



COMMONWEALTH
HERITAGE GROUP

INTENSIVE-LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE CASS CORRIDOR

DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

J-1098/R-1456

JULY 2021



Image Credits: Detroit Poets by John Sinclair; Woman, by Bruce Harness; and Gilda Snowden, by Grantmakers in the Arts



INTENSIVE-LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE CASS CORRIDOR

Prepared for

**DETROIT HISTORIC DESIGNATION ADVISORY BOARD
PURCHASE ORDER 3044842 FOR CONTRACT AGREEMENT 6002766**

Prepared by

**COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE GROUP, INC.
3215 CENTRAL STREET
DEXTER, MICHIGAN 48130**

Elaine H. Robinson, Senior Architectural Historian

Katie Beck, Architectural Historian

Sarah Reyes, Architectural Historian

Lucy Wayne, Historian

Brandon M. Gabler, Project Manager

R-1456

July 2021

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the staffs at the Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board and the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office for your assistance in gathering information on previously recorded properties within the Cass Corridor Project Area.

Additional thanks are extended to Kim Schroeder, School of Information Sciences, Wayne State University (WSU), the staff of the Walter P. Reuther Library, WSU, and the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, Detroit. Finally, the incredible generosity of Bruce Harkness, photographer, has added greatly to the project, through his numerous photographs of the Cass Corridor taken during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Project staff included Sarah R. Reyes and Hannon Hylkema who carried out the field photography, as well as assisted with the background investigations and report preparation. Additional Commonwealth staff who assisted with the report and associated identification forms included Katie Beck and Lucy Wayne, Ph.D. Elaine H. Robinson was the Principal Investigator and primary author of the report. James Montney prepared all the GIS files and figures. Brandon M. Gabler served as the Project Manager and completed the QA/QC. Megan McGowan, an outside consultant, aided with overall background research.

Funding Credit

The activity that is the subject of this project has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Michigan State Strategic Fund, State Historic Preservation Office. However, the contents and opinions herein do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior or the Michigan Strategic Fund, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products herein constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or the Michigan Strategic Fund.

This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in its federally assisted programs. Michigan law prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to:

*Chief, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW, MS-2740
Washington, DC 20240*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an effort to document the above-ground cultural resources, including buildings, structures, sites, objects, and historic districts within the Cass Corridor area, the Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board (HDAB) contracted with Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. (Commonwealth) to carry out an intensive level architectural and historical survey. The survey area is roughly bounded by Grand Boulevard on the north, Woodward Avenue on the east, the north side of I-75 on the south, and the east side of M-10 on the west, and consists of a total of 767.6 acres and 756 properties. This project builds on previous work in the Cass Corridor with the intent of providing updated information for use in future planning; developing additional National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and local designations; and meeting the needs of Section 106 reviews related to future development or projects within the area.

The project identifies and evaluates all above-ground resources for listing in the NRHP and reevaluates those resources previously designated as a local historic district (LHD) or listed in the NRHP. To carry the survey, Commonwealth has taken current photographs of the above-ground resources and developed relevant historic contexts to enable the accurate application of the NRHP Criteria for Evaluation. Previously documented properties were updated with the new photographs and information, while previously unrecorded properties were evaluated for potential significance. Commonwealth worked closely with the staff of HDAB and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to carry out the project, including the preparation of SHPO identification forms for each individual property, building complexes, and cultural landscapes. The results of this study are presented in this report, including sufficient locational maps and photographs to clearly illustrate the findings of the project.

This new project builds on the groundwork of two earlier large-scale surveys, *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey* completed in 1995 and the *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey* completed in 2002. Additionally, there are sixteen local historic districts and fifty-eight NRHP-listed individual buildings and/or multiple property districts within the project area. Using information from the currently listed properties along with newly developed contexts will aid in the evaluation of all above-ground resources within the project area, moving beyond simply compiling a cohesive history for the entire corridor. Potential uses for the materials include informing future NRHP nominations, Section 106 reviews, Historic Preservation Tax Credit applications, and preservation planning.

Cass Avenue forms the spine of the project area and provides the name for the area. The street name was first used in 1827 and honors Governor Lewis Cass, the second governor of the Michigan Territory. During his life, Cass (1782–1866), also served as a U.S. senator from Michigan, U.S. Secretary of State, and was a presidential candidate in 1848. Under President Andrew Jackson, Cass served as the Secretary of War. A former owner of enslaved persons, Cass advocated for “popular sovereignty,” under which whites in the northern territories would be allowed to decide whether to permit enslavement.¹

¹ Paul Egan, “Whitmer strips name of slave owner Lewis Cass from state office building,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 30, 2020, A1, A6.

The impact of the American Indian tribes, including the Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Potawatomi, that lived in Detroit prior to the arrival of the French by 1701, continues to be evident on the landscape of the Cass Corridor. These early residents established paths or routes that were later adapted and expanded by the growing city. The first early land development in the Cass Corridor area was the establishment of the Park Lots in the early 1800s and the Cass Farm, which was subdivided in the 1860s. The decisions made by these early planners determined the size of building lots, and placement of streets. These decisions were felt generations later, with closely spaced buildings and the presence of some of the busiest roadways in the city.

The development of the Cass Corridor began as the city expanded away from Fort Shelby to create first an exclusive residential area, and then an area that incorporated commercial and industrial purposes. As people lived and worked in the area, other amenities followed them; churches, schools, and places of entertainment were all located within the corridor.

Historically, early industrial leaders constructed their showcase residences in the area, particularly along Woodward Avenue and on the streets extending east and west from Cass Avenue. As urban growth pushed into the area, so did some of the leading manufacturers, including automobile parts suppliers and distribution centers, film distribution, and pharmaceuticals. In the 1920s the area began to transition into the city's cultural center, with the main branch of the Detroit Public Library opening across the street from the Detroit Institute of Arts and a number of smaller museums. Early schools in the area included Detroit Central High School, which eventually became the home of Wayne University, today known as Wayne State University (WSU). The presence of the university and the cultural center resulted in the evolution of the area as a creative hub, particularly in the 1960s when it became the center for the city's countercultural movement.

Today the Cass Corridor is a vibrant mixture of people, places, and history. People representing a variety of ethnic groups, professions, and passions all call Cass Corridor home. There are long-term residents whose families have lived in the area for generations and new arrivals looking to start their adventure, perhaps as students at WSU or as someone newly entering the workforce. While change in the Cass Corridor has been an important aspect of the area, much of the historic built environment remains. This study focuses on the fabric of the Cass Corridor in an effort to enable future planners and developers to continue to protect the character of the area and educate the public about its historic significance.

CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	iv
List of Tables	vii
Section 1	1
Credits and Credentials.....	1
Elaine H. Robinson, Senior Architectural Historian	1
Katie Beck, Architectural Historian	1
Sarah Reyes, Architectural Historian	2
Lucy Wayne, Ph.D., Architectural Historian	2
Meghan McGowan, Researcher	2
Project Objectives and Methodology	3
Survey Objectives	3
Survey Methodology	5
Previous Investigations.....	6
National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation.....	12
Data Location	13
Planning Needs and Recommendations	13
Preservation Issues and Threats.....	14
Survey Maps	14
Section 2	15
Descriptive Overview	15
Historical Context.....	18
Thematic Narratives	18
Historical Narrative of Detroit and the Cass Corridor.....	19
Evaluation Results Summary.....	158
Bibliography	173
Newspapers.....	188

Appendix A Identification Forms

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The Cass Corridor Project Location	4
Figure 2. Designated LHDs and NRHP-listed properties within the project area	11
Figure 3. Four sections of the Cass Corridor Project Area	16
Figure 4. Italianate-style Colin Fox House (1871), 627 West Canfield Street	23
Figure 5. Queen Anne-style houses at 937 West Willis (1870; left) and 943 West Willis (1873; right)....	24
Figure 6. Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church (1877, 1885), now home of the Mosaic Midtown Church, 80 West Alexandrine Street	27
Figure 7. Cass Park, photograph ca. 1899.....	30
Figure 8. Looking south on Woodward Avenue from Peterboro, photograph ca. 1880	33
Figure 9. Joseph A. Cooper House (ca. 1878; left), 3760 Second Street and Robert Smith House (1880; right), 3752 Second Street	34
Figure 10. The main entrance to the Verona Flats (1884–1896), 92–100 West Ferry.....	35
Figure 11. Chesterfield Apartments (1911), 3566 Cass Avenue	36
Figure 12. Davenport Apartments (1905), 149 Davenport Street	37
Figure 13. Saint Andrew’s Memorial Episcopal Church (1902, 1912), 5105 Anthony Wayne Drive	40
Figure 14. Clay School (1882), photograph from 1982	41
Figure 15. Central High School (1895–1896), photograph ca. 1915	42
Figure 16. Home of the Friendless.....	43
Figure 17. David Whitney House and Detroit Athletic Club on Woodward Avenue, photograph ca. 1905	47
Figure 18. Virelo Apartments, 467 West Alexandrine, constructed ca. 1914.....	51
Figure 19. B. F. Goodyear/Leonard N. Simmons Building (1913), 4809 Woodward Avenue.....	52
Figure 20. Miller-Judd Company Sales and Service/ WSU Facilities Planning & Management and Finance Business Operations Building (1929), 5454 Cass Avenue	53
Figure 21. Grade separation bridge (1929), over Third Avenue	54
Figure 22. Detroit Motor Bus Routes, 1924.....	56
Figure 23. Ladder Company No. 7 and Engine Company No. 17 (1922–1923), 6100 Second Street	58

Figure 24. Stuber-Stone Building (1916), 4221–4229 Cass Avenue.....	59
Figure 25. General Motors Building (1923), photograph ca. 1921.....	63
Figure 26. View south on Second Avenue, General Motors Building (1923; immediate left) and General Motors Research Building (center left), ca. 1942	64
Figure 27. Fisher Building (1927–1928), photograph ca. 2007	67
Figure 28. View north on Woodward Avenue showing the Detroit Public Library (1921; left) and the Detroit Institute of Arts (1927; right)	72
Figure 29. Masonic Temple (1926) view across Cass Park, photograph ca. 1930	73
Figure 30. Detroit Orchestra Hall (1919), 3711 Woodward Avenue.....	75
Figure 31. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard near Third Street. Jeffries Project towers visible in the distance, ca. 1980	82
Figure 32. International Style Community Arts Building (1957), 5400 Gullen Mall.....	83
Figure 33. NHL listed McGregor Memorial Conference Center (1958), 495 Ferry Mall	84
Figure 34. During World War II, the American Women’s Volunteer Services staffed a kiosk in the lobby of the Fisher Building	87
Figure 35. Detroit 13th Precinct Police Station (1946), 4747 Woodward Avenue.....	88
Figure 36. Detail of the HOLC 1939 map of Detroit (highlighted area is the Cass Corridor Project Area)	94
Figure 37. Advertisement for Brooks Bus Line	98
Figure 38. Brooks Bus Line bus in front of their Harper Street station, photograph ca. 1950	99
Figure 39. Paradise Theater (1919), 3711 Woodward Avenue, photograph 1949.....	105
Figure 40. Willis Show Bar advertisement	107
Figure 41. Ca. 1940s postcard of Buddy & Jimmy's Inn, "A Friendly Place to Meet a Friend"	108
Figure 42. Urban Renewal areas and names in Detroit, 1963.....	111
Figure 43. West side of Third Avenue south of Charlotte, photograph ca. 1979	113
Figure 44. Jumbo's Bar, 3736 Third Avenue, ca. 1978.....	114
Figure 45. Detroit Historical Museum (1951), 5401 Woodward Avenue	115
Figure 46. West Canfield Avenue in the West Canfield Historic District, view to the southwest	116
Figure 47. Developer Joel Landy at one of his project sites	117

Figure 48. Rosa Parks and Rep. John Conyers in front of GM Building. Conyers' sign reads: "GM has made the most inhumane decision in its history"	119
Figure 49. Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic/WSU School of Social Work (1958), 5447 Woodward Avenue .	120
Figure 50. The Chinese Merchants Association Offices (1915), or <i>On Leong Tong</i> , 3143 Cass Avenue	123
Figure 51. Chinatown advertisement in the October 3, 1963, <i>Detroit Free Press</i>	125
Figure 52. Chinatown Kiosk, northwest corner of Cass Avenue and Peterboro Street	126
Figure 53. United Sound Studio with George Clinton and Jim Vitti, recording engineer	129
Figure 54. Patrons of the Gold Dollar Show Bar, 3127 Cass Avenue (not extant), photograph ca. 1978	136
Figure 55. Trans-Love Energies flyer, April 1967	140
Figure 56. Detroit Artists' Workshop, 4851 John Lodge (corner of Warren), event poster, August 1966	142
Figure 57. Gilda Snowden (1954–2014).....	145
Figure 58. Nancy Mitchnick, Cass Corridor Movement Artist.....	147
Figure 59. Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels, Devil with a Blue Dress On went to #4 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1966.....	148
Figure 60. Joni and Chuck Mitchell recording in their Verona Apartment, photograph ca. 1967	149
Figure 61. John Sinclair, 1968	151
Figure 62. Patrons of a Cass Corridor Bar, photograph ca. 1981	152
Figure 63. The band Asklepius performs at the Old Miami, 3930 Cass Avenue.....	153
Figure 64. Dally in the Alley crowds, photograph 2014.....	155
Figure 65. One of the Dally in the Alley bands, photograph 2014	155
Figure 66. First Dally in the Alley, 1982 photograph.....	157
Figure 67. NRHP eligible properties.....	165
Figure 68. Detail of Eligible Fourth Street Historic District.....	166
Figure 69. Detail of Eligible North Cultural Center Historic District.....	167
Figure 70. Detail of Eligible West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District.....	168
Figure 71. Detail of Eligible Chinatown Historic District	169

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Properties only designated as Detroit LHDs within the Cass Corridor project area.....	6
Table 2. Properties within the project area with NRHP and/or LHD designation	6
Table 3. Designated properties no longer extant.....	10
Table 4. HOLC map details by section within the Cass Corridor Project Area.....	92
Table 5. Cass Corridor and City of Detroit ethnic diversity based on 1950 census records	97
Table 6. Cass Corridor and City of Detroit ethnic diversity based on 1960 census records	121
Table 7. Cass Corridor and City of Detroit ethnic diversity based on 1970 census records	122
Table 8. NRHP eligible properties	159
Table 9. Previously listed NRHP properties in the North Cultural Center Historic District	164

SECTION 1

Credits and Credentials

Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. (Commonwealth) dedicated four full-time staff members to the Intensive-Level Architectural and Historical Survey of the Cass Corridor in Detroit, Michigan. Elaine H. Robinson was the Principal Investigator of the project and primary author of the report. Sarah R. Reyes completed the field survey with the assistance of Hannon Hylkema, a temporary staff member who provided logistical support. Katie Beck, Sarah Reyes, and Lucy Wayne, Ph.D., prepared the Identification Forms. Meghan McGowan, an outside consultant, assisted with compiling background research.

Elaine H. Robinson, Senior Architectural Historian

Ms. Robinson serves as Commonwealth's senior architectural historian and preservation planner and will direct all technical aspects of the architectural history tasks within the project. She will be the primary author of the Above-Ground Reconnaissance Level Survey report. Ms. Robinson has been employed by Commonwealth since 1994. During her years of employment, she has conducted a wide range of survey and documentation projects, including National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations for single properties and districts, determination of eligibility reports, and HABS/HAER documentation. Among her largest assignments was the NRHP nomination for the Idlewild Historic District in Lake County, Michigan, for which over 1,200 properties were documented and evaluated for significance; preparation of a historic property reports for Segments 3 and 4 of the I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis Tier 2 study completed for Indiana Department of Transportation (InDOT); an intensive-level survey completed for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for survey, documentation, and evaluation of over five miles of I-94 in Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan; and a survey of Southfield Road between I-69 and Twelve Mile Road, including resources in Southfield, Lathrup Village, and Beverly Hills, Oakland County, Michigan.

Katie Beck, Architectural Historian

Ms. Katie Beck serves as an architectural historian for Commonwealth, working primarily in the Great Lakes and Midwest regions. She has experience writing NRHP nominations and has evaluated individual properties for Determinations of Eligibility and NRHP eligibility. She has conducted background research for the development of historical contexts and architectural evaluations for properties in Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia. She has experience with research utilizing HABS/HAER databases, city assessor's offices, applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation and adaptive reuse. She has a thorough understanding of the Antiquities Act, the National Preservation Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Among her most recent Michigan projects is the evaluation of the Hastings Table Co. building in Hastings. She has also completed several large survey projects in Ohio and West Virginia

Sarah Reyes, Architectural Historian

Ms. Sarah Reyes serves as an architectural historian for Commonwealth, working primarily in Michigan. She has assisted with a variety of projects, completing photography for several small projects in southeast Michigan, and recently at the Seney National Wildlife Refuge in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. In addition to her work completed for Commonwealth, Ms. Reyes, a recent Eastern Michigan University graduate, has experience carrying out background research to determine the history of a property and extensive experience in preparing written reports.

Lucy Wayne, Ph.D., Architectural Historian

Dr. Wayne has extensive experience in cultural resource management studies throughout the southeastern U.S. She has served as co-investigator and principal author for projects in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Maryland, Alabama, the U. S. Virgin Islands, Antigua, and Ascension Island. Dr. Wayne has training in archival research, architectural history and preservation, and preservation law. She has conducted extensive historic research for cultural resource projects and regularly documents and evaluates historic properties. Dr. Wayne has also provided litigation support services, including historic research and professional opinions for projects in South Florida.

In addition to her architectural history and historic research qualifications, Dr. Wayne is a registered professional archaeologist with experience on both prehistoric and historic sites throughout the southeastern United States and several Caribbean islands. Archaeological projects have ranged from surveys to Phase III data recovery projects for both government and private clients, including several Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements.

Meghan McGowan, Researcher

Ms. Meghan McGowan earned her Master of Library and Information Science and a Certificate in Archival Administration from WSU in May 2017. She brings years of working in a variety of libraries to the Cass Corridor project. Her most recent position is as a librarian at the Main Branch of the Detroit Public Library, where she works in the Social Science, Education, Religion, Business, Science, and Technology departments. She is also a substitute librarian for the Ferndale, Michigan, library where she works in both the children's and adult departments. Ms. McGowan has additional experience working as an archival intern with the McGregor Fund, serving as a researcher for the Detroit Jewish News Foundation, and as a practicum student at the Burton Historical Collection where she processed the Detroit Housing Commission Reports.

Project Objectives and Methodology

Survey Objectives

Portions of the Cass Corridor have been surveyed twice in the past, and a number of both local and national districts established. However, the two surveys were completed in 1995 and 2002, making it almost twenty years since the most recent of the two surveys was completed. Given the length of time since the last survey, the Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board (HDAB) determined that the entire area needed to be surveyed again, providing an opportunity to update information on the area, and generate a tool for future planning purposes.

This project looks at an expanded Cass Corridor area and seeks to document every building, no matter the age or level of historic integrity. The completed survey and the associated identification forms, photographs, and maps will provide an updated document that will facilitate an understanding of the historic resources of the area, record the changes since the completions of the earlier surveys, expand on the areas of historic significance for the area, aid with future planning efforts, and facilitate the development of additional NRHP and local designations. Updated materials will also be useful in any Section 106 reviews related to future development or projects within the area. Additionally, the new survey and updated status for previously recorded properties partially fulfills the City of Detroit's Certified Local Government (CLG) requirement that a "CLG must plan for the ongoing survey and inventory of historic resources."² HDAB administers the Detroit's CLG programs, such as this project.

The Cass Corridor survey area for this project is defined as being roughly bounded by Grand Boulevard on the north, Woodward Avenue on the east, the north side of I-75/Fisher Freeway on the south, and the east side of M-10/John C. Lodge Freeway on the west, and consists of a total of 767.6 acres (Figure 1). This area is slightly larger than the area historically considered to be the Cass Corridor, and includes a portion at the north end traditionally identified as New Center. A large portion of the former Cass Corridor, particularly to the north end of the area, has also adopted the name Midtown, to better reflect its location in the city. The southern end of the former Cass Corridor retains that name.

² Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, *Certified Local Government Program: Program Requirements + Certification Handbook*, 2020, accessed 5 April 2021, https://www.mplace.org/4a3182/globalassets/documents/shpo/programs-and-services/certified-local-governments/mishpo_clg_handbook_2020web_version.pdf.

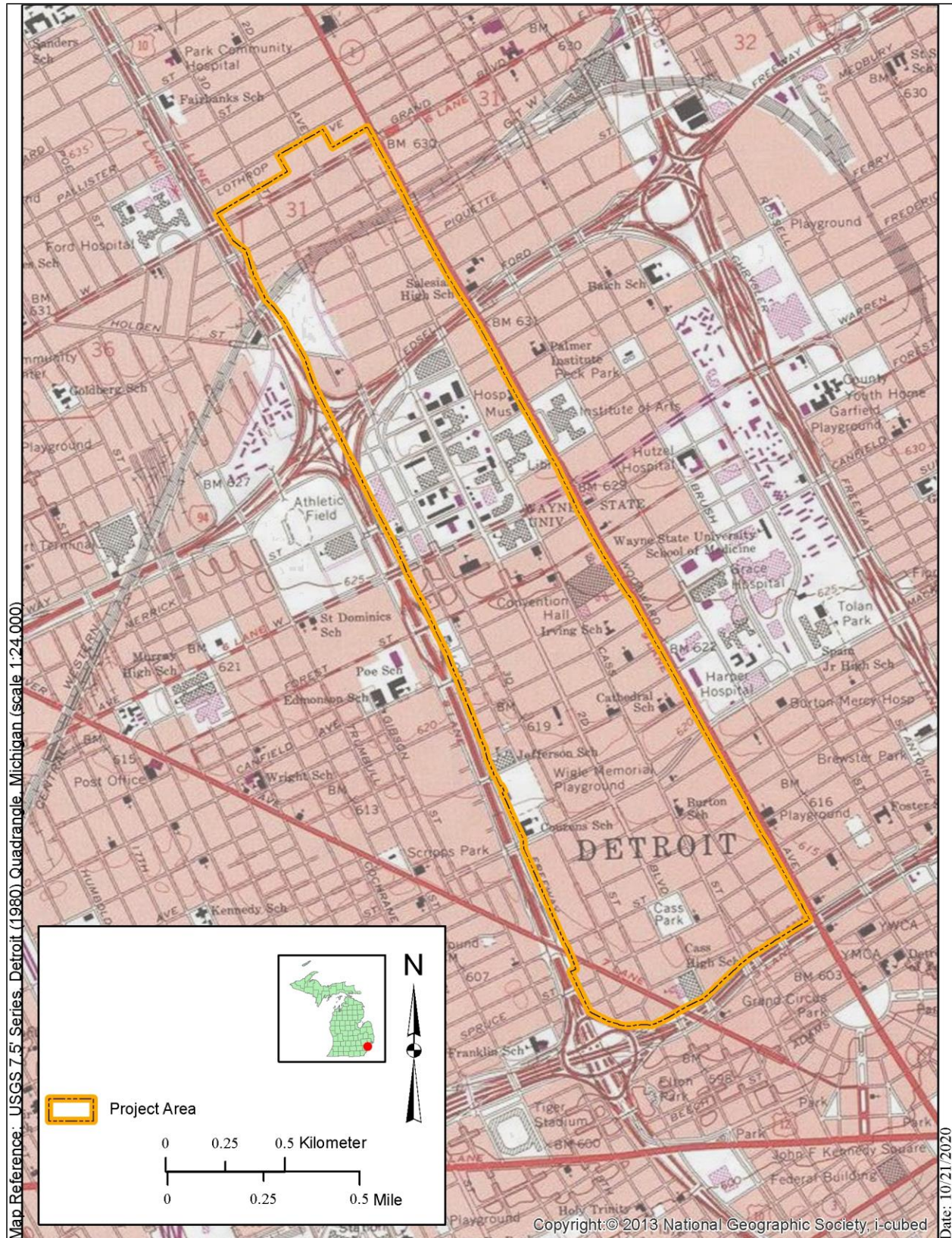


Figure 1. The Cass Corridor Project Location

Survey Methodology

Commonwealth used a team of individuals to carry out the survey and prepare the documentation of the Cass Corridor. The survey efforts for this project were divided between HDAB and Commonwealth. HDAB was responsible for photographing and creating new identification forms for those properties that at the start of the survey were either designated as a local historic district or listed in the NRHP. Commonwealth was tasked with carrying out the survey of all remaining resources, no matter the date of construction or the level of historic integrity.

Prior to beginning the physical survey, Commonwealth created maps of all resources to be documented, using the mapping of the designated or listed properties provided by HDAB as a guide. Commonwealth's physical survey included extensive photography of each resource, and accurate mapping of documented resources. Once this effort was done, the high-resolution photographs were shared with a team of architectural historians to prepare each building description for the individual Identification Forms presented in Appendix A. The same team completed research on each individual building and prepared the significance statements. Buildings, structures, districts, sites, and objects were evaluated for NRHP eligibility in consultation with the entire team.

At the same time the physical survey was undertaken, the survey report, including background information and context development, was prepared. This portion of the project included a public meeting with information on possible contacts and sources provided by the participants. Additional background investigation for potential sources was also carried out by HDAB, which resulted in the identification of additional individuals who were excellent sources of information utilized in the report preparation.

In addition to the extensive background information gleaned from earlier designations or listings provided by HDAB, Commonwealth carried out additional investigations on individual resources and general historic contexts relevant to the area. Among the sources consulted were published histories, and maps and oral histories on file at the Walter P. Reuther Library at WSU. Additionally, extensive background investigations were carried out using newspapers, websites, and other online sources. Several very valuable connections were made as part of this project, including with Kim Schroeder, WSU School of Information Faculty, and Megan McGowan, Master of Science in Library and Information Science, and staff at Detroit Public Library, who assisted in accessing libraries and oral history collections. Timothy F. Retzliff, Ph.D., also proved to be an invaluable resource regarding the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) community. Finally, a number of original photographs and conversations with photographer Bruce Harkness provide a look at the Cass Corridor not otherwise available.

The largest issue encountered in the survey process has been restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic. For much of the background investigations, libraries and archival collections either have been entirely closed or have offered only limited access. Several collections of resources specifically suggested by HDAB staff for consultation were unavailable to the Commonwealth team because the team did not include a current WSU student, faculty, or staff. Although limited reproductions were possible, the amount of resources to be

investigated precluded this option. In spite of this limitation, Commonwealth was able to carry out an intense effort to gather the history of the Cass Corridor, which has allowed further designation of properties, and will be useful for future planning efforts.

Commonwealth has approached the Intensive-Level Survey in a manner that incorporates previously documented historic resources along with unrecorded resources that includes everything from individual photographs to the establishment of relevant historic contexts. The full review of the area also includes updated information prepared by HDAB on previously listed or designated properties and relevant historic contexts. The materials completed by HDAB will facilitate updates in existing documentation and expanding areas of historic significance.

Previous Investigations

Since the early 1970s the cultural resources of the Cass Corridor area have been studied in relation to their historic significance. To this end, there have been a large number of individual buildings and historic districts listed in the NRHP or designated as local historic districts (LHD). The current project builds on the ground work of two earlier large-scale surveys, *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey* (1995)³ and the *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey* (2002).⁴ There have also been three properties that are designated only as LHD and sixty-one properties designated as LHD and/or listed in NRHP for individual buildings and multiple property districts (Figure 2; Table 1 and Table 2). Three properties, the Fisher Building (3011 West Grand Boulevard, 1927–1928), the General Motors Building (3044 West Grand Boulevard, 1911–1922), and the McGregor Memorial Conference Center (495 Gilmour Mall, 1958), have also been designated National Historic Landmarks (NHL).

Table 1. Properties only designated as Detroit LHDs within the Cass Corridor project area

Name	Location	Designation	Listed
Cass Henry	Henry Street, Cass Avenue, I-375/Fisher Freeway, Second Avenue	LHD	7/29/2018
Peterboro-Charlotte	Peterboro, Park Boulevard, Charlotte, Woodward Avenue	LHD	8/9/1984
United Sound Systems	5840 Second Avenue	LHD	4/19/2015

Table 2. Properties within the project area with NRHP and/or LHD designation

³ Deborah M. Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, Historic Designation Advisory Board and Zachary & Associates, 1995.

⁴ Marilyn Florek and Marleen Tulas, *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, completed for University Cultural Center Association, 2002.

Intensive-Level Architectural and Historical Survey of Cass Corridor

Name	Location	Historic District	Designation	Listed
Architects Building	415 Brainard Street		NRHP	5/4/1995
Art Center Music School	3975 Cass Avenue	Willis-Selden	LHD NRHP	3/11/1993
Belcrest Hotel	5440 Cass Avenue		NRHP	5/31/1984
Boydell, William C., House	4614 Cass Avenue	Warren-Prentis	NRHP	3/19/1982
Campbell Symington House	3977 Second Avenue	Willis-Selden	LHD NRHP	12/8/1978
Cass Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church	3901 Cass Avenue	Willis-Selden	LHD NRHP	4/13/1987 12/10/1982
Cass Motor Sales	5800 Cass Avenue		NRHP	4/29/1986
Cass Park Historic District	Temple Avenue, Ledyard Street, and Second Avenue at Cass Park		NRHP	2/2/2005
Cass-Davenport Historic District	Davenport, alley east of Cass, ML King Blvd, Cass, and alley west of Cass		NRHP	9/22/1997
Chapel of St. Theresa--the Little Flower	46 Parsons Street		NRHP	9/22/1997
Chatsworth Apartments	630 Merrick Street		NRHP	5/1/1986
Coronado Apartments	3751-3753 Second Avenue	Willis-Selden	NRHP	4/22/1982
Cultural Center Historic District	5200, 5201 Woodward Avenue, 100 Farnsworth Street		NRHP	11/21/1983
Detroit Central High School/ Old Main	4841 Cass Avenue	Wayne State University Buildings	NRHP	6/23/1978
Detroit Edison Company Willis Avenue Station	50 W. Willis Street		NRHP	9/22/1997
Detroit Masonic Temple	500 Temple Avenue	Cass Park	NRHP	11/28/1980
Detroit Public Library, Main Branch	5201 Woodward Avenue	Cultural Center Historic District	NRHP	11/21/1983
Detroit--Columbia Central Office Building	52 Seldon Street		NRHP	9/22/1997
East Ferry Avenue Historic District	East Ferry Avenue between Woodward Avenue and Brush Street		NRHP	3/10/1980
Eddystone Hotel Historic District	110-118 Sproat Street		LHD NRHP	3/29/2006 7/12/2006

Name	Location	Historic District	Designation	Listed
First Church of Christ Scientist/Hilberry Theatre	4743 Cass Avenue	Wayne State University Buildings	NRHP	6/23/1978
First Unitarian-Universalist Church	4605 Cass Avenue	Warren-Prentis	LHD	12/14/1980
Fisher and New Center Buildings	7430 Second Avenue and 3011 W. Grand Boulevard		NRHP NHL	10/14/1980
General Motors Building	3044 W. Grand Boulevard		NRHP NHL	6/2/1978
General Motors Research Laboratory	485-495 Milwaukee Avenue		LHD NRHP	3/29/2006 7/22/2005
Graybar Electric Company Building	55 W. Canfield Avenue		NRHP	9/22/1997
Hunter, Mulford T., House	77 W. Hancock Avenue	Warren-Prentis	NRHP	7/22/1994
Jacob, Max, House	451 W Kirby Street		NRHP	5/15/1986
Jefferson Intermediate School	938 Selden Street		NRHP	9/22/1997
Joy, James, House	100 W Kirby Street	University Cultural Center	NRHP	5/15/1986
Kresge, S. S., World Headquarters	2727 Second Avenue	Cass Park	NRHP	12/19/1979
League of Catholic Women Building	100 Parsons Street		NRHP	9/22/1997
Linsell, Fredrick, House	5104 Second Avenue	University Cultural Center	NRHP	5/15/1986
Loomer, George W., House	71 W. Hancock Avenue	Warren-Prentis	NRHP	7/22/1994
Maccabees Building	5057 Woodward Avenue		NRHP	7/7/1983
Mackenzie, David, House	4735 Cass Avenue/ 4700 Second Avenue		NRHP	6/23/1978
McAdow, Perry, House	4605 Cass Avenue	Warren-Prentis	NRHP	7/3/1980
McGregor Memorial Conference Center	495 Ferry Mall (WSU campus)		NRHP NHL	12/10/2010 2/27/2015
Midtown Woodward Historic District	2951-3424 Woodward Avenue, 14 Charlotte Street, 10 and 25 Peterboro Street		NRHP LHD	11/26/2008
New Amsterdam Historic District	435, 450 Amsterdam Street; 440, 441-447 Burroughs; 5911, 6050, 6260 Cass Avenue, 6200-6300 Second Avenue; 425 York Street		LHD NRHP	12/16/2001 5/30/2001
Orchestra Hall	3711 Woodward Avenue		LHD NRHP	12/31/1969 4/16/1971

Name	Location	Historic District	Designation	Listed
Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium Complex	5203 Cass Avenue		NRHP	5/2/2011
Rands, William, House	5229 Cass Avenue	University Cultural Center	NRHP	5/15/1986
Saint Andrew's Memorial Episcopal Church	5015 Anthony Wayne Drive		NRHP	5/15/1986
Smith, Samuel L., House	5035 Woodward Avenue		NRHP	4/29/1986
Strasburg, Herman, House	5415 Cass Avenue		NRHP	4/29/1986
Sts. Peter and Paul Academy	64 Parsons Street		NRHP	9/22/1997
Stuber-Stone Building	4221-4229 Cass Avenue	Willis-Selden	NRHP	4/4/1996
The Clay School	453 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard		NRHP	7/8/1982
Thompson Home	4756 Cass Avenue	Warren-Prentis	NRHP	6/3/1976
Verona Apartments	92 W. Ferry Avenue		NRHP	4/29/1986
Warren - Prentis Area Historic District (North Cass Corridor)	Bounded by Woodward Avenue, Warren Avenue, Third Avenue, and alley south of Prentis Street		LHD NRHP	1/16/2001 12/1/1997
Wayne State University Buildings	4735-4841 Cass Avenue		NRHP	6/23/1978
West Canfield Historic District and Boundary Increase	Canfield Avenue between Second Avenue and Third Street		LHD (not boundary increase) NRHP NRHP	12/31/1969 5/27/1971 9/22/1997
Whitney, David, House	4421 Woodward Avenue		NRHP	8/21/1972
Willis-Selden Historic District	Bounded by alley north of W. Willis Street, Woodward Avenue, alley south of Selden Street, and Third Avenue		LHD NRHP	10/10/2011 6/13/1975

Seven properties previously designated as a LHD or listed in the NRHP have since been demolished (Table 3).

Table 3. Designated properties no longer extant

Name	Location	Designation	Listed	Demolished
Cass, Lewis, Technical High School	2421 Second Avenue	NRHP	3/29/2011	July 2011
Gleaners Temple	5705 Woodward Avenue	NRHP	4/29/1986	1996
Grindley, Robert M. and Matilda (Kitch), House	123 Parsons Street	NRHP	12/1/1997	Unknown
Park Avenue Hotel	2643 Park Avenue	NRHP	7/12/2006	Unknown
Santa Fe Apartments	681 Merrick Street	NRHP	5/1/1986	Unknown
Sprague, Thomas House	80 W Palmer Avenue	NRHP	4/29/1986	Unknown
Webster Hall/Mackenzie Hall	Cass Avenue between Warren and Putnam Street	NRHP	4/29/1986	2/17/1991

.

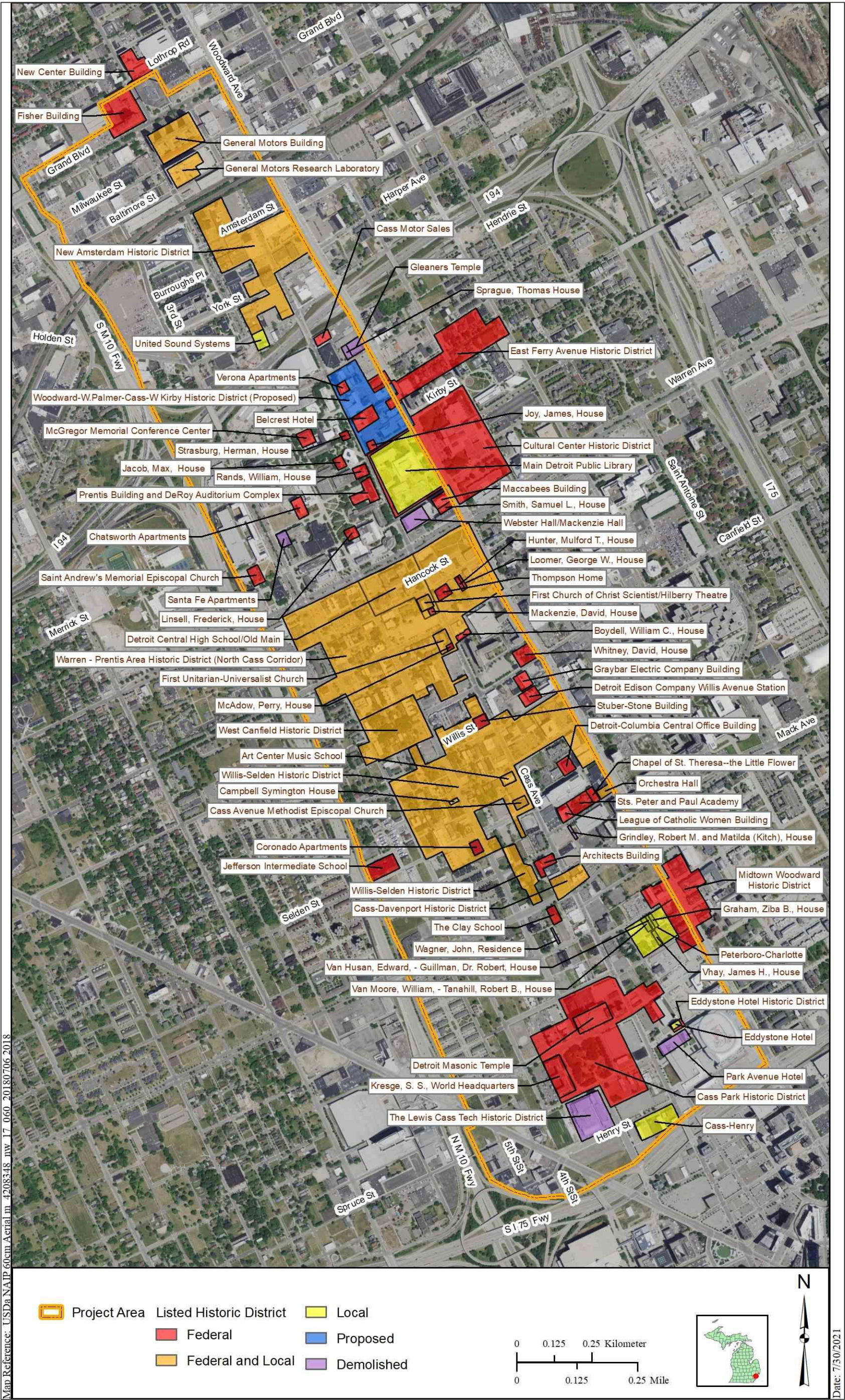


Figure 2. Designated LHDs and NRHP-listed properties within the project area

National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation

According to the National Parks Service (NPS), which manages the NRHP, to be eligible for listing a property must possess significance in American history, architecture, archaeology. Buildings, such as a house or factory; structures including towers and barns; sites, which include parks or other open areas; and historic district, which typically consist of multiple resources from any of the categories, can be considered for listing in the NRHP if meet one or more of the NPS Criteria for Evaluation, which include:

- A. be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or,
- B. be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or,
- C. embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant or distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or,
- D. have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Additionally, the NPS has issued Criteria Considerations for special types of historic resources – including cemeteries, birthplaces of or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historical buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years and are not ordinarily be considered eligible for the NRHP. Criterion Consideration G is particularly relevant in this project since it provides for an exception to the basic guideline that suggests a resource needs to be fifty years old to be significant. Instead, under Consideration G a property that has achieved significance within the last fifty years can be NRHP eligible if it is of exceptional importance.

In addition to possessing significance, a cultural resource must possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Historic integrity, as it is spelled out by the NPS regulations list the seven areas of integrity mentioned above. Typically, integrity is thought of in terms of high or excellent, good, low, or no integrity in an effort to remove some subjectivity from the evaluation. A property with a high level of integrity will exhibit several aspects of integrity; a resource with low integrity will exhibit a correspondingly low level of observable integrity. It is important to not confuse integrity with condition. For example, a Queen Anne house with original cladding and all its ornamental details intact, but no paint, has a higher level of integrity than a similar building with the ornament removed to make way for replacement windows and vinyl siding. In the first example, the house retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship; the house in the second example has lost integrity in the same areas.

Another issue of integrity is the determination of the appropriate period of significance. The period of significance, or the time when the cultural resource is being recognized as important, is not limited to only when the building was first constructed or held by its original owner. Having identified events or people that are historically important, the period of significance further defines the importance by tying the reasons for historic significance to time.

Data Location

Survey data is on file both with the HDAB and the SHPO. The HDAB office is located at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, 2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 218, Detroit, Michigan, 48221. SHPO offices are at 300 North Washington Square, Lansing, Michigan, 48913.

Planning Needs and Recommendations

It is Commonwealth's recommendation that for each of the individual buildings or historic districts in this document recommended for listing in the NRHP, a local historic designation be considered (see Table 8). Local historic designation carries the greatest level of protection for each property. This means that demolitions can be slowed, which is particularly important in areas where extensive demolitions are a threat. Local designation also requires developers to follow guidelines that are in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation when completing renovations and restorations, and may ensure that the restorations will be completed in a manner that is sympathetic to the historic resource.

In addition to the local historic designation, Commonwealth suggests that the HDAB consider developing a program that identifies local historic properties to the area residents and visitors. This identification program could take several forms, including a series of brochures, walking tours (online or hard-copy pamphlets), or signage. Published materials or signage would support cultural heritage tourism efforts in the area, would help build an understanding of the local history, and could possibly support future development projects. One potential way to defray the cost of these programs would be to implement a requirement that any developers undertaking a project be required to do some kind of preservation related program as part of receiving permits and permissions to carry out the project. Another possible way to gather information on properties that could be lost due to demolition is to require developers or the organization that applies for the demolition permit to complete Historic American Building Survey style recordation, including professional large format photographs, and the development of an extensive history of the resource. Although the building would ultimately be lost through demolition, it would be recorded for history. Arrangements with the Burton Collection or another repository could be made to assure that the record can be accessed by the public.

Preservation Issues and Threats

The Cass Corridor project area is currently under a great deal of development pressure. The recently completed Little Caesar's Arena resulted in the demolition of a number of buildings in the south end of the project area, new and on-going work on I-94/Ford Freeway is impacting resources both north and south of the existing freeway, and the continued growth of WSU has resulted in a number of the area's buildings being purchased and repurposed or demolished. In some cases, some of the historic character of the building has been lost during this process; however, there are examples of buildings that have been sensitively updated while protecting the original character. This activity is all in addition to the ongoing development of new housing on much of the lands vacated by the Jeffries Housing Project East and in areas around WSU.

However, there has been a positive historic preservation culture developed in the Cass Corridor, largely due to the efforts of Midtown Detroit, Inc. The organization, which was formed from two earlier groups, University Cultural Center Association (UCCA) established in 1976 and the New Center Council (NCC) established in 1980, focuses on real estate and economic development, and preservation of the district's history.⁵ Through Midtown Detroit, Inc.'s efforts, and the work of a number of dedicated developers, the Cass Corridor area has taken on new life. Hopefully, this work can continue at a smaller scale with the reinstatement of the State Historic Tax Credit. This credit will enable smaller property owners to defray the cost of some of the work on their building, once the rulemaking process is completed sometime in 2022.⁶

Survey Maps

Included in the body of this report are several maps depicting the project location, location of previous surveyed areas, and those resources currently listed in the NRHP or designated as local historic districts. In the final chapter of this report, a map is presented showing all of the resources identified as historically significant as the result of this project. Additionally, there is a series of detail maps illustrating each of the newly identified historic districts.

⁵ Midtown Detroit, Inc., "History," accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.midtowndetroitinc.org/mission>.

⁶ Michigan Economic Development Corporation, "Historic Preservation Tax Credits," accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/historic-preservation-tax-credits/>.

SECTION 2

Descriptive Overview

The Cass Corridor project area encompasses 767.6 acres and approximately 755 cultural above-ground resources (building, structures, sites, and objects). The corridor is bound by West Grand Boulevard to the north, I-75 Fisher Freeway on the south, Woodward Avenue to the east, and the M-10/John C. Lodge Service Drive on the west. The project area can be subdivided into four sections: the north corridor, from West Grand Boulevard to Interstate I-94/Edsel Ford Freeway (often considered to be part of the New Center Area); the WSU area from I-94/Edsel Ford to West Forest Avenue; the central corridor from West Forest Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard; and the south corridor from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Interstate I-75 (Figure 3).

The north corridor extends from West Grand Boulevard to I-94/Edsel Ford and largely features commercial buildings and parking lots/structures.⁷ At the southwest corner of this section is the University Preparatory Academy and a residential enclave. Queen Anne, American Foursquare, and Romanesque styles are utilized on apartment buildings, duplexes, and houses. There are three current historic districts in this portion of the corridor along Second Avenue (see Figure 2). Many of the commercial buildings feature Modern movement, International style, industrial and commercial styles. They include the General Motors Research Laboratory/Argonaut Building, New Amsterdam Historic District, and United Sound Systems Recording Studios.

The WSU corridor is from I-94/Edsel Ford to West Warren Avenue is largely occupied by WSU. The walkable campus spans from West Warren to West Palmer Avenues and between Third and Cass Avenues. The campus features many examples of International style and Modern movement architecture. The campus continues east of Cass Avenue where buildings become a mix of commercial, educational, cultural, and residential buildings. Included in this portion of the study area is the main branch of the Detroit Public Library and the Detroit Historical Museum. The property west of Third Avenue/Anthony Wayne Drive is owned by WSU and includes a large parking structure, Saint Andrew's Memorial Episcopal Church, Manoogian Hall, the General Lectures building, and a new mixed-use residential building at West Kirby called the Anthony Wayne Drive Apartments.

⁷ Historically this portion of the study area has been called New Center neighborhood. For the purposes of this study, it has been incorporated into the traditional Cass Corridor area.

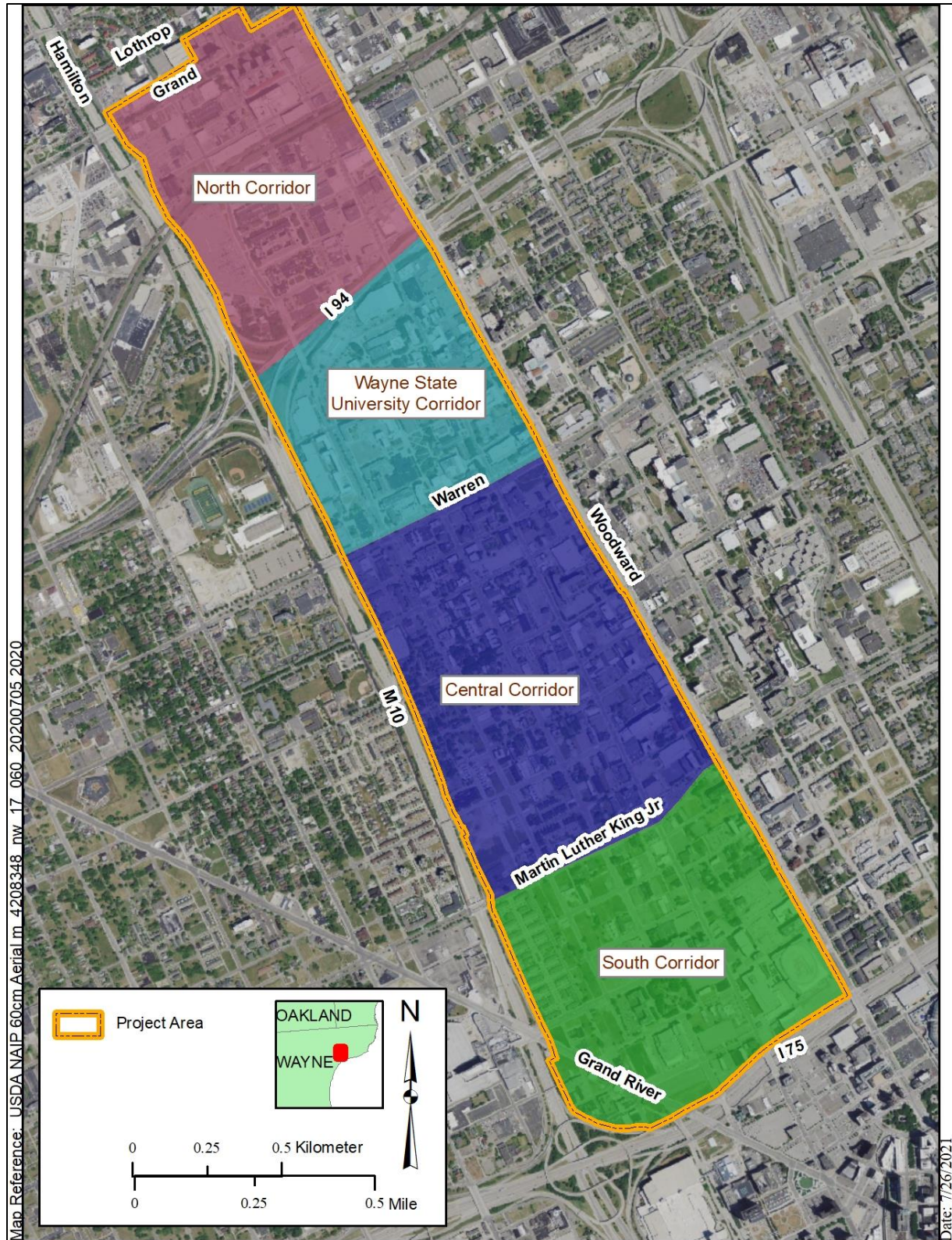


Figure 3. Four sections of the Cass Corridor Project Area

The central corridor portion of the Corridor spans from West Warren Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.⁸ In this section of the corridor, the built environment retains a greater degree of historic density than the area around the WSU campus. Commercial buildings and parking lots fill the eastern edge of the section along Woodward, Cass and onto Second Avenue. The western portion of the section is dominated by residential buildings. Several established historic districts encompass the center of this section including the Willis-Selden, West Canfield, and Warren-Prentis Historic Districts (see Figure 2). The housing includes a mix of new build large-scale apartment complexes, large apartment buildings, smaller flats, and single-family homes. The northwest corner of this section includes the WSU Industrial and Systems Engineering and the Biomedical Engineering buildings with an associated surface parking lot. Further south are two contemporary apartment complexes, University Apartments and Calumet Apartments. Many buildings along Third Avenue and Fourth Street south of Calumet Street have been demolished, leaving vacant lots in their place. Two-blocks of concentrated historic homes are located south of Calumet Street to West Alexandrine and between the M-10/John C. Lodge Service Drive and Fourth Street. These houses include Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne, and late Victorian-era houses. The vacant lots along Fourth Street from Alexandrine Street south to Selden Street are currently being developed into single family homes and are interspersed between the existing buildings. Several lots have been converted into City Sculpture Park at the southeast corner of West Alexandrine Street and John C. Lodge Service Drive. The southwest corner of this section is anchored by the former Jefferson Intermediate School on Selden Street and the M-10/John C. Lodge Service Drive. South of Jefferson School is a skateboard park with the James Couzens Elementary/Delta Preparatory Academy at the corner of Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard, and the M-10/John C. Lodge Service Drive.

The final section of the corridor extends from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard on the north to the I-75 Fisher Freeway on the south. This portion of the study area includes a mix of new construction, vacant lots, and commercial and residential buildings. Little Caesars Arena anchors the southeast corner of the corridor and has been a catalyst for major change in the area. In addition to the commercial buildings and parking structures/lots needed to support the influx of the Arena's clients, a large contemporary housing complex, Cornerstone Estates, fills the northwest corner of this section. Cass Park is located northwest of Little Caesars Arena and Cass Avenue. It is encompassed in the Cass Park Historic District and features several prominent Detroit buildings including the Masonic Temple and the Architects Building, as well as several commercial and apartment buildings (see Figure 2). The Cass-Henry Historic District is also present in this section of the corridor and is comprised of apartment buildings including Italian Renaissance Revival, Colonial Revival, and Georgian Revival styles. The Peterboro-Charlotte Historic District includes middle-and upper-class single-family homes, apartment houses, a hotel, and a clinic from the 1880s, which have a range of style including Stick style, Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, Second Empire, and Colonial Revival. The southwest corner of this section has a concentration of industrial buildings delineated by the I-75/Fisher Freeway to M-10/John C. Lodge Freeway interchange and

⁸ This portion of the study area is now known as the Midtown neighborhood.

Grand River Avenue. The new Cass Technical High School is located across from the industrial sector and backs to Cass Park.

Historical Context

Although the name “Cass Corridor” was not used for the area until the 1960s, for the ease of the reader, the name is used throughout this report to refer to the project area.

Thematic Narratives

The contexts relevant to the history of the Cass Corridor have been, for the ease of the reader, divided into five time periods. These include: The Early Years: 1701 to the 1870s; Streetcar Suburbs: 1870s to 1910s; Automobile Age: 1910s to 1930s; War Years: 1940s to 1950s; and Decades of Change: 1960s to today.

Within each of the time periods, and to the extent possible, the same overarching themes will be discussed, largely in the same general order, to create a consistent understanding of the built and cultural environments at the time. The themes discussed in this report include community development, transportation, government, medicine, commerce and industry, ethnic heritage, religion, education, social history, art and entertainment, and recreation. Additionally, architectural styles and forms will be examined relative to popularity and prevalence during each time period. Woven into each of the topics is information on the changes that occurred during the period. Information for significant individual buildings, architects, people, and organizations is also presented within the relevant time periods.

At the end of each time period, the report presents several paragraphs relating to the specific historic contexts relevant from the period. Historic contexts provide a way to determine if something is historically significant or just old. Patrick Andrus, formerly of the National Register of Historic Places, wrote that “historic contexts are those patterns or trends in history by which a specific occurrence, property, or site is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within history or prehistory is made clear.”⁹ Contexts could be the recognition of a trend, pattern, theme, or cultural affiliation.

In the following section, street addresses are included for each extant building; buildings that are no longer extant will also include the notation “(not extant).” For the ease of the reader, street addresses are given using the revised numbering system established in 1922.

⁹ Patrick Andrus, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division, 1997), 7.

Historical Narrative of Detroit and the Cass Corridor

The Early Years: 1701 to 1870s

During the precontact period, before the white settlers arrived from Europe, there were a variety of American Indian tribes that either lived or hunted in the Detroit area. These peoples were largely displaced by the arrival of white settlers. French settlers divided the land into ribbon farms that stretched from the river into the interior, largely eliminating the need for a number of roads, since the river served as their transportation way. As time passed and the city became part of the Northwest Territory, efforts were made to make it into a modern city. Detroit grew north from the Detroit River, using previously established routes (i.e., American Indians trails) and pathways defined by the ribbon farms. City growth was slow, with areas within the current Cass Corridor still considered wilderness in the second-half of the nineteenth century.

As the grid of public roads expanded, the population of the city was able to move farther away from the city center. Initially it was the wealthy that moved to the outskirts of the city, where they constructed large mansions, especially along Woodward and Cass Avenues. By the middle of the nineteenth century, additional methods of transportation were added to the city's infrastructure. The development of a horse-drawn street railroad system enabled people to move farther away from the city center, particularly if they lived on or near one of the streetcar routes.

Most of the residents of the Cass Corridor during this period were white, typically of western European origin. Additional ethnic groups were represented in the enslaved peoples, and included both American Indian and African Americans. There were free Blacks present in Detroit, but there is little evidence that any lived or worked in the Cass Corridor.

As the city population moved away from the downtown area, goods and services were required farther away from the river front. As the Cass Corridor was developed, and families began to move north, there was a growing demand for local churches and schools. Both churches and schools were constructed beginning in the south end of the corridor, and were often either expanded or relocated to new larger facilities a few years later. Like the residences of the period, there were a number of architectural styles favored for buildings of this period, including Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne.

This period is also associated with the Victorian era, including not only the architectural styles, but in the moral functions of society. As such, it was during this period that some of the earliest, charitable organizations were established. The earliest of these are no longer functioning, but the principles that they instilled in the Cass Corridor community continue to be practiced into the twenty-first century.

One of the earliest recreational spaces established in the Cass Corridor, Cass Park, was a gift to the city by Lewis Cass. The small well-manicured park was a popular gathering spot for area residents, and included benches, and a fountain as the focal point.

Community Development and Transportation

The popular belief is that Detroit was established by French settlers. However, there are thousands of years of history that precedes the arrival of the French. Based on archaeological investigations, Michigan was occupied throughout the precontact period. Generally defined as the period prior to the arrival of Europeans, the precontact period is typically discussed as incorporating the Paleoindian, Archaic, and Woodland periods. The postcontact period begins with the introduction of European explorers and colonizers in the seventeenth century.

Protohistoric (immediate postcontact period) settlement and land use of the Great Lakes by native peoples remains poorly documented as a result of the massive population dislocations that took place when Europeans first entered the region. Research suggests that approximately 100,000 people lived in five tribes in Michigan: the Potawatomi, Ottawa, Ojibwa/Chippewa, Miami, and Huron. The Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Ojibwa speak similar Algonquin languages and are known as the “People of the Three Fires.” Ethnohistoric narratives and early cartographic evidence suggest the region once was the home range of the linguistically allied Sauk, Fox, and Kickapoo tribes, although the data is not conclusive. Through the last quarter of the seventeenth century, indigenous use of the region seems to have been limited to seasonal procurement activities by Iroquois, Wendat-Huron, Ojibwa-Chippewa, and Ottawa groups.¹⁰

Historic documents and archeological evidence indicates that early in the seventeenth century, southern Michigan was inhabited by several different groups, including the Mascouten on the eastern side of the state near Lake Huron.¹¹ By the mid-seventeenth century, most of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan was abandoned as a result of inter-group conflict, with the majority of the American Indian population moving westward into Wisconsin.¹² As a result of Iroquois aggression during the Iroquois War (Beaver Wars), the Huron, Neutral, Potawatomi, and Tionontati, who lived in the western Lake Erie area along the Detroit River fled the area between 1652 and 1679.¹³ Following the Iroquois War, the Huron and Tionontati returned to the Detroit area. “Called Huron by the French, this refugee community became known to the British as the Wyandot, an adaptation of their name for their ancient alliance, usually spelled ‘Wendat’.”¹⁴ Today’s Wyandotte Nation traces their heritage to most of these people.

¹⁰ C. Callender, “Fox,” in *Northeast*, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15), 636; C. Callender, “Sauk,” in *Northeast*, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15), 648; C. Callender et al., “Kickapoo,” in *Northeast*, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15), 656.

¹¹ Charles E. Cleland, *Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan’s Native Americans* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); J. Feest and C. Feest, “Ottawa,” in *Northeast*, ed. by Bruce G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians (Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15); Mason, *Great Lakes Archaeology* (New York: Academic Press, 1981); George Irving Quimby, *Indian Life In The Upper Great Lakes: 11,000 B.C. to A.D. 1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); George I. Quimby, *Indian Culture and European Trade Goods* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966).

¹² Cleland, *Rites of Conquest*.

¹³ Helen H. Tanner, ed., *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 30–34.

¹⁴ Tanner, *Great Lakes Indian History*, 35

The French arrived in Detroit by 1701, where they established a settlement that included dividing the landscape into ribbon farms, or long narrow properties, known as Private Claims, all with frontage on the Detroit River and extending inland up to three miles. These farms passed from the original French owners through the hands of a variety of American landholders. The property that is most closely associated with the Cass Corridor included lands that were originally granted to Robert Navarre on May 1, 1747, with additional lands in the farm granted to Messers. Barrois, Godet, and St. Martin in 1750.¹⁵

Although the French occupation of Detroit ended in the 1760s, the land divisions were largely maintained by the British, who assumed jurisdiction over the area that included Detroit until the American government established the Northwest Territory in the 1790s.¹⁶ The earliest versions of Detroit consisted of a small village of wood homes constructed closely together. This proximity was a source of disaster in 1805, when a devastating fire destroyed all but one building in the city.¹⁷

Following the fire, the plan to rebuild the city was developed by Judge Augustus B. Woodward. The Judge was a member of the Governor and Judges Commission, created as a result of the fire to determine the best way forward. The Commission laid out two major areas, the Park Lots and the Ten-Thousand Acres Tract. The Park Lots lay on both sides of Woodward Avenue and extended north for almost two-and-one-half miles from Adams Avenue. The Ten-Thousand Acres Tract was separated from the rest of the land in the act because it had not yet been surveyed and would not be until several years after the Park Lots were laid out.¹⁸ The Park Lots were laid out in irregular parcels, in part due to the already established roadways of Woodward and Cass Avenues. The lots were sold and resold several times over the following years before finally being further subdivided into the general pattern present on the landscape today.

Just west of the Park Lots was the ribbon farm owned by William Macomb. This land was purchased by Lewis Cass on September 9, 1816.¹⁹ Cass was the second governor of the Michigan Territory and former mayor of Detroit.²⁰ The borders of Detroit original excluded the land later known as Cass Farm, although this issue was corrected on October 25, 1815, when the city limits were extended to include the Cass Farm for a distance of two miles from the river. This act was reversed less than five years later, when on March 30, 1820, the city limits again excluded Cass Farm.²¹

The city of Detroit developed around a series of natural corridors, based on former American Indian trails but refined following the inspiration of L'Efant's plans for Washington, D. C.²²

¹⁵ Silas Farmer, *History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan* (Detroit: Silas Farmer & Co., 1890), 35.

¹⁶ Florek and Tulas, *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 17.

¹⁷ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 32.

¹⁸ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 25.

¹⁹ Florek and Tulas, *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 18.

²⁰ Taubman College, *Detroit's Lower Cass: corridor, neighborhood, district?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1999), 75.

²¹ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 34.

²² Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1.

Crossing the north-south and radial roads were a series of secondary roads that were placed based on early French settlement and ribbon farm systems.

Over the next several decades, Cass, and later his heirs, platted and sold the property moving the city growth progressively north away from the river. The portion of Cass Farm north of Grand River Avenue was laid out in 1859, but the area was still considered rural.²³ In 1851, the Michigan State Fair was held at the corner of Grand River and Fourth Avenues, and the area known today as the Cass Corridor was “pure countryside.”²⁴ Over the next few years the fair site moved progressively farther north, first to the northwest corner of Woodward and Myrtle, and later near the corner of Woodward and what is today Martin Luther King Jr., Boulevard.²⁵

One of the reasons that the city continued to grow and expand to the north was the establishment of public transportation. By 1863, Detroit boasted a horse-drawn streetcar that extended for two and three-quarter miles along Woodward Avenue, terminating at Jefferson Avenue on the south.²⁶ The line was run by the Detroit City Railway, one of the largest and earliest firms in the city, with over nine miles of lines on Jefferson, Woodward, Gratiot, and Michigan Avenues. In the early 1870s a second line was established that also served the growing the Cass Corridor. The Central Market, Cass Avenue, and Third Street Railway extended for just over three miles on Cass and Third, reaching near the northern limits of the city.²⁷ The Central Market, Cass Avenue, and Third Street Railway was incorporated in 1873 and reorganized as the Cass Avenue Railway Company in 1877.²⁸

The population in the Cass Corridor started to increase as the community was opened for development, a street grid was established, and public transit became available. Expanding residential and commercial activities in the Cass Corridor also resulted in the establishment of churches and schools needed by the growing number of families. Parks and other recreational activities were also established. The earliest buildings constructed during this period tended to be modest wooden homes; this architecture is no longer extant.

Early homes of the wealthy were located in the vast, newly opened tracts of land on the west side of Woodward Avenue, far from the poorer sections of the city’s east side.²⁹ The new homes tended to be opulent and eclectic, with mansions often illustrated in media as if they were in a park-like rural setting, far from the rising social tensions of the inner city.

²³ Florek and Tulas, *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 18.

²⁴ David W. Hartman, *The Development of Detroit’s Cass Corridor: 1850-1975* (Detroit: Ethnic Studies Division, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University), 1.

²⁵ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 1.

²⁶ Kenneth Schramm, *Images of Rail: Detroit’s Street Railways* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 10–11.

²⁷ Schramm, *Detroit’s Street Railways*, 10–11.

²⁸ Graydon M. Meints, *Michigan Railroads and Railroad Companies* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992), 46.

²⁹ Conrad Kickert, *Dream City: Creation, Destruction, and Reinvention in Downtown Detroit* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2019), 25.

Architectural styles were driven by popular taste, with prevalent styles including in the early portion of the period being examples of the Federal, Georgian, Greek Revival, and Gothic Revival styles. The earliest surviving buildings within the Cass Corridor Project Area have been dated to the early 1870s and include residences, public buildings such as churches and schools, such as the Gothic Revival-style Emanuel Memorial Episcopal Church on Cass Avenue (not extant) and the first Clay School, 23 Pitcher Street (not extant) constructed in 1873 north of Cass Park.

Into the mid-late nineteenth century, architectural styles tended to illustrate a more opulent lifestyle, at least among many of those residing in the growing Cass Corridor area. Architectural styles from this time period included Italianate, Queen Anne, Second Empire and Richardsonian Romanesque. Several of the houses constructed in the Cass Corridor during this period are extant, including the Italianate-style Colin Fox House (1871) at 627 West Canfield Street (Figure 4), and the Queen Anne-style houses of Dr. Walter Watton (1871) at 639 West Canfield Street and the houses at 937 West Willis (1871) and 943 West Willis (1873) (Figure 5, next page).



Figure 4. Italianate-style Colin Fox House (1871), 627 West Canfield Street



Figure 5. Queen Anne-style houses at 937 West Willis (1870; left) and 943 West Willis (1873; right).

Architect-designed and built buildings did not become popular until the later nineteenth century when architecture as a profession was better established. Early residents of the area relied on local builders to design and construct their homes. Builders of note include Putnam and Moore known for Colonial Revival-style houses, C. W. Shipley, and J. E. Boomer, and Mouet and Currie, a stonemason and carpenter who also built later into the nineteenth century.³⁰

The development that occurred in the Cass Corridor during this period established many features that continue to define the area several centuries later. Road placements, lot sizes, open park areas, the extant commercial and public buildings, and surviving mansions of the wealthy and major influencers continue to define the physical character of the Cass Corridor.

Government

Michigan had five territorial governors prior to becoming a state in 1837. Lewis Cass held the position longest, serving from October 29, 1813, to August 5, 1831.³¹ Following his term as territorial governor, Cass served as Secretary of War, then U.S. Minister to France. After failing to gain the Democratic presidential nomination in 1844 and 1845, Cass became a U.S. Senator from Michigan, where he served until he was nominated for president in 1848. His bid for the presidency was unsuccessful, so Cass continued to serve as a Michigan senator

³⁰ Griner, Historic and Architectural Resources of the Cass Farm Survey Area National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, on file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.

³¹ S. B. McCracken, *The State of Michigan: Embracing Sketches of its History, Position, Resources and Industries* (Lansing, MI: W. S. George & Co., 1876), 9.

until 1856, following which he was appointed by President Buchanan as Secretary of State in 1857.³²

Cass' long term as Michigan's territorial governor - the longest in territorial tenure in the United States – was attributed to a variety of factors, including his ability to keep his “political fences well mended through frequent trips to Washington, the number of American Indian treaties he negotiated, and by aggressively promoting settlement in the region.”³³

During his long administration as Territorial Governor, Cass assisted in establishing the foundations for a number of issues, including the expansion of popular government and educational opportunities of the territory's citizens.³⁴ Cass Avenue, which is partially located on what was later known as the Cass Farm, is named in honor of Lewis Cass.

One of the earliest and most important services established during this period in Detroit was the Detroit volunteer fire department, which was established in 1825. At this time, the first fire ordinance was passed, and the City obtained its first fire engine. This was a major step forward in the effort to control fires compared to the former bucket brigades that had been the only means to fight the menace.³⁵ It was not until 1860, when steam engines and professional firefighters were in use, that the City officially assumed control of the volunteer operation. By 1867, Michigan legislature passed an act that formed a four-man fire commission. At the same time, a fire alarm system went into use, greatly increasing the efficiency of the fire department.³⁶

Ethnic Heritage

Silas Farmer reports that there was the practice of enslavement present in Detroit almost from its settlement.³⁷ By 1760, the settlement included both African and American Indian enslaved persons. The American Indian enslaved people were largely from the Pawnee tribe, but others were present from the Osage, Choctaw, and other western tribes who had been captured in battle and subsequently sold to the French.³⁸

With the establishment of the Northwest Territory Ordinance, ownership of enslaved people was prohibited. However, both the French and British settlers enslaved people and, under treaty agreements with the United States, were able to retain their bondage. The total number of enslaved people in Detroit was relatively small, with many held by prominent citizens as household “servants,” including Governor Cass.³⁹

³² United States Department of State, “Biographies of the Secretaries of State: Lewis Cass (1782-1866),” accessed January 19, 2021, <https://history.state.gov/departments/history/people/cass-lewis>.

³³ Willard Carl Klunder, *The Seeds of Popular Sovereignty: Governor Lewis Cass and Michigan Territory*, *Michigan Historical Review* v. 17, Spring 1991:66.

³⁴ Klunder, *The Seeds of Popular Sovereignty*, 66.

³⁵ Deborah M. Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor*, 73.

³⁶ Deborah M. Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor*, 74.

³⁷ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 344.

³⁸ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 344.

³⁹ Willard Carl Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation* (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1996), 46.

There was a tremendous influx of new residents to Detroit from Europe during the 1840s and 1850s. So great was the number of immigrants that tensions soon rose between the different races and ethnicities forced into a relatively small area. These tensions were illustrated by more than twenty major and minor riots in the city between 1849 and 1863.⁴⁰ By far, the largest number of residents in the Cass Corridor area were white, and largely of western European descent.

Religion

As population of the Cass Corridor expanded, so did the number of churches present. The earliest churches in the project area were located in the southern portion of the Cass Corridor, with additional buildings added as the population grew and the city expanded to the north. In some cases, church buildings were constructed along Woodward or Cass Avenues farther north than the population had reached in anticipation of attracting new members while taking advantage of easy transportation along the main thoroughfares of the area. A number of the early church congregations expanded so much that over a relatively short time, some of the early buildings had to be expanded, or new facilities constructed to accommodate the ever-growing congregations.

The number of churches present also indicated a lot about the residents of the area. For example, in some cases the ethnic background of the area can be determined by the church denominations. Early churches tended to represent western European populations, including Congregational and Episcopal congregations. One source defined Congregational churches as having congregations that could trace their history back to non-conforming Protestants, which were organized in opposition to the Church of England.⁴¹ This contrasts with the Episcopal church, which also has its roots in England and the British Isles but is the American version of the Church of England.⁴²

One of the first churches in the area was the Second Congregational Church, later known as Woodward Avenue Church (not extant).⁴³ The original society for the church was established in 1850 and held their meetings in various locations around town until the effort was abandoned. A later, successful effort to establish the church began in 1866, when a group of congregants broke away from the First Church.⁴⁴ In July 1866, the congregation purchased a lot near the corner of Woodward Avenue and Sibley Street, where they constructed a chapel at the rear of the lot. Four years later, with the congregation reaching 197 members, the church purchased the corner lot and set about construction of a new building that would be large enough to seat twelve-hundred worshipers. The original chapel was sold in 1874 to the

⁴⁰ Kickert, *Dream City*, 25.

⁴¹ Daniel T. Jenkins, "Congregationalism," Britannica.com, accessed April 28, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Congregationalism>.

⁴² Editors of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Episcopal Church in the United States of America," accessed April 28, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Episcopal-Church-in-the-United-States-of-America>.

⁴³ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 614; Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v. 1 (Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1884), 4.

⁴⁴ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 614.

African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which was the same year the new church was dedicated.⁴⁵

The second church constructed in the Cass Corridor, the Emanuel Memorial Episcopal Church at 80 West Alexandrine Street, was founded in 1872. After holding services in a variety of locations, the Gothic Revival style church was constructed in 1875. The new church cost \$4,035 to construct, an amount that was donated in full by Mrs. L. R. Medbury as a memorial to her husband Samuel Medbury.⁴⁶ In 1877, the church purchased two large lots on the north side of Alexandrine between Cass and Woodward Avenues, and the Gothic Revival church was relocated to the new site. After some alterations and repairs, the relocated church seated six hundred worshippers. In 1885, the church was again enlarged to accommodate seven hundred and fifty persons (Figure 6).

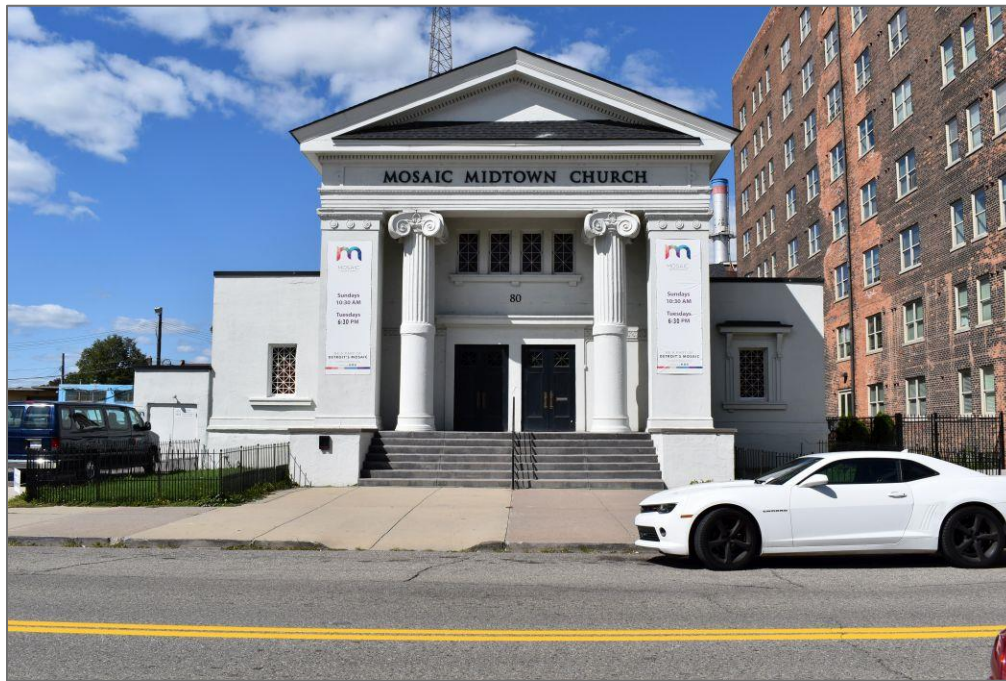


Figure 6. Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church (1877, 1885), now home of the Mosaic Midtown Church, 80 West Alexandrine Street

The Westminster Presbyterian Church was organized with thirty-one members in October 1857.⁴⁷ The congregation worshiped in several locations before constructing their first building on the east side of Washington Avenue in 1861. The brick church was sold in March 1873 to St. Aloysius Catholic Church and a large brick church was constructed for the congregation at the rear of a lot at the corner of Woodward Avenue and Parsons Street (not extant). The new building could seat 350 persons.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 615.

⁴⁶ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 587.

⁴⁷ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 599.

⁴⁸ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 600.

Education

By the mid-nineteenth century, as families made their home in the Cass Corridor area, the need for public schools grew. The first known school in the Cass Corridor area was the Cass Union School at 2301 Second Street, constructed in 1860 (not extant). The school was originally known as the Fifth Ward School, with the name being changed just a year after it opened. The building experienced a devastating fire in 1909, after which the ruins were demolished.⁴⁹

Additional schools were needed as the population expanded to north in the Cass Corridor area, and the Willis Avenue School at 94 West Willis Street (not extant) was constructed. The new school's name was changed to the Washington Irving School in 1871.⁵⁰

The Clay School at 23 Pitcher Street (now 453 Martin Luther King Jr., Boulevard), was constructed in 1873, north of Cass Park.⁵¹ The frame structure was named in honor of Henry Clay, former Secretary of State under President John Quincy Adams.⁵² This building only survived a few years before the population growth in the area required the construction of a new building at the same site.

By 1870, there had been three new schools constructed in the Cass Corridor, with the northern-most one located on West Willis Avenue, in the southern third of the current Cass Corridor area.

Social History

Many of the residents of Detroit, like other locations in the United States, had a tradition of charitable giving. This may have been associated with religion, such as the Jewish tradition of Tzedakah (the ethical requirement of charity), or based on the morals of the population due to the principles and standards of the Victorian era. In Detroit, there were a number of organizations focused on either providing social activities or benefiting others less fortunate. These organizations could function city-wide or work with residents of a certain area, depending on the individual mission. One charitable organization that was located within the Cass Corridor was the Ladies Christian Union. The group was organized in 1860, and the following year approached the Michigan House of Representatives Committee on Education to request the establishment of a reform school for girls.⁵³ As a result of the request, the Committee on Education assigned the Ways and Means Committee the task of studying the matter and determining if sufficient provisions could be identified to enable opening such a school. The ladies established their first house on Lafayette Avenue between Griswold and Shelby Streets, near downtown Detroit, in 1860.⁵⁴ Over the next few years the Ladies

⁴⁹ Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis: Detroit Public Schools 1942-2015*, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://landgrid.com/reports/schools#peak>

⁵⁰ Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

⁵¹ Armando Delicato and Elias Khalil, *Images of America: Detroit's Cass Corridor* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), 29.

⁵² Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 746; Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

⁵³ Michigan Legislature House of Representatives (MHR), Documents Accompanying the Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan at the Biennial of 1861 (Lansing: Hosmer & Kerr, 1861), No. 8-1.

⁵⁴ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 659.

Christian Union relocated their home several times before finally constructing a spacious building on the south side of Warren Avenue west of Woodward Avenue in 1874 (no longer extant).⁵⁵ The new building occupied eight lots that were purchased in 1868 for \$3,600. The building was constructed shortly afterward for \$30,500.⁵⁶ The Ladies Christian Union was one of the first charitable organizations to locate in the Cass Corridor, but was far from the last.

Recreation

By 1859, the original Lewis Cass Farm was platted, and the following year Cass offered a gift of a small parcel of land to establish a park. The park, which contained less than five acres of land, was bounded by Second, Ledyard, and Bagg (later Temple) Streets. Plans for the park called for it to be “bounded by 40 foot carriageways, with a fountain, proud curved walks, and ample shrubs and trees.”⁵⁷ The small size of the park made some in the city quite upset, as is evident in the statement made by William Hale, an alderman, in his remarks before City Council on May 8, 1860:

It [Cass Park] contains less than four acres of ground which is a space altogether too limited to make it a matter of much concern to the public. It is, in fact, but a speck upon the map of the city. Improve it as we may, it will soon cease to be an object of interest to any, except to the future residents of the small portion of the Cass Farm immediately surrounding it.⁵⁸

Initially the gift of the park was not acted upon by the city, but eventually it was accepted and the small park was established (Figure 7, next page).

⁵⁵ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 660.

⁵⁶ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 660.

⁵⁷ Silas Farmer, *All About Detroit* (Detroit: Silas Farmer & Co., 1899), 52; Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 2.

⁵⁸ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 2.



Figure 7. Cass Park, photograph ca. 1899

Source: Detroit Publishing Company, Library of Congress

Streetcar Suburb: 1870s to 1910s

By the final decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century Cass Corridor was well developed, and the population was booming. The street grid was well established and growth finally reached the northern end of the Cass Corridor project area. The area continued to include a number of large homes for the city's wealthy residents, but by the end of the period, there was a growing number of apartment buildings needed to accommodate the expanding population. Additionally, along with the area's residential development, there was a growing number of commercial buildings along the major transportation corridors, and industrial growth. The industrial properties tended to be located in the northern portion of the corridor or in the southwest section, not far from where Grand River is located.

The iconic large mansions that were the focus of many developers in the previous period, continued to be constructed; however, there were a growing number of modest houses and a growing number of apartment buildings constructed to further increase the population and building density of the corridor. Victorian era architectural styles continued to prevail early in the period, with transitions to more modest styles and forms, such as Colonial Revival, during the later portion of the period.

Among the visible aspects of city government in the Cass Corridor area was the growth of the fire department, with new fire houses constructed in the corridor. One new fire house was

located near the south end of the corridor, and a second facility was added in the north section. Throughout the Cass Corridor, a new fire alarm system was installed, facilitating more effective firefighting, and giving the area residents and business owners a part in protecting their own properties.

Like the earlier period in the Cass Corridor, additional churches and religions were introduced to the residents of the corridor. Congregation sizes continued to grow, particularly in areas that experienced new or expanded growth, resulting in new or expanded buildings to meet the needs. The growing population was also an issue for public education. In some cases, earlier schools were enlarged. However, enlarging schools in the south end of the corridor would not solve the issues in areas where new residences were located, necessitating the construction of several new schools during this period, including the Central High School near the center of the Cass Corridor.

Several new charitable organizations were established in the Cass Corridor during this period, including the Home of the Friendless and Thompson Home for Old Ladies, both within a block of the corner of Warren and Cass Avenues. The social history of the area is not limited to charitable works, but also included several fraternal organizations, including the Masons of the Masonic Lodge.

There were a variety of entertainment and recreational activities available to area residents during this period. One of the largest facilities was the Detroit Athletic Club, whose clubhouse and grounds occupied a large lot on Woodward Avenue. The club members enjoyed a variety of pass times at the club, which included a gymnasium, bowling alley, swimming pool, billiard hall, and roof-top grand stand overlooking the adjacent oval bicycle race track and club grounds.

Community Development and Transportation

While there had been a horse-drawn streetcar route on Woodward Avenue, Cass Avenue, and Third Street since the 1860s, in the 1880s the potential for improvement came when to electric streetcars were introduced in Detroit. The Detroit Electric Railway introduced electric streetcars to the city in 1874, but the first car operated on Dix Avenue, distant from the Cass Corridor area.⁵⁹ In 1886 the city's second electric street railway company, the Highland Park Railway, began operations. This line ran on Woodward Avenue terminating at the Bay City Crossing (near present day Baltimore Street/Milwaukee Junction) in the north end of the Cass Corridor project area. The end of the Highland Park Railway line also coincided with the terminus of the Detroit City Railway horsecar. Unlike other streetcar lines, the Detroit City Railway ran on a slotted third rail rather than having overhead wires, but was eventually converted to a regular trolley system.⁶⁰

In 1882, five years after it was formed, the Cass Avenue Railway Company was acquired by the Detroit City Railway.⁶¹ The railroad mergers were frequent during the last decade of the nineteenth century, and the Detroit City Railway did not escape this phenomenon. In 1890, the

⁵⁹ Schramm, *Detroit's Street Railways*, 20.

⁶⁰ Schramm, *Detroit's Street Railways*, 20.

⁶¹ Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 46.

railway was conveyed to the Detroit Street Railway.⁶² The Detroit Street Railway was, in turn, sold to the Detroit Citizens' Street Railway in September 1891.⁶³ The Detroit Citizens' Street Railway introduced electric cars in 1893, when they purchased a car from Pullman Company.⁶⁴

In the 1890s, the Detroit Street Railway also acquired the Grand River Railway, the Detroit Electric Railway, and the Fort Wayne & Belle Isle before being acquired by the Detroit United Railway on December 31, 1900.⁶⁵

By the 1880s, Detroit's growth had expanded north along Woodward Avenue and the streets flanking it. Initially businesses made their way north along Woodward followed by residential development. By 1887, a major effort was undertaken to sell a huge number of lots on Woodward and the adjoining areas by Messrs. Hung and Leggett, who platted much of the area. In an advertisement from November 1887, the firm noted that they would sell in public auction four hundred and ninety lots in the area. The full-page notice described the area as

...there is not a section in the city that can equal the northern end in elegance of buildings and in desirability for residence. It is a section freer from unsightly structure, disorderly houses, and everything the founder of a home most desires to avoid. It is a region of artistic and Christian homes, of churches, schools, good manners, good morals, and good surroundings. In short, it is that part of the city where men of wealth seek the sites for beautiful homes, and where men of average means can find property within the limits of their income, and where they can build in the assurance that their neighbors will all be desirable, that surrounding property will be improved by the erection of fine houses, and that values steadily increase.⁶⁶

In addition to the growth of developed areas, amenities were also moving northward during the early part of the Streetcar period. As part of the effort to expand streetlight capabilities, an electric company erected a tower in Cass Park in 1882 to exhibit the efficiency of the arc light compared to the earlier gas and naphtha lamps (Figure 8, next page).⁶⁷

⁶² Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 63.

⁶³ Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 68.

⁶⁴ Schramm, *Detroit's Street Railways*, 25.

⁶⁵ Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 62.

⁶⁶ "Investors!" Advertisement, *Detroit Free Press*, November 9, 1887, 3.

⁶⁷ George B. Catlin, *The Story of Detroit* (Detroit: The Detroit News, 1926), 561.



Figure 8. Looking south on Woodward Avenue from Peterboro, photograph ca. 1880

Source: Detroit Publishing Company, Library of Congress

By the 1890s, the city borders had expanded north to reach Grand Boulevard, including what is now the entirety of the Cass Corridor.⁶⁸ By this time, the area had also gained the nickname of ‘Piety Hill.’ Many believe the nickname was due to the large number of churches in the area, but at least one scholar attributed the name to its “occupation by the well-to-do citizens who represented the moral and religious aspects of the city.”⁶⁹ It may have been the status of the residents of the area, or simply a coincidence given the importance of the transportation routes in the Cass Corridor, but in 1892 there were only four asphalt paved roads in Detroit, two of which were Cass and Second Avenues.⁷⁰

During this period houses constructed in the Cass Corridor area tended to be large, single-family homes for the well-to-do. Examples of these residences, representing Victorian-era styles such as Italianate, Queen Anne, and Richardson Romanesque, were among the favored designs at the time. Most of the large houses constructed during the period are found either along a major throughfare, including Woodward and Cass Avenues, or are in the southern section of the Cass Corridor, illustrating the limits of the city at the time. Among the residences constructed during this period were the Campbell Symington House (1882) at 3977 Second Avenue, which was designed by architects Donaldson and Meijer.⁷¹ Another distinctive mansion from the time was the David Whitney, Jr., House (1891–1894) at 4421 Woodward Avenue, which was designed by architect Gordon W. Lloyd, and was said to be “an American Palace enjoying the distinction of being the most pretentious modern home in

⁶⁸ Arthur M. Woodford, *This is Detroit, 1701-2001* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001), 88.

⁶⁹ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 3.

⁷⁰ Catlin, *The Story of Detroit*, 593.

⁷¹ HDAB, Proposed Campbell Symington House Historic District: Final Report, December 18, 1978.

the state and one of the most elaborate houses in the west”⁷²

More modest residences which remain extant from the period include the Queen Anne style Samuel Smith House (1889) at 5035 Woodward Avenue, designed by the firm of James S. Rogers and Walter MacFarlane, and the Robert H. Brown House (1891) at 3975 Cass Avenue, located at the southwest corner of Cass Avenue and West Alexandrine Street, which had a major addition in the 1930s.⁷³ The original portion of the building was designed by well-known Detroit architect Almon Clothier Varney. Other houses owned by prominent business men are located at 3760 Second Street and 3752 Second Street (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Joseph A. Cooper House (ca. 1878; left), 3760 Second Street and Robert Smith House (1880; right), 3752 Second Street

Apartment buildings began to make their way into the city during this period, with the first Detroit apartment buildings constructed in the 1880s. The demand for large apartment buildings was, however, slow to grow. Detroit did not have the density issues of Chicago or New York, so the urgent need to double up on space was absent.⁷⁴ Additionally, the perceived lower living conditions in tenement buildings did not bolster desire for middle- and upper-class families to live in shared dwellings. In this void of interest, developers found an alternative market in aspirational middle-class families, who either had grown children or no children, and viewed apartments as a convenient alternative to home ownership. For them,

⁷² *Detroit Free Press*, February 4, 1894; November 29, 1900; December 2, 1900.

⁷³ Klug, University-Cultural Center Phase I MRA, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1986, 57; HDAB, Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District: Final Report, March 11, 1992.

⁷⁴ The building permit for the Burnstine Flats was taken out on February 5, 1883, by architect Robert S. Brookes. Detroit Fire Marshal permits (microfilm BHC 960), Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

apartments provided fashionable houses in fashionable neighborhoods without maintenance responsibilities since those would be tended to by the landlord.⁷⁵

An anomaly to the majority of apartment buildings constructed in Detroit during the late nineteenth century is the Verona Flats (1884–1896) at 92–100 West Ferry. The building, which included only sixteen luxury suites, was marketed to upper class residents. Perhaps part of its appeal, besides the three different entrances to ensure privacy of its tenants, was the fact that the building was the work of well-known architects, William G. Malcomson and William E. Higginbotham. (Figure 10)⁷⁶



Figure 10. The main entrance to the Verona Flats (1884–1896), 92–100 West Ferry

In the first decade of the twentieth century the apartment building was gaining acceptance, and popularity, particularly for the working classes. These smaller buildings, which are comprised of two-, three-, or four-units, were accessed through separate entrances and functioned as stacked single units.⁷⁷ They reflected a variety of architectural styles including,

⁷⁵ “Realty and Building: What the Future Promises for Apartment Houses,” *Detroit Free Press*, January 19, 1896, 23.

⁷⁶ Ruth E. Mills and Austin, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 1892–1970*, On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2017, E-7.

⁷⁷ Mills and Austin, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit*, E-6.

Federal Revival,⁷⁸ Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and Romanesque Revival. Architectural detail was often limited to the façade, particularly around the front doors.

Among the early apartment buildings are two located within the Cass Davenport Historic District, which is bounded by Davenport, the alley east of Cass, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Cass Avenue, and the alley west of Cass Avenue. Here, the two earliest apartment buildings, the Chesterfield (1911) at 3566 Cass Avenue (Figure 11), and the Davenport (1905) at 149 Davenport Street (Figure 12, next page), are just three or four stories high, but still substantially larger than the single-family homes.⁷⁹



Figure 11. Chesterfield Apartments (1911), 3566 Cass Avenue

The level of growth in the Cass Corridor helped the adjacent Woodward Avenue supplant Jefferson Avenue as the primary throughfare in the city.⁸⁰ By the closing decade of the nineteenth century, more and more commercial buildings were being constructed along Woodward Avenue. Blocks of stores were interspersed with dwellings and churches as far

⁷⁸ A number of architecture books simply call this style Federal, but given that true Federal Style buildings were constructed between 1790 and 1840, by the time these buildings were built in Detroit they were a revival of the style (see Gordon, *How to Complete the Ohio Inventory Form* [Columbus, Ohio: Ohio Historic Preservation Office and Ohio Historical Society, 1992]:78 or McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* [New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2013]:216).

⁷⁹ Gretchen Griner, Cass-Davenport Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997, 7-1, 2.

⁸⁰ HDAB, Proposed Cass Henry Historic District Final Report, February 8, 2018.

Sibley Street.⁸¹ In the early years of the twentieth century, the automobile industry also began to impact the development of the area, with dealerships present by the end of the era.



Figure 12. Davenport Apartments (1905), 149 Davenport Street

Government

On August 18, 1876, the *Detroit Free Press* noted that the new fire engine house on Alexandrine Avenue, near the southwest corner of Cass Avenue, was progressing finely. Engine House No. 5 was reported to have the second story complete and the tower timbers in position.⁸² In December of the same year, a second item in the *Detroit Free Press* indicated that a new chemical engine would be stationed at the new Alexandrine Avenue house.⁸³ The first time the engine house was illustrated on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps was in 1897, when the building included a two-story brick building with an attached seventy-foot tall frame hose tower on the west side of the building.⁸⁴

There was a second fire house in the Cass Corridor area by 1897. Fire Engine Company No. 17, which also included Hook and Ladder Company No. 7, was located in a two-and-one-half story brick building at the northwest corner of Cass Avenue and Amsterdam Street.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v. 4 (Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1897), 24.

⁸² Sayings and Doings, *Detroit Free Press*, August 18, 1876, 1.

⁸³ "Saturday's Fires," *Detroit Free Press*, December 3, 1876, 1.

⁸⁴ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, v. 6, 1897, 75.

⁸⁵ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, v. 6, 1897, 22.

To support the fire houses, the Fire Department installed a number of fire alarms in 1880. These alarms were unlocked by a key placed in the nearest and most convenient store or house, and with each member of the police force.⁸⁶ The devices meant that anyone in the city could sound an alarm in the event of a fire. Alarm locations were selected based on the city population and density, growing from sixty in 1870 to one hundred eighty-eight in 1886.⁸⁷ Within the Cass Corridor area in 1880 there were alarm boxes located at: Woodward Avenue and High Street (No. 213), Woodward Avenue and Peterboro Street (No. 214), Woodward and Willis Avenues (No. 215), Woodward and Putnam avenues (No. 217), Woodward and Antoinette Avenues (No. 218), Engine House No. 5 (No. 234), and Cass Avenue and Sibley Street (No. 243).⁸⁸

Commerce and Industry

By the end of the nineteenth century and into the first decade of the twentieth century, the largely residential character of the Cass Corridor began to shift, particularly along some of the major transportation routes. In 1884, the lots fronting on Woodward Avenue from High Street on the south to Alexandrine Avenue on the north were almost entirely dedicated to stores or services, including bakeries, drug stores, and plumbing shops.⁸⁹ Interestingly, Sanborn maps from the period reveal that a number of the storefronts also included the notation “vac” or vacant suggesting they were newly under construction at the time. By 1897, commercial enterprises had reached the corner of Woodward Avenue and West Grand Boulevard but was largely limited to the area north of Amsterdam and the railroad crossing, due to the industrial section immediately adjacent to the railroad.⁹⁰ This northern portion of Woodward also included a variety of industrial complexes, and, at the southwest corner of Amsterdam and Woodward, the Citizens Street Railway Car Barn.⁹¹

While small commercial enterprises continued to slowly be added to Woodward Avenue, the east portion of the Milwaukee Junction area (east of Woodward Avenue and surrounding the railroad lines) was well on its way to becoming an early hub of production for the automobile industry after 1905. West of Woodward Avenue, there was also a clear and growing industrial presence. Included in these early enterprises was the Caille Brothers Company (ca. 1900) at 6200 Second Avenue, which was owned by Arthur and Adolph Caille. Arthur Caille invented the cash conveyor system for stores, penny slot machines, and marine and small motor parts. Arthur Caille also went on to own a number of motion picture theaters, including Detroit’s first, the Casino on Monroe Avenue, located outside the Cass Corridor.⁹²

Another major industrial enterprise in the Cass Corridor was the American Electrical Heater Company (1908) at 6100 Cass Avenue. The firm manufactured American Beauty electrical

⁸⁶ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 517.

⁸⁷ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 517.

⁸⁸ The Fire Department, *Detroit Free Press*, February 22, 1880, 6.

⁸⁹ Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v.1 (Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1884), 4–5.

⁹⁰ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, v. 6, 1897, 22, 23.

⁹¹ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, v. 6, 1897, 19.

⁹² Dolkowski, *New Amsterdam Historic District*, 8-16.

heating devices. The plant was said to be the most completely equipped such manufacturing facility in the world.⁹³

Not far from the American Electrical Heater Company was the Safety Furnace Pipe Company (1910) at 5960 Second Avenue. Safety Furnace Pipe was established by brothers Thomas and George Bradbeer in 1886, moving to their Second Avenue site in 1910. The company manufactured hot-air pipes that were installed so a current of cold air was consistently passed between the hot pipe and adjacent wood components of a building, such as floor joists. These pipes provide a safe method of moving heat through an area and reducing the risk of fire.⁹⁴

Religion

As the population of Detroit grew and spread north, new churches were established. The fashionable area of Cass Avenue was one such area that experienced both growth in population and the number of churches. One of the churches established in 1880 was the Cass Avenue Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church.⁹⁵ In May 1881, David Preston purchased two lots at the intersection of Cass and Selden Avenues, the future site of the small church designed by the firm of Mason and Rice.⁹⁶ The 1883 chapel fronted on Selden and had red brick walls and steep roofs pierced by ornamental chimneys and ornamentation inspired by Tudor architecture. The small chapel soon proved too small to meet the needs of the growing congregation, and between 1891 and 1892 the chapel was incorporated into a new Romanesque style church designed by Malcomson and Higginbotham.⁹⁷

In the early 1880s, the brick Westminster Presbyterian Church at the corner of Woodward Avenue and Parsons Street was enlarged. The updated building increased capacity to eight hundred sixty worshipers. The building once again underwent renovations during the summer and fall of 1887, with improvements made to the audience room and the construction of a tower. The building reopened for services on November 6 of that year.⁹⁸

Just a few blocks north of the Westminster Presbyterian Church was the Emanuel Memorial Church. Originally constructed at 80 West Alexandrine in 1877, in 1885 the church was enlarged to better accommodate its growing congregation. The updated facility could seat seven hundred fifty people.⁹⁹ By the mid-1890s, the church was again remodeled, and add a Classical Revival façade to the original Carpenter Gothic building.¹⁰⁰

Episcopalians living in the neighborhood around the intersection of Fourth Street and Putnam Street organized a Sunday school class in a small cottage in the area. From this school, a new mission church was established, the twentieth such mission in Detroit since the first

⁹³ Lauren Dolkowski, New Amsterdam Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2001, 8–9.

⁹⁴ Dolkowski, New Amsterdam Historic District, 8–12.

⁹⁵ HDAB, Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report, April 13, 1987, 1.

⁹⁶ HDAB, Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report, April 13, 1987, 1.

⁹⁷ HDAB, Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report, April 13, 1987, 2.

⁹⁸ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 600.

⁹⁹ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 588.

¹⁰⁰ Gretchen Griner, Willis-Selden Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory Form. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.

Episcopalian church was established in 1824.¹⁰¹ The new mission church, named for Saint Andrew, constructed a frame building in 1886, with the first service held in the building on January 17.¹⁰² In the early 1890s, the Boston firm of Cram, Wentworth & Goodhue was commissioned to design a new church for Saint Andrew's Memorial Episcopal Church. The drawings were submitted to the congregants about 1894, and the cornerstone laid in either 1898 or 1900.¹⁰³ Due to a lack of funding, it was not until November 1902, that the new church was completed and dedicated. The Bedford limestone church with a buttressed square tower and includes entrance porches on both the Putnam Street and Fourth Street elevations. In 1906 the church suffered a devastating fire that required the reconstruction of the building, which was done in consultation with Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson.¹⁰⁴ The reconstructed building altered a number of the original features of the building such as the loss of the tower and a clerestory window present in the original building (Figure 13). Immediately west of the church the congregation erected a rectory in 1887.¹⁰⁵



Figure 13. Saint Andrew's Memorial Episcopal Church (1902, 1912), 5105 Anthony Wayne Drive

¹⁰¹ Thomas Klug, Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center: Partial Inventory – Historic and Architectural Resources in Phase II Project Area. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1985, 45.

¹⁰² Klug, Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center, 46.

¹⁰³ Klug, Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center, 43.

¹⁰⁴ Klug, Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center, 44.

¹⁰⁵ Klug, Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center, 45.

Education

Population growth in the area resulted in a growing number of children that needed to attend the public schools. To address the expanding student population, the Detroit Public schools opted to reconstruct two of their buildings in the Cass Corridor area. Although not even twenty years old, the old Willis Street/Washington Irving School was replaced with a new building at the same site in 1882.¹⁰⁶ The old frame Clay School also met the same fate in 1888 (Figure 14). The Detroit Board of Education funded the relocation of the original school from the site to a new location outside the Cass Corridor, and the construction of the new brick building designed by J. B. Tarleton on the original school site.¹⁰⁷ Tarleton was originally employed as a draughtsman for Mortimer L. Smith from 1880 to 1884. Beginning in 1884 and through 1890, Tarleton was the architect for the Detroit Board of Education. During this time, Tarleton designed ten schools in the city, with only the Clay School surviving at the end of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁸ The new Clay School at 453 Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard, was designed to serve as a neighborhood school, and functioned as an elementary school until the early 1920s.¹⁰⁹



Figure 14. Clay School (1882), photograph from 1982

Source: Brian Conway, The Clay School NRHP Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1982.

¹⁰⁶ Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

¹⁰⁷ Brian Conway, The Clay School National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1982, 8-1.

¹⁰⁸ Conway, The Clay School, 8-1.

¹⁰⁹ Conway, The Clay School, 8-1.

In the mid-1890s, work was begun on a new high school, to be located at the corner of Cass Avenue and Warren Avenue. Announcements of work being completed on Central High School appeared in the local newspapers frequently in early 1895, with one on January 4, seeking a firm to supply “all the labor and materials for the plumbing, gas-fitting, and sewerage” of the new building.¹¹⁰ In May 1895, the cornerstone for the new school was placed in a gathering that included the mayor, board of education, teachers, and 1,500 pupils of the school.¹¹¹ The crowd arrived at the scene taking streetcars from the Biddle House, where temporary classes had been held while awaiting the completion of the new high school. In September 1896, right on schedule, the new school was opened the first time for classes (Figure 15). The architects, Malcomson and Higgenbotham, were credited with designing a fantastic building, featuring a “marvelously well fashioned” exterior and an interior with marble walls.¹¹² The school included a large library, auditorium, and laboratories, in addition to the classrooms and office space needed for a modern school. In spite of the large scale of the school, and its ability to house 1,500 students when it opened, by 1908 the school was stretched to its limits as a result of the continued growth of the student population and the first addition was made to the school.¹¹³



Figure 15. Central High School (1895–1896), photograph ca. 1915

Source: Detroit Publishing Company, Library of Congress

¹¹⁰ Office of the Board of Education, Advertisement, *Detroit Free Press*, January 4, 1895, 2.

¹¹¹ Well and Truly Laid, *Detroit Free Press*, May 14, 1895, 1.

¹¹² Model School, *Detroit Free Press*, September 13, 1896, 4.

¹¹³ Evelyn Aschenbrenner, *A History of Wayne State University in Photographs* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009), 281.

It was not just public schools that were growing in Detroit. In 1892 the Saint Peter and Paul Academy serving the children of Saint Patrick's Catholic Church on Adeline and John R. Street was completed. The church had been constructed in the early 1860s and expanded with a rectory a few years later. It was not until much later that the church felt the pressure to establish their own school, but by then, there was no land available near the church grounds. Because of the lack of available land, the new academy was constructed at 64 Parsons in 1892 following the design of nationally known church architect, Leon Coquard. The new school was constructed at an estimated cost of \$50,000 and was at the time considered one of the finest school buildings in the city.¹¹⁴

Social History

The Ladies Christian Union had established the Home of the Friendless (Figure 16), on Warren Avenue just west of Woodward in 1874 (not extant). The Home took in homeless women and children and "stray old ladies."¹¹⁵ The organization was the beneficiary of several large estates, enabling the organization to continue their mission to care for any woman who wished to return to a virtuous life. They stated that "common drunkards, prostitutes, children

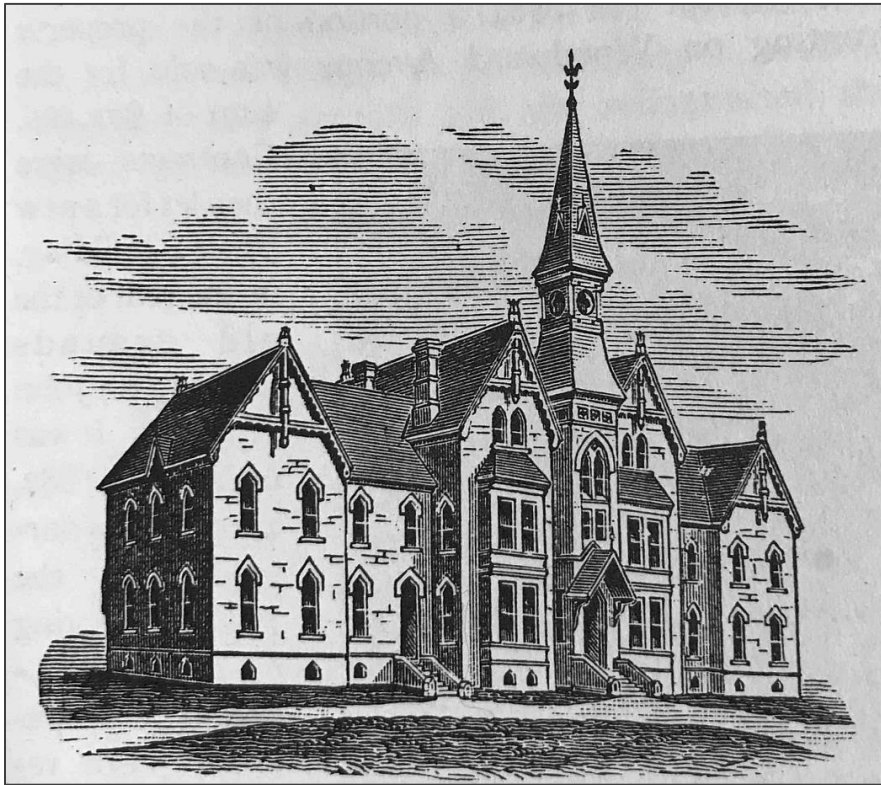


Figure 16. Home of the Friendless

Source: Farmer, History of Detroit

¹¹⁴ Gretchen Griner, SS. Peter & Paul Academy National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997, 8-1.

¹¹⁵ Patricia Ibbotson, *Record of the Juvenile Inmates of the Home for the Friendless, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan* (Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 1995), 1.

of depraved habits, persons bearing the taint of disease or insanity, or who are subject to fits; and also profane or hopelessly idle persons, or those guilty of any flagrant vice, are not received.”¹¹⁶ Those wishing to obtain a place in the home were required to seek a recommendation from the admission committee. The organization was popular and had a large population, with some paying for the privilege but others granted free room and board.

The president’s statement from 1881 read as follows:

The work of the Home of the Friendless is to care for friendless and homeless women and children. We average per day three such women, and twenty children, for whom and from we never receive a penny of compensation.

Secondly, we board at a sum that is almost nominal, children who have one or more parents out at service. Also, the children of parents where either the mother or father are confined in jails or the House of Correction. Much has been done for such and their unhappy parents.

Thirdly, we board waif and stray old ladies who are dependent upon relatives better able to pay for than to give the care they need.

Fourthly, we have a standing contract with the lady managers of the Thompson Home to furnish their Home with light, heat, and water; to supply their table with food, and do their laundry work, for a specified sum per capita (\$2.50 per week).¹¹⁷

The Thompson Home for Old Ladies was another charitable organization, with a large building located at 4736 Cass Avenue, just south of Hancock Street. The Home was constructed in 1884 using the design of architect George Mason and a generous donation by Mrs. Mary Thompson.¹¹⁸ The Thompson Society, which managed the facility, sought to provide a home where “friendless old ladies could pass in peace and quiet the remaining days of their lives.”¹¹⁹ In addition to the Thompsons, a number of other members of prominent families in Detroit supported the home. Among the donors was Mr. James S. Joy, whose own home was located at 100 West Kirby, at the northeast corner of Cass Avenue. Joy included the Thompson Home in the bequeaths in his will following his death on March 7, 1910.¹²⁰

Other larger organizations were also established in nineteenth century Detroit. Among these was the Detroit Masonic Lodge.¹²¹ The lodge was actually founded in Michigan in 1764 by a few civilians and British soldiers at the British garrison at Fort Ponchartrain. The lodge was

¹¹⁶ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 660.

¹¹⁷ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 660.

¹¹⁸ Hope Whitten, Thompson Home for Old Ladies National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1974, 8-1.

¹¹⁹ Whitten, Thompson Home for Old Ladies, 8-1.

¹²⁰ “Joy Will Make Church Legatee,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 13, 1910, B-1.

¹²¹ Les Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1980, 8-1.

the first west of the Allegheny Mountains and operated under a charter granted by the Grand Lodge of England until after the American War of Independence, when rechartered first through the Grand Lodge of Quebec and later the Grand Lodge of New York. Finally, in 1826 the Grand Lodge of Michigan was formed and carried the charter for the Detroit lodge.¹²² Initially the lodges met in a variety of rented facilities, until 1851 when the first permanent lodge was constructed on Jefferson Avenue in Detroit. All of the Detroit lodges shared this one location until 1881, when it was outgrown. For the next fifteen years the lodges occupied a variety of structures until a combined effort by all the Detroit lodges, the Scottish Rites organizations, and the Moslem Temple joined to form the Detroit Masonic Temple Association.¹²³ This newly formed group constructed a combined temple at Lafayette Boulevard and First Street.

Although the new building was planned to have a useful life of approximately fifty years, the tremendous growth in Freemasonry in Detroit in the early twentieth century resulted in the building being overcrowded by 1908.¹²⁴ Plans for a new and larger building were well underway by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century.

Gleaners Temple had its start as a fraternal society that provided benefits and funds to members of the group who needed them, such as widows and orphans of deceased members. In 1908, the organization moved its headquarters from Caro in Tuscola County to Detroit. The organization commissioned George L. Harvey, an architect based in Port Huron, to design the new building, a Bedford limestone structure inspired by the Temple of Victory in Athens.¹²⁵

Art and Entertainment

Many of the entertainment opportunities present in the late nineteenth century revolved around social gatherings. Regular parties were held in the homes of the area. For those seeking an outdoor experience, Cass Park continued to serve as a popular destination for area residents.

Recreation

In early August 1884, a newspaper article referenced local rumors that a new roller rink was in the works. The roller rink was to be located on Second Avenue and High Street and be designed by architect A. C. Varney.¹²⁶ After a disaster at the building site, the architect was replaced with E. E. Meyers.¹²⁷ The new Princess Roller Rink (not extant) opened for business on November 6th.¹²⁸

¹²² Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-1.

¹²³ Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-1.

¹²⁴ Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-1.

¹²⁵ Evelyn Aschenbrenner, Gleaners Temple for Historic Detroit.org, accessed 22 October 2020, <https://historicdetroit.org/buildings/gleaners-temple>.

¹²⁶ That New Rink, *Detroit Free Press*, August 8, 1884, 8; Sayings and Doings, *Detroit Free Press*, August 22, 1884, 1.

¹²⁷ Sayings and Doings, *Detroit Free Press*, September 15, 1884, 11.

¹²⁸ "A Magnificent Success," *Detroit Free Press*, November 7, 1884, 8.

While the population of the area continued to grow creating a demand for both commercial enterprises and recreational opportunities, the new roller rink was not a major success. During its years in operation, it was converted from a roller rink to a theater and even a public market.¹²⁹ While struggling to find the right business model, the facility did have some success hosting dramatic performances, concerts, and social occasions, such as a Governor's Levee and Military Soiree held on February 12, 1885, in honor of Governor Russell A. Alger.¹³⁰ In the summer of 1892, the Detroit Riding Club leased the former roller rink and operated a riding school and semi-annual horse show in the space through the 1890s.¹³¹

For men in the area, there was also the option of joining the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC), which had a clubhouse on Woodward Avenue north of Canfield (Figure 17, next page). The club was known for its encouragement of outdoor sports and to improve the physical condition of young men.¹³² Initially the organization met at the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), but in 1887 one of the founding members, J. V. Gearing, provided a clubhouse design. Gearing's architectural firm was subsequently awarded the contract for the building, which was constructed on Woodward Avenue north of Canfield.¹³³ The new building was completed in the summer of 1888, but required a new addition within a year due to the growing membership numbers.¹³⁴ The Richardson Romanesque style brick building included a gymnasium, bowling alley, swimming pool, billiard hall, and roof-top grand stand overlooking the adjacent oval bicycle race track and club grounds.¹³⁵ The club was strategically placed for easy accessibility by the city's wealthiest residents who lived on either side of Woodward Avenue.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ Notes, *Detroit Free Press*, January 2, 1886, 5; "The Rink was Bad Enough," *Detroit Free Press*, August 11, 1886, 5.

¹³⁰ Invitation 1965.283.020, Biographical Collection. Detroit Historical Society, Detroit, Michigan.

¹³¹ Robert Budd Ross and George Byron Catlin, *Landmarks of Detroit: A History of the City* (Detroit: Evening News Association, 1898), 603.

¹³² "The Detroit Athletic Club," *Detroit Free Press*, January 28, 1880, 1.

¹³³ Kenneth H. Voyles and John A. Bluth, *Images of America: The Detroit Athletic Club: 1887-2001* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2001), 11.

¹³⁴ Voyles and Bluth, *The Detroit Athletic Club*, 13.

¹³⁵ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, 1897, 92.

¹³⁶ Delicato and Khalil, *Cass Corridor*, 28.



Figure 17. David Whitney House and Detroit Athletic Club on Woodward Avenue, photograph ca. 1905

Source: Detroit Publishing Company, Library of Congress

Automobile Age: 1910s to 1930s

In the early twentieth century, a number of major changes took place in the Cass Corridor, not only with the residents, but in other areas of life in the area. During this period, the country faced World War I and the wide-scale construction and marketing of the automobile, both of which impacted the Cass Corridor. The increased industrial production, and the large number of jobs suddenly available, particularly in the Milwaukee Junction area east of the north end of the corridor, attracted more people to the area, resulting in a major population influx. Existing apartment buildings were expanded and new apartments were constructed to provide housing for the new arrivals. During this period, several large apartment buildings were constructed, one specifically targeting single men, in recognition of the number of men who were coming ahead of their families to secure work before bringing the rest of the family to the city.

Architectural styles associated with the new buildings were also representative of the popular styles of the period. Art Deco was utilized for some of the commercial buildings, including those that housed businesses such as sales floors for automobiles. Many of the residences constructed in this period are much more modest than earlier buildings, and include American Foursquare form, Craftsman style, Colonial Revival style, and a few examples of Tudor Revival style.

The availability of jobs not only impacted population, but also played a role in the evolving ethnicity of Detroit, and the Cass Corridor. There was a large number of individuals that

migrated from Appalachia, perhaps planning to stay just a brief time, but many eventually making their permanent home in the city. The number of southern whites who arrived actually impacted the Cass Corridor by establishing areas that were nicknamed “little Kentucky” or “Tennessee Valley.” This was also the first period that there was an influx of ethnic groups apart from western European whites. In the 1920s and 1930s, people from the region around the Mediterranean Sea, including Greece and what is today known as the Middle East, began moving to Detroit and the Cass Corridor. Many of those coming from the Middle East, in particular, immigrated in the hopes of escaping war.

The tremendous success of the automobile was felt in the Cass Corridor beyond the factory jobs and sales facilities. General Motors constructed their world headquarters in the north end of the Cass Corridor during this period. A few years after that was completed, they added a large research building one block south. The Fisher Brothers, founders and owners of Fisher Body also constructed a massive new building in the north end of the Cass Corridor. The new Fisher Building included office space, retail areas, and a large live-performance theater, bringing a major entertainment venue to this part of Cass Corridor. Much of the office space in the Fisher Building was leased by doctors and dentists, many of whom likely had admitting privileges at the nearby Henry Ford Hospital.

Smaller industries and commercial establishments were also present in the Cass Corridor. The industries continued to remain in areas defined in earlier time periods, with most of the activity located in the southwest quarter of the corridor or in the north end, near the railroad lines. Commercial activity was typically located along major transportation routes, where those riding the streetcars would see the businesses as they moved about the city.

As is expected in an area where the population continues to grow and evolve, there were several new churches and schools constructed in the Cass Corridor during this period. For example, although the technical school had been established in the first decade of the twentieth century, it finally had a permanent home constructed as the Lewis Cass Technical High School during this period. Similarly, the Central High School began its slow transition from high school to college. Education was also recognized during the period with the construction of a new main branch of the Detroit Public Library on Woodward Avenue. The library sits directly across the street from the Detroit Institute of Arts, and for decades helped define this portion of Cass Corridor as the cultural center.

Large buildings seemed to define much of the activity in the Cass Corridor during this period. In addition to the massive office buildings at the north end of the corridor and the large public library in the cultural center, there were several large new buildings constructed near Cass Park in the south section of the corridor. These include the large new headquarters of the S. S. Kresge company and the massive new Masonic Temple. The two buildings are positioned with the Kresge building flanking the entire west side of Cass Park and the Masonic Temple near the northeast corner of the park. The fourteen-story tall Masonic Temple could accommodate fifty Masonic bodies with lodge rooms and required special ancillary facilities for each that were designed in accordance with the appropriate Masonic traditions and rituals. Additionally, like the Fisher Building, the Masonic Temple included several theater spaces, with the largest able to seat five thousand guests.

While some entities were drawn to erecting large imposing buildings, others took a more modest approach. For example, the Detroit Pythian Castle (Hebrew) relocated into the former home of the First Baptist Church and the Delta Tau Delta fraternity established a new fraternity house in a former single family residence.

Given the issues that the city dealt with related to the Great Depression during this period, it is not surprising that there were a number of new theaters and entertainment venues established in the Cass Corridor during this period. In addition to the theaters in the Fisher Building and the Masonic Temple, the Detroit Symphony erected Orchestra Hall during this period. The new building was located on Woodward Avenue, in the central portion of the corridor. Other smaller venues, including a number of well-known bars that also included entertainment, were established throughout the Cass Corridor during this period.

Community Development

The first three decades of the twentieth century in the Cass Corridor were marked by extensive changes that impacted almost every aspect of work, entertainment, and life in general for those living and working in the area. Growing development pressures, often related to the expanding automobile industry, drew more residents to the area. As more people arrived in the Cass Corridor, the need for housing, work places, and entertainment venues grew. But, by the close of the period, the economic downturn of the Great Depression also resulted in substantial changes to the Cass Corridor and all of Detroit.

While there were some large single-family homes constructed in the first part of the period, the population growth demanded greater building density. To meet this need, large, elegant residences of the upper class were joined by a growing number of upper middle income apartment hotels that typically catered to young professionals. In 1916, the *Guide to Detroit*, wrote that:

Until a few years ago the upper part of Woodward was one of the finest residence streets in the Middle West and was lined with beautiful residences and well-kept lawns, but the industrial growth of the city is shown by the change in this Avenue and within ten years most of the houses have been replaced by automobile showrooms, garages, department stores, and shops. A few of the old residences have surrounded their houses with high iron fences, but one by one they are being crowded out to satisfy the ever increasing demand for business sites.¹³⁷

After the original owners moved from some of their large residences in the area, the homes were converted to apartments, rooming houses, hotels, and restaurants. For example, the George L. Beecher House, 5475 Woodward Avenue, was designed by architect H. J. Grylls and constructed by Henry Carew & Co. in 1893–1894.¹³⁸ The Beecher family had left the residence by 1914, and it was sold two years later as an investment property that housed

¹³⁷ Helen E. Keep and M. Agnes Burton, *Guide to Detroit* (Detroit: Detroit News Company, 1916).

¹³⁸ Real Estate Record, *Detroit Free Press*, October 29, 1893, 19; “Costly Home of George L. Beecher Is Purchased as Investment Realty,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 12, 1916, C10.

“furnished rooms.”¹³⁹ The building continued in its role as a rooming or boarding house for various owners into the 1940s. Similarly, the former residence of Robert H. Brown, 3877 Cass Avenue, was designed by A. C. Varney and constructed ca. 1891.¹⁴⁰ Mr. Brown died in 1908, with his widow remaining in the residence until 1916 when she sold the property to N. Frank Hamilton and William Otter of the William Hamilton Corporation. The new owners, who had an already well-established mortuary business in the city, opened a funeral home in the house. By 1925, the successful business expanded by constructing the Egyptian Revival Art Deco style building south of the original building.¹⁴¹

While most of the earlier large residences faced an uncertain future, there were several new buildings constructed during the period. Among these was the architecturally distinctive Lemuel Bowen House (1912) at 5435 Woodward Avenue. The Jacobean Revival style mansion was designed by architects Mason and Rice for Bowen, who was an executive in the Dexter Morris Seed Company; the company’s farm was several blocks away from the house down East Ferry Avenue.¹⁴² Other architectural styles represented by the residential buildings constructed in the time period included Prairie style, as was featured on the William C. Rands House (1912–1913) at 5229 Cass Avenue and the Atlanta Apartments (1914–1915) at 2467 Cass Avenue, constructed in the Georgian Revival style with Arts and Crafts influences.

The shift in the area was recorded in the 1916 *Guide to Detroit*, which noted that the area:

contained 508 apartment houses, 372 rooming houses, 33 hotels, 21 pool rooms, 44 office buildings, 10 cafes, 8 dance hall, 5 dancing schools, 5 motion picture theaters, 9 trade schools, 9 convention halls, 4 grade schools, 3 high schools, 1 college, 1 home for girls, 2 homes for the aged, 2 fraternal temples, 2 hospitals, 6 banks, and 9 churches.¹⁴³

There were several buildings constructed during this period that emphasized the shift from single family homes to apartment living. In one area alone, bounded by West Wills, Woodward, the alley south of Selden, and Third Avenue, there were forty apartment buildings constructed between the 1890s and 1920s, with the majority present in the 1910s.¹⁴⁴ There was also great diversity in the apartment buildings constructed during this period, which ranged from two-story duplexes to an eight-story, full lot apartment building.

Due to the growing availability of employment in the city, large numbers of single men made their way to Detroit during the early twentieth. One developer took advantage of the pressing need and backed the construction of Webster Hall, which was marketed as a “bachelor hotel and club.”¹⁴⁵ The hotel, designed by the firm of Halpin & Jewell, included facilities such as a

¹³⁹ R. L. Polk, *Polk’s City Directory* (Detroit: R. L. Polk & Co., 1917), 1819.

¹⁴⁰ HDAB, Final Report: Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District., 1.

¹⁴¹ HDAB, Final Report: Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District., 2.

¹⁴² Leslie J. Vollmert, East Ferry Avenue Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1979, 7-6.

¹⁴³ Keep and Burton, *Guide to Detroit*.

¹⁴⁴ Gretchen Griner, Willis-Selden Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997, 7-2.

¹⁴⁵ “New Bachelor Hotel-Club Named for Judge Webster,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 16, 1924, 6-1.

swimming tank, lounge rooms, library, smoking rooms, card and billiard rooms, and large cheerful bedrooms. The building was scheduled to open on January 1, 1925, but in December 1924 several hundred men had already toured the new facility.¹⁴⁶

The investment firm behind the Webster Hotel, S. W. Strauss & Company also financed the Belcrest Apartments constructed a block north on Cass Avenue between Kirby and Ferry.¹⁴⁷ The Belcrest Apartments were designed by Charles N. Agree and completed in 1926.¹⁴⁸ The Belcrest offered its guests “high class amenities,” multiple-room units, long-term residential possibilities, and unlike other developments, encouraged children.¹⁴⁹ The twelve-story steel and concrete building is sheathed with brown brick and trimmed with terra cotta.

Other smaller apartment buildings were also present within the Cass Corridor area, particularly in the southern section of the study area. Among these smaller apartments are the Virelo Apartments (ca. 1914), 467 West Alexandrine, which is an example of the Classical Revival-style (Figure 18); the Mahtawa Apartments (ca. 1917), 434 West Alexandrine, constructed by the Kirby Brothers Company; the Eileen Apartments (1919), 454 West



Figure 18. Virelo Apartments, 467 West Alexandrine, constructed ca. 1914

¹⁴⁶ “Book-Cadillac and Webster Hall Hotels costing \$18,000,000,” *Detroit Free Press*, October 5, 1924, 6-1; “New Bachelor Hotel to be Ready Jan. 1,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 30, 1924, 33.

¹⁴⁷ “Large Building Projects Under Way Here,” *Detroit Free Press*, January 31, 1926, 5-1.

¹⁴⁸ Gregory C. Piazza and Brian Conway, *The Belcrest National Register of Historic Places Inventory*. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1983, 8-2.

¹⁴⁹ Piazza and Conway, *The Belcrest*, 8-2.

Alexandrine, an example of the Neo-Georgian style; and the Strathmore Hotel (1924), 70 West Alexandrine, constructed in the Colonial Revival style by builder Benjamin Braver.¹⁵⁰

New construction was certainly not limited to residential properties. One of the finest examples of the Chicago School is the B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company Building, 4809 Woodward Avenue (Figure 19). Designed by Albert Kahn & Associates it was constructed in 1913 for the tire company, which in addition to selling tires, included a warehouse and service garage.¹⁵¹ After years as the Fisher Wallpaper and Paint store, the building was purchased by WSU and is the home of the WSU Press.



Figure 19. B. F. Goodyear/Leonard N. Simmons Building (1913), 4809 Woodward Avenue

¹⁵⁰ Gretchen Griner, Willis-Selden Historic District. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan. 1997, 7-4.

¹⁵¹ HDAB, Proposed Warren-Prentiss Historic District: Final Report. On file, HDAB, Detroit, Michigan. 2001; Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, 1921, 111.

Changes in architectural tastes also include the introduction of Art Deco style, which was commonly used for public and commercial buildings. One fine example of the style is the Miller-Judd Company Sales and Service Building designed by Albert Kahn and constructed by James S. Holden Company in 1929 (Figure 20). The building is located at 5454 Cass Avenue/75 Ferry Avenue, and originally housed an automotive sales business and the associated service garage.¹⁵² The building was sold to the Detroit Board of Education in 1954, and initially served as the Wayne University Science Building. After the university separated from the city's public school system, and a new Science Building had been constructed on campus, the building housed the Maintenance and Grounds facility. Today, the building houses both the WSU Facilities Planning & Management and Finance Business Operations.¹⁵³



Figure 20. Miller-Judd Company Sales and Service/ WSU Facilities Planning & Management and Finance Business Operations Building (1929), 5454 Cass Avenue

Another major change during this period was the separation of the streets and railroad bridges in a series of grade separations, which place cars and trains on different levels. In a letter to the editor of the *Detroit Free Press* printed on December 16, 1927, one reader, known only as “Thrifty Speeder,” urged the city to consider adding grade separations between busy roads and the railroads to provide a faster and safer trip for Detroit motorists.¹⁵⁴ Included in the suggested areas for grade separations were the crossings on both Cass Avenue and Second Avenue, including locations at both Milwaukee and Baltimore. This was a popular issue and by the following December, the Grand Trunk Railroad was busy constructing a number of

¹⁵² Robinson, North Cultural Center Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration, Draft. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2015, 10.

¹⁵³ Robinson, North Cultural Center Historic District, 14.

¹⁵⁴ “Grade Separation Urged as Traffic Aid,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 16, 1927, 6.

bridges to accommodate crossings on the east side of Detroit, including the area now known as the Dequindre Cut.¹⁵⁵ The same article noted that the railroad also planned to construct similar concrete bridges on the Grand Trunk line between west Detroit and the Milwaukee Junction, including at Hamilton, Third, Second, Cass, and Woodward Avenues (Figure 21).¹⁵⁶ In each case, the bridge was raised slightly above the existing grade, and the road bed lowered to create an area for vehicular traffic to pass under the railroad.



Figure 21. Grade separation bridge (1929), over Third Avenue

While the passenger and freight trains of the Grand Trunk Railroad were eventually raised to ease their impact on traffic and reduce accidents, this was not the case for street railroads, that needed to be at the same grade as the road to provide access for their passengers. The street railways continued to be a primary source of transportation for the city. In 1915, a report provided to the Board of Street Railway Commissioners for the City of Detroit reported that there were twenty principal lines of street cars in the city system and eight interurban lines that served the city. The twenty primary lines, which totaled 206.88 miles of track, were further divided into a variety of routes, with some of the lines having as many as twenty-five different routes.¹⁵⁷ Between 1904 and 1913 approximately twenty miles of track were added to the system, but at the same time ridership increased by one hundred eighty percent, resulting in a continued overload of the system.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ “Grand Trunk Grade Cut Called Ambitious,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 9, 1928, 11.

¹⁵⁶ “Grand Trunk Grade Cut Called Ambitious,” “ 11.

¹⁵⁷ Barclay Parsons & Klapp, *Report on Detroit Street Railway Traffic and Proposed Subway*, Made to Board of Street Railway Commissioners, City of Detroit. (New York: Barclay Parsons & Klapp 1915), 10.

¹⁵⁸ Barclay Parsons & Klapp, *Detroit Street Railway Traffic*, 11

A study done by the firm of Barclay, Parsons & Kapp, Manhattan based transit engineers, evaluated the street railway traffic conditions, and made recommendations to alleviate the congestion. During the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century Detroit became increasingly industrial and grew with an influx of factory workers that needed to get to and from their new place of work. Much of the congestion experienced on the streetcar routes was traced to the fact that most lines converged near City Hall, and the Woodward Avenue line was shown to be the most heavily traveled. Because so much of the traffic was clustered around the lines on Woodward Avenue, the consultants discounted the potential for developing a belt line system to address the congestion. To deal with the situation, the consultants proposed developing a new system of street railway lines rerouting the lines over a system of loops in the downtown district.¹⁵⁹ Additionally, the consultants recommended permanent relief in streetcar congestion through the development of a subway, with the first subway route to be along the Woodward route, where the number of passengers had grown three times that of other lines between 1904 and 1913, with additional routes on Gratiot and Michigan Avenues.¹⁶⁰ In spite of the careful calculations of the consultants, in 1920, the idea of a subway in Detroit was vetoed by Mayor James Couzens, and the city council override failed by one vote.¹⁶¹

A few years later, in 1923, the Detroit Rapid Transit Commission (RTC), under the leadership of former automobile executive Sidney D. Waldon, proposed a comprehensive transit program that would break the gridlock of the existing system.¹⁶² The proposed new transit system included high-speed rail lines routed through subways in downtown Detroit, then extending beyond the city limits in the form of elevated “super-highways” that also carried motor vehicles with express lanes for through traffic and other lanes for local traffic. The proposed project was unable to gain public approval before the plan died completely due to the lack of funds in the 1930s.¹⁶³ Part of the problem was the need to have most, if not all, of the elaborate systems completed to draw the required ridership. Meanwhile, highways could be constructed in smaller sections with the congestion-freeing effects evident almost immediately.

Although the promise of a subway died, public transit continued on transitioning to motor coaches instead of trolleys or streetcars. The earliest bus operated by the Detroit Street Railroad began service on November 19, 1922.¹⁶⁴ This line served the Dodge Export Plant that was formerly accessible by the Lynch Road Line. The plant, constructed as an ordnance plant during World War I, was originally served by the Detroit United Railway (DUR) but the service was discontinued after the Armistice, when business gradually fell off. By October 1921, the rail service was discontinued and the tracks removed. At the request of the

¹⁵⁹ Barclay Parsons & Klapp, *Detroit Street Railway Traffic*, 13.

¹⁶⁰ Barclay Parsons & Klapp, *Detroit Street Railway Traffic*, 21; Kickert, *Dream City*, 28.

¹⁶¹ Alex Trajkovski, A concise history of Detroit public transit, *Curbed Detroit*, September 22, 2017, accessed 10 February 2021, <https://detroit.curbed.com/2017/9/22/16322202/detroit-transit-history>.

¹⁶² Charles K. Hyde, “Planning a Transportation System for Metropolitan Detroit in the Age of the Automobile: The Triumph of the Expressway,” *Michigan Historical Review* 32 (Spring 2006): 59.

¹⁶³ Hyde, “Planning a Transportation System,” 59.

¹⁶⁴ Schramm et al, *Detroit’s Street Railways*, v. 11: 1922–1956, (Chicago: Central Railfan’s Association, 1980), 29.

Milwaukee Junction Manufacturers Association, service was reinstated on the line using three single-decker buses.¹⁶⁵ The move to reinstate the motor coach lines was the beginning of greatly expanded service for the entire city (Figure 22).

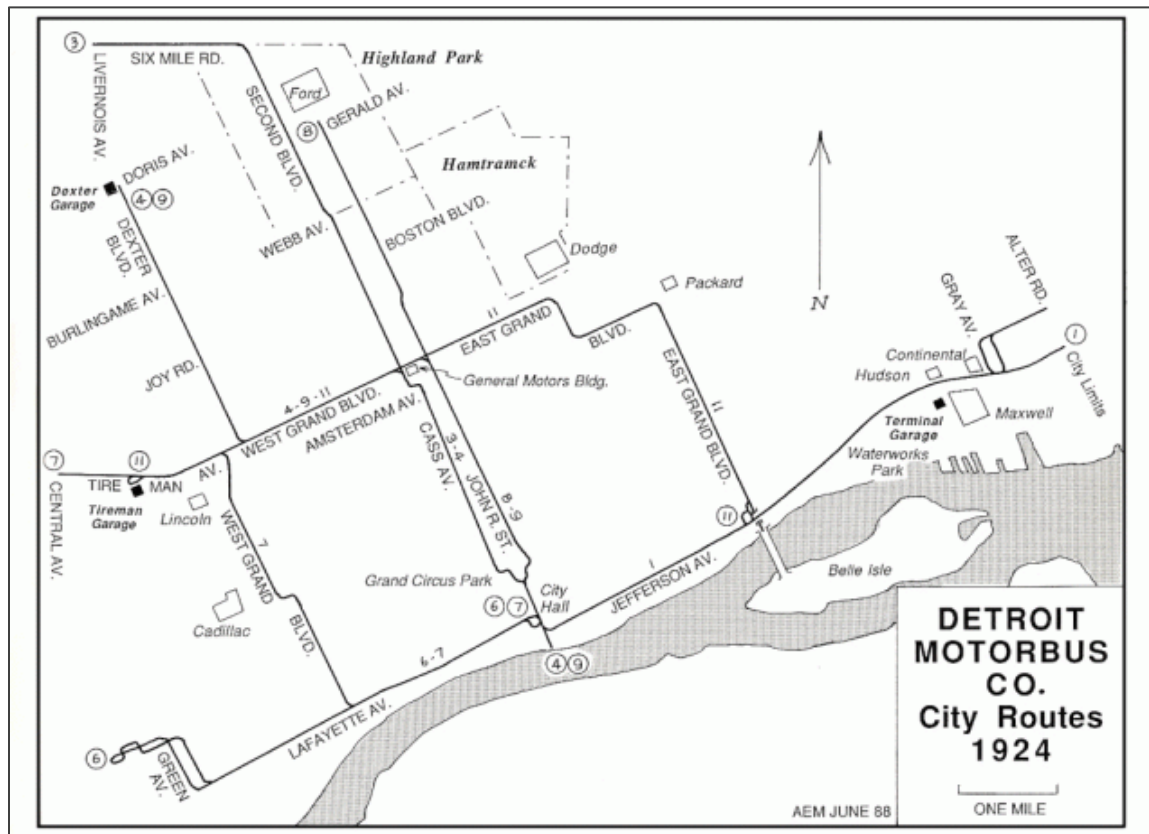


Figure 22. Detroit Motor Bus Routes, 1924

Source: DETROITography.com

There were changes beyond public transit in the works for Detroit drivers in the 1920s. The Woodward Avenue Improvement Association, established in 1924, worked to bring much needed improvements to one of the most heavily traveled routes from Detroit to the northern bedroom communities.¹⁶⁶ After three years of studies by a variety of road commissions, municipal engineers, and city planners, Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties adopted a new plan that would hopefully create a sensible system of roads in the region. In Detroit, the City Plan Commission completed a study that determined Woodward was too narrow to handle the traffic, parking needs, and center lanes of streetcars. The study pointed out that with all the ancillary demands there was just one lane in each direction remaining for moving traffic, far below what was needed.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Schramm et al., *Detroit's Street Railways*, 29.

¹⁶⁶ Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 16.

¹⁶⁷ Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 17.

Although the referendum on widening Woodward Avenue was developed in 1924 and approved by the public in 1925, due to political wrangling and court battles it took until 1935 before the project was completed. During the delay, it all but halted the growing commercial efforts on Woodward Avenue. As a result of the widening a number of buildings along Woodward were altered to accommodate the widened road. Road widening was completed on the east side of Woodward Avenue south of Garfield Street and on the west side south of the Maccabees Building.¹⁶⁸ On the west side, the Goodrich Building, at the northeast corner of Woodward and Hancock Street, lost two bays out of its depth, although the façade was reattached preserving the decorative tile work on the building (see Figure 19).¹⁶⁹

Government

Engine House No. 5 was greatly expanded following its construction in 1876. A news item in 1902 indicated that the fire commissioner was seeking \$3,500 in funding for an addition to engine house No. 5.¹⁷⁰ Five years later, in 1907, the fire department was seeking funding to replace Fire House No. 5; this may have been required because the station was adding a ladder truck to their equipment. There is no additional newspaper reporting on the expansion of the engine house, but in 1921, the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* reveals that the building was almost double in width, with a two story addition on the west elevation of the original structure and the original tower removed. It is very likely that the fire station was expanded to meet the growing need given the rising density of both buildings and population of the area. This is confirmed by a notation in the 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas, which notes that the enlarged portion of the building was for “Rescue Square No. 2.”¹⁷¹

To meet the growing building and population density of the Cass Corridor area, another fire station was constructed in the early 1920s in the northern portion of the area. The new facility housed both Ladder Company No. 7 and Engine Company No. 17 at 6100 Second Street (Figure 23, next page). This building, designed by architect Hans Gehrke, was constructed in 1922–1923 to replace an earlier building located at Cass Avenue and Amsterdam.¹⁷² The two fire department units moved into their new building on Monday, June 18, 1923, a move celebrated by the mayor and fire commissioners with speeches and presentations. The newspaper noted that the new station is “in the heart of one of the busiest districts in the city.”¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 17.

¹⁶⁹ Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 18.

¹⁷⁰ “Lower Fire Com. Estimates,” *Detroit Free Press*, February 14, 1902, 5.

¹⁷¹ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County*, 1921, 76.

¹⁷² Dolkowski, New Amsterdam Historic District, 8–12.

¹⁷³ “New Fire Building Opened Monday,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 19, 1923, 16.



Figure 23. Ladder Company No. 7 and Engine Company No. 17 (1922–1923), 6100 Second Street

Ethnic Heritage

As the automotive and other industries began to gain national importance, there was a large influx of workers into the city. With the slow evolution of the Cass Corridor away from the large well-to-do estates, and the increase in apartment buildings, more and more of the new arrivals made their way to the area. New residents in the area included members of the Jewish faith, who began developing property in the second decade of the twentieth century, and migrants from Greece, who established a number of commercial enterprises along major transportation corridors.¹⁷⁴ Striking in their absence from the area was the Black population. A large African American area had developed east of Woodward, in an area known alternatively as the near east side or as Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, largely due to restrictions on property ownership. As early as 1917, the Black Bottom/Paradise Valley areas were creating a sense of community and shared culture for Blacks moving to the city. However, the vast numbers that arrived in the subsequent years put a strain on the area, which was only exacerbated by the Great Depression. The practice of redlining, or limiting the areas where Blacks could live through unfair lending practices or neighborhood restrictions, ensured that Detroit's neighborhoods would remain separate and resulted in disinvestment by the local government.¹⁷⁵

The new residents in the Cass Corridor were typically easily integrated into the white population that had occupied the area for decades. Among the Jewish men who were

¹⁷⁴ Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 15.

¹⁷⁵ Ruth E. Mills and Sandra Little, *Survey Report 20th Century Black Civil Rights Sites in the City of Detroit*, prepared for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing, Michigan, February 2021, E-2.

recognized for their role in the corridor is David W. Simons, one of Detroit's leading developers. Simons was responsible for the construction of the Stuber-Stone Building (1916), 4221-4229 Cass Avenue, for an automobile dealership (Figure 24). Jewish individuals not only built some of the later apartment buildings but also, according to City Directory records, lived in some too, especially near the corner of Second and Forest Avenues.¹⁷⁶ This concentration of Jewish residents is clearly illustrated by the names of the original residents of the Hollenden Apartments, 4709–4711 Second Avenue, including the Goldbergs, Weiss, and Ettingers.¹⁷⁷



Figure 24. Stuber-Stone Building (1916), 4221–4229 Cass Avenue

In the 1910s the first members of the Chaldean community made their way to Detroit. This event occurred just before the 1915 or 1916 massacre of Chaldeans in Aldana, Turkey, which was part of the Armenian Genocide.¹⁷⁸ This event sparked the initial movement of Chaldeans away from Turkey, but the migration continued on for several decades as they sought safer places to live and raise their families. The earliest members of the Detroit community appear to have lived in Brush Park, but soon made their way to the Cass Corridor area.¹⁷⁹

Interestingly, the Chaldean residents of the Cass Corridor were completely overlooked by the census summary. This oversight may have been due to the diversity of their points of origin, with some coming from the lands of ancient Mesopotamia.¹⁸⁰ Today, this land is largely known as Iraq, but based on Detroit census records, also appears to include some individuals

¹⁷⁶ Goldstein, et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 15.

¹⁷⁷ R. L. Polk & Co., *Detroit City Directory*, 1914-1915 (Detroit: R. L. Polk & Co., 1915), 2845.

¹⁷⁸ Jacob Bacall, *Images of America: Chaldeans in Detroit* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Press, 2014), 37.

¹⁷⁹ Rebecca Binno Savage, personal communication with Elaine Robinson, May 3, 2021.

¹⁸⁰ Bacall, *Chaldeans in Detroit*, 37.

who immigrated from Syria, Turkey, and, in the 1930 Detroit census, a number of individuals who were born in Jerusalem.¹⁸¹ That year, census records indicate that there was fifteen Chaldean residents who were originally from Jerusalem or Syria and lived on Third Avenue near West Kirby Street. The recorded family names included Ajlowny, Essa, Abed, Kalef, and Zayled, who lived together in three rented houses. In two of the houses, the residents included extended family members, including a nuclear family of head, wife, and children, as well as cousins and uncles.¹⁸² Professionally, the family members were listed as a baker, a chef, and salesmen for a linen company.

By the middle of the 1930s, the number of Chaldean families who resided in the area had increased further. There were several families, including the Garmos, Binnos, and Kilanos who lived on Hancock Street near Third.¹⁸³ The three families, all of whom hailed from Iraq, resided in the same place in 1935, but other family members were listed as living in Baghdad or Wheeling, illustrating that the families likely sent the head of the family ahead to find a place to live and work before bringing the remainder of the family to the city. The 1940 census indicates that David Kilano was the owner of a grocery store and his neighbor, Mike Binno, worked as a grocery store clerk; although records are not clear, it is possible that Binno worked at Kilano's store. A newspaper article from 1944, lists Mike Binno as the owner of a store at 4626 Third.¹⁸⁴ The children of the family attended school at Burton Elementary and the families worshiped at either Saint Dominic's Roman Catholic Church (outside Cass Corridor), 4846 Trumbull Avenue, or Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church (outside Cass Corridor), 142 Adelaide Street.¹⁸⁵

Beginning in the 1920s, Greek migrants began moving to the corridor. Many of these new families established businesses in the area. Among the business owners of Greek heritage were the Tsacoumangos Brothers, who operated a grocery store in one of the storefronts north of the Garden Theater at 3937 Woodward Avenue. Both Gustav Pappas and Anastasios Soundias had restaurants. Pappas' restaurant was located at 4245 Woodward and Soundias' restaurant was at 3956–3966 Cass Avenue.¹⁸⁶ In 1927, Greek immigrant Gust Boukas, opened the Temple Bar, 2906 Cass Avenue.¹⁸⁷ Originally the bar occupied one storefront in a building that also included an ice cream parlor, candy store, and barbershop.¹⁸⁸ Temple Bar went on to be one of the most popular venues in the Cass Corridor area, still operating over ninety years later.

Beginning in 1926, there was also a dedicated bus line that traveled between Paducah, Kentucky and Detroit, Michigan, facilitating the migration of southern whites to jobs in

¹⁸¹ United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930).

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1940).

¹⁸⁴ "Grocer Draws \$50 Fine for Food-Price Violation," *Detroit Free Press*, October 28, 1944.

¹⁸⁵ Julia Hakim, "Chaldean History," Email. 2021.

¹⁸⁶ Becall, *Chaldeans in Detroit*, 37.

¹⁸⁷ The correct spelling of Mr. Boukas' first name is Gust.

¹⁸⁸ Reindel, "Dive Bar Near New Area," A6.

Detroit.¹⁸⁹ While plenty of people made the move on their own or by other established bus lines, the Brooks Bus Line made the move north, and returning south again, possible. The firm started as a ride service that had one Chevy van driven by the founder, J. Polk Brooks, which made a weekly run from Paducah to Detroit and back again five days later. Brooks, himself a transplant from Paducah who had moved to Detroit to work at a Chevrolet plant, explained,

The longer I lived in Detroit, the more people I met from Paducah, Mayfield, and other west Kentucky towns. When people heard my wife and I were driving to Paducah they'd ask for a ride.¹⁹⁰

Initially the drive was twenty-six hours each way, and Brooks charged each passenger twelve dollars and fifty cents a week. Brooks was not the only taxi service with a similar operating plan, but in 1936 the Interstate Commerce Commission required drivers to apply for permits, wiping out virtually all of the competition. One study reported that by 1930, the native-born southern whites accounted for large enclaves of transplants in midwestern cities. In Detroit it was estimated that there were sixty-six thousand transplants living in the city. Perhaps more important than the numbers was the fact that the new arrivals often clustered in urban neighborhoods, such as the Cass Corridor.¹⁹¹

Commerce and Industry

The period of the most extensive commercial building construction in the area was between 1915 and 1930, when the automobile industry reigned.¹⁹² By the 1920s the automobile industry was firmly entrenched in the area around the Grand Trunk Railroad interchange known as the Milwaukee Junction, located south of Grand Boulevard roughly between Woodward Avenue and I-75. Historically, there have been large automobile manufacturing facilities on Piquette Avenue, which is located approximately four blocks south of Grand Boulevard and extends east from Woodward. Over time, all three of the “big three” automobile companies had a presence on this street. While there were additional automobile plants around the city, this concentration played an important role in the development of the commercial and industrial aspects of the area.

General Motors was established in 1908 by William C. Durant when he began acquiring a number of different smaller manufacturers under a single name. Under Durant's leadership, the company acquired Buick, Oldsmobile, Pontiac (originally called Oakland), Cadillac, and Chevrolet along with a number of parts manufacturing firms.¹⁹³ Unfortunately, Durant overextended the company and was soon removed from his leadership role in favor of James J. Storrow, formerly of the banking firm of Lee, Higginson & Company. Storrow brought

¹⁸⁹ “Brooks Bus Line Wins First Place in U.S. Safety Contest,” *The Paducah Sun* (Paducah, Kentucky), October 25, 1964, 8.

¹⁹⁰ Chad Berry, “The Great ‘White’ Migration, Alcohol, and the Transplantation of Southern Protestant Churches,” in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* (Summer 1996), 268, 265–296.

¹⁹¹ Berry, “The Great ‘White’ Migration,” 265–296.

¹⁹² Gretchen Griner, Stuber-Stone Building National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1995, 8-1.

¹⁹³ Ralph J. Christian, General Motors Building National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1977, 8-1.

stability to the organization again through the establishment of general administrative offices, a combination of subsidiaries, liquidation of the unprofitable acquisitions, and the establishment of an in-house research department. Storrow also limited manufacturing efforts to the most profitable models.¹⁹⁴ By 1911 Durant was able to regain his role at the top of General Motors, which signaled the beginning of another period of rapid expansion. Durant brought several men into the organization who would play important roles over the coming years, including Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., and Charles F. Kettering. It was also under Durant's direction that the firm purchased Fisher Body, the world's largest producer of automobile bodies, a consumer financing division was established, and the company eventually known as Frigidaire was acquired.¹⁹⁵ By 1920, Durant was again forced out of his role in the company, again due to sloppy administrative methods and financial issues.

Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., was the president of General Motors in 1923 when they completed construction of their world headquarters on West Grand Boulevard. The huge office building, which is located on the block bound by West Grand, Second, Milwaukee, and Cass Avenue, was designed by Albert Kahn and constructed by the Thompson-Starrett Company.¹⁹⁶ Prior to construction of the new building the block was sparsely occupied with single family residences, duplexes, flats, and a hay storage facility with a residence on the second floor.¹⁹⁷ All of these buildings were removed to make way for the new fifteen-story building that provided the first permanent headquarters for General Motors; the company had previously maintained offices in rented spaces in both New York and Detroit. The new building was constructed of concrete sheathed with limestone and erected from east-to-west, with the portion of the building along Cass Avenue open and occupied before work had begun on the Second Avenue side.¹⁹⁸ The building includes a series of eight wings that project from a central spine (Figure 25, next page). A five-story annex is located at the southeast corner of the building. The grand building is emphasized by Kahn's use of Renaissance division of the building into a base, body, and top. The base has a centrally located entrance loggia with triple arches and a groin vault. The arches are continued along the façade and sides of the building creating an arcade to frame the automobile exhibits inside.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ Christian, General Motors Building, 8-2.

¹⁹⁵ Christian, General Motors Building, 8-3.

¹⁹⁶ Christian, General Motors Building, 8-1.

¹⁹⁷ Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v.6 (Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1910), 35.

¹⁹⁸ Christian, General Motors Building, 7-1.

¹⁹⁹ Christian, General Motors Building, 7-1.



Figure 25. General Motors Building (1923), photograph ca. 1921

Source: Library of Congress

Five years after the General Motors Building was completed, another General Motors building was completed in the Cass Corridor area. The new building occupied most of the block bounded by Milwaukee Avenue on the north, Cass Avenue on the east, Baltimore Avenue on the south, and Second Avenue on the west. Prior to the construction of the new building, the block had been almost fully occupied by single family homes, two row houses (one with three units and one with four), and a brick flat.²⁰⁰ All of these buildings were removed to make way for the General Motors Research Laboratory/Argonaut Building. The new building was constructed in two sections: Building A, completed in 1928, is located at 421 Second Avenue and Building B, completed in 1936, is located at 485 West Milwaukee.²⁰¹ In contrast to the smooth surface of the nearby General Motors Building, the new Research Laboratory is constructed of red-brown brick with limestone, brick, and cast-iron ornament (Figure 26, next page). Additional ornament includes a gray granite plinth that raps the north and west elevations of the building up to the middle of the first story, which is in turn topped by alternating bands of brick and limestone to the middle of the third story. The banding pattern repeats at the eleventh story and at the parapet. The entire building complex was occupied by the research divisions of General Motors into the mid-1950s.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Michigan*, v.6, 1910, 35.

²⁰¹ Brenda Rigdon, General Motors Research Laboratory National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, 2004, 7-1.

²⁰² Rigdon, General Motors Research Laboratory, 8-1.



Figure 26. View south on Second Avenue, General Motors Building (1923; immediate left) and General Motors Research Building (center left), ca. 1942

Source: Arthur S. Siegel Collection, Library of Congress

The automobile presence in Cass Corridor was certainly not limited to the large offices associated with General Motors. By 1911, Woodward Avenue was already being called “Automobile Row” in recognition of the number of auto sales and repair shops that stretched from approximately Grand Circus Park north for three miles.²⁰³ These commercial enterprises did not limit themselves to Woodward Avenue but also included locations along Cass Avenue. The early date of the Automobile Row nickname was confirmed by a newspaper notice for Welch Company, an early subsidiary of General Motors, which opened a showroom at 1221–1229 Woodward.²⁰⁴

By the mid-1910s there were over sixty automobile related businesses located either along Woodward Avenue or one of the flanking streets.²⁰⁵ One of the extant automobile related buildings in the area was the Stuber-Stone Building, 4221–4229 Cass Avenue, which was constructed in 1916 to house a dealership for Stuber-Stone & Company automobiles.²⁰⁶

Among the other, smaller, related buildings constructed during the period was the B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company (1913–1914) at 4801–4819 Woodward Avenue. Goodrich sold automobile tires, parts, and maintained a service department. The building is one of the

²⁰³ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 4.

²⁰⁴ “Welch Co. to Open Rooms,” *Detroit Free Press*, April 11, 1911, 6.

²⁰⁵ Robinson, Goodrich Building, 8-2.

²⁰⁶ Griner, Stuber-Stone Building, 8-1.

numerous buildings associated with the automobile industry and designed by Albert Kahn in the Cass Corridor.²⁰⁷ Another Kahn design was the Miller-Judd Sales and Service Building (1929), 5454 Cass Avenue. The L-plan building provided space along the Cass Avenue façade for corporate offices on the second floor above the first-floor showroom — strategically designed with large windows to show-off the cars. A perpendicular wing extends off the north elevation of the building and provides direct access from West Ferry Avenue to the service garage.²⁰⁸ Kahn was also the architect of record for the Richards-Oakland Motor Company (1927), 440 Burroughs Avenue. The company was one of the world's largest distributors of Pontiac and Oakland automobiles at its peak.²⁰⁹

The Cass Motor Sales Building (1928), 2800 Cass Avenue, was designed by Charles Agree, who also was the architect of the residential hotel, Belcrest Apartments, 5440 Cass Avenue.²¹⁰ Originally the Cass Motor company sold Marmon Motor Company cars but after that business failed during the Depression, the firm switched to selling Chrysler produced cars. This sales line continued until the late 1960s, when the building was purchased by Charles Dagleish who specialized in Cadillacs.²¹¹

In 1922, a large convention hall was constructed fronting on both Woodward and Cass Avenues between Forest and Canfield. The building rose to two stories on the Woodward and Cass Avenue facades and was just one story between. A key feature of the building was the nineteen automobile showrooms planned for the Cass Avenue side of the building.²¹² A newspaper article from June 1922 reported that:

the arrangement of the display space and showrooms makes the building especially well adapted to the display of automotive equipment, it will be one of Detroit's best locations for an automobile accessory business.²¹³

In 1925, the first Detroit Auto Show was held in Convention Hall. This event continued annually until about 1960, when it was moved to Cobo Hall in downtown Detroit.²¹⁴

In addition to the businesses associated with the automobile industry, there were several large office/commercial spaces constructed in the Cass Corridor during this period. One such building, the Architects Building (1924), 415 Brainard Street, was designed by the firm of Richard H. Marr and Marcus R. Burrowes.²¹⁵ The seven-story Neo-Classical Revival style building was planned to provide office space for architects and members of related building trades under a single roof. Other well-known architects who had offices in the building, besides Marr and Burrowes, included Lancelot Sukert and Roland C. Gies.²¹⁶

²⁰⁷ Robinson, Goodrich Building, 8-1.

²⁰⁸ Robinson, North Cultural Center Historic District, 10.

²⁰⁹ Dolkowski, New Amsterdam Historic District, 8-6.

²¹⁰ Klug, University-Cultural Center Phase I, 35.

²¹¹ Klug, University-Cultural Center Phase I, 35.

²¹² Robinson, Goodrich Building, 8-2.

²¹³ Robinson, Goodrich Building, 8-2.

²¹⁴ Robinson, Goodrich Building, 8-2.

²¹⁵ Deborah M. Goldstein, The Architect's Building, National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1994, 8-1.

²¹⁶ Goldstein, The Architect's Building, 8-3.

The S.S. Kresge World Headquarters Building (1928–1930) at 2727 Second Avenue was constructed adjacent to Cass Park, and occupies an entire city block bounded by Second and Third Avenues and Ledyard and Henry Streets. The Art Deco-style building is just four stories tall, breaking from the trend in the 1920s and 1930s to construct similar buildings as skyscrapers. Originally a five-cent and ten-cent store, by the 1930s, the company had expanded its business model to include merchandise up to one dollar and became a national retailer. In an effort to streamline the administrative operations of his store, the new corporate headquarters was planned to not only serve as a company showplace, but also headquarters for the workforce of five-hundred employees.²¹⁷

Like S.S. Kresge, the Fisher Brothers, of Fisher Body fame, were also seeking to have a statement building to their credit. They too hired Albert Kahn as the architect of the Fisher Building (1927–1928), 3011 West Grand Boulevard.²¹⁸ The building consists of several major building components, including a twenty-eight-story office tower with two, flat-roofed, eleven-story wings extending to the north and south resulting in an L-plan. The Art Deco design of the Fisher Building has a vertical emphasis created by projecting piers between strip windows and stepped-back massing of the tower. The green tile roof, with gilt cresting, is a distinctive landmark visible from a variety of locations around the city.²¹⁹ The finished building included an estimated ten-thousand tons of steel, six-hundred thousand cubic yards of concrete and marble, and polished and cured Minnesota pink granite cladding the first three stories of the building's exterior (Figure 27, next page).²²⁰

²¹⁷ Leslie J. Vollmert, The S.S. Kresge World Headquarters National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1979, 8-1.

²¹⁸ Les Vollmert, Fisher & New Center Buildings National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1980, 8-1

²¹⁹ Vollmert, Fisher & New Center Buildings, 7-1.

²²⁰ "New Era is Opened by Fisher Building," *Detroit Free Press*, May 20, 1928, 6-10.



Figure 27. Fisher Building (1927–1928), photograph ca. 2007

Source: Balthazar Korab Collection, Library of Congress

Newspaper articles published about the time the Fisher Building was nearing completion noted that the building would provide office space for a variety of services that would benefit the surrounding area. Included in the amenities was an “11-story garage, having capacity for more than 1,000 cars; a 3,000-seat theater; a professional wing for dentists, physicians and surgeons; a restaurant, drug store and a beauty parlor.”²²¹ Three stories of the building were dedicated to shops of various kinds, with the remainder of the building devoted to business offices. The inclusion of the large live-theater space offered the first theater in the area, with

²²¹ “New Era is Opened by Fisher Building,” *Detroit Free Press*, May 20, 1928, 6-10.

the only other venue of a similar size in the area is the slightly older theater space in the Masonic Temple at the southern end of the Cass Corridor project area, which could seat five thousand.²²² The Fisher Building also provided a large, convenient, central location for a number of medical professional offices, given that Henry Ford Hospital was located approximately three blocks west down West Grand Boulevard.

The managers of the building were well aware of the impact on the area by the new development. A May 20, 1928, newspaper article noted that the Fisher Building would embody “a solution to the traffic, parking, shopping, and theater problems, as these problems concern its immediate vicinity...”²²³ Details of the buildings design included bronze sashes and frames for the eighteen-hundred windows, electric wires that run under the floors to provide connections to telephones, buzzers, telegraph, and other electric controls by merely tapping through the floor. To accommodate vertical movement through the building twenty-five elevators were installed, all with automatic controls.

In addition to major statement buildings, there were a number of smaller commercial endeavors in the Cass Corridor that added to the unique character of the area. One of these was Graybar Electric, who hired C. F. Haglin and Sons to construct their building in 1926 at 55 West Canfield Avenue.²²⁴ Graybar Electric was the nation’s largest independent electrical and telecommunications distributor from 1926 to the 1940s. The firm was established in Rochester, New York in the 1860s, and by 1926 they had fifty-nine distributing houses in important cities across the county, including Detroit.

Other smaller commercial endeavors were present in the Cass Corridor. These businesses both provided employment for local residents, but in many cases offered the goods and services needed for residents to maintain their home and family. Among these smaller commercial businesses were the John Solomon Grocery (1925), 4160 Cass Avenue; the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company Grocery (1924), 4160 Cass Avenue; a gas station (1931), 4152 Second Street; and Weber Furniture Company (1923), 4126 Third Street. Industrial buildings constructed during the period include the George D. Mason designed Cadillac Motor Car Company Assembly Plant (1905), 450 Amsterdam Avenue. In 1914 the Detroit Vault Company constructed a new factory at 5940 Cass Avenue.

One of the most unique commercial enterprises established in the Cass Corridor during this period was the United Sound Systems Recording Studio. In the 1930s, James (Jimmy) Siracuse and his wife Shyla (Esther), started the recording studio on the first floor of their home at 5051 Cass Avenue.²²⁵ The firm, one of Detroit’s first independent recording studios, offered a variety of services, including: recording, transcription, and production services for radio programs, record companies, musicians, singers, and private citizens (many of whom

²²² Alex Lundberg and Greg Kowalski, *Images of America Detroit’s Masonic Temple* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 56.

²²³ Lundberg and Kowalski, *Detroit’s Masonic Temple*, 56.

²²⁴ Gretchen Griner, Graybar Electric Company Building National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997, 8-1.

²²⁵ HDAB, “Proposed United Sound Systems Recording Studio’s Historic District – Final Report,” Detroit, Michigan, 2015, 2.

took advantage of the service to send recordings to military personnel during World War II).²²⁶ By the end of the decade the company relocated from the Siracuse home to a new house located at 5840 Second Avenue in the northern section of the Cass Corridor project area.²²⁷

Religion

Between 1918 and 1928, the neighborhood surrounding the Cass Methodist Church began to transition from a fashionable residential area to one dominated by people that were of more modest means. As part of this transition, the single-family homes were being replaced by new commercial enterprises. As a result of the changes, the membership of the church went from seven hundred and sixty-seven to two hundred and seventy-five.²²⁸ Instead of closing the facility entirely, the congregation embarked on a program to convert to an evangelical center. This decision moved the church to take an active role in the community, one that was not new to the organization. In 1894, the church and its Relief Committee actively supported the efforts of Alice Bowen, founder of the Visiting Nurses Society in Detroit.²²⁹ To reflect the updated mission of the church, its name was actually changed in 1928 to Cass Community Methodist Episcopal Church.²³⁰ In the 1930s, particularly during the Great Depression when there were a large number of people out of work and struggling to make ends meet, efforts by the church included providing food and clothing for area residents that did not otherwise qualify for aid from the Welfare Department. At its peak, the Church assisted fourteen-hundred families in just one month during 1933.²³¹

Several new churches were constructed in the Cass Corridor area during this period. Among these is First Unitarian Universalist Church (1916), 4605 Cass Avenue. The congregation was originally established in downtown Detroit, moving to the adjacent McAdow House (1891) in 1913. Services were held in the house until the church was completed next door several years later, and the McAdow house converted into the parish house. The church building was designed by architect John Scott and constructed by Martin Scholls and Son.²³²

The First Church of Christ, Scientist (1917) at 4743 Cass Avenue, is located just a few blocks north of the Unitarian Church. The Church of Christ, Scientist, was designed by Field, Hinchman and Smith, predecessor firm of the firm Smith, Hinchman and Grylls. The building is an example of the Neo-Classical Revival style and is an early example in the city.²³³

²²⁶ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, "Historical Marker-S744 – United Sound Systems Recording Studios," accessed February 26, 2021, https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/Publications/PDFS/ArcGISOnline/StoryMaps/mhc_historical_markers/pdfs/MHC822017002.pdf.

²²⁷ HDAB, "United Sound Systems Recording Studio," 3.

²²⁸ HDAB, Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report, April 13, 1987, 2.

²²⁹ HDAB, Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report, April 13, 1987, 3.

²³⁰ Cass Community Church, History, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://cassumc.com/history/>.

²³¹ HDAB, Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report, April 13, 1987, 3.

²³² Les Vollmert, Perry McAdow House National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1980, 8-1, 2.

²³³ Miller, Wayne State University Buildings, 8-2.

Education

In January 1913, the President of the Detroit School Board, Hiram C. Goldberg, was quoted as saying,

Detroit is growing more rapidly than any other city in the country. The school population last year was 56,000, an increase of 6,000 in one year. It is estimated that another 6,000 at least, will be shown at the next enumeration. This means that Detroit must expend large sums for new buildings and additions or fall far behind... Detroit during the coming year ought to build six or seven 16-room elementary buildings, and another high school is badly needed in the northern section of the city.²³⁴

Between 1910 and 1930, the Detroit School Board constructed on hundred and eighty new schools across the city. Included in this number is Burton Elementary School, 3420 Cass Avenue, which was constructed between 1912 and 1913, opening for classes in 1914.²³⁵ In 1922, the demand on the building was such that there was an addition made to the building.²³⁶

The Clay School, 453 Martin Luther King Boulevard, continued to serve as a local elementary school from its construction in 1888 until 1923. From 1923 until 1931, the school housed a special education center for boys.²³⁷ After the use as a special education center ended, the building housed continued its role in education along a slightly different path, housing a vocational study headquarters and the administrative offices for the Practical Nursing Center.²³⁸

The Central High School principal, David Mackenzie, was instrumental in the future of the high school. By the early 1910s, Mackenzie was working with Detroit public school superintendent Charles Chadsey and Dean Walter MacCraken of the Detroit Medical College to expand the class selection to create a larger program. In 1917, the Detroit Junior College was officially authorized by the Michigan legislature to provide two-year courses to enrolled students, enabling local residents to gain a college education without bearing the traditional costs of a higher education.²³⁹ By the end of the decade, a new facility was constructed to house Central High School and the former building was fully occupied by several departments of the new junior college. Just a few years later, in 1923, the institution received legislative sanction to become a four-year college known as College of the City of Detroit.²⁴⁰

The Lewis Cass Technical High School, 2421 Second Avenue, provided a permanent location for a technical school that had been established in January 1907, but was located within the Cass Union building. This first effort at technical education had one-hundred-ten students and

²³⁴ "Warns Detroit to Provide Schools," *Detroit Free Press*, January 21, 1913, 5.

²³⁵ Sanborn Map Company, *Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, 1921, 70; Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

²³⁶ Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

²³⁷ Conway, *The Clay School*, 8-1.

²³⁸ Conway, *The Clay School*, 8-1.

²³⁹ Aschenbrenner, *A History of Wayne State*, 39.

²⁴⁰ Miller, *Wayne State University Buildings*.

nine teachers. The program was specifically to prepare participants for careers in the growing manufacturing industry, such as “draughtsmen, machinists, electricians, auto-mechanics, patternmakers, bookkeepers, salesmen, typists, stenographers, and cost accountants.”²⁴¹ Constructed between 1918 and 1922, the Malcomson & Higgenbotham-designed school was seven stories tall and included sixty classrooms as well as a three-thousand seat auditorium. The new school offered classes in “Mechanic Arts, Electrical, Auto Mechanics, Science, Pharmacy, Printing, Industrial Arts, Music, Pre-Nursing, Textiles, and General Merchandising, and Home Economics.”²⁴² The building was also utilized to offer a variety of vocational classes to adults. For a time, the new school was connected by a second-story causeway to the High School of Commerce across High Street from the new building. This second school provided classes focusing on preparing students for careers in clerical and retail work.²⁴³

The growing population of school-age children in Detroit was not limited to those in elementary or high school. To address this issue, and remove a deteriorated elementary school constructed in 1873 from use, in 1922 the Detroit Board of Education hired the firm of Malcomson and Higgenbotham to design and construct the new Jefferson Intermediate School on Selden Avenue.²⁴⁴ The grounds for the old school had been expanded in 1915, with the addition of several neighboring lots for playgrounds, so the property was well suited to the need for an updated building. Designed in the popular Collegiate Gothic style, the new building could accommodate approximately fifteen hundred students.²⁴⁵ City-wide there had been nine new schools or additions made for the 1923 school year, but the Board of Education cautioned the need for schools still continued to rise, forcing a number of temporary schools to be placed into service.

In addition to the schools in the area, between 1915 and 1930, the Detroit Public Library constructed a large new main branch at 5201 Woodward Avenue, between Farnsworth and Kirby streets.²⁴⁶ The library had been established in 1865 and was first located in City Hall before moving to Center Park in 1875. Almost fifty years later, the library was much too small to accommodate the growing collections and needs of the public. The site was selected in part because the city had recently purchased the land directly across Woodward Avenue for the new art institute. The two buildings would form the nucleus of the desired Cultural Center.

The city retained the services of Philadelphia architect Frank Miles Day who advised that the city should hold a competition for the design of the new building. A preliminary competition was held for Detroit based architects, from which two designs were selected to compete against a national competition. Cass Gilbert, from New York City, was announced as the

²⁴¹ Timothy Boscarino, Lewis Cass Technical High School National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2011, 8-1.

²⁴² Boscarino, Lewis Cass Technical High School, 8-1.

²⁴³ Boscarino, Lewis Cass Technical High School, 8-1.

²⁴⁴ Gretchen Griner, Jefferson Intermediate School National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997, 8-1.

²⁴⁵ “Detroit Schools open their doors on Tuesday,” *Detroit Free Press*, September 4, 1923, 22.

²⁴⁶ Brian Conway, Cultural Center National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1983, 8-1.

winner of the competition in 1913. That December, Gilbert paid his first visit to the site saying, “no better choice of a library site could have been made.”²⁴⁷ Construction for the new library was planned to begin in 1914, and to cost an estimated \$850,000, but both the city and the architect indicated that it would not be surprising if the one-million-dollar mark was passed to complete the construction.²⁴⁸

Finally, on Friday, June 3, 1921, the new library was opened to the public for the first time.²⁴⁹ The price tag had tripled, reaching three-million dollars, but newspaper accounts indicate that the public was pleased with their new building (Figure 28). Newspaper accounts described the



Figure 28. View north on Woodward Avenue showing the Detroit Public Library (1921; left) and the Detroit Institute of Arts (1927; right)

Source: Arthur S. Siegel Collection, Library of Congress

building as a modified Renaissance style that was constructed primarily of marble and included three floors, a basement, and mezzanine. Details, such as the fireplace in the children’s room, which was done by Mary Perry Stratton and illustrates ten favorite stories of youth such as those of Ulysses, Aladdin and his lamp, Robinson Crusoe, Alice in Wonderland, and so on” were extolled.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ New York Architect Praises Library Site,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 18, 1913, 9.

²⁴⁸ “New York Architect Praises Library Site,” 9.

²⁴⁹ “Crowds Visit New Library,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 4, 1921, 1.

²⁵⁰ “Crowds Visit New Library,” 3.

Social History

At the end of the first decade of the 1900s the Masonic lodges had outgrown their current facility on Jefferson Avenue, and began to amass land for a large new temple building. In 1913 the new site at 500 Temple Avenue, between Cass Avenue and Second Street, was purchased.²⁵¹ The Masonic Temple Association selected noted Detroit architect George D. Mason to design the new facility, which they believed would be both a Masonic Temple and city cultural center. Using Gothic style, as a nod to the origins of Freemasonry and the craft guilds of medieval Europe, the resulting building covered almost two acres and enclosed over twelve million cubic feet on fourteen floors, and was one of the most complex architectural designs of the time. The cornerstone for the temple was placed in 1922, and construction was completed in 1926 (Figure 29).²⁵²

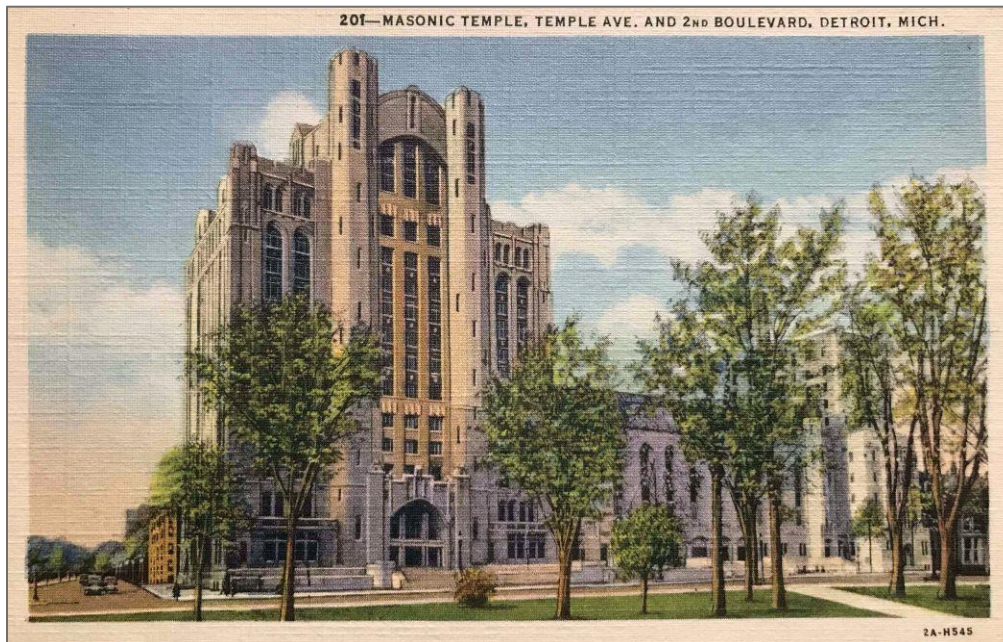


Figure 29. Masonic Temple (1926) view across Cass Park, photograph ca. 1930

Inside, the Masonic Temple building was designed to accommodate fifty Masonic bodies with lodge rooms and required special ancillary facilities for each that were designed in accordance with the appropriate Masonic traditions and rituals. Additionally, the building boasted the city's largest auditorium, and extensive convention and dining facilities. Recreational features of the new building included a swimming pool, handball courts, billiard rooms, and bowling alleys. As a result of the needs for the organization, the final design included over one-thousand rooms, thousands of feet of painted and gilded moldings and friezes designed to

²⁵¹ Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-1.

²⁵² Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-1.

complement the unique period décor, and thousands of square feet of stenciling and frescos covered the walls and ceilings.²⁵³

The Detroit Masonic Temple auditorium was the largest venue in the city that could accommodate live performances. Over the years, it hosted classical soloists, symphony orchestras, the New York Metropolitan Opera, and the San Francisco Ballet, to more recently, the Rolling Stones.²⁵⁴

There were a number of smaller social halls located in the Cass Corridor area by the early twentieth century. Among these was the Detroit Pythian Castle (Hebrew) located at 3143 Cass Avenue. The hall opened in 1913 in the former First Baptist Church. The former church was sold after the congregation merged with the North Woodward Baptist Church at Woodward Avenue and Pingree Street (outside Cass Corridor project area).²⁵⁵ Sanborn Maps from the time indicate that the two-story brick building included a kitchen, dining room, and club rooms on the first floor and a hall on the second floor.²⁵⁶

Much smaller social organizations were also present in the Cass Corridor. For example, Delta Tau Delta opened a fraternity house at 5511 Cass in 1922.²⁵⁷ The fraternity announced its plans to open the house to provide a

meeting place for all Delta in Detroit, a place for young men of the fraternity just out of school to meet older men firmly established in business, who it is hoped to be of assistance in helping the younger fellow to get his feet firmly set on the ladder in dynamic Detroit.²⁵⁸

Constructed in 1928, the League of Catholic Women Building, 100 Parsons Street, was, at the time it was completed, the largest building of its size and type erected by a group of organized women. Organized in 1906, the group underwent a number of name changes, before being reorganized in 1915 as the League of Catholic Women. Through their efforts, the League brought Catholic women from across Detroit together to carry out a city-wide effort of mercy and charity for single young women seeking employment in the city. At the time the Parsons Street building was erected, the League boasted a membership of twelve thousand. The distinctive home of the League was designed by the firm of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls in the Neo-Georgian style.²⁵⁹

Art and Entertainment

The Detroit Orchestra was organized in the 1870s with its forty members remaining active until approximately 1910. After being limited to traveling symphony orchestras from other

²⁵³ Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-2.

²⁵⁴ Vollmert, Detroit Masonic Temple, 8-3.

²⁵⁵ "First Baptist Church to be Pythian Castle," *Detroit Free Press*, February 9, 1913, 23.

²⁵⁶ Sanborn Map Company, *Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v. 2 (Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1921), 70.

²⁵⁷ "Delta Tau Delta has a New Home on Cass Avenue," *Detroit Free Press*, March 19, 1922, 4-1.

²⁵⁸ "Delta Tau Delta," 4-1.

²⁵⁹ Gretchen Griner, League of Catholic Women Building National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.

cities, by 1913–1914 the city was again clambering for their own orchestra and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra was revived.²⁶⁰ The newly formed orchestra included members from the School of Music in Ann Arbor, a variety of facilities of Detroit conservatories of music, and professional players in theatre and café orchestras from Detroit. The reconstituted orchestra was under the direction of Weston Gales. The first performance of the newly formed orchestra took place in March 1914 at the Detroit Opera House.²⁶¹ Each of the six concerts that first year were held in the afternoon since the organization lacked sufficient funding for an evening rental of the Opera House. In spite of these setbacks, the orchestra received donations from William H. Murphy and Horace Dodge sufficient to establish the orchestra on a permanent basis.²⁶²

Ossip Gabrilowitsch was a guest conductor during the first season of the revived orchestra.²⁶³ So impressed were the performance's patrons that they sought to make Gabrilowitsch the permanent conductor. Using his influence to establish a better performance location, Gabrilowitsch accepted the new position provided a new permanent hall suitable to the needs of the orchestra be constructed in time for the first concert in the fall — less than six months after the demand was made (Figure 30).²⁶⁴



Figure 30. Detroit Orchestra Hall (1919), 3711 Woodward Avenue

²⁶⁰ Constance Henslee, Orchestra Hall National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1971, 3.

²⁶¹ Henslee, Orchestra Hall, 4.

²⁶² Henslee, Orchestra Hall, 4.

²⁶³ Henslee, Orchestra Hall, 4.

²⁶⁴ Henslee, Orchestra Hall, 4.

The community rallied, and within two short weeks over a half-million dollars was raised and the site of the new hall at Woodward and Parsons was purchased. The new building was designed by C. Howard Crane, who, as the architect of approximately fifty theaters in Detroit alone, was considered one of the most prolific theater architects in Detroit of the time.²⁶⁵ To meet their deadline, workmen worked around the clock from May to October, barely meeting the goal of hosting the first concert in the new hall on October 23, 1919. Workman continued with their tasks until “dinnertime” leaving before the 8:30 pm concert. While the building was complete, it was not fully decorated, missing draperies, carpets, wall lights, and other ornamental decorations.²⁶⁶ The first concert was well attended and a huge hit with all present. The event opened with a resounding ovation for the conductor, who immediately launched his ninety-member orchestra into the Star-Spangled Banner.²⁶⁷

Gabrilowitsch continued to lead the orchestra into the 1930s. After a long illness, the conductor passed away in September 1936. The loss of their famed conductor and the financial pressures of the Great Depression forced the orchestra to make a series of difficult decisions, including closing their hall and relocating to the Detroit Masonic Temple, where they could continue to perform at a reduced expense.²⁶⁸

For those who liked to take a more active role when listening to music, there was the Arcadia Pavilion, a dance hall and auditorium. Located at 3527 Woodward Avenue, between Stimson Place and Davenport, the entrance was located at the center of a long strip of commercial buildings fronting on Woodward. The building was completed in 1912, with initial reports indicating that the facility could accommodate up to four thousand. The Arcadia Pavilion was called the “largest dancing palace in the country, erected at a cost of \$100,000.”²⁶⁹ The interior of the building featured highest quality of maple flooring for a 37,750-square foot area. Additionally, the dance hall would have over four thousand lights operated by “novel electrical devices with theatrical dimmers, flashers, and other mechanical appliances.”²⁷⁰ The dance hall management assured potential patrons that the facility would use great care to assure that they would require registration of those who wished to enter, providing an opportunity to refuse admission to undesirables.²⁷¹

The new office and retail building, the Fisher Building on West Grand Boulevard, also included a large theater space. The building featured a three thousand-seat theater designed by architects Graven and Mayger in the Mayan style.²⁷² The Mayan designs, based on the architecture of the ancient civilization that was considered to be one of the most colorful and advanced of early American peoples, utilized in the decorative panels and figures of the theater were replicas of the original from excavations in Yucatan and Honduras and made

²⁶⁵ Henslee, *Orchestra Hall*, 3.

²⁶⁶ Charlotte M. Tarnsney, “Concert Opens Music Temple,” *Detroit Free Press*, October 24, 1919, 3.

²⁶⁷ Tarnsney, “Concert Opens,” 3.

²⁶⁸ Henslee, *Orchestra Hall*, 6.

²⁶⁹ “Dance Hall to be Country’s Finest,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 19, 1912, 14.

²⁷⁰ “Dance Hall,” 14.

²⁷¹ “Dance Hall,” 14.

²⁷² “Dance Hall,” 14.

possible through the assistance of the Mexican government.²⁷³ Some of the design elements utilized in the lobby decorations were from excavations completed as recently as the spring prior to the theater opening.²⁷⁴ The new theater space offered movies and vaudeville shows.²⁷⁵

This period was also one of loss for the Cass Corridor. In the early 1900s, the Detroit Athletic Club (D.A.C.) experienced financial difficulties, largely due to falling membership. A meeting held by the club in 1902 revealed that membership was just three hundred but needed to be at least four hundred and fifty to meet their financial obligations.²⁷⁶ Of additional concern at the time was the fact that the lease for the property where the clubhouse was located would expire in just a few months. The club was able to retain their Woodward Avenue property through the first decade of the century by boosting their membership and fundraising for the organization.²⁷⁷ However, by 1910, newspaper reports indicated that the Detroit Library had placed an option with the property owners to purchase the property occupied by the D.A.C..²⁷⁸ Even if the library did not locate on the D.A.C. grounds, the property had been sold, with the new owners announcing their plan to subdivide the large parcel and use it for commercial purposes.²⁷⁹ By early 1913, through membership pledges of financial support, the new clubhouse site at Madison Avenue between Randolph and John R. Street had been secured. The club had secured the services of architect Albert Kahn to design the new building, which was completed and open for use in April 1915.²⁸⁰

While the D.A.C. was moving out of the Cass Corridor, a number of theaters, featuring both live and motion picture events, were constructed in the area, particularly along Woodward Avenue. One of the new motion picture theaters in the area was the Garden Theater (1912), 3933 Woodward Avenue. Designed by theater architect C. Howard Crane, the building name may have been based on the use of trellised and foliated motifs in the interior. The Garden Theater boasted nine-hundred and three seats, making it one of Detroit's first large neighborhood theaters.²⁸¹

Movie theatres in the Cass Corridor included Roxy's Theater, Woodward Avenue between Temple and Sproat, which opened on Friday, November 4, 1932.²⁸² The fourteen-hundred seat movie theater was operated by Ben and Lou Cohen and had a policy of "continuous motion pictures." A newspaper notice regarding the new theater announced that this feature meant that movies would be shown day and night with no closing period, making it possible to "cater to all classes of fans."²⁸³ The easy access to the Woodward Avenue venues, which were along

²⁷³ Ella H. McCormick, "The Reel Players: Fisher Mayan Motifs Authentic," *Detroit Free Press*, October 16, 1928, 24.

²⁷⁴ McCormick, 24.

²⁷⁵ Paul Vachon, *Images of America: Forgotten Detroit* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), 99.

²⁷⁶ "New Era for Detroit A.C.," *Detroit Free Press*, March 12, 1902, 3.

²⁷⁷ "New Era for Detroit A.C.," 3.

²⁷⁸ "Library may get D.A.C. Grounds," *Detroit Free Press*, March 25, 1910, 6.

²⁷⁹ E. A. Batchelor, "D.A.C. Will Have New Field and Clubhouse," *Detroit Free Press*, September 4, 1912, 8.

²⁸⁰ Voyles and Bluth, *The Detroit Athletic Club*, 27, 30.

²⁸¹ Lisa Maria DiChiera, "The Theater Designs of C. Howard Crane" (Master's Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1992), 14.

²⁸² "Opening of Roxy's is Set for Friday," *Detroit Free Press*, November 2, 1932, 18.

²⁸³ "Opening of Roxy's," 18

the streetcar lines and one of the city's major throughfares, made the area a natural location for the entertainment industry. Additionally, each of these theaters boasted a large marquee that provided an area to advertise to those passing by. This meant that even the most casual observer was well aware of what was showing in each theater. For the residents of Cass Corridor, not only did their proximity to the large theater district mean they did not have to go far to enjoy the latest entertainment craze, they also were able to find jobs, selling tickets, working the refreshment stands, and running the projection booth, essentially in their own back yard.

A number of bars and small entertainment venues opened in the area in the 1930s. Among these is the Gold Dollar, 3129 Cass Avenue. The small bar later became a well-known landmark in Cass Corridor and was a launching place for aspiring bands in the city.²⁸⁴ Like the larger entertainment venues on Woodward Avenue, these smaller locales provided convenient locations for neighborhood residents to gather socially. The smaller spaces also probably were preferred by those seeking a more casual outing. Although there would have been fewer jobs available at the smaller venues, there was still an opportunity to find work close to home.

The War Years: 1940s to the 1950s

Urban renewal has greatly impacted much of Detroit, but in the Cass Corridor during this period it led to the loss of large areas of residential development between Warren Avenue and West Palmer Avenue. This area was transformed from a middle class neighborhood to the site of the Wayne University beginning in the 1940s, with the first new buildings added to the campus beginning in the late 1940s and continuing into through the 1950s. The new buildings constructed on campus during this period are among the finest examples of Mid-Century modern styles and the works of several leading architects. Among the most noted buildings from the period is the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, designed by Detroit-based architect Minoru Yamasaki and completed in the closing years of the 1950s. These buildings constructed as part of the early development of Wayne University are representative of community development during this period and have the greatest potential for NRHP eligibility under Criterion A and C.

Similarly, urban renewal played a major role in the development of the freeways that eventually were constructed across Detroit. Thousands of houses, businesses, and industries were removed during this period to make way for the development of I-94/Edsel Ford and the M-10/Lodge Freeways in the Cass Corridor, reshaping neighborhoods and changing connectivity patterns and paths in the area. Among the goals for the new roadways was to facilitate smoother and safer travel for large volumes of traffic by removing it from surface streets where stop signs, traffic lights, and pedestrians all created distractions and potential hazards. While this goal was largely achieved, the freeway construction also artificially separated neighborhoods. From the view of the surface streets, large obstacles were introduced that were often challenging to cross and limited the walkability of the area. This aspect of urban renewal is challenging to include in the NRHP. It is possible that the freeways

²⁸⁴ Steve Neavling, "Legendary, Ilitch-owned Gold Dollar is demolished after suspicious fire," *Detroit Metro Times*, August 12, 2019, accessed February 3, 2021, <https://www.metrotimes.com/news-hits/archives/2019/08/12/legendary-ilitch-owned-gold-dollar-is-demolished-after-suspicious-fire>.

themselves could be NRHP eligible; however, they have been altered extensively over time, which appears to preclude them from NRHP consideration. In contrast, areas that escaped demolition as a result of the freeway construction are more likely to have significance. At least one area, the small section of neighborhood bounded by I-94/Ford Freeway on the south, M-10/John C. Lodge on the West, and Third Street on the east, south of Holden Street, is such an isolated neighborhood that retains much of its historic feel, and has taken advantage of the isolation to create a residential enclave unlike anything else in the Cass Corridor.

One of the most defining issues of the period in Detroit was the fight to achieve fair housing options for all residents of the city. In spite of federal legislation and a law suit brought by the Detroit NAACP, this issue met with great resistance by the white community and at City Hall. The Detroit Housing Commission established a number of public housing developments in the city, although none were within the boundaries of the Cass Corridor, the Jeffries Housing Project, was located just across the M-10/Lodge Freeway. The Jeffries was constructed on lands cleared by urban renewal and although originally intended to be occupied by a mix of races, eventually ended up almost entirely Black occupied. The practice of separating races has a long tradition in Detroit, with the development of several areas that Blacks were restricted to, including Black Bottom and Paradise Valley. Later, a small enclave known as Sugar Hill was also opened to Black settlement. The small amount of land open to Black occupation was over sixteen percent of the city, but housed thirty percent of the population by the end of the 1950s.

Extreme overcrowding, unfair housing practices, and racial tensions exploded into rioting in 1942, as Black defense workers attempted to move into their new federal housing at the Sojourner Truth Homes on Nevada Street, outside the Cass Corridor. The new complex was in a traditionally white neighborhood, which ultimately sparked protests and attempts to block the new residents from moving into their homes. This blockade was the precursor to the 1943 riots that started on Belle Isle and moved to Black Bottom and Paradise Valley. The fight, which started with approximately two hundred individuals, grew as the night progressed, ultimately ending only after the arrival of six thousand army troops armed with automatic weapons. As a result of the fighting, nine whites and twenty-five Blacks were killed, including seventeen at the hands of police. Following the riot, it reports indicated that there were approximately seven hundred people injured in the violence and approximately two million dollars in property damages. Fortunately, most of the violence and associated looting was outside the Cass Corridor, but it illustrates the conditions at the time.

The ethnic mix within the Cass Corridor itself during this period had a very low number of Blacks. The majority of the population was white, with most being of eastern European descent. There were some notable exceptions, including a small but growing number of Japanese and Chaldean residents, with both groups establishing a presence in different sections of the Corridor. A larger number of the newly arrived residents to the Cass Corridor were southern whites, who moved north to find work in the large industries of Detroit. There were so many people from the south that at one point Third Avenue, generally between West Willis and West Canfield, was known as “little Kentucky” or “Tennessee Valley.” Properties that can be definitively linked to these ethnic groups, and that retain historic integrity, are candidates for NRHP eligibility.

There were several commercial enterprises of note in the Cass Corridor during the period, including the United Sound Systems studio, which had moved by this time to 5840 Second Avenue in the north end of the corridor, and established working relationships with a number of the music industries leaders. The home of the United Sound Systems studio is NRHP eligible, even with the current plans to relocate the building from its historic location on Second Street to accommodate updates in bridges and road configurations of I-94/Edsel Ford Freeway. For many of the city's residents and visitors, another major move that occurred during this period would leave a lasting memory. In the early 1950s, the auto shows that were once held in the Convention Hall at 4501 Woodward Avenue were relocated to the newly constructed Cobo Hall. The vacant hall was soon purchased by the owners of Vernor's Ginger Ale, and converted into a large bottling plant. For generations, those passing by the distinctive gnome sign on the corner of the building could watch as Detroit's own soda was bottled. Unfortunately, this building has been demolished and a modern mixed use building has taken its place.

Churches in the Cass Corridor continued to host regular services during the period, even as they lost congregations to urban renewal. At least one church, the Cass Avenue Methodist, expanded their ministries to include even greater outreach. It was this church that was also credited with establishing a welcoming presence for the Japanese migrants seeking new homes, many after losing their homes and livelihoods when they were forced into the Japanese Internment Camps during World War II.

During the 1950s, public schools also expanded, with a building constructed at 3550 John C. Lodge Service Drive. The addition of the James Couzens Elementary to the area brought the number of active public schools to four. In addition to the public schools, Wayne University greatly expanded its campus, adding a number of classrooms, two libraries, and a community arts building. Like the modern buildings constructed on Wayne University campus, the James Couzens Elementary school is also eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. The building not only is representative of architectural style popular during the period, it's also representative of the schools constructed during the period – one of the last in which the Detroit School Board worked to keep up with the growing student population.

It was during this period that the LGBTQ community also began to gain greater visibility. In some cases, such as with the Sweetheart Bar, this visibility remained cloaked by discretion with the same-sex couples gathering in a separate space from the local residents. In other venues, like the Traffic, Jam and Snug (TJs), the owners were openly gay and welcomed everyone to their very popular restaurant. While the LGBTQ community continued to face prejudice from many Detroiters, the first small moves to an accepting society was established in the Cass Corridor during this period. Unfortunately, most of the buildings from this period associated with the LGBTQ community have either been lost, replaced with a new structure, or have experienced extensive loss of historic integrity.

One of the most vibrant and exciting aspects of the Cass Corridor during the period was the huge amount of art and entertainment available. Music and stage shows were presented in small bars and on the stage of the Paradise Theatre, where from 1941 to 1951, Black entertainers took the stage daily. The Paradise Theatre, which was located in the abandoned Orchestra Hall, drew top jazz, swing, and R&B entertainers from across the country, with

multiple shows offered every day. The theatre also offered movies and was open to black and white audiences. The building is listed on the NRHP under the name Orchestra Hall; however, consideration should be given to updating the nomination to be more inclusive of its history, including its very important period as a major African American entertainment venue.

No less important than the Paradise Theater were the smaller venues, that often catered to the local residents. These gathering spots frequently included music or some kind of show, but just as often, as was the catch phrase of Buddy & Jimmy's Inn noted, "a friendly place to meet a friend." Most of these venues within the Cass Corridor Project Area were established well before this period, or have experienced extensive loss of historic integrity, precluding their inclusion in the NRHP.

Community Development and Transportation

Beginning in the 1940s and continuing into the 1960s, Detroit's city planning department began work on multi-faceted redevelopment projects. There was a two-prong purpose for the effort: to allow for the construction of a network of freeways to ease street traffic congestion, and to eliminate areas that were rundown and considered by some to be blighted.²⁸⁵ One of the largest areas of urban renewal was the area historically known as Black Bottom, roughly bounded by Gratiot Avenue, Brush Street, Vernor Highway, and the Grand Trunk railroad tracks, and referred to as the Gratiot Area Redevelopment Project by city planners. In 1957, a newspaper article explained that there were also several areas in the Corktown area targeted for redevelopment. These included an area identified as the West Side Industrial project, which included approximately seventy-five acres of land; the Central Business District No. 1, an area of deteriorated buildings bounded by Bagley, Cass, Lafayette and the John C. Lodge Expressway; and the Central Business District No. 2, a thirty-four acre site bounded by Vernor Highway, John C. Lodge Expressway, Third, and Bagley.²⁸⁶ As each of these areas were cleared, a huge number of people were forced from their homes and had to seek lodging elsewhere.

One such area that was specifically designed to accommodate the displaced residents was the Jeffries Housing Project located just west of the Lodge Freeway, and just across the freeway from the Cass Corridor. Named for Edward J. Jeffries, a former Detroit Recorder's Court judge and father of a Detroit mayor Edward J. Jeffries Jr., the project cost more than \$28.7 million to construct.²⁸⁷ Although the development was outside the Cass Corridor, it was close enough to impact the businesses and residents of the Corridor, particularly in terms of housing, commercial activities, and crime in the area. Construction of the development began in 1950, with the first of eight fourteen-story towers opening in 1953 (Figure 31).²⁸⁸ The project was initially planned to have mixed racial residency, but by its completion, the facility was entirely occupied by Black residents.²⁸⁹ Within just a couple of years, the project added a

²⁸⁵ Robert C. Goodspeed, "Urban Renewal in Postwar Detroit, The Gratiot Area Redevelopment Project: A Case Study" (History Honors Thesis, The University of Michigan, 2004), accessed February 27, 2021, <http://goodspeedupdate.com/RobGoodspeed-HonorsThesis.pdf>

²⁸⁶ Tom Davis, "How Our Public Housing Rates," *Detroit Free Press*, September 1, 1957: 6.

²⁸⁷ Mark Puls, "Jeffries Towers Tumble – Implosion makes way for new housing," *Detroit News*, April 20, 2001.

²⁸⁸ Puls, "Jeffries Towers Tumble."

²⁸⁹ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 8.

series of townhouses that brought the total number of housing units to 2,270 on the forty-seven acre site. One of the original residents of the Jeffries Housing Project, Cliff Williams, recalls that initially, “it was beautiful...everybody was trying to get in there, the cream of the crop.” This sentiment would not last, and by the late-1960s, the waiting list that had been established when the Jeffries Housing Project was first opened to assign new units to residents, was set aside as people began to avoid the development.



Figure 31. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard near Third Street. Jeffries Project towers visible in the distance, ca. 1980

Source: Photograph by Bruce Harkness

Urban renewal was also a major force behind the growing footprint of Wayne University (later WSU). In 1942, architect Suren Pilafian won the competition to develop a new master plan for the campus of Wayne University.²⁹⁰ That same year, the first block of new real estate (Warren to Putnam, west of Cass Avenue) was purchased. Through the 1940s, the campus of Wayne University continued to grow. A newspaper report in April 1943 noted that the Detroit Board of Education had approved condemnation proceedings to acquire the title to a block of residences bound by Merrick, Cass, Putnam, and Second for expansion of the WSU Campus. This act enabled the removal of approximately fifteen buildings, although several survived into the late twentieth century as classrooms or clubhouses.²⁹¹ Facing increasing enrollment and classrooms that were less than ideal, in 1946 Michigan Governor Kelly announced he

²⁹⁰ Evelyn Aschenbrenner, *A History of Wayne State University in Photographs* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2009), 282.

²⁹¹ Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v. 6 (Detroit, Sanborn Map Company, 1910–1951), 78.

would recommend that the next session of the legislature vote more funds for building purposes.²⁹²

Additional property was purchased, existing buildings were converted to new uses, and construction of the first new buildings on campus since officially being established as Wayne University in 1933 were completed (State Hall, quickly followed by Science Hall).²⁹³ The new university buildings enabled the introduction of Modern Era style buildings, including International Style and New Formalism. The International style took the simplicity of Art Deco and Art Moderne to another level by removing all ornament and decorative detailing from the walls, windows, and roofline. Asymmetry, smooth surfaces, large, flush window groupings, and windowless wall surfaces are all identifying characteristics of the style. The use of a lightweight metal structural system underneath allowed for more flexible fenestration patterns and three-dimensional compositions, reducing the reliance on ornamentation. Examples of International Style buildings on campus include State Hall (1946), 5143 Cass Avenue; Purdy/Kresge Library (1954–1963), 5265 Cass Avenue; and the Community Arts Building (1957), 5400 Gullen Mall (Figure 32).



Figure 32. International Style Community Arts Building (1957), 5400 Gullen Mall

²⁹² “Shovelful of Dirt Starts New Wayne U Building,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 13, 1946, 23.

²⁹³ “Shovelful of Dirt,” 23.

The three buildings listed above, as well as the College of Engineering (1949) and the Alumni House (1957), which originally served as the University President's home, were all designed by Suren Pilafian. Pilafian is also credited with designing several WSU plans and played an essential role in the development of the city's cultural center.²⁹⁴

Minoru Yamasaki completed some masterplan work for the Wayne University campus beginning in the late 1950s and designed four buildings, each making a dramatic impact on the campus as a contrast to the surrounding turn-of-the-century architecture.²⁹⁵ Yamasaki is known for designing Detroit's first major International Style building, the annex to the Federal Reserve Branch Bank in Detroit, in the 1940s and he continued his efforts in Detroit and internationally.²⁹⁶ Yamasaki employed the principles of New Formalism, which reintroduced classical or traditional elements and merged them with the building materials and technologies of the modern era, in his efforts in campus planning and building design to Wayne State.²⁹⁷ Among the features that may be considered character defining characteristics of the style are smooth wall surfaces, decorative screens or grilles of metal or concrete, repetitive arches, and flat roofs with wide, overhanging eaves. Several excellent examples of the style by Yamasaki include the McGregor Memorial Conference Center (1958), 495 Ferry Mall; the Education Building (1960), 5425 Gullen Mall; the Prentis Building (1962-1964), 5201 Cass Avenue; and the DeRoy Auditorium (1962-1964), 5203 Cass Avenue (Figure 33).



Figure 33. NHL listed McGregor Memorial Conference Center (1958), 495 Ferry Mall

²⁹⁴ Blake McDonald, "Suren Pilafian (July 20, 1910 – Aug 5, 1988)," accessed February 24, 2021, <https://historicdetroit.org/architects/suren-pilafian>.

²⁹⁵ Rebecca Binno Savage, "Minoru Yamasaki: Biography," Wayne State University Yamasaki Legacy, accessed February 24, 2021, <http://yamasaki.wayne.edu/biography.html>.

²⁹⁶ Savage, Minoru Yamasaki: Biography.

²⁹⁷ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 662.

Urban renewal has greatly impacted much of Detroit, but in the Cass Corridor during this period it led to the loss of large areas of residential development between Warren Avenue and West Palmer Avenue. This area was transformed from a middle class neighborhood to the site of the WSU beginning in the 1940s, with the first new buildings added to the campus in the late 1940s. The new buildings constructed on campus during this period are among the finest examples of Mid-Century modern styles and the works of several leading architects. Among the most noted buildings from the period is the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, designed by Detroit-based architect Minoru Yamasaki and completed in the closing years of the 1950s.

In addition to the loss of buildings to accommodate the expansion of the Wayne University campus, there were a number of buildings that were removed to make way for the growing freeway system in the city. As the freeway construction continued to grow across Detroit, rapid transportation was enabled, allowing people to live further from their place of work, school, and worship. However, the freeways also removed hundreds, if not thousands, of buildings in their way. The new roads cut through long-established neighborhoods, creating artificial obstacles that separated the remaining residents from their surroundings and frequently forcing displaced residents to move to entirely new areas, leaving behind family, familiar shopping venues, and even proximity to their places of employment. Ironically, at the time the freeways were being constructed, a local news report suggested that the completion of the “Lodge and Edsel Ford Expressways will stabilize residential neighborhoods and encourage their improvement, thus checking the flow, to some extent, into the suburbs.”²⁹⁸

The first limited-access expressways were developed to help move wartime industry traffic and eventually became the baseline corridor for the I-94/Edsel Ford corridor. In 1942 the Willow Run Expressway was completed from Ypsilanti Township east to Hannan Road, east of Belleville. The Detroit Industrial Expressway was completed between 1942 and 1945 between Hannan Road and Wyoming Road, at the Detroit boundary, allowing 20,000 workers to commute daily.²⁹⁹ The Willow Run and the Detroit Industrial Expressways formed the baseline corridor of I-94/Edsel Ford, which runs through the north end of the Cass Corridor project area.³⁰⁰ At the same time, another expressway was being constructed in nearby Highland Park, the Davidson Freeway, located approximately 2.5 miles north of the West Grand Boulevard. The Davidson Freeway was intended to ease access to the Highland Park Ford plant and Chrysler facilities. North/south streets that pass through the Cass Corridor all led to the new expressways, as well as the ever-increasing industrial activities in the Milwaukee Junction area, on the east side of Woodward Avenue roughly between Harper and Grand Boulevard Avenues.

The early 1950s witnessed the completion of other early freeways, or expressways as they were initially known, beginning with the completion of the north-south portion of the M-

²⁹⁸ “Detroit Makes Its Plans: Two New Expressways,” *Detroit Free Press*, August 12, 1954, 8.

²⁹⁹ Mead & Hunt and Kidorf Preservation Consulting, “Reconnaissance-level Survey Report: Residential Neighborhoods in Detroit.” Prepared for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing, Michigan, 2013, 42.

³⁰⁰ michiganhighways.org, Early US-12, Willow Run, Detroit Industrial & Edsel Ford Freeways, accessed January 27, 2021, http://www.michiganhighways.org/indepth/early_I-94.html.

10/John C. Lodge Expressway in 1950. Following this, the Willow Run Expressway was extended eastward toward Mount Clemens and renamed the I-94/Edsel Ford Expressway.³⁰¹

Movement from one expressway to another, or from the expressway to the surface streets was an issue that was of great concern. While opening expressways to provide faster routes to final destinations was a major goal at the time, engineers also had to consider the safe and efficient movement of fast-moving traffic from one roadway to another. This was of particular concern within the Cass Corridor area, which includes the intersection of the east-west Edsel Ford Expressway and the north-south M-10/John C. Lodge. Cloverleaf intersections were initially considered the best method of dealing with the issue, but these typically required tight turns and large amounts of right-of-way and therefore were found to be inefficient and unsafe.³⁰² In 1944, highway engineers thought they had resolved the issue, based on a design popularized in New Jersey, but ultimately, they scrapped that model and developed the present configuration, one that provided “a direct connection type of interchange providing for direct turning movements in all directions.”³⁰³ National engineers commented that the interchange “depicts the most outstanding design for a highway interchange in the country.”³⁰⁴

With the passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1956, also known as the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act, which prompted the creation of the interstate highway system, the city’s freeway system was again expanded. In 1958, the Edsel Ford Expressway was extended 3.3 miles to stretch from Mount Elliot Street northeast of downtown, the previous eastern terminus, east beyond Connor Street to Norcross Street.³⁰⁵ Today, the Edsel Ford Expressway is a small segment of the I-94/Edsel Ford freeway that travels 275 miles across Michigan’s Lower Peninsula from New Buffalo on Lake Michigan to Port Huron at the southernmost point of Lake Huron.³⁰⁶

Even as the freeway system was expanding public transit still included streetcars. In 1945 there remained 928 cars operating on nineteen routes.³⁰⁷

³⁰¹ Michiganhighways.org, Year-by-Year History: I-94 before I-94 existed, accessed January 27, 2021, http://www.michiganhighways.org/indepth/early_I-94.html.

³⁰² Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan’s Historic Bridges: I-94 EB / I-94 Ramp to M-10, accessed January 27, 2021, https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9623_11154_11188-29426--,00.html.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Michiganhighways.org, Year-by-Year History: I-94 before I-94 existed, accessed January 27, 2021, http://www.michiganhighways.org/indepth/early_I-94.html

³⁰⁶ Detroit Historical Society, Encyclopedia Detroit: Edsel Ford Expressway, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/edsel-ford-expressway>.

³⁰⁷ Trajkovski, “A concise history of Detroit public transit.”

Government

In December 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for America to become “the greatest arsenal of democracy.”³⁰⁸ Michigan took this call to heart, and quickly transitioned from a large industrial base with an automotive focus to producing everything from airplanes and tanks to radar units, field kitchens, and ammunition. The proximity of the industrial areas in nearby Milwaukee Junction meant that a large number of the men, and sometimes women, were set to work on the production lines.

Additional war efforts in Detroit, were enumerated by Detroit Mayor Edward J. Jeffries Jr., in October 1942. Jeffries noted that the residents of the city were responsible for the donation of blood (Detroiters donated seventy-two thousand pints by early October 1942), the American Red Cross’ enrollment of 180 thousand Detroiters for civilian-defense duties, and the extensive efforts to place women in Detroit factories to free men for military service (Figure 34).³⁰⁹



Figure 34. During World War II, the American Women’s Volunteer Services staffed a kiosk in the lobby of the Fisher Building

Source: Detroit Historical Society

After the war ended, the attention of the city turned inward again to issues planned to improve the lives of area residents. One such move was made in December 1946, when the Detroit Common Council approved a contract for the construction of the new 13th Precinct police

³⁰⁸ Kat Eschner, “How Detroit Went from Motor City to the Arsenal of Democracy,” *Smithsonian*, accessed April 30, 2021, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/when-detroit-was-arsenal-democracy-180962620/>.

³⁰⁹ “Jeffries Tells Illinois Group Axis Will Soon Feel Detroit’s Might,” *Detroit Free Press*, October 9, 1942, 2.

station at the corner of Hancock and Woodward.³¹⁰ The contract for \$358,178 was awarded to the construction firm of Banbrook-Gowon Company. The grand opening for the building was celebrated on August 16, 1948, when it was known as the Canfield Station, having replaced an earlier station on East Canfield.³¹¹



Figure 35. Detroit 13th Precinct Police Station (1946), 4747 Woodward Avenue

Detroit Precinct 13 was constructed at 4747 Woodward Avenue in 1946. The building was erected by Banbrook-Gowon Company, and has elements that are often associated with the International Style, such as a flat roof, large expanses of windows, cantilevered horizontal surfaces, and an absence of ornamental detail (Figure 35).³¹²

It was also during this period that both state and local government took more obvious steps to deal with the growing concern about Civil Rights. In 1949, the Michigan Committee on Civil Rights included segregated housing as an issue that required attention.³¹³ However, while some recognized the Civil Rights issue, it would take almost two additional decades before the matter would actually be addressed in the Michigan statutes.

In April 1952, the Michigan state government stated that everyone who resided in state supplemented housing was “entitled to full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of ...public housing.”³¹⁴ Only partially successful, local public housing commissions rescinded their earlier policy on racial occupancy. However, in reality, the commissions continued their pre-1952 practices. In 1954, the Detroit National Association of

³¹⁰ “63-Hour Work Week Approved by Council for Detroit Firemen,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 25, 1946, 11.

³¹¹ Donna Jarvis et al., *Images of America: Detroit Police Department* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 59.

³¹² HDAB, “Proposed Warren-Prentis Historic District: Final Report.” On file, HDAB, Detroit, Michigan. 2001.

³¹³ Sidney Fine, “Michigan and Housing Discrimination, 1949–1968,” in *Michigan Historical Review*, Fall 1997, 81.

³¹⁴ Fine, “Michigan and Housing Discrimination,” 85.

the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a lawsuit against the Detroit Housing Commission, which was slow to comply with the new federal law and denied twenty-one African Americans apartments in the city's public housing units based solely on race. The NAACP was pushing the city to allow a person of any race to choose where they wanted to live. In spite of this, Detroit Mayor Cobo, believed that "his administration had the right to say whether a family does or does not fit into an area and will not create friction in public housing."³¹⁵ Even after the federal court ruled in favor of the plaintiff, the city continued to push back, asking for more time to implement the change. The federal judge rejected the request, which resulted in the city appealing the decision to the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. This court ended the debate, ruling that the city had to "end segregation 'forthwith'."³¹⁶ At the time, Detroit had eight public housing complexes, two integrated but six still segregated with three entirely Black-occupied and three entirely white-occupied.³¹⁷ In spite of the court's ruling, it took Detroit over a year to integrate one of the six segregated housing complexes, and almost a decade later there were still two complexes that remained entirely Black-occupied.³¹⁸ While none of the public housing complexes were located within the boundaries of Cass Corridor in the 1950s, several were nearby, including the Jeffries, mentioned in the Community Development section.

Medicine

While there were several small medical offices within the Cass Corridor early in the history of the area, the first building dedicated entirely to the medical profession was established in 1942, when the former Lemuel W. Bowen house (1912), 5425 Woodward Avenue, was purchased by Albert Collom Johnson, D.O., and Warren Tavener, D.O., as the home of their newly established hospital for osteopathic physicians. The conversion from the private home/inn to the Art Centre Hospital took two years and the doors finally opened on April 1, 1944.³¹⁹ Initially, a staff of twenty-five physicians and sixty-five nurses worked in the eighty-five-bed hospital. Unlike other facilities in the general area, the Art Centre Hospital employed osteopathic physicians, who were often shunned by doctors who did not endorse the homeopathic path of medical practice during the early twentieth century.³²⁰ The hospital was a great success and the debts incurred by purchasing the property and converting a residence into a working hospital were paid off within six years of opening. At the time the Art Centre Hospital was established it allowed osteopathic doctors a place to practice because they were not given admitting privileges to any of the other hospitals in the city.

By 1956, plans were well underway to expand the Art Centre Hospital by constructing a large addition south of the original Bowen House at 5425 Woodward Avenue. However, the addition of patient rooms and a laboratory were simply not enough to keep up with the demand on the hospital, and by the late 1960s plans were in development to construct a new

³¹⁵ "Housing Tiff Marrs Whitby Session," *Detroit Free Press*, January 23, 1954:9.

³¹⁶ Collins George, "Court's Ban on Segregation in City Housing is Upheld," *Detroit Free Press*, October 6, 1955, 3.

³¹⁷ George, Court's Ban, 3

³¹⁸ "First Public High Rise Housing Units Awaiting Detroit Occupants," *Detroit Free Press*, April 4, 1955, 18.

³¹⁹ Greg Kowalske, "Art Center and Zieger: Looking Back on Four Decades," in *Becoming Michigan Health Care Corp* (Detroit, MI: Michigan Health Care Corporation, April 1984): 6–7.

³²⁰ Kowalske, "Art Center and Zieger," 6–7.

hospital. The transition to a new facility took a decade once again; the new hospital opened under the name Michigan Osteopathic Medical Center and was located outside the Cass Corridor area.³²¹ With the move to a new facility, the former Bowen House was purchased by WSU and no longer functions as a hospital.

Even with the planned departure of the Art Centre Hospital from the Cass Corridor area, the Detroit Medical Center, including Harper Hospital (incorporated in May 1863), was located just a few blocks outside the Cass Corridor area. By 1950, Harper Hospital was located on the east side of John R Street and occupied almost the entire block between Alexandrine and Brady (roughly even with Parsons Street), assuring that major medical assistance was still in close proximity to the residents of the Cass Corridor.³²²

Just two years after the Art Centre Hospital expansion, the Michigan Orthopaedic Clinic was constructed at 5447 Woodward Avenue. Established in the early twentieth century by the Sigma Gamma organization, the group supported the efforts of the Infant's Ward of the Woman's Hospital. As that need was filled by others, Sigma Gamma's mission changed to financing and operating the Sigma Gamma Clinic for Crippled Children, Inc.³²³

The clinic occupied several different Detroit locations, including buildings on Mullett Street, Saint Antoine Street, and West Warren Avenue, before it made its final move to Woodward Avenue in the early 1950s.³²⁴ It is likely that the original Woodward Avenue home of the clinic was originally the home of Dwight Cutler and his family, which was subsequently demolished to make way for the O'Dell, Hewlett & Luckenbach Associates-designed building in 1958.

Ethnic Heritage

In the 1940s, the City of Detroit, like much of the industrialized north, experienced incredible housing shortages, which led to unrest by Detroit's residents, with the greatest impacts felt by the Black population due to restrictions on where they could live. For generations, many of Detroit's Black population were restricted to living in several small areas, including Black Bottom, which was roughly bounded by Gratiot Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, 1-375 (originally Hastings Street), and Mount Elliot. This area was supplemented by a commercial area known as Paradise Valley that was entered around the intersection of St. Antoine and Adams.³²⁵

While the Black population continued to grow, the area available for residences did not, eventually resulting in thirty percent of the city's population living on just fifteen percent of the land.³²⁶

³²¹ HDAB, "Final Report: Proposed Woodward-W. Palmer – Cass – W. Kirby Historic District." On file, HDAB, Detroit, Michigan, 2009.

³²² Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County*, vol. 3, Michigan, (Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1921; rev 1950), 34.

³²³ Florence E. Cox, *Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic* (Detroit: The Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic, 1938), 7.

³²⁴ Cox, *Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic*, 10.

³²⁵ Diane Jones et al., Sugar Hill Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2002.

³²⁶ Jones et al., Sugar Hill, 2002.

In the 1940s and 1950s, another neighborhood was established that was welcoming to the Black population. Known as Sugar Hill the neighborhood was just east of Cass Corridor and was roughly bounded by East Forest Avenue, East Canfield, John R, and Woodward Avenue. Sugar Hill included residences, but also a number of businesses that formed an entertainment district associated with jazz music. The new African American neighborhood, located between Black Bottom and Cass Corridor may have played a role in the relatively slow movement of Blacks into Cass Corridor. In a NRHP nomination for the Sugar Hill Historic District, the area was noted for establishing a new settlement pattern for African Americans, that provided an alternative to the Black Bottom area. Of equal, or even greater importance, was the fact that the residents of Sugar Hill were able to establish a middle-class lifestyle that put them on equal footing with the surrounding white neighborhoods. This may have been possible because of the role that music played in the area.³²⁷

Still, even with the addition of Sugar Hill, and a small area on the west side of Detroit, the restrictions placed on housing for the Black community by the city were intolerable, and formed the focus of a two day conference hosted by the Michigan branch of the NAACP held at the Saint Antoine YMCA in February 1940.³²⁸ The conference agenda included a presentation by Senator Charles C. Diggs, who spoke on “Housing Conditions in Detroit for Negroes.” As part of this presentation, John B. Morris, president of the Wolverine Bar Association, discussed Diggs’ Civil Rights Act. A second attorney, from Bay City, discussed the proper procedures to follow when the Civil Rights Act was violated.

The NAACP conference was held just months after the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) established a series of loans through the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) in the late-1930s.³²⁹ The HOLC prepared maps that through color coding determined the stability of the loans. The map covering Detroit was published in 1939 (Figure 36). Known as “residential security maps,” there was a four-tier evaluation process established. The first grade areas were noted in green or “best”, second grade in blue or “still desirable”, and third grade in yellow or “Over half (fifty-one percent) of the city was rated “definitely declining” and the final twenty-eight percent was “hazardous.”

In addition to the basic map, the HOLC maps assigned a code for each area, which was used to organize notes on the population, buildings (construction materials, age, repair, owner occupied, and price), mortgage funds, total tax rate, and description/characteristics of the area. The Cass Corridor project area includes all or portions of four areas, D37, C50, D30, and C36. Information on these areas is provided in Table 4.

³²⁷ Jones et al., Sugar Hill Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration.

³²⁸ “State NAACP Association Opens Two-Day Conference Here,” *Detroit Tribune*, February 3, 1940, 3.

³²⁹ “State NAACP Association Opens Two-Day Conference Here,” *Detroit Tribune*, February 3, 1940, 3.

Table 4. HOLC map details by section within the Cass Corridor Project Area

Area Number	Class and Occupation	Foreign Families	Black Families	Shifting of Infiltration	Building Construction	Average Building Age	Owner Occupied	Rent bracket	Descriptions and Characteristics
D37	Labor-native	No	No	Blacks from the east	Frame and brick	40-60 years	20%	\$15-60 (houses); \$15-30 (apartments)	Converting to rooming-houses, apartments, sales rooms, garages, light manufacturing on Cass, Second & Woodward. Retail shops on Woodward. All mixed sizes and types converting to light housekeeping rate the area 4th grade.
C50	Old families-large incomes	10%	20%	East of Woodward – Jewish & Black	Brick	30-40 years	40%	\$20-40 (houses); \$30-50 (apartments)	Area in conversion to Clinics, Insurance, Furniture, Business & Apts. east of Woodward once very fine residential, now rooming houses, apts., and apt. hotels. Alien and black encroachment from the east and south. Second Blvd. and west 7-12 singles. Cass & Palmer 2-flats up to \$20,000. Streets from Woodward to Second large singles up to 18 rooms, priced \$10,000-\$25,000. Farnsworth & Frederick 7-8 room singles \$5000-\$7000. The area will slowly decline. It is converting to rooming houses and light housekeeping.
D30	Labor – mixed southern Europeans	20%	75%	No comments	Frame and brick	35-50 years	20% (houses); 10% (apartments)	\$15-40 (houses); \$10-35 (apartments)	Industry along RR. Unreliable class of tenants. Depressed area-fire hazard.

Area Number	Class and Occupation	Foreign Families	Black Families	Shifting of Infiltration	Building Construction	Average Building Age	Owner Occupied	Rent bracket	Descriptions and Characteristics
C36	Professional, salesmen, clerks, mechanics	50%	No	Rooming houses – tea rooms – apartments, rapidly changing	Brick and frame	Up to 30 years	50% (houses); 40% (apartments)	\$30-75 (houses); \$30-60 (apartments)	All city facilities. Near big shopping area. Formerly fashionable. Old residents moving out. Character changing. Trend is toward apartments. The area east of Hamilton was at one time particularly pretentious. 14th to 12th very mixed-singles, 2-flats, 4-flats, and large apartments. Wide range of values. Age of structures and mixed population rate the area 3rd grade.

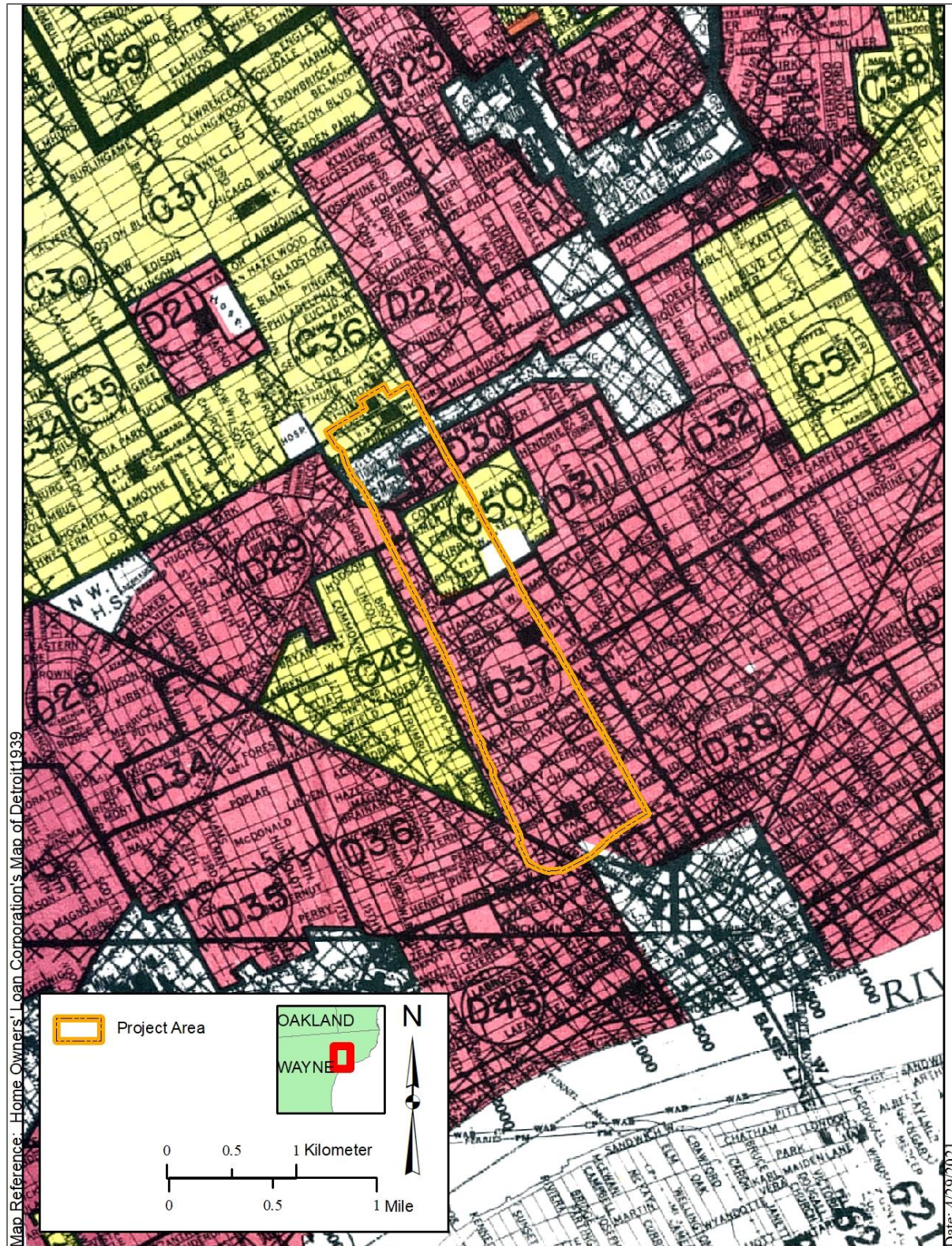


Figure 36. Detail of the HOLC 1939 map of Detroit (highlighted area is the Cass Corridor Project Area)

Source: Herne Brothers

Modest efforts to address the housing shortage were sponsored by the Federal Government, including the construction of the Brewster Homes housing project located east of the Cass Corridor in an area bounded by Beaubien, Hastings, Mack, and Wilkins Street.³³⁰ But, the large housing complex, opened in 1938, initially only included seven hundred and one units. The final complex, completed in 1941, had a total of nine hundred and forty-one units, but was still far short of the rising need.³³¹

These two factors combined to make the white residents of Detroit uneasy with what they perceived to be a growing threat by the proximity to the African American residents of the city. Exacerbating the situation was the fact that in 1940 only one percent of the Detroit Police force was African American.³³² This often resulted in the almost entirely white force acting like, as was noted by Arthur Johnson, Executive Secretary, Detroit NAACP, an “army of occupation, bent on harassing, intimidating, and abusing Blacks.”³³³

Illustrating the tension around the housing market between Black and white residents is the story of the Sojourner Truth Homes, constructed to house defense workers flooding into the city. In the early 1940s, the United States Housing Authority through the Detroit Housing Commission, announced plans to construct a total of forty-five residential buildings, parking lots, a recreation field, and an administration building on the seventeen-acre parcel approximately four miles northeast of the Cass Corridor Project Area, and close to the factories where the war-work was ongoing. When complete, the new development would accommodate two hundred families.³³⁴ While the housing was desperately needed for those who were involved in Detroit’s defense work, not everyone was happy about the location of the new development or the decision that it would be designated as African American residences. The neighborhood surrounding the property at Nevada and Fenelon streets was historically occupied by whites, who wanted the new development to also carry the same policy.

In February 1942, as the first of the black families attempted to move into their new homes, a crowd of white protesters blocked the moving vans. Picketers and those throwing rocks slowed the progress. Eventually, Detroit Mayor Edward J. Jeffries ordered a postponement of the move-in day. Mayor Jeffries acted on the advice of Police Commissioner Frank D. Eaman, who noted that “there is no sense moving these people in if you need an army to protect them after they get in.”³³⁵

Because of the ongoing violence, the Sojourner Truth Homes remained vacant until the end of April 1942 when 1,100 city and state police officers along with 1,600 members of the Michigan National Guard were mobilized.³³⁶ With the assistance of the police and National

³³⁰ Laura Rose Ashlee, editor, *Traveling Through Time* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 457.

³³¹ Ashlee, *Traveling Through Time*, 457.

³³² W. Marvin Dulaney, *Black Police in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 117.

³³³ Arthur L. Johnson, *Race and Remembrance: A Memoir*. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008), 55.

³³⁴ “Local Firm Starts Big Detroit Job,” *Lansing State Journal*, September 21, 1941, 20.

³³⁵ “Trouble Breaks Out at Housing Project,” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, February 28, 1942, 5.

³³⁶ Detroit 1701, “Sojourner Truth Homes,” Electronic document, accessed March 31, 2019, <http://www.detroit1701.org/Sojourner%20Truth%20Housing%20Project.html>.

Guard, six African American families were successfully moved into the Sojourner Truth Homes. Eventually, the original six families were expanded to include 168 families to fully occupy the complex.³³⁷

The tensions demonstrated by the white community at Sojourner Truth Homes was the precursor to a much larger riot the following year. On June 20, 1943, more than two hundred Black and white individuals began to fight on Belle Isle. This initial fight was halted by midnight, but tensions continued to raise, and were fueled by rumors that ignited individuals on both sides. Individuals moved west from the nearby Paradise Valley to Woodward Avenue, where looting and additional skirmishes continued through the night. Fights took sides along racial lines, with the fighting only halting after the arrival of six thousand army troops armed with automatic weapons. As a result of the fighting, nine whites and twenty-five Blacks were killed, including seventeen at the hands of police. Following the riot, it reports indicated that there were approximately seven hundred people injured in the violence and approximately two million dollars in property damages.³³⁸

Woodward was an effective barrier to much of the damage from the 1943 riots. And, although the HOLC map of 1939 indicates that most of the Cass Corridor was redlined, it was unlikely that race resulted in the designation, instead it was likely the aging housing stock. David W. Hartman, Ph.D., who received his doctorate in urban anthropology from WSU, reported that the Cass Corridor area appears to have experienced only limited racial tensions, perhaps due to the lack of ethnic diversity. The majority of the population, ninety-nine percent, was white, which was a full nine percentage points higher than the rest of Detroit. Even within the white residents there was little diversity, with most of the foreign-born residents from either Canada or eastern Europe.³³⁹

Although the majority of the residents in the Cass Corridor were white, it does not mean that there were no African American's present at all. Even in the 1940s and 1950s, there were a number of Blacks who worked in the area. Although not true for every venue, African American performers were often welcome to entertain within the Cass Corridor. This was particularly evident at the Paradise Theatre, where the acts were largely African American. Similarly, the United Sound Systems Studio worked with a large number of Black artists, including such superstars as John Lee Hooker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Jackie Wilson.

A picture of the ethnic diversity within the Cass Corridor is revealed through an analysis of the United States Census records from 1950. Based on the census, there were five census tracts within the Cass Corridor. By compiling statistics from these tracts there are 21,503 residents in the area (Table 5). There were, unfortunately, some ethnic groups that may have simply been too small to enumerate individually, these included the small group of Chaldeans that may have originated from Iraq or Syria and began moving to Detroit in the 1930s.

³³⁷ Detroit 1701, "Sojourner Truth Homes," Electronic document, accessed March 31, 2019, <http://www.detroit1701.org/Sojourner%20Truth%20Housing%20Project.html>.

³³⁸ Detroit Historical Society, "Encyclopedia of Detroit: Race Riot of 1943," accessed April 30, 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/race-riot-1943>.

³³⁹ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 5.

Similarly, those identified as Asians included not only Chinese, but also Japanese migrants. It is also unclear how the Native American population was recorded in the census.

Table 5. Cass Corridor and City of Detroit ethnic diversity based on 1950 census records

Ethnicity	Cass Corridor population	Percentage of Cass Corridor population	Total Detroit population	Total Percentage of Detroit population
White, U.S. born	16,154	76%	1,545,847	83.6%
White, foreign born	2,710	13%		
Canada	917	4%		
Black	461	2%	300,506	16.23%
Other	419	2%	1,481	<1%
England/Wales	240	1%		
Asia	160	1%	1,734	<1%
Germany	78	<1%		
Scotland	72	<1%		
Poland	55	<1%		
Italy	52	<1%		
Ireland	17	<1%		
Yugoslavia	16	<1%		
Total population	21,351		1,849,568	

Based on these numbers only about two percent of the area was Black, two percent of the population was “other,” which may have included the Chaldean and Native American residents. Additionally, less than one percent of the population was Asian. The census tables suggest that the remaining ninety-three percent (although it should be higher if Chaldeans are part of the “other” group) of the population were either white or identified as white.

Another revealing statistic in census records was the number of males to females. The male population accounted for almost fifty-six percent of the residents. Hartman attributed the greater number of males in the area to how attractive it was for newly arriving Southern white migrants who were often unmarried or left their wives and families behind while they sought employment.³⁴⁰ There was such a large influx of people from the Appalachian region that Cass Corridor gained the local nicknames “Tennessee Valley” and “Little Kentucky.”³⁴¹ Hartman speculated that the Cass Corridor became a port of entry for the southern white migration to Detroit. He postulated five key points substantiating his thesis: the area was not far from the terminus point for several bus lines; there was inexpensive housing in the area; there had traditionally been discrimination against southern whites in the city’s housing market; the Cass Corridor offered a high degree of excitement and entertainment; and their own racial prejudice prohibited the southern whites from moving into many other low-income areas within the city, particularly since this would could living in proximity other ethnic

³⁴⁰ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*: 5.

³⁴¹ Taubman College, *Detroit’s Lower Cass*: 75.

groups.³⁴² One southern migrant explained “that’s where we were forced to live and now I can’t see any reason for leavin.”³⁴³

As mentioned earlier, immigration of the many of the southern whites who moved to Detroit and the Cass Corridor was facilitated by bus. One of the companies that was established to meet the demand was the Brooks Bus Line. In the 1920s, the company started with a single van, but as roads and vehicles improved, and demand increased, the single Brooks van became many that were eventually replaced by a fleet of airconditioned buses that made the run daily (Figure 37).³⁴⁴ The buses arrived in Detroit at their station at 7301 Harper Avenue, approximately three miles east of the Cass Corridor neighborhood (Figure 38).³⁴⁵ By 1950, the travel time was reduced to just sixteen hours (down from twenty-six) making the ride that much more appealing, especially since the new coaches continued to offer reserved seats, but were now radio equipped and offered “pillow service” to make the ride even more comfortable.



Figure 37. Advertisement for Brooks Bus Line

Source: Paducah Sun, Paducah, Kentucky, 1 May 1945

³⁴² Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 5.

³⁴³ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 5.

³⁴⁴ “Detroit Never ‘Home’ for Them,” *The Times Herald* (Port Huron, Michigan), March 26, 1974, 8B.

³⁴⁵ Brooks Bus Line Business Card, Detroit Public Library Digital Collections, accessed April 30, 2021, <https://digitalcollections.detroitpubliclibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A253482>



Figure 38. Brooks Bus Line bus in front of their Harper Street station, photograph ca. 1950

In the mid-1940s and into the 1950s, greater ethnic diversity became apparent in the Cass Corridor area. In approximately 1944, Japanese Americans began moving to Michigan, with many finding homes in the Cass and Canfield area. These new residents were often former internees in the Japanese Internment Camps, that were unable to return to their former towns or simply wanted a new start in a different city. This decision was often driven by available employment, something that the industries of Detroit could provide.³⁴⁶ Like the southern whites, the early Japanese immigrants were often one family member who went ahead to seek an area that would be hospitable to the family. Among the organizations that were welcoming to the newly arriving Japanese was the Central Methodist Church, which was likely the reason that many settled in the Cass and Canfield area.³⁴⁷ This had become a central gathering place with temporary living quarters used by the immigrants during their transition into Michigan society.³⁴⁸ As time passed, these individuals left the Corridor for homes scattered across the Metropolitan Detroit area.

Commerce and Industry

The United Sound Systems Recording Studio continued to thrive in the 1940s and 1950s. For the first ten years after relocating the business to the house at 5840 Second Avenue, Jimmy Siracuse leased the building. It was not until 1949 that the couple was able to purchase the house outright from the investment company that had been the previous owners.³⁴⁹ Siracuse

³⁴⁶ Toshiko Shimoura, "The History of Nekkei (Japanese) in Detroit," in *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, edited by Sook Wilkinson and Victor Jew (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015), 160.

³⁴⁷ Shimoura, "The History of Nekkei (Japanese) in Detroit," 160.

³⁴⁸ Shimoura, "The History of Nekkei (Japanese) in Detroit," 160.

³⁴⁹ HDAB, "United Sound Systems Recording Studio," 3.

used his skill at adapting residential spaces to accommodate technical and engineering aspects of the music industry. He was so successful at this task that the building often was actually considered to be one of the instruments on a recording. In the late 1950s, to further increase his capabilities, the studio area was expanded to accommodate orchestras and motion picture production. It was in the Second Avenue studio that the 1959 song “Come to Me,” was recorded by Marv Johnson as the first single for Tamla Records (later Motown).³⁵⁰ The studio, always known for working with a wide variety of musical genres, counted John Lee Hooker, Johnnie Ray, Dizzy Gillespie, Jackie Wilson, and Alberta Adams on their list of clients.

Based on aerial maps, the University Motel, 5841 Second Avenue, was constructed between 1956 and 1957.³⁵¹ The construction of the motel, across the street from the United Sound Systems Studio, suggests that it may have provided lodging for artists or their bands while in town to record. Unfortunately, records of guests are not available. It would be almost seven years before additional new motels or hotels would be constructed in the area, including the Saint Regis Hotel, located at 3075 West Grand Boulevard. The motel is of particular interest due to its architectural style, Googie, which was popular during the mid-twentieth century.

Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers define the University Motel form as the Motor Inn type, which gained popularity in the 1950s.³⁵² The Motor Inn was typically located in metropolitan areas or urban centers, although they were also common near airports and interchanges of freeways. These building complexes typically were comprised of two or three two-story buildings arranged around a courtyard. Often the registration desk was within a small lobby that could be expanded to include a magazine counter and gift shop.³⁵³ Through the large glass expanses of the University Motel office, it is clear that the lobby also includes an interior stairway to the second story. Additionally, access to second floor rooms is provided from an open exterior stairway.

The steeply angled cantilevered roof line of the reception building is a popular feature of Mid-Century buildings in the Googie style, which is often associated with roadside architecture.³⁵⁴ Googie style is typically characterized by bold, angular forms, and intensive use of steel, glass, and neon inspired by the Space Age, science fiction, and car culture. Alan Hess, an architect and historian who is recognized for his understanding and interpretation of Googie architecture, explains that:

one of the key things about Googie architecture was that it wasn't custom houses for wealthy people – it was for coffee shops, gas stations, car washes, banks...the average buildings of everyday life that people of the period used

³⁵⁰ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, “Historical Marker-S744 – United Sound Systems Recording Studios.”

³⁵¹ Wayne State University Libraries, Aerial Photographs Digital Collections, Wayne County 1956, accessed January 27, 2021, https://digital.library.wayne.edu/dte_aerial/part2/wayne/1956/ga-1-86.pdf.

³⁵² John A. Jakle et al., *The Motel in America* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 49.

³⁵³ Jakle et al., *The Motel in America*, 49

³⁵⁴ do-co,mo.com_us. Styles of the Modern Era, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://www.docomomo-us.org/explore-modern/styles-of-the-modern-era>.

and lived in. And it brought the spirit of the modern age to their everyday lives.³⁵⁵

It was also during this period that the former Convention Hall, the highlight of automotive growth in the area from the 1920s, was abandoned as the automobile show was relocated to the newly constructed Cobo Hall in downtown Detroit. The former convention hall, 4501 Woodward Avenue, was named as the new location for Vernor, Detroit's premier soft drink bottler, in 1952.³⁵⁶ The May 17, 1953, *Detroit Free Press* included a short article that announced the former convention hall was being demolished to make way for a new building that would be one of the most modern bottling and extract-manufacturing plants in the world. The new building (no longer extant) had been designed by Harley, Ellington & Day, architects.³⁵⁷ In reality, Convention Hall was only partially demolished, which was revealed in the building permit application for the new plant requiring "interior and exterior alterations" valued at \$350 thousand.³⁵⁸

Religion

Community work continued at the Cass Avenue M.E. Church in the 1940s, although the efforts were hindered beginning in 1941 when the church was declared unsafe by city inspectors.³⁵⁹ Fortunately the city's Methodist churches rallied to save the building. Funds were raised to repair the roof, plaster, and wiring, enabling the church to reopen in 1942.³⁶⁰ Social programming at the church took into consideration the ever-changing needs of the surrounding neighborhood. Under the leadership of Reverend Lewis Redmond (pastor from 1953 to 1979), a program was established to create life-skills and recreational activities for individuals living in group homes in the area. A second program under Reverend Redmond, Project Scout, assisted elderly residents to remain independent while providing them with support and resources. This program worked hand-in-hand with a Senior Center established by the church. Reverend Redmond also worked beyond the church walls to advocate to save Burton Elementary School and to establish the Concerned Citizens of Cass Corridor, also known as the 4 C's, to organize local residents to address issues of housing, education, and crime.³⁶¹

Education

Wayne University had reached its student population capacity by December 1945, with students forced to attend in shifts due to the shortage of classroom space. The university had just forty-two classrooms requiring that approximately sixty percent of the approximately twenty-thousand students attended classes after 2:00 P.M.³⁶² Many of the classrooms were

³⁵⁵ Matt Novak, Google: Architecture of the Space Age, accessed January 27, 2021, A <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/google-architecture-of-the-space-age-122837470>.

³⁵⁶ "City gets Vernor's Property," *Detroit Free Press*, September 27, 1952:3.

³⁵⁷ "Vernor Plant Contract Let," *Detroit Free Press*, May 17, 1953, A17.

³⁵⁸ "Addition to Church Scheduled," *Detroit Free Press*, July 26, 1953, C10

³⁵⁹ HDAB, "Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report," April 13, 1987, 3.

³⁶⁰ HDAB, "Proposed Cass Methodist Historic District Final Report," April 13, 1987, 3.

³⁶¹ Cass Community Church, "History," accessed January 27, 2021, <https://cassumc.com/history/>.

³⁶² Owen C. Deatrick, "Kelly Plans to Ask Aid for Wayne," *Detroit Free Press*, December 19, 1945, 13.

located in the vacated homes purchased by the school in preparation for their eventual expansion. The following year a celebration was held on Tuesday, November 13, when the first shovel of dirt was dug to signal the beginning of construction of the first new purpose-built building on Wayne's campus since the school was founded in 1933.³⁶³ The building, State Hall, was estimated to cost 900 thousand dollars and was completed in 1947.³⁶⁴

Wayne University renamed the former Central High School in 1950 to Old Main, a name that continues over seventy years later. This was just the first of the extensive changes that occurred on campus during the 1950s. During this period, the large parcels of land purchased by the university were cleared of most of the houses, and a major building campaign was implemented to create the core of the urban campus, to better accommodate the ever-growing student population. Among the newly erected buildings was the Engineering Building, 5050 Third Avenue, which was completed and opened for classes. In 1953 both the General Library, 5244 Second Avenue, and the Science Library, 5294 Second Avenue, were completed. The Music Building of the Community Arts Center, 5451 Cass Avenue, was completed in 1955, with the Art Building, 5400 Cass Avenue, portion completed in 1956. In 1957 an addition was completed to State Hall and in 1958 McGregor Memorial Community Conference Center, 495 West Ferry, was completed. Finally, in 1959, the Community Arts Auditorium, 450 Kirby; the Alumni House/Presidents Home, 441 West Ferry; the Richard Cohn Memorial Building (College of Nursing), 5557 Cass Avenue; and the Administration Services Building (Bliss Building), 5946 Cass Avenue, were all completed. Additionally, 1959 marks the year the last of the classroom barrack buildings was demolished.³⁶⁵ In addition to all the changes on campus, in 1956 Wayne University became WSU (WSU) by Act 183 of Michigan Public Acts of 1956.³⁶⁶

Another school in the Cass Corridor area, Lewis Cass Technical High School, was also expanded in the 1940s or 1950s. The annex was constructed adjacent to the original building and provided space for music, Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) classes, and a field to allow for school athletics.³⁶⁷

In the 1950s, the Detroit Public Schools were overcrowded and facilities were largely outdated. In February 1951, Walter Reuther addressed the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, condemning the business community for its indifference to the state of public education. He remarked that "In Detroit we took the war factories off swing shifts, but we put the schools on the swing shifts."³⁶⁸ In spite of Reuther's comments, steps were being taken to address the crowded school conditions. In 1950 alone there had been five new schools constructed in the city. Between 1950 and 1960 there were 28 new schools

³⁶³ "Shovelful of Dirt Starts New Wayne U. Building," *Detroit Free Press*, November 13, 1946, 23.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.; Aschenbrenner, *A History of Wayne State University*, 283.

³⁶⁵ Aschenbrenner, *A History of Wayne State University*. 283–284.

³⁶⁶ WSU, "History," accessed October 22, 2020, <https://wayne.edu/about/history/>

³⁶⁷ Boscarino, "Lewis Cass Technical High School," 8-1.

³⁶⁸ Jeffrey Mirel, *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit: 1907-1981* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 217.

erected in the city, with an additional 56 in the 1960s.³⁶⁹ Included in the buildings opened in 1956 was the James Couzens Elementary School, 3550 John C. Lodge Service Drive. With the construction of Couzens Elementary School, there were four public schools in the Cass Corridor Project Area: Cass Tech High School, Burton Elementary School, Couzens Elementary School, and Jefferson Intermediate School. Additionally, Clay School was still extant, but no longer serving as a public school, and Detroit Central High School was functioning as Old Main at Wayne University.

Although the architect is unknown for the Couzens Elementary school, it may have been Eberle M. Smith and Associates, who were architects for many of the Detroit schools in the early 1950s.³⁷⁰ The week of May 15, 1955, a building permit was pulled for the new school, with an estimated cost of \$950,000.³⁷¹ The building opened for classes in 1956, with 1,670 students its first year in operation.³⁷² Shortly after opening, the school was one of three Cass Corridor schools selected to participate in a pilot program that was aimed to “close the cultural gap” between long-time area residents and those new to the area, particularly from rural areas such as the American southern states, in recognition that “35 percent of the children in big city schools are in need of special attention.”³⁷³ As discussed above, while the Cass Corridor was largely white, many of these residents migrated from the south, where they would have attended smaller rural schools. The transition to the city schools of Detroit could cause problems for the students, both because of their new situation and the expectations of a larger school. Similarly, the newly arrived Japanese and Chaldean students would have also benefited from the additional attention promised by the program. In addition to Couzens Elementary, the program was also implemented at Burton Elementary and Jefferson Intermediate School.³⁷⁴

Like Detroit’s schools, the collections at the Detroit Public Library also were greatly expanded during this period. In the 1950s, the book collection reached over 2.5 million volumes.³⁷⁵ Once again, the library was in danger of overcrowding, and steps were begun to make an addition to the building to appropriately house the collection. By the end of the decade, the Detroit Public Library Service Shop, 5820 Third Street, which had moved several times, settled into its permanent location just a few blocks from the main library. Not open to the public, the Service Shop housed departments that are tasked with a book binding and other services needed to keep the collections in good condition.³⁷⁶ The residents of the Cass Corridor were able to use three large libraries, including the main branch of the Detroit Public

³⁶⁹ John Glover, “Detroit Schools 1842–2015 -- Public,” accessed January 27, 2021, <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UXWpuk5offwJO7Km5e5LHWxphtUVrZcs-HoiRwTJjqQ/edit#gid=1773167960>.

³⁷⁰ “Changes Mind on School Architect,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 27, 1954, 3.

³⁷¹ “Permit for School Heads Week’s List,” *Detroit Free Press*, May 15, 1955, B7.

³⁷² Glover, “Detroit Schools.”

³⁷³ “Schools Starting Project for ‘Culturally Deprived.’” *Detroit Free Press*, August 30, 1959, 8B.

³⁷⁴ “Schools Starting Project,” 8B.

³⁷⁵ DPL, “About,” accessed October 22, 2020, <https://detroitpubliclibrary.org/about#:~:text=The%20Detroit%20Public%20Library%20opened,Detroit%20Library%20Commission%20took%20over.>

³⁷⁶ Robinson et al., “I-94 Modernization Project: Above-Ground Reconnaissance and Intensive Level Survey, City of Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan.” Prepared for Michigan Department of Transportation, 2018.

Library (1921), and both the General and Science Libraries that opened on Wayne University campus in 1953.

Social History

Although the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) community had always been present in Detroit, it was kept quiet. In part, this was due to the discriminatory laws at all levels of government. At the federal level, the Federal Bureau of Investigation initiated a project that targeted “sex deviates.” This was expanded upon in 1953, when President Eisenhower issued an executive order that explicitly named “sexual perversion” as grounds for exclusion or dismissal from federal government jobs.³⁷⁷ In Detroit, a law was passed in 1955 that prohibited cross-dressing.

In spite of discriminatory laws, the LGBTQ community was present. In the 1940s, the straight community became more aware the LGBTQ presence through publications such as the national scandal magazine *Whisper*, started to include articles about the LGBTQ way of life. Timothy F. Retzliff, Ph.D., wrote in his dissertation that the publications “simply depicted and exaggerated the most visible, and to some the most unsavory, elements of Detroit gay life at the time.”³⁷⁸ Still, there was a gay presence in Detroit, and one of the places known for gays to meet from the 1940s to the 1960s was the Colonial Theater (replaced) on Woodward at Sibley. In fact, the area along Woodward Avenue between Grand Circus Park to Forest Avenue, what *Whisper* called the “Drag,” was an active area of the gay and lesbian life into the 1960s.³⁷⁹ Cass Avenue was also known for its gay visibility.

An early bar, and reputed to be the earliest lesbian bar in Detroit, was the Sweetheart Bar (demolished), 3928 Third Street.³⁸⁰ Anna and Irving (Izzy) Thorpe opened the bar in 1939 as a working class and lesbian bar. Roey Thorpe, an author and social justice movement leader for LGBTQ equality, writes, “The front of the bar, the area closest to the entrance, seemed like other nearby bars, where heterosexual men and women from the surrounding neighborhood came to have a drink and socialize. At the back of this section stood a pair of double doors, behind which stretched a large space where the floor show, usually a drag performance, alternated with time for dancing. By convention, this space was divided according to sexuality.”³⁸¹ As early as 1946, men were reportedly booted from the bar if they harassed lesbian clientele.

The area around WSU was particularly popular with the gay community. In the 1950s, the same-sex couple Ben Edwards and Richard Vincent, bought a run-down bar and transformed

³⁷⁷ Marc Stein, “Historical Landmarks and Landscapes of LGBTQ Law,” in *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Foundation and National Park Service, 2016), 19-12.

³⁷⁸ Timothy Ford Retzliff, “City, Suburb, and Changing Bounds of Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit, 1945-1985,” (Ph.D. diss. Yale University, 2014), 248.

³⁷⁹ Retzliff, “City, Suburb, and Changing Bounds of Lesbian and Gay Life,” 248.

³⁸⁰ Brett Beemyn, *Creating a Place for Ourselves: Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community Histories*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997), 167.

³⁸¹ Beemyn, *Creating a Place for Ourselves*, 167.

it into the ever-popular Traffic Jam & Snug, a popular college and local hang-out, which continues on to the present time.³⁸²

Art and Entertainment

After the Detroit Symphony Orchestra was forced to leave their Woodward Avenue hall in the late 1930s for financial reasons, the building sat vacant for several years. On December 26, 1941, Orchestra Hall under the new name of Paradise Theater (Figure 39) was reopened.³⁸³ The new name paid homage to the nearby Paradise Valley, the Black business district that in conjunction with the near east-side residential area Black Bottom, was one of the largest Black areas in Detroit.³⁸⁴ The new endeavor was operated by Ben and Lou Cohen, well-known theater operators, who planned shows mixing live performances with first-run motion pictures. The theater was open from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m., daily, with a complete show held at midnight every Saturday. Opening night featured trumpeter Louis “Satchmo” Armstrong and his swing orchestra in what was billed as the “first of a dazzling array of noted sepia stars who will head a mammoth weekly stage show.”³⁸⁵ Other major stars scheduled to perform at the new venue, included the Four Inkspots and Count Basie. Rivaling the Apollo Theater in Harlem, the Paradise theater featured musicians included Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Lena Horne, Peral Bailey, and Duke Ellington.



Figure 39. Paradise Theater (1919), 3711 Woodward Avenue, photograph 1949

Source: Black Bottom Archives, accessed 24 July 2021,

<http://www.blackbottomarchives.com/blackhistory/2015/5/15/paradise-theater-detroit-mi>

³⁸² Beemyn, *Creating a Place for Ourselves*, 252.

³⁸³ Henslee, “Orchestra Hall,” 6.

³⁸⁴ Goldstein et al., *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, 82.

³⁸⁵ “Paradise opens next Friday,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 22, 1941, 22.

In January 1942, the *Detroit Tribune* praised the efforts of the theater owners who presented Black stage shows and noted that the long lines of waiting people in front of the theatre, corner of Woodward and Parsons was a very good indication that Black entertainers “still draw if they have anything to offer.”³⁸⁶ The headliners in the theater included Deep River Boys, NBC singers and their Harlem “Merry -Go-Round” with future scheduled artists including “record-breaker and topper of sweet swing, Miss Maxine Sullivan.”³⁸⁷ Live entertainment during the life of the Paradise included “top national swing, jump blues, and R&B talent.”³⁸⁸ Although the performers at the Paradise Theatre were predominately Black there were no limits or restrictions on who could attend the shows. This was also true of some of the venues in Paradise Valley itself, with open clubs locally known as “Black and Tan” meaning they were open to both Black and white patrons.

The Paradise Theater eventually fell out of favor with local music lovers, especially as the later musical styles gained favor. Initially the theater began to suffer with lower box office proceeds. By 1951, the club closed.³⁸⁹

In addition to the Paradise Theater, there were other music venues in the Cass Corridor, including The Willis Show Bar, 4156 Third Avenue at Willis, originally opened in 1949 as a jazz hot spot. In the 1950s, the live shows continued but had changed focus. In 1957 a newspaper advertisement for the Willis Show Bar had a “new entertainment policy,” which appears to allude to the increased amount of “gentlemen’s entertainment.” While the policy was never specifically spelled out, the headliners in the ad included exotic dancer Gay Leslie, the “Panama Cutie,” who appeared with the Manny Lopez Trio featuring Marie DeCarlo (Figure 40).³⁹⁰

³⁸⁶ Ulysses Boykin, “The Jumpin’ Jive,” *Detroit Tribune*, January 17, 1942, 9.

³⁸⁷ Boykin, “The Jumpin’ Jive,” 9.

³⁸⁸ Marilyn Bond and S. R. Boland, *Images of America: The Birth of the Detroit Sound, 1940-1964* (Chicago, IL: Arcadia Publishing, 2002), 13.

³⁸⁹ The Concert Database, “Paradise Theater,” accessed February 28, 2021, <https://theconcertdatabase.com/venues/paradise-theater>.

³⁹⁰ “Willis Show Bar Advertisement,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 17, 1957, 26.



Figure 40. Willis Show Bar advertisement

Source: Detroit Free Press, June 17, 1957

Like the Willis Show Bar, Jumbo's Bar at 3736 Third Street, opened in 1940 and is still operating in 2021. Just a few blocks away from Jumbo's Bar was Buddy & Jimmy's Inn, a neighborhood bar at 3660 Cass Avenue (not extant). The bar was operated by former vaudeville stars, brother and sister team, Mrs. Beulah (Buddy) Farr and her brother Jimmy Lee. In keeping with their entertainment background, Beulah and Jimmy were known to periodically break into song while working in the bar. This caused problems for the duo in 1941 when the city of Detroit began a push to enforce a new ordinance requiring a ten-dollar annual permit to allow singing and a three-piece orchestra.³⁹¹ The bar originally opened in the 1930s by Beulah and Jimmy on the first floor of a "ramshackle green house, which is saved from total drabness by some white trim" (Figure 41). Even after Jimmy's death in 1963, the bar continued, although by 1964 the crowds had thinned, and there were often no patrons, still Beulah had no plans to leave.³⁹²

³⁹¹ Owen C. Deatrick, "Council Gets Plea to Ease Cabaret Rule," *Detroit Free Press*, September 18, 1941, 1.

³⁹² Van G. Sauter, "On Cass You Still Find...Roaring 20s," *Detroit Free Press*, March 15, 1964, 7B.



Figure 41. Ca. 1940s postcard of Buddy & Jimmy's Inn, "A Friendly Place to Meet a Friend"

Decades of Change: 1960s to 1980s

After decades of growth in the Cass Corridor and a number of new buildings constructed to accommodate the expanding population, the urban renewal efforts begun in the 1940s and 1950s continued. Expressways were constructed along the west side of the Cass Corridor, eliminating a once active commercial area on Hamilton Avenue. Additional expressways were added east-west across the corridor north of the Wayne State University campus, and a second expressway was built at the southern edge of the corridor. As a result of these construction projects, a number of buildings, primarily residential and commercial, were demolished, creating new boundaries and barriers where none had existed previously.

During this period, the issue of civil rights gained momentum, with legislation passed that aimed to remove prohibitions on the Black community related to where they could live. The former redlining practices broadly prevalent in Detroit, were lifted, and the Detroit Housing Commission was ordered to stop their discriminatory practices. For the first time, the ethnic mix within the Cass Corridor more closely represented that of the City of Detroit, with a dramatically increased number of Blacks moving into the area. In addition to the new Black residents, Chinese and Chinese Americans made their way to the Cass Corridor following the urban renewal of the original Chinatown near Michigan Avenue in the Corktown area of Detroit. A new Chinatown, including restaurants, stores, and a community center, was established near Cass Avenue and Peterboro Street.

The urban renewal projects had impacts beyond the expressway development. Removal of the residential neighborhoods to accommodate the growth of the Wayne State University campus may have played a role in the reduction in church congregations and the reduced number of students, requiring consolidation of schools.

There were several areas of social history that were key to Cass Corridor during this period. One, which had been around for years, but was gaining broader recognition and awareness was the LGBTQ community. The LGBTQ community had a more visible presence in the area after 1960, including establishing organizations on the WSU campus and being more widely accepted by area business owners. The second major social history development was the establishment and growth of a counter culture movement. This movement can be perhaps best explained by its association with the Trans-Love Energies (TLE) Unlimited. TLE was a cooperative community that functioned in Detroit in the late 1960s that defined itself as a radical, anti-establishment group that served as an umbrella organization or “tribal council” for the city’s “hip” organizations. Closely related to the TLE was the White Panther Party, formed in support of the Black Panther Party and self-promoted as a cultural revolution organization.

A large part of the counter culture movement was the Detroit Artists Workshop (DAW), which was established in the Cass Corridor and promoted area artists, musicians, and poets. In addition to the DAW, local artists were encouraged and supported by area art schools, including the program at WSU, local galleries, and even the contemporary curator at the Detroit Institute of Arts. A large number of artists, musicians, and writers from the Cass Corridor went on to gain national recognition and fame.

Community Development and Transportation

By 1960, in part due to the expansive changes resulting from the large-scale demolitions in the 1940s and 1950s to make way for the development of an expanded campus for WSU, the former residential and commercial area was increasingly occupied by students. Alongside the students, the residents living in the Cass Corridor were increasingly poor and included a large and visible assortment of “alcoholics, dope addicts, prostitutes and pimps, bag ladies, and odd types who did not fit in anywhere else.”³⁹³ While the press largely focused on the issues of crime and poverty in the Cass Corridor, a thriving community also called the area home.

It was not just the area around WSU that were targeted for demolitions. In the early 1960s, after years of planning and court deliberations, a blighted area of Detroit that consisted of over two hundred parcels near Corktown was slated for demolition (Figure 42). The targeted area, which was called Central Business District 1, 3, and 5, was bounded by Third, Cass, West Lafayette, Michigan, and Bagley, and included the historic location of Chinatown. This area along with other sections of Detroit, such as the former Black Bottom neighborhood that had been removed in the 1950s, were frequently slated for one of two purposes: new residential and commercial development, or the development of new freeways.

The complicated network of freeways eventually included the Walter P. Chrysler (I-75), the Jeffries (I-96), and the Walter Reuther freeways (I-696), in addition to the John C. Lodge (M-10), Fisher (I-375), and Edsel Ford (I-94), which roughly defined three sides of the Cass Corridor. The Fisher Freeway was formed as an extension to I-75 that extended south down to Jefferson Avenue and the Detroit Riverfront and was completed in 1964 following the

³⁹³ Mary Jane Jacob, “Kick out the Jams: The Emergence of a Detroit Avant-garde” in *Kick out the Jams: Detroit’s Cass Corridor, 1963-1977* (Detroit: The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1980), 17.

removal of hundreds of properties in what was known as the Gratiot Area Redevelopment Project.³⁹⁴ By the early 1970s, almost two hundred miles of freeway had been constructed in and around Detroit, with an additional sixty-five miles of freeway either under construction or planned for development.³⁹⁵ While the freeways allowed for the rapid movement of vehicles into and out of the city, they caused the dislocation of thousands of people who lived in their path. By 1970, an estimated 20,400 homes had been demolished for freeway construction within the Detroit metropolitan area. Additionally, the freeways divided, destroyed, and isolated many of the city's neighborhoods, either through outright removal or inaccessibility.³⁹⁶

In the Cass Corridor area, Hamilton Avenue was virtually replaced by the M-10/John C. Lodge expressway and associated service drive. Historically, Hamilton was the western edge of the Corridor, and was lined with stores, movie theaters, and bars typical of any of the major commercial streets in the area, and may have unofficially been part of the area known as "Little Kentucky" or "Little Tennessee." However, when the Lodge was constructed in the mid-1950s, the road was eliminated, destroying a number of viable businesses, and cutting off easy movement between the Cass Corridor and the neighboring residential area around Trumbull Avenue.³⁹⁷ This sense of isolation was further exacerbated by the demise of the streetcar system in 1966. The loss of the streetcars meant that the only available public transit,

³⁹⁴ Robert C. Goodspeed, *Urban Renewal in Postwar Detroit, The Gratiot Area Redevelopment Project: A Case Study*. History Honors Thesis, The University of Michigan, accessed January 27, 2021, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiypNqk4_rVAhWDy4MKHTVCDf8QFggnMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fgoodspeedupdate.com%2FRobGoodspeed-HonorsThesis.pdf&usg=AFQjCNGYx1TNX5r_3tOgOw8P3yKKoj_Jdw.

³⁹⁵ Arthur M. Woodford, *This is Detroit 1701–2001*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001), 163–164.

³⁹⁶ Woodford, *This is Detroit 1701–2001*, 164.

³⁹⁷ Hartman, *Cass Corridor*, 7.

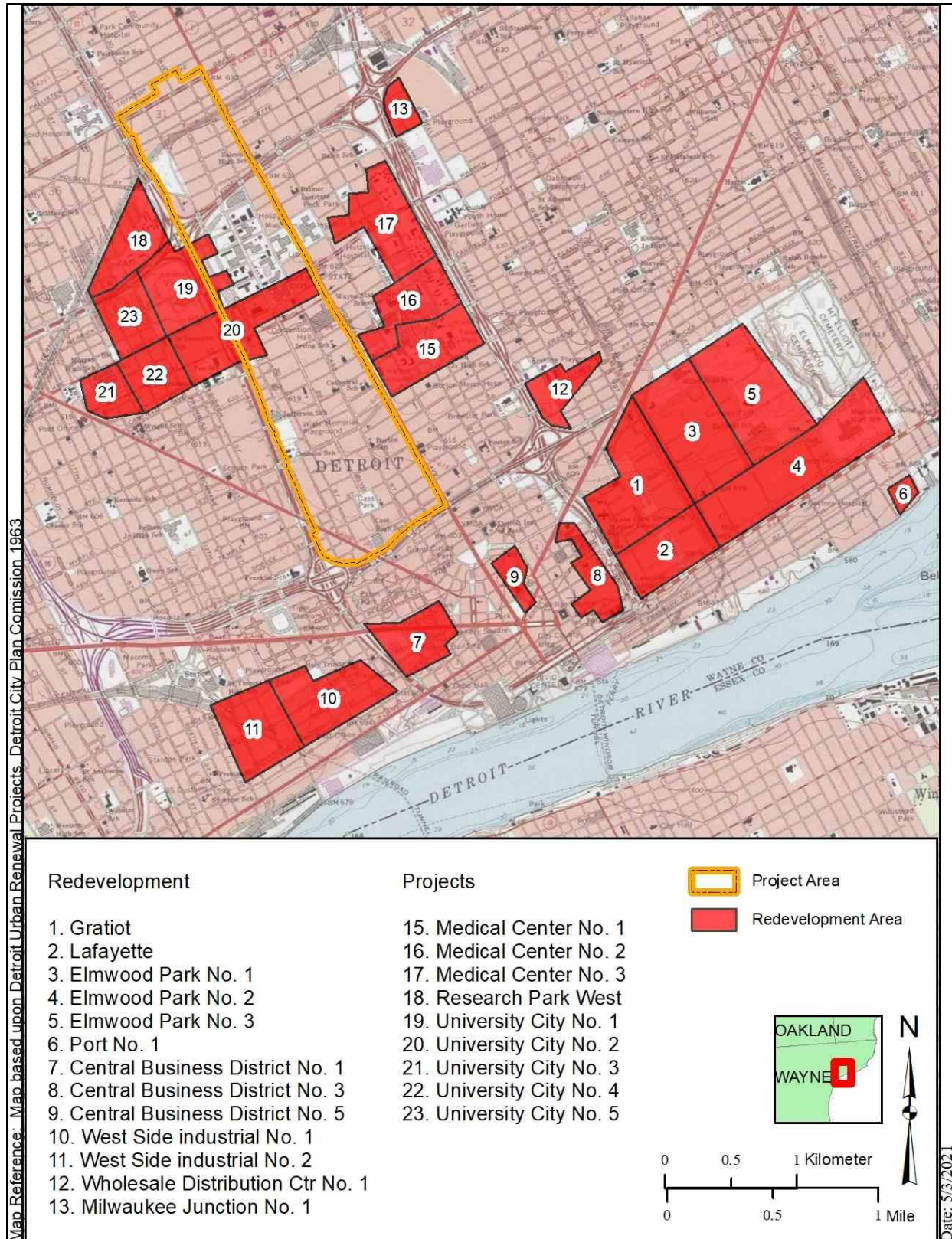


Figure 42. Urban Renewal areas and names in Detroit, 1963

Source: DETROITography 2021

in a city that was increasingly dependent on the automobile, came in the form of motor coaches or buses.³⁹⁸

The urban renewed area near Corktown and the southwest corner of the Cass Corridor project area not slated for freeway development, had been proposed for a new commercial district. The new commercial development had been tentatively named International Village.³⁹⁹ Before the final decision was made about demolition of the original Chinatown on Michigan Avenue and payments made to displaced property owners, Henry Yee, a major business man in the community, met with Detroit's Mayor Miriani and other city official to urge their support of relocating the community. Yee noted that he, along with other Chinese merchants, would like to remain in the general area and hoped to see a new Chinatown that could accommodate thirty to thirty-five business places established in one area.⁴⁰⁰ Historically Chinatown was located largely along Michigan Avenue between Third Avenue and Howard Street and had been there at least twenty-five years, although in reality it may have been longer.⁴⁰¹ By moving to the area near Cass Avenue and Peterboro Street, the community faced a move of just over a mile. Plus, there was initially a discussion of creating an "international village" near the cleared area, and the Chinese community proposed locating in a section of that parcel. Eventually this deal fell through and the new Chinatown was forced to move slightly farther away.⁴⁰²

As a result of the loss of their businesses and homes in the area, the Chinese American community relocated to Cass Avenue near Peterboro, approximately a mile north of the old location.⁴⁰³ The transition to the new Chinatown was signaled complete with the opening of the new Chinese Merchants Association, *On Leong*, on Sunday, May 12, 1963.⁴⁰⁴

Others also displaced by earlier urban renewal projects across Detroit made their way to the Cass Corridor during this period. These moves may have been due to the proximity of the area to their original home location, suggesting a number of the new residents may have historically lived in the Corktown area, or because of the affordable housing rates found in the area. The new residents are illustrated by the change in the demographic make-up of the area (see discussion in Ethnic Heritage section below). Within the Cass Corridor itself there were very different conditions between what was known as "Lower Cass" and the northern part of the area where WSU and the Detroit Public Library were located. In the 1970s sociologist Joyce Stephens in her study of a "slum hotel," described Lower Cass as:

The surrounding neighborhood is honeycombed with rooming houses and hotels...The economic character of the area is revealed in the high concentration of marginal businesses – nudie shows,

³⁹⁸ Trajkovski, A concise history of Detroit public transit.

³⁹⁹ "Skid Row's Doom Sealed," *Detroit Free Press*, December 22, 1961, 1.

⁴⁰⁰ "City to Hear Plea for new Chinatown," *Detroit Free Press*, March 10, 1960, 19.

⁴⁰¹ Sandra Bunnell, "The dragon that dances: a century of Chinese in Detroit with a culture that will not die," *Detroit Free Press*, January 6, 1974, 6.

⁴⁰² Chelsea Zuzindlak, "Tell 'em you're from Detroit," in *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, edited by Sook Wilkinson and Victor Jew (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015), 59.

⁴⁰³ Kathie Norman, "The New Chinatown," *Detroit Free Press Detroit Magazine*, November 3, 1963, 4.

⁴⁰⁴ Jack Mann, "Old Chinatown Born Anew at Relocation Ceremonies," *Detroit Free Press*, May 13, 1963, A3.

nude photographic studios, resale shops, cheap cafes and restaurants, dry-cleaning stores, “we buy anything” shops, and bars.⁴⁰⁵

What Stephens left out of her description was the growing number of buildings in the Cass Corridor that were vacant and abandoned. This left open areas within the once densely packed streets (Figure 43).



Figure 43. West side of Third Avenue south of Charlotte, photograph ca. 1979

Source: Photograph by Bruce Harkness

The name Cass Corridor was first applied to the area beginning in the 1960s. It has been speculated that this name was in reference to the growing crime and number of bars and possible illicit activity. The name may also have been placed on the area in recognition of the creative spirit that surrounded the area. Poets, musicians, and artists brought a special feel to the area, and resulted in an interesting mix of the old standard bars and restaurants and new “beatnik cafes and jazz joints.”⁴⁰⁶ One of the members of the artist community that gathered in the area in the 1960s and 1970s, WSU professor and painter John Egner, said that the name was something made up by a city planner. Egner stated the name was something “catchy and upbeat, but it has nothing to do with us, and what goes on here. Who names their own neighborhood?”⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁵ Retzliff, “Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit,” 248–249.

⁴⁰⁶ D. Sands, “Would the Real Midtown Please Stand Up? A Cultural History of Cass Corridor,” *Critical Moment*, February 15, accessed April 29, 2021, <https://critical-moment.org/2012/02/15/would-the-real-midtown-please-stand-up/>.

⁴⁰⁷ Joy Hakanson, “Cass Corridor,” *Detroit News, Sunday News-Tribune*, February 6, 1972.

One of the lasting icons of the Cass Corridor and its transition to the place that evolved in the 1960s was Jumbo's Bar. The owner of the establishment was affectionately known as the "Mayor of the Cass Corridor," and looked out for the area residents, including a number of veterans (Figure 44).⁴⁰⁸



Figure 44. Jumbo's Bar, 3736 Third Avenue, ca. 1978

Source: Photograph by Bruce Harkness

⁴⁰⁸ Sands, "Would the Real Midtown Please Stand Up?" .

Despite demolition within the area, there was new construction underway in the area as well. In addition to the dramatic changes that continued to occur on the WSU campus, much of the new development was focused in commercial, educational, and student or multi-unit residential buildings. Additionally, a major new museum was added to the Cultural Center during this period. The Detroit Historical Museum (1951), 5401 Woodward Avenue, was completed by architect William Kapp (Figure 45). The new museum building was dedicated as part of Detroit's 250th Birthday Festival, and featured flagstaffs donated by the *Detroit News* and carved by artist, Corrado Parducci.⁴⁰⁹



Figure 45. Detroit Historical Museum (1951), 5401 Woodward Avenue

⁴⁰⁹ Dedication, Detroit Historical Museum, *The Detroit News*, 24 July 1951; "Detroit Marks Its Great Day," *The Detroit News*, July 24, 1951, 4; "Highlights of Detroit's 250th Birthday Celebration," *The Detroit News*, July 25, 1951, 60.

It was also during this period that people started to recognize the architectural and cultural value of the buildings and places within the Cass Corridor. One of the earliest Michigan entries in the NRHP was the West Canfield Historic District, which was listed on May 27, 1971, becoming the seventh Detroit listing, and the first district (Figure 46).⁴¹⁰



Figure 46. West Canfield Avenue in the West Canfield Historic District, view to the southwest

Building on the growing appreciation of the historic buildings in the Cass Corridor, by the late-1970s, developer Joel Landy began his work restoring a number of projects. Landy, who died in 2020, has long been considered one of the leading developers and a major advocate of historic preservation. Other developers in the area considered Landy a force working against the decline in the Cass Corridor, which at the time was plagued with issues of homelessness, drug addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes, and crime.⁴¹¹ Landy spent forty years renovating one building at a time, with the majority in Detroit, and many in the Cass Corridor. Landy himself noted that he started his first project with just \$4,500, but by 2018 he owned twenty-seven million dollars' worth of property (Figure 47, next page).⁴¹²

⁴¹⁰ NRHP, Listed Properties Database, accessed April 21, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm#table>

⁴¹¹ Capital Impact Partners, "40 Years in Detroit's Cass Corridor," accessed 22 July 2021, <https://www.capitalimpact.org/stories/40-years-detroits-cass-corridor/>.

⁴¹² Ibid.



Figure 47. Developer Joel Landy at one of his project sites

Source: Capital Impact Partners

Government

One of the growing issues felt in the Cass Corridor, particularly in the southern end of the area, was the increasing level of crime. In 1976, a newspaper report noted that the area was saturated with programs geared to assist ex-offenders, addicts, and alcoholics. Reverend Lewis Redmond, the pastor of the Cass Methodist Church, reported that these programs were all available in a three by eight block area surrounding the church. The issue was brought up when the Michigan State Department of Corrections announced plans to convert a former Salvation Army residence for business women on Second Avenue into a half-way house for prison inmates nearing parole.⁴¹³

Civil Rights and housing both continued to be issues in the city during this period. As of December 1964, five of Detroit's seven public housing projects had been integrated, but two were still occupied entirely by Black residents, allegedly because the "Black tenants themselves wanted it that way."⁴¹⁴

In 1963, Michigan Governor George Romney, a moderate Republican, listed housing discrimination as "the most crucial and pressing problem" in civil rights. Romney called for the state legislature to enact a measure that embodied the key features of Detroit's Fair Neighborhood Practice Ordinance.⁴¹⁵ The Detroit ordinance prohibited real-estate salesmen and brokers from pushing sales and rentals by claiming that a neighborhood was about to undergo a change in racial, religious, or ethnic makeup, and was signed into law by Mayor Cavanagh in 1962.⁴¹⁶

⁴¹³ "Halfway House Draws Criticism," *Detroit Free Press*, April 7, 1976, 1A.

⁴¹⁴ Fine, "Michigan and Housing Discrimination," 85.

⁴¹⁵ Fine, Michigan and Housing Discrimination, 97.

⁴¹⁶ "Brickley Law Signed by Mayor," *Detroit Free Press*, November 27, 1962, 3.

However, in spite of the governor's support of a fair housing law, the state legislature did not feel the same urgency, with the bill dying in committee in 1963.⁴¹⁷ Continuing to press the issue, in 1966 and 1967, the Civil Rights Commission held a series of public meetings across the state. As a result of the hearings, the Commission concluded that "a discriminatory housing market, coupled with sub-standard housing" in the Black areas of the state, effectively prevented Black families from upgrading their living conditions.⁴¹⁸ They also determined that the problem of segregation was intensified by "urban renewal projects and highway construction, which displaced non-whites in particular, forcing them to relocate to a constricted housing market that denied them freedom of choice."⁴¹⁹

After a series of public housing hearings held by the Michigan Civil Rights Commission that concluded in 1967 it was noted that approximately ninety percent of all Michigan's nonwhite residents lived in residentially segregated areas. The commission wrote that "Negroes have been forced to live apart in urban ghettos throughout the State of Michigan, and in some cases, in rural ghettos."⁴²⁰

This information brought about a series of changes in the way the Michigan Department of Transportation managed some of their larger expressway developments, including requiring the development of "citizen advisory councils" whose recommendations were required to be submitted for review prior to action on housing removals could be taken.⁴²¹ At the same time, the Michigan Housing Development Authority was established and directed to revise their main purpose to provide low-cost housing for families displaced by highway construction and not urban renewal projects.⁴²² Finally, in June 1968, the state of Michigan passed the Fair Housing Act, which was scheduled to be enacted on November 14 of that year. The legislation, intended to protect tenants from landlords maintaining run-down neighborhoods, and "bans discrimination in the sale and rental of housing."⁴²³

Elias Khalil, a resident of the Cass Corridor area, noted that the impact of the urban renewal projects and the building of the Fisher and Lodge Freeways "literally eliminated whole portions of the neighborhood, creating new boundaries for the Cass Corridor."⁴²⁴ Displaced residents of the nearby areas found their way to the Cass Corridor. Khalil wrote that "the disruptions were a blow to the then-working-class population, creating the perfect storm for

⁴¹⁷ Fine, *Michigan and Housing Discrimination*, 98.

⁴¹⁸ Fine, *Michigan and Housing Discrimination*, 99.

⁴¹⁹ Fine, *Michigan and Housing Discrimination*, 100.

⁴²⁰ Fine, "Michigan and Housing Discrimination," 83.

⁴²¹ There is no readily available information on early citizen advisory boards utilized by MDOT, but in recent years, such groups have been employed for projects such as the M-1 Rail development that resulted in the QLine, and for both the planning process for I-375 and I-94. MDOT also gathers information from the general public through a series of public meetings which meet some of the requirements mandated by law.

⁴²² Fine, "Michigan and Housing Discrimination," 102.

⁴²³ Roger Lane, *State Legislators Respond to some of the Riot Causes*, *Detroit Free Press*, 11 August 1968, 6-A.

⁴²⁴ Elias Khalil, Cass Corridor, in *The Detroit Neighborhood Guidebook*, edited by Aaron Foley (Cleveland, OH: Belt Publishing, 2017), 22.

the Cass Corridor to become the hub of crime, drug activity, prostitution, blight, and homelessness for an entire generation.”⁴²⁵

Along with fair housing, the continuing issue of fair employment continued during the period. This was something that was of major interest of Michigan’s First Congressional District Representative, John Conyers. The First Congressional District was newly established in 1964, but was located just north of the Cass Corridor. That year, Rep. Conyers campaign, in which he won a seat in Congress for the first time, included as a volunteer civil rights activist Rosa Parks, who remained on to staff his office after winning the seat. Parks, who was officially the office receptionist and administrative assistant, answered phones, met with visitors, handled constituent cases, and assisted the Congressman with scheduling. In 1986, Mrs. Parks was photographed with the Congressman outside the General Motors headquarters, located in the Cass Corridor project area, to protest the company’s decision to close five Michigan plants (Figure 48).⁴²⁶



Figure 48. Rosa Parks and Rep. John Conyers in front of GM Building. Conyers’ sign reads: “GM has made the most inhumane decision in its history”

Source: Library of Congress

⁴²⁵ Khalil, *Cass Corridor*, 22.

⁴²⁶ Library of Congress, Notes “Rosa Parks and U.S. Congressman John Conyers, Jr., picketing in front of General Motors corporate headquarters, Detroit, Michigan, 1986. Accessed January 25, 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2015645704/>

Medicine

By the late 1960s plans were in place for the development of a new facility for the Detroit Osteopathic Hospital. Finally, after more than a decade of planning, their Woodward Avenue facility was abandoned. Ultimately, the vacant building was purchased by WSU and was repurposed.⁴²⁷

Over time, the mission and the name of the Sigma Gamma Clinic for Crippled Children, Inc., located in the 1958 Mid-Century Modern building at 5447 Woodward Avenue (Figure 49) was changed to have greater appeal to the medical community. To this end, the name was changed to Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic. Along with continuing outpatient services, the organization added inpatient capabilities. In 1979, the final major shift changed the name to Detroit Institute for Children, eliminated the inpatient services, and realigned their mission to “care for children with physical or developmental disabilities, neurological or behavioral special needs in a way that is positive, passionate, integrated and family-centered so that the children can maximize their potential within their families and the community.”⁴²⁸



Figure 49. Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic/WSU School of Social Work (1958), 5447 Woodward Avenue

⁴²⁷ Robinson, North Cultural Center Historic District Registration, Draft, 54.

⁴²⁸ DLRA, Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic, Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation, online document, accessed September 26, 2014, http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/bcs_corp/image.asp?FILE_TYPE=STS&FILE_NAME=D0152\STAT0771\92336C CQ.TIF; Detroit Institute for Children, About Us, Electronic document, accessed September 29, 2014, <http://www.detroitchildren.org/changinglives>.

Ethnic Heritage

The U.S. Census records provided a good image of the ethnic make-up of the Cass Corridor. In 1960, there were seven different tracts within the Cass Corridor, with a combined population total of 23,721. However, the ethnic groups tallied lacked the clarity of earlier censuses (Table 6). The same table also includes, for comparison purposes, the population counts for the overall city. While the breakdown for the Detroit numbers is not as fine as in the Cass Corridor population, it is clear that the majority of the city at the time was ethnically white.

Table 6. Cass Corridor and City of Detroit ethnic diversity based on 1960 census records

Ethnicity	Cass Corridor population	Percentage of Cass Corridor population	Total Detroit population	Total percentage of Detroit population
White, U.S. born	14,044	60%	1,182,970	70%
Black	4,017	17%	482,223	28%
Native/Foreign Born Mixed Heritage	1639	7%		
All other not reported	1,111	5%	2,171	<1%
Asian			2,780	<1%
Canada	972	4%		
United Kingdom	450	2%		
Germany	465	2%		
Poland	345	1%		
Austria	70	<1%		
Italy	67	<1%		
U.S.S.R.	52	<1%		
Sweden	24	<1%		
Ireland	93	<1%		
Total population	23,349		1,670,144	

Based on these numbers, the Black population of the Cass Corridor had risen from two percent in 1950 to seventeen percent in 1960. The number may actually be up to seven percent higher when the mixed heritage group is considered. Other groups present in 1950 are apparently absent or counted within one of the ambiguous categories, such as “other” or “all others/not reported.” These categories could include persons of Asian or American Indian ethnicity.

The 1970 U.S. Census records, while continuing to include several vaguely defined ethnic groups, clearly shows that the Black population, mixed heritage individuals, and persons speaking Spanish language are acknowledged. There was a total of 18,127 people in the seven census tracts within the Cass Corridor (Table 7).⁴²⁹ Of these, 11,188 people were either recorded as white or with an ethnicity that is of European descent (Canada, Ireland, Germany,

⁴²⁹ While not precisely recorded in the census records, as the restrictions on housing for the Black population were lifted, the White population across the city moved to areas farther from the central core of the city. Known as ‘white flight,’ the practice was common across the country, not just in Detroit, and may also be attributed to the almost simultaneous development of a more effective freeway system that enabled people to live farther from work and still easily commute to work.

United Kingdom, Italy, U.S.S.R., Austria, and Poland). This is just under sixty-two percent of the total population of the Cass Corridor. At the same time, this population represents about fifty-five percent of the entire City of Detroit. The most definitive increase in any ethnic group, the combined Black and Mixed Heritage categories, rose to over thirty percent of the entire population and the combined Spanish language and Puerto Rico ethnic groups represented 1.5 percent of the total population within the Cass Corridor.

Table 7. Cass Corridor and City of Detroit ethnic diversity based on 1970 census records

Ethnicity	Cass Corridor Population	Percentage of Cass Corridor population	Total Detroit population	Total percentage of Detroit population
White	9805	54%	838,877	55.5%
Black	4238	23%	660,428	43.5%
Native/Foreign Born/Mixed Parentage	1288	7%		
All Other	1150	6%	7,699	<1%
Asian			4,378	<1%
Canada	576	3%		
Spanish Language	245	1%		
Germany	188	1%		
United Kingdom	210	1%		
Poland	176	1%		
U.S.S.R.	103	1%		
Italy	80	<1%		
Ireland	35	<1%		
Hispanic/Latino ⁴³⁰	18	<1%	27,038	1.79%
Austria	15	<1%		
Total population	18,127		1,511,482	

The rise in the number of Blacks in the Corridor from two percent of the total population to seventeen percent of the total Corridor population in 1960 and twenty-three percent in 1970, may be linked to several factors, including the passing of several acts related to fair housing practices at both the city and state level (see Government section above). Noticeably absent from the 1970 census ethnicities are Asian and American Indian. These persons may be included in the “all others/not reported” category, which includes 6.4 percent of the overall population in the Cass Corridor.

In 1970, a newspaper story regarding a community event in the Cass Corridor described the ethnic mix present,

⁴³⁰ Hispanic/Latino is a combined category that in the Cass Corridor tracts was identified as Puerto Rico.

The Cass Community, like no other in Detroit, is not one ethnic or racial strain. It's a mixture. It could be a volatile mixture – of Black and Appalachian white, American and East Indian, Chinese, young refugees – sometimes students – from middle class suburbia – the elderly, the winos, and the down and out.⁴³¹

Sandra Battle Lucas, who graduated from Cass Tech High in 1961, confirmed that the area was widely integrated. In talking about her experience at the high school, she recalled the school was very different from others across the city of Detroit. She explained that it was fully integrated — with equal numbers of Black and white classmates — who easily worked together.⁴³²

While the census records do not record any Asians in the Cass Corridor area, this was certainly not true. Following the loss of the Chinatown area at Third and Michigan Avenues due to urban renewal, the community relocated, to a new site along Cass Avenue near Peterboro Street (see the Community Development section above). One of the key features of the new Chinatown was the Chinese Merchants Association, or *On Leong*, which was the moving force behind the community. From their offices at 3143 Cass Avenue, the Association served as a combination of council, court, and government, with its members elected by the members of the Chinese community (Figure 50).⁴³³



Figure 50. The Chinese Merchants Association Offices (1915), or *On Leong Tong*, 3143 Cass Avenue

⁴³¹ Helen Fogel, "Cass Corridor Celebrates Its Heritage," *Detroit Free Press*, August 21, 1970, 3-C.

⁴³² Megha Styandarayana, "A final farewell to old Cass Tech," *Detroit Free Press*, July 31, 2011, 12A.

⁴³³ Norman, "New Chinatown," 5.

The Association, which boasted between four hundred-fifty and five hundred members in 1974, also assisted its members with family squabbles and property disputes, helped them locate jobs, ensured they had sufficient funds to pay bills and funeral expenses, and gave errant youths lectures on ‘saving face.’⁴³⁴ Informal use of the *On Leong* included its role as a popular gathering place or community center for the “local retirees to drink tea, reminisce, and play mahjong”⁴³⁵ For younger area residents, the Koon Lok Club (a youth club), met in the *On Leong*.⁴³⁶ The Association building included a conference room, with a large hand-carved black-and-gold shrine that was shipped from China to Detroit in the early years of the twentieth century. The shrine is known as the Kwan Dai, for the carving in the center panel of the prince who unified China after the Han Dynasty collapsed in 220 CE.⁴³⁷ The building also included a theater where Chinese operas were presented.

Henry Yee, who owned Jade Palace restaurant in the old Chinatown< and Forbidden City restaurant at 3148 Second Avenue, was elected executive secretary of the Association in December 1962, making him the unofficial mayor of Chinatown. Yee, who was born in Canton, China, and moved to the United States at the age of five, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, and went on to take on a leadership role in the Association.⁴³⁸ It was under Yee’s leadership that the plans to relocate Chinatown were completed, the buildings constructed, and the opening celebrations were held. In May 1963, an inaugural celebration of the new Chinatown was held. The celebration boasted the famed dragon dance in the street and drew nearly five-hundred Chinese people and Chinese Americans to the celebration.⁴³⁹ Unfortunately, the due to the delay in relocating Chinatown, and the number of opportunities available outside the city, only a few of the Chinese-owned businesses actually relocated to the New Chinatown.⁴⁴⁰

In 1963, the *Detroit Free Press* reported there were about fifty-five Chinese residents of Chinatown, most of whom were elderly and spoke little English.⁴⁴¹ While the location of these residents’ homes is unclear, it is very likely that they lived as close as possible to the *On Leong Tong* and Chinese businesses. The younger people in the Chinese community largely left the area and scattered across the region, especially to the surrounding suburbs where they could restaurants and businesses in areas without competition. Because most of the Chinese residents of Metro Detroit did not come to Chinatown except to attend Association meetings, most of the restaurants advertised extensively in local newspapers and catered to American tastes. In addition to the *On Leong Tong*, among the businesses established in the new

⁴³⁴ Bunnell, “The dragon that dances,” 10.

⁴³⁵ Tai Chan, Tukyul Andrew Kim, and Kul B. Gauri, “The Legacy Keepers: The Voices of Chinese, Korean, and Indo-American Michiganders” in *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, edited by Sook Wilkinson and Victor Jew (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015), 132.

⁴³⁶ Brunnell, “The dragon that dances,” 12.

⁴³⁷ Norman, “New Chinatown,” 5.

⁴³⁸ Norman, “New Chinatown,” 6.

⁴³⁹ Emiko Ohnuki, *The Detroit Chinese - A Study of Socio-cultural Changes in the Detroit Chinese Community from 1872 Through 1963*, MS Thesis (University of Wisconsin, 1964), 96.

⁴⁴⁰ Zuzindlak, “Tell ’em you’re from Detroit.” 59.

⁴⁴¹ Norman, “New Chinatown,” 6.

Chinatown were the Wah Lee curio shop and grocery at 3409 Cass Avenue (now 3401 Cass Avenue), a hand laundry run by Chin Kin at 478 Peterboro Street, Chung's restaurant at 3177 Cass Avenue (now 3175 Cass Avenue), and Forbidden City at Second and Cass (not extant) (Figure 51).⁴⁴² Eventually the community also included the Chinese School of Detroit and a Chinatown Kung-fu Club which was located on Charlotte Street and opened in response to the Bruce Lee movies of the 1970s.⁴⁴³



Figure 51. Chinatown advertisement in the October 3, 1963, *Detroit Free Press*

By November 1963, newspaper advertisements began appearing regularly. A large ad on Friday, November 1st, noted,

*Quaint shops and exotic eateries
are sparking a rebirth along Cass.*

Detroit's new Chinatown has more neon flashiness than the old one bulldozed out of the Third and near Michigan area. But you enjoy the same succulent egg rolls, sweet and sour shrimp. The shops are crammed with same teak Buddhas, ivory chopsticks, brass incense burners, pressed ginger and litchee nuts.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴² Norman, "New Chinatown," 8.

⁴⁴³ Delicato and Khalil, *Cass Corridor*, 40; Detroit Chinatown, Welcome Chinatown!, May 24, 2006, accessed January 29, 2021, <http://detroitchinatown.blogspot.com/2006/05/welcome-chinatown.html>.

⁴⁴⁴ "The New Chinatown" advertisement, *Detroit Free Press*, November 1, 1963, 11-B.

In 1977, the new Chinatown area received a \$300,000 federal grant to revitalize the area. The grant funded paving of sidewalks, construction of planters, installation of new streetlights, and the placement of banner poles (Figure 52).⁴⁴⁵ By 1980, the Chinatown area had lost much of the earlier hyped vibrancy. Chung's restaurant continued to operate, as did several other businesses – Wing Lee Lung Chinese Vegetable Co., Yee Yuen, Lun Hop, and Bow Wah's Chop Suey – but the area had taken on a bleak appearance. Some of the shops were closed, others faded shells with few patrons. Charlie Chung noted that “it's more peaceful in Chinatown, but business is slow.”⁴⁴⁶ At the time, there were few people around, and most were not Chinese. Another area resident commented that “the Chinese family, when they first get here, they live here. But then maybe they get a good job and find a place uptown near where they are working. So, they move out again.”⁴⁴⁷



Figure 52. Chinatown Kiosk, northwest corner of Cass Avenue and Peterboro Street

Chung's, the final landmark of Detroit's Chinatown, closed in 2000, ending an era.⁴⁴⁸ In 1972, the Association of Chinese Americans (ACA) was started in Detroit becoming the founding chapter in an organization that now has over fifty chapters nationwide. The ACA continues to operate a service center at 4750 Woodward Avenue, Suite 211, Detroit.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁵ Thomas BeVier, “Chinatown Dedication Sparkles,” *Detroit Free Press*, 25 September 1977, 3A.

⁴⁴⁶ Sally Smith, “Changing rhythms in Cass Corridor,” *Detroit Free Press Detroit Magazine*, April 27, 1980, 9.

⁴⁴⁷ Smith, “Changing rhythms in Cass Corridor,” 10.

⁴⁴⁸ Wayne State University (WSU) College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Chinatown, accessed January 29, 2021, <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/ELD/Chinatown>

⁴⁴⁹ Association of Chinese Americans, “About ACA,” accessed February 17, 2021, <https://acadetroit.org/about-aca/>.

Other Asians were present in the Cass Corridor. Beginning in the 1940s there was an influx of Japanese into the area. While many of these people moved on to new homes outside the Cass Corridor, many established their first home in Detroit in the Cass Corridor. Most of the Japanese population did not remain in the area long, but signs of their presence lingered. In 1970, there was a popular store known as Kuwahara's Trading Post at 3126 Cass Avenue. The store was owned by Frank Kuwhara, and sold basic Japanese food, like kamaboko (processed fishcake), sashimi (prepared raw fish), and nori (dried seaweed). The store was relocated to Clawson in 1984, and eventually sold and renamed as Noble Fish Sushi and Market.⁴⁵⁰

Like the Asian community the American Indian community also moved to the area with the loss of their homes in the urban renewal area along Michigan Avenue. Historically, many of the American Indians who came to Detroit from the reservations or other areas outside of Detroit, were often pointed to the Michigan and Third area, which was treated as a "point of entry, the orientation center" for most American Indians.⁴⁵¹ American Indians found homes in second-floor apartments, and used the area for both social purposes and as a location to learn about leads on jobs and housing. Like the Chinese community, with the removal of the buildings at Michigan and Third, the American Indian community also found homes within the Cass Corridor area and continued to assist new arrivals from the reservations as they adapted to urban life in Detroit.⁴⁵² Author Edmund Jefferson Danziger, Jr., wrote:

...downtown Indians frequently turned to one another for assistance, another distinguishing trait. Michigan Avenue and later the Cass Corridor appealed to them not just because rents were low; Indian friends lived and socialized in these neighborhoods. Here one could get help: Money, a place to sleep, personal support during a crisis time. Here native youngsters buddied together, roaming the streets and going to movies, just like their parents did in apartment buildings or on the job.⁴⁵³

In 1972, the *Detroit Free Press* estimated the American Indian population within the Cass Corridor area had reached approximately three thousand individuals.⁴⁵⁴ Poverty was prevalent among the American Indians who made their home in the Cass Corridor, in part due to limited education that often limited individuals to unskilled or semi-skilled positions.⁴⁵⁵ Many of the American Indian households suffered from substandard living conditions and the residents experienced serious health problems. Danziger wrote that the community had "overcrowded

⁴⁵⁰ One Detroit, "New Year's mochi and recent history of Japanese food in Detroit," published 19 December 2018, accessed 24 July, 2021, <https://www.onedetroitpbs.org/mochitsuki-a-japanese-new-years-tradition/>; Noble Fish "Team," accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.noblefish.com/#team>.

⁴⁵¹ Edmund Jefferson Danziger, Jr. *Survival and Regeneration: Detroit's American Indian Community*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 31.

⁴⁵² Danziger, *Detroit's American Indian Community*, 35.

⁴⁵³ Danziger, *Detroit's American Indian Community*, 64–65.

⁴⁵⁴ Tom Nugent, "Leave Us Alone: Detroit's Indian Population Caught Between 2 Worlds," *Detroit Free Press*, February 20, 1972, 9A.

⁴⁵⁵ Danziger, *Detroit's American Indian Community*, 74.

quarters, inadequate heat, faulty plumbing, rats and roaches” all endured because they often occupied the city’s cheapest apartments so they could be near their friends.⁴⁵⁶

While individual residences were not identified, one of the major social services organizations for the American Indian community had its offices in a small building at the northwest corner of West Baltimore Street and Third Avenue. Dean George, the Executive Director of the North American Indian Club, lived in the Architects Building, 415 Brainard Street, during the 1970s. It was in his living room that the organization that sought to improve Native women’s access to jobs and educational opportunities was located.⁴⁵⁷

A variety of organizations were established to support the American Indian community, including the Associated Indians of Detroit (AID), which was located in the Cass Methodist Church. The AID assisted local American Indians with obtaining their GED, provided cultural classes taught by volunteers, provide food and clothing distributions, offer job referrals, and host a drop-in facility that served coffee and donuts. Carleen Pedrotti, who worked with the organization between 1972 and 1975, recalled that the organization was an “Indian-for-Indians organization...[trying to] bring back some tradition to the people who lived in the area.”⁴⁵⁸ Unfortunately, some of the AID staff members became involved with national American Indian affairs that resulted in frequent FBI inquiries. By 1975, the church pastor was convinced that the American Indian group was militant, and the organization was forced to find new quarters. After leaving the church the group changed its name, some of the early leadership left the group, and its prominence faded.⁴⁵⁹

Similar to the AID, the American Indian Services (AIS) was originally established in Highland Park but relocated to West Baltimore Street and Third Avenue (not extant) in 1972. The AIS focused their efforts on alcoholism, counseling, education, and unemployment among the American Indian community. While located in the Cass Corridor, the AIS also provided to another organization, the Detroit Indian Educational and Cultural Center (DIECC), which also rented spaces in other areas, including the Burton Elementary school building, for ceremonies, feasts, and powwows.⁴⁶⁰ At some point this organization relocated to Lincoln Park, and ended its services in July 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁶ Danziger, *Detroit’s American Indian Community*, 138-139.

⁴⁵⁷ Jade Ryerson, *Native American History in Detroit*, National Park Service, accessed 2 May 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/native-american-history-in-detroit.htm>.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 156-157.

⁴⁶¹ American Indian Services, Inc., “Mission,” Accessed 18 February 2021, <https://amerinserv.org/>

Commerce and Industry

In 1972, United Sound Systems Recording Studio was purchased by African American guitarist, producer, and entrepreneur, Don Davis. Davis continued to work with a broad spectrum of recording artists, especially soul, disco, funk, and rhythm and blues. The single “Disco Lady,” recorded by Johnnie Taylor at the studio in 1976, had the distinction of being the first certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America.⁴⁶²

It was during the Don Davis era that artists such as Marvin Gaye recorded “*What’s Goin’ On*” in the studio.⁴⁶³ Other well-known performers who worked in the studio during this period included Burt Bacharach, Aretha Franklin, The Staple Singers, Marilyn McCoo & Billy Davis, The Dells, The Dramatics, Carla Thomas, and David Ruffin. Also of note was the period when George Clinton and the Parliament-Funkadelic made the studio their home base for recording and recorded “Cosmic Slop” (1973), “Chocolate City” (1974), and “Mothership Connection”(1975) (Figure 53).⁴⁶⁴



Figure 53. United Sound Studio with George Clinton and Jim Vitti, recording engineer

Source: Discogs.com

⁴⁶² Michigan Department of Natural Resources, “Historical Marker-S744.”

⁴⁶³ Micah Walker, “Historic United Sound Systems recording studio in Detroit saved by MDOT,” *Detroit Free Press*, January 11, 2019.

⁴⁶⁴ HDAB, “United Sound Systems Recording Studio,” 5.

As the Cass Corridor continued to evolve a large number of restaurants, small businesses, and industries were established. Some of the enterprises located in existing buildings. Among these was The Whitney, a restaurant opened in the former David Whitney House, 4221 Woodward Avenue.⁴⁶⁵ Other businesses catered to specific clientele. For example, in 1969 the store, Mixed Media, 5704 Cass Avenue, was opened. The shop carried records, small-press books, jewelry, posters, and was the “daddy of Detroit head shops.”⁴⁶⁶ Among the many offerings in the store was the popular Detroit magazine, *Creem*. Under the same ownership as Mixed Media was the nearby store known as Full Circle, 4860 Cass Avenue, that specialized in records.⁴⁶⁷ Both stores were owned by Barry Kramer, a WSU student and entrepreneur. After an article written by Kramer reviewing a local band was rejected by a local underground newspaper, he started *Creem*. The new publication’s first editor, Tony Reay, named the magazine after his favorite band, *Cream*.⁴⁶⁸ For a time, the magazine was published in an old dentist office at 3729 Cass Avenue. Over time, the magazine changed both its focus from a local to a national audience, and its format from a large newsprint paper to a full-color magazine.⁴⁶⁹

Creem magazine, which was born of the countercultural movement of Detroit, did not express simple idealism about revolutionized cultural and political life in the United States. Instead, “the magazine attempted to develop a critic of the counterculture in which it participated, while refusing to give up on the counterculture’s utopian dream of transforming Cold War America into a more just, vital, meaningful, and fun society.”⁴⁷⁰ *Creem* magazine has always proclaimed that it was “America’s only rock’n’roll magazine.” In 2020, *The New Yorker* acknowledged this masthead logo, but explained that the staff knew that the magazine was never the only one covering rock and roll, but that it was the “only one that mattered.”⁴⁷¹ During its early years of operation, the airwaves were flooded with “soft rock” songs like “A Horse with No Name” and “Joy to the World,” but *Creem* magazine left these to *Rolling Stone* to cover, instead focusing on proto-punk bands including the Stooges and MC5, mavericks such as Dr. John and George Clinton, and heavy-metal acts including Black Sabbath, Deep Purple, and Alice Cooper.⁴⁷² While never a financial success, with production ending in 1989, *Creem*’s influence was far reaching, inspiring other publications that followed their lead related to other music genres.

Several additional newspapers were published in the Cass Corridor during this period. The first, the *Fifth Estate*, founded in 1965 and still in operation today, was a bi-weekly paper that had “little tolerance for the police, elected government officials, organized religion and hawkish precepts but great fondness for Panthers, Black and white, jazz and psychedelic

⁴⁶⁵ The Whitney, “About the Whitney,” accessed 27 February 2021, <https://www.thewhitney.com/about>.

⁴⁶⁶ Tavy Stone, Tavy Stone’s Detroit Guidebook, Detroit Head Shops – Poster, Candles, Psychedelia, *Detroit Free Press*, 25 June 1969, 12.

⁴⁶⁷ Stone, Tavy Stone’s Detroit Guidebook, 12.

⁴⁶⁸ Bill Holdship, Sour CREEM, the rise and fall of the rock mag that mattered, *Detroit Metro Times*, 16 January 2008, accessed 2 February 2021, <https://www.metrotimes.com/detroit/sour.-creem/Content?oid=2190982>.

⁴⁶⁹ Susan Whitehall, phone interview by Jennifer Radcliffe, 1 December 2020.

⁴⁷⁰ Michael J. Kramer, “Can’t Forget the Motor City:” *Creem Magazine*, Rock Music, Detroit Identity, Mass Consumerism, and the Counterculture, in *Michigan Historical Review*, Fall 2002, 44.

⁴⁷¹ Jim DeRogatis, The Overlooked Influence of *Creem Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, 17 August 2020.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

music, John Sinclair and the MC5 and all campus disruptions.”⁴⁷³ Originally published in the teenage editor Harvey Ovshinsky’s parent’s basement, by 1970, the offices were located at 1107 West Warren.⁴⁷⁴ Not far away from the *Fifth Estate* headquarters, at Cass and Warren, were the offices of the WSU student newspaper, *The South End*.⁴⁷⁵

Religion

Unlike the early periods of history in the Cass Corridor, where there were so many churches that the area was known as Piety Hill, the number of congregations began shrinking in the 1960s and 1970s as more and more residential buildings were removed. The original congregation of the First Church of Christ, Scientist (1917), 4743 Cass Avenue, occupied their building until 1961, when their reduced number necessitated a move to smaller quarters. The building was then purchased by WSU’s theater department to provide both rehearsal and performance space for their students.⁴⁷⁶

As the WSU campus continued to expand and the original neighborhoods were demolished, Saint Andrew’s Episcopal Church (1894, 1906), 5105 Anthony Wayne Drive, started losing its parishioners. Initially, the church was embraced by the school, hosting a variety of programming in the building. However, by 1976 to 1977, the church served only seventy households, and had an average weekly attendance of fifty people. The numbers continued to drop, and in 1988 the final regular church service was held in the building. The following year, the church was purchased by WSU and has since been restored for use as a musical performance venue.⁴⁷⁷

Other churches embraced their evolving neighborhoods. One such example is the Cass Methodist Church, which after the relocation of Chinatown experienced an influx of Chinese to their services.

Rev. Edwin Rowe served at the Cass Community Methodist Episcopal Church from 1970 to 1994. During his tenure, the church began to address the needs of the area’s homeless, establishing both the Homeless Drop-In Center and Interfaith Rotating Shelter in 1988.⁴⁷⁸

Education

The large addition to the Main Branch of the Detroit Public Library was completed in 1963. This addition, which cost approximately eleven million dollars, added two wings and a concourse to the original building, an estimated two-hundred-thirty thousand square feet.⁴⁷⁹

At WSU, the era of building construction from the 1940s and 1950s continued. In 1960s, the campus added the College of Education Building, 5425 Second Avenue, and the Life Sciences

⁴⁷³ Stone, Tavy Stone’s Detroit Guidebook, 12.

⁴⁷⁴ *The Fifth Estate* relocated to Liberty, Tennessee in 2002.

⁴⁷⁵ Hank Malone, Detroit’s Open City: What it is, where it’s at, *Detroit Free Press*, 23 August 1970, 22.

⁴⁷⁶ Miller, Wayne State University Buildings, 8-2.

⁴⁷⁷ Evelyn Aschenbrenner, St. Andrew’s Memorial Episcopal Church, accessed 28 February 2021, <https://historicdetroit.org/buildings/st-andrew-s-memorial-episcopal-church>.

⁴⁷⁸ Cass Community Church, History, accessed 27 January 2021, <https://cassumc.com/history/>.

⁴⁷⁹ John A. Woerpel, “Renaissance: A look at the Expanding Cultural Center,” *Detroit Free Press*, 15 February 1963, B-3.

Building, 5000 Second Avenue (Gullen Mall). The following year the former Webster Hall on Cass Avenue was renamed the Student Center, Chatsworth Tower and Chatsworth Annex, 630 and 650 Merrick were purchases, and the First Church of Christ, Scientist, 4743 Cass Avenue at Hancock was purchased and renamed Hilberry Theatre. Additional buildings completed on campus in the 1960s include the Helen L. De Roy Auditorium, 5203 Cass Avenue, Meyer and Anna Prentis Building (School of Business Administration), 5201 Cass Avenue, Shapero Hall of Pharmacy, 5501 Second Avenue Mall, Physics Research Building, 666 Hancock, Law School Building, including the law library and classrooms, on Ferry Mall, the Palmer Avenue parking structure, and the University Center, 5221 Second Avenue was completed, although its name was changed to the Student Center in 1974.⁴⁸⁰ It was also in 1968 that the portion of Third Avenue through the heart of WSU campus was renamed Anthony Wayne Drive.

Over the next twenty years, additional buildings were added to the WSU campus, older buildings were repurposed, and some of the building names were changed. Also, during this period many of the remaining homes from the neighborhood that was present before the expansion of WSU were demolished. In 2021, only five buildings survive from the residential period of the area, and these are located distant from each other, so the former neighborhood setting is lost to the ever-changing urban university campus. These extensive changes to the neighborhood fabric was largely responsible for the founding of Preservation Wayne and their effort to save the David Mackenzie House. The building was slated for demolition to make way for a sewer line. In an interview, William Colburn noted that “the whole idea of an urban university is to mesh with the community surrounding it. There should be an integration of the old and new. Instead of building up, they’re tearing down and making a sprawling country campus out of what was once a thriving, significant part of the urban community.”⁴⁸¹ The small student group was not only able to save the Mackenzie House from demolition, but the building also became the home of Preservation Wayne and later Preservation Detroit for decades. In the 2000s, when the expansion of the nearby Hilberry Theatre threatened the house, the University instead moved the house from its original site to 4700 Second Avenue.

In this period there were huge changes that occurred in the education of the area’s children. The 1888 Clay School, 453 Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard, after having served as an elementary school, special education center and a vocational school for the Practical Nursing Center, was sold by the Detroit School Board in 1981.⁴⁸² By 1983 newspaper accounts reported the former school was nearing completion of its renovation into an office building.⁴⁸³ The office building was last sold in 2017 and is currently vacant.⁴⁸⁴

The James Couzen’s school, 3550 Lodge Service Drive, changed names twice, first to Dewey Elementary and by 2005 it housed the Malcolm X Academy.⁴⁸⁵ By 2010, the Detroit School

⁴⁸⁰ Aschenbrenner, *A History of Wayne State University*, 284-285.

⁴⁸¹ “Students Fight for Historic Site,” *Detroit Free Press*, 8 March 1977, 10A.

⁴⁸² Conway, *The Clay School*, 8-1.

⁴⁸³ Cassandra Spratling, *Old schools often die, but many get new lives*, *I8*, 28 March 1983, 3A.

⁴⁸⁴ Landgrid.com, *Detroit Parcels*, 453 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://detroitparcels.landgrid.com/us/48201#p=us/mi/wayne/detroit/207416>

⁴⁸⁵ Glover, *Detroit Schools*.

Board was faced with a shrinking number of students and a budget problem and was working with a financial manager to bring everything back into order. As part of this, in 2010 there were forty-one school closings and one support building slated for closure, with an additional thirteen schools scheduled to be closed by 2012.⁴⁸⁶ Malcolm X Academy was part of the first series of closures, although the programming has successfully been relocated to the Paul Robeson Malcolm X Academy, the first public school in the United States to provide an African-centered curriculum.⁴⁸⁷ Since closing the Malcolm X Academy at this site, the building has briefly housed a music school and then the Detroit Delta Preparatory Academy, which abruptly closed in September 2018.⁴⁸⁸

Another major loss to the area occurred in 2003, when the Burton Elementary School was closed due to low enrollment. Eventually the building was sold, and it was repurposed as a community theater.⁴⁸⁹ Unlike the Burton school, the Irving Washington School, 94 West Willis Street, was demolished between 1969 and 1973. The school had been constructed in 1883 and served the area for almost ninety years.⁴⁹⁰

Public schools were not the only schools that experienced a downturn in student population. The Saints. Peter & Paul Academy on Parsons Street, which had been in operation since 1892, was closed in 1969 due to the demographic shift in the neighborhood.⁴⁹¹ In 1973, the building reopened as the Saint Patrick Senior Center to provide comprehensive services to seniors living throughout metropolitan Detroit.⁴⁹²

Although there were a lot of losses in the larger schools in the area, there were smaller schools present in the Cass Corridor area for at least a portion of the period. In 1981, after years serving first as a private residence and then the William R. Hamilton Company Funeral Home, the building complex at 3975 Cass Avenue (southwest corner of West Alexandrine Street) was purchased to house the Art Center Music School.⁴⁹³ The school was established by Dr. Nellie Huger Ebersole and her husband Amos in 1952. The Ebersole's brought a lifetime of work in music to the school, with Mr. Ebersole a noted conductor and former head of the voice department at Heidelberg College, Ohio. Dr. Ebersole earned degrees from Michigan State Normal College, Chicago Training School, a Methodist School for Deaconesses and Home Missionaries, and the Union Theological Seminary in Detroit before earning a Ph.D. from the Detroit Institute of Musical Arts. The Art Center Music School was established in 1922 to provide quality music instruction to low- and moderate-income families at affordable rates.⁴⁹⁴ During the Ebersole's ownership of the school, it was located at 441 West Hancock

⁴⁸⁶ Closing Schools Creates a Smaller, Modernized School System, *Detroit Free Press*, 4 April 2010, 20A.

⁴⁸⁷ Detroit Public Schools Community District, Paul Robeson Malcolm X Academy, accessed 27 January 2021, <http://detroitk12.org/schools/robesonmalcolm/>.

⁴⁸⁸ Detroit charter school abruptly announces; We're closing this week, *Detroit Free Press*, 26 September 2018, accessed 27 January 2021, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/education/2018/09/26/detroit-delta-preparatory-academy-closing/1433298002/>.

⁴⁸⁹ Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

⁴⁹⁰ Landgrid.com, *A School District in Crisis*.

⁴⁹¹ Griner, SS. Peter & Paul Academy, 8-2.

⁴⁹² Griner, SS. Peter & Paul Academy, 8-2.

⁴⁹³ HDAB, "Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District," enacted 11 March 1993, 3.

⁴⁹⁴ HDAB, "Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District," enacted 11 March 1993, 4.

Street, then by 1977 it was housed within Orchestra Hall, then in a building at East Ferry and John R. Street in a building owned by the Center for Creative Studies (now College for Creative Studies), and finally in the Lewis School of Business on East Ferry.⁴⁹⁵ The music school was forced to close in the late 2000s, leaving the facility vulnerable to vandalism. Beginning in 2010, the Friends of Art Center Music School began efforts to restore the buildings and reopen as a community center for the youth in the area.⁴⁹⁶

In 1985, the Albert Kahn & Associates architecture firm designed and constructed a second addition to the Cass Technical High School, expanding the building's footprint to cover almost the entire block.⁴⁹⁷ In spite of the continued updates to the building, after two years of discussion, debate, and planning, ground broke for the construction of a new Cass Tech High School in 2002.⁴⁹⁸ Plans called for the new one hundred-million-dollar school to open for classes for the 2004–2005 school year. The new school included modern science labs, an auditorium, and dance and athletic facilities. Initially, the student alumni association objected to the planned demolition of the original school building. Alumni recommended that the old building be used for the Cass and Commerce High and planned to pursue this option going forward.⁴⁹⁹ However, in 2011, demolition of the original Cass Tech High building was begun.⁵⁰⁰ The first section of the building to be demolished was a 1981 addition that housed the cafeteria and athletic facilities. The demolition of the 1922 building was not begun until June 2011, after students in the new building had completed their school year.⁵⁰¹

Social History

In the 1960s to the 1980s, there were a large number of organizations established to focus on the social issues of the Cass Corridor. As was mentioned in the Ethnic Heritage section above, some of the new organizations were established to directly aid newly arriving groups to the area, such as the *On Leong*, for Chinese Americans and both the Associated Indians of Detroit (AID) and American Indian Services (AIS) worked with the American Indian Community. Other newly established organizations included the Cass Corridor Youth Advocates, a group founded by Jim Fraser and operated out of the storefront at 4229 Cass Avenue.⁵⁰²

There were forces beyond those related to personal health and safety that gained the attention of the residents of the Cass Corridor too. In addition to the unrest felt by many residents of the area, particularly those concerned with continuing unpopular war efforts, there was also a great sense of care for the community created by many of the Cass Corridor residents. For example, one activist in the Cass Corridor, Helen Bernauer, was a founding member of the Citizens of Cass Corridor and helped form the Cass Corridor Neighborhood Development Corporation, which helped rehabilitate several neighborhood apartment buildings and built

⁴⁹⁵ HDAB, "Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District," enacted March 11, 1993, 4.

⁴⁹⁶ Art Center Music School Auditorium Fundraiser, Art Center Music School, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://artcentermusicschoolfundraiser.weebly.com/>.

⁴⁹⁷ Boscarino, Lewis Cass Technical High School, 8-1.

⁴⁹⁸ Chastity Pratt, "Groundbreaking is today for Cass Tech," *Detroit Free Press*, April 18, 2002, 3B.

⁴⁹⁹ Pratt, "Groundbreaking is today for Cass Tech."

⁵⁰⁰ Mike Brookbank, "Good-bye, old Cass Tech," *Detroit Free Press*, March 24, 2011, 9A.

⁵⁰¹ Megha Styandarayana, "A final farewell to old Cass Tech," *Detroit Free Press*, July 31, 2011, 12A.

⁵⁰² Smith, "Changing rhythms in Cass Corridor," 11.

new housing.⁵⁰³ Bernauer had worked at the WSU School of Medicine as a laboratory technician from 1961 until her retirement in the 1970s. She remained in the Cass Corridor after her retirement, where the residents of the area became her family. Jim Fraser, Director of the Cass Corridor Youth Advocates, noted that many of the residents of the Cass Corridor “considered her an adopted mother.”⁵⁰⁴

It was also during this period that the LGBTQ community became more visible. National scandal magazines found fodder in the Detroit scene, although much like earlier publications, these articles focused on sensationalism. One such article, “Lesbian Alleys in Detroit,” was published in *Whisper* magazine in February 1969, and portrayed the community as “part of a menace of urban landscapes.”⁵⁰⁵ While most of the magazine’s work continued to exaggerate the reality, there was sometimes a drop of truth included. The *Whisper* article noted a place they called the “Drag,” a mile-long strip from Grand Circus to Forest Avenue along Woodward Avenue. The area did, in reality, include gay and lesbian life in the late 1960s, as did Cass Avenue, which Retzliff called “a continuum of social class and a continuum of gay visibility.”⁵⁰⁶ A much better source of information on the gay community in the late 1960s was a paper written by Roy Smith, a WSU undergrad for his folklore class. Smith interviewed a gay colleague, who talked about the different levels within the gay community, calling the downtown Detroit tearooms⁵⁰⁷ as where “the lower elements of homosexual society” were found, while the upper level of the society loitered at the Detroit Institute of Arts and WSU for “reputable, clandestine gay meeting places.”⁵⁰⁸

Although the experience at WSU may have carried a higher level of acceptability, campus officials did not always agree. In May 1967, the newly formed Wayne Student Movement, revealed that the university had kept files on “convicted and suspected homosexuals as well as activists and students identified as ‘psychos.’”⁵⁰⁹ The same student group revealed an undercover operation where police secretly filmed sexual activity in the State Hall men’s room.

Dr. Retzliff wrote that during this period there were a number of known gay and lesbian bars in the Cass Corridor. He enumerated some of the places in the Corridor important to the gay community, including:

- the Blue Crest, later the Circa 1890, 5474 Cass Avenue. This bar had a secretive gay presence in the 1950s and was listed in a national gay travel guide through the early 1970s, when the owner was said to have become intolerant.
- The travel guide continued to list Traffic Jam & Snug, 511 West Canfield, as a gay spot into the 1970s.
- The Gold Dollar Show Bar (Figure 54), 3127 Cass Avenue (not extant), was a well-

⁵⁰³ “Helen Bernauer,” *Detroit Free Press*, July 8, 2000, 11-A.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ Retzliff, “Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit,” 247.

⁵⁰⁶ Retzliff, “Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit,” 248.

⁵⁰⁷ A term applied to toilet facilities where men would engage in surreptitious sexual encounters with other men.

⁵⁰⁸ Retzliff, “Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit,” 249.

⁵⁰⁹ Retzliff, “Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit,” 253.

known bar for female impersonation from ca. 1959 to the late 1970s.

- Sweetheart Bar, 3928 Third Avenue (not extant), served as a lesbian gathering place from the late 1930s.



Figure 54. Patrons of the Gold Dollar Show Bar, 3127 Cass Avenue (not extant), photograph ca. 1978

Source: Photograph by Bruce Harkness

In addition to the bars, Retzloff noted the

- Gay Community Center, 906 West Forest Street (not extant) that operated in 1973 and 1974;
- a Rooming House, 5847 Second Avenue, which was owned by Virginia Fox Kennedy in the 1950s. Mrs. Kennedy rented rooms to a number of gay men, which resulted in the building being called the Carillon since it was a “tower of bells;”
- and the First Unitarian-Universalist Church, 4605 Cass Avenue, was associated with the gay community. In the 1960s, the church hosted an early gay organization known as ONE. Additionally, the church was the site of a gay dance on the evening of June 24, 1972, following the first ever Pride Parade in Detroit. Finally, beginning in the late 1980s, the church was the home of the Detroit Women’s Coffeehouse.⁵¹⁰

The counterculture movement expanded beyond the typical definition of the social history by the NPS and the NRHP as “efforts to promote the welfare of society; the history of society

⁵¹⁰ Tim Retzloff, PhD. “Michigan LGBTQ Remember.” Email, 2021.

and the lifeways of its social groups.”⁵¹¹ There were a lot of issues during this time period that caused concern, particularly among the younger generation. The war in Vietnam had begun in 1954, with no end to the fighting in sight in the 1960s. Protests against the fighting were prevalent, particularly on college campuses and in Washington, D.C.

The 1960s also saw more political and inspirational leaders in the county killed than during any other period outside of war. On November 22, 1963, U.S. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated during a trip to Dallas, Texas. Less than two years later Malcolm X, one of the most important Black figures of the century and known for his strong beliefs in Black self-determination and empowerment, was killed at a speaking engagement in Harlem, New York on February 21, 1965.⁵¹² Three years after the death of Malcolm X at the age of 39, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was hit by a sniper’s bullet on April 4, 1968. King, who was also 39 at the time of his death, had a tremendous record with the Civil Rights Movement, which he spearheaded for eleven years from 1957 to 1968.⁵¹³ The fourth major political leader to lose his life in the 1960s was Robert F. Kennedy, a presidential candidate that was assassinated on June 6, 1968, by Sirhan, allegedly for his support of Israel following the 1967 Six-Day War.⁵¹⁴

There was also racial unrest, as was demonstrated so clearly in an uprising on the streets of Detroit in 1967. Beginning with a raid of a blind pig at Twelfth and Clairmont Streets, there was fighting in the streets, burglaries, looting, and arson across the city. Over the course of five days there was fighting between unarmed Black residents and the largely white force of armed officials.⁵¹⁵ As a result of the uprising, the city experienced a massive growth in activism and community engagement in the following years. In the aftermath of the fighting two Detroit organizations were founded to address the root causes of the disorder, New Detroit and Focus: HOPE.⁵¹⁶

There were protests against the war in Vietnam and organizations and demonstrations by the Black students at high school and college level. One of the Vietnam protests took place near the Detroit Public Library, and included rock-throwing and a clash with police.⁵¹⁷ Another Vietnam protest took the form of a school boycott, which was organized by a group of junior and high school students from seventeen Detroit schools. The plan by co-chairs from Murray-Wright and Cass Tech High Schools was scheduled for April 3, 1969, since the protest would

⁵¹¹ Linda F. McClelland, *Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms, Part A* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1997), 41.

⁵¹² Josiah Bates, The Enduring Mystery of Malcolm X’s Assassination, *Time*, 20 February 2020.

⁵¹³ The Nobel Foundation, Martin Luther King Jr.- Biography. NobelPrize.org, accessed 4 May 2021, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1964/king/biographical/>.

⁵¹⁴ Tim Arango, A Campaign, a Murder, a Legacy: Robert F. Kennedy’s California Story, *The New York Times*, 5 June 2018.

⁵¹⁵ Detroit Historical Society, Encyclopedia of Detroit: Uprising of 1967, accessed 4 May 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/uprising-1967>.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ Detroiters Sought in Bomb Probe, *Detroit Free Press*, 04 April 1970, 2A.

also double as a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The protest date was selected since it was the school day closest to the first anniversary of Dr. King's assassination.⁵¹⁸

On WSU Campus there was also unrest following the July 1967 riots. This was illustrated, in part, by the 1969 student take-over of the student newspaper, the *Daily Collegian*, and renaming it the *South End*. The new paper became a mouthpiece for revolutionary struggle, particularly for the African Americans.⁵¹⁹

All of the actions that were beyond the control of most individuals, resulted in the development of a counterculture movement. But there was much more movement than protests about war and the growing efforts for racial justice. This may, perhaps, be best illustrated by the Cass Corridor organization known as Trans-Love Energies Unlimited.

Trans-Love Energies (TLE) Unlimited, was a cooperative community that functioned in Detroit in the late 1960s. The organization, which maintained headquarters at 4857–4863 John C. Lodge (not extant), was a radical, anti-establishment group that served as an umbrella organization or “tribal council” for the city's “hip” organizations.⁵²⁰ In their introductory flier (Figure 55), the TLE announced they were a

co-operative of artists, musicians, craftsmen, and hippies in general which as formed two months ago to get people together and get them there on time – wherever they're going! Generally Trans-Love exists to make things better for people by putting them in touch with people who can help make them happier than they already are.⁵²¹

A list of the members of TLE included Leni and John Sinclair, a variety of bands from across genres, the Artist Workshop Press, LEMAR (Committee to legalize marijuana), stores including Mixed Media, House of Mystique, and the Skin Shop, newspapers such as the *Fifth Estate* and *The Sun*, and “thousands of individual hippies in the Detroit area.”⁵²²

Music, art, and literature, and the open encouragement of drug use, were all geared as a means to express the issues of the time and bring others into the fold in support. The drug use issue as one that is often associated with John Sinclair, as he gained national fame as the subject of a song by John Lennon about Sinclair's arrest for passing two marijuana joints to a police officer that resulted in an up-to-ten-year prison sentence. The song, which proclaimed,

It ain't fair, John Sinclair; In the stir for breathin' air
Won't you care for John Sinclair? In the stir for breathin' air
Let him be, set him free; Let him be like you and me
They gave him ten for two...

⁵¹⁸ Anti-War Strike Set in Schools, *Detroit Free Press*, 19 March 1969, B-4.

⁵¹⁹ Retzliff, “Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit,” 254.

⁵²⁰ Trans-Love Energies flyer (April 1967), Ann Arbor District Library, accessed 4 May 2021, <https://aadl.org/node/192488>

⁵²¹ Ibid.

⁵²² Ibid.

Following an Ann Arbor rally in support of him, Sinclair was released after serving just two years of his term.

Source: Ann Arbor District Library

Even before his issue with the law, John Sinclair was considered by many of the older generation as “the head hippie,” but he was much more to his followers. Sinclair was the Minister of Information for the White Panther Party, formed in support of the Black Panther Party. Perhaps Sinclair earned his reputation based on the White Panther’s slogan of “rock and roll, done and f*** in the streets.”⁵²³ To further infuriate those outside the movement, Sinclair and the White Panther Party educated young people to “defend themselves against police terrorism and dumb authority.”⁵²⁴

Art and Entertainment

The unique blend of people living and working in the Cass Corridor was apparently well-suited to fostering what would become a major art community. Mary Jane Jacob, former associate curator of modern art at the Detroit Art Institute (DIA), wrote that there were two major streams for the arts in Detroit between 1963 and 1969, the mainstream or more conservative world dominated by WSU and the DIA; and a counterculture movement that was initially typified by the activities of the Artists’ Workshop, founded by Detroit poets, musicians, and artists (Figure 56).⁵²⁵ The counterculture line assumed the role of promoter for the avant-garde led largely by white suburban students that sought to embrace rebellion and radicalism.

An early effort of the counterculture movement was the Detroit’s Artist’s Workshop. The workshop was established on November 1, 1964, by artists, musicians, and writers who gathered to create a collective dedicated to the cooperative advancement of the arts in Detroit.⁵²⁶ The workshop, located originally at 4865 West Forest Street and relocated to 4867 John C. Lodge after a fire in 1965, provided public venues for member concerts, poetry readings, gallery shows, publishing, and other cultural events.⁵²⁷ Richard Tobias, who was one of the founding members of the workshop, noted that among the other early members were: Douglas Larkins, poet; Robin Eichele, Nancy Madison, Alister MacKenzie, Billy Reid, the MC 5, Stephen Ligosky, George Tysh, Ken “Jumbo” Schooner, Jim Siemark, Charles More, Ellen Phelan, and John Sinclair.⁵²⁸ Many of these early members made their way to San Francisco during the mid-1960s and established a second workshop under the name The Family Dog, and eventually sparked the “psychedelic” music and art movement in that city. In Michigan, the Workshop, after John Sinclair relocated to Ann Arbor, was known as Trans Love Energies.⁵²⁹ Many of the leading individuals behind the Detroit Artists Workshop were later associated with the White Panther Party, an anti-racist political collective founded in 1968.⁵³⁰

⁵²³ John Sinclair, *Detroit Free Press/Sunday*, January 3, 1988, 7B.

⁵²⁴ John Sinclair, *Detroit Free Press/Sunday*, January 3, 1988, 7B.

⁵²⁵ Tribes of the Cass Corridor & Forum, “Detroit Artist’s Workshop 1960-?,” accessed January 25, 2021, http://corridortribe.com/tribes/artists_workshop/index.htm.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Detroit Artists Workshop, *The Detroit Artists Workshop: Roots and Branches a 50th Anniversary Celebration* (2014), accessed May 3, 2021, <http://www.detroitartistsworkshop.com/the-detroit-artists-workshop-roots-and-branches-a-50th-anniversary-celebration/>.

⁵²⁸ Tribes of the Cass Corridor & Forum, “Detroit Artist’s Workshop 1960-?,”

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ Kaya Burgess, “Obama’s inauguration hailed by White Panther founder John Sinclair,” *The Times* (London).

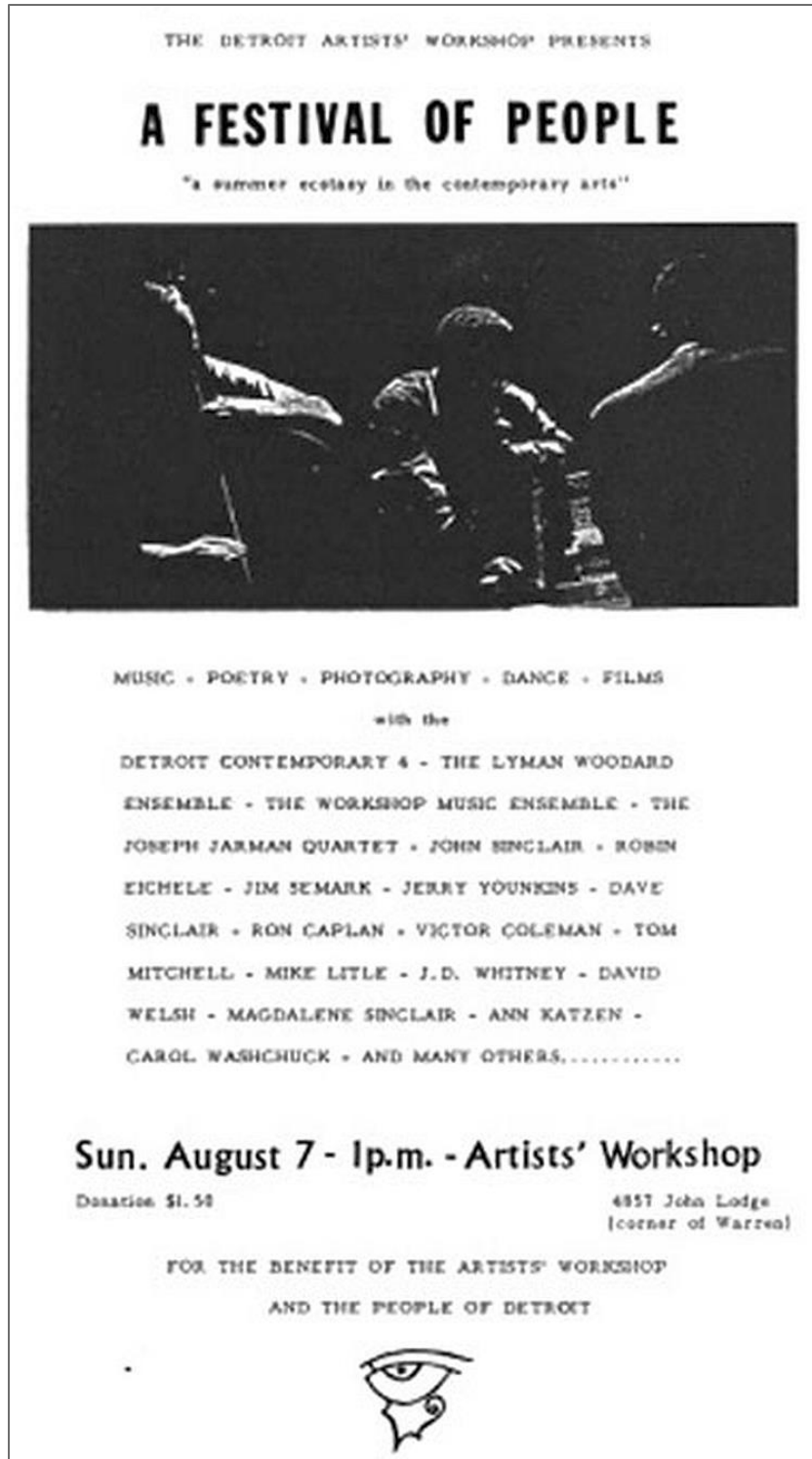


Figure 56. Detroit Artists' Workshop, 4851 John Lodge (corner of Warren), event poster, August 1966

Source: MC 5 Concert Posters, accessed January 25, 2021,
http://makemyday.free.fr/66/mc5_posters_1966_13.htm

The number of artists working in the Cass Corridor greatly impacted the businesses in the Corridor. One such place was the Willis Art Gallery, 422 Willis Street. Artist Robert Sestock recalled that the gallery was a gathering place for artists coming out of Wayne State, College for Creative Studies (CCS), and even Cranbrook, most who had little money so “they utilized found objects and materials from the lumber yard or hardware store, rather than the art supplies store.”⁵³¹ Another corridor artist, Jim Chatelain, talked about Robert Cobb, who rented a space he had to the local artists for a community gallery.

The artists fix it all up, they don’t pay a lot of rent and they start having these mega openings where it’s like there’s three or four hundred people there and the place is packed, they’re having a show, so where do they go after the opening? But to his bar!⁵³²

The art community thrived in the Cass Corridor in the 1960s and 1970s. Studio spaces were carved out of former industrial buildings, with one of the most popular studio locations being inside the old Convention Hall originally constructed as a showplace for the automobile industry. During the 1960s and 1970s, the building was transformed into living and studio spaces for area artists. Another area warehouse, the Forsythe Building at Fourth and Holden streets, was also a living and studio space for artists. Robert Sestock believes that the building was a warehouse owned by the Detroit Police, with other sources suggesting it may have been a garage associated with Detroit’s infamous Purple Gang that operated in the 1910s-1930s.⁵³³

Not all the gallery spaces for the Cass Corridor artists were limited to former industrial or abandoned store fronts. The Feigenson Gallery was located in the Fisher Building. Following the closing of the Willis Gallery, Jackie Feigenson moved the remaining art to the new gallery.⁵³⁴ Other galleries included the Trobar Gallery, 4470 Second Avenue.⁵³⁵

Years later, a look at the Cass Corridor Movement, reveals that it was the only major art movement in Detroit that gained widespread attention on a national, and even international, stage.⁵³⁶ In part, the success of the movement is attributed to Sam Wagstaff, who for a short period was the contemporary curator at the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA). In fact, it was Wagstaff’s presence at the DIA that likely led to the exhibit, *Kick Out the Jams: Detroit’s Cass Corridor, 1963-1977*, held in 1980. Ironically, by the time of the show, most of the original artists featured had already left the Cass Corridor.⁵³⁷

⁵³¹ Avalon, *Casting a Legacy*, accessed 27 February 2021, <https://www.detroitlover.net/robert-sestok>.

⁵³² James Chatelain, interviewed by Derrick Burton, April 4, 2011, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System, 16. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4293156>

⁵³³ Robert Sestok, interviewed by Joseph Wasukanis II, 4-5; Joy Hakanson, Cass Corridor, *Detroit News, Sunday News-Tribune*, 6 February 1972. .

⁵³⁴ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place* (Detroit: Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Wayne State University, 2009), Exhibition catalogue. https://artcollection.wayne.edu/publications/time_and_place_-_web.pdf

⁵³⁵ Doings *Detroit Free Press*, 9 June 1988, 4A.

⁵³⁶ Sarah Rose Sharp, The unsung heroes of the Cass Corridor artist movement, *Detroit Free Press*, 23 April 2017, 3E.

⁵³⁷ Jay Belloili, Looking at Cass Corridor Art, in *Kick Out the James: Detroit’s Cass Corridor 1963-1977* (Detroit: The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1980), 56.

Among the artists who worked in the Cass Corridor were:

- Samuel J. Wagstaff, Jr., 1921-1987. Wagstaff was the Curator of Contemporary Art at Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) from 1967 to 1971 and was an instrumental force in getting the Cass Corridor artists sold and shown in spaces outside of Willis Gallery.
- Greg Murphy (1936-1988), Murphy was an artist that met with Sam Wagstaff of the DIA and initiated a number of connections with the Cass Corridor artists.⁵³⁸
- Ellen Phelan, 1943-. Discussed in multiple oral histories from the Cass Corridor project as a powerhouse. Aleksey Kondratyev described Phelan as “an artist whose work spans multiple styles, techniques and approaches. Phelan received her BA and MFA degrees from WSU before she began working as an assistant to Sam Wagstaff at the Detroit Institute of Arts.”⁵³⁹
- Brenda Goodman, 1943-. Goodman studied at CCS and was active in the Cass Corridor art scene until she moved to New York in 1976. Goodman described her time in the Corridor, “My work was different from the other Cass Corridor artists. They were mostly guys who used materials like barbed wire and surfaces with bullet holes. Detroit was a rough place and they were representing the city. My work had a surreal feeling, and it was very personal. It was based on what was going on in my life at the time. But we were still a group and it was really nice.”⁵⁴⁰
- Gordon Newton, 1948-2019. Multimedia artist whose work became prominent in the 1960s forward. Achieved success in the art world, stayed in Detroit, considered instrumental in the 1960s and 1970s the Cass Corridor arts movement. Detroit Institute of Arts co-chief curator Nancy Barr wrote, “He’s really respected as a true artist of the Cass Corridor. He really spoke to Detroit on levels that were very textural — sometimes gritty, sometimes sublime. He was an amazing artist and very mythic to so many of us because of the large body of work he produced during his lifetime.”⁵⁴¹
- Jim Duffy⁵⁴², named by Sestok as instrumental in uniting artists and getting the art movement off the ground in Detroit in the sixties.⁵⁴³ John Egner notes that Duffy bought tons of work off of emerging artists in Detroit and New York City.⁵⁴⁴ Jim

⁵³⁸ Simone DeSousa Gallery. “Exhibition Description Cass Corridor, Connecting Times,” accessed 25 July 2021, <https://www.simonedesousagallery.com/cass-corridor-connecting-times-foust-murphy-pletos-description/>.

⁵³⁹ Aleksey Kondratyev, “Picture of the Week - Portrait of Nancy Mitchnick, 1984” University Art Collection - Wayne State University, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://artcollection.wayne.edu/picture-of-the-week/portrait-of-nancy-mitchnick-37204>.

⁵⁴⁰ Jennifer Samet, “Beer With a Painter: Brenda Goodman,” *Hyperallergic* (Brooklyn, NY), Nov. 9, 2019. <https://hyperallergic.com/527172/beer-with-a-painter-brenda-goodman/>

⁵⁴¹ Ryan Patrick Hooper, “Gordon Newton, considered one of Detroit’s greatest visual artists, has died,” *Detroit Free Press*, 24 April 2019. <https://www.freep.com/story/entertainment/arts/2019/04/24/gordon-newton-artist-death-obituary-detroit-cass-corridor/3567770002/>

⁵⁴² Jeffrey Abt, Dennis Alan Nawrocki, and MaryAnn Wilkinson. *Up from the streets: Detroit art from the Duffy warehouse collection*. Detroit, MI: Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Wayne State University, 2001.

⁵⁴³ Robert Sestok, interviewed by Joseph Wasukanis II, 10, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4293170>

⁵⁴⁴ John Egner, interviewed by Charlie Keller, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System, 11.

Chatelain discusses Duffy's warehouse where a bunch of artists were able to create.⁵⁴⁵ Kathryn Luchs criticized Duffy for taking advantage of artists, said he would offer them ridiculous prices that they could not refuse because they were struggling.⁵⁴⁶

- Gilda Snowden, 1954-2014. Gilda Snowden was an artist, writer, curator, and a Professor of Fine Arts at CCS (Figure 57). John Egner was her advisor at Wayne State during her studies. Snowden wrote: "The instructors that we had were either Cass Corridor artists directly or related to the Cass Corridor or they were living down there, which is really the definition of Cass Corridor artists. But that was all I knew, all we knew, because we were studying with these artists and we were studying in that area that was the Cass Corridor. Our classrooms were not just the studios in 150 Community Arts or in Old Main. It was the street, it was the Cass Corridor. So, there were no lines of demarcation or very few because we will be in class and then we'd be in Alvin's. We'd be in class, or we'd be at the New Miami, or we'd be at the Willis Gallery. We'd be at the [Jackie] Feigenson Gallery."⁵⁴⁷



Figure 57. Gilda Snowden (1954–2014)

Source: Grantmakers in the Arts

⁵⁴⁵ James Chatelain, interviewed by Derrick Burton, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System, 12.

⁵⁴⁶ Kathryn Brackett Luchs, interviewed by Bart Bealmer, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System, 26, 30-31.

⁵⁴⁷ Gilda Snowden, interviewed by Sean Marshall, April 13, 2011, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4307702>

- Nancy Pletos, 1950-. Painter and sculptor, still working in New York City and Detroit. Shown at the Willis Gallery.⁵⁴⁸
- Cay Bahnmler, 1955-2007. Mixed media artist, permanently featured in the DIA.⁵⁴⁹
- Ann Mikolowski, 1940-1999. An established painter and co-founder of the *Alternative Press* alongside her husband Ken Mikolowski.⁵⁵⁰ The *Alternative Press* was self-published subscription mailing that linked artists (just as Ann) with poets (including Ken) but expanded to include others from across Detroit and across the country. The Press was published regularly until Ann's death in 1999.⁵⁵¹
- Julia Myers argues in *Subverting Modernism* that Gilbert and Lila Silverman are often overlooked, but that they were earlier patrons of the Cass Corridor artists and Gil Silverman was the Vice President of Common Ground of the Arts from 1968-1970.⁵⁵²
- Robert (Bob) Sestok, 1946-. Painter and sculptor associated with the Cass Corridor art movement.⁵⁵³
- John Egner, 1940-. John Egner is an artist and former painting professor at WSU and a key figure in the Cass Corridor art scene.⁵⁵⁴
- Jim Chatelain, 1947-. Jim Chatelain is an artist and former employee of the Detroit Institute of the Arts in the Conservation and Restoration Department.⁵⁵⁵
- Paul Schwarz, Painter and intermedia artist.⁵⁵⁶
- Stephen Goodfellow, 1953-. "Stephen Goodfellow is an artist known for his painting style Micropointillism, as well as his work with the local Detroit band, The Layabouts."⁵⁵⁷
- Michael Luchs, 1938-. Luchs is a painter and sculptor who worked in the Cass Corridor in the 1960s and 1970s. Married to Kathryn Brackett Luchs.
- Kathryn Brackett Luchs, 1950-. Kathryn Brackett Luchs is a multimedia artist. In 2002, she and Shaun Bangert created *Images from Detroit's Cass Corridor*, a

⁵⁴⁸ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place*.

⁵⁴⁹ Marissa Nicole Gannascoli, "Picture of the Week - Cay Bahnmler, Untitled. 1983-84," University Art Collection - Wayne State University, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://artcollection.wayne.edu/picture-of-the-week/cay-bahnmler-untitled-1983-84-oil-latex-paint-on-paper-72660>.

⁵⁵⁰ Chong W. Pyen, "Noted artist Ann Mikolowski dies at age 59," *Ann Arbor News*, 9 August 1999. https://aadl.org/aa_news_19990809-noted_artist_ann_mikolowski_dies_at_age_59

⁵⁵¹ Ken Mikolowski, *From a Secret Location* (March 2017), accessed 3 May 2021, <https://fromasecretlocation.com/the-alternative-press/>.

⁵⁵² Julia Myers, *Subverting Modernism: Cass Corridor Revisited 1966-1980*, (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2013,) exhibition catalog, 25.

⁵⁵³ Robert Sestok, interviewed by Joseph Wasukanis II, April 11, 2010, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4293170>

⁵⁵⁴ John Egner, interviewed by Charlie Keller, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System.

⁵⁵⁵ James Chatelain, interviewed by Derrick Burton, April 4, 2011, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4293156>.

⁵⁵⁶ Sarah Rose Sharp, *Discovering the Treasures of an Artist from the Cass Corridor Movement, Hyperallergic*, originally published 25 October 2017. Accessed 27 February 2021,

<https://hyperallergic.com/407119/discovering-the-treasures-of-an-artist-from-the-cass-corridor-movement/>

⁵⁵⁷ Stephen Goodfellow, interviewed by Josiah Rector, March 15, 2011, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4293158~S47; 'Images' from Detroit's Cass Corridor>, directed by Kathryn Brackett Luchs and Shaun Bangert, 90 min., [S.l.: s.n.], c2002, DVD.

documentary film that shows many of the area artists.⁵⁵⁸

- Nancy Mitchnick, 1947-. Ms. Mitchnick is a Detroit artist who was in two group shows and had a successful solo exhibition at the Willis Gallery in 1973. Mitchnick was a member of the Board of Directors of the Willis Gallery when it was a “wild scene at its height.” (Figure 58).⁵⁵⁹



Figure 58. Nancy Mitchnick, Cass Corridor Movement Artist

Source: Rebecca Savage, May 2021

⁵⁵⁹ Nancy Mitchnick, interviewed by Maria Wendeln, April 9, 2011, Cass Corridor Documentation Project, Wayne State University Library System. <https://elibrary.wayne.edu/record=b4293163~S47>

In addition to the visual artists, there was a huge number of musicians and poets that include time in the Cass Corridor. Musicians included:

- MC5- managed by John Sinclair, recorded albums live at the Grande Ballroom.⁵⁶⁰ Ken Mikolowski recalled the band was “formative musicians in the 1960s and 1970s in Cass Corridor.”⁵⁶¹
- Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels, the band included Jim McCarty, Earl Elliott (who replaced by Jim McCallister), Mitch Ryder, John "Bee" Badanjak, and Joe Kubert (Figure 59). Reached local then short-lived national success in the late sixties. In the early seventies, Mitch Ryder was managed by Barry Kramer, the publisher of *Creem*.

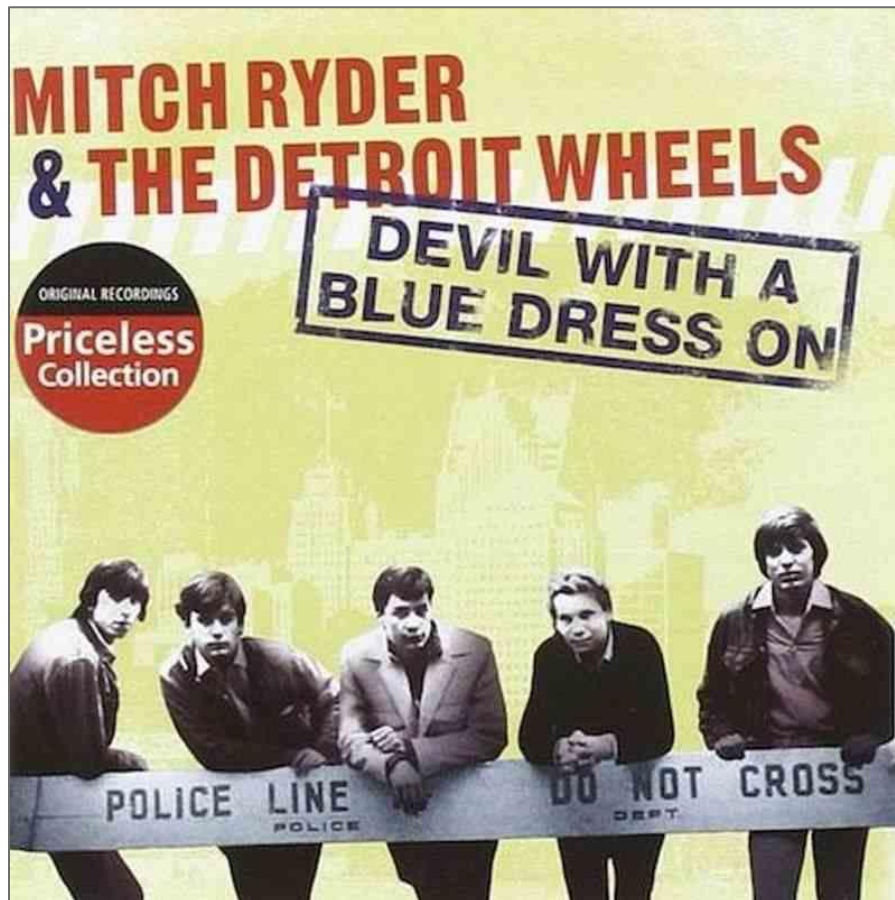


Figure 59. Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels, Devil with a Blue Dress On went to #4 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1966

⁵⁶⁰ Stevie Chick, “MC5 - 10 of the best,” *The Guardian*, (New York, NY), Aug. 17, 2017.
<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/aug/17/mc5-10-of-the-best>

⁵⁶¹ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place*.

- Sixto Rodriguez, 1942-. Released back-to-back albums in Detroit, *Cold Fact* in 1970 and *Coming From Reality* in 1971, although neither had much local success. Later Rodriguez gained international fame, especially in Australia and South Africa.⁵⁶²
- Shadowfox—beloved community band that played frequently at Alvin’s.⁵⁶³
- Folksinger Chuck Mitchell was a resident of the Verona Apartments beginning in 1962, and was joined by his bride, Joni, in 1965 (Figure 59). During their time in the Cass Corridor, the couple had a regular folk music show and performed at one of several folk music venues in the city. Following their break-up in 1968, both Joni and Chuck left the Verona and Detroit.⁵⁶⁴



Figure 60. Joni and Chuck Mitchell recording in their Verona Apartment, photograph ca. 1967
Source: Detroit News

⁵⁶² Ann Delisi, *The 50-Year Legacy of Sixto Rodriguez’s “Cold Fact” Is Rooted In Detroit*, reported by Ann Delisi, (Ann Delisi’s Essential Music, Culture Shift, WDET, 2020), audio.
<https://wdet.org/posts/2020/03/26/89375-the-50-year-legacy-of-sixto-rodriguezs-cold-fact-is-rooted-in-detroit/>

⁵⁶³ Kathryn Brackett Luchs, interviewed by Bart Bealmer, 26.

⁵⁶⁴ George Bulanda, “Sixties Folklore,” *Hour Detroit*, February 2009, accessed May 3, 2021,
<http://www.hourdetroit.com/Hour-Detroit/March-2009/Sixties-Folklore/>.

The Cass Corridor poets included:

- Donna Brook, 1944-. Brook moved to Detroit as a teenager and attended the University of Michigan, and now lives in Brooklyn, NY with her husband, Robert Hershon (also a poet).⁵⁶⁵
- Mick Vranich, 1946-2010. Published *Saw Horse*, *Radnik Pissar*, *Boxer's Break*, and *Night*.⁵⁶⁶ Following his death, he was memorialized as “a rock 'n' roll poet who knew how to swathe his words in electric guitar shimmers, or send them skittering ahead of a big beat. But strip away the sounds of the instruments and there was the sound of the words that also worked alone.”⁵⁶⁷
- Faye Kicknosway, 1936-- “Poet and visual artist Faye Kicknosway was born in Detroit and raised in Los Angeles.”⁵⁶⁸
- John Sinclair, 1941-. Founded Detroit Artists Workshop, managed MC5, and started the White Panther Party, which he chaired from November 1969 to July 1969.⁵⁶⁹ In addition to his role with the Workshop and as a poet, Sinclair was an activist, speaking out often on a variety of issues, but perhaps he is best known for his role in advocating for the decriminalization of marijuana. In the 1960s he was sentenced to up to ten years in prison for possession of two marijuana joints he was accused of giving to an undercover police officer (Figure 61, next page).⁵⁷⁰ A Freedom Rally held on December 10, 1969, featured John and Yoko Ono, Bob Segar, and many others, in a protest over the long sentence, and ultimately led to Sinclair's release from prison.
- Jim Gustafson, 1949-1996. Published- *The Most Realistic Spring in Years*, *Breath Torque*, *Bright Eyes Talks Crazy to Rembrandt*, *Virtue and Annihilation*.⁵⁷¹
- Andrei Codrescu, 1946-. Moved to Detroit from Romania in 1966 and became active in Detroit Artists Workshop.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁵ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place*.

⁵⁶⁶ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place*.

⁵⁶⁷ “Mick Vranich, 1946–2010,” *Metro Times*, (Detroit, MI) March 30, 2010. <https://www.metrotimes.com/the-scene/archives/2010/03/30/mick-vranich-1946-2010>

⁵⁶⁸ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place*.

⁵⁶⁹ Kathleen Gray, “Legendary pot advocate John Sinclair opening cafe in Detroit,” *Detroit Free Press*, (Detroit, MI), December 31, 2018. <https://www.freep.com/story/news/marijuana/2018/12/31/pot-advocate-john-sinclair-cafe-detroit/2445319002/>

⁵⁷⁰ Gus Burns, Activist and poet John Sinclair among first to purchase legal recreational marijuana in Michigan, 50 years after his historic arrest, *MLive*, December 1, 2019, accessed 3 May 2021, <https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2019/12/activist-and-poet-john-sinclair-among-first-to-purchase-legal-recreational-marijuana-in-michigan-50-years-after-his-historic-arrest.html>.

⁵⁷¹ Ken Mikolowski, *Time and Place*.

⁵⁷² Norene Cashen, “‘Poems of my classical age’ Detroit went from gray to radical technicolor,” *Metro Times*, December 3, 2003.



Figure 61. John Sinclair, 1968

Source: Larry Gabriel, Detroit MetroTimes

There were entertainment opportunities to suit everyone in the Cass Corridor area during the 1960s and beyond. In 1960, the legendary Gold Dollar bar, 3129 Cass Avenue, advertised itself as “Detroit’s most popular Nite Spot, presenting the Country’s Most Famous Exotic Dancers” (Figure 62, next page).⁵⁷³ By the mid-1980s the advertisements for the hot spot were less subtle, noting that they had “Topless Dancers.”⁵⁷⁴ In addition to their exotic entertainment, the Gold Dollar was a popular venue for up-and-coming bands, including hosting the first show performed by the White Stripes in 1997.⁵⁷⁵ After over 50 years as an iconic drag show and music venue, was closed in 2001.⁵⁷⁶ Following a devastating fire in 2019 the building was demolished.⁵⁷⁷ There were plenty of small bars or taverns in the Cass Corridor area during this period. Many catered to the students living in and going to school at WSU, but many others well outside the usual sphere of the students were present.

⁵⁷³ Nite Life, *Detroit Free Press*, June 25, 1960, 12.

⁵⁷⁴ Topless Dancers advertisement, *Detroit Free Press*, February 17, 1984, 14C.

⁵⁷⁵ Neavling, Gold Dollar is demolished.

⁵⁷⁶ Neavling, Gold Dollar is demolished.

⁵⁷⁷ Neavling, Gold Dollar is demolished.



Figure 62. Patrons of a Cass Corridor Bar, photograph ca. 1981

Source: Photograph by Bruce Harkness

The famed Temple Bar, originally opened in 1927, 2906 Cass Avenue, was sold by the original owners in 1974. Fourteen years later, in 1988, George Boukas was able to repurchase the property.⁵⁷⁸ The deal with the changes in the neighborhood, George set out to befriend the drug dealers and prostitutes hanging out in the area, even offering the building as a refuge where they could start to restore order to their lives. Among the events hosted at the Temple Bar have been LGBTQ parties in celebration of their diverse clientele.

Other popular bars and art and music venues in the area included Alvin's Finer Twilight bar, 5756 Cass Avenue⁵⁷⁹ the Decanter Bar, near Alvin's near Cass and Palmer, and was as being a folk and rock scene where the artists hung out.⁵⁸⁰ Additional bars include the Old Miami, 2930 Cass Avenue (Figure 63, next page), Elmer's Bar (now known as Honest John's), 488 Selden Street and the Golden Ducat, 3568 Second Avenue. Gaiety Bar, 412 Charlotte, was reputed to be a white establishment that may have not served Black patrons.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁸ J. C. Reindl, Temple Bar holds on as spotlight shines on Little Caesars Arena, *Detroit Free Press*, September 15, 2017, A-1.

⁵⁷⁹ Alvin's Finer Twilight Bar, 1981, Card, advertising, 8.5" x 11", Detroit Historical Society, <https://detroithistorical.pastperfectonline.com/archive/85331987-99A7-4760-A407-084908524719>.

⁵⁸⁰ John Egner, interviewed by Charlie Keller, 5-6.

⁵⁸¹ Cass Area Bar Owner, Caretaker are Slain, *Detroit Free Press*, May 13, 1977, 11.



Figure 63. The band Asklepius performs at the Old Miami, 3930 Cass Avenue

Source: Benjamin Justice, The Metropolitan, 2019

Another interesting entertainment venue was the Clifford Hotel, 2452 Clifford. The hotel was constructed in 1923, and over time, the bar had lost some of its original glamour. In the 1970s, the hotel bar, the Voyager Room also known as Mother Marilyn's after manager Marilyn Gray, was a popular place for men active in the Tribe, Detroit's first leather club.⁵⁸²

The interior of the Fisher Theater underwent a major renovation in 1961, replacing the original Mayan influenced design with a more subdued style. At the same time, the theater was converted from a movie and vaudeville house to a venue for live productions. The first live performance in the updated theater space was a production of *The Gay Life*, starring Barbara Cook and Walter Chiari on September 30, 1961.⁵⁸³ The following year, in 1962, the three surviving Fisher Brothers sold the Fisher Building to a group of local investors. The building was sold again in 1974 to Tristar Development, a subsidiary of Trizec Corporation, Ltd., of Montreal, the largest publicly owned real estate development firm in North America.⁵⁸⁴

There were also changes in the smaller theater venues in the Cass Corridor during the period. In 1961, WSU purchased the former First Church of Christ, Scientist on West Hancock Street.

⁵⁸² Timothy Ford Retzloff, "City, Suburb, and Changing Bounds of Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit, 1945-1985" (Ph.D. diss. Yale University, 2014), 205.

⁵⁸³ Vachon, *Forgotten Detroit*, 99.

⁵⁸⁴ Vollmert, *Fisher & New Center Buildings*, 8-2.

The building was converted into Hilberry Theatre and has been the home of the Hilberry Repertory Company since.⁵⁸⁵ A second theater, the former Garden Theater, 3239 Woodward Avenue, transitioned into an adult movie theater and was renamed the Sassy Cat in the 1980s. The facility was known for its triple bills and, unfortunately, a high number of arrests. A 1985 *Detroit Free Press* article noted that there had been nearly ninety arrests in front of the theater since 1982.⁵⁸⁶

The Cass Corridor also included festivals and other entertainment. One of the largest festivals is the Dally in the Alley, a major programming event of the North Cass Community Union (NCCU). The NCCU bylaws define their area of concern as bounded by Warren Avenue on the North, Woodward Avenue on the East, Alexandrine Avenue on the South, and the Lodge Freeway on the West.⁵⁸⁷ The Dally was first held in 1977 occupying backyards, alleys, and other underutilized urban spaces.⁵⁸⁸ The modest initial effort included card tables set up in an alley and the sale of beer to fund a fight against the City of Detroit and WSU to protect the surrounding apartment buildings from being demolished.⁵⁸⁹ In recent years the physical area of the Dally has expanded, to most recently include alleys between West Hancock Street, Second Avenue, West Forest Avenue, and Third Avenue. In 2021, the organization noted that the Dally in the Alley was one of the longest-running events in the city that was organized entirely by volunteers and is described by the NCCU as “a neighborhood celebration of local musicians, artists, restaurants, vendors and people of all sorts. Dally is open and Welcoming to ALL people, regardless of, well, anything” (Figure 64 and Figure 65).⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁵ Miller, WSU Historic District.

⁵⁸⁶ Bill McGraw, Sassy Cat on Woodward: Council Hears Flak over Adult Movie Theater, *Detroit Free Press*, March 19, 1985, 12.

⁵⁸⁷ NCCU, Bylaws, accessed January 29, 2021,

https://docs.google.com/document/pub?id=1J4dJueMgtrujrG2yCApoGqnh3UX_p8LhrwgHLDRzsYc.

⁵⁸⁸ Andrew Herscher, *The Unreal Estate Guide to Detroit* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), accessed January 29, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvdtphxh>, 162.

⁵⁸⁹ Lexi Trimpe, Viva La Resistance with Dally in the Alley, *Hour Detroit*, August 31, 2017, accessed 1 February 1, 2021, <https://www.hourdetroit.com/art-and-entertainment/viva-la-resistance/>.

⁵⁹⁰ Dally in the Alley, About, accessed January 29, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/dallyinthealley>.



Figure 64. Dally in the Alley crowds, photograph 2014

Source: Photograph by Charlie Zink



Figure 65. One of the Dally in the Alley bands, photograph 2014

Source: Photograph by Charlie Zink

The goal of the NCCU, made possible because of funds raised through the Dally in the Alley, is to fill the gaps that existed in municipal services, such as nighttime security, a neighborhood soup kitchen, snow plowing for neighborhood alleys, trash pick-up, and maintenance of a community garden.⁵⁹¹ Funds are raised at the Dally, through the sale of locally designed t-shirts, posters, and other items. The first poster was presented in 1982, also the year that the event first called the Dally in the Alley, with a new entry following each year since (Figure 66). The first poster was designed by Gary Grimshaw, a well-known local artist and member of the MC5 band. Among his other works were posters for the Jimi Hendrix Experience, Cream, The Who, and the poster used to promote the John Sinclair Freedom Rally.⁵⁹²

⁵⁹¹ Herscher, *The Unreal Estate Guide to Detroit.*, 162.

⁵⁹² Michael Erlewine, *Biography of Gary Grimshaw, Classic Posters*, accessed May 4, 2021, <http://www.startypes.com/pdf/articles/Posters/Classic%20Posters%20-%20Biography%20of%20Gary%20Grimshaw.pdf>

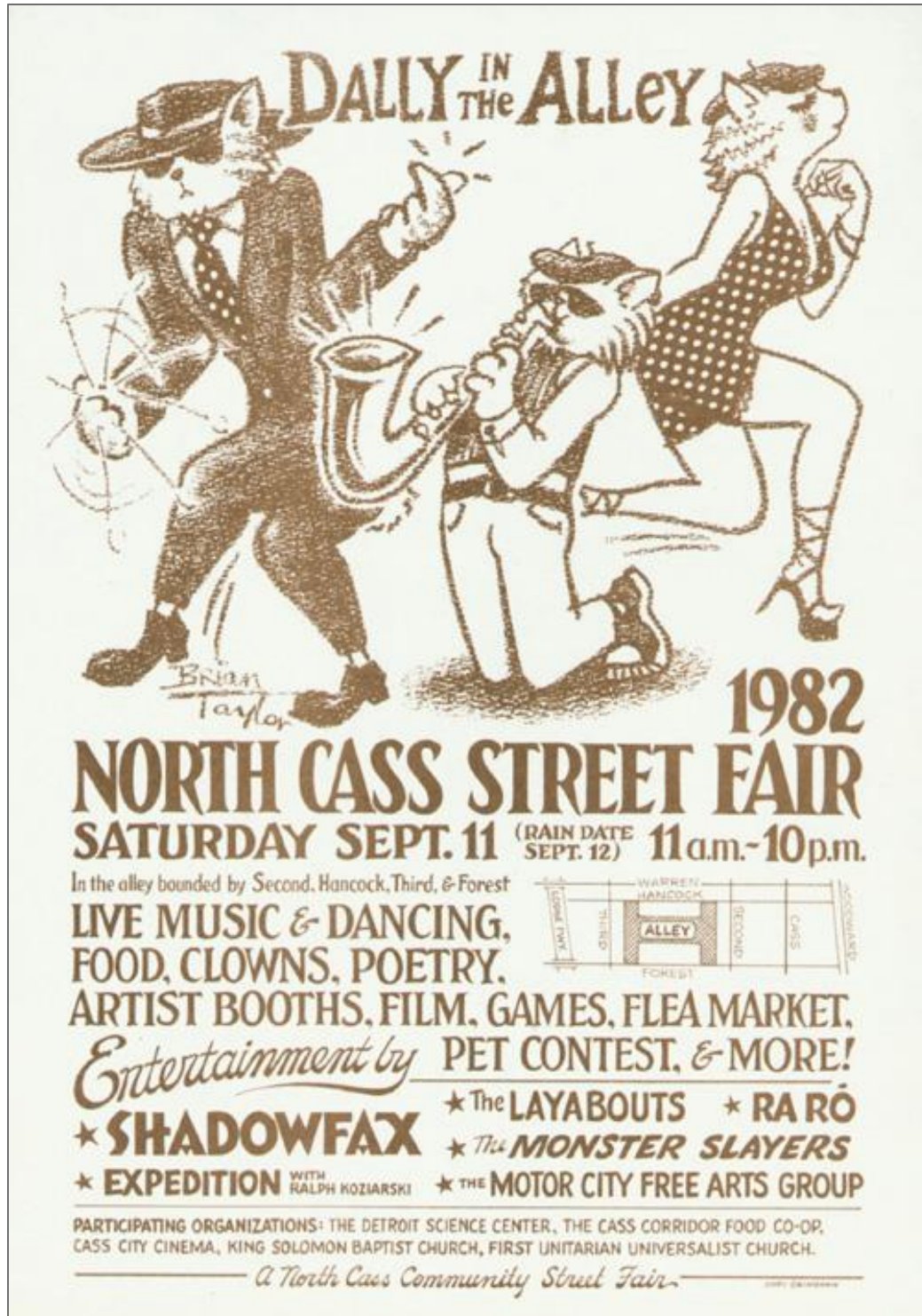


Figure 66. First Dally in the Alley, 1982 photograph

Source: NCCU, Posters, accessed 29 January 2021, <https://dallyinthealley.com/posters/>

The Cass Corridor has continued to be an area that has invited new and different types of gatherings. For example, in 2009, Joe Uhl and Francis Grunow founded the *Marche du Nain Rouge* (or in English, the March of the Red Dwarf).⁵⁹³ The celebration, which uses Mardi Gras as its inspiration, is celebrated with a parade held in March as a way to “make a space for escape from our day to days and to rid ourselves of the past year, as well as to rally for the next.”⁵⁹⁴ The annual event includes a parade that marches down Cass Avenue to Cass Park, where the crowd meets the “red dwarf” that has been causing trouble in the city since, as legend has it, Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac arrived in the area.⁵⁹⁵

Summary

In the over three centuries that the Cass Corridor area has been part of the urban landscape, the area has gone through a huge number of changes. From un-platted lands open for settlement, to a strict grid pattern of streets and buildings to accommodate the ever-growing population. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, the Cass Corridor is striving to protect the places that mark the chronology of change in the area. Efforts are being made to recognize the importance of not only the long-dominate populations, but also the role each of the various ethnic groups that made their way into the Cass Corridor have added to the vitality of this part of Detroit. The Cass Corridor is much more than a collection of buildings and people, it is a place that welcomes everyone, invites them to express their opinions, enjoy a meal, appreciate some art, dance if the mood strikes them, and take away something from this part of Detroit.

Evaluation Results Summary

In carrying out the Intensive-Level Architectural and Historical Survey of the Cass Corridor, there were a total of 756 properties documented. This includes 395 properties, including buildings, structures, sites, and objects, completed by HDAB, and 361 properties recorded by Commonwealth (see Identification forms in Appendix A).

Of the resources documented by Commonwealth, one-hundred-and-two are recommended NRHP eligible, including forty that are recommended individually eligible (Figure 67; Table 8). This number includes fourteen buildings located on the campus of WSU, two former Detroit Public Schools, a variety of residences and commercial buildings, a museum, a utility substation, two of the Corridor’s iconic bars, four industrial buildings, a government building, and four grade separation bridges associated with Grand Trunk Railroad.

Five NRHP-eligible historic districts were also identified: the Fourth Street Historic District, North Cultural Center Historic District, the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District, the Chinatown Historic District, and the Fourth Street Block Historic District. The newly recommended Fourth Street Historic District has seventeen residential buildings, including single family homes, duplexes, and apartments, located in a small area created as a result of

⁵⁹³ Erin Podolsky, Evil red dwarf begone!, *Detroit Free Press*, March 17, 2011, 94.

⁵⁹⁴ Francis Grunow (Marche du Nain Rouge founder) in telephone conversation with researcher Meghan McGowan, January 25, 2021.

⁵⁹⁵ Podolsky, Evil red devil, 94.

urban renewal and freeway construction that preserves much of the historic feel of the area. In contrast, the newly recommended North Cultural Center Historic District has thirteen newly identified resources and five previously listed buildings that are a mix of single-family homes, multiple family residences, commercial buildings, and institutional buildings (Figure 69; Table 8 and Table 9). This district includes several major cultural institutions, such as the Detroit Historical Museum, and a number of buildings currently under the ownership of WSU.

The newly recommended West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District has twenty-two houses or apartment buildings constructed in the late-nineteenth to early twentieth century (Figure 70). The recommended West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District is located in proximity to the Willis-Selden Historic District and a boundary reconfiguration may be appropriate to add the densely packed cultural resources of the recommended West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District to the existing Willis-Selden Historic District.

The Chinatown Historic District includes the four extant resources of the small Chinatown area established in the early 1960s and one apartment building that would have been an important part of the community (Figure 71). The final recommended district, the Fourth Street Block Historic District includes three Queen Anne style houses that are the only ones of their kind that remain extant following the loss of much of the surrounding neighborhood resulting from the construction of M-10/Lodge Expressway to the west (Figure 72).

Table 8. NRHP eligible properties

Name	Address	Date Constructed	Recommendation	NRHP Criteria for Evaluation
Alumni House	441 Gilmour Mall, WSU	Ca. 1967	Individually Eligible	A, C
Apartment Building	447 Antoinette Street	1913	Individually Eligible	A, C
Apartments	5835 Third Avenue	1901	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
Apartment	5850 Fourth Street	1917	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
Apartment Building	87 W Ferry Avenue	1909-1910, 1944	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Apartments	828 West Willis Street	1926	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	4207 Fourth Street	1882	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	914 West Willis Street	1882	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	925 West Willis Street	1875	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	4145 Fourth Street	1900	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C

Name	Address	Date Constructed	Recommendation	NRHP Criteria for Evaluation
Apartments	4123 Fourth Street	1882	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	4117 Fourth Street	1889	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartment	4105 Fourth Street	1889	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	916-918 West Alexandrine Street	1915	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	475 Peterboro Street	1914	Contributes to the Chinatown Historic District	A
Apartments	944-946 West Alexandrine Street	1892	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	4061 Fourth Street	1870	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartments	4055 Fourth Street	1924	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
Apartment Building	600 Brainard Street	1912	Individually Eligible	A, C
Art Apartments	78-80 W Ferry Avenue	1917	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Art Building	5400 Gullen Mall, WSU	Ca. 1957	Individually Eligible	A, C
Art Centre Hospital (Osteopathic)	5425 Woodward Avenue	1958	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Art Deco Garage	633 W Milwaukee Avenue	1924	Individually Eligible	C
Barrett Apartments	466 Antoinette Street	1913	Individually Eligible	A, C
Clarence Burton Elementary School	3420 Cass Avenue	1912	Individually Eligible	A, C
Chung's Restaurant	3175 Cass Avenue	1963	Contributes to the Chinatown Historic District	A
City of Detroit Department of Elections	2978 W Grand Boulevard	1951	Individually Eligible	C
Richard Cohn Building/College of Nursing	5557 Cass Avenue, WSU	Ca. 1967	Individually Eligible	A, C
College of Education Building	5425 Gullen Mall, WSU	1960	Individually Eligible	A, C
College of Engineering	5050 Anthony Wayne Drive, WSU	1949-1952; 1987	Individually Eligible	A, C
Community Arts Building	450 Reuther Mall, WSU	Ca. 1957	Individually Eligible	A, C

Name	Address	Date Constructed	Recommendation	NRHP Criteria for Evaluation
James Couzens Elementary School/Detroit Delta Preparatory Academy	3550 John C. Lodge Service Drive	1956	Individually Eligible	A, C
Detroit Historical Museum	5401 Woodward Avenue	1951, 1968, ca. 1885	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Detroit Creamery Garage and Stables	1043 Spruce Street	1915	Individually Eligible	A, C
Digestive Ferments Company	920 W Henry Street	Ca. 1919	Individually Eligible	A, C
Duplex	697 Antoinette Street	1914	Individually Eligible	A, C
Duplex	830 Peterboro Street	1885	Individually Eligible	C
Elmo Apartments/Phoenix Apartments	75 W Palmer Avenue	1908, 1916	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Fee Apartments	68-70 W Ferry Avenue	1909-1910	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Grand Trunk Grade Separation	Third Street south of W Baltimore Avenue	1929	Individually Eligible	A, C
Grand Trunk Grade Separation	Second Avenue south of W Baltimore Avenue	1929	Individually Eligible	A, C
Grand Trunk Grade Separation	Cass Avenue south of W Baltimore	1929	Individually Eligible	A, C
Grand Trunk Grade Separation	Woodward Ave south of W Baltimore Avenue	1929	Individually Eligible	A, C
Hotel St. Regis	3075 West Grand Boulevard	1966 (1986 addition)	Individually Eligible	A, C
House/Cass Machine Company	691 Antoinette Street	1905	Individually Eligible	A, C
House	675 Antoinette Street	1915	Individually Eligible	A, C
House	667 Antoinette Street	1907	Individually Eligible	A, C
House	5895 Fourth Street	Ca. 1897	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5881 Fourth Street	1912	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5875 Fourth Street	1892	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5869 Fourth Street	Ca. 1897	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5865 Fourth Street	1892	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5841 Fourth Street	1913	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5842 Fourth Street	1916	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5834 Fourth Street	1926	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C

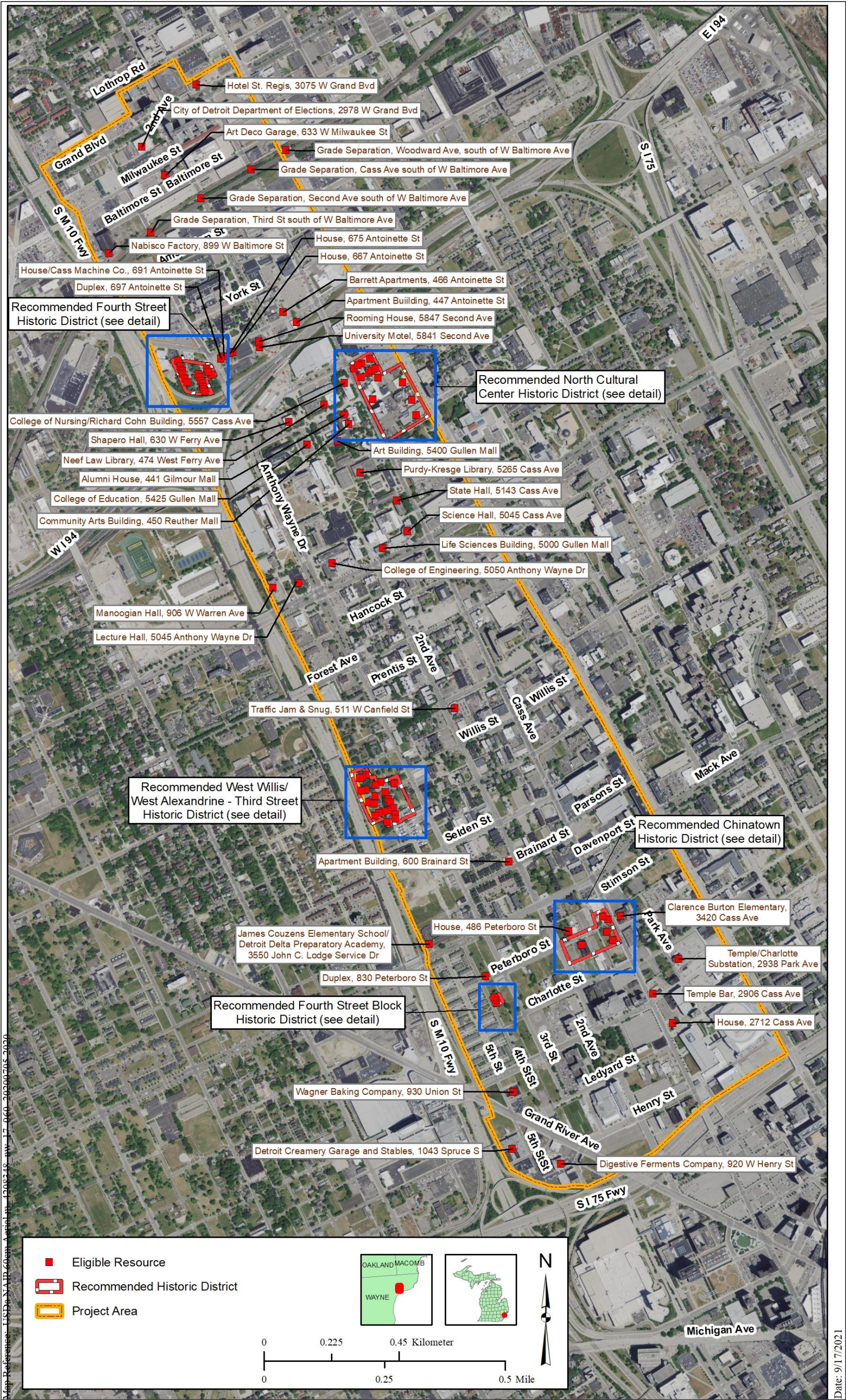
Name	Address	Date Constructed	Recommendation	NRHP Criteria for Evaluation
House	5828 Fourth Street	1910	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5822 -5824 Fourth Street	1901	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5816-5818 Fourth Street	1910	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5810 Fourth Street	1910	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5853 Third Avenue	Ca. 1892	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	5847 Third Avenue	Ca. 1900	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
House	929 Calumet Street	1885	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	933 Calumet Street	1892	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	941 Calumet Street	1900	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	950 West Willis Street	1890	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	942 West Willis Street	1895	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine – Third Street Historic District	C
House	943 West Willis Street	1900	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	937 West Willis Street	1870	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	928 West Alexandrine Street	1884	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	934 West Alexandrine Street	1900	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	923 West Alexandrine Street	1900	Contributes to the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District	C
House	486 Peterboro Street	Ca. 1883	Individually Eligible	C
House	3220 Fourth Street	1890	Contributes to the Fourth Street Rowhomes Historic District	A
House	3214 Fourth Street	1890	Contributes to the Fourth Street Rowhomes Historic District	A

Name	Address	Date Constructed	Recommendation	NRHP Criteria for Evaluation
House	3208 Fourth Street	1890	Contributes to Fourth Street Rowhomes Historic District	A
House	2712 Cass Avenue	1880	Individually Eligible	A
Isabelle Apartments	51 W Palmer Avenue	1908, 1916	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Lecture Hall	5045 Anthony Wayne Drive, WSU	1971	Individually Eligible	A, C
Lexington Apartments	58 W Ferry Avenue	1905, 1916-1917	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Life Sciences Building	5000 Gullen Mall, WSU	1959	Individually Eligible	A, C
Manoogian Hall	906 W Warren Avenue, WSU	1970	Individually Eligible	A, C
Michigan Orthopaedic Clinic	5447 Woodward Avenue	1958	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Miller-Judd Sales and Service	5454 Cass Avenue/75 W Ferry Avenue	1929	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Nabisco Factory	899 W Baltimore Street	1920	Individually Eligible	A, C
Arthur Neef Law Library	468 Ferry Mall, WSU	Ca. 1967	Individually Eligible	A, C
<i>On Leong Tong</i> (Merchants Association)	3143 Cass Avenue	1885	Contributes to the Chinatown Historic District	A
Purdy-Kresge Library	5265 Cass Avenue, WSU	1954	Individually Eligible	A, C
Rooming House	5847 Second Avenue	1914	Individually Eligible	A
Sarmineto Brick Wall	[61] W Ferry Avenue	Ca. 1903	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Science Hall	5045 Cass Avenue, WSU	1949	Individually Eligible	A, C
Shapero Hall	630 W Ferry Avenue, WSU	1965	Individually Eligible	A, C
Sherman Apartments	5538 Cass Avenue	1908-1909	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Sign Kiosk	Northeast Corner Cass and Peterboro Street	Ca. 1963	Contributes to the Chinatown Historic District	A
State Hall	5143 Cass Avenue, WSU	1946	Individually Eligible	A, C
Taft Apartments	5524 Cass Avenue	1908-1909	Contributes to the North Cultural Center Historic District	A, C
Temple Bar	2906 Cass Avenue	1925	Individually Eligible	A, C
Temple/Charlotte Substation	2838 Park Avenue	1914	Individually Eligible	A, C
Traffic Jam & Snug	511 W Canfield Street	Ca. 1940	Individually Eligible	A
University Motel	5841 Second Avenue	1956-1957	Individually Eligible	A, C

Name	Address	Date Constructed	Recommendation	NRHP Criteria for Evaluation
Valson Apartments	5855 Fourth Street	1926	Contributes to the Fourth Street Historic District	A, C
Wah Lee Curio Shop and Grocery Building	3401 Cass Avenue	Ca. 1920	Contributes to the Chinatown Historic District	A
Wagner Baking Company	930 Union Street	1910	Individually Eligible	A, C

Table 9. Previously listed NRHP properties in the North Cultural Center Historic District

Name	Address	Date Constructed	NRHP listed	Associated District if applicable
Verona Flats	92-100 W Ferry Avenue	1894-1896	April 29, 1986	University-Cultural Center Phase I MRA
George Beecher House	5475 Woodward Avenue	1893-1894	March 10, 1980	East Ferry Avenue Historic District
The Belcrest	5440 Cass Avenue	1925-1926	May 31, 1984	
Lemuel Bowen House	5435 Woodward Avenue	1912, 1956	March 10, 1980	East Ferry Avenue Historic District
James S. Joy House	100 W Kirby Avenue	1897	April 29, 1986	University-Cultural Center Phase I MRA



Date: 9/17/2021

Figure 67. NRHP eligible properties

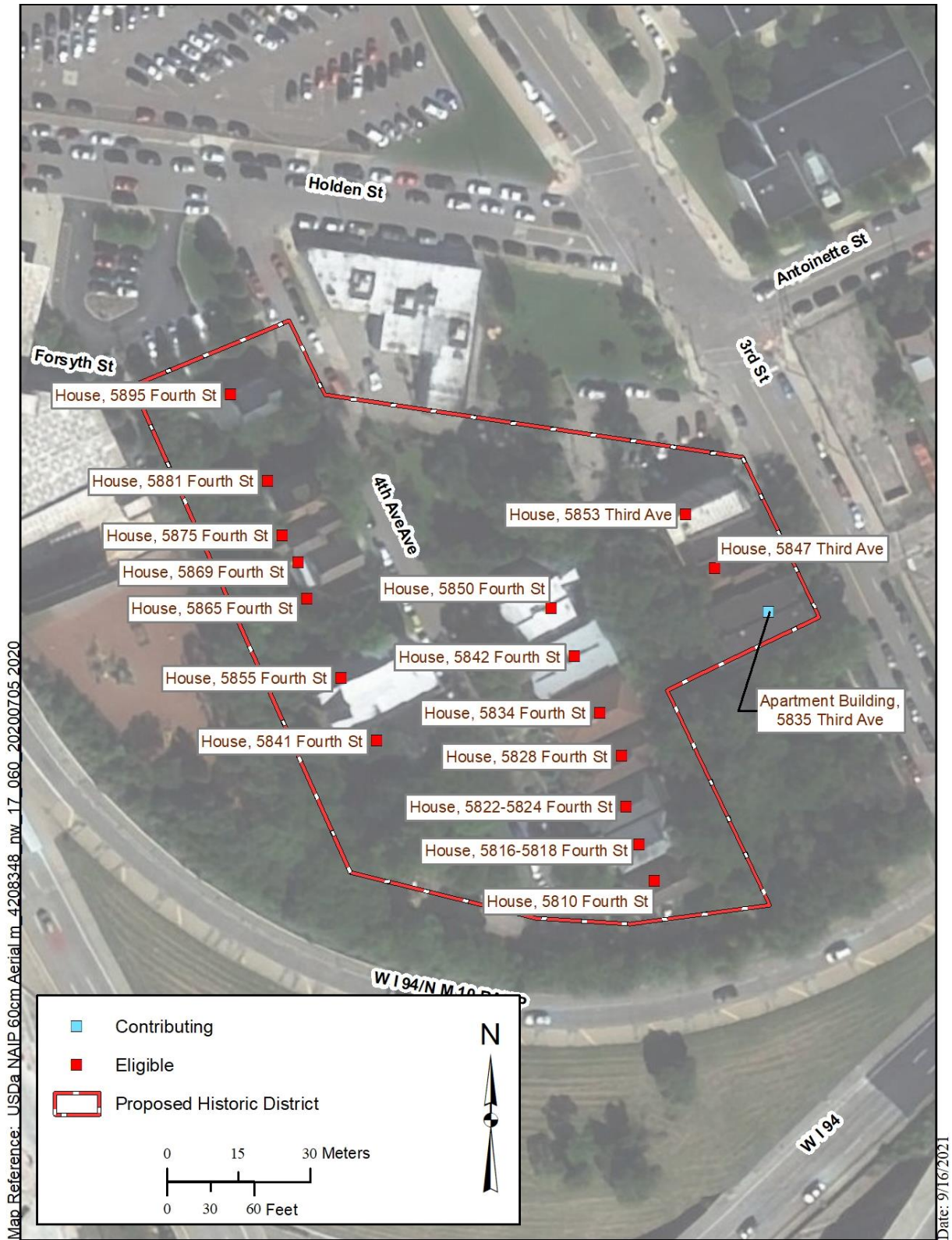


Figure 68. Detail of eligible Fourth Street Historic District

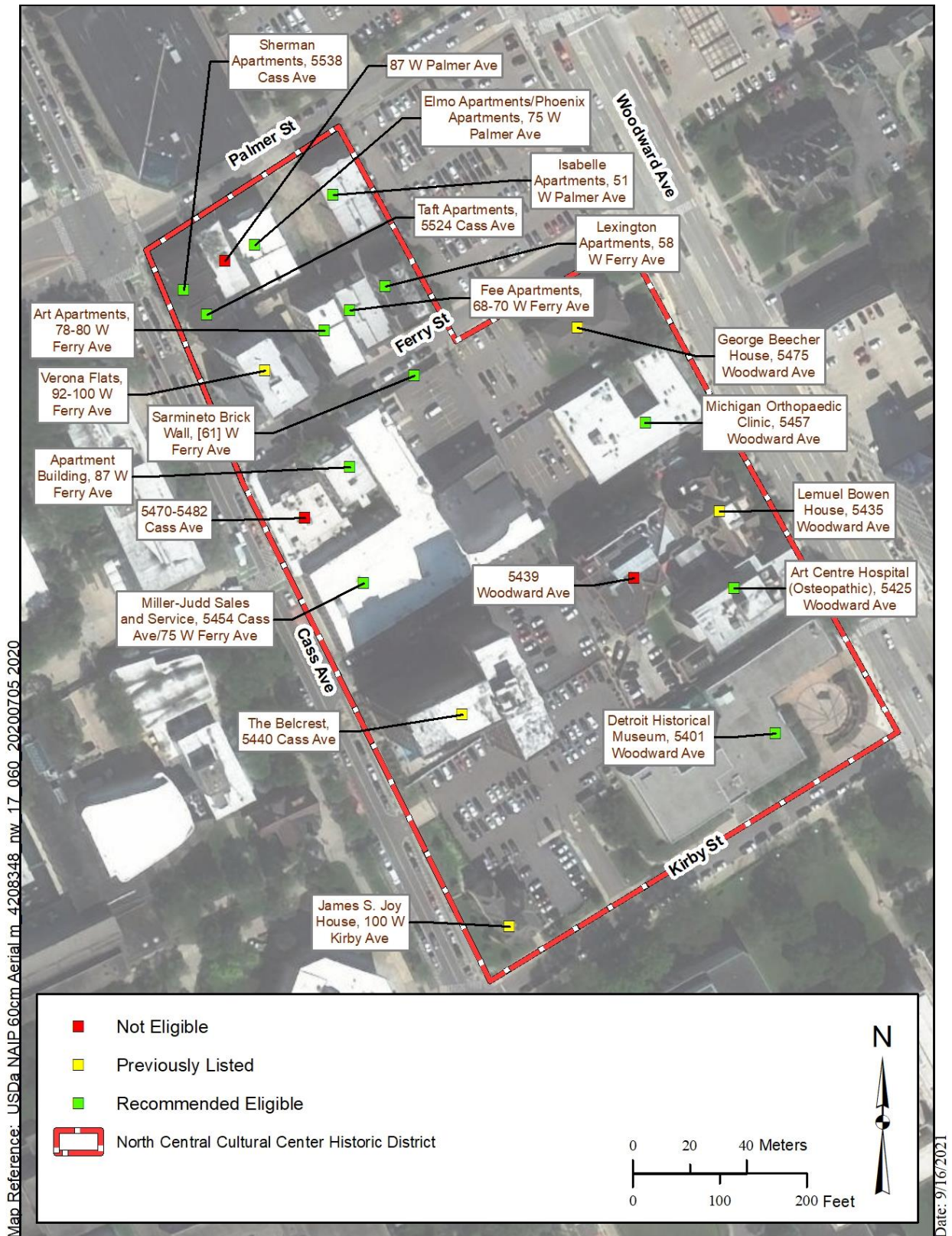


Figure 69. Detail of eligible North Cultural Center Historic District

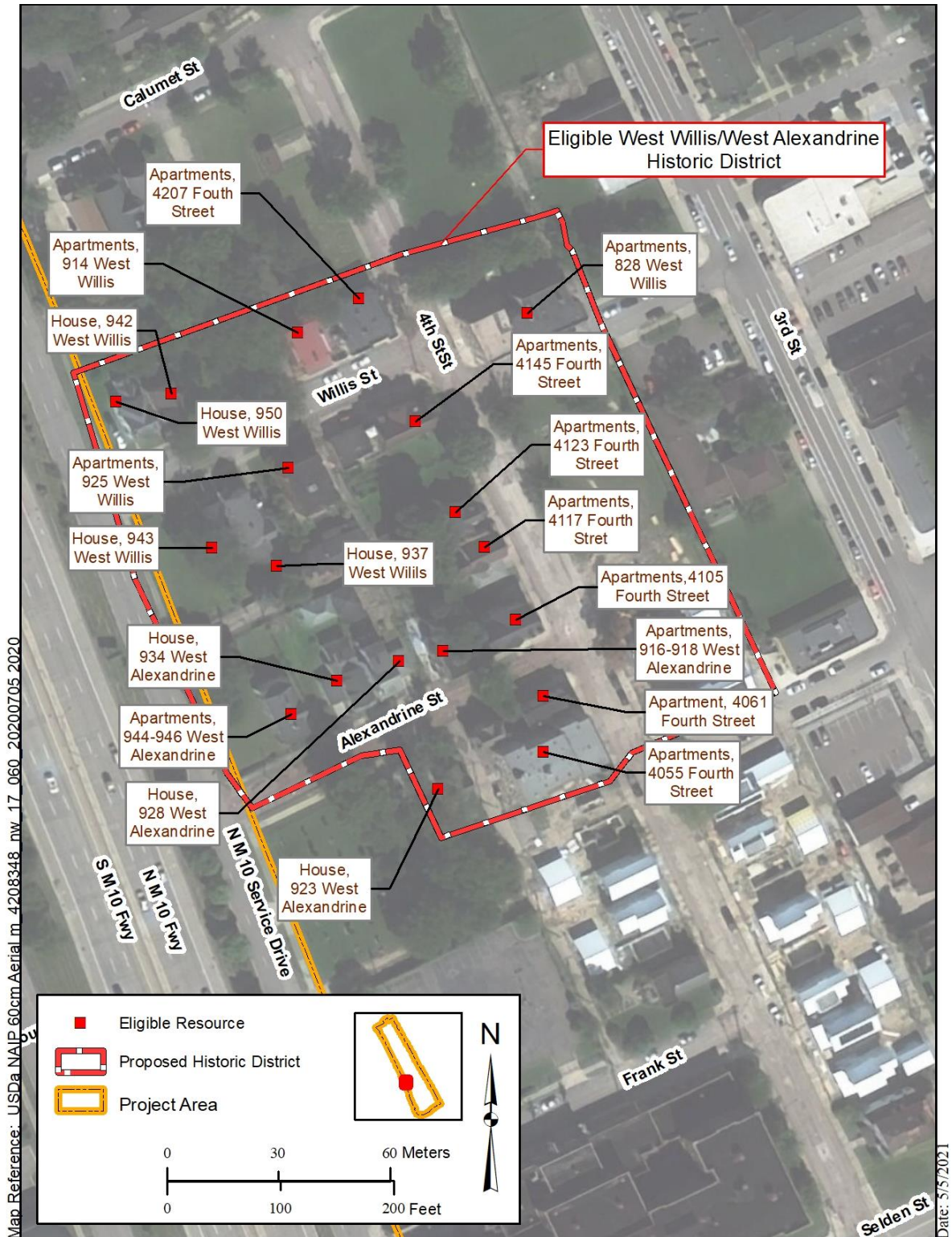


Figure 70. Detail of eligible West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District

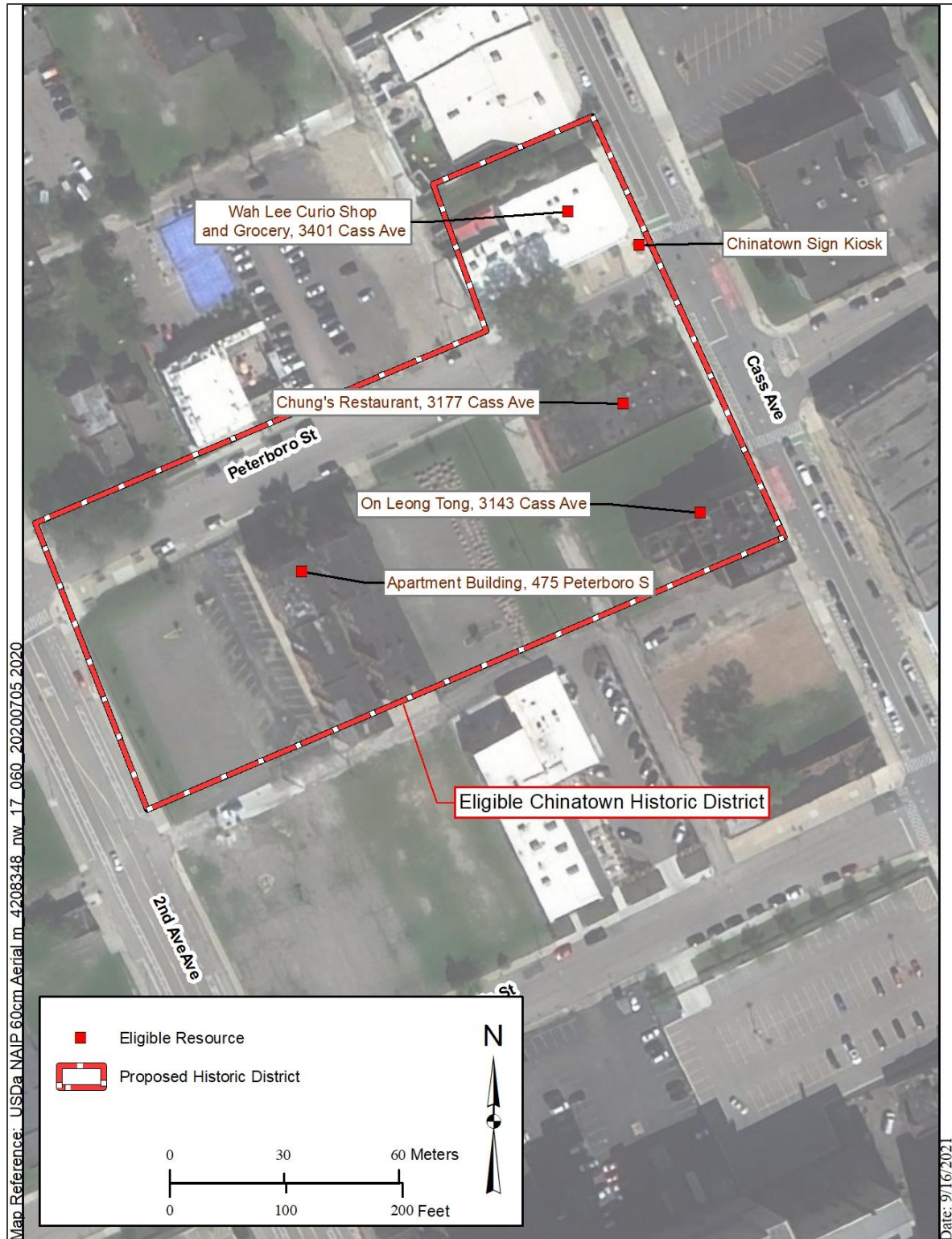


Figure 71. Detail of eligible Chinatown Historic District

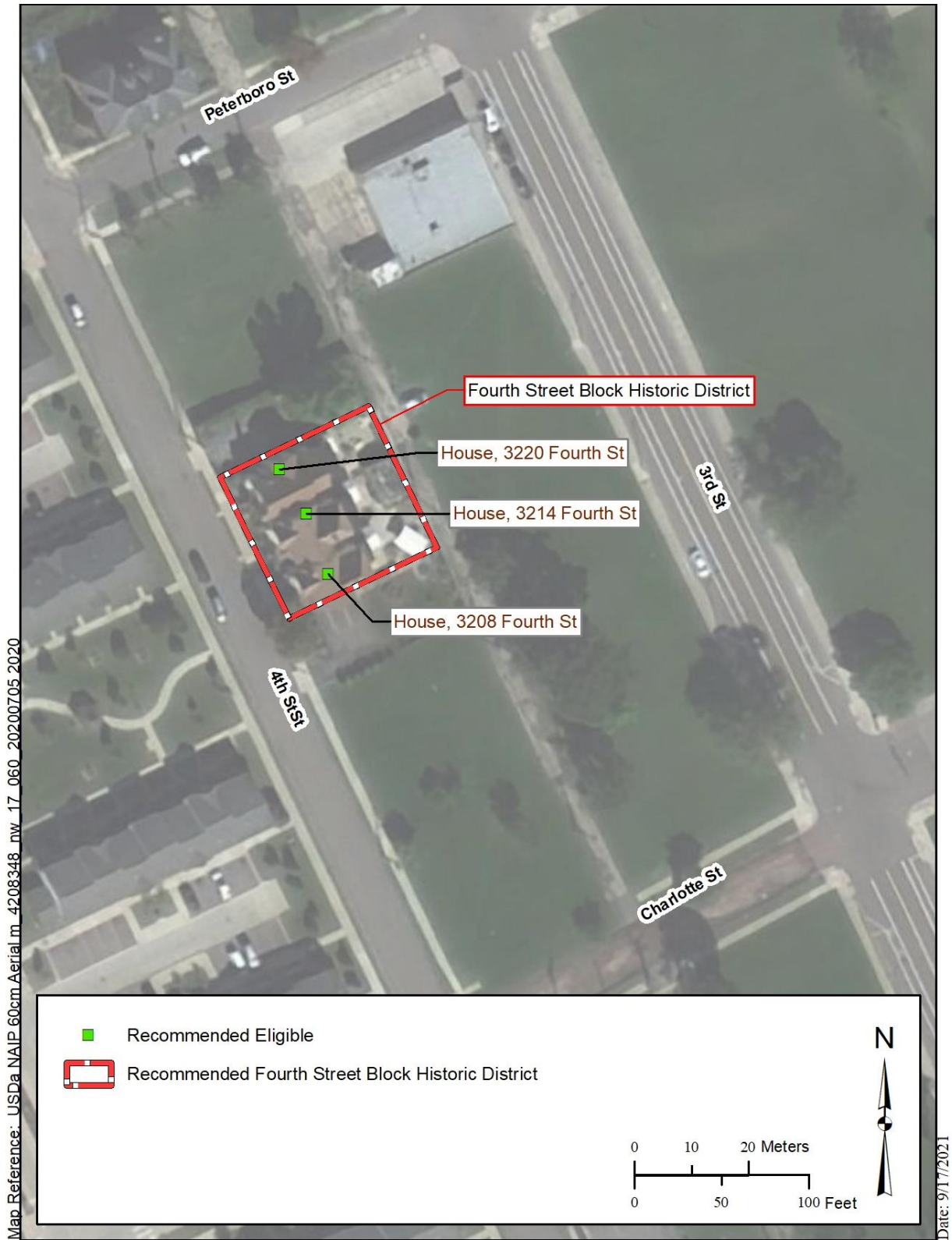


Figure 72. Detail of eligible Fourth Street Block Historic District

The newly recommended eligible properties illustrate the evolving history of the area, but are also illustrative of the related historic contexts. The majority of the newly recommended eligible properties are different types of residential buildings, but even these have their distinctions. For example, the Saint Regis Hotel, 3075 West Grand Boulevard, was constructed to cater to business travelers to the nearby General Motors World Headquarters, whereas the University Motel, 5841 Second Avenue, provided a different lodging experience to visitors to the area and may have even housed the visiting artists recording at the United Sound Systems Recording Studio across the street.

A third residential building, the Rooming House at 5847 Second Avenue, was part of the LGBTQ history of Detroit. The building was operated as a rooming house that was occupied by a number of gay men, who ultimately called the building the “Carillon,” since it “was the house of belles.”⁵⁹⁶ A second resource associated with the social history of the Cass Corridor, the Traffic Jam & Snug, 511 West Canfield Street, is also recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP. Constructed ca. 1940, the bar has a long association with the LGBTQ community in Detroit.

There are fourteen WSU buildings recommended eligible as a result of this survey. The buildings are significant for their association with community development as a large residential area had to be cleared prior to the construction of the new buildings. The construction of the new WSU buildings was an important step in the history of the school and enabled the university to meet the growing demands placed on the educational institute. Additionally, the WSU buildings are examples of the latest period of educational architecture, which contrasts strongly to both the previously listed Clay School (1888) and the newly recommended Clarence Burton School (1914) and the James Couzens Elementary School/Detroit Delta Preparatory Academy (1956), which all illustrate the ever-changing needs in public education.

In addition to the buildings recommended eligible as a result of the survey there are also four structures recommended individually eligible as a result of the survey. These structures are the four grade separation (bridges) constructed by Grand Trunk Railroad and the City of Detroit to elevate the train tracks above the vehicular traffic routes of Third, Second, Cass, and Woodward Avenues. The construction of the grade separations eased traffic congestion on the heavily traveled roads and eliminated the concern over train/car crashes.

The northern most recommended historic district, the Fourth Street Historic District, consists of seventeen residences located in an area immediately north and east of the I-94 and M-10 freeways. The construction of the two freeways cut this block off from the remainder of the residential area that had originally existed to the south. As a result of the urban renewal that took place in support of the freeway development, this is an isolated neighborhood that survives today as a unique place in the Cass Corridor. Local residents refer to the area as the “farm” in recognition of the amount of trees and local vegetation present in the small area.

⁵⁹⁶ Tim Retzlöff, PhD., email to Elaine H. Robinson, March 28, 2021.

The recommended historic district with the largest variety of buildings is the North Cultural Center Historic District. Located between Cass Avenue and the main campus of WSU and Woodward Avenue, the district includes thirteen newly recommended buildings and five previously NRHP listed properties. Included in the new district is the Detroit Historical Museum, several buildings associated with the medical history of the area, and a large number of buildings that have been added to the WSU holdings over the last decade. These include several former large single family residences and a former automobile dealership and garage. In addition to the publicly owned buildings, there are a number of apartment buildings that had been constructed in the first two decades of the twentieth century to accommodate the growing population of the area.

The third eligible historic district, the West Willis/West Alexandrine Historic District consists of twenty-two houses and apartment buildings that largely retain their historic density and are representative of the architectural styles prevalent in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. These buildings are also in close proximity to the established Willis-Selden Historic District and may be an appropriate boundary reconfiguration in the future.

The Chinatown Historic District is associated with the new development of the community that was been displaced in the 1950s and 1960s as part of an urban renewal project. The new Chinatown includes a restaurant, the *On Leong Tong*, or Association building, a commercial strip, one of the surviving Chinatown sign kiosks, and an apartment building that once provided residences for members of the community.

The final eligible historic district, the Fourth Street Block Historic District, includes three Queen Anne style houses on the east side of Fourth Street between Charlotte and Peterboro Streets. The three houses were historically part of a much larger neighborhood, which was impacted by construction of M-10/Lodge Expressway just to the west. The district is recommended NRHP eligible under Criterion A for its association with community planning and development as it directly relates to the expressway development.

The protection of these resources is an important step that should be taken before they are lost. In the last twenty years, there have been a significant number of buildings that represented an important part of the area's history forever removed from the landscape. Places that were important in the LGBTQ history, like the Sweetheart Bar, the first lesbian bar in the city, cannot be replaced. Similarly, buildings associated with specific ethnic groups, such as the modest early twentieth century building at West Baltimore Street and Third Avenue that housed a resource center for the American Indian community, perhaps one of the few buildings directly associated with that ethnic group, is now a vacant lot. The social importance of the bars and restaurants, places where famous bands preformed before gaining national fame, has also been lost. Urban renewal and blight removal have greatly impacted the appearance of the Cass Corridor, but it is not too late if the protections offered by historic preservation can be taken quickly.

.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- American Indian Services, Inc. "Mission," accessed February 18, 2021, <https://amerinserv.org/>.
- Andrus, Patrick. *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division, 1997.
- Anonymous. Sweetheart Bar. *Lost Womyn's Space*, accessed April 23, 2021, <https://lostwomynsspace.blogspot.com/2014/02/sweetheart-bar.html>.
- Arango, Tim. A Campaign, a Murder, a Legacy: Robert F. Kennedy's California Story. *The New York Times*, June 5, 2018.
- Art Center Music School Auditorium Fundraiser. Art Center Music School, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://artcentermusicschoolfundraiser.weebly.com/>.
- Aschenbrenner, Evelyn. *A History of Wayne State University in Photographs*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2009.
- _____. Gleaners Temple for Historic Detroit.org, accessed October 22, 2020, <https://historicdetroit.org/buildings/gleaners-temple>.
- _____. St. Andrew's Memorial Episcopal Church. Accessed February 28, 2021, <https://historicdetroit.org/buildings/st-andrew-s-memorial-episcopal-church>.
- Ashlee, Laura Rose, editor. *Traveling Through Time*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005.
- Association of Chinese Americans. "About ACA." Accessed February 17, 2021, <https://aca.detroit.org/about-aca/>.
- Avalon, "Casting a Legacy." Accessed 27 February 2021, <https://www.detroitlover.net/robert-sestok>.
- Bacall, Jacob. *Images of America: Chaldeans in Detroit*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Press, 2014.
- Barnard, F. A. *American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men with Portrait Illustrations*. Cincinnati, OH: Western Biographical Publishing Co., 1878.
- Bates, Josiah. The Enduring Mystery of Malcolm X's Assassination. *Time*, February 20, 2020.
- Belloili, Jay. "Looking at Cass Corridor Art" in Kick out the Jams: Detroit's Cass Corridor, 1963-1977 (Detroit: The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1980), 43-56.

- Berry, Chad. "The Great 'White' Migration, Alcohol, and the Transplantation of Southern Protestant Churches." In *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* (Summer 1996), 265-296.
- Bond, Marilyn, and S. R. Boland. *Images of America: The Birth of the Detroit Sound, 1940-1964*. Chicago, IL: Arcadia Publishing, 2002.
- Boscarino, Timothy. Lewis Cass Technical High School National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2011.
- Britt, Bruce. Creem Magazine Springs Back, *The Des Moines Register Datebook*, August 11, 1988:12D.
- Bulanda, George. "Sixties Folklore." *Hour Detroit*, February 2009. Accessed 3 May 2021, <http://www.hourdetroit.com/Hour-Detroit/March-2009/Sixties-Folklore/>,
- Bunnell, Sandra. "The dragon that dances: a century of Chinese in Detroit with a culture that will not die." *Detroit Free Press*. 6 January 1974, 10.
- Burgess, Kaya. [Obama's inauguration hailed by White Panther founder John Sinclair](#)". *The Times* (London).
- Burns, Gus. Activist and poet John Sinclair among first to purchase legal recreational marijuana in Michigan, 50 years after his historic arrest. *MLive*, December 1, 2019. Accessed 3 May 2021, <https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2019/12/activist-and-poet-john-sinclair-among-first-to-purchase-legal-recreational-marijuana-in-michigan-50-years-after-his-historic-arrest.html>.
- Burton, Clarence Monroe, ed., *The City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922*, v. III, Detroit: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922.
- _____. *The City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922*, v. IV, Detroit: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922.
- _____. *The City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922*, v. V, Detroit: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922.
- Callender, C. "Fox." In *Northeast*, edited by B.G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15.
- _____. "Sauk," In *Northeast*, edited by Bruce G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15.
- Callender, C., R. K. Pope, and S. M. Pope, "Kickapoo." In *Northeast*, ed. B.G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15.

- Capital Impact Partners. "40 Years in Detroit's Cass Corridor." Accessed 22 July 2021, <https://www.capitalimpact.org/stories/40-years-detroits-cass-corridor/>.
- Cass Community Church. "History." Accessed 27 January 2021, <https://cassumc.com/history/>.
- Catlin, George B. *The Story of Detroit*. Detroit, MI: The Detroit News, 1926.
- _____. (ed.). "Local History of Detroit and Wayne County" in *Historic Michigan: Land of the Great Lakes*, George N. Fuller (ed.). Dayton, OH: National Historical Association, Inc., ca. 1928.
- Chan, Tai, Tukyul Andrew Kim, and Kul B. Gauri. "The Legacy Keepers: The Voices of Chinese, Korean, and Indo-American Michiganders" in *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, edited by Sook Wilkinson and Victor Jew. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015.
- Christian, Ralph J. General Motors Building National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, 1977.
- Cleland, Charles E. *Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan's Native Americans*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992.
- Collum, Marla O., Barbara E. Krueger, and Dorothy Kostuch. *Detroit's Historic Places of Worship*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2012.
- Concert Database, The. "Paradise Theater." Accessed 28 February 2021, <https://theconcertdatabase.com/venues/paradise-theater>.
- Conway, Brian. The Clay School National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan. 1982.
- _____. Maccabees Building National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan. 1982.
- _____. Cultural Center National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1983.
- Cox, Florence E. *Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic*. Detroit, MI: The Detroit Orthopaedic Clinic, 1938.
- Cox, Sarah. University Motel Owes \$83,184 In Taxes, But Won't Be Auctioned. *Curbed Detroit*. Accessed 27 January 2021, <https://detroit.curbed.com/2014/9/5/10051080/the-university-motel-to-be-auctioned-off-as-a-tax-foreclosure>.
- Crew, Rebecca, and Aimee D'Agostini. Detroit Historical Museum in Historic Resources Survey, prepared for Woodward Light Rail, September 22, 2010.

- Danziger Edmund Jefferson, Jr. *Survival and Regeneration: Detroit's American Indian Community*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991.
- Davis, Tom. How Our Public Housing Rates. *Detroit Free Press*, 1 September 1957, 6.
- Delicato, Armando and Elias Khalil. *Images of America: Detroit's Cass Corridor*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012,
- DeRogatis, Jim. The Overlooked Influence of Creem Magazine. *The New Yorker*, 17 August 2020.
- Detroit Artists Workshop. The Detroit Artists Workshop: Roots and Branches a 50th Anniversary Celebration (2014). Accessed 3 May 2021, <http://www.detroitartistsworkshop.com/the-detroit-artists-workshop-roots-and-branches-a-50th-anniversary-celebration/>.
- DETROITography.com. Map: Detroit Motor Bus City Routes 1924. Accessed 10 February 2021, <https://detroitography.com/2014/07/23/map-detroit-motor-bus-city-routes-1924/>.
- _____. Map: Detroit Urban Renewal Projects 1963. Accessed 3 May 2021, <https://detroitography.com/2014/06/25/map-detroit-urban-renewal-projects-1963/>
- Detroit Chinatown. Welcome Chinatown!, May 24, 2006, accessed January 29, 2021, <http://detroitchinatown.blogspot.com/2006/05/welcome-chinatown.html>.
- Detroit Historical Society. Encyclopedia Detroit: Edsel Ford Expressway. Accessed 27 January 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/edsel-ford-expressway>.
- _____. Encyclopedia of Detroit: Race Riot of 1943. Accessed 30 April 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/race-riot-1943>.
- _____. Encyclopedia of Detroit: Uprising of 1967. Accessed 4 May 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/uprising-1967>.
- _____. Timeline of Detroit: The People of Three Fires, 1600-1699. Accessed 28 April 2021, <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/timeline-detroit/people-three-fires-1600-1699>.
- Detroit Public Schools Community District. Paul Robeson Malcolm X Academy. Accessed 27 January 2021, <http://detroitk12.org/schools/robesonmalcolmx>.
- DiChiera, Lisa Maria. The Theater Designs of C. Howard Crane. Master's thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1992.
- Discogs.com. Jim Vitti, Accessed 29 April 2021, <https://www.discogs.com/artist/382651-Jim-Vitti#images/31377638>
-

- Dolkowski, Lauren. New Amsterdam Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2001.
- Dulaney, W. Marvin. *Black Police in America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- Dunbar, Willis Frederick. *All Aboard! A History of Railroads in Michigan*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969.
- Dunbar, Willis Frederick, and George S. May. *Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.
- Eckert, Kathryn Bishop. *Buildings of Michigan*, revised ed. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2012.
- Editors of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Episcopal Church in the United States of America." Accessed 28 April 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Episcopal-Church-in-the-United-States-of-America>.
- Erlewine, Michael. Biography of Gary Grimshaw. Classic Posters. Accessed 4 May 2021, <http://www.startypes.com/pdf/articles/Posters/Classic%20Posters%20-%20Biography%20of%20Gary%20Grimshaw.pdf>
- Eschner, Kat. How Detroit Went from Motor City to the Arsenal of Democracy. *Smithsonian*. Accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/when-detroit-was-arsenal-democracy-180962620/>.
- Farmer, Silas. *All About Detroit*, Detroit: Silas Farmer & Co., 1899.
- _____. *History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan*. Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1969.
- Feest, J. and C. Feest. "Ottawa." In *Northeast*, edited by Bruce G. Trigger, Handbook of North American Indians. Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:15.
- Ferry, W. Hawkins. *The Buildings of Detroit: A History*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1968.
- _____. *The Legacy of Albert Kahn*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1970.
- Fine, Sidney. "Michigan and Housing Discrimination, 1949-1968." In *Michigan Historical Review*, Fall 1997, 81-114.
- Florek, Marilyn. Cass Park National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form. 2004. Copy on file Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, Lansing, Michigan.

- Florek, Marilyn and Marleen Tulas, *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, completed for University Cultural Center Association, 2002.
- Fogel, Helen. Cass Corridor Celebrates Its Heritage. *Detroit Free Press*. 21 August 1970, 3-C.
- Gabriel, Larry. Why marijuana activist John Sinclair deserves a holiday, *Detroit MetroTimes*, 9 July 2019, accessed 3 May 2021, <https://www.metrotimes.com/detroit/why-pot-activist-john-sinclair-deserves-a-holiday/Content?oid=22092744>.
- Garden Theater. Jewel in the Heart of Midtown. Accessed 23 February 2021, <http://thegardendetroit.com/>.
- George, Collins. "Court's Ban on Segregation in City Housing is Upheld." *Detroit Free Press*, 6 October 1955:3.
- Goldstein, Deborah M. The Architect's Building National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1994.
- Goldstein, Deborah M., William M. Worden, Diane V. B. Jones, Arthur F. Mullen, Jenifer L. Cansfield, Gretchen E. Griner, and Conrad Schewe, *North Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, Historic Designation Advisory Board and Zachary & Associates, 1995.
- Glover, John. Detroit Schools 1842–2015 – Public. Accessed 27 January 2021, <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UXWpuk5offwJO7Km5e5LHWxphtUVrZcs-HoiRwTJjqQ/edit#gid=1773167960>.
- Goodspeed, Robert C. "Urban Renewal in Postwar Detroit, The Gratiot Area Redevelopment Project: A Case Study." History Honors Thesis, The University of Michigan, 2004. Accessed 27 February 2021, <http://goodspeedupdate.com/RobGoodspeed-HonorsThesis.pdf>.
- Gordon, Stephen C. *How to Complete the Ohio Inventory*. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio Historic Preservation Office and Ohio Historical Society, 1992.
- Griner, Gretchen. Cass-Davenport Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.
- _____. Historic and Architectural Resources of the Cass Farm Survey Area National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.
- _____. Jefferson Intermediate School National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.
- _____. Graybar Electric Company Building National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.

- _____. Historic and Architectural Resources of the Cass Farm Survey Area National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.
- _____. League of Catholic Women Building National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1997.
- _____. SS. Peter & Paul Academy National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan 1997.
- _____. Willis-Selden Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan. 1997.
- Hartman, David W. *The Development of Detroit's Cass Corridor: 1850-1975*. Ethnic Studies Division, Center for urban Studies, Wayne State University, Detroit.
- Hakanson, Joy. Cass Corridor *Detroit News, Sunday News-Tribune*. 6 February 1972.
- Hakim, Julia. "Chaldean History." Email. 2021.
- Henslee, Constance. Orchestra Hall National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan. 1971.
- Herne Brothers, *Polyconic Project Map of Greater Detroit*. Detroit: Herne Brothers, 1939.
- Herscher, Andrew. *The Unreal Estate Guide to Detroit*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012. Accessed January 29, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvdtphxh>.
- Henslee, Constance. Orchestra Hall National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1971.
- Historic Designation Advisory Board, "Proposed Campbell Symington House Historic District: Final Report." Detroit, Michigan. 1978.
- _____. "Proposed Mackenzie House Historic District: Final Report." Detroit, Michigan. 1978.
- _____. "Proposed First Unitarian-Universalist Church Historic District: Final Report." Detroit, Michigan. 1980.
- _____. "Proposed Art Center Music School Historic District: Final Report." Detroit, Michigan. 1992.
- _____. "Proposed Warren-Prentis Historic District: Final Report." Detroit, Michigan. 2001.
- _____. "Final Report: Proposed Woodward – W. Palmer – Cass – W. Kirby Historic District." Detroit, Michigan, 2009.

- _____. "Proposed Cass-Davenport Historic District," Detroit, Michigan, 2011.
- _____. "Proposed United Sound Systems Recording Studio's Historic District – Final Report" Detroit, Michigan, 2015.
- _____. "Final Report: Proposed West Grand Boulevard Historic African American Arts and Business District." Detroit, Michigan, 2018.
- _____. "Final Report: Proposed Cass Henry Historic District." Detroit, Michigan, 2018.
- Hyde, Charles K. "Planning a Transportation System for Metropolitan Detroit in the Age of the Automobile: The Triumph of the Expressway." *Michigan Historical Review* 32 (Spring 2006): 59-95.
- Ibbotson, Patricia. *Record of the Juvenile Inmates of the Home for the Friendless, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*. Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 1995.
- Jacobs, Mary Jane. "Kick out the Jams: The Emergence of a Detroit Avant-garde" in *Kick out the Jams: Detroit's Cass Corridor, 1963-1977*. Detroit: The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1980.
- Jarvis, Donna, Stephen W. White, Charles Wilson, and Michael Woody. *Images of America: Detroit Police Department*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008.
- Jenkins, Daniel T. "Congregationalism." Britannica.com. Accessed 28 April 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Congregationalism>.
- Johnson, Arthur L. *Race and Remembrance: A Memoir*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008.
- Johnson, Donald Leslie, and Donald Langmead. *Makers of 20th Century Modern Architecture: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook*. Chicago, IL: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997.
- Jones, Diane, Erica Marotzke, Elisabeth Knibbe, Benda Rigdon, and Wendy Hoefer. Sugar Hill Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2002.
- Justus, Benjamin. After Hour Pretties 02. The Metropolitan, September 19, 2019. Accessed 16 April 2021, <https://themetdet.com/after-hour-pretties-02-by-benjamin-justus/>
- Khalil, Elias. Cass Corridor, in *The Detroit Neighborhood Guidebook*, edited by Aaron Foley. Cleveland, OH: Belt Publishing, 2017:22-24.
- Keep Helen E. and M. Agnes, Burton. *Guide to Detroit*. Detroit: Detroit News Company, 1916.

- Klug, Thomas A. "University Cultural Center Phase 1 MRA." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1986.
- Klug, Thomas. Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center: Partial Inventory – Historic and Architectural Resources in Phase II Project Area. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1985.
- Kickert, Conrad. *Dream City: Creation, Destruction, and Reinvention in Downtown Detroit*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2019.
- Klunder, Willard Carl. "The Seeds of Popular Sovereignty: Governor Lewis Cass and Michigan Territory." *Michigan Historical Review*, v. 17, Spring 1991:64-81.
- Koyl, George S., ed. *American Architects Directory*. New York, NY: American Institute of Architects, 1955.
- _____. *American Architects Directory*. New York, NY: American Institute of Architects, 1962.
- Krakker, James J. "Changing Sociocultural Systems During the Late Prehistoric Period in Southeast Michigan." PhD. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1983. University Microfilms.
- Kramer, Michael J. "Can't Forget the Motor City": Creem Magazine, Rock Music, Detroit Identity, Mass Consumerism, and the Counterculture. *Michigan Historical Review*, Fall 2002, 42-77.
- Landgrid.com, Detroit Parcels, 453 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. Accessed February 2, 2021, <https://detroitparcels.landgrid.com/us/48201#p=/us/mi/wayne/detroit/207416>.
- _____. *A School District in Crisis: Detroit Public Schools 1942-2015*. Accessed February 23, 2021, <https://landgrid.com/reports/schools#peak>
- Leake, Paul. *History of Detroit*, v. III. Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1912.
- Lewis Publishing Company. *Michigan*. Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Company, 1915.
- Library of Congress, Notes "Rosa Parks and U.S. Congressman John Conyers, Jr., picketing in front of General Motors corporate headquarters, Detroit, Michigan," 1986. Accessed January 25, 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2015645704/>
- Lundberg, Alex, and Greg Kowalski. *Images of America Detroit's Masonic Temple*. Charleston, S.C. Arcadia Publishing, 2006.
- McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018.

McClelland, Linda F. *Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms, Part A*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1997.

McCracken, S. B. *The State of Michigan: Embracing Sketches of its History, Position, Resources and Industries*. Lansing, W. S. George & Co., 1876.

McDonald, Blake. "Suren Pilafian (July 20, 1910 – Aug 5, 1988)." Historic Detroit. 2021. Accessed 24 February 2021, <https://historicdetroit.org/architects/suren-pilafian>.

McGraw, Bill. Sassy Cat on Woodward: Council Hears Flak over Adult Movie Theater. *Detroit Free Press*, 19 March 1985, 12.

Malone, Hank. Detroit's Open City. *Detroit Free Press*, 23 August 1970, 22.

Marquis, Albert Nelson. *The Book of Detroiters: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Men of the City of Detroit*. Chicago, IL: A. N. Marquis & Company, 1914.

Mason, Ronald J. *Great Lakes Archaeology*. New York: Academic Press, 1981.

Mead & Hunt and Kidorf Preservation Consulting, *Reconnaissance-level Survey Report: Residential Neighborhoods in Detroit*. Prepared for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing, Michigan, 2013.

Meints, Graydon M. *Michigan Railroads & Railroad Companies*. East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 1992.

Meyer, Katharine Mattingly (ed.) and Martin C. P. McElroy (ed.). *Detroit Architecture A.I.A. Guide*, revised ed. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1980.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources. "Historical Marker-S744 – United Sound Systems Recording Studios." Accessed 26 February 2021, https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/Publications/PDFS/ArcGISOnline/StoryMaps/mhc_historical_markers/pdfs/MHC822017002.pdf.

Michigan Economic Development Corporation. "Historic Preservation Tax Credits." Accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/historic-preservation-tax-credits/>

Michiganhighways.org. Early US-12, Willow Run, Detroit Industrial & Edsel Ford Freeways. Accessed 27 January 2021, http://www.michiganhighways.org/indepth/early_I-94.html.

_____. Year-by-Year History: I-94 before I-94 existed. Accessed 27 January 2021, http://www.michiganhighways.org/indepth/early_I-94.html.

Michigan Legislature House of Representatives. *Documents Accompanying the Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan at the Biennial of 1861*. Lansing: Hosmer & Kerr, 1861.

Michigan State Historic Preservation Office. *Certified Local Government Program: Program Requirements + Certification Handbook*, 2020. Accessed 5 April 2021, https://www.miplace.org/4a3182/globalassets/documents/shpo/programs-and-services/certified-local-governments/mishpo_clg_handbook_2020web_version.pdf.

Midtown Detroit, Inc. "History," accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.midtowndetroitinc.org/mission>.

Miller, Robert E. Wayne State University Buildings National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan. 1978

Mills, Ruth E., and Stephanie Austin. Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 1892–1970. On file, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, Lansing, Michigan. 2017.

Mills, Ruth E. Branch Banks in Detroit, Michigan, 1889–1970 MPD. On file Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, Lansing, Michigan. 2017.

Mills Ruth E. and Sandra Little. Survey Report 20th Century Black Civil Rights Sites in the City of Detroit. Prepared for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing, Michigan, February 2021.

Mikolowski, Ken. *Time and Place*. Detroit: Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Wayne State University, 2009, Exhibition catalogue. https://artcollection.wayne.edu/publications/time_and_place_-_web.pdf

_____. *From a Secret Location* (March 2017). Accessed 3 May 2021, <https://fromasecretlocation.com/the-alternative-press/>.

Mirel, Jeffrey. *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit: 1907-1981*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999.

Montgomery Alesia F. Different futures for different neighborhoods: the sustainability fix in Detroit. *Ethnography* 16, December 2015, 523-555.

Moore, Charles. *History of Michigan*, v. III. Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1915.

National Register of Historic Places. Listed Properties Database. Accessed 21 April 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm#table>.

Noble Fish. "Team." Accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.noblefish.com/#team>.

The Nobel Foundation. Martin Luther King Jr.- Biography. NobelPrize.org. Accessed 4 May 2021, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1964/king/biographical/>.

North Cass Community Union. Bylaws. Accessed 29 January 2021, https://docs.google.com/document/pub?id=1J4dJueMgtrujrG2yCApoGqnh3UX_p8LhrwgHLDRzsYc.

Ohnuki, Emiko. The Detroit Chinese - A Study of Socio-cultural Changes in the Detroit Chinese Community from 1872 Through 1963. MS Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1964.

One Detroit. "New Year's mochi and recent history of Japanese food in Detroit." Published 19 December 2018, accessed 24 July 2021, <https://www.onedetroitpbs.org/mochitsuki-a-japanese-new-years-tradition/>

Piazza, Gregory C. and Brian Conway, The Belcrest National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1983.

Polk. R. L. *Polk's City Directory*. Detroit, R. L. Polk & Co., 1915.

_____. *Polk's City Directory*. Detroit, R. L. Polk & Co., 1917.

QLine Detroit. "About." accessed 24 February 2021, <https://qlinedetroit.com/about/#:~:text=from%20Downtown%20Detroit%20through%20Midtown,Friday%2C%20May%2012%2C%202017>.

Quimby, George Irving. *Indian Life In The Upper Great Lakes: 11,000 B.C. to A.D. 1800*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.

_____. *Indian Culture and European Trade Goods*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966.

Retzloff, Timothy Ford. "City, Suburb, and Changing Bounds of Lesbian and Gay Life and Politics in Metropolitan Detroit, 1945-1985." Ph.D. diss. Yale University, 2014.

_____. "Michigan LGBTQ Remember." Email. 2021.

Rigdon, Brenda. General Motors Research Laboratory National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, 2004.

Robinson, Elaine H. Goodrich Building National Register of Historic Places Registration, Draft. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1989.

_____. North Cultural Center Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration, Draft. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 2015.

- Robinson, Elaine H., Katie Remensnyder, Scott Slagor, and Brandon M. Gabler, I-94 Modernization Project: Above-Ground Reconnaissance and Intensive Level Survey, City of Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. Prepared for Michigan Department of Transportation, 2018.
- Rosenthal, Mark. Jim Duffy's Hybrid Aesthetic, *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts*, 2011, 4-11.
- Ross, Robert B., and George B. Catlin. *Landmarks of Wayne County and Detroit*. Detroit, MI: The Evening News Association, 1898.
- Runyan, Robin. University Motel Sells to Midtown Detroit Inc. for \$600K. *Curbed Detroit*, 15 November. 2017. Accessed 27 January 2021, <https://detroit.curbed.com/2017/11/15/16656138/university-motel-midtown-detroit-sold>.
- Ryerson, Jade. Native American History in Detroit. National Park Service. Accessed 2 May 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/native-american-history-in-detroit.htm>.
- Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Maps of Detroit*, vol. 1. New York, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1884.
- _____. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v.6. Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1910.
- _____. *Fire Insurance Map from Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan*, v. 2 . Detroit: Sanborn Map Company, 1921.
- _____. *Insurance Maps of Detroit*, vol. 6. New York, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1884-1951.
- Sands, D. "Would the Real Midtown Please Stand Up? A Cultural History of Cass Corridor." *Critical Moment*, February 15, 2012. Accessed 29 April 2021, <https://critical-moment.org/2012/02/15/would-the-real-midtown-please-stand-up/>.
- Sauer, E. A., and C. M. Perry. *Perry's New Guide of Detroit and Suburbs*. Detroit, MI: E. A. Sauer and C. M. Perry, 1917.
- Savage, Rebecca Binno. "Minoru Yamasaki: Biography." Wayne State University Yamasaki Legacy. Accessed February 24, 2021, <http://yamasaki.wayne.edu/biography.html>.
- Schramm, Jack E., William H. Henning, and Thomas J. Dworman. *Detroit's Street Railways*, v. 11: 1922-1956. Chicago: Central Railfan's Association, 1980.
- Schramm, Kenneth. *Images of Rail: Detroit's Street Railways*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006.
- Sharp, Sarah Rose. "Detroit's famed Cass Corridor art movement spotlighted at Simone DeSousa," *Detroit Free Press*, 21 April 2017.

- _____. "The unsung heroes of the Cass Corridor artist movement." *Detroit Free Press*, 23 April 2017, 3E.
- _____. Discovering the Treasures of an Artist from the Cass Corridor Movement, *Hyperallergic*, originally published 25 October 2017. Accessed 27 February 2021, <https://hyperallergic.com/407119/discovering-the-treasures-of-an-artist-from-the-cass-corridor-movement/>
- Shimoura, Toshiko. "The History of Nekkei (Japanese) in Detroit," in *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, edited by Sook Wilkinson and Victor Jew. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015.
- Simone DeSousa Gallery, "Exhibition Description Cass Corridor, Connecting Times." Accessed 25 July 2021, <https://www.simonedesousagallery.com/cass-corridor-connecting-times-foust-murphy-pletos-description/>.
- Stein, Marc. "Historical Landmarks and Landscapes of LGBTQ Law." In *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Foundation and National Park Service, 2016.
- Stitt, Charles. Midtown Detroit developer Landy dies. *Detroit Free Press*, 3 August 2020, A-7.
- Superintendents of the Poor. *Eighty-Eighth Annual Report of the Superintendents of the Poor of Wayne County, Michigan*. Detroit, MI: Aronsson Printing Co., 1922.
- Tanner, Helen H., ed. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987, 30–34.
- Taubman College. *Detroit's Lower Cass: corridor, neighborhood, district?* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1999.
- Trajkovski, Alex. "A concise history of Detroit public transit," *Curbed Detroit*, September 22, 2017, accessed 10 February 2021, <https://detroit.curbed.com/2017/9/22/16322202/detroit-transit-history>.
- Trans-Love Energies flyer (April 1967). Ann Arbor District Library. Accessed 4 May 2021, <https://aadl.org/node/192488>.
- Trimpe, Lexi. Viva La Resistance with Dally in the Alley. *Hour Detroit*, 31 August 2017. Accessed 1 February 2021, <https://www.hourdetroit.com/art-and-entertainment/viva-la-resistance/>.
- Tribes of the Cass Corridor & Forum, "Detroit Artist's Workshop 1960-?," accessed January 25, 2021, http://corridortribe.com/tribes/artists_workshop/index.htm.

- Tutag, Nola Huse. *Discovering Stained Glass in Detroit*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1987.
- United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States*, 1930. Washington, D.C. National Archives and Records Administration.
- United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940. Washington, D.C. National Archives and Records Administration.
- United States Department of State [USDS], Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, Biographies of the Secretaries of State: Lewis Cass (1782-1866), accessed January 19, 2021, <https://history.state.gov/departments/history/people/cass-lewis>.
- Vachon, Paul. *Images of America: Forgotten Detroit*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2009.
- Varney, Almon C. *Our Homes and Their Adornments*. Detroit, MI: The J. C. Chilton Publishing Company, 1885.
- Vollmert, Les. The S.S. Kresge World Headquarters National Register of Historic Places Registration. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1979.
- _____. Detroit Masonic Temple National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1980.
- _____. Fisher & New Center Buildings National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1980.
- _____. Perry McAdow House National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1980.
- Vollmert, Leslie J. East Ferry Avenue Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1979.
- Voyles Kenneth H. and John A. Bluth. *Images of America: The Detroit Athletic Club: 1887-2001*. Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2001.
- Walker, Micah. Historic United Sound Systems recording studio in Detroit saved by MDOT. *Detroit Free Press*. 11 January 2019.
- Wayne County Sheriff. "Connect." Accessed 19 February 2021, <http://sheriffconnect.com/index.php/contact-us.html>.

Wayne State University Libraries. Aerial Photographs Digital Collections, Wayne County 1956. Accessed 27 January 2021, https://digital.library.wayne.edu/dte_aerial/part2/wayne/1956/ga-1-86.pdf.

Wayne State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Chinatown, accessed January 29, 2021, <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/ELD/Chinatown>

Whiffen, Marcus and Frederick Koeper. *American Architecture*, vol. 2: 1860-1976. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995.

Whitney, The. "About the Whitney." Accessed 27 February 2021, <https://www.thewhitney.com/about>.

Whitten, Hope. Thompson Home for Old Ladies National Register of Historic Places Inventory. On file, Michigan SHPO, Lansing, Michigan, 1974.

Whitely, Henry F, A.I.A. and Elise Rathburn Whitely. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles, CA: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.

Woodford, Arthur M. *This is Detroit, 1701-2001*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001.

Zuzindlak, Chelsea. "Tell 'em you're from Detroit," in *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, edited by Sook Wilkinson and Victor Jew. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015, 50–69.

Newspapers

Detroit Free Press

Detroit Free Press Detroit Magazine

Detroit Free Press Sunday

Detroit News

Evening News Association (Detroit)

Times (London, England)

Paducah Sun (Paducah, Kentucky)

Times Herald (Port Huron, Michigan)

APPENDIX A
IDENTIFICATION FORMS