

Historical Context and Intensive Level Survey For Multi-Family Public Housing

Detroit, Michigan
Wayne County
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Detroit Housing Commission, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, City of Detroit

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The Detroit Housing Commission

The Detroit Housing Commission (“DHC”) utilizes funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) Office of Public and Indian Housing (“PIH”) under the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C 1437 et seq.) and other special programs as Congress may appropriate from time to time such as the American Recovery and Reinvestment act of 2009 (ARRA). Between 2009 and 2011, the DHC undertook HUD-assisted activities on its properties in Detroit including repair, rehabilitation, demolition, and disposition of residential properties, each of which is an undertaking (“Undertaking”) as defined pursuant to 36 CFR 800.16(y).

On September 24, 2014, the U.S. Office of Inspector General (“OIG”) completed audit 2014-FW-0005 “Public Housing Capital Fund and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Environmental Reviews,” of the DHC’s Undertakings in the period defined above that identified non-compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The OIG required resolution of the findings through evidence that the Undertakings caused no environmental harm or that any harm would be satisfactorily mitigated.

Between February and March of 2017 the City of Detroit’s Preservation Specialist reviewed all of the subject Undertakings and determined that of the 232 undertakings, 95% had a finding of “No Historic Properties Affected,” 1 % had a finding of “No Adverse Effect” and 3 % had a finding of “Adverse Effect.” Forty of the Undertakings had completed Section 106 reviews with concurrence from the SHPO at the time of the actions. HUD consulted with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (“ACHP”) about how to resolve the audit findings and the ACHP decided that a Section 106 program alternative under 36 CFR 800.14 would not be appropriate to resolve the audit.

The City, HUD, the DHC, and the SHPO consulted and determined that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be an appropriate mechanism to resolve the audit and ACHP confirmed that it was a reasonable way to meet the intent of the NHPA under the circumstances. The signatories agreed that rather than mitigating individual adverse effects, the appropriate remedy would be an overall mitigation strategy that improves future compliance of public housing projects with Section 106, and thereby promotes the preservation of historic public housing properties. One of the stipulations within the MOU is the preparation of this survey report.

Executive Summary

The Detroit Housing Commission Intensive Level Survey for Multi-Family Public Housing was initiated to create both an Intensive Level Survey and a Historic Context statement for public housing in the city of Detroit. The context statement specifically addresses multifamily public housing developments constructed through 1980. The survey covers the historic and architectural significance of public housing in Detroit, and only includes those developments which the Detroit Housing Commission (DHC) owns and were constructed prior to 1980.

The property list provided by the DHC named a total of ten sites of public housing multifamily developments in Detroit including DHC-owned and mixed-finance ownership entities. The sites included: Algonquin Apartments, Forest Park-Diggs Apartments, Greenbrooke Manor, Harriett Tubman Apartments, Parkside Homes, Riverbend Tower Apartments, John W. Smith Homes, Sojourner Truth Homes, State Fair Apartments, and Warren West Apartments. In reality, although the DHC grouped certain sites together, there were fourteen (14) properties of public housing multifamily developments surveyed. The sites included: Sojourner Truth Homes (1941), Sojourner Truth Homes Addition (1987), Charles C. Diggs Sr. Terraces (1974), Forest Park Place Senior Citizens Apartments (1971), Harriet Tubman Apartments (1971), Parkside Homes (1938), Villages at Parkside (1998), Riverbend Tower Apartments (1974), John W. Smith Homes (1942), State Fair Apartments (1972), Warren West Apartments (1969), Algonquin Apartments (1911), Latonia Apartments (1911) and Greenbrooke Manor (1964). The acreage of the fourteen properties totaled 106.5 acres or 43 hectares.

Seven of the properties surveyed are recommended as eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. These properties include the following: the Greenbrooke Manor Apartments, the Warren West Apartments, the State Fair Apartments, the Parkside Homes, the Sojourner Truth Homes, the Forest Park Place Apartments and the Harriet Tubman Apartment building. Two of the surveyed properties, the Algonquin Apartments and the Latonia Apartments, were previously listed in the National Register as part of the Woodbridge Neighborhood historic district. The survey data page for each property contains the narrative description and statement of significance for the sites recommended for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Historic Context Statement for public housing in Detroit highlights the history of multi-family public housing in the United States and the history of the establishment of the DHC. The section on the history of multi-family public housing in the United States was derived from several sources of primary and secondary research. There is a section on federal housing reform in the United States and the many national legislative initiatives. There is a history of Public Housing in Michigan, the DHC, the architecture of multi-family public housing in Detroit and the architects who designed the housing developments in Detroit.

To complete this project, research was conducted at primary and secondary levels to identify people, places and trends associated with the DHC, and specifically the fourteen (14) multi-family housing sites under review. Finally, photographs were taken of the interior and exterior of each property included in the survey.

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Credits and Credentials

Detroit Housing Commission – Intensive Level Survey

Kraemer Design Group's historic preservation staff, Rebecca Binno Savage and Melissa Arrowsmith conducted the Intensive Level Survey of the Detroit Housing Commission (DHC) properties listed in the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Historical Context and Intensive Level Survey - File No. H560.

Rebecca Binno Savage - Rebecca has over twenty years' experience working in historic preservation and meets the federal professional qualifications set forth in 36 CFR 61. Prior to working as a Historic Preservation Consultant, Rebecca worked for nine years in the advertising industry, and then decided to obtain her Master's in Historic Preservation at Columbia University's graduate school of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. Since 1995, Rebecca has worked on numerous restoration projects in New York and Detroit, planning historical conferences and authoring funding grants for multiple properties. Rebecca has written National Register of Historic Places nominations for some of Detroit's most significant buildings and worked on substantial revitalization initiatives such as the Woodward Avenue Light Rail Transit Project – the Qline.

Melissa Arrowsmith – Melissa joined Kraemer Design Group in January 2017 with a background in planning, community development, and the preservation of cultural and architectural heritage. She has been involved in the preservation of Detroit's architectural history since 2012. Melissa holds a BA in Historic Preservation from the University of Mary Washington and completed her Master's in Urban Planning from Wayne State University in 2016. Additionally, she is certified in Charrette Facilitation and Management by the National Charrette Institute (2016). She was published in the September/October 2016 issue of the Michigan Planner magazine with an article on watershed councils and local planning.

Project Objectives and Methodology

The Detroit Housing Commission Intensive Level Survey and Historic Context for public housing in the city of Detroit was undertaken by the combined efforts of the DHC, the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the City of Detroit's Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD). The survey was undertaken to address the historic and architectural significance of public housing in Detroit (constructed prior to 1980). The goals of the survey project were described as:

1. Provide DHC officials with a more complete understanding of the history of their organization and the buildings within their inventory.
2. Provide the SHPO and the City of Detroit Preservation Specialist with adequate information to make determinations of effect as it relates to HUD-funded activities requiring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA).
3. Provide scholars with historical information regarding the development of the DHC both physically and socially.
4. Provide the DHC with a framework in which to market properties marked for disposition, supplying developers a way to utilize Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits when rehabilitating these buildings.

The Historical Context and Intensive Level Survey project was directed by Jason Borrer, Capital Asset Manager of the DHC, Kathrine Kolokithas, Diane Tuinstra and Amy Arnold of the SHPO, Michelle Gilliland and Ryan Schumaker of the City of Detroit Housing & Revitalization Department.

During the months from March to July, 2018, Kraemer Design Group (KDG)'s historic preservation staff visited each of the ten sites. At each site KDG staff used the SHPO-provided Michigan History/Architectural Survey Site form to describe the property. KDG staff photographed each site according to the photography requirements specified in the RFP – Section D, 1. In the case of some properties (Algonquin and Forest Park-Diggs) KDG could not obtain interior photographs.

KDG staff mapped the exterior photos into a site map for each property provided by DHC staff. Each of the ten sites has a different boundary description. All of the survey data was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet containing the categories determined by the SHPO. The Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was imported into a Microsoft Word document containing the survey form. Additionally, KDG created a Detroit city-wide key map of all ten DHC properties. These items were submitted for the Historical Context and Intensive Level Survey.

Historical sources for the survey included the *Detroit Free Press*, *the Detroit News*, *the New York Times*, the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University, the Main Detroit Public Library; Burton Historical Collection, Historic American Building Survey reports and National Register of Historic Places nominations and internet websites from the DHC and others.

Data Location

Data for the Detroit Housing Commission Intensive Level Survey for Multi-Family Public Housing is located at the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, 735 East Michigan Avenue P. O. Box 30044, Lansing, Michigan, 48909. A full set of the materials in both print and digital form are at this location. A copy is also located within the City of Detroit's Housing & Revitalization Department at City of Detroit, 2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 908, Detroit, Michigan, 48226.

Evaluation Results Summary

The property list provided by the DHC included ten sites of public housing multifamily developments in Detroit, including DHC-owned and mixed-finance ownership entities. The sites included: Algonquin Apartments, Forest Park-Diggs Apartments, Greenbrooke Manor, Harriett Tubman Apartments, Parkside Homes, Riverbend Tower Apartments, John W. Smith Homes, Sojourner Truth Homes, State Fair Apartments and Warren West Apartments. In reality, although the DHC grouped certain sites together, there were fourteen (14) properties of public housing multifamily developments surveyed. The sites included: Sojourner Truth Homes (1941), Sojourner Truth Homes Addition (1987), Charles C. Diggs Sr. Terraces (1974), Forest Park Place Senior Citizens Apartments (1971), Harriet Tubman Apartments (1971), Parkside Homes (1938), Villages at Parkside (1998), Riverbend Tower Apartments (1974), John W. Smith Homes (1942), State Fair Apartments (1972), Warren West Apartments (1969), Algonquin Apartments (1911), Latonia Apartments (1911) and Greenbrooke Manor (1964).

Seven of the properties surveyed are recommended as eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These properties include the following: the Greenbrooke Manor Apartments, the Warren West Apartments, the State Fair Apartments, the Parkside Homes, the Sojourner Truth Homes, the Forest Park Place Apartments and the Harriet Tubman Apartment building. Two of the surveyed properties, the Algonquin Apartments and the Latonia Apartments, were previously listed in the National Register, as part of the Woodbridge Neighborhood historic district. A short summary description and significance statement for each of the sites is included below.

1. Sojourner Truth Homes (1941) – 4801 East Nevada, Detroit

The Sojourner Truth Homes are sited on their original street plan and location in the northern, central area of Detroit. There are four entrances to the Sojourner Truth Homes complex: two off East Nevada Street, one off Strockton Avenue, and one off Fenelon Street. There are twenty of the original 1941 Sojourner Truth buildings remaining on the site. The original Sojourner Truth Homes maintain a high degree of integrity to their original design as dark red brick, side-gabled two-story row houses with a beige-colored brick string course. The string course runs around the building along the lower edge of the second story windows. The dark red brick is laid in running-bond pattern. Each building is composed of six bays and contains six individual units. There is no eave overhang on the side gables of the buildings.

The first-floor windows have cast stone or concrete sills. The first-floor windows are aluminum replacement windows. There are newer replacement white vinyl double-hung windows on the second floor. A projecting awning over the front entry porch of each unit was added at an unknown date, with asphalt shingles and vinyl siding. Front entry doors are wood, grouped in pairs and have a brown metal screen door and dark red aluminum door surround. Each entry has a porch light, address and cast-iron mail box. The rear of the rowhouses have enclosed mechanical additions with vinyl siding and dark red asphalt shingled roof. On the roof of each unit is a PVC vent pipe, and units share a brick chimney. There are brown aluminum gutters and downspouts on each building. Some of the town houses' side facades have beige stucco and trim replicating a half-timbered appearance in the gable. A variation among the

rowhouses is newer-construction one-story Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant addition on some buildings. Twenty-nine new building were added to the site in 1986/87. There is minimal landscaping at the entrances to the complex, as well as on traffic islands within the complex. Some properties have shrubbery surrounding the foundation, but most do not. There are some large trees scattered throughout the site.

The Sojourner Truth Homes are eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A and C. Sojourner Truth is a representative example of a standard planned federal public housing project. The Sojourner Truth Homes were built as part of the federal government's defense housing program in 1941 to house African American war workers. The Sojourner Truth Homes became a central point of racial tension leading to Detroit's Race Riot of 1943. Detroit was in the midst of a housing shortage due to the influx of workers during World War II, and the shortage disproportionately impacted African Americans because of housing segregation and discrimination. Members of the surrounding all-white neighborhood contested the placement of the housing project and the National Housing Administration (NHA) reversed the racial occupancy to white. With appeals from Mayor Edward Jeffries and civil rights groups, the NHA was convinced to reverse their decision in favor of black families. Violence erupted when black families tried to move into their new homes on March 1, 1942. In all, fifteen people were injured and more than twenty-four were jailed as a result of the confrontation.

2. Sojourner Truth Homes Addition (1987) – 4801 East Nevada Avenue, Detroit.

The Sojourner Truth new townhomes added twenty-nine new buildings to the site of the existing Sojourner Truth homes. These comprise sixty-six units of townhouses that were added to the Sojourner Truth Homes site in 1986/87. The scale and massing of the new townhomes match that of the original 1941 homes. Because the new buildings match the 1941 buildings in massing and scale the integrity of the original buildings is not jeopardized.

At the center of the complex is a large community building that includes offices, meeting rooms and a large assembly space. The contemporary townhouse apartment buildings are clad in dark red brick laid in a running-bond pattern. The townhouses are characterized by multi-level gables, second-floor wood panel siding and projecting bays. The wood panel siding has been painted a light peach color. The main entrance to each unit is entered at a concrete slab in the short alcove sided with wood panels. A porch light, address numbers and mail slot are found on the wood siding. The entry door to each unit is the original brown aluminum screen door and brown entry door with a horizontal casement window at the top. The first-floor window at the front entrance is also of brown aluminum with a divided two-part casement window. A sill of header bricks is at the first-story windows. The second-story windows have been replaced with white vinyl two-part casement windows. A water-table of header bricks is at the second story window level. The roofs are covered in grey asphalt shingles. Brown aluminum gutters and downspouts are on the buildings and an exhaust vent projects from each roof. There is a brown aluminum ridge vent at each roof peak.

The units are grouped in identical pairs, sited as opposite reflecting plans. The rear of the units has a similar alcove entrance, and the windows and doors are also brown aluminum. The utility boxes are on the exterior of the end units, and the side facades are faced in brick, include a brown casement aluminum window, and the gable is sided with wood panels, also painted a light peach color. There are two, three, and four bedroom townhouses on the Sojourner Truth Homes site. Each block is surrounded by a black wrought-iron fence. There are honey locust trees in the rear yards of the new town homes.

The Sojourner Truth new townhomes are incorporated into the original site of the Sojourner Truth complex, at streets adjacent to the original 1941 buildings. The additional townhomes at the Sojourner Truth housing complex does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because it has not reached the age of fifty years and has not achieved significance of exceptional importance.

3. Forest Park Place Senior Citizens Apartments (1971) – 1331 East Canfield Street, Detroit.

Forest Park Place is a seven-story apartment tower containing ninety-seven units. The rectangular building features brown brick-clad vertical piers between each window bay. The brick is laid in a running bond pattern. The building's main facade is the southern facade. The large main section of the building's southern facade is attached to a recessed stair/elevator tower at the eastern side. East of the elevator tower is an additional separate bay of apartment units.

The window pattern on the large main section of the southern facade is symmetrical. The window pattern runs from west to east: slider-window, slider-window, paired slider windows, paired slider windows, slider-window - then repeated. Beige Exterior Finish Insulation System (EFIS) spandrel panels and EFIS clad entrance canopy surrounds are recent additions. The main entrance is marked by an extended canopy, infilled on the west side to enclose an interior space. The eastern side of the entrance canopy has the main brown aluminum divided door. There are vertical casement windows on each side of the door. A raised fascia panel on top of the canopy has lettering for "FOREST PARK PLACE." There is brown trim at the roofline of the entrance canopy. The windows of the building are casement brown aluminum in most cases. Some windows for office spaces are double-hung aluminum. An air conditioning unit vent sits below each window. Landscaping includes a sidewalk path that leads to a community gazebo at the northwest corner of the lot. The parking lot is at the southern side of the property and retains its original lights as well as landscaping in the island at the center. The west and east (secondary) facades are almost entirely brick clad with a single bay of windows down the center. Windows and entrance doors are aluminum. At the western side of the building the mechanical units are all in a group and the dumpster is in this location as well. The roof is flat.

The Forest Park Place apartment building will meet the criteria for listing on the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2021. The Forest Park Place apartment building is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A and C. Forest Park Apartments retains a high degree of integrity and retains the character-defining features of the original design. Planning for the Forest Park Apartments was first announced in 1964. At that time, the site included the area bounded by Mack, East Warren Avenue, Dequindre Street and the Chrysler I-75 Expressway. This site was mainly occupied by

single-family homes constructed by the Polish-American community that first moved to this area. Federal Urban Renewal funds were used for the demolition of the existing homes. An invitation for bids on the construction of the Forest Park Place Apartments was advertised in 1967. It was not until 1972 when ground was broken and the Forest Park Apartments project was initiated.

4. Charles C. Diggs Sr. Terraces (1974) – 1331 East Canfield Street, Detroit.

The Charles C. Diggs Sr. housing complex is composed of seven courts of four clustered townhouse apartment buildings, two stories in height. There are a total of 104 units in the complex. The townhouses are clad in brown brick at the first floor and beige vinyl siding at the second floor with a side-gabled, multi-level grey asphalt shingle roof. The brown brick is laid in a running bond pattern. A soldier course of brick is at the transition edge between the first and second stories. Entrances are recessed with metal doors. Each unit has a walk-out sliding glass door with a brick privacy enclosure, half-story in height. The brick enclosure is capped with cast concrete, and is enclosing a concrete patio slab. At the rear of the townhouses, the second story floor plate projects over the first story, creating a short roof. Aluminum windows vary between sliding and single-hung, with glass block windows at the basement level on some of the units. Open green space occupies the area at the center of the clusters. In the northwest corner of the site is the community center building, a one-and-a-half story structure clad in brown brick with a reddish-brown roof. There is beige vinyl siding on the building, and a double-door recessed entry at the rear and two pedestrian entry doors at the front facade.

The Charles C. Diggs Sr. housing complex does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because it has not reached the age of fifty years and has not achieved significance of exceptional importance. The Diggs housing complex should be evaluated for eligibility once it has reached fifty years of age in 2024. The Charles C. Diggs housing complex is named for Detroiters Charles C. Diggs Sr., the first African American Democrat elected to the Michigan Senate in 1937. He was a founder of the Michigan Federated Democratic Clubs and built his success on his funeral business. Diggs was a mortician and founded Michigan's first black-owned cemetery in 1925, Detroit Memorial Park. The Charles C. Diggs Sr. housing complex was designed by African American Detroit architect Howard Sims (1936-2018). Sims was a notable Detroit architect who designed structures such as: The Cobo Conference and Exhibition Center expansion, the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, the Orleans East Apartments in Lafayette Park, and many other Detroit-based projects in his career. The Diggs homes were called townhouses initially and were designed with three-to-six bedrooms - creating units for low-income families. The DHC worked with a subsidiary of First Federal Savings Bank of Detroit to develop this \$2.9 million housing project. When constructed in 1974, the Diggs Terraces were the first new low-income public housing to be built in Detroit in nineteen years.

5. Harriet Tubman Apartments (1971) – 2450 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit.

The Harriet Tubman Apartment Building is a twelve-story, 211-unit building characterized by the grid of rounded balconies on the front and rear facades. There are ten bays of balconies on each side. Full-height segmented brown aluminum screens were added to the balconies in 2014. The screens hide the

units' double patio doors. Concrete stabilization work was completed in 2014 as well. The construction of the building made use of an in-place, high-speed casting concrete system.

The building's main entrance is on the West Grand Boulevard (north) facade. The main entrance is distinguished by a rounded concrete canopy supported by four cast concrete piers. Today, the entry canopy is painted a light orange color. There are glass and aluminum doors at the building's main entry. There is a stair tower that is centered at the western facade of the building, which is faced with brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The main elevator/stair tower is at the north side of the building faced with brown brick laid in a running-bond pattern. The curved cast concrete patios edges and piers are a character-defining feature of the building. The first floor of the building is set back to the structural walls, under the patios above. The walls of the first level are finished in brown brick, laid in a running bond pattern.

The first floor windows are floor-to-ceiling brown aluminum window systems. There are air conditioner units/openings cut into the first-floor brick walls. The eastern and western facades display the cast concrete system structure. There are no windows on the eastern and western facades, and a brown brick pier (approximately 12-foot wide) is centered at the west-side facade. Brown brick veneer, laid in a running bond pattern faces the elevator and stair tower, as well as the rear recreation room addition.

At the north side of the property is a one-story projecting addition to the cast-concrete apartment building. The one-story addition has a connecting hallway to a community kitchen and recreation room. The addition exits on to the building's patio and garden. The recreation room doors and windows are glass and brown aluminum. The addition is faced with brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building roof is flat. The site of the entire property is surrounded by a black cast metal fence. The site includes a parking lot on the south (entered via Ferry Park Street) and west side of the building. A gabled metal picnic pavilion is in the north garden near West Grand Boulevard. Landscaping surrounding the property is well-maintained and includes large trees.

The Harriet Tubman Apartment Building, designed in 1971, will meet the criteria for listing in the National Register when it reaches the age of fifty years in 2021. It is recommended for National Register eligibility and is significant under Criterion A and C. The innovative use of cast concrete in the curved design of the apartment balconies was unique to Detroit's public housing design. The building's construction system was developed in the Netherlands, using high-speed casting of concrete on-site and in-place. Building Systems Inc. of Cleveland completed the building in 366 days. The twelve-story building was planned and developed by the DHC, costing \$3.2 million to build, providing 211 units for low-income senior citizens over the age of 62.

The building's amenities initially included a community kitchen, free laundry facilities on two floors, an outdoor patio and recreation area. The apartment units are 460-square feet in size with an individual balcony for each. The units initially included grab bars in bathrooms, individual thermostats in each unit and closed-circuit television security systems. The building was sited near a City of Detroit bus line as well as Henry Ford Hospital. An identical twin building (State Fair Apartments) was completed in 1972 at

State Fair and Ralston Streets. At that time, a third low-income Senior Citizen apartment building was planned for Conner and Waveney Streets (Riverbend Apartments), but that project used a different architectural design.

6. Parkside Homes (1938) – 12001 East Warren Avenue, Detroit

The Parkside Homes (1938) were designed as row housing in various unit configurations throughout the planned complex. The Parkside Homes are plotted along a central street - Stringham Court - which runs east-west and is centered through the complex. Other streets are in a grid perpendicular to Stringham Court. The boundary streets are Frankfort Street to the north and East Warren Avenue to the South; Conner Street is the western boundary and Gray Street is at the east. North of Frankfort Street is Chandler Park, one of the largest public parks in Detroit.

The original rowhouses that remain in the Parkside housing complex are two-story, red brick clad, with minimal decoration. The roofs are hipped asphalt shingled with widely overhanging eaves. A recent renovation added hipped roofs on the porches and buildings are finished with grey asphalt shingles. The windows have all been replaced with white vinyl double-hung paired sets of windows. There are cast concrete sills. Some units' first-floor windows have been replaced with a bay window of new white vinyl windows and grey asphalt shingles on the gabled roof. The units are built on a slab and do not have basements.

The front entrances of the units have been altered and are now a red brick enclosed entryway with metal panel sidelight covering - many units have different colors on the panels. The porch enclosures have red brick siding, asphalt shingled hipped roof, and a concrete landing with black wrought iron guardrail. The brick is laid in a running-bond pattern. The front doors are mostly white metal paneled doors with a rounded half-arch window. There is a wrought iron security door on each unit. Many of the entry doors have been replaced with metal security doors, and many have been painted different colors.

There is evidence of brick replacement/repair and infill of some windows on some units. There are white aluminum gutters and downspouts on all of the buildings. Some units have a partial basement and utility access at the end of the unit. The rear side of units have concrete patios and are accessed by a rear door. The unit patios are separated by wood privacy fencing. The new name of the complex is "The Villages at Parkside." There is very little landscaping on the site, which is divided by a fence from Chandler Park which is adjacent to the north. The entire complex is surrounded by a black wrought iron fence. A large open space at the center of the complex, where a portion of the original development was demolished, is surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. Parking is interspersed throughout the Parkside complex, and some streets allow for parking in front of the units. There is street lighting and sidewalks around the complex.

Parkside Homes (1938) are eligible for listing in the National Register under National Register criterion A and C. Parkside is Detroit's only remaining PWA project. The development was designed and planned by a committee of 26 architects, with George D. Mason as the chairman and chief architect. Mason was

also the Chief Architect for DHC projects that have since been demolished: the Brewster Homes (1938) and the Herman Gardens project (1942). Opposition to the project, led by City Councilman William P. Bradley, claimed that government-subsidized housing was an affront to private enterprise. The DHC's first director, Josephine Gomon, championed the project and ensured its success. Once opened, the project received praise for its outstanding living conditions. Parkside had many active tenant groups and a bi-weekly newspaper, *The Parksider*.

7. Villages at Parkside (1998) – 12002 East Warren Avenue, Detroit.

The 1998 infill one-and two-story townhouses are sited throughout the Parkside development and match the existing spatial pattern, scale and massing of the original 1938 units. The units are faced with red brick siding on the lower 3/4 of the facade, and beige vinyl siding at the attic level. The buildings are constructed on a slab, they have a raised porch and concrete entry step. There are porch columns and a gabled porch roof as well as gabled dormer at the roofline over the entry. These gables are distinctive, and the new units stand apart from the original Parkside rowhouses.

The entry doors are white paneled metal with a rounded arch window at the top. There is a black wrought iron security door in front of each entry door. There is a black wrought iron railing at the entry step. The windows are new white vinyl double-hung windows. There are beige aluminum gutters and downspouts on every building. The 1998 Parkside infill housing included one-story units that are ADA (American with Disabilities Act) compliant. The one-story units have a large gable over the extended porch. There are three porch columns comprised of a red brick base and vinyl covered square column above. The units are faced with red brick set in running bond pattern with beige vinyl siding above. The windows are white vinyl double-hung windows. The doors are white metal doors with a black wrought-iron security door at the front.

In the 1998 era, a post-modern Community Building was constructed at the southwest corner of the property. The Community Building houses offices, meeting rooms and a large assembly hall. The Community Building has a base of dark red brick laid in running bond pattern. The upper portion of the building is faced in grey vinyl siding, and the roof is shingled in grey asphalt shingles. A gabled roof over the main assembly hall projects from the center of the one-story structure's roof.

The Parkside infill housing was constructed in 1998 does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because it has not reached the age of 50 years and has not achieved significance of exceptional importance.

8. Riverbend Tower Apartments (1974) – 4386 Conner Street, Detroit.

The Riverbend Tower Apartments, located at 4386 Conner, is an eight-story building containing 95 apartment units. The building is 17-bays long and 4-bays wide and is characterized by Egyptian Revival-style columns and pale green and gold accents. The building is clad in ribbed concrete masonry units, designed to resemble vertically-laid, off-white bricks. The windows are slider casement white vinyl-clad

aluminum. Dryvit spandrel panels are painted pale green. Egyptian Revival-style capitals, and other Exotic Revival elements were likely added to the building at a date after its construction. There is a covered port cochere at the main entry. There are four Egyptian Revival-style columns at each corner of the port cochere. Decorating the roofline are rounded arches infilled with a light green color. At the roofline are rounded arches one-story in height. The arches are infilled with light green-colored EFIS and outlined in white. The main entry doors are automatic sliding glass and aluminum doors with aluminum side light windows. An outdoor seating area with garden beds and benches sits on the southeast corner of the site. The parking lot is at the north side of the property.

The Riverbend Tower Apartment building could meet the criteria for listing on the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2024. The building was constructed in 1973 by the DHC at a cost of \$2.1 million. In 1995 the DHC added a new entry and canopy on the building as well as interior upgrades.

9. John W. Smith Homes (1942) – 14313 Crescent Drive, Detroit.

The John W. Smith Homes complex is entered off Lyndon Street, Evergreen Road, or Kentfield Street. The complex is built around a road pattern of curvilinear streets, a design that is evident in the original plan created in 1942. There are fifty-two buildings in the complex with 157 total units of housing within those buildings.

Along the complex's main thoroughfare, Crescent Drive, the rowhouses are two-story, light grey vinyl clad with combination hip-gabled roofs with dark grey asphalt shingles and white vinyl sliding casement windows. Some units are clad in light blue siding at the first-floor level, and light grey siding above. Buildings within the complex have flat facades with small porticos above the entrances on the primary facade, creating an open covered porch. Many structures are comprised of double units that are reflections of each other. Many structures have a door to utility rooms at the center of the rowhouse structure between the units. The side facades have varying projections and recessed entrances. White scalloped shingle vinyl siding decorates some of the gables.

Some structures were designed for ADA accessibility and have a ramp in front. Some of the ADA units have a one-story addition that projects from the side of the original structure. Some structures have a gabled covered entry porch with an entry wall containing three square opening for decorative effect. There are white aluminum gutters and downspouts at each unit. White vinyl-clad screen doors are over white steel security entry doors. There is a porchlight and exterior electrical outlet near each front entry door.

The Smith Homes community building is a one-story concrete block structure with dark red brick and vinyl siding on some facades. The Smith Homes community building is recent construction from the last twenty years. There is some landscaping at the entrances to the complex, including shrubs and trees. The complex is surrounded by a black wrought iron fence. There is a large area of open green space

along the eastern side. Parking lots are adjacent to street-facing structures and some units have parking spaces adjacent to the structures.

The John W. Smith Homes (housing complex) is not eligible for listing in the National Register. Though the site may have historic significance, we believe this site lacks sufficient integrity to be eligible for National Register listing. Demolition of original housing units, demolition of original walkways and the original community center has diminished the historic integrity of the John W. Smith Homes. Additionally, the housing units were renovated with new siding, roofs and windows over time, and the highly altered form of the structures today has contributed to the loss of integrity.

Internationally-known architect Eliel Saarinen of the Cranbrook Institute of Arts addressed the Detroit Federation of Settlements at the Smith Homes in 1943 to remark on Detroit's growth and future - evidence of the prominence of the project. The John W. Smith Homes, named after former Detroit Mayor John W. Smith, were designed by Maynard Lyndon and Eberle Smith who became prolific in their careers as modernist architects and are credited with designing the United States' first modern school building in Northville, Michigan. Their firm, Lyndon & Smith (1935-1942), completed thirty schools and two public housing projects.

Constructed and opened to families in 1942, the Smith Homes was rented completely by war workers. Originally, the site included 210 units, completed at a cost of \$1,321,000. A local official described the project (*Detroit News*, December 1, 1942.) as, "It looks like a fine development and a credit to the neighborhood." The buildings suggested Bauhaus in their design which had flat roofs and used plywood for the walls, which were painted coral, yellow, blue-gray, silver-gray, green and khaki. The buildings underwent renovations in the 1950s and 1990s which altered the appearance of the exterior. The original design and choice of materials caused maintenance problems and were renovated over time to their current appearance. Today there are 157 units remaining in the Smith Homes, albeit in a much-altered appearance from the original design.

10. State Fair Apartments (1971) – 1231 West State Fair Avenue, Detroit.

The State Fair Apartment Building is a twelve-story, 211-unit building characterized by the grid of rounded balconies on the front and rear facades. There are ten bays of balconies on each side. Full-height segmented brown aluminum screens were added to the balconies in 2014. The screens hide the unit double patio doors.

The building was constructed with steel frame and cast-concrete construction system. The building's main entrance is on the State Fair (north) facade. The main entrance is distinguished by a rounded concrete canopy supported by four cast concrete piers. Today, the entry canopy is painted a bright orange color. There are glass and aluminum doors at the building's main entry. There is a stair tower at the southern facade of the building, faced with brown brick laid in running bond pattern. The main elevator/stair tower is at the north side of the building faced with brown brick in laid in running-bond pattern. The curved cast concrete patios edges and piers are a character-defining feature of the building.

The first floor of the building is set back to the structural walls, under the patios above. The walls of the first level are finished in brown brick, laid in running bond pattern. The first-floor windows are floor-to-ceiling brown aluminum window systems. There are air conditioner units/openings cut into the first-floor brick walls.

The eastern and western facades display the cast concrete system structure. There are no windows on the eastern and western facades, and a brown brick pier (approximately 12 feet wide) is centered at the west-side facade. Brown brick veneer, laid in a running bond pattern faces the elevator and stair tower, as well as the rear recreation room addition. At the north side of the property is a one-story projecting addition to the cast-concrete apartment building. The one-story addition has a connecting hallway to a community kitchen and recreation room. The addition exits on to the building's patio and garden. The recreation room doors and windows are glass and brown aluminum. The addition is faced with brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building roof is flat. The site of the entire property is surrounded by a black cast-metal fence. The site includes a parking lot on the south (entered via Ralston Street on the east) and east side of the building. A gabled metal picnic pavilion is at the west side of the building near the apartment building to the west. Landscaping surrounding the property is well-maintained and includes a few large trees.

The State Fair Apartment Building, designed in 1971, will meet the criteria for listing in the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2021. It is significant under Criterion A and C. The innovative use of cast concrete in the curved design of the apartment balconies was unique to Detroit's public housing design. The building's construction system was developed in the Netherlands, using high-speed casting of concrete on-site and in-place. Building Systems Inc. of Cleveland completed the building in 366 days. Concrete stabilization work was completed in 2014. The 12-story building was planned and developed by the DHC, costing \$3.2 million to build, providing 211 units for low-income senior citizens over the age of 62. The building's amenities initially included a community kitchen, free laundry facilities on two floors, an outdoor patio and recreation area. The apartment units are 460-square feet with an individual balcony for each. The units initially included grab bars in bathrooms, individual thermostats in each unit and closed-circuit television security systems. The building was sited near a City of Detroit bus line as well as Woodward Avenue - Detroit's main street. A twin building (Harriet Tubman Apartments) was completed in 1972 at Ferry Park Street and West Grand Boulevard. At that time, a third low-income senior citizen apartment building was planned for Conner and Waveney Streets (Riverbend Apartments), but that project used a different architectural design.

11. Warren West Apartments (1969-1971) – 4100 West Warren Avenue, Detroit.

The Warren West Apartment Building (1971) is a nine-story structure located on the west side of Detroit, near the Edsel Ford Freeway (I-94). There are 143 apartment units in the building. Designed in the form of a wide oblique angle, the structure is sited on a large plot that is adjacent to West Warren Avenue at its south end. The east and west facades of the building have set-back bays, alternating between apartment units. At the eastern side of the structure, at the bend of the angle, is the main

entrance. Just north of the main entrance is a one-story projecting garage and utility storage space. This addition to the building has a flat roof and is faced with concrete also painted pink in color.

At the roof line is a coping of brown aluminum above beige concrete-faced structural panels. Dumpsters and utilities are located at this side, adjacent to the garage and storage addition. Above the recessed main entrance is the elevator and stair tower, which projects above the roofline. The elevator lobby of each floor has a wide three-part casement window unit clad in brown aluminum. The 7-story building is of steel-frame construction and reinforced concrete. The building is clad in concrete painted beige at the piers and beams and faced with articulated concrete panels painted pink, which are punctured by metal air conditioning vents at each unit. The windows are double-casement slider units of brown aluminum. Metal spandrel panels below the aluminum windows are painted dark pink. The main entry doors are of dark brown aluminum with glass automatic slider doors that have a transom above. The roof is flat. The site is landscaped with a walking path, gazebo, trees and picnic tables. The parking lot is accessed from West Warren Avenue and is on the east side of the site. The site is surrounded by a black wrought iron fence.

The Warren West Apartment Building, designed in 1971, will meet the criteria for listing in the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2021. It is significant under Criterion A and C. The seven-story building was planned and developed by the DHC. The cost of the project in 1970 was \$2.9 million. It was designed for senior citizens and equipped with a community room, laundry facilities, garbage disposals stoves, refrigerators and draperies. In 1993 the building was renovated, and the repairs included: new paint, roof maintenance, and new stoves and refrigerators in the units. These renovations were funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

12. Algonquin Apartments (1911) – 4711 Trumbull Avenue, Detroit.

The Algonquin is three-and-a-half story, six-unit apartment building with a rectangular plan. The building fronts onto Trumbull Avenue and is clad in orange/brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building's basement floor projects a half-story above ground-level. The current windows are all vinyl, multi-lite replacements. There are cast-stone sills and lintels at the windows. The symmetry of the Trumbull Avenue facade with projecting bays on either side of the entrance and the widely overhanging eaves with entablature display an Italian Renaissance Revival style. The building name "ALGONQUIN" is engraved in the cast stone lintel over the door. The front door is a grey steel door, accessed by a seven-step staircase. A contemporary wooden porch and stair structure is attached to the rear of each building and is three stories tall.

The Algonquin Apartment Building was constructed as part of a development of three adjacent apartment buildings: The Algonquin, the Latonia, and the Pensacola. The three-building apartment development was sited at the northwest corner of West Forest Avenue and Trumbull Avenue. While the Algonquin fronts Trumbull Avenue, the Latonia fronts Forest Avenue as did the now-demolished Pensacola. The buildings were designed with an identical layout.

The developers/builders of the three structures were the Hart Brothers. William and John Hart were partners in the construction/contracting/real estate business called Hart Bros., which was formed in 1901. Their contracting and real estate firm was located in an office in the Chamber of Commerce Building (1212 Griswold, Detroit). The Hart Bros. developed apartments in a similar design and layout at the southeast corner of Rosa Parks Boulevard (then called Twelfth Street) and Spruce Street: The Ramara Flats, the Orena Flats, and the Elaine Flats in 1910. The Algonquin, Latonia and Pensacola Apartments were developed and constructed in 1911, and then sold to Bernard H. Mazure for \$15,000 each. This development in Woodbridge marked a time when demand for apartment buildings was stimulated by the tremendous growth of Detroit's population between 1900 and 1920 as a result of the burgeoning auto industry. Today, only the Algonquin and Latonia remain. The Pensacola Apartment building was demolished in the 1990s. In 1993 the Algonquin and the Latonia were renovated by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Neighborhood Preservation Program.

13. Latonia Apartments (1911) – 1520 West Forest Avenue, Detroit.

The Latonia is a three-and-a-half story, six-unit apartment building with a rectangular-plan. Located at the northwest corner of Trumbull and Forest Avenues the building fronts on Forest Avenue. The building is clad in orange/brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building's basement level projects a half-story above the ground floor. The windows are vinyl multi-lite replacements with stone sills. The symmetrical front facade includes a center entrance that includes the building name "LATONIA" inscribed in cast stone above. The entrance is accessed by a seven-step staircase. The front door is a new white steel door. There are projecting bays on either side of the entrance and widely overhanging eaves with entablature. There are cast-stone window lintels and sills. The building is in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. A wooden porch and stair structure is attached to the rear of each building, and is three stories tall.

The Latonia Apartment Building was constructed as part of a development of three adjacent apartment buildings: The Algonquin, the Latonia, and the Pensacola. The three-building apartment development was sited at the northwest corner of West Forest Avenue and Trumbull Avenue. The Algonquin fronts Trumbull Avenue while the Latonia and the now-demolished Pensacola buildings fronted Forest Avenue. The buildings were designed with an identical layout.

The developers/builders of the three structures were the Hart Brothers. William and John Hart were partners in the construction/contracting/real estate business called Hart Bros., which was formed in 1901. Their contracting and real estate firm was located in an office in the Chamber of Commerce Building (1212 Griswold, Detroit). The Hart Bros. developed apartments in a similar design and layout at the southeast corner of Rosa Parks Boulevard (then called Twelfth Street) and Spruce Street: the Ramara Flats, the Orena Flats, and the Elaine Flats in 1910. The Algonquin, Latonia and Pensacola Apartments were developed and constructed in 1911, and then sold to Bernard H. Mazure for \$15,000 each. This development in Woodbridge marked a time when demand for apartment buildings was stimulated by the tremendous growth of Detroit's population between 1900 and 1920 as a result of the mushrooming auto industry. Today, only the Algonquin and Latonia remain. The Pensacola Apartment

building was demolished in the 1990s. In 1993 both the Algonquin and the Latonia were renovated by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Neighborhood Preservation Program.

14. Greenbrooke Manor Apartments (1964) – 19801 Greenfield Road, Detroit.

The Greenbrooke Manor apartments are located at the southwest corner of Greenfield Road and Pembroke Avenue in northwest Detroit. The Greenbrooke Manor apartments are comprised of two matching two-story rectangular-plan buildings. There are eighteen apartment units in each building. The buildings are each set on a podium and raised a half-story; accessed by three steps and a sidewalk to reach the entry doors. The glass and aluminum entry doors are newer replacements. There are two entry doors on both sides of the north/south facades. The two-story entries are set back into the structure, and a short roof projects over each entry door. An asphalt parking lot separates the two buildings. Each building is surrounded on three sides by a four-foot wall of beige brick. The wall extends from the building facade creating a patio/garden. Each of these patio/garden areas contain box hedges, occasional Norway maple trees and white marble landscape stones. The buildings are faced with beige brick, glass, and aluminum designed in the International style. The large aluminum window walls with textured aluminum panels, panes of glass, flat roof, and minimalism, display characteristics of the International style. There are light-blue-colored textured aluminum spandrel panels under each window unit, contrasting with aluminum surrounds of the windows and brown aluminum trim. The brown aluminum trim at the base, middle and parapet emphasizes the horizontality of the buildings. The eastern and western facades are mainly brick with a centered window unit at each level. The eastern brick facade wall of the northern building contains black lettering of the name "GREENBROOKE MANOR." Air conditioning units penetrate the beige brick walls at the east and west ends of the buildings, as well as at each entrance's set-back piers. The air conditioning units were added at a later date. Security lights have been added on both of the buildings at the parapet level, and a chain-link fence is at the south and west sides; a black steel fence is at the east side of the parking lot, and a short black steel fence is at the handicap entry ramp. The buildings have an open staircase leading to the second-story and basement level at each entry. There are one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartment units arranged on each side of double-loaded corridors. The basement level houses utility rooms, storage rooms and laundry rooms.

The Greenbrooke Manor Apartments are eligible for the National Register under Criterion A and C. The International-style design of Greenbrooke Manor is associated with the broad pattern of apartment design in the mid-century era. The patio space surrounding the buildings follow some of the garden apartment principals of the 1960s. The International Style introduced new materials and construction methods, coupled with an aesthetic rejection of historical styles. Characteristic features of the International Style were used on the Greenbrooke Manor Apartments: wide expanses of windowless walls, flat roofs, and the widespread use of glass and aluminum. Very little information was available on Greenbrooke Manor. The Greenbrooke Manor Apartment buildings were constructed in 1964 in a primarily single-family residential neighborhood that was developed in the 1940s and 1950s. Advertisements for units at Greenbrooke Manor in the late 1960s-1980s describe them as "luxury" apartments. The complex was acquired by the DHC in 2012.

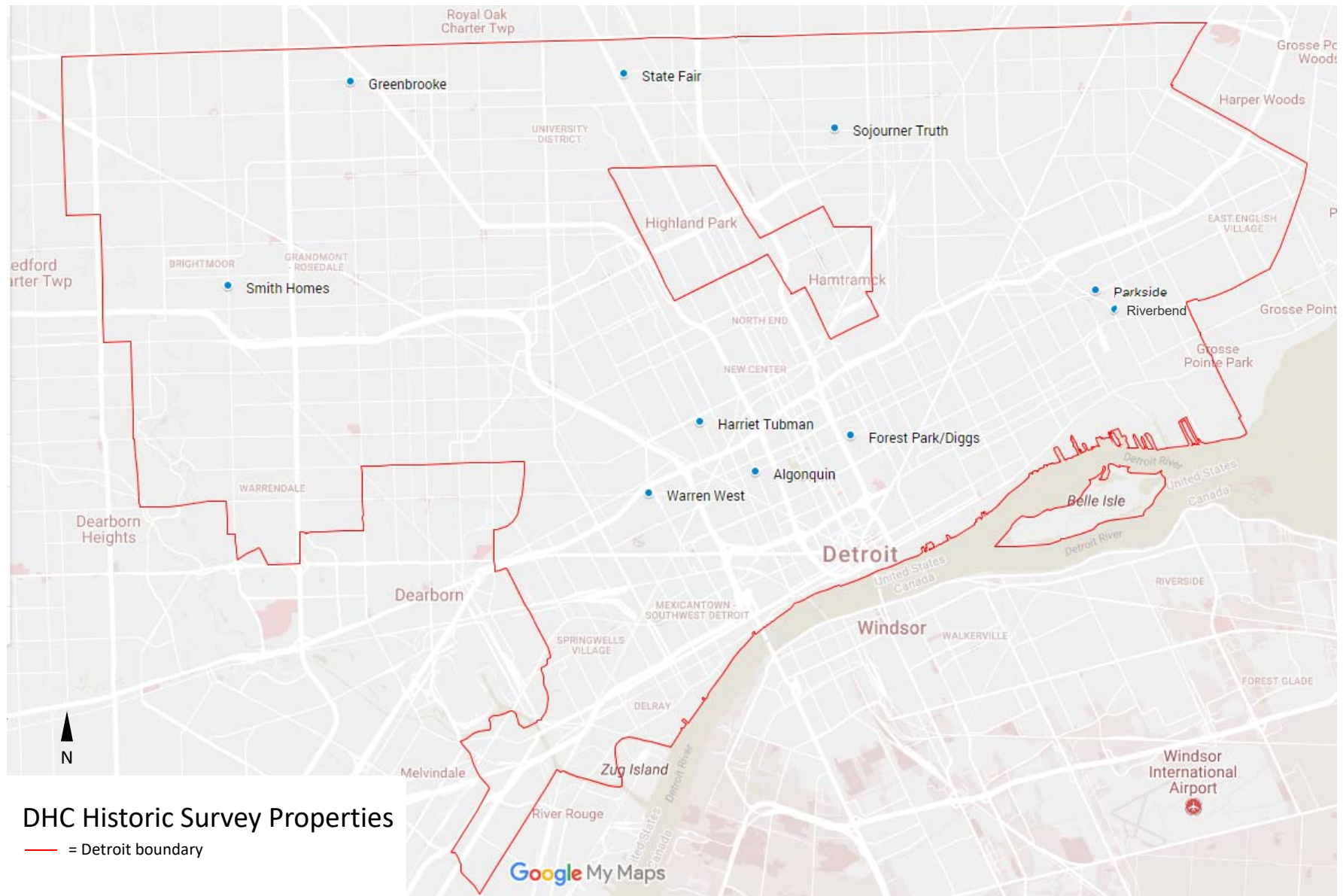
Planning Needs and Recommendations

Kraemer Design Group recommends that in order to encourage future preservation of the seven (7) recommended National Register-eligible survey sites, that the properties be designated historic districts by the City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board. This will encourage historically sensitive rehabilitation and discourage unnecessary demolition.

Preservation Issues and Threats

Kraemer Design Group noticed some DHC properties such as Parkside Homes, Sojourner Truth Homes, and the Forest Park Homes have a large number of vacant and deteriorated housing units. Investment by the DHC in the upkeep, maintenance and renovation of the deteriorated housing units is necessary to keep the integrity of these historic public housing sites intact.

Survey Maps





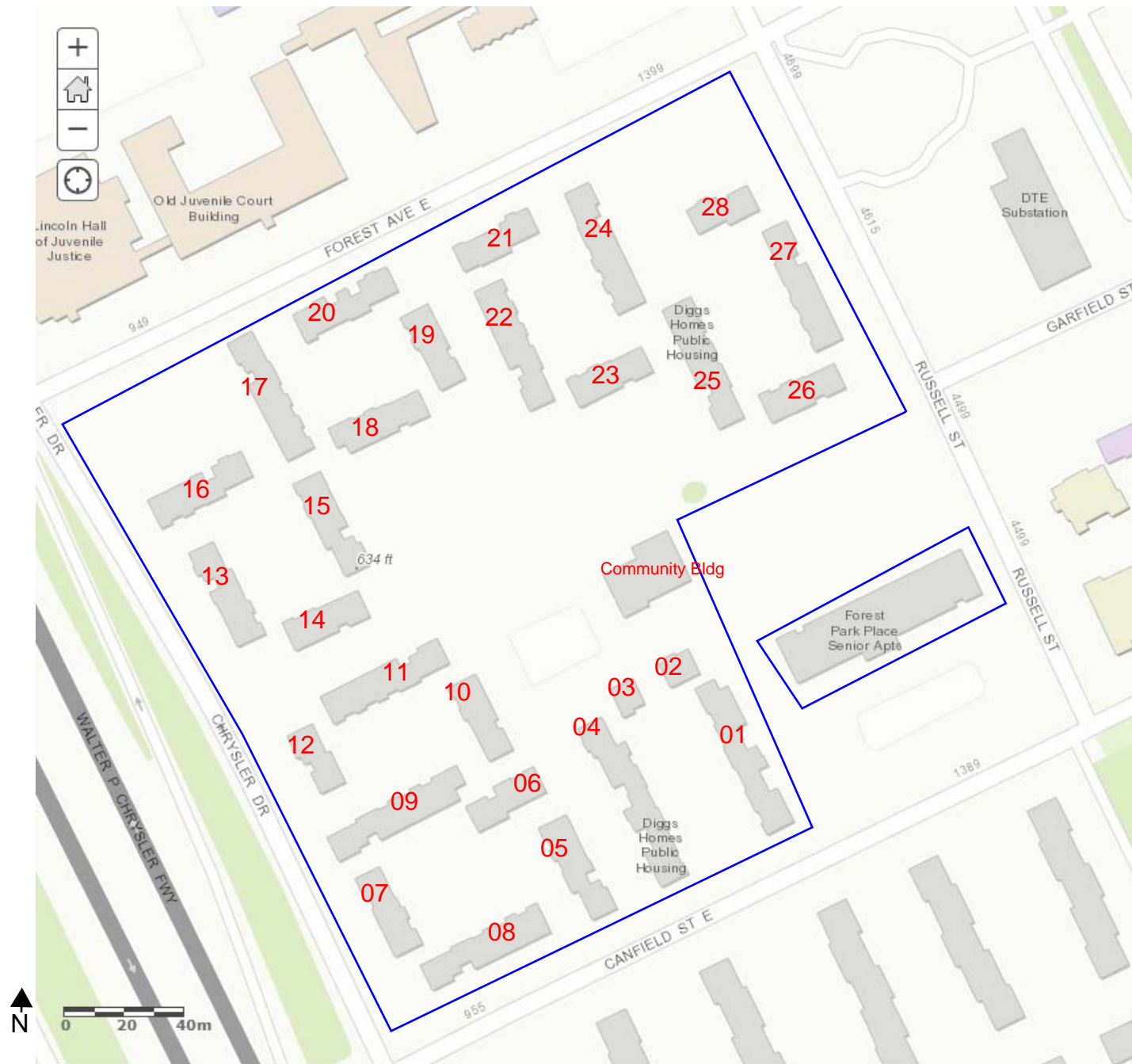
— = housing project boundary

Detroit Housing Commission

Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey

Algonquin Apartments - 4711 Trumbull Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County

Latonia Apartments - 1520 West Forest Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County



— = housing project boundary

Detroit Housing Commission
 Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
 Forest Park Senior Citizens Apartments - 1311 East Canfield Street, Detroit, Wayne County
 Charles C. Diggs Sr. Terraces - 1311 East Canfield Street, Detroit, Wayne County



— = housing project boundary

Detroit Housing Commission
 Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
 Greenbrooke Manor - 19801 Greenfield Road, Detroit, Wayne County



Detroit Housing Commission
Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
Harriet Tubman Apartments -
2450 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit, Wayne County



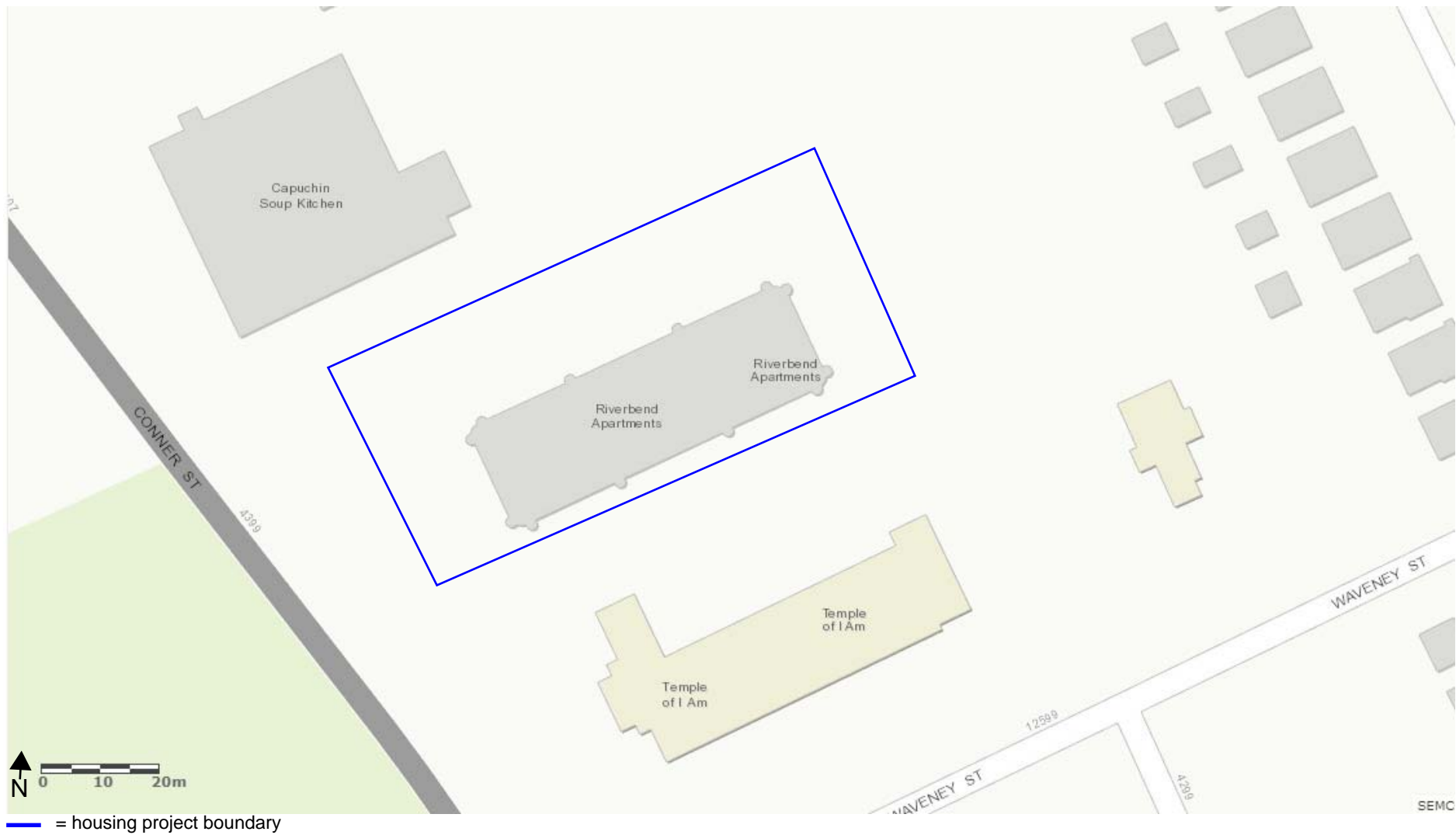
- = original buildings (1938)
- = housing project boundary

Detroit Housing Commission
 Historic Context and intensive Level Survey
 Parkside Homes - 12001 East Warren Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County



= original buildings (1938)
 = housing project boundary

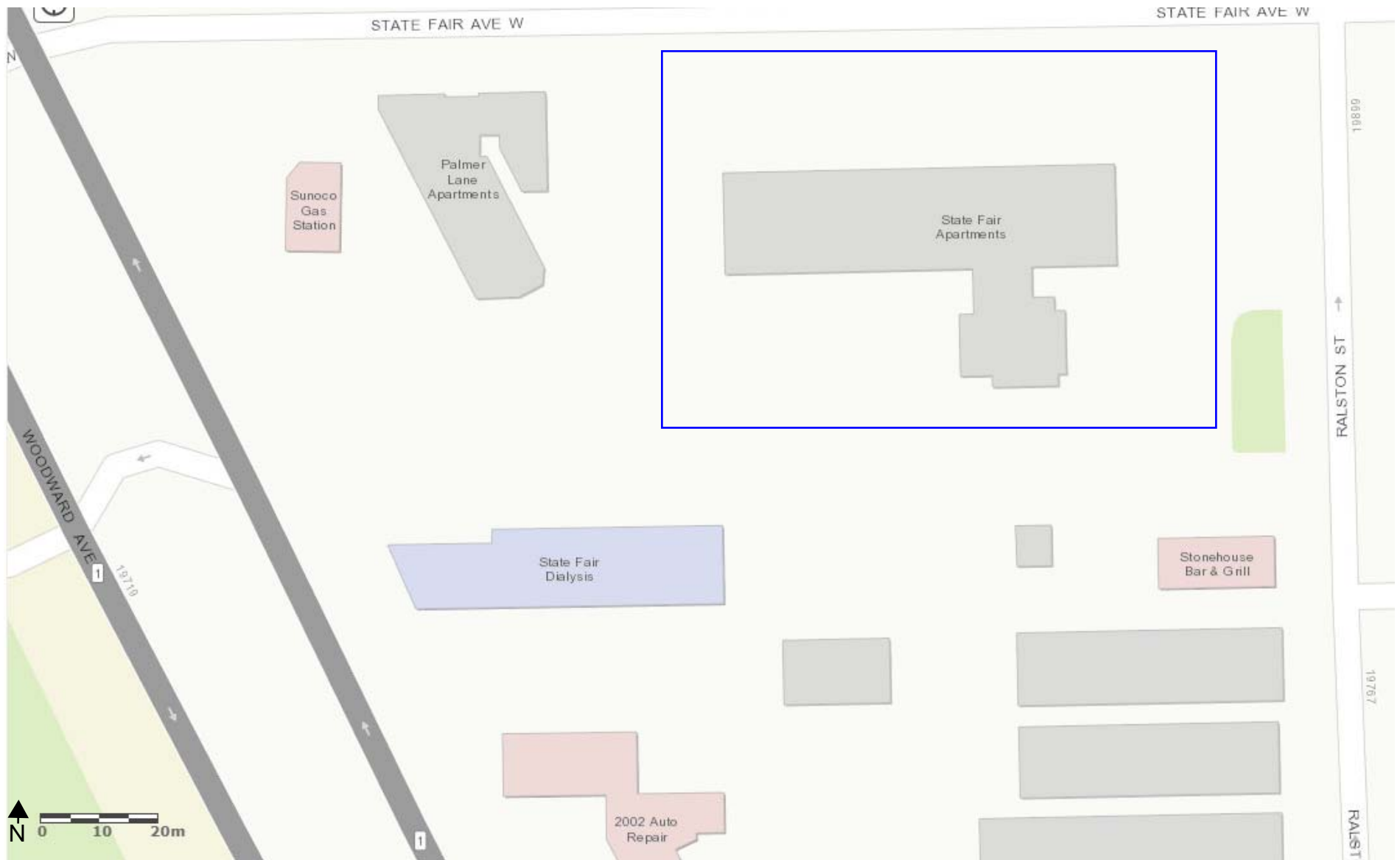
Detroit Housing Commission
 Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
 Parkside Homes - 12001 East Warren Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County



Detroit Housing Commission
 Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
 Riverbend Tower Apartments - 4386 Conner Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County



- = original buildings (1941)
- = housing project boundary



— = housing project boundary

Detroit Housing Commission
 Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
 State Fair Apartments - 1231 West State Fair Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County



— = housing project boundary

Detroit Housing Commission
Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey
Warren West Apartments - 4100 West Warren Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County

Section II

Descriptive Overview

Each of the ten sites of multifamily public housing in the scope of this project has distinctive characteristics and distinctive location, land uses and building design. The only consistent descriptive statement to be made for the ten sites is that they are all located on flat topography. A brief summary description for each site is as follows:

1. Sojourner Truth Homes – Located in the north-central area of the city of Detroit, the site is bounded by four main streets: East Nevada Street (to the south), Stockton Avenue (to the north), Fenelon Street (to the east) and Justine Street (to the west), creating a rectangle. The topography is flat, and mostly industrial properties surround the site. To the north, across Stockton Street, is Krainz Park which contains a school building (Legacy Charter Academy). The Sojourner Truth Homes site is isolated from other homes or commercial businesses.
2. Forest Park Senior Citizens Apartments/Charles C. Diggs Terraces – Located in the east side area of Detroit, the site is bounded by four main streets, East Canfield Street, East Forest Avenue, Russel Street and the Chrysler Freeway (Interstate-75) service drive. The site is almost a square-shape and is sited where turn-of-the-century single family homes once stood. To the east on Russell Street is the historic Sweetest Heart of Mary Catholic Church, and to the south is the Forest Park townhouses. To the north of the site is the Wayne County Juvenile Justice Center and to the west is the Chrysler Freeway (Interstate-75).
3. Harriet Tubman Apartments – Located on the north-end neighborhood of Detroit, the site is bounded by Ferry Park Avenue to the south, Fourteenth Street to the east, West Grand Boulevard to the north and Fifteenth Street to the west. The site is almost square and includes structures that are not part of the DHC-owned Harriet Tubman Apartments. There are two small structures at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Ferry Park Avenue and there is a 1920s-era apartment building at the northwest corner of the site. West Grand Boulevard is an eight-lane divided road that is mostly lined with commercial structures and former multifamily housing that are in various states of re-use and vacancy.
4. Parkside Homes – Located on the east side of Detroit, the site is bounded by East Warren Avenue to the south, Conner Street to the west, Frankfort Street to the north and Gray Street to the east. To the north of Frankfort Street is Chandler Park, one of the largest public parks in Detroit. To the east of Gray Street is an extension of Chandler Park, mainly just a grassy field. To the south of East Warren Avenue and west of Conner Street are single family homes, commercial businesses and strip malls.
5. Riverbend Tower Apartments – Located on the east side of Detroit, just a mile away from the Parkside Homes site is the Riverbend Tower Apartments. Bounded by Conner Street to the west, Waveney to the south, Algonquin Street to the east and East Canfield Street to the north. The Riverbend Tower Apartment building faces north and the site includes a parking lot on the north and west sides of the building.
6. John W. Smith Homes – Located in northwest Detroit, the site is bounded by Evergreen Road to the east, Kendall Street to the south, Kentfield Street to the west and Lyndon Street to the north. The site of the John W. Smith Homes includes several courts and extensions of the main street, Crescent Drive. The site is entered from Evergreen Road and the entryway flows to Crescent Drive which curves from north to south. To the north, east and west are single family homes. To the south is Rosedale Park Baptist Church.

7. State Fair Apartments – The State Fair Apartment building is located at the north edge of central Detroit. The site is bounded by West State Fair Avenue to the north, Ralston Street to the east, and former alley divisions to the south and west. Nearby to the west is Detroit’s main street, Woodward Avenue. The former Michigan State Fairgrounds are located directly across West State Fair Avenue to the north, and mostly vacant property surrounds the site today. The Palmer Lane Apartment building is to the west, and a former bar (now vacant) is located to the southeast of the site.
8. Warren West Apartments – Located on the west side of Detroit, the site is unique for its location adjacent to the Edsel Ford Freeway (Interstate 94). To the south the property is bounded by West Warren Avenue, to the east is West Grand Boulevard, and to the west is Scotten Avenue. The Edsel Ford Freeway is at the northern boundary of the site. The building is mostly surrounded by vacant land, and vacant single-family homes to the south. To the east are sparsely occupied single family homes facing West Grand Boulevard. There is a former gas station to the south of the property.
9. Algonquin and Latonia Apartments – Located on the near-west side of Detroit, this site is approximately three miles from downtown Detroit. The Algonquin Apartment Building faces Trumbull Avenue, and is adjacent to another multi-family property to the north, and a vacant lot to the south. The Latonia Apartment Building faces West Forest Avenue and is bounded by an alley to the west, a vacant lot to the east, and parking lot and vacant property to the north. The surrounding neighborhood includes multi-family homes and apartment buildings.
10. Greenbrooke Manor – Located on the west side of Detroit, the Greenbrooke Manor Apartments parking lot is entered from Greenfield Road (to the east). Pembroke Avenue is to the north and an alley is to the west side of the property. To the south is a fence line between the Greenbrooke Manor Apartments and a church building to the south. A large church is at the northeast corner of Pembroke Avenue and Greenfield Road, and single family homes face both Pembroke Avenue and Greenfield Road to the east. Single family homes sit to the west of the property.

Historical Context

I. Summary Paragraph

The Detroit Housing Commission (DHC) was established in 1933. For 85 years, the DHC has operated and developed low-income, public housing projects in Detroit. Detroit's population began to skyrocket in the beginning of the 20th century, and during World War II, a lack of available materials to build permanent housing coupled with an influx of war workers caused a housing crisis in Detroit. The DHC changed focus to the task of developing temporary defense housing projects during this time. Post-war, the DHC resumed the construction of permanent housing. A history of the DHC, and an overview of its pre-1980 architecture and architects, provide insights into the social history of public housing, practices of community planning, and the evolution of low-income housing strategies in Detroit.

II. The History of Multi-Family Public Housing in the United States

The history of public housing in the United States has origins in a series of significant government initiatives begun in the 1930s to combat the converging problems of unemployment, expanding slums, and insufficient housing during the Great Depression. Additional government programs in the early 1940s provided housing for defense industry workers and their families in overcrowded manufacturing centers during World War II. Nearly 700 large-scale public housing projects, built either as "low-rent" housing during the Great Depression or "defense" housing during World War II continue to operate today within the federal public housing program. These projects comprise approximately 125,000 dwelling units and are in the inventories of nearly 250 local Public Housing Authorities in 39 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.¹

Federal public housing programs have been well documented, and well researched in the last three decades. Entire books, reports and online resources have detailed the background of federal housing reform, and the story of its creation. The most relevant to this report is the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing nomination titled "*Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949.*" This was a comprehensive history completed in 2004 authored by Paul R. Lusignan of the National Park Service along with Judith Robinson and Laura Bobeczko of Robinson & Associates Inc., and Jeffrey Shrimpton, of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers. Their Multiple Property Listing nomination details the evolution of federal housing programs, the structures, and the individuals behind the initiatives. Housing reform and the related national legislation have a complex and detailed history; this report will summarize and cite portions of the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing form briefly here.

¹ Lusignan, Paul R., Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko, and Jeffrey Shrimpton. *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing*, "Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949." National Park Service, December 1, 2004, Section E, Page 3.

Federal Housing Reform in the United States

Prior to the 1930s, the federal government was largely uninvolved in the housing debate. Its role in providing for the social welfare of its citizens was limited, with the expectation that local governments and private charities should address housing. Yet the need for better housing was imperative. State, local, and private housing measures since the mid-nineteenth century had neither improved the dreadful living conditions in the slums, nor provided a substantial increase in the supply of adequate new housing available to the poor.

Agitation for reform in American housing, particularly as it applied to accommodations for the poorer segments of the population, generated considerable debate during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Federal efforts, however, to eliminate the nation's slums and to replace them with decent, low-rent housing for the urban poor did not begin until spurred on by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Desperate to boost the stagnant construction industry and to create jobs, the government cleared slums and built housing under President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal plan. The New Deal plan sought to stimulate decent housing construction and created two housing agencies to implement its new policy.

A number of factors contributed to the development of public housing in America, some of which had been brewing for more than half a century. The years of 1890-1920 were named the Progressive Era; a period of widespread social activism and political reform across the United States. Progressive Era activists sought to improve standards of construction, health, and safety and these aims were clearly incorporated into the designs of new housing.²

The Garden City movement, with its ideal of building new towns for the future, spread from Britain at the turn-of-the-century, and gained many advocates in the United States, who honed their skills in the government-built defense housing projects of World War I and the residential suburban developments of the 1920s. Also, the rational-functional forms of European Modernist housing estates and the work of European Modernist architects became well-known in the United States through the travels of important American writers, and through the Modern Architecture exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1932.³

Regulation

A product of the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the nineteenth century, slums appeared in cities throughout the nation. Social pathologies attributed to the slums – poverty, disease, crime, promiscuity, delinquency – encouraged early reform efforts. This degraded environment seemed to threaten the physical and moral welfare of its residents, and of society as a whole. Cultural differences further provoked concern, as massive waves of immigrants, mostly impoverished and unskilled in industry or modern agriculture, filled the slums of the northeast and north-central industrial centers. The perception arose that these newcomers, if left unassimilated in their surroundings, could erode traditional American values and destroy the existing social order.

² Lusignan, Paul R., Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko, and Jeffrey Shrimpton. *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing*. "Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949." National Park Service, December 1, 2004, Section E, Pages 3-15.

³ Ibid.

Some attempts were made to regulate minimum acceptable building standards to restrict the construction of the worst types of slum housing. The legislature of the state of New York made several attempts to amend its Tenement House Law to make it a more effective weapon against slums. In New York state, the National Housing Association was formed in 1910 and it published a “Model Housing Law” to encourage other states to enact municipal housing codes. Still, no mechanism was yet in place to ensure that housing built to these proposed standards would become available to the poor.⁴

A National Reform Movement

As states dealt with the inadequacies of their tenement housing legislation and the model tenement movement struggled to provide a trickle of decent housing for the poor, reformers of the Progressive Era focused national attention on the housing problem. Before World War I, the settlement house movement, inspired by Jane Addams in Chicago, Robert Woods in Boston, and Lillian Wald in New York, brought the problems of immigrants and the slums to the attention of middle-class America. Settlement workers provided educational and social services to immigrants, raised money for parks and libraries in the slums, and lobbied for tenement housing reform.

Mobilization for World War I led to the first federal intervention in constructing housing, albeit modest. Created by Congress in 1918 to implement housing programs to address the wartime shortage, the United States Housing Corporation (USHC) and the United States Shipping Board Emergency Fleet Corporation (EFC) built fifty-five housing developments for 95,000 wartime workers and their families. These developments were decidedly built along the lines of the Garden City models. The USHC directly built and oversaw the construction and management of housing for workers at arsenals and navy yards. These two important precedents established the granting of federal loans to private housing corporations and the use of direct public construction to meet housing needs.⁵

The bursting of the housing bubble of the 1920s was a major contributor to the onset of the Great Depression. By “the summer of 1932, as many as one thousand mortgage defaults were being recorded every day, and by early 1933 about half of the nation’s home mortgages were in default...”⁶ Millions of Americans lost their homes and millions more were in danger of default. The construction industry ground to a halt and the building trades were hit particularly hard. Shortly after taking office in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s administration initiated a series of programs designed to combat the related issues of unemployment, housing shortages, and the so-called slums. The National Housing Act was signed into law by President Roosevelt in June, 1934, in order to “encourage improvement in housing standards and conditions, to provide a system of mutual mortgage insurance, and for other purposes.” The law created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC).⁷ It was FDR’s hope that the law would spur employment and encourage

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Mills, Ruth and Deborah Goldstein. National Historic Landmark nomination, “*Lafayette Park*.” Detroit, Michigan, September, 2013, p. 22.

⁶ Freund, David. “*Colored Property: State Policy & White Racial Politics in Suburban America*.” Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 2007, p. 110.

⁷ From the website: The Living New Deal, accessed July 3, 2018. <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/national-housing-act-1934/>

the construction of new homes as well as address the fact that adequate housing is a significant societal need.⁸

The Public Works Administration (PWA) Direct-Build Housing program was inaugurated in 1934; working through local housing agencies, the PWA would acquire land, clear so-called blighted areas, and construct and run new housing. A significant feature of the program was the provision of housing for African Americans, with around one-third of units designated for African American tenants, either in African American-only or segregated buildings.⁹ In 1937, the federal Housing Act was administered by the Public Works Administration (PWA). The most significant activity in multi-family housing in Detroit during the 1930s and 1940s came from public housing initiatives. These were made possible by the PWA Direct-Build Housing program. In Detroit there were 1,476 direct-built PWA housing units constructed at the Parkside and Brewster housing projects.

Wagner-Steagall Housing Bill/United States Housing Act of 1937

Congressman Henry Steagall of Alabama, chairman of the House Committee on Banking and Currency, co-sponsored the Wagner Bill in 1937. Although opponents of public housing testified before the House Committee, there were many public housing advocates supporting the bill. After two years, the Committee relented and recommended that the bill be brought before the House for a vote. It passed the house and President Roosevelt signed the bill into law as the United States Housing Act of 1937.

Congress authorized the USHA to enter into local contracts of not more than \$5 million in 1937, and up to \$7.5 million for the next two years. Additionally, the local government was also required to make a small contribution to the operation of the local public housing authority, equal to 20 percent of the federal contract. The local governments then established an “Authority” such as the Philadelphia Housing Authority to enact the Housing Act of 1937. The local Authority fostered public support for its programs and the new housing projects, taking opportunity to educate the public, potential residents, neighbors, and influential officials in their programs using media, printed materials and public tours.

National Defense Act

During the year and a half prior to the United States’ entry into World War II in December, 1941, an estimated three million war workers and their families – a total of about eight to ten million Americans – migrated to jobs in the nation’s 200 or so industrial centers. Approximately 1.7 million of these workers found accommodations in existing housing. This left 1.3 million dependent on new construction. Throughout 1940 and 1941, Congress passed a number of laws designed to increase public and private housing construction to meet this staggering demand. Congress included responsibilities for the United States Housing Authority under the National Defense Act in 1940. Congress enacted Public Law 671 which extended the 1937 Housing Act to assist local agencies in building housing for those engaged in national defense.¹⁰ Title II of Public Law 671 authorized USHA to assist the more than 500 local housing authorities and cooperate with the Navy and War Departments to make “necessary housing available for persons engaged in national defense activities.”¹¹ The act waived the low-income requirement for

⁸ FDR Presidential Library & Museum; <https://fdrlibrary.org/housing>

⁹ Lusignan, Paul R., Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko, and Jeffrey Shrimpton. “MPDF, Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949.” National Park Service, December 1, 2004, E-23-24.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ “Defense Housing.” *Architectural Forum*, 73 (November 1940), p. 441. From Lusignan, et. al.

tenancy and made defense housing available to all workers facing the housing shortage. The National Defense Act gave no appropriations for public housing, and all low-rent public housing projects that were in various stages of planning or construction were to be reassessed.

The Lanham Act of 1940, introduced by Republican Congressman Fritz Lanham of Texas, provided \$150 million to the Federal Works Administration to provide federally built housing quickly and cheaply in congested defense industry centers. Through the Lanham Act, the federal government built approximately 625,000 units of housing, including temporary construction such as plywood dormitories and trailers. Although many Lanham Act projects were managed by local housing authorities, the Act specifically retained project ownership by the federal government. It also specifically forbade the use of such housing after the war as subsidized housing for low income families. Over 24,000 dwelling units in 82 projects built under the terms of the Lanham Act were transferred to local housing authorities for use in their public housing programs. Housing authorities were required to pay net operating receipts to the federal government over a 40-year period.

Federal Public Housing Practices

In the post-World War II era, public housing was initiated under Title III of the 1949 Housing Act, which defined Public Housing as housing that was built, operated and owned by a local government's designated housing authority. Housing was typically provided at nominal rent to those in need. The 1949 Housing Act authorized funds to localities to assist in slum clearance and urban redevelopment, new construction, and activities not directly related to housing construction (open space land, neighborhood facilities, and basic water and sewer facilities).¹²

The Housing Act of 1949 was controversial in many communities, and backlash against the program put progressives on the defensive. The National Association of Home Builders and the U. S. Savings and Loan League mobilized local opposition by sending out "kits" to their members with pre-designed advertisements for local newspapers reading, "Can you afford to pay somebody else's rent?"¹³ The result was an avalanche of local referenda, and voters across the country blocked new construction. In California, Proposition 10 made all new projects contingent on local referenda, and Los Angeles voters threw out their mayor over his support for public housing. In other cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Philadelphia, race played a major role in the development of new public housing. Despite a massive postwar housing shortage, public housing supporters struggled to keep the Housing Act of 1949 funded in the early 1950s.¹⁴

The Housing Act of 1954 amended the 1949 Housing Act to provide funding, not just for new construction and demolition, but also for the rehabilitation and conservation of deteriorating areas. This began a gradual shift in emphasis from new construction to conservation, now reflected in housing

¹² Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; https://www.huduser.gov/portal/hudtimeline_1940.html

¹³ Hunt, D. Bradford. "How Did Public Housing Survive the 1950s?" *Journal of Policy History*, Cambridge University Press, Volume 17, Number 2, 2005, p. 193.

¹⁴ Ibid.

policies that fund rehabilitation. With the 1954 amendment, the term “urban renewal” was introduced to refer to public efforts to revitalize aging and decaying inner cities and some suburban communities.¹⁵

The Housing Act of 1956 added special provisions under Sections 203 and 207 including public housing programs to give preference to the elderly, and amended the 1949 Act to authorize relocation payments to persons displaced by urban renewal. Federal involvement in housing rapidly expanded to include the financing of new construction, measures to preserve existing housing resources, and urban renewal.

Executive Order 11063, Equal Opportunity in Housing, issued in 1962, represented the first major federal effort to apply civil rights to housing. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 assured nondiscrimination in federally assisted housing programs. Equality in housing opportunity was legislated by Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Fair Housing Act, which prohibited discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing. The Housing and Urban Development Act (HUD) of 1965 created HUD as a cabinet-level agency and initiated a leased housing program to make privately-owned housing available to low-income families.

The 1970s brought new housing initiatives including the following policies: elimination of the hazards of lead-based paint poisoning in existing housing, protecting the rights of consumers in the areas of interstate land sales and real estate settlement procedures, discouraging geographical discrimination in the mortgage lending industry, providing communities with resources to address a wide range of unique development issues, and to supply rental subsidies to eligible tenants residing in newly constructed, rehabilitated and existing rental and cooperative apartment projects (the Section 8 Voucher program).

In January 1973, President Nixon declared an 18-month moratorium on the approvals for subsidized housing programs, including Sections 235 and 236. The moratorium also applied to funding for urban renewal, Model Cities, and FHA programs. The moratorium was rescinded in late 1974.

HUD’s Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) was created in 1973 and tasked with conducting research on priority housing and community development issues. Features of PD&R’s new research program included the American Housing Survey, a regularly maintained database on the characteristics of the nation’s housing stock, and the Partnership for Advancing Technologies in Housing Initiatives that identified techniques for building more affordable, durable, disaster-resistant, safe and energy-efficient housing. PD&R’s vehicle for distributing research and information was launched in 1978. During the 1970s, PD&R generated a wealth of housing studies including examples such as: *“Summary Report of the Evaluation of Section 8 Existing and New Construction Programs.”*¹⁶

The 1980s saw significant measures to ensure housing opportunities for all with new rental programs, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHC), and changes in rules governing thrift institutions. Budgetary constraints eliminated Section 8 New Construction and Substantial Rehabilitation programs, but the Section 8 Voucher Demonstration, the Housing Development Action Grant, and Rental Rehabilitation programs were implemented by the Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983. The scope of fair housing provision of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 was expanded, giving HUD additional enforcement responsibilities.

¹⁵ Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R). Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; https://www.huduser.gov/portal/hudtimeline_1940.html

¹⁶ Ibid.

The 1990s saw several crises arise related to the cost of expiring Section 8 contracts, and deteriorating properties. Several new programs were designed to ensure survival of affordable units and the viability of subsidized housing programs. For example, the Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990 was designed to maintain the supply of affordable housing by offering project incentives to preserve low-income rental properties. The high cost of FHA-insured mortgages made HUD Section 8 subsidies extremely expensive. The Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act of 1997 restructured these mortgages in order to maintain affordable Section 8 subsidies. HUD was also beset by budgetary pressures and streamlined the department through significant staff cuts, reorganizing operations and program consolidation.

During the 2000s, HUD worked with public agencies, private partners, nonprofit, faith-based, and community organizations to expand the availability of affordable housing, to improve structural and living conditions in HUD-insured and assisted rental housing projects. America's homeownership rate reached a new record-high of 69 percent in 2004. HUD worked with public agencies, private partners, nonprofit, faith-based, and community organizations to expand the availability of affordable housing. HUD reformed outdated and needlessly complex regulatory requirements under the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA). Housing prices peaked in early 2005 and began to decline in the following year. Increased foreclosure rates among U. S. homeowners led to a crisis that reverberated throughout the nation's mortgage markets. The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA) strengthened and modernized the regulation of government-sponsored lenders such as "Fannie Mae" and "Freddie Mac" and the Federal Home Loan Banks. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program was established to assist communities suffering from foreclosures and abandonment.

Today, HUD continues to work with public agencies, private partners, nonprofit, faith-based and community organizations to expand the availability of affordable housing, to improve living conditions in HUD-insured and assisted rental housing projects, to promote wider affordable rental housing opportunities, and to stabilize and sustain communities.¹⁷

III. Public Housing in Michigan

With the availability of federal funds for the construction of public housing, a central state housing agency would be created as the conduit for these funds. The state agency would delegate to local housing boards or commissions the tasks of land acquisition, construction of housing, and administration of the program funds. The State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966 (Act 346) was the enabling legislation under which the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) was created. MSHDA is a decentralized agency that follows a board to direct its policies and programs. The organization distributes federal dollars for housing and has the power to sell tax-exempt bonds, using the proceeds for financing low-income housing and subsidies.

Prior to Act 346 and the creation of MSHDA, Detroit's Housing Commission was the first local housing commission in the State of Michigan when it was established in 1933. Assistant Corporation Counsel Vance Ingalls brought the Detroit Housing Bill to the state legislature as the enabling statute in

¹⁷ Ibid.

November 1933.¹⁸ This enabling legislation laid the foundation for other municipalities to form housing commissions across the state, though during this time the need for such agencies was concentrated in the metro-Detroit region. The next municipality to establish a housing commission was likely Dearborn, with mention of its activities in a 1939 *Free Press* article.¹⁹ The City of Hamtramck created a commission at least as early as 1940, when a *Free Press* article announced that, “\$1,263,000 [was] allocated by U.S. Authorities,” to the Hamtramck Housing Commission to build a low-income housing project.²⁰ The state of Michigan now has over 130 housing commissions.

Governor G. Mennen Williams’ Michigan Committee on Civil Rights (MCCR) issued a report in 1948 that characterized the state of civil rights throughout Michigan. As part of this report, public housing in Michigan was described as “an unfortunate chapter” in the state’s history, citing the discrimination and segregation of projects leading to “mass demonstrations” which were often violent.²¹ Michigan’s issues with public housing were centered on where the largest concentration of public housing existed, in Detroit.

IV. The History of the Development of the Detroit Housing Commission

In the early 20th century, Detroit’s population boom was causing a housing crisis in the city. Overcrowding and slum conditions were rampant, “darkness, damp, dirt, foul air, windowless rooms, filthy alleys, unsanitary and overcrowded homes, tenements and lodging houses. Detroit has all these.”²² In the summer of 1910, the first housing commission was organized to study and help improve the conditions of the housing for the poor.²³ The first board of directors, elected September 1910, included James S. Holden as Chairman, Tracey McGregor as vice-Chairman, Charles Moore as treasurer, and Rev. Luther Lovejoy as secretary. Other members of the board included Abner E. Larned, Albert A. Albrecht, William B. Stratton, Henry M. Leland and Rabi Leo M. Franklin. Detroit’s population would nearly double in the years 1910-1920. Sensing that the rapid population growth would exacerbate the problems already present in poor housing, the commission studied the conditions and lobbied for the implementation of health and building regulations. Secretary Lovejoy once explained:

“[...] there are practically no legal regulations in our city determining the proportions of a lot that may be covered by a building erected for human habitation, nothing to forbid interior dark and unventilated bedrooms and living rooms, nothing to forbid cellar tenements, to provide for paving or drainage of yards [...] for toilet accommodations or bathing facilities, nothing to prevent congestion of population and overcrowding of rooms [...]”²⁴

This early housing board was active throughout the early to mid-1910s, but appears to have ceased its activities by the 1920s.

¹⁸ “Housing Bill in Lansing, but 60-Day Delay is Seen.” Detroit Housing Commission. Nov. 28, 1933.

¹⁹ “Dearborn O.K.’s Housing Plans.” *Detroit Free Press*. Nov. 30, 1939.

²⁰ “Hamtramck wins cash for housing.” *Detroit Free Press*. March 24, 1940.

²¹ Fine, Sydney. “Expanding the Frontiers of Civil Rights”: Michigan, 1948-1968. Wayne State University Press. 2017.

²² “Housing plans are mapped out.” *Detroit Free Press*. Dec 9, 1910.

²³ “Housing body chooses board.” *Detroit Free Press*. Sep 24, 1910.

²⁴ Ibid.

Public housing in Detroit began with the availability of federal assistance for slum clearance and low-rent housing. In 1933, the city was allocated \$3,200,000 by the Federal Emergency Housing Corp. for these purposes. The next day, Mayor John W. Smith established the Detroit Housing Commission to administer the funds and oversee the development of low-cost housing. To gain approval for the Commission, the authorization bill from the Michigan legislature gave the governor power to appoint members to the commission. The commission was, originally, to be made up of five members with no interest in property or materials for the development of housing, with six-year terms. Mayor Smith's appointees to the Commission were confirmed by Governor William A. Comstock with "minor changes."²⁵ The enabling legislation also gave the commission the powers of eminent domain. Thus, in early 1934 the DHC officially began a process of blight study, condemnation, and acquisition of land for sites to become future housing development.

The DHC's first director-secretary was Josephine Gomon (1892-1975), a political, labor, and social activist, praised as "one of the most influential women in the city's history."²⁶ Her work and activism for liberal causes and public affairs include being one of the national founders of the Planned Parenthood League. Gomon was an "architect of the New Deal" and a close friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, Detroit labor leader Walter P. Reuther, and former Detroit mayor and Michigan governor Frank Murphy. Gomon was well-connected in Washington D.C., and regularly traveled there to secure support and funding for the DHC's projects. Other members of the board disapproved of her involvement with officials in Washington and with the press, as she frequently wrote to and spoke with newspapers.

Gomon served as director-secretary of the DHC until January 1938, when she was pushed out of her position. The re-organization came despite Gomon being regarded as "one of the most capable authorities on housing in the country," by Nathan Straus, of the United States Housing Agency, who had just named Gomon to his committee on the advancement of the entire national housing program. After the re-organization, Carl L. Bradt was appointed as the executive secretary and director. Bradt resigned in March 1940, and was replaced by George Edwards, an organizer for the United Auto Workers-Congress of Industrial Organizations (U.A.W.-C.I.O.). The DHC's 5-member board served two-year terms without monetary compensation until 1974.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the creation of multi-family housing in Detroit was mostly driven by public housing initiatives supported by the federal government.²⁷ The first public housing projects in Detroit were Public Works Administration (PWA) projects: the Brewster Homes and Parkside Homes, each completed in 1938 under the direction of Gomon at the DHC. In fact, one cause of the animosity leading to Gomon's removal from the DHC was that when funding was denied by the federal government for the Parkside and Brewster projects, Gomon went "over the heads" of the commission and visited Eleanor Roosevelt at the White House to secure the \$10,000,000 allotment.²⁸ The PWA, through the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act of 1935, could award grants to local housing agencies that covered 45% of the project cost. The PWA would then loan the remaining 55%. The Brewster Homes (now demolished) was the first planned public housing project in

²⁵ Hyde, Charles K., Parkside Homes and Addition. HABS No. MI-409.

²⁶ Tyson, Remer, and Louis Heldman. "Josephine Gomon, Shaper of Detroit History, Dies at 83." *Detroit Free Press*. Nov. 15, 1975.

²⁷ Mills, Ruth. "Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 1892-1970." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2017.

²⁸ "Praises Work of Mrs. Gomon." *Detroit Free Press*. Jan. 5, 1938.

Detroit and the first publicly-funded housing project exclusively for African Americans in the nation. The project was to be built in the Hastings Street slum clearance area, and the low-rise apartment buildings were designed by a Detroit firm, Harley, Ellington & Day. The Parkside project, located on an undeveloped 31-acre site next to Chandler Park, was the “white counterpart” to the Brewster project and did not require any condemnation or slum clearance. By 1941, additions were already built for the Brewster Homes with 240 new units, and Parkside received an additional 355 units.

The PWA program ended in 1937, however federal public housing assistance was continued under the Housing Acts of 1934 and 1937. In 1939, the Charles Street Housing Project (now demolished) was opened in northeast Detroit and became the city’s third housing project. The project cost was estimated at \$2,248,063 with 90% of the funds borrowed from the United States Housing Authority (USHA). The 25-acre site was located between Charles Street, Talbot, Mound Road and Buffalo Avenue. The project consisted of 51 residential buildings with a total of 440 units, and four service buildings.

By the early 1940s, the U.S. began to prepare for the growing likelihood of its involvement in World War II. In June of 1940, Congress enacted Public Law 671 which extended the Housing Act of 1937 to include the building of housing for workers engaged in national defense.²⁹ The influx of war workers to Detroit was estimated to add an additional 350,000 to the population between September 1942 and July 1943. The director-secretary of the Detroit Housing Commission at this time was Charles F. Edgecomb who faced substantial challenges in securing the materials to build the housing projects.

The DHC’s role during wartime was focused on dealing with the housing shortage crisis and finding temporary housing solutions. In Detroit, controversy about the site placement of projects due to racial biases and discrimination prevented the war housing program from seeing much success.³⁰ In 1942, John B. Blandford, Jr., of the National Housing Agency, hoped for an end to the unrest, “I am sure the patriotism of the citizens of Detroit will assert itself and that peaceful counsels will bring a speed end to a controversy [...] Detroit is making too important a contribution to the war effort to have its attention so diverted.”³¹ In the end, only two such DHC-built housing projects were authorized. The projects were to be segregated, one for whites (the John W. Smith Homes, opened in 1942) and one for African Americans (the Sojourner Truth Homes, opened in 1942). Segregation persisted as a long-running issue within Detroit’s public housing, however, and the controversy surrounding the Sojourner Truth project along with unequal access to employment, schools, goods and services for African Americans led to the Detroit Race Riot of 1943, in which 25 African Americans and 9 whites were killed. There were many factors that lead to the violence, chief among them being that black workers faced racism and discrimination at nearly every turn. The United Auto Workers (U.A.W.) – Congress of Industrial Organizations (C.I.O.) had committed to wiping out racial injustice and discrimination within and outside of its organization. Labor leader Walter P. Reuther took the podium in downtown Detroit during the riots to call for peace. Under Reuther’s leadership, the UAW-CIO would support the Civil Rights movement alongside Dr. Martin Luther King into the 1960s.

The inadequacy of housing accommodations for African Americans was drastic: the DHC reported 1,942 applications for war worker housing, 11,000 applicants for permanent low-rent housing, and yet only

²⁹ Lusignan, Paul R., Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko, and Jeffery Shrimpton. “MPDF, Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949,” National Park Service, December 1, 2004, E-54.

³⁰ “Housing Officials Reject Biracial Occupancy.” *Detroit Free Press*. April 30, 1943.

³¹ “Negroes Win U.S. Decision on Housing.” *Detroit Free Press*. March 7, 1942.

356 temporary war housing units under construction. Meanwhile, housing projects across the Detroit area had vacancies due to segregationist policies. At Willow Run, a white-only war housing development in Ypsilanti, Michigan, the project had 800 vacant units that they would not rent to black families.³² One of the African American workers at the Willow Run bomber factory, Howard Flowers, sued and won against the National Housing Agency and the Federal Public Housing Agency.³³ That year, black war workers and their families began to move in to Willow Run, one of the earliest victories in ending *de jure* racially restrictive housing in Michigan. In Hamtramck, the dispute on whether to admit African American tenants caused an injunction on the rental of units built for low-income families. Until the case could be tried, 22 units out of the 300 built were forced to sit idle costing the government \$770 monthly.³⁴

The DHC became a focal point of the fight for civil rights nationally when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chose Detroit as a “test city” to gain a “favorable decision outlawing discrimination” in Federal housing. The DHC had adopted a resolution in 1943, to “operate public housing so as not to change the racial characteristics of neighborhoods.”³⁵ The use of the word “neighborhoods” suggests that the DHC operated not only within the scope of its specific projects but the city as a whole. With this policy the DHC was thus perpetuating the practice of redlining, where neighborhoods with minority occupants were marked red on maps from the Home Owner’s Loan Corporation to denote them as high-risk. Redlined neighborhoods were denied services such as mortgage loans and home insurance. This racist and discriminatory practice meant that entire neighborhoods remained segregated and those neighborhoods occupied by black families were excluded from FHA-backed mortgages.

During the second world war, Director-Secretary Edgecomb claimed that none of Detroit’s planned war housing projects would be able to adhere to the 1943 racial separation resolution, and if it were to attempt integration, he feared it would lead to violence in turn hurting the entire public housing program.³⁶ When this policy was challenged in court in 1954, the resolution was changed to remove the explicit mention of race, and instead would “place tenants in projects in keeping with the law and Constitution and in the best interests of the community.”³⁷ Edward M. Turner, president of the Detroit Branch of the NAACP, excoriated this policy’s lack of a definition for what a community’s “best interests” were.³⁸ Only a few months later, an order was signed on June 22, 1954, by Chief Federal Judge Arthur F. Lederle who held that the DHC was in violation of the Constitution and laws of the United States and the agency must end the “character of the neighborhood” policy and the assignment of only white families to certain projects. The white-only projects to be integrated included Herman Gardens, Charles Terrace, John W. Smith and Parkside. The Jeffries project (now demolished) was opened that year as the first new inter-racial project, and the first existing DHC housing project to be integrated was Charles Terrace, nearly a year later. However, while public housing was integrated on paper, segregation persisted in

³² “Willow Run War Housing Surplus Seen.” *Detroit Free Press*. Jan. 24, 1944.

³³ “Willow Run and the National Housing Agency.” *The New York Age*. July 29, 1944.

³⁴ “Hamtramck Units Sit Idle.” *Detroit Free Press*. Oct. 23, 1943.

³⁵ Beckman, Frank. “High Court Ruling Recalls Lawsuit by Negroes Here.” *Detroit Free Press*. May 25, 1954.

³⁶Peterson, Sarah Jo. “Planning the Home Front: Building Bombers and Communities at Willow Run,” p. 243. University of Chicago Press 2013.

³⁷ See note 9 above.

³⁸ See note 9 above.

reality through *de facto* influences that impacted segregation not only in the housing projects, but across the metro-Detroit region as a whole.

Before the war, some of the DHC's planned permanent developments were put on hold. A 1941 article in the *Detroit Free Press* reported that the George Herman Gardens project at Joy and Southfield roads was planned to be completed in September 1942, to consist of 2,150 terrace homes and apartment units. Herman Gardens was completed by 1943 with only some delay but only 2,106 units. Appointed in 1948, James H. Inglis served as the director-secretary of the DHC. During these years, the DHC began to pick up the task of constructing permanent housing projects. The expansion of the Brewster Homes began construction in 1949. The addition, known as the Frederick B. Douglass housing project (now demolished), would occupy a site of former temporary war housing bounded by Wilkins, Beaubien, Vernor and Hastings. A development initially planned in 1941 was the Edward J. Jeffries project, which would require condemnation and acquisition of land. But the DHC could not begin soliciting bids for the construction of the Jeffries Homes until 1949. The project was not completed until 1955 but would have a total of 2,170 units.

In January 1950, Harry J. Durbin was appointed to the director-secretary position at DHC by the newly elected Mayor Albert E. Cobo. Durbin served in this position until his retirement on December 31, 1959. During this post-war era the DHC began to remove the temporary war housing projects.³⁹ The 1950s were a contentious period for Detroit's public housing program. The City, Mayor Cobo, Common Council, and the DHC were named as defendants in a Supreme Court case challenging the DHC's policy of segregation in public housing units. In 1950, the DHC was operating 22 permanent and temporary projects totaling 11,363 units. Of these, 8,221 units were white-occupied and 3,142 were black-occupied. After the federal order to integrate, the DHC abolished the separation of applications and eligibility lists by race, and all applicants were given their choice of housing projects.

With the completion of the Frederick Douglass Apartments and the Jeffries homes in 1955, Detroit would not see the construction of another low-rent family public housing project for another 17 years until the construction of the Forest Park Apartments. The Forest Park Apartments (1967) was part of a massive "eminent domain" land acquisition area that ran from the former "Paradise Valley" African American district to the Polish American district known as "Poletown." The demolition and displacement of people from these districts allowed for the construction of the federal interstate highway known as I-75 as well as DHC housing projects.

Mark K. Herley, who had been second-in-command at the DHC since 1944, was named director-secretary in December 1959 as Durbin's replacement. His tenure was short, however, and he returned to his assistant-director position in 1962 when Mayor Cavanaugh recommended Robert D. Knox to the director-secretary position.

The 1960s began a new period of inner-city planning and development known as urban renewal, in which local governments were granted federal dollars and the use of eminent domain to redevelop blighted areas. The ideas of urban renewal began in pre-war urban planning, with a focus on clearing "blight" and "slum" areas to revitalize and modernize cities. With the information collected in studies⁴⁰

³⁹ Classified Ad. "For Sale: Surplus Government Housing." *The Detroit Free Press*. October 19, 1955.

⁴⁰ Detroit City Planning Commission slum clearance studies were submitted with the application for PWA and Federal Housing Corp. funding in 1933. Additionally, the 1946 Detroit Plan identified sites targeted for renewal.

throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and with the support of the Housing Act of 1949, Detroit began to ramp up action on its urban renewal projects. Condemning, clearing and relocating households in urban renewal areas was administered by the Detroit Housing Commission, and in many cases the vacated land was then sold to private developers. The DHC sought to purchase large apartment buildings and homes for the relocation of people in the path of the planned freeways.⁴¹ University City, the Medical Center, and Lafayette Park were Detroit's largest renewal areas.

In February 1969, Director Knox resigned his position, under the pressure of criticism for raising the rent in the city's 8,200 public housing units. Tenants of DHC's public housing projects were outraged with the raise in rent while experiencing continual maintenance problems and began to withhold rent in protest. The rent strike lasted through midsummer and fall of 1969. Conrad Mallett, a former police officer, teacher, and youth employment supervisor, took over as the director following Knox's resignation and became the DHC's first African American director. At this time, the city was preparing to open 1,200 new low-income public housing units with an additional 900 under construction.

Many of these planned new units were likely part of the city's "turnkey" program. The turnkey program became popular during the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was first introduced by HUD during the Johnson Administration in 1966 and was argued to be far more expeditious than the conventional development of public housing. Through the turnkey program, a private developer would renovate a structure and sell it to the local housing authority (DHC) for leasing to low-income senior citizens. Lee Plaza on West Grand Boulevard, the Wolverine Hotel downtown, and Temple Towers near the Masonic Temple were some of the DHC's turnkey projects. The projects were purchased entirely through PHA federal funds. Although a few projects were completed in Detroit through the turnkey program, it did not live up to its efficiency expectations and eventually ended. DHC records indicate that in 1968 and 1969, there were eleven turnkey projects in the works, either planned, under construction, or completed. By 1971, according to DHC status reports, many of the turnkey developments were running into problems with unacceptable work completed by the developer.

⁴¹ It's estimated that at least 17,000 residents, or 5,900 families, were displaced by highway construction of the Fisher, Chrysler, Jeffries and Davison Freeways. Sources: [DetroitHistorical.org](http://detroithistorical.org), and "Renewal Pursues the Displaced." *Detroit Free Press*. May 31, 1966.

Turnkey Developments Under Construction, Proposed, or Completed by the DHC

Name	# Units	Structure		Financing	Comments
		Type	Unit Type		
Lee Plaza Hotel	223	Tower	Senior	PHA	Rehabilitation; Completed
Wolverine Hotel	236	Tower	Senior	PHA	Rehabilitation; Completed
31 Woodland @ Woodward	43	Apt.	Senior	PHA	Rehabilitation; Completed
439 Temple	64	Apt.	Senior	PHA	Rehabilitation; Completed
631 Selden	114	Apt.	Senior	PHA	Rehabilitation; Completed
Sherwood @ Nevada	60	Apt.	Lg. Family	PHA	New Construction; Completed
Forest Park Place	129	Tower	Senior	UR/PHA	New Construction; Completed
Herman Gardens	129	Tower	Senior	PHA	New Construction; Completed
Myrtle-Magnolia Humboldt	82	Row	Lg. Family	UR/PHA	Proposed turnkey
Freud-Montclair	36	Row	Lg. Family	PHA	Proposed turnkey
Anderdon-Waveney	16	Row	Lg. Family	UR/PHA	Proposed turnkey
Total	1132				

Data source: Detroit Historical Commission records, 1908-1980. Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library.

The 1960s also saw the creation of HUD through the Department of Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965. HUD, a Cabinet-level agency, would oversee all housing-related programs of the federal government including the dispersion of funds to local agencies such as the DHC. In 1966, the Michigan Legislature approved the creation of the state Housing Development Authority, today known as MSHDA, to administer federal housing programs and tackle various affordable housing issues across the state through loan and mortgage programs.

Harold Varner, an architect, was chosen to replace Mallett as director of DHC in 1970. He resigned from the position in January 1973 and was replaced by the assistant director, Ronald J. Hewitt. Hewitt continued as director until at least 1979.

With the groundbreaking of Forest Park/Diggs in 1971, the *Free Press* reported that it would be the first new low-income public housing to be built in Detroit for 17 years. In 1971, the DHC reportedly administered a total of 9,456 units of public housing, with 1,193 units specifically for senior citizens. One estimate was that 30,000 people were living in these public housing units at that time.⁴²

The market for high-rise, luxury apartment towers was growing in Detroit during this era, as housing developers across the nation embraced the “towers in the park” movement of modernism. The DHC built or acquired multiple high-rise public housing buildings in the 1970s, including Harriet Tubman, Forest Park Place, State Fair, and Conner-Waveney (known today as Riverbend). Each of these high-rise buildings were built as senior homes.

By the 1970s, quite a few of DHC’s properties were nearing 30-40 years in age and lacking proper maintenance. Varner expressed the constraints in meeting operating costs due to unpaid rents, small federal subsidies and increasing inflation.⁴³ Problems persisted and multiplied throughout the 1970s and into the ‘90s. In 1979, the Housing Department’s Director Theodore Jordan called out Nixon era HUD policies⁴⁴, economic recession and unemployment, and increasing vacancy in public housing was leading

⁴² Greene, Mattie. “Detroit public housing – a history of woes.” *The Detroit News*. Oct. 2, 1972.

⁴³ Benjaminson, Peter. “City Sees a Crisis in Public Housing.” *Detroit Free Press*. April 27, 1972.

⁴⁴ President Richard Nixon imposed a moratorium in 1973 on housing and community development assistance.

the public housing program toward impending bankruptcy.⁴⁵ As was the case across the country, public housing in Detroit was degenerating into crime and drug-infested “warehouses” for welfare-dependent poor people.⁴⁶ Because of this, the city began shifting away from large housing projects and scattered site public housing began to be implemented in the 1970s. The 1973 Nixon moratorium on all federally-funded housing programs caused a shift away from conventional public housing and the rise of the private housing market through Section 8 housing allowances or vouchers. By 1996, there were 432 units of scattered site, single-family home public housing.⁴⁷ With renovations in the 1990s, safety and quality-of-life improvements were made to DHC projects including the addition of community buildings, security card access, job-training programs, and changing the street patterns in low-rise public housing neighborhoods to slow down vehicles.

V. Architecture of Multi-family Public Housing in Detroit

a) Overview

The DHC’s existing public housing projects built prior to 1980 are not concentrated in a single area but are scattered across the city of Detroit. Some projects consist of single apartment buildings, while others are complexes of residential rowhouses or townhomes. The immediate surrounding environment of each site varies greatly in land use and amenities. Working within the confines of public housing budgets, the architecture of the DHC’s pre-1980 public housing projects placed emphasis on uniformity of design and balancing the use of space on the site between buildings and landscaping. Spanning nearly a half-century, this architectural survey covers the period between 1938 – 1974. Outliers in this period include two adaptive reuse properties that were not originally constructed as public housing but were acquired by the DHC in the 1990s – 2010s.

b) Rowhouse Subtype

Detroit’s earliest public housing projects were built by the federal government in the late 1930s and 1940s as defense or emergency housing. These are Parkside (1938)⁴⁸, the Sojourner Truth Homes (1941)⁴⁹ and the Smith Homes (1942)⁵⁰, each displaying the architectural subtype of modest, traditional, and economically-designed rowhouses. Funded by the PWA, the Lanham Act, and the Defense Housing program, respectively, the form of these developments is the outcome of certain guidelines, as well as emphasis on speed in construction and economy of materials. Creating an arc from what was then the outskirts surrounding the city center, these three sites were chosen based on available vacant land for ease of acquisition. Additionally, by locating the low-income developments far from the overcrowded

⁴⁵ Heldman, Louis M. “Public housing is going broke.” *Detroit Free Press*. April 9, 1979.

⁴⁶ Lusignan, Paul R., Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko, Jeffrey Shrimpton. “Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949, MPS,” p. 67. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Dec. 1, 2004.

⁴⁷ King, R.J. “Detroit overhauls public housing.” *The Detroit News/Detroit Free Press*. Oct. 13, 1996.

⁴⁸ Architect: George D. Mason as Chief Architect with Chandler Park Associates. Addition: Parkside Architectural Associates (Edward A. Schilling, C. William Palmer, and Clair W. Ditchy).

⁴⁹ Architect unknown. Possible contractor: William P. Seaber.

⁵⁰ Architect: Lyndon and Smith Architects (Maynard Lyndon and Eberle M. Smith).

inner-city, residents could be “liberated from squalor and discomfort,” as according to a *Detroit News* article.⁵¹

Under PWA standards, architects were given a choice of “sample plans” that could be used in various configurations.⁵² Later, under FHA/USHA standards, federally funded public housing projects were to be unified and simplistic in design, while trends or ornamentation were to be avoided. The “simple but durable construction,” was intended to be matched with extensive landscaping with parkways, gardens, and playgrounds.⁵³ Parkside and Sojourner Truth, both of fireproof brick and concrete construction, are the most typical projects of this era. The Smith Homes (1942)⁵⁴ was an exception as its original modernistic design was more aligned with the popular aesthetics of the age. Each of these developments were originally organized in clusters surrounding courtyards and greenspace.

These three early projects each underwent exterior changes over the years. Parkside and Sojourner Truth homes still maintain integrity of their original form and design on the exterior with some alterations. Changes to the historic buildings at Parkside include the addition of entrance vestibules at the front and rear entrances, as well as new windows, some brick infill, and a minimal amount of shingle siding at the second floor on some buildings. Sojourner Truth Homes received porch awnings and ADA-compliant side additions on some structures in the 1980s or 1990s. Smith Homes also received extensive renovations in the 1990s. Originally constructed with weatherproof plywood and flat roofs, the Smith Homes now have combination hip-gabled roofs and vinyl siding. Deviating from the original landscaping designs, parking eventually came to occupy much of the open space.

c) Townhouse Subtype

The next wave of architectural design in public housing in Detroit is displayed in the townhouse subtype. Townhouse public-housing design gained popularity nationwide, which was first exemplified by architect Hugh Stubbins in the 1960s with his design of Warren Gardens in Boston’s Roxbury neighborhood.⁵⁵ The townhouse design movement held the principle that low-income housing could be made to look indistinguishable from middle-class housing. The main example of this subtype is the Charles C. Diggs Jr. Terraces (1974)⁵⁶ housing complex. Contemporary infill at the Sojourner Truth Homes, built in 1987, also exemplifies this subtype. The Diggs Terraces were designed with minimal exterior architectural features, concentrating resources on the interior features, such as a layout that maximized useful space and furnishing with modern appliances. To create visual interest the facades of the townhouses at Diggs and Sojourner Truth have an alternating pattern of recessed and projecting entrances, and multi-level roof lines. Wall materials are brown brick at the first floor, and a contrasting off-white vinyl siding (Diggs) or tan wood paneling (Sojourner) at the second floor. At Diggs Terraces, each unit has a sliding glass door and metal door which enters into the front of the units, and a small concrete patio in the rear. The original seven-cluster layout is still intact. Much like the earlier public housing developments,

⁵¹ “John W. Smith Homes Opens 100 Units to War Workers.” *The Detroit News*. Dec 1, 1941.

⁵² Hyde, Charles K., Parkside Homes and Addition. HABS No. MI-409.

⁵³ “Vacating of 6 Asked, Plan Commission’s Approval Given.” *The Detroit News*. Dec. 6, 1935.

⁵⁴ Architect: Lyndon and Smith Architects.

⁵⁵ Von Hoffman, Alexander. “High Ambitions: American Low-Income Housing Policy.” *Housing Policy Debate*. Volume 7, Issue 3. 1996.

⁵⁶ Architect: Howard Sims Associates.

landscaping was a focus of the original design of Diggs Terraces, which included five landscaped parks and three playgrounds.

d) Medium-rise Apartment Towers

The market for high-rise apartment towers began in the mid to late 1950s with luxury apartment buildings. Based on the theories of modernists such as Bauhaus urban planner Ludwig Hilberseimer, the “super block” concept included an erasure of the existing street grid and replacing it with self-contained, landscaped miniature cities. In Detroit, the super block is exemplified by the Lafayette urban renewal project, including the Pavilion Apartments (1958) and Lafayette Towers (1963), designed by architect Mies Van der Rohe and urban planner Ludwig Hilbersheimer. The high-rise model became adapted to the public housing sector in the 1970s when the DHC began to develop medium-size apartment towers for the elderly, including Warren West (1971), Forest Park Place (1971), Harriet Tubman (1971) and its twin State Fair (1972)⁵⁷, and Riverbend (formerly Conner-Waveney, 1974). Ranging in height from seven to twelve stories, this type makes use of modern construction techniques and materials, such as high-speed casting of concrete on-site and in-place, exterior insulation and finishing systems (EIFS), also known as Dryvit, a synthetic stucco material.

e) Adaptive Reuse

Buildings of other architectural types that were not originally constructed as public housing have been acquired by the DHC. Therefore, these properties fall under the Adaptive Reuse subtype.

The Algonquin and Latonia apartments, two side-by-side, matching three-story brick buildings, were built in 1912 in the Colonial Revival style. The architecture of these buildings is an outlier in the DHC’s portfolio of public housing, but is typical of the surrounding Woodbridge neighborhood, a national register historic district. Each building contains six units and continue to be used for multi-family residential housing, as they were originally intended. The Algonquin and Latonia apartments were acquired by MSHDA and allocated to the DHC in the early 1990s.

The Greenbrooke apartments, two matching 2-story brick, glass, and metal buildings, were built in 1964. The large panes of glass, flat roof, and minimalism display characteristics of the International style. The complex was acquired by the DHC in 2012.

VI. Architects

Lyndon and Smith

Detroit-based architects Lyndon & Smith (1935-1942) had an office listed at 18700 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan. Maynard Lyndon (1907-1999) was born in Howell, Michigan, and was a graduate of the University of Michigan. In his early career, Lyndon worked as a draftsman for Albert Kahn’s office (1928-1930), Nathan O. Gould’s office (1930-1933), and then as designing architect and site planner for visitor centers for the U.S. Park Service. His ambitions to launch a career of his own were realized when he was contacted by a former colleague, Eberle M. Smith (b. 1905). Smith, also a University of Michigan graduate, also worked as a draftsman for Albert Kahn (1927-1929) where he met Lyndon. Smith worked as an architect for Malcomson and Higginbottom (1929) and Nathan O. Gould (1929-1935) before forming Lyndon & Smith in 1935. Their first work together was the Northville Grade School, the first

⁵⁷ Architect: Siebert, Worley, Cady, Kirk Partners Inc.

modernist school building in the United States and a recipient of a Silver Medal from the Fifth Pan American Congress of Architects in 1940. Altogether, the firm produced about 15 projects in Michigan, consisting mostly of contemporary-designed schools, with some industrial and public housing projects including the John W. Smith Homes (designed in association with Samuel Abrahams). Lyndon and Smith were among Michigan's most outstanding modern architects during this early period.

Lyndon and his wife, interior designer Jo Lyndon, operated a store in Detroit, "Contemporary Backgrounds." In 1942 Maynard Lyndon moved to California and began working for the aircraft industry, and then briefly with architect Richard Neutra. He then established his own practice and became a respected modernist architect of the mid-century era. Lyndon constructed a number of innovative school buildings, but also prominent was the Santa Fe Railway Ticket Office on Pershing Square in Los Angeles, and a commercial building for Cory Glass Co. on Wilshire Boulevard. Also well-known was the Harvey Knox shop in Beverly Hills. His design for Bunche Hall at UCLA created a multistory open courtyard which was capped by a grid to filter the sun. In Westwood, California, for the 28th Church of Christ, Scientist, Lyndon designed an integration of site and building that was one of the most innovative of its day.⁵⁸

After Lyndon relocated to California in 1942, Smith continued working in Detroit with his firm Eberle M. Smith and Associates. Eberle M. Smith and Associates went on to design buildings in Detroit and the region, specializing in school buildings such as Edsel Ford High School in Dearborn, the Carver School in Royal Oak, Henry Ford Community College (1962), the Central Office Facilities (2211 Orleans Street) for the DHC, and the brutalist buildings Frank Murphy Hall of Justice (1969) and the Southwest Detroit Hospital.

DHC Projects:

Brightmoor Housing Project (Smith Homes), Detroit, 1938.

Other Projects:

Northville Grade School, 501 West Main Street, Northville, 1936.

Beecher High School, 6399 Neff Road, Flint, 1936.

Walter Kesten residence, 1938.

Willow Run War Housing (Norwayne), Willow Run, 1940-1941.

George D. Mason

The Parkside Homes were built by a team of architects, the Chandler Park Associates, with George D. Mason as Chief Architect. Mason (1856-1948) was born in Syracuse, New York, and relocated to Detroit with his family in 1870. He began the study of architecture under Henry T. Brush, went on to launch his career in 1881 at the age of twenty-three, and would become one of Detroit's most impactful architects. Mason partnered with Zacharias Rice under the firm name Mason and Rice until 1898. He then practiced independently for a number of years before organizing George D. Mason & Company, architects, in January of 1920. With a career spanning a half-century, Mason would impact Detroit architecture far into the future as he is credited with mentoring and hiring a young Albert Kahn.

DHC Project:

Parkside Homes, 12001 East Warren, Detroit, 1938.

⁵⁸ Savage, Rebecca, National Register of Historic Places registration form, Norwayne Historic District, 2015, p.18.

Other Projects:

Ransom Gillis House (with Brush), 205 Alfred Street, Detroit, 1876.
Trinity Episcopal Church, 1519 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Detroit, 1890.
First Presbyterian Church, 2930 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, 1891.
Century Club, 333 Madison Avenue, Detroit, 1903.
Belle Isle Aquarium, 900 Inselruhe Avenue, Belle Isle Park, Detroit, 1904.
Masonic Temple, 500 Temple Street, Detroit, 1926.
Gem Theater, 333 Madison Street, Detroit, 1927.
Grand Hotel, 286 Grand Ave, Mackinac Island, 1887.
Detroit Yacht Club, 1 Riverbank Road, Belle Isle Park, Detroit, 1923.

Howard Sims

Detroit-born and a graduate of Northwestern High School, Howard Sims (1933-2016) founded Michigan's oldest minority-owned architecture firm, SDG Associates, LLC, formerly Sims-Varner & Associates. Sims served in the Navy in 1951 and returned to his home state to earn bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture at the University of Michigan. His first office was located on Main Street in Ann Arbor in 1964. After relocating back to Detroit, in 1969 Howard Sims & Associates was incorporated. In 1973, the firm was joined by partner Harold R. Varner, architect. Harold R. Varner later became the director-secretary of the DHC during the 1970s. In 1988, Sims was awarded as a Gold Medal Recipient from the American Institute of Architects.

DHC Project:

Diggs Terrace, 1331 East Canfield, Detroit, 1974.

Other Projects:

Cobo Conference and Exhibition Center expansion, 1 Washington Boulevard, Detroit, 1981-89.
Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, 315 East Warren Avenue, Detroit, 1987.
University of Michigan School of Social Work, 1080 University Avenue, Ann Arbor, 1995.
Detroit Wayne County Port Authority Terminal, Detroit.
Greektown Casino, Detroit.
Detroit Historical Museum Renovations, Detroit.
Orleans East Apartments in Lafayette Park, Detroit.
Wayne County Community College Downtown and Northwest Campuses, Detroit.

Hart Brothers

William Hart was the junior partner of the construction business Hart Bros., which he operated with his brother John. The Hart brothers' parents, John and Martha Barisdale Hart, were both born in Ireland and immigrated to Canada at early ages. The younger John Hart was born in Ontario in 1861, and his brother William was born two years later after the family had immigrated to Michigan. John and William's parents died in the early 1880s, leaving the young men to take over the family farm in Southfield. In the 1890s, the men had moved to Detroit to seek better opportunities. John became a mason and William a carpenter. In 1901, they formed a contracting and real estate firm, Hart Bros., operated from an office in the Chamber of Commerce Building in Detroit.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Sewick, Paul. Corktown History. <http://corktownhistory.blogspot.com/>

DHC Projects:

Latonia Apartments, 1520 West Forest Avenue, Detroit, 1911.

Algonquin Apartments, Detroit, 4711 Trumbull Street, 1911.

Other Projects:

Ramara Flats, Twelfth Street, Detroit, 1909.

Orena Flats, Twelfth Street, Detroit, 1909.

Elaine Flats, Spruce Street, Detroit, 1909.

Pensacola Apartments (now demolished), West Forest Avenue, Detroit, 1911.

Siebert, Worley, Cady, Kirk Partners Inc.

A Cleveland-based architectural partnership which traces back to an early 1920s Youngstown, Ohio, firm started by John Samuels and Charles Owsley.⁶⁰ In the mid-1950s to 1960s, the firm was operating under the name Damon, Worley, Samuels & Associates.⁶¹ In the 1960s, Austin C. Damon and Leon M. Worley dropped the Samuels name and established the firm known as Damon, Worley, Cady, Kirk and Associates, and later became established under the name DWCK Partners, Inc. (1970). The firm changed its name to Siebert, Worley, Cady, Kirk Partners, Inc., in 1972. The firm became Seibert, Bode, Kirk, Engler & Van Niel, Inc., in 1982. The full names of some architects associated with the firm were found to be Alvah F. Seibert, Harold Van Niel, Thomas W. Bode, and Ulrich Engler. The firm ceased filing as a business with the Ohio Secretary of State in 1987.

⁶⁰ "Thomas W. Bode." *The Vindicator*. <http://www.vindy.com/news/tributes/2014/jan/22/thomas-w-bod/>

⁶¹ *Ohio Architect Magazine* Listing of Ohio Buildings, 1954-1970.

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Detroit Housing Commission Historic Context and Intensive Level Survey

Index List of Surveyed Properties

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Sojourner Truth Homes	4801 East Nevada Avenue	Detroit	Wayne
	4617 E Nevada		
	4619 E Nevada		
	4621 E Nevada		
	4623 E Nevada		
	4625 E Nevada		
	4627 E Nevada		
	4626 Stockton		
	4624 Stockton		
	4622 Stockton		
	4620 Stockton		
	4618 Stockton		
	4616 Stockton		
	4638 Stockton		
	4636 Stockton		
	4634 Stockton		
	4632 Stockton		
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	4628 Stockton		
	4629 E. Nevada		
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	4635 E. Nevada		
	4637 E. Nevada		
	4639 E. Nevada		
	4709 E. Nevada		
	4711 E. Nevada		
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	4715 E. Nevada		
	4717 E. Nevada		
	4719 1/2 E. Nevada		
	4720 Stockton		
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Harriet Tubman Apartments	2450 West Grand Boulevard	Detroit	Wayne
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	12545 McCoy Circle 12547 McCoy Circle 12549 McCoy Circle 12551 McCoy Circle 12553 McCoy Circle		
Riverbend Tower Apartments	4386 Conner Street	Detroit	Wayne
John W. Smith Homes	14184 Crescent Drive 14189 Crescent Drive 14190 Crescent Drive 14195 Crescent Drive 14204 Crescent Drive 14213 Crescent Drive 14218 Crescent Drive 14219 Crescent Drive 14226 Crescent Drive 14227 Crescent Drive 14242 Crescent Drive 14245 Crescent Drive 14258 Crescent Drive 14268 Crescent Drive 14270 Crescent Drive 14271 Crescent Drive 14274 Crescent Drive 14276 Crescent Drive 14281 Crescent Drive 14282 Crescent Drive 14284 Crescent Drive 14286 Crescent Drive 14288 Crescent Drive 14294 Crescent Drive 14296 Crescent Drive 14297 Crescent Drive 14298 Crescent Drive 14300 Crescent Drive 14304 Crescent Drive 14308 Crescent Drive 14309 Crescent Drive 14310 Crescent Drive 14316 Crescent Drive 14318 Crescent Drive	Detroit	Wayne

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State Fair Apartments	1231 West State Fair Avenue	Detroit	Wayne
Warren West Apartments	4100 West Warren Avenue	Detroit	Wayne
Algonquin Apartments	4711 Trumbull Avenue, 1520 West Forest Avenue	Detroit	Wayne
Greenbrooke Manor	19801 Greenfield Road 19811 Greenfield Road	Detroit	Wayne

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Sojourner Truth Homes (1941)	4801 East Nevada Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1941

Property Type
Residential district

Architectural Classification
Minimal Traditional



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Side-gable

Roof
Asphalt

Other Materials
Synthetics: Vinyl

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling,
Design and Materials

Architect
William P. Seaber (contractor)

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple
dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

The Sojourner Truth Homes are sited on their original street plan and location in the northern, central area of Detroit. There are four entrances to the Sojourner Truth Homes complex: two off East Nevada Street, one off Strockton Avenue, and one off Fenelon Street. There are twenty of the original 1941 Sojourner Truth buildings remaining on the site. The original Sojourner Truth Homes maintain a high degree of integrity to their original design as dark red brick, side-gabled two-story row houses with a beige-colored brick string course. The string course runs around the building along the lower edge of the second story windows. The dark red brick is laid in running-bond pattern. Each building is composed of six bays and contains six individual units. There is no eave overhang on the side gables of the buildings.

The first-floor windows have cast stone or concrete sills. The first-floor windows are aluminum replacement windows. There are newer replacement white vinyl double-hung windows on the

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

second floor. A projecting awning over the front entry porch of each unit was added at an unknown date, with asphalt shingles and vinyl siding. Front entry doors are wood, grouped in pairs and have a brown metal screen door and dark red aluminum door surround. Each entry has a porch light, address and cast-iron mail box. The rear of the rowhouses have enclosed mechanical additions with vinyl siding and dark red asphalt shingled roof. On the roof of each unit is a PVC vent pipe, and units share a brick chimney. There are brown aluminum gutters and downspouts on each building. Some of the town houses' side facades have beige stucco and trim replicating a half-timbered appearance in the gable. A variation among the rowhouses is newer-construction one-story Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant addition on some buildings. Twenty-nine new building were added to the site in 1986/87. There is minimal landscaping at the entrances to the complex, as well as on traffic islands within the complex. Some properties have shrubbery surrounding the foundation, but most do not. There are some large trees scattered throughout the site.

Statement of Significance

The Sojourner Truth Homes are eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A and C. Sojourner Truth is a representative example of a standard planned federal public housing project. The Sojourner Truth Homes were built as part of the federal government's defense housing program in 1941 to house African American war workers. The Sojourner Truth Homes became a central point of racial tension leading to Detroit's Race Riot of 1943. Detroit was in the midst of a housing shortage due to the influx of workers during World War II, and the shortage disproportionately impacted African Americans because of housing segregation and discrimination. Members of the surrounding all-white neighborhood contested the placement of the housing project and the National Housing Administration (NHA) reversed the racial occupancy to white. With appeals from Mayor Edward Jeffries and civil rights groups, the NHA was convinced to reverse their decision in favor of black families. Violence erupted when black families tried to move into their new homes on March 1, 1942. In all, fifteen people were injured and more than twenty-four were jailed as a result of the confrontation.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Contributing to
an Eligible District

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News; The New York Times;
Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

5/2/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Sojourner Truth Homes Addition (1987)	4801 East Nevada Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1987

Property Type
Residential district

Architectural Classification
Other



Plan
Irregular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Side-gable

Roof
Asphalt

Other Materials
Wood

Condition
Good

Integrity
Association

Architect
Unknown

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings:

Areas of Significance

Narrative Description

The Sojourner Truth new townhomes added twenty-nine new buildings to the site of the existing Sojourner Truth homes. These comprise sixty-six units of townhouses that were added to the Sojourner Truth Homes site in 1986/87. The scale and massing of the new townhomes match that of the original 1941 homes. Because the new buildings match the 1941 buildings in massing and scale the integrity of the original buildings is not jeopardized.

At the center of the complex is a large community building that includes offices, meeting rooms and a large assembly space. The contemporary townhouse apartment buildings are clad in dark red brick laid in a running-bond pattern. The townhouses are characterized by multi-level gables, second-floor wood panel siding and projecting bays. The wood panel siding has been painted a light peach color. The main entrance to each unit is entered at a concrete slab in the short alcove sided with wood panels. A porch light, address numbers and mail slot are found on the wood

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

siding. The entry door to each unit is the original brown aluminum screen door and brown entry door with a horizontal casement window at the top. The first-floor window at the front entrance is also of brown aluminum with a divided two-part casement window. A sill of header bricks is at the first-story windows. The second-story windows have been replaced with white vinyl two-part casement windows. A water-table of header bricks is at the second story window level. The roofs are covered in grey asphalt shingles. Brown aluminum gutters and downspouts are on the buildings and an exhaust vent projects from each roof. There is a brown aluminum ridge vent at each roof peak.

The units are grouped in identical pairs, sited as opposite reflecting plans. The rear of the units has a similar alcove entrance, and the windows and doors are also brown aluminum. The utility boxes are on the exterior of the end units, and the side facades are faced in brick, include a brown casement aluminum window, and the gable is sided with wood panels, also painted a light peach color. There are two, three, and four-bedroom townhouses on the Sojourner Truth Homes site. Each block is surrounded by a black wrought-iron fence. There are honey locust trees in the rear yards of the new town homes.

Statement of Significance

The Sojourner Truth new townhomes are incorporated into the original site of the Sojourner Truth complex, at streets adjacent to the original 1941 buildings. The additional townhomes at the Sojourner Truth housing complex does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because it has not reached the age of 50 years, and has not achieved significance of exceptional importance.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Not Eligible for the NRHP

NR Criteria

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

5/2/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Charles C. Diggs Sr. Terraces	1331 East Canfield Street	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1974

Property Type
Residential district

Architectural Classification
Other



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Side-gable

Roof
Asphalt

Other Materials
Synthetics: Vinyl

Condition
Fair

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Howard Sims Associates

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder
Wake-Pratt Construction Company

Outbuildings: Other

Areas of Significance: None

Narrative Description

The Charles C. Diggs Sr. housing complex is composed of seven courts of four clustered townhouse apartment buildings, two stories in height. There are a total of 104 units in the complex. The townhouses are clad in brown brick at the first floor and beige vinyl siding at the second floor with a side-gabled, multi-level grey asphalt shingle roof. The brown brick is laid in a running bond pattern. A soldier course of brick is at the transition edge between the first and second stories. Entrances are recessed with metal doors. Each unit has a walk-out sliding glass door with a brick privacy enclosure, half-story in height. The brick enclosure is capped with cast concrete and is enclosing a concrete patio slab. At the rear of the townhouses, the second story floor plate projects over the first story, creating a short roof. Aluminum windows vary between sliding and single-hung, with glass block windows at the basement level on some of the units. Open green space occupies the area at the center of the clusters. In the northwest corner of the site is the community center building, a one-and-a-half story structure clad in brown brick with a

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

reddish-brown roof. There is beige vinyl siding on the building, and a double-door recessed entry at the rear and two pedestrian entry doors at the front facade.

Statement of Significance

The Charles C. Diggs Sr. housing complex does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because it has not reached the age of fifty years and has not achieved significance of exceptional importance. The Diggs housing complex should be evaluated for eligibility once it has reached fifty years of age in 2024. The Charles C. Diggs housing complex is named for Detroiters Charles C. Diggs Sr., the first African American Democrat elected to the Michigan Senate in 1937. He was a founder of the Michigan Federated Democratic Clubs and built his success on his funeral business. Diggs was a mortician and founded Michigan's first black-owned cemetery in 1925, Detroit Memorial Park. The Charles C. Diggs Sr. housing complex was designed by African American Detroit architect Howard Sims (1936-2018). Sims was a notable Detroit architect who designed structures such as: The Cobo Conference and Exhibition Center expansion, the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, the Orleans East Apartments in Lafayette Park, and many other Detroit-based projects in his career. The Diggs homes were called townhouses initially and were designed with three-to-six bedrooms - creating units for low-income families. The DHC worked with a subsidiary of First Federal Savings Bank of Detroit to develop this \$2.9 million housing project. When constructed in 1974, the Diggs Terraces were the first new low-income public housing to be built in Detroit in nineteen years.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Not Eligible for the NRHP

NR Criteria

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; *The Detroit News*; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing." Accessed March 29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/9/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Forest Park Place Senior Citizens Apartments	1331 East Canfield Street	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1971

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Modern Movement



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Synthetics

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Unknown

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings: Other

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

Forest Park Place is a seven-story apartment tower containing ninety-seven units. The rectangular building features brown brick-clad vertical piers between each window bay. The brick is laid in a running bond pattern. The building's main facade is the southern facade. The large main section of the building's southern facade is attached to a recessed stair/elevator tower at the eastern side. East of the elevator tower is an additional separate bay of apartment units.

The window pattern on the large main section of the southern facade is symmetrical. The window pattern runs from west to east: slider-window, slider-window, paired slider windows, paired slider windows, slider-window - then repeated. Beige Exterior Finish Insulation System (EFIS) spandrel panels and EFIS clad entrance canopy surrounds are recent additions. The main entrance is marked by an extended canopy, infilled on the west side to enclose an interior space. The eastern side of the entrance canopy has the main brown aluminum divided door. There are

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

vertical casement windows on each side of the door. A raised fascia panel on top of the canopy has lettering for "FOREST PARK PLACE." There is brown trim at the roofline of the entrance canopy. The windows of the building are casement brown aluminum in most cases. Some windows for office spaces are double-hung aluminum. An air conditioning unit vent sits below each window. Landscaping includes a sidewalk path that leads to a community gazebo at the northwest corner of the lot. The parking lot is at the southern side of the property and retains its original lights as well as landscaping in the island at the center. The west and east (secondary) facades are almost entirely brick clad with a single bay of windows down the center. Windows and entrance doors are aluminum. At the western side of the building the mechanical units are all in a group and the dumpster is in this location as well. The roof is flat.

Statement of Significance

The Forest Park Place apartment building will meet the criteria for listing on the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2021. The Forest Park Place apartment building is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A and C. Forest Park Apartments retains a high degree of integrity and retains the character-defining features of the original design. Planning for the Forest Park Apartments was first announced in 1964. At that time, the site included the area bounded by Mack, East Warren Avenue, Dequindre Street and the Chrysler I-75 Expressway. This site was mainly occupied by single-family homes constructed by the Polish-American community that first moved to this area. Federal urban renewal funds were used for the demolition of the existing homes. An invitation for bids on the construction of the Forest Park Place Apartments was advertised in 1967. It was not until 1972 when ground was broken and the Forest Park Apartments project was initiated.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Individually
Eligible/Eligible District

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing."
Accessed March29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/10/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Harriet Tubman Apartments	2450 West Grand Boulevard	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1971

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Modern Movement



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Concrete

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Brick

Condition
Fair

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Siebert, Worley, Cady, Kirk Partners Inc

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder
Building Systems Inc

Outbuildings: Other

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

The Harriet Tubman Apartment Building is a twelve-story, 211-unit building characterized by the grid of rounded balconies on the front and rear facades. There are ten bays of balconies on each side. Full-height segmented brown aluminum screens were added to the balconies in 2014. The screens hide the units' double patio doors. Concrete stabilization work was completed in 2014 as well. The construction of the building made use of an in-place, high-speed casting concrete system. The building's main entrance is on the West Grand Boulevard (north) facade. The main entrance is distinguished by a rounded concrete canopy supported by four cast concrete piers. Today, the entry canopy is painted a light orange color. There are glass and aluminum doors at the building's main entry. There is a stair tower that is centered at the western facade of the building, which is faced with brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The main elevator/stair tower is at the north side of the building faced with brown brick laid in a running-bond pattern. The curved cast concrete patios edges and piers are a character-defining feature of the building. The first floor of the building is set back to the structural walls, under the patios above. The walls

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

of the first level are finished in brown brick, laid in a running bond pattern. The first floor windows are floor-to-ceiling brown aluminum window systems. There are air conditioner units/openings cut into the first-floor brick walls. The eastern and western facades display the cast concrete system structure. There are no windows on the eastern and western facades, and a brown brick pier (approximately 12-feet wide) is centered at the west-side facade. Brown brick veneer, laid in a running bond pattern faces the elevator and stair tower, as well as the rear recreation room addition.

At the north side of the property is a one-story projecting addition to the cast-concrete apartment building. The one-story addition has a connecting hallway to a community kitchen and recreation room. The addition exits on to the building's patio and garden. The recreation room doors and windows are glass and brown aluminum. The addition is faced with brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building roof is flat. The site of the entire property is surrounded by a black cast metal fence. The site includes a parking lot on the south (entered via Ferry Park Street) and west side of the building. A gabled metal picnic pavilion is in the north garden near West Grand Boulevard. Landscaping surrounding the property is well-maintained and includes large trees.

Statement of Significance

The Harriet Tubman Apartment Building, designed in 1971, will meet the criteria for listing in the National Register when it reaches the age of fifty years in 2021. It is recommended for National Register eligibility and is significant under Criterion A and C. The innovative use of cast concrete in the curved design of the apartment balconies was unique to Detroit's public housing design. The building's construction system was developed in the Netherlands, using high-speed casting of concrete on-site and in-place. Building Systems Inc. of Cleveland completed the building in 366 days. The twelve-story building was planned and developed by the DHC, costing \$3.2 million to build, providing 211 units for low-income senior citizens over the age of 62.

The building's amenities initially included a community kitchen, free laundry facilities on two floors, an outdoor patio and recreation area. The apartment units are 460-square feet in size with an individual balcony for each. The units initially included grab bars in bathrooms, individual thermostats in each unit and closed-circuit television security systems. The building was sited near a City of Detroit bus line as well as Henry Ford Hospital. An identical twin building (State Fair Apartments) was completed in 1972 at State Fair and Ralston Streets. At that time, a third low-income Senior Citizen apartment building was planned for Conner and Waveney Streets (Riverbend Apartments), but that project used a different architectural design.

Eligibility Recommendation
Recommended Contributing to
an Eligible District

NR Criteria
A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing."
Accessed March 29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor
Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed
5/16/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Parkside Homes (1938)	12001 East Warren Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1938

Property Type
Residential district

Architectural Classification
Minimal Traditional



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Hip

Roof
Asphalt

Other Materials

Condition
Fair

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Chandler Park Associates
(George D. Mason, Chief Architect), Parkside Architectural Associates
(Edward A. Schilling, C. William Palmer, and Clair W. Ditchy, Nelson Blood Hubbard, mechanical engineer, and Raymond B. Wilcox, landscape architect) [Parkside Addition, 1940]

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder
John Griffiths & Son Construction Company; O.W. Burke Company of Detroit [Parkside Addition, 1939]; Bryant and Detwiler Company of Detroit [Parkside Addition, 1940]

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Narrative Description

The Parkside Homes (1938) were designed as row housing in various unit configurations throughout the planned complex. The Parkside Homes are plotted along a central street - Stringham Court - which runs east-west and is centered through the complex. Other streets are in a grid perpendicular to Stringham Court. The boundary streets are Frankfort Street to the north and East Warren Avenue to the South; Conner Street is the western boundary and Gray Street is at the east. North of Frankfort Street is Chandler Park, one of the largest public parks in Detroit.

The original rowhouses that remain in the Parkside housing complex are two-story, red brick clad, with minimal decoration. The roofs are hipped asphalt shingled with widely overhanging eaves. A recent renovation added hipped roofs on the porches and buildings are finished with grey asphalt shingles. The windows have all been replaced with white vinyl double-hung paired sets of windows. There are cast concrete sills. Some units' first-floor windows have been replaced with a bay window of new white vinyl windows and grey asphalt shingles on the gabled roof. The units are built on a slab and do not have basements.

The front entrances of the units have been altered and are now a red brick enclosed entryway with metal panel sidelight covering - many units have different colors on the panels. The porch enclosures have red brick siding, asphalt shingled hipped roof, and a concrete landing with black wrought iron guardrail. The brick is laid in a running-bond pattern. The front doors are mostly white metal paneled doors with a rounded half-arch window. There is a wrought iron security door on each unit. Many of the entry doors have been replaced with metal security doors, and many have been painted different colors. There is evidence of brick replacement/repair and infill of some windows on some units. There are white aluminum gutters and downspouts on all of the buildings. Some units have a partial basement and utility access at the end of the unit. The rear side of units have concrete patios and are accessed by a rear door. The unit patios are separated by wood privacy fencing. The new name of the complex is "The Villages at Parkside." There is very little landscaping on the site, which is divided by a fence from Chandler Park which is adjacent to the north. The entire complex is surrounded by a black wrought iron fence. A large open space at the center of the complex, where a portion of the original development was demolished, is surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. Parking is interspersed throughout the Parkside complex, and some streets allow for parking in front of the units. There is street lighting and sidewalks around the complex.

Statement of Significance

Parkside Homes (1938) are eligible for listing in the National Register under National Register criterion A and C. Parkside is Detroit's only remaining PWA project. The development was designed and planned by a committee of 26 architects, with George D. Mason as the chairman and chief architect. Mason was also the Chief Architect for DHC projects that have since been demolished: the Brewster Homes (1938) and the Herman Gardens project (1942). Opposition to the project, led by City Councilman William P. Bradley, claimed that government-subsidized housing was an affront to private enterprise. The DHC's first director, Josephine Gomon, championed the project and ensured its success. Once opened, the project received praise for its outstanding living conditions. Parkside had many active tenant groups and a bi-weekly newspaper, The Parksider.

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Contributing to
an Eligible District

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions**Sources**

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News;

Hyde, Charles K. Parkside Homes and Addition. HABS No. MI-409.

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/9/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Villages at Parkside (1998)	12002 East Warren Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1998

Property Type
Residential district

Architectural Classification
Other



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Hip

Roof
Asphalt

Other Materials

Condition
Good

Integrity
Association

Architect
Unknown

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance

Narrative Description

The 1998 infill one-and two-story townhouses are sited throughout the Parkside development and match the existing spatial pattern, scale and massing of the original 1938 units. The units are faced with red brick siding on the lower 3/4 of the facade, and beige vinyl siding at the attic level. The buildings are constructed on a slab, they have a raised porch and concrete entry step. There are porch columns and a gabled porch roof as well as gabled dormer at the roofline over the entry. These gables are distinctive, and the new units stand apart from the original Parkside rowhouses.

The entry doors are white paneled metal with a rounded arch window at the top. There is a black wrought-iron security door in front of each entry door. There is a black wrought-iron railing at the entry step. The windows are new white vinyl double-hung windows. There are beige aluminum gutters and downspouts on every building. The 1998 Parkside infill housing included one-story

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

units that are ADA (American with Disabilities Act) compliant. The one-story units have a large gable over the extended porch. There are three porch columns comprised of a red brick base and vinyl covered square column above. The units are faced with red brick set in running bond pattern with beige vinyl siding above. The windows are white vinyl double-hung windows. The doors are white metal doors with a black wrought-iron security door at the front.

In the 1998 era, a post-modern Community Building was constructed at the southwest corner of the Parkside property. The Community Building houses offices, meeting rooms and a large assembly hall. The Community Building has a base of dark red brick laid in running bond pattern. The upper portion of the building is faced in grey vinyl siding, and the roof is shingled in grey asphalt shingles. A gabled roof over the main assembly hall projects from the center of the one-story structure's roof.

Statement of Significance

The Parkside infill housing constructed in 1998 does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because it has not reached the age of 50 years, and has not achieved significance of exceptional importance.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Not Eligible for the NRHP

NR Criteria

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing." Accessed March 29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/9/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Riverbend Tower Apartments	4386 Conner Street	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1974

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Exotic Revival



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Concrete

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Unknown

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Community planning and development

Narrative Description

The Riverbend Tower Apartments, located at 4386 Conner Street, is an eight-story building containing 95 apartment units. The building is 17-bays long and 4-bays wide and is characterized by Egyptian Revival-style columns and pale green and gold accents. The building is clad in ribbed concrete masonry units, designed to resemble vertically-laid, off-white bricks. The windows are slider casement white vinyl-clad aluminum. Dryvit spandrel panels are painted pale green. Egyptian Revival-style capitals, and other Exotic Revival elements were likely added to the building at a date after its construction. There is a covered port cochere at the main entry. There are four Egyptian Revival-style columns at each corner of the port cochere. Decorating the roofline are rounded arches infilled with a light green color. At the roofline are rounded arches one-story in height. The arches are infilled with light green-colored EFIS and outlined in white. The main entry doors are automatic sliding glass and aluminum doors with aluminum side light windows. An outdoor seating area with garden beds and benches sits on the southeast corner of the site. The parking lot is at the north side of the property.

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Statement of Significance

The Riverbend Tower Apartment building could meet the criteria for listing on the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2024. The building was constructed in 1973 by the DHC at a cost of \$2.1 million. In 1995 the DHC added a new entry and canopy on the building as well as interior upgrades.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Not Eligible for
the NRHP

NR Criteria

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing."
Accessed March 29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/19/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
John W. Smith Homes	14313 Crescent Drive	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1942

Property Type
Residential district

Architectural Classification
Minimal Traditional



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Synthetics: Vinyl

Roof Form
Other

Roof
Asphalt

Other Materials
Metal: Aluminum

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Lyndon and Smith Architects
(Maynard Lyndon and Eberle M. Smith), in association with
Samuel Fye Abraham

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder
W.E. Wood Co. (general contractor), C. Wendell Smith (landscape contractor)

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Social history

Narrative Description

The John W. Smith Homes complex is entered off Lyndon Street, Evergreen Road, or Kentfield Street. The complex is built around a road pattern of curvilinear streets, a design that is evident in the original plan created in 1942. There are fifty-two buildings in the complex with 157 total units of housing within those buildings.

Along the complex's main thoroughfare, Crescent Drive, the rowhouses are two-story, light grey vinyl clad with combination hip-gabled roofs with dark grey asphalt shingles and white vinyl sliding casement windows. Some units are clad in light blue siding at the first-floor level, and light grey siding above. Buildings within the complex have flat facades with small porticos above the

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

entrances on the primary facade, creating an open covered porch. Many structures are comprised of double units that are reflections of each other. Many structures have a door to utility rooms at the center of the rowhouse structure between the units. The side facades have varying projections and recessed entrances. White scalloped shingle vinyl siding decorates some of the gables.

Some structures were designed for ADA accessibility and have a ramp in front. Some of the ADA units have a one-story addition that projects from the side of the original structure. Some structures have a gabled covered entry porch with an entry wall containing three square opening for decorative effect. There are white aluminum gutters and downspouts at each unit. White vinyl-clad screen doors are over white steel security entry doors. There is a porchlight and exterior electrical outlet near each front entry door. The Smith Homes community building is a one-story concrete block structure with dark red brick and vinyl siding on some facades. The Smith Homes community building is recent construction from the last twenty years. There is some landscaping at the entrances to the complex, including shrubs and trees. The complex is surrounded by a black wrought-iron fence. There is a large area of open green space along the eastern side. Parking lots are adjacent to street-facing structures and some units have parking spaces adjacent to the structures.

Statement of Significance

The John W. Smith Homes (housing complex) is not eligible for listing in the National Register. Though the site may have historic significance, we believe this site lacks sufficient integrity to be eligible for National Register listing. Demolition of original housing units, demolition of original walkways and the original community center has diminished the historic integrity of the John W. Smith Homes. Additionally, the housing units were renovated with new siding, roofs and windows over time, and the highly altered form of the structures today has contributed to the loss of integrity.

Internationally-known architect Eliel Saarinen of the Cranbrook Institute of Arts addressed the Detroit Federation of Settlements at the Smith Homes in 1943 to remark on Detroit's growth and future - evidence of the prominence of the project. The John W. Smith Homes, named after former Detroit Mayor John W. Smith, were designed by Maynard Lyndon and Eberle Smith who became prolific in their careers as modernist architects and are credited with designing the United States' first modern school building in Northville, Michigan. Their firm, Lyndon & Smith (1935-1942), completed thirty schools and two public housing projects.

Constructed and opened to families in 1942, the Smith Homes was rented completely by war workers. Originally, the site included 210 units, completed at a cost of \$1,321,000. A local official described the project (*Detroit News*, December 1, 1942) as, "It looks like a fine development and a credit to the neighborhood." The buildings suggested Bauhaus in their design which had flat roofs and used plywood for the walls, which were painted coral, yellow, blue-gray, silver-gray, green and khaki. The buildings underwent renovations in the 1950s and 1990s which altered the appearance of the exterior. The original design and choice of materials caused maintenance problems and were renovated over time to their current appearance. Today there are 157 units remaining in the Smith Homes, albeit in a much-altered appearance from the original design.

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Not Eligible for
the NRHP

NR Criteria**NR Exceptions****Sources**

Online Archive of California Maynard Lyndon papers, circa 1929-circa 1980; AIA California Council;
The Detroit Free Press; *The Detroit News*.

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/23/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name State Fair Apartments	Street Address 1231 West State Fair Avenue	Municipal Unit Detroit	County Wayne
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District Names
n/a

Year Built
1972

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Modern Movement



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Concrete

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Brick

Condition
Fair

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Siebert, Worley, Cady, Kirk Partners Inc

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder
Building Systems Inc

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

The State Fair Apartment Building is a twelve-story, 211-unit building characterized by the grid of rounded balconies on the front and rear facades. There are ten bays of balconies on each side. Full-height segmented brown aluminum screens were added to the balconies in 2014. The screens hide the unit double patio doors.

The building was constructed with steel frame and cast-concrete construction system. The building's main entrance is on the State Fair (north) facade. The main entrance is distinguished by a rounded concrete canopy supported by four cast concrete piers. Today, the entry canopy is painted a bright orange color. There are glass and aluminum doors at the building's main entry. There is a stair tower at the southern facade of the building, faced with brown brick laid in running bond pattern. The main elevator/stair tower is at the north side of the building faced with brown brick in laid in running-bond pattern. The curved cast concrete patios edges and piers are a character-defining feature of the building. The first floor of the building is set back to the

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

structural walls, under the patios above. The walls of the first level are finished in brown brick, laid in running bond pattern. The first-floor windows are floor-to-ceiling brown aluminum window systems. There are air conditioner units/openings cut into the first-floor brick walls.

The eastern and western facades display the cast concrete system structure. There are no windows on the eastern and western facades, and a brown brick pier (approximately 12 feet wide) is centered at the west-side facade. Brown brick veneer, laid in a running bond pattern faces the elevator and stair tower, as well as the rear recreation room addition. At the north side of the property is a one-story projecting addition to the cast-concrete apartment building. The one-story addition has a connecting hallway to a community kitchen and recreation room. The addition exits on to the building's patio and garden. The recreation room doors and windows are glass and brown aluminum. The addition is faced with brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building roof is flat. The site of the entire property is surrounded by a black cast-metal fence. The site includes a parking lot on the south (entered via Ralston Street on the east) and east side of the building. A gabled metal picnic pavilion is at the west side of the building near the apartment building to the west. Landscaping surrounding the property is well-maintained and includes a few large trees.

Statement of Significance

The State Fair Apartment Building, designed in 1971, will meet the criteria for listing in the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2021. It is significant under Criterion A and C. The innovative use of cast concrete in the curved design of the apartment balconies was unique to Detroit's public housing design. The building's construction system was developed in the Netherlands, using high-speed casting of concrete on-site and in-place. Building Systems Inc. of Cleveland completed the building in 366 days. Concrete stabilization work was completed in 2014. The 12-story building was planned and developed by the DHC, costing \$3.2 million to build, providing 211 units for low-income senior citizens over the age of 62. The building's amenities initially included a community kitchen, free laundry facilities on two floors, an outdoor patio and recreation area. The apartment units are 460-square feet with an individual balcony for each. The units initially included grab bars in bathrooms, individual thermostats in each unit and closed-circuit television security systems. The building was sited near a City of Detroit bus line as well as Woodward Avenue - Detroit's main street. A twin building (Harriet Tubman Apartments) was completed in 1972 at Ferry Park Street and West Grand Boulevard. At that time, a third low-income senior citizen apartment building was planned for Conner and Waveney Streets (Riverbend Apartments), but that project used a different architectural design.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Individually
Eligible/Eligible District

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; The Detroit News; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing."
Accessed March 29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

5/23/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Warren West Apartments	4100 West Warren Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1971

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
International Style



Plan
Angled

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Other

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Concrete

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Unknown

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

The Warren West Apartment Building (1971) is a nine-story structure located on the west side of Detroit, near the Edsel Ford Freeway (I-94). There are 143 apartment units in the building. Designed in the form of a wide oblique angle, the structure is sited on a large plot that is adjacent to West Warren Avenue at its south end. The east and west facades of the building have set-back bays, alternating between apartment units. At the eastern side of the structure, at the bend of the angle, is the main entrance. Just north of the main entrance is a one-story projecting garage and utility storage space. This addition to the building has a flat roof and is faced with concrete also painted pink in color.

At the roof line is a coping of brown aluminum above beige concrete-faced structural panels. Dumpsters and utilities are located at this side, adjacent to the garage and storage addition. Above the recessed main entrance is the elevator and stair tower, which projects above the

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

roofline. The elevator lobby of each floor has a wide three-part casement window unit clad in brown aluminum. The 7-story building is of steel-frame construction and reinforced concrete. The building is clad in concrete painted beige at the piers and beams and faced with articulated concrete panels painted pink, which are punctured by metal air conditioning vents at each unit. The windows are double-casement slider units of brown aluminum. Metal spandrel panels below the aluminum windows are painted dark pink. The main entry doors are of dark brown aluminum with glass automatic slider doors that have a transom above. The roof is flat. The site is landscaped with a walking path, gazebo, trees and picnic tables. The parking lot is accessed from West Warren Avenue and is on the east side of the site. The site is surrounded by a black wrought iron fence.

Statement of Significance

The Warren West Apartment Building, designed in 1971, will meet the criteria for listing in the National Register when it reaches the age of 50 years in 2021. It is significant under Criterion A and C. The seven-story building was planned and developed by the DHC. The cost of the project in 1970 was \$2.9 million. It was designed for senior citizens and equipped with a community room, laundry facilities, garbage disposals stoves, refrigerators and draperies. In 1993 the building was renovated, and the repairs included: new paint, roof maintenance, and new stoves and refrigerators in the units. These renovations were funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Individually
Eligible/Eligible District

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

The Detroit Free Press; *The Detroit News*; Detroit Housing Commission. "Public Housing."
Accessed March 29, 2018. <http://www.dhcmi.org/PublicHousing.aspx>

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/26/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Algonquin Apartments	4711 Trumbull Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
Woodbridge Neighborhood
Historic District

Year Built
1911

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Renaissance



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Stone: Limestone

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Design, Feeling,
Material

Architect
Hart Bros.

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple
dwelling

Builder
Hart Bros.

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

The Algonquin is three-and-a-half story, six-unit apartment building with a rectangular plan. The building fronts onto Trumbull Avenue and is clad in orange/brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building's basement floor projects a half-story above ground-level. The current windows are all vinyl, multi-lite replacements. There are cast-stone sills and lintels at the windows. The symmetry of the Trumbull Avenue facade with projecting bays on either side of the entrance and the widely overhanging eaves with entablature display an Italian Renaissance Revival style. The bays are defined by obtuse angled corner bricks at the corner of each bay. The building name "ALGONQUIN" is engraved in the cast-stone lintel over the door. The front door is a grey steel door, accessed by a seven-step staircase. A contemporary wooden porch and stair structure is attached to the rear of each building and is three stories tall.

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Statement of Significance

The Algonquin Apartment Building was constructed as part of a development of three adjacent apartment buildings: The Algonquin, the Latonia, and the Pensacola. The three-building apartment development was sited at the northwest corner of West Forest Avenue and Trumbull Avenue. While the Algonquin fronts Trumbull Avenue, the Latonia fronts Forest Avenue as did the now-demolished Pensacola. The buildings were designed with an identical layout.

The developers/builders of the three structures were the Hart Brothers. William and John Hart were partners in the construction/contracting/real estate business called Hart Bros., which was formed in 1901. Their contracting and real estate firm was located in an office in the Chamber of Commerce Building (1212 Griswold, Detroit). The Hart Bros. developed apartments in a similar design and layout at the southeast corner of Rosa Parks Boulevard (then called Twelfth Street) and Spruce Street: The Ramara Flats, the Orena Flats, and the Elaine Flats in 1910. The Algonquin, Latonia and Pensacola Apartments were developed and constructed in 1911, and then sold to Bernard H. Mazure for \$15,000 each. This development in Woodbridge marked a time when demand for apartment buildings was stimulated by the tremendous growth of Detroit's population between 1900 and 1920 as a result of the burgeoning auto industry. Today, only the Algonquin and Latonia remain. The Pensacola Apartment building was demolished in the 1990s. In 1993 the Algonquin and the Latonia were renovated by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Neighborhood Preservation Program.

Eligibility Recommendation

Previously Listed on the NRHP

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

MSHDA - 1993 Annual Report. *The Detroit Free Press*. "Three Six-Family Brick Apartment Buildings Are Sold For About \$15,000 Each." July 23, 1911. Sewick, Paul. Developer history. Vollmert, Leslie J. Woodbridge Neighborhood, National Register of Historic Places nomination

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/26/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name	Street Address	Municipal Unit	County
Latonia Apartments	1520 West Forest Avenue	Detroit	Wayne

District Names
Woodbridge Neighborhood
Historic District

Year Built
1911

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Renaissance



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Stone: Limestone

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Design, Feeling,
Material

Architect
Hart Bros.

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple
dwelling

Builder
Hart Bros.

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Community Development and Planning

Narrative Description

The Latonia is a three-and-a-half story, six-unit apartment building with a rectangular-plan. Located at the northwest corner of Trumbull and Forest Avenues the building fronts on Forest Avenue. The building is clad in orange/brown brick laid in a running bond pattern. The building's basement level projects a half-story above the ground floor. The windows are vinyl multi-lite replacements with stone sills. The symmetrical front facade includes a center entrance that includes the building name "LATONIA" inscribed in cast stone above. The entrance is accessed by a seven-step staircase. The front door is a new white steel door. There are projecting bays on either side of the entrance and widely overhanging eaves with entablature. There are cast-stone

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

window lintels and sills. The building is in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. A wooden porch and stair structure is attached to the rear of each building, and is three stories tall.

Statement of Significance

The Latonia Apartment Building was constructed as part of a development of three adjacent apartment buildings: The Algonquin, the Latonia, and the Pensacola. The three-building apartment development was sited at the northwest corner of West Forest Avenue and Trumbull Avenue. The Algonquin fronts Trumbull Avenue while the Latonia and the now-demolished Pensacola buildings fronted Forest Avenue. The buildings were designed with an identical layout.

The developers/builders of the three structures were the Hart Brothers. William and John Hart were partners in the construction/contracting/real estate business called Hart Bros., which was formed in 1901. Their contracting and real estate firm was located in an office in the Chamber of Commerce Building (1212 Griswold, Detroit). The Hart Bros. developed apartments in a similar design and layout at the southeast corner of Rosa Parks Boulevard (then called Twelfth Street) and Spruce Street: the Ramara Flats, the Orena Flats, and the Elaine Flats in 1910. The Algonquin, Latonia and Pensacola Apartments were developed and constructed in 1911, and then sold to Bernard H. Mazure for \$15,000 each. This development in Woodbridge marked a time when demand for apartment buildings was stimulated by the tremendous growth of Detroit's population between 1900 and 1920 as a result of the mushrooming auto industry. Today, only the Algonquin and Latonia remain. The Pensacola Apartment building was demolished in the 1990s. In 1993 both the Algonquin and the Latonia were renovated by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Neighborhood Preservation Program.

Eligibility Recommendation

Previously Listed on the NRHP

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

MSHDA - 1993 Annual Report. *The Detroit Free Press*. "Three Six-Family Brick Apartment Buildings Are Sold For About \$15,000 Each." July 23, 1911. Sewick, Paul. Developer history. Vollmert, Leslie J. Woodbridge Neighborhood, National Register of Historic Places nomination.

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/26/2018

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

Name
Greenbrooke Manor

Street Address
19801 Greenfield Road

Municipal Unit
Detroit

County
Wayne

District Names
n/a

Year Built
1964

Property Type
Apartment building

Architectural Classification
Modern Movement



Plan
Rectangular

Foundation
Concrete

Walls
Brick

Roof Form
Flat

Roof
Membrane

Other Materials
Metal: Aluminum

Condition
Good

Integrity
Location, Setting, Feeling

Architect
Unknown

Historic Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Use
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Builder

Outbuildings

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Narrative Description

The Greenbrooke Manor apartments are located at the southwest corner of Greenfield Road and Pembroke Avenue in northwest Detroit. The Greenbrooke Manor apartments are comprised of two matching two-story rectangular-plan buildings. There are eighteen apartment units in each building. The buildings are each set on a podium and raised a half-story; accessed by three steps and a sidewalk to reach the entry doors. The glass and aluminum entry doors are newer replacements. There are two entry doors on both sides of the north/south facades. The two-story entries are set back into the structure, and a short roof projects over each entry door.

An asphalt parking lot separates the two buildings. Each building is surrounded on three sides by a four-foot wall of beige brick. The wall extends from the building facade creating a patio/garden. Each of these patio/garden areas contain box hedges, occasional Norway maple trees and white marble landscape stones. The buildings are faced with beige brick, glass, and aluminum designed

MICHIGAN HISTORY/ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY SITE FORM

in the International style. The large aluminum window walls with textured aluminum panels, panes of glass, flat roof, and minimalism, display characteristics of the International style. There are light-blue-colored textured aluminum spandrel panels under each window unit, contrasting with aluminum surrounds of the windows and brown aluminum trim. The brown aluminum trim at the base, middle and parapet emphasizes the horizontality of the buildings. The eastern and western facades are mainly brick with a centered window unit at each level. The eastern brick facade wall of the northern building contains black lettering of the name "GREENBROOKE MANOR." Air conditioning units penetrate the beige brick walls at the east and west ends of the buildings, as well as at each entrance's set-back piers. The air conditioning units were added at a later date. Security lights have been added on both of the buildings at the parapet level, and a chain-link fence is at the south and west sides; a black steel fence is at the east side of the parking lot, and a short black steel fence is at the handicap entry ramp. The buildings have an open staircase leading to the second-story and basement level at each entry. There are one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartment units arranged on each side of double-loaded corridors. The basement level houses utility rooms, storage rooms and laundry rooms.

Statement of Significance

The Greenbrooke Manor Apartments are eligible for the National Register under Criterion A and C. The International-style design of Greenbrooke Manor is associated with the broad pattern of apartment design in the mid-century era. The patio space surrounding the buildings follow some of the garden apartment principals of the 1960s. The International Style introduced new materials and construction methods, coupled with an aesthetic rejection of historical styles. Characteristic features of the International Style were used on the Greenbrooke Manor Apartments: wide expanses of windowless walls, flat roofs, and the widespread use of glass and aluminum. Very little information was available on Greenbrooke Manor. The Greenbrooke Manor Apartment buildings were constructed in 1964 in a primarily single-family residential neighborhood that was developed in the 1940s and 1950s. Advertisements for units at Greenbrooke Manor in the late 1960s-1980s describe them as "luxury" apartments. The complex was acquired by the DHC in 2012.

Eligibility Recommendation

Recommended Individually
Eligible/Eligible District

NR Criteria

A, C

NR Exceptions

Sources

Mills, Ruth, Stephanie Austin. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 1892-1970." Detroit, Michigan, 2017; Peggy Young & Associates, Inc. Appraisal of Greenbrook Manor Apartments. Detroit Housing Commission, December 30, 2010.; *The Detroit Free Press*.

Surveyor

Melissa Arrowsmith,
Rebecca Binno Savage

Date Surveyed

4/23/2018

Algonquin Apartments – 4711 Trumbull, Detroit



Algonquin Apartments – 4711 Trumbull, Detroit



Latonia Apartments – 1520 West Forest, Detroit



Latonia Apartments – 1520 West Forest, Detroit



Charles C. Diggs Apartments – 1331 East Canfield Street, Detroit



Charles C. Diggs Apartments – 1331 East Canfield Street, Detroit



Garfield Community Building



Forest Park Apartments – 1331 East Canfield, Detroit



Forest Park Apartments – 1331 East Canfield, Detroit



Greenbrooke Manor – 19805 Greenfield, Detroit



Greenbrooke Manor – 19805 Greenfield, Detroit



Harriet Tubman Apartments – 2450 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit



Harriet Tubman Apartments – 2450 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit



Parkside Homes – 12001 East Warren, Detroit



Parkside Homes – 12001 East Warren, Detroit



Riverbend Apartments – 4386 Conner, Detroit



Riverbend Apartments – 4386 Conner, Detroit



John W. Smith Homes – 14313 Crescent Drive, Detroit



John W. Smith Homes – 14313 Crescent Drive, Detroit



Sojourner Truth Homes – 4801 East Nevada, Detroit



Sojourner Truth Homes – 4801 East Nevada, Detroit



State Fair 1231 West State Fair Avenue, Detroit



State Fair 1231 West State Fair Avenue, Detroit



Warren West Apartments – 4100 West Warren Avenue, Detroit



Warren West Apartments – 4100 West Warren Avenue, Detroit

