

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office Building

Other names/site number: Detroit Cab Company Garage

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 2128 Trumbull Avenue

City or town: Detroit State: Michigan County: Wayne

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

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Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Michigan State Historic Preservation Office</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	<hr/>
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION/Vehicular/Taxicab Garage and Office
COMMERCE/TRADE/Business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial
Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, CONCRETE, METAL: Steel

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office is a three-story, rectangular building measuring 292 by 124 feet and located at 2128 Trumbull Avenue in Detroit's Corktown neighborhood. Constructed in the Commercial Brick style, the steel-and-concrete-framed building is faced with brick trimmed with cast concrete accents, with a mixture of double-hung and industrial-style windows. The original garage interior has been rehabilitated with the garage use maintained on the lower levels and most of the mezzanine, and the upper levels adapted into apartments. The building retains integrity to its period of significance.

Narrative Description

Site Context

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The Checker Cab Building is located at 2128 Trumbull in Detroit's Corktown neighborhood, one block north of Michigan Avenue. The neighborhood immediately surrounding the building is largely light industrial in nature with one- to three-story factory buildings. To the south, lining Michigan Avenue, are commercial/retail buildings. Directly across Trumbull Avenue (west) from the building is the former Tiger Stadium site. The stadium was demolished in 2008-2009, and the site is (at the time of this nomination) being redeveloped into mixed use commercial/residential around a new ball field. The Checker Cab building sits on the block bounded on the west by Trumbull Street, on the north by Plum Street, on the east by 8th Street, and on the south by Elizabeth Street. The building occupies the entire north half of the block stretching from Trumbull to 8th Street and extends to the lot lines on the west, north, and east. Its main façade faces west onto Trumbull Street. The south half of the block, formerly largely vacant and used for parking, is (at the time of this nomination) being redeveloped with new commercial/apartment buildings and an activated alley between them and the Checker Cab Building.

Structure

The Checker Cab Building is a three-story, rectangular building measuring approximately 292 (east-west) by 124 feet (north-south). The four eastern structural bays of the thirteen-bay long building are raised a half story above the remainder of the building to create mezzanine levels that facilitated the interior circulation of the parking deck. Structurally, the building is steel framed with I-beam posts and beams. The steel posts and beams are encased in concrete for fireproofing and protection from vehicles, except at the exterior walls where the posts are encased in brick. In the main part of the building (nine structural bays at the west end), there are structural posts at the outer walls and two interior rows of eight posts each running east-west. The beams bearing on these posts span north-south in this section. At the four eastern structural bays, there are structural posts at the outer walls and two interior rows of five posts each running north-south. The beams span east-west in this section and are deeper between the center posts. Between the main beams are intermediate reinforced concrete beams that serve as floor joists. The floor structure is reinforced concrete.

Exterior

The majority of the exterior walls are a red-brown fired brick, but portions of the south wall are faced with buff colored brick. The roof is flat and covered with fully-adhered light-colored EPDM. The eastern roof is raised above the main building roof, and there is a brick chimney rising from the southeast corner of this roof. Two metal-clad enclosures also extend above the roof on its upper level; these house the elevator and stair overruns. A helicopter landing pad was installed on the roof in the 1980s. It is a steel structure with a concrete slab landing pad and steel staircases. Three lightwells were added to the building during the recent rehabilitation. These are rectangular (longer in the north-south orientation) and spaced equidistant (two in the main section and one in the mezzanine section). They extend two stories high from the bottom of the second floor to the main roof. The lightwell walls are clad in standing seam metal and they have simple rectangular windows punched through. The surface of the lightwell base is covered with stones and a small turfed area. At the east side of the easternmost lightwell is a historic skylight. It is steel-framed and retains its original opening gears. A new aluminum-framed skylight has

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been installed over the historic skylight to protect it. Two more historic skylights and two skylights that were installed later were removed and infilled following National Park Service approval.¹

The main façade of the building is on the west elevation facing Trumbull Street. The exterior wall is red-brown brick trimmed with cast concrete bands and soldier-course brick lintel bands. At the northwest corner is a painted vertical historic sign reading "Checker Cab." The façade is arranged symmetrically with seven bays: a narrow bay in the center with a single window is flanked by two bays each with paired windows; these three bays are surmounted by a gabled parapet. The center section is flanked on each side by a four-windowed bay and a paired window bay. Each bay is divided by brick piers trimmed with flat cast concrete bands at each floor level; the gabled parapet has a narrow cast concrete frieze band and is trimmed at the top with stone coping. The windows are aluminum, double-hung three-over-three units that match the historic configuration and sight lines. The windows have cast concrete sills. The window opening on the northernmost bay of the first floor is infilled with brick; based on the original drawings, this was intended from the beginning. There is a pedestrian door in the center bay of the first floor. There are two garage door openings on the first floor. The northern garage door has been infilled with four storefront doors to access the commercial space; these are similar to the historic four-paneled garage doors depicted on the original drawings. The southern garage door has a metalwork rolling gate to access the parking areas.

The north elevation facing Plum Street is thirteen bays long. The exterior wall is red-brown brick with brick piers outlining each bay and brick corbelling at the top of each bay. Soldier course bands of brick run above the windows on each floor of each bay and the windows have cast concrete sills. The three western bays have tripled windows on each floor; the windows are aluminum double-hung three-over-three sash that match the historic configuration and sight lines. The remaining ten bays of this elevation originally had bands of steel factory windows on each floor. Each window was divided into four units of sixteen panes each, with some operable units. The exception to this pattern was the eastern four bays; here, the end units to each side had only twelve panes each. These are now aluminum sash that match the historic configuration and sight lines. The windows on the first floor of the main section and the basement, first, and second levels of the mezzanine section have no glass; they are open to provide ventilation in the garage levels, with wire mesh installed on the interior to provide security. On the first floor, there is a storefront door in the easternmost opening of the second bay from the west, a garage door in the seventh bay from the west and two utilitarian doors flanking a window in the ninth bay from the west.

The east elevation is six bays wide and clad in red-brown brick with brick piers separating each bay and a row of brick corbelling at the top of each bay. The second and fifth bays are wider than the remaining bays. This elevation has bands of aluminum factory windows on each floor, with

¹ The original drawings and structural evidence shows that the roof deck was framed to carry the three original skylights, while the roof structure was cut to install the additional units and reinforced where the slab was demolished; the skylights themselves are also of a different design, with the originals being designed as operable and the retrofitted designs fixed. It is unknown when the new skylights were added.

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four sixteen-pane units in the larger bays and three sixteen-pane units in the smaller bays, some operable. The southernmost bay only has two sixteen pane units, with the end units infilled with brick. The windows on the basement, first, and second levels have no glass; they are open to provide ventilation in the garage levels, with wire mesh installed on the interior to provide security. A pedestrian door is located in the southernmost bay; it has aluminum double doors with a glass and aluminum storefront surround. This is the main entry to the residential units.

The south wall is the least decorative and regular of the four elevations; historically there were other buildings on the block that obscured this elevation. The mezzanine portion at the eastern end is faced with red brick and had four bays of factory window openings with two to four sets of sixteen-pane units in the bays. The main portion is faced with buff brick and has seven bays of factory window openings with two to four sets of sixteen-pane units in the bays. The windows on the basement, first main and mezzanine level, and second mezzanine level have no glass; they are open to provide ventilation in the garage levels, with wire mesh installed on the interior to provide security. The red-brown brick of the west façade wraps around the first bay of the south elevation, along with header courses of brick separating the floor levels. Aluminum double-hung three-over-three windows to match the west façade windows are located on each level. At the middle of the mezzanine portion, a full-height hyphen connects this building to the new apartment building to the south (the elevator and stairs in the Checker Cab building provide vertical circulation for the new apartment building).

Interior

Originally, the building interior was largely composed of a multi-level parking garage. The garage floors were not sloped; rather, the raised portion at the east end provided vertical circulation. Cars climbed a ramp into the raised section (the mezzanine level), then looped around to another ramp on the opposite side to climb up to the next main level. A stair was located on the south side of the north ramp. The building structure was mostly exposed in the garage section and finished with utilitarian materials – exposed concrete floors, columns, and ceilings, and brick, concrete block, or window perimeter walls. At the western end of the building were offices and workspaces on each floor, with some office and workshop areas located around the perimeter walls. A stair was centered on the west elevation.

The recent rehabilitation adapted portions of the building for residential use. The historic garage use, including the ramps, was retained on the basement, first main and mezzanine level, and second mezzanine level. A commercial space, two bays wide and three bays long, is located on the northwest corner of the first floor. The residential lobby is located on the southeast corner of the building and is one bay wide and five bays long. It is set at the intersection of the staggered floor levels to allow the two elevators to access each level. The second main level and third main and mezzanine levels are divided into apartments. At the main levels, the apartments are arranged around a rectangular double-loaded corridor while at the mezzanine level they are arranged around a U-shaped double-loaded corridor. The central units have windows overlooking the light wells. The apartment units retain the exposed concrete ceilings, exposed brick exterior walls, and concrete floors that characterized the garage interior. Unit interior partitions have been held back from the ceiling to maintain its open character. Wood floors and

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drywall walls maintain the finished historic appearance of the former office spaces at the west end. The retained historic skylight illuminates an accessible unit on the third mezzanine level. A new stair was inserted on the north side of the north ramp to provide code-required egress. In the west end stair, the historic Checker Cab paint colors and murals have been retained.

Analysis of Integrity

The Checker Cab Building retains a high degree of integrity. Its exterior is largely intact, particularly at the west and north elevations, the most significant and decorative of the facades, which for the most part retain their original materials. Although many of the original windows were missing, or had been infilled with non-historic materials, the rehabilitation has restored the historic fenestration patterns with new windows that match the configuration and historic sight lines, while new window openings on the historically utilitarian south elevation are filled with sash that are complementary to the original factory-style windows. The adaptive reuse of the building interior into apartments maintains the garage use on some levels while sensitively inserting apartment units that reflect the industrial character of the building on the upper levels.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION

ARCHITECTURE

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1927-1931

Significant Dates

1927

1931

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company

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

The Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office is significant under Criterion A at the local level for its association with the development of Detroit's taxicab industry in the 1920s and 1930s. Founded in 1921 during a period of tumultuous development in the transition from horse-drawn cabs to motor vehicle taxicabs, Checker Cab emerged in the late 1920s as Detroit's dominant taxicab company. Originally built for a rival cab company in 1927, the Checker Cab building became the headquarters of Checker Cab in 1931 and the company remained in the building until 2016. The building is also significant under Criterion C, at the local level, for its architectural and engineering importance as a largely intact steel and concrete frame garage structure dating from the 1920s. The period of significance is 1927 to 1931, encompassing its original construction and acquisition by Checker Cab Company.

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

Criterion A

The Checker Cab Company Building of Detroit is significant under Criterion A, at the local level, as the headquarters of Detroit's oldest and largest taxi company, founded in 1921 and operated out of the same building from 1931 to 2016.

The founding of Detroit's Checker Cab Company dates to 1921, a period in which Detroit was struggling to deal with the growing taxicab industry in the city. At the end of the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth century, motorized vehicles for hire were gradually supplanting the horse-drawn hansom cabs that had provided individual public transportation in nineteenth century Detroit. The first motorized taxis were electric, appearing on the streets of New York City in the late 1890s and shortly thereafter in Detroit. Gasoline-powered taxis began replacing electric vehicles in the late 1900s and early 1910s.² As early as 1908, Detroit's "cabbies" (referring to horse-drawn cabs) were complaining that the "newfangled" (motorized) taxi-cabs were crowding them out of prime locations for picking up

² The Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company went back to electric taxicabs in the mid to late 1910s, quietly introducing several in 1914 and building up their fleet to around 100 electric taxicabs by 1917; they found that customers (especially women) preferred the quieter and cleaner electric cars for shorter distance routes (gasoline was still more efficient for longer journeys). The company set up curbside charging stations as well as a charging garage. Improvements in gasoline technology following World War I led the company to switch back to gasoline powered vehicles in the late 1910s. <http://www.leftlanenews.com/the-unofficial-history-of-the-hybrid-and-electric-car-the-rise-and-fall-of-electric-taxicabs.html>

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fares on Woodward Avenue and other major thoroughfares; at this time, the motorized taxi-cabs were not regulated as the horse-drawn vehicles were.³

The cab “wars” continued into 1909, as the first taxicab companies (the Taxi-Cab Service Company and the Postal-Doherty Taxi-Cab Company) appeared in Detroit’s city directories. These companies began opening systems of cab stations throughout the city at strategic locations like the Belle Isle Bridge, and motorized taxis quickly cut into the existing horse-drawn cab trade because of their novelty, speed, and flashy image. However, the local press reported that Detroit had never had a very lucrative cab trade because the longer-distance trips outside the “half-mile circle” around downtown Detroit could rarely pick up a return fare due to the faster and less expensive street cars. By the following year, the *Detroit Free Press* was speculating that Detroit would be the “First Horseless City.”⁴

For the next dozen years or so, the city struggled to deal with the implications of a new transportation system. The first ordinance allowing the mayor to issue taxi cab operating permits passed in 1909, and the City Council also began regulating fares. Despite this, the local press regularly reported throughout the 1910s that Detroit had relatively high taxicab rates compared to other cities in the United States and abroad; the city’s system of one-way streets and restrictive turning ordinances also tended to increase the length of taxi rides and thus their cost.⁵ The physical accommodation of taxicabs also proved problematic. Clashes between motorized taxis, the remaining horse-drawn cabs, private passenger vehicles, street cars, and pedestrians were frequent. The city tried to restrict taxicabs to permanent stands, with approval required by the property owner (or the city if on city-owned property), and banned taxicab stands from Woodward Avenue when they obstructed traffic on the city’s main thoroughfare. In 1914 the police commissioner had to prohibit taxis from parking within 75 feet of corners where pedestrians boarded streetcars in order to prevent accidents. The city also worked to require all taxicab drivers to be licensed and bonded, although unlicensed operators continued to be a problem.⁶

By the mid 1910s, taxis were commonplace on city streets and were estimated to cover at least a thousand miles a day. The Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company, the city’s largest taxicab company at the time, had a fleet of 65 Oldsmobiles, 42 of which were metered taxis, the rest being touring cars and limousines. Drivers for the taxicab companies made \$14 to \$18 per week at the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company and Yellow Bennet Company, while Yellow Taxi

³ “Taxies and Cabbies War,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 3, 1908, 1.

⁴ “New ‘Taxies’ Coming to Aid in Merry War,” *Detroit Free Press*, February 26, 1909, 6; “Passing of the Jolly Cabby,” *Detroit Free Press*, April 4, 1909, D4; “Will Detroit be the First Horseless City?” *Detroit Free Press*, October 16, 1910, C5.

⁵ “May Bar Autos from Avenue,” *Detroit Free Press*, July 17, 1912, 1; “Council Adopts New Taxi Scale,” *Detroit Free Press*, May 17, 1911, 10; “A Possible Solution of Street Transportation,” *Detroit Free Press*, September 29, 1911, 4; “Detroit Taxis Should Reduce Rates,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 10, 1919, 4; “Traffic Rules and Taxicabs,” *Detroit Free Press*, August 2, 1919, 4; “The Detroit Taxi Rates,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 22, 1920.

⁶ “May Bar Autos From Avenue,” *Detroit Free Press*, July 17, 1912, 1; “Taxis Must Find Permanent Stands,” *Detroit Free Press*, August 2, 1913; “Seek to Prevent Taxis Standing on Streets,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 13, 1913, 6; “To Prohibit Auto Parking Near Car Boarding Corners,” *Detroit Free Press*, May 5, 1914;

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paid their drivers 25% of every dollar (drivers had to pay for their own gasoline). Independent operators were also working in the city, and the taxicab trade was even open to women: Detroit Taxicab and Transfer was one of the first companies to hire women and pay them equal wages, and other companies followed suit when the United States' entry into World War I in 1917 led to shortages of male drivers.⁷

By the late 1910s, the taxicab wars had evolved from horse-drawn versus motorized cabs to stiff competition between the leading motorized taxicab companies and their independent colleagues. Several of the city's prominent hotels, including the Hotel Statler and Hotel Wolverine, had entered into exclusive agreements with the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company to provide taxicabs to their patrons. For the hotels, this provided the advantage of dealing with one company and some leverage in ensuring that the cab operators met certain standards expected by their customers, while the taxicab company benefitted from a guaranteed clientele. The city's independent taxicab operators objected to the restrictions and attempted to linger around the hotel vicinity hoping to pick up fares. The Hotel Statler in particular obtained a number of injunctions against the independent drivers in an attempt to keep them away from the hotels, charging that the independent operators engaged in fights, used obscene language, and harassed women. In 1921, after such exclusive rights were ruled unconstitutional by the courts, the hotels resorted to outfitting Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company employees as hotel doormen, who would then direct patrons to their own company cars.⁸

In response, the Detroit City Council continued to revise the taxicab ordinances, complicated by the fact that the state considered taxicabs as common carriers, and thus subject to the rules of the public utilities commission; it was thus unclear who could set rates.⁹ However, in addition to rates, the City Council also considered issues such as physical examinations for drivers, photo identification, mandated insurance, license numbers on cabs, the abolition of "calling charges" (charging for the time between the call for a taxicab and the actual pickup), and whether or not the city could establish taxicab stands over the objection of private property owners. The Council also contemplated abolishing or severely regulating jitneys (taxis that ran regular, established routes, thus competing with streetcars). Not surprisingly, these proposals met with disapproval from both the taxicab operators and the hotel owners, and the Council found itself occasionally reversing previous decisions.¹⁰

⁷ "Detroit Taxis Cover 1,000 Miles Each Day," *Detroit Free Press*, June 29, 1913, D6; "Independent Taxis Ask Square Deal," *Detroit Free Press*, December 17, 1916; "Girl Driver of Taxicab Wears 'Pluck and Bravery' Medal," *Detroit Free Press*, July 10, 1918, 3; <http://www.leftlanenews.com/the-unofficial-history-of-the-hybrid-and-electric-car-the-rise-and-fall-of-electric-taxicabs.html>

⁸ "Taxicabs' Stands Bring About Suit," *Detroit Free Press*, February 2, 1919, 4; "War on Taxi Men Renewed by Hotel," *Detroit Free Press*, April 23, 1920, 5; "Questions City Rule of Taxis," *Detroit Free Press*, April 5, 1921, 5; "Hotel-Taxicab War Reopened," *Detroit Free Press*, February 5, 1922.

⁹ In 1919, the United States government had also imposed a tax on taxicabs. "Taxis and Rented Autos Must Pay," *Detroit Free Press*, March 22, 1919; "Questions City Rule of Taxis," *Detroit Free Press*, April 5, 1921, 5.

¹⁰ "Rigid Physical Tests Planned," *Detroit Free Press*, June 8, 1921, 5; "Hotel, Cab Men Hit Law Draft," *Detroit Free Press*, June 10, 1921, 7; "Vote to Establish Stands for Taxis," *Detroit Free Press*, July 22, 1921, 3.

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In an attempt to combat the monopolies and economic and political weight carried by the established taxicab companies, Detroit's independent taxicab owners organized themselves into a confederation in early 1921. In April of that year, the association named itself the Checker Taxicab Service, and one of the first drivers, George Roberts, painted a black and white checkered stripe around his taxi's body (cab owners maintained their own colors). The company was formed as a membership organization, with bylaws and a board of directors selected by the members. A contemporary report by the *Detroit Free Press* noted that the service was composed of 200 individually owned cabs, while later company publications and George Roberts' obituary claimed the company started with eighteen members each with one taxicab. Since the company later distinguished between full and associate memberships, it is possible that the figure of eighteen refers to the full members, and the service employed other non-member drivers to reach the number of 200 referred to by the newspaper; it is also possible that the newspaper was confusing the membership of the Independent Taxicab Owners Association with the Checker Taxicab Service.¹¹ The original officers of the company were Fred J. Wolan, President, Arthur Merrill, Vice President, and Thomas A. Moore, Secretary-Treasurer, and the company established its headquarters and switchboard in a basement at the corner of Bagley and Clifford.¹²

The Checker Taxicab Service (later renamed Checker Cab Company) aimed to survive in the cutthroat Detroit taxicab industry by drastically cutting its prices. While most companies at the time charged the maximum allowed by ordinance, Checker reduced those prices by 40 percent (to 20 cents for the first 1/3 mile and 10 cents for each subsequent 1/3 mile) and the following year (1922), they reduced their rates even further to a flat rate of 10 cents for each third of a mile.¹³ Checker Cab also made overtures to other cab drivers in the city and thereby increased their membership to 85 cabs by 1922 and 240 by 1924. In 1924, the company leadership voted to allow members to operate two cabs each, increased to three in 1925; members thus became business owners in their own right, allowed to hire drivers for their "fleet" of cabs. As the company grew, they added taxicab stands and call boxes in locations around the city. In 1928, the company added associate memberships; drivers could own one cab and operate under the Checker Cab name, but were not voting members of the company.¹⁴

The 1920s were a boom time for Detroit, and at the time Checker was a growing company, but by no means the only taxicab service in the city. Its main rival, the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company, remained a strong presence through the mid to late 1920s, although it was renamed the Detroit Cab Company in 1925. In 1921, when the Checker Cab Company formed, there were

¹¹ "Independents Cut Taxi Rates," *Detroit Free Press*, April 16, 1921, 5; "George Roberts, Sr., co-founded Detroit cab company," *The Detroit News*, July 21, 1986, 5B; "Low-Price Taxicab Service Organized," *Detroit Free Press*, April 23, 1921; "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan.

¹² 1921 Polk City Directory; "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan.

¹³ "Low-Price Taxicab Service Organized," *Detroit Free Press*, April 23, 1921; "Checker Cab Display Ad," *Detroit Free Press*, February 13, 1922, 5; "Checker Cab Display Ad," *Detroit Free Press*, May 8, 1922, 9.

¹⁴ "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan.

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eleven taxicab companies and ten independent operators listed in the city directories; by 1925-26 there were 38 taxicab providers. Towards the end of the 1920s, the number of providers declined as independent taxicab owners dropped out and some companies consolidated (Checker Cab, for example, consolidated with LaSalle Cab in 1929 and appears to have acquired Yellow Cab by 1931).¹⁵

With its membership and services growing, the Checker Cab Company moved into new offices in the General Motors Building (now known as Cadillac Place in Detroit's New Center) in 1923. The company also began forming subsidiary companies to handle certain aspects of the business. After determining that the company should offer insurance to its members, the company formed the Checker Mutual Insurance Company in 1926. In 1928, the Checker Service Corporation was organized to manage and operate the garage side of the business (provision of gas and oil stations, wash racks, tires, etc. This was replaced by the Trumbull-Michigan Garage after the company moved into its new headquarters at 2128 Trumbull in 1931; Trumbull-Michigan Garage was later reincorporated as the Navin Field Garage). In order to handle the purchasing of automobiles and related supplies and equipment the Detroit Operating Company incorporated in 1929.¹⁶ By 1929, the company had nearly 2000 cabs in service, operated 52 switchboards with 1600 miles of private telephone wire, employed 90 operators, and 57 "starters" (on-site dispatchers) at various points throughout the city, and had 204 call boxes. It produced its own newsletter, the "Checkergram," which provided company news, reminded drivers of the rules, gave them tips and advice, and included jokes and stories.¹⁷

In 1929, the Checker Cab Company purchased the Detroit Cab Company, successor firm to its old rival, the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Service. Along with that company came their newly built garage at 2128 Trumbull Avenue in Detroit. For a time, Checker Cab kept Detroit Cab as a separate entity, paying it rent for the building at 2128 Trumbull in 1930 and 1931. Over the next several years, Checker Cab moved its operations into the building, taking it over completely and moving out of their old quarters in the General Motors Building in late 1931. The Detroit Cab Company disappeared as a separate entity around this time.

As the Depression took hold of Detroit in the early 1930s, many taxicab companies went out of business. By 1931-32, there were only a handful of taxicab companies and independent operators listed in city directories (besides those operated by Checker Cab). Although Checker Cab itself lost members and associate members during the Depression, it remained the city's dominant taxicab company during this period; in 1936, city registration records indicated that 615 of the

¹⁵ Detroit City Directories, 1921-1930; "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan.

¹⁶ All 236 members of the Checker Cab Company were stockholders of the Checker Service Corporation. "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan; Bylaws of the Checker Service Corporation, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan; Bylaws of the Detroit Operating Company in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan.

¹⁷ "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan; *Checkergram*, Volume 5, No. 9, May 1st, 1932, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan;

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826 cabs registered in the city were registered to Checker Cab's 400 owners. However, several other cab companies were started in the 1930s and 40s that would become rivals, including the Detroit Cab Company (a different entity than the one acquired by Checker in 1929), Radio Cab, and Highland Cab; some of these were started by former Checker Cab members. The Depression was also turbulent in other ways for Checker Cab: in 1937 union members instituted a strike against Checker Cab.¹⁸

The 1940s and 1950s represented another "lush" period for Checker Cab as postwar prosperity kept its members busy. In 1946, the company created yet another subsidiary, the Trumbull Realty Company, to handle the real estate side of operations, including purchasing, leasing, and selling real estate, constructing buildings, and making improvements and additions. In 1952, the company introduced two-way radios, making it the largest radio-equipped company in the country.¹⁹ However, the company was also losing business in the growing African American neighborhoods because the company apparently failed to hire African American drivers, while rival companies did.²⁰

Although the company did well financially in the 1940s and 1950s, by the 1960s there were signs of difficulty. An internal memorandum in 1961 detailed suggested cost savings and methods of increasing revenue, including finding a more profitable tenant for the restaurant in the 2128 Trumbull building, expanding into the suburban market, and buying or selling land near the building. In 1965, Checker Cab employees voted to form a union. When the company refused to recognize or bargain with the union, pointing out that it was primarily a coalition of independent owners rather than a traditional employer, the National Labor Relations Board issued an order to enforce their ruling that the company should recognize the union.²¹

The company's financial troubles continued into the 1970s and 1980s. In 1979 a letter to the Board of Directors from their Certified Public Accountant referred to recent "financial disasters," noting that membership was decreasing and costs increasing, with the consequence of severe financial trouble. The CPA pointed to the Trumbull Realty Company and Navin Field Garage as part of the problem as their operations were too tightly intertwined with the cab company. Navin

¹⁸ "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan; "Checker Taxicabs Strike in Detroit," *New York Times*, March 25, 1937, 11.

¹⁹ Trumbull Realty Company Articles of Incorporation, in Checker Cab archives, Detroit, Michigan; "Checker Cab, 1921-1971: Silver Anniversary," program of a celebration at the Polish Century Club, May 14, 1971, in the Checker Cab Company archives, Detroit, Michigan;

²⁰ Checker driver Charles H. Campbell wrote to Checker Cab president Alfred Diaz in October 1957 noting that he was African American and offering to help recruit other African Americans to drive for the company; he also noted that the company employed "Spanish, Mexicans, Indians, Cubans, Hawaiians, and other races." A month later, Campbell wrote back to Diaz complaining that the latter had not kept his offer confidential and that he had been harassed by other drivers. Correspondence in Checker Cab archives, Detroit, Michigan.

²¹ "Report and Recommendations to the Board of Directors By Leslie Moore," June 19, 1961, in Checker Cab archives, Detroit, Michigan; "National Labor Relations Board, Petitioner, v. Checker Cab Company and its Members, Respondents, On Petition for Enforcement of an order of the National Labor Relations Board: Brief for the National Labor Relations Board," September, 1965, in the Checker Cab archives, Detroit Michigan.

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Field Garage was nominally profitable, but at the expense of the other two companies.²² However, while the CPA strongly urged selling the property at 2128 Trumbull at that time, the company did not, and its continued existence today demonstrates that the company was able to survive its financial troubles. It remains in business today as the largest taxicab company in Michigan.

Criterion C

The Checker Cab Company Building is also significant under Criterion C, at the local level, for its architectural and engineering importance as a largely intact steel and concrete frame garage structure dating from the 1920s.

The Checker Cab Company Building was constructed in 1927 as a purpose built taxicab garage for the Detroit Cab Company, the successor to one of the city's original taxicab companies, the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company (DTTC). The DTTC was organized in 1910 as the Detroit Garage Company, and changed its name the following year to the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company.²³ By the early 1920s, it was the city's largest taxicab company and held exclusive contracts with a number of Detroit's hotels. The company's headquarters during this period was at 565 East Larned, but it also had auxiliary locations at 13 Lafayette Boulevard and at the corner of Trumbull and Plum.²⁴

The large lot at the southeast corner of Trumbull and Plum had previously hosted a yard of the Detroit Cement and Sewer Pipe Company, as shown in the 1897 Sanborn map. The 1921 Sanborn map shows the Detroit Taxicab and Transfer Company at this location. Its facility encompassed several one-story buildings including an office, a garage with a capacity of eight trucks, an attached auto and wagon shed, and a stable with an attached harness room and wagon shed.

In 1925, the DTTC was renamed or bought out by the Detroit Cab Company.²⁵ This company built the present garage in 1927. The date of construction is sometimes given as 1929, but the original drawings and building permits are dated 1927. According to the permit drawings, the building was designed by the Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company out of their Detroit office in the Penobscot Building.²⁶ Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company was founded by Friederick and Berthold Weinhagen in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin in 1886 before they moved the company to

²² William R. Thompson, Kent, Kuhn, and Thompson, Certified Public Accountants, to the Board of Directors and Mr. Thomas Poucher, General Manager, Checker Cab Company, August 29, 1979, in the Checker Cab archives, Detroit, Michigan.

²³ *Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record*, V. 6, Issue 13, p. 8.

²⁴ 1921 City Directory.

²⁵ <http://www.leftlanenews.com/the-unofficial-history-of-the-hybrid-and-electric-car-the-rise-and-fall-of-electric-taxicabs.html>

²⁶ "The Detroit Cab Company," Permit Drawings, Permit No. 32306, 1927, microfilm held at Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board, Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Detroit, Michigan.

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Milwaukee in 1890.²⁷ The company manufactured structural steel for buildings, bridges, and mining structures and was a leading builder of bridges in Wisconsin in the late 1800s and early 1900s.²⁸ By 1917 they had branches in Chicago, Kansas City (Missouri), and in the Penobscot Building in Detroit. Detroit work listed in the company's photograph collection included (dates provided where listed) a foundry building for the Atlas Foundry Company, a press building for Clayton and Lambert Manufacturing, a warehouse for the Detroit Ship Building Company, a coal elevator for the P. Koenig Coal Company, a bridge over the River Rouge for the Michigan Central Railroad, a forge shop for the Studebaker Corporation, the Davison Avenue and Grand Truck Railroad bridge (1939), and a factory building for the Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Corporation (1935). Their other work in Michigan includes the Redridge Steel Dam across the Salmon Trout River in Houghton County (completed 1901), the Saginaw River Swing Bridge on the Central Michigan Railroad (1914), the Black River Bascule Bridge in Port Huron (1933), and the American approaches to the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron (1938). The company continued to expand its offerings in the middle decades of the twentieth century, but filed for bankruptcy in 1982 and closed its facility in Milwaukee.²⁹

The original drawings for the building were produced in late spring and early summer of 1927, and the owners applied for a permit from the Detroit building department on July 16, 1927. The original construction price was listed as \$300,000. The address for the property at its construction was 2168 Trumbull (also cross-referenced as 1401-53 Plum); 2128 was originally assigned to the residence next door to the south, but that building was renumbered to 2122 around 1928-29 and 2128 became the official address for the Checker Cab building at that time (the address varies, listed at times as 2126, 2128-, 2128-30, and 2128-48).

While the building at 2128 Trumbull was not a public parking garage, its construction was possible because of a rise in such facilities in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the late 1920s, parking for automobiles was a critical need in cities across the United States. By 1920, over nine million cars and trucks were registered in the country, and the numbers continued to climb from there. The earliest automobile parking facilities were conversions from other uses, such as stables (some cities had massive multi-story stables built of wood, masonry, or concrete), bicycle repair shops, and even a skating rink. One upholstery shop in Detroit rented space in its building for parking. However, the limited space available in most of these buildings,

²⁷ "Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company," Finding Aid, Milwaukee Public Library Historic Photo Archives, Milwaukee Public Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

²⁸ Fifteen of the fifty-nine bridges identified as significant in a 1981 Wisconsin Highway system historic bridge survey were attributed to the Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company, more than three times those attributed to any other firm. Survey cited in Guy Meyer, "Transportation: Iron and Truss Bridges," in Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resources Management in Wisconsin, Volume 2* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), 12-8 to 12-19.

²⁹ Amy Ross, et. al., "Broadway Street Bridge Spanning the Manitowoc River at Broadway Street," (Madison, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 1995), 9; "Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company," Finding Aid, Milwaukee Public Library Historic Photo Archives, Milwaukee Public Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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and the fact that multi-story stables had been designed for the storage of horses, not combustible vehicles, meant that their utility was finite.³⁰

Beginning in the 1910s, architects and engineers began exploring new solutions for the parking of automobiles. Early prototypes used elevators and even turntables. However, while they did maximize storage space, they were eclipsed by the ramp garage by the mid-1920s, because elevators and turntables were often costly to operate, frequently broke down, and required attendants to park the cars. The ramp garage prevailed in part due to the development of the D'Humy system of ramp design. First introduced in 1918 by designer Fernand D'Humy, the ramp system split the garage into two halves, staggering the height of the floors to reduce the difference between floors and shorten the ramp length required to reach each level. Other systems placed ramps at either ends of the garage, used elliptical or spiral ramps, or sloped all levels of the garage to create a continuous sloping floor. In terms of materials, reinforced concrete was in use in garage construction as early as 1905 and became widespread due to its fireproof nature and the need for a washable but non-slip surface in garages. The use of structural steel framing, pioneered in parking garages by Detroit architect Albert Kahn in the 1910s and 1920s, permitted smaller columns with larger spaces between and wider roof spans. Until vehicle technology advanced in the 1930s, parking structures were generally enclosed to protect vehicles from the weather, and their utilitarian nature was often hidden behind high-style facades that blended with the urban architecture around them.³¹

Predictably, given that the rise in Detroit's fortunes and population in the 1910s and 1920s was fueled in large part by the automobile industry, parking garages were an early introduction to the city. While it is unclear which building had the distinction of being the first parking garage in Detroit, the city's pre-eminent industrial architect, Albert Kahn, was, unsurprisingly, an early innovator. Kahn had executed an elevator-style, concrete-framed garage for the Chicago Motor Car Company (in Chicago) in 1910. In 1915, he designed a six-story garage for the Detroit Athletic Club (opened 1921). The First National Bank Building (1922) featured his first skyscraper garage, while he included an underground garage in the S. S. Kresge Administration Building (1931). The Fort Shelby Hotel garage (1926) had an innovative ramp design, while the Detroit News Building garage (1931) was considered an "honest" garage – one that highlighted the frame structure behind it. Kahn also attached an eleven-story parking garage to Detroit's Fisher Building (1928) with direct connections between the garage and the Fisher Building.³²

An early example of the D'Humy system in Detroit was the Book Tower Garage, designed by J. B. Book Corporation engineer L. R. Hoffman and Book Tower architect Louis Kamper. Located behind the Book Tower at State Street and Park Place, the twelve-story garage, opened in May 1928, featured slightly curving ramps that created additional parking space and a double-ramp at the entrance to avoid congestion (the garage is no longer extant; there is currently a long, two-

³⁰ Shannon Sanders McDonald, *The Parking Garage: Design and Evolution of a Modern Urban Form* (Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute, 2007), 7-15.

³¹ Shannon Sanders McDonald, *The Parking Garage: Design and Evolution of a Modern Urban Form* (Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute, 2007), 33-35; 141-145.

³² McDonald, *The Parking Garage*, 38-39.

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story ramp along Park Place extending from Michigan Avenue to Grand River Avenue). The Detroit Garages Company opened three public parking garages (at Congress and Beaubian, Elizabeth Street west of Park Boulevard, and Cass Avenue at Larned) in late 1924.³³

The new garage that the Detroit Cab Company built on its Trumbull Avenue property in 1927 was a three-story, rectangular structure with its principal façade on the west elevation facing Trumbull Avenue. It was an example of a modified split level (D'Humy) design. Instead of being split in half, the eastern end of the building was slightly higher and the floor levels offset to accommodate "mezzanine" parking and ramps between levels. It is possible this was done to provide for quicker access to the upper levels, as cars could travel a shorter distance to reach the next half level. The exterior was executed in the Commercial Brick style, with brown-red brick on the decorative facades, trimmed with cast concrete bands and window sills. The decorative façade of the west elevation wrapped around one bay on the south, and nine bays on the north, although these had less trim than the west elevation. The decorative facades had double-hung three-over-three steel windows, while the remainder of the building had multi-paned steel factory windows with some operable sash. The center bays of the west façade were topped by a triangular pediment, also trimmed with cast concrete. The 1951 Sanborn map lists the capacity as 600 cars. The original drawings show four offices grouped around the center (west) stair on the first floor, a one-deep row of offices on portions of the west and north elevations on the second floor, and two offices in the northwest corner of the third floor.

At around the same time as Checker Cab acquired the Detroit Cab Company garage on Trumbull, a restaurant was installed in one of the center bays on the first floor of the west elevation of the building.³⁴ It was listed as the Navin Field Restaurant/Café in directories through 1937; it was replaced in 1938 with the Stadium Café but also operated in the 1950s as the Robinson Restaurant before reverting to the Stadium Restaurant in the 1970s. The city directories also list the various subsidiary companies of Checker Cab as they came and went through the years, including the Trumbull-Michigan Garage, later replaced by Navin Field Garage, Yellow Cab Company, Checker Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, Detroit Operating Company, and the Checker Finance Corporation.

Checker Cab Company tradition relates that the roof of the Checker Cab Building was used in the 1930s as "Wild Cat Bleachers" by Detroit Tigers fans (Navin Field, later Briggs Stadium and Tiger Stadium, was directly across Trumbull Avenue) before the second level was added to the Trumbull Avenue wall. This story is supported by a historic photograph showing large billboards on the building with crowds of people peering out from under the billboards, and even perching on top of them. The same tradition holds that the second level on the stadium was added to block that view, although that element of the story could not be confirmed and seems less likely given the few numbers that could be accommodated on the roof. However, it is true that the helipad on the building's roof was installed by Detroit Tigers owner Tom Monahan in the 1980s so he could use a helicopter to reach the stadium without having to fight traffic.

³³ McDonald, *The Parking Garage*, 33; "Book Tower Garage Will Open Monday," *Detroit Free Press*, May 20, 1928, 76.

³⁴ The Detroit building permit was applied for on July 13, 1929 and noted as "conv. into restaurant and garage."

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The Checker Cab Company remained in the building it had occupied since 1931 until 2016, when it was sold for redevelopment as residential apartments with a commercial space on the first floor. Prior to the Checker Cab moving out, the building was remarkably intact; the west elevation retained most of its historic fabric, including the original windows, with minor alterations including the installation of newer pedestrian and garage doors (in the original openings), replacement of two windows with glass block, and the reconfiguration of the former restaurant opening. The north elevation was also mostly intact, including nearly all of the double-hung steel windows; however, some of the factory windows toward the east end of the building were covered (at the upper levels), or removed and blocked in (at the lower levels) for security. Similar alterations took place on the east and south elevations, which were always designed as utilitarian facades. At the interior, the office spaces and finishes were remodeled over the years, but the general layout (a balance of parking garage with office spaces at the perimeter) remained. Traces of the first floor restaurant also remained, although it had also undergone later alterations and the kitchen was mostly removed. City building permits list the construction of men's toilet rooms in 1947, a new partition in the basement for the electrical switch room in 1949, the installation of a new ceiling and alterations to the existing office areas in 1962, and the addition of a used car sales area in the basement in 1985. The recent adaptive reuse of the building has retained its most significant character-defining features while sensitively introducing new elements to support its new use as residential apartments. The historic garage use is honored through the retention of parking on the first floor and the second floor of the mezzanine.

The period of significance for the Checker Cab Company building is 1927-1931. This period reflects the building's architectural significance in terms of its original construction in 1927 as the Detroit Cab Company, as well as its historical significance as the headquarters of the Checker Cab Company. By 1931, Detroit's taxicab industry had matured after its tumultuous rise in the 1910s and 1920s, and Checker Cab had consolidated its place as the city's leading taxicab service, culminating in its purchase and occupation of its new headquarters at 2128 Trumbull.

NOTE: Research did not uncover a connection between Detroit's Checker Taxicab Company and Checker cab companies in other cities or the automobile manufacturing firm Checker Cab Company, eventually headquartered in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The Checker Taxi Company of Chicago was founded around 1919 (thus predating Detroit's Checker Cab) and by 1922 was a million-dollar corporation fielding a fleet of a thousand taxicabs.³⁵ Since Checker Taxi of Chicago was also a coalition of independent taxi operators, Detroit's Checker Taxi Service may have named its company after the Chicago Checker Taxi Company to make that functional connection. Checker Taxi Company of Chicago's rivalry with another Chicago taxi company, John Hertz's Yellow Cab, became legendary and was heavily interconnected with Chicago's organized crime scene in the 1920s and 1930s. The Checker Cab Company, which manufactured taxicabs supplied to Checker Taxi and other cab companies, was formed in 1922 from the consolidation of Commonwealth Motors, which had manufactured the Mogul Taxi used by many Chicago Taxicab Company operators, and Markin Body Company, owned by Russian immigrant

³⁵ *Official Reference Book: Press Club of Chicago* (Chicago, IL: Press Club of Chicago, 1922), 267; National Taxicab and Motorbus Journal, Volume 2 (1922).

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Morris Markin, which under a previous name had supplied the Mogul automobile body to Commonwealth. In June of 1922, the Checker automobile manufacturing company introduced the Checker Model C in Chicago and added the checkerboard pattern beltline and logo (at least a year after it entered use in Detroit). In 1923, following a deadly taxicab war in Chicago in which Markin's house was bombed, Markin moved his production facility to Kalamazoo. Markin later gained control of Checker taxicab companies in New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Minneapolis, but the Detroit Checker Cab Company appears to have remained independent.³⁶ In the 1940s, the United States Justice Department targeted the cartels that owned taxi services in Chicago, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, and New York City, but no reference has been found related to Detroit's Checker Cab.

³⁶ James Hinckley, *Checker Cab Company Photo History* (Hudson, WI: Iconografix, 2003); <http://www.coachbuilt.com/bui/c/checker/checker.htm>

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark

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recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: Checker Cab Archives, 2128 Trumbull, Detroit, MI

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.332598 | Longitude: 83.067511 |
| 2. | |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 5. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

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

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

East of Trumbull, the west 292.5 feet of the south 124 feet of out lot 89 of Woodbridge Farm, Liber 1, Pages 146 and 147 of Plats, Wayne County records.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses parcel on which the Checker Cab Building is situated and reflects the historic extent of the building, which was built out to the lot lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ruth E. Mills, Architectural Historian

organization: Quinn Evans Architects

street & number: 219 ½ North Main Street

city or town: Ann Arbor state: Michigan zip code: 48104

e-mail: rmills@quinnevans.com

telephone: 734-926-0433

date: March 28, 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office

City or Vicinity: Detroit

County: Wayne

State: Michigan

Photographer: All photographs by Quinn Evans Architects, except 0001 (photographer unknown)

0001 of 0042

Date Photographed: ca. 1932

Historic photograph looking northeast

0002 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2016

West and south elevations looking northeast, prior to rehabilitation

0003 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2016

West elevation looking east, prior to rehabilitation

0004 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2016

North and east elevations, looking southwest, prior to rehabilitation

0005 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2016

South and east elevations, looking northwest, prior to rehabilitation

0006 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

West and north elevations, looking southeast

0007 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

West and south elevations, looking northeast

Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office
Name of Property

Wayne County, Michigan
County and State

0008 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
East and south elevations, looking northwest

0009 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
East and north elevations, looking southwest

0010 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Commercial entrance, west elevation looking east

0011 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage entrance, west elevation looking east

0012 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage level 1 main, looking northeast

0013 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage level 1 main, looking west

0014 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage level 1 mezzanine, looking southeast

0015 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage level 1 mezzanine, looking northwest

0016 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Residential lobby looking east

0017 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Residential lobby looking southwest

0018 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage level 2 mezzanine looking southwest

Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office
Name of Property

Wayne County, Michigan
County and State

0019 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Garage level 2 mezzanine looking southeast

0020 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor corridor looking east

0021 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor corridor looking south

0022 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor unit 227 looking south

0023 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor unit 227 looking northeast

0024 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor unit 228 looking south

0025 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor interior unit 229 looking northeast

0026 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor unit 209, looking southeast

0027 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor unit 220, looking southeast

0028 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Second floor unit 220 looking west

0029 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Third floor corridor looking west

Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office
Name of Property

Wayne County, Michigan
County and State

0030 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor corridor looking south

0031 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor lobby corridor looking west

0032 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor elevator lobby looking northwest

0033 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Second/Third floor stair looking east

0034 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor unit 301 looking northwest

0035 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor unit 301 looking southeast

0036 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor unit 306 looking northwest

0037 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor unit 328 looking south

0038 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor accessible unit 318 looking northwest

0039 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Third floor unit 312 looking west

0040 of 0042

Date Photographed: 2019

Light well 1 at second floor level, looking northeast

Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office
Name of Property

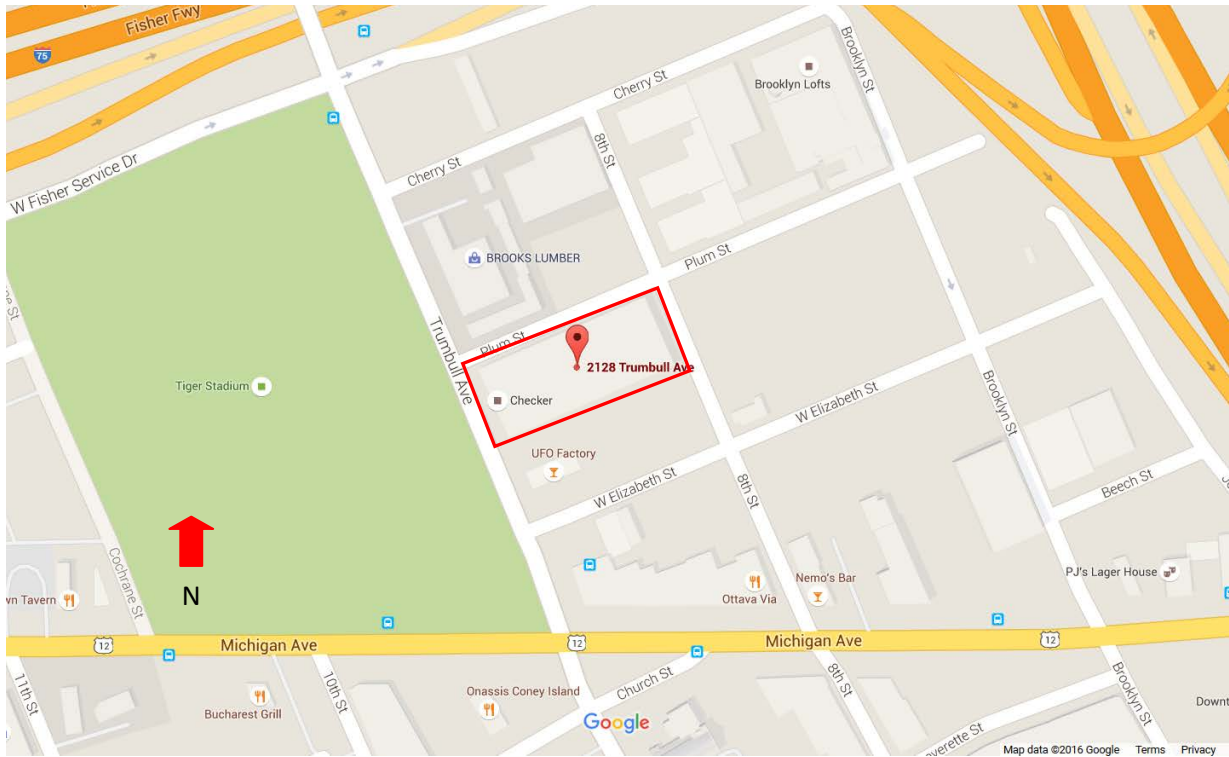
Wayne County, Michigan
County and State

0041 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Roof looking southwest

0042 of 0042
Date Photographed: 2019
Roof looking southeast

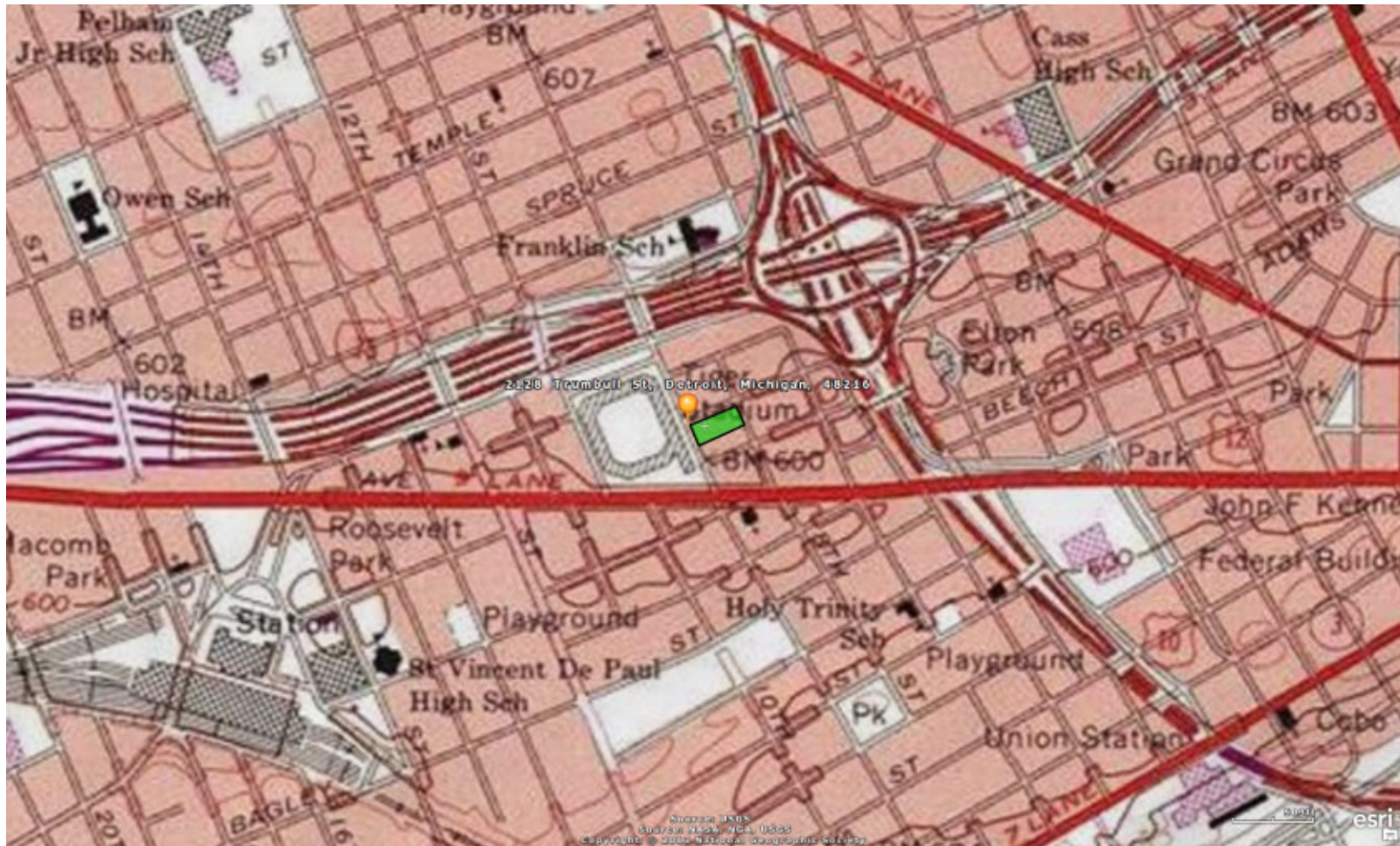
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

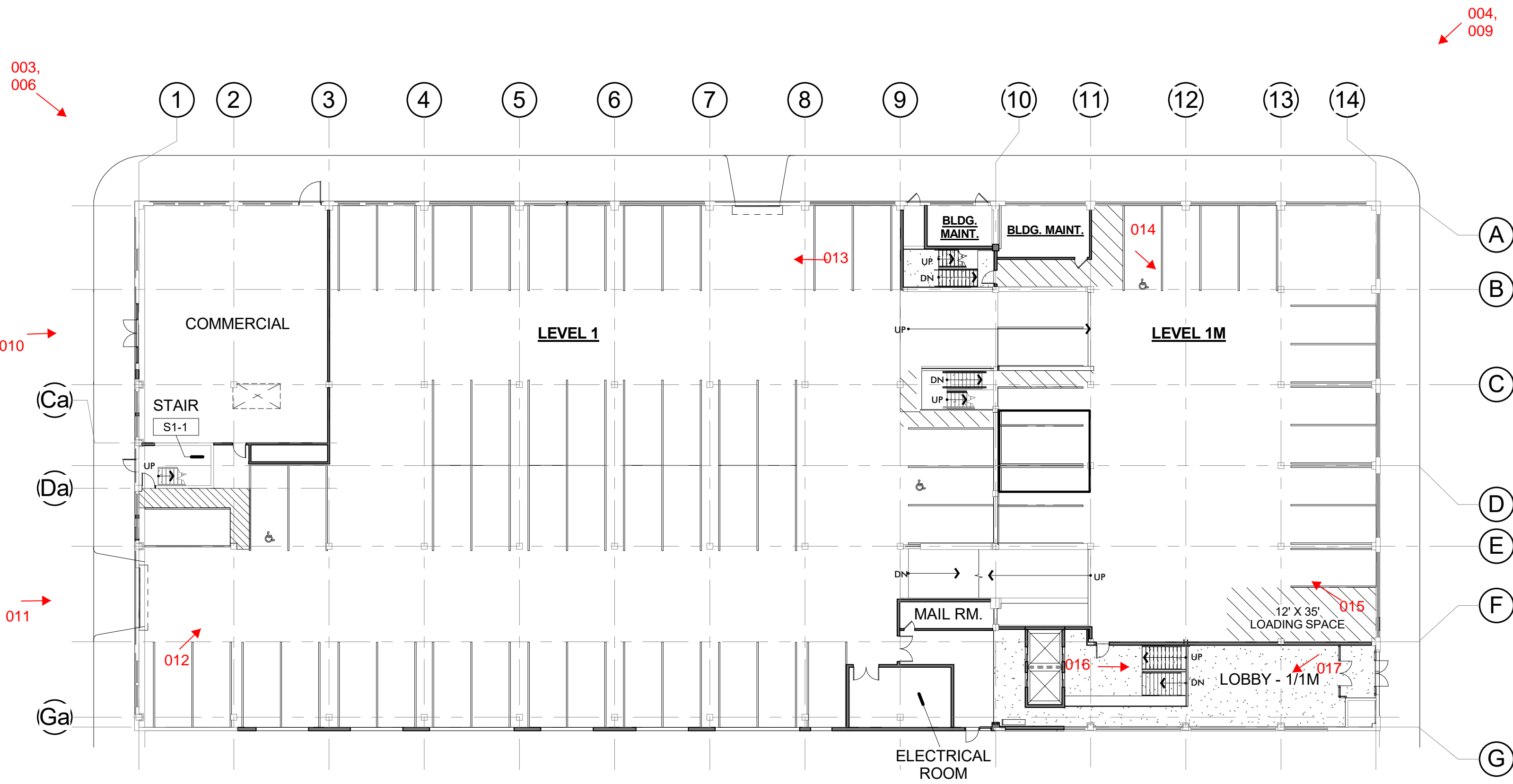
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office
2128 Trumbull Avenue
Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan
Location and Boundary Map

Checker Cab Building, 2128 Trumbull, Detroit, MI





LEVEL 1/1M PLAN

003,
006

004,
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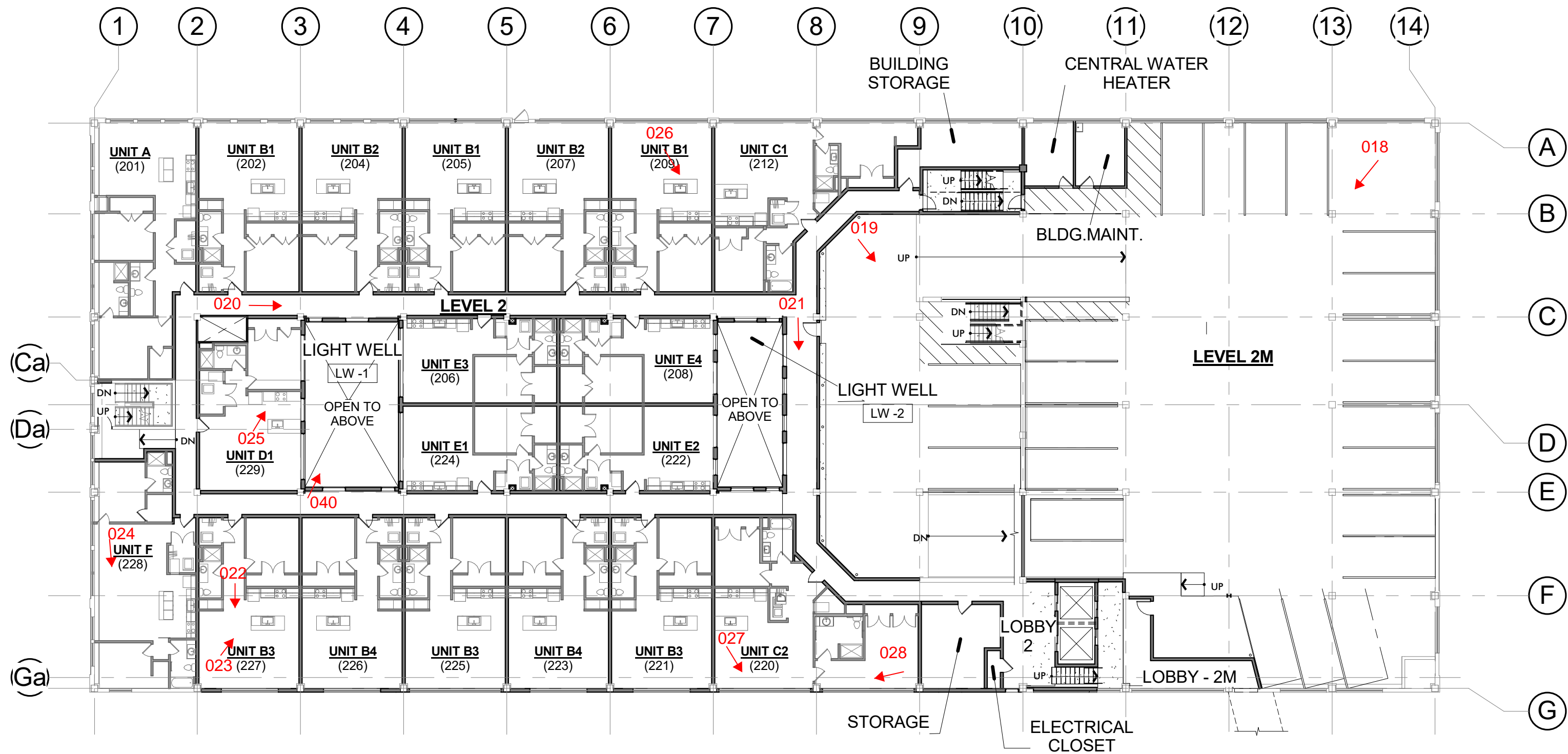
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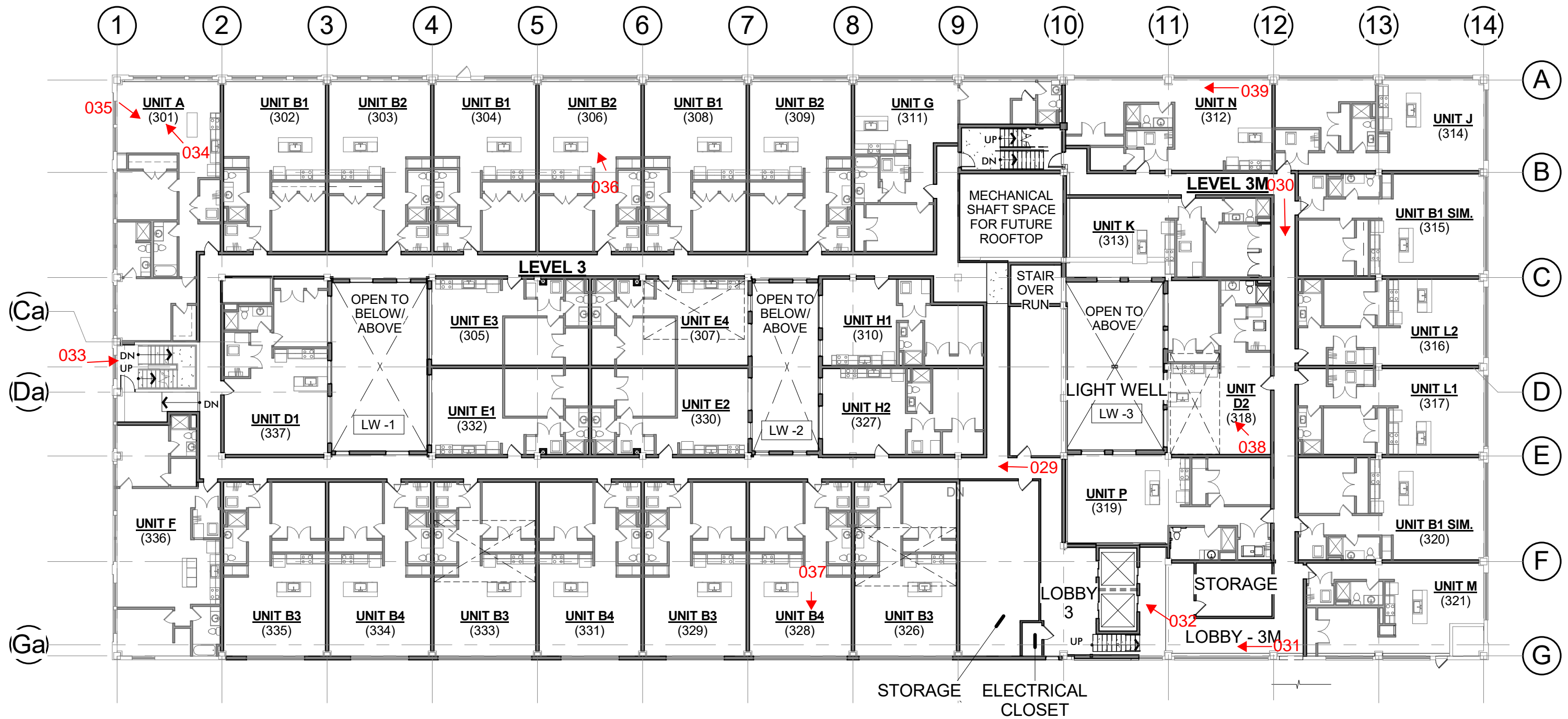
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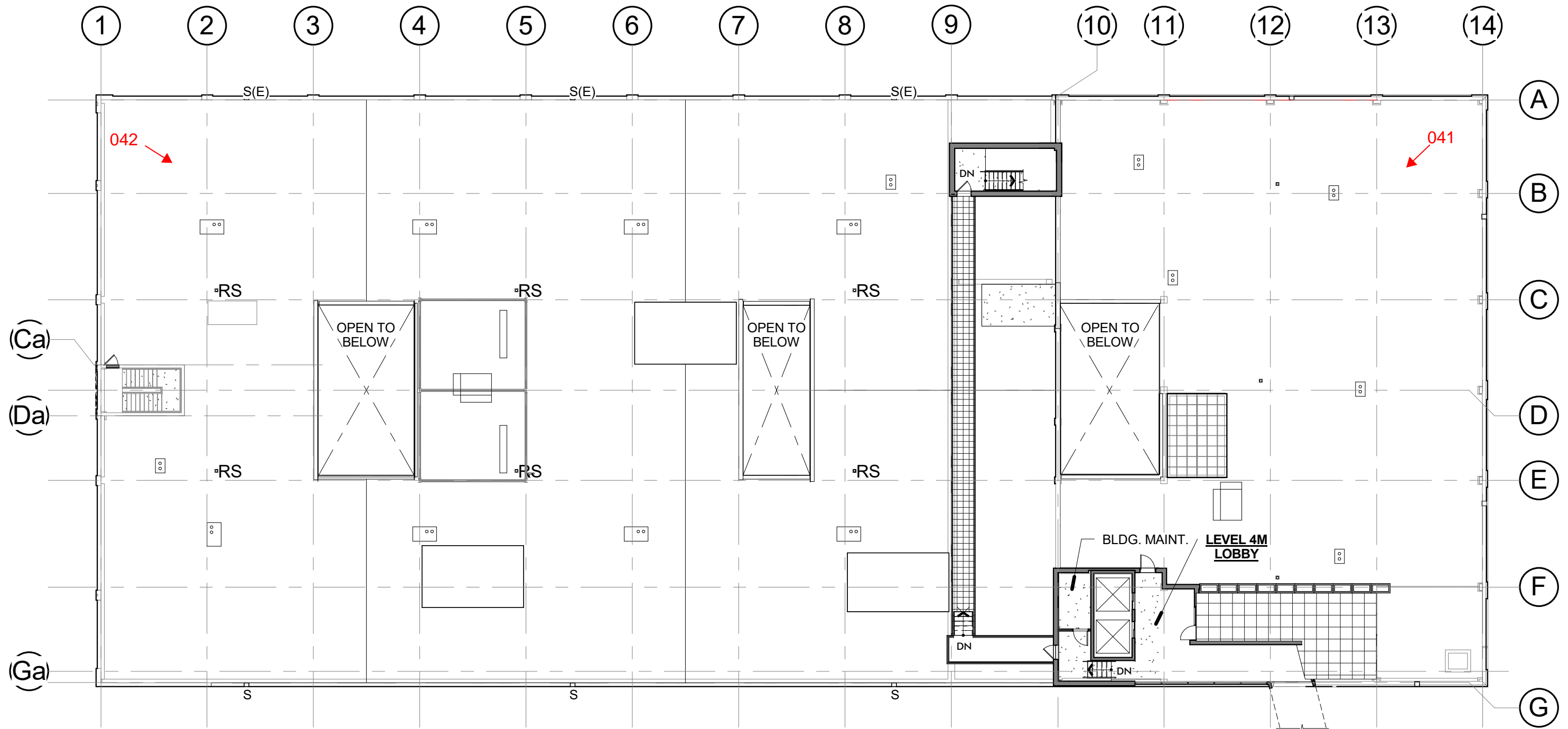
LEVEL 2/2M PLAN





LEVEL 3/3M PLAN





LEVEL 4/4M PLAN







Ottawa Via

McShane's Irish Pub & Whiskey Bar

2128 Trumbull Avenue

UFO Factory

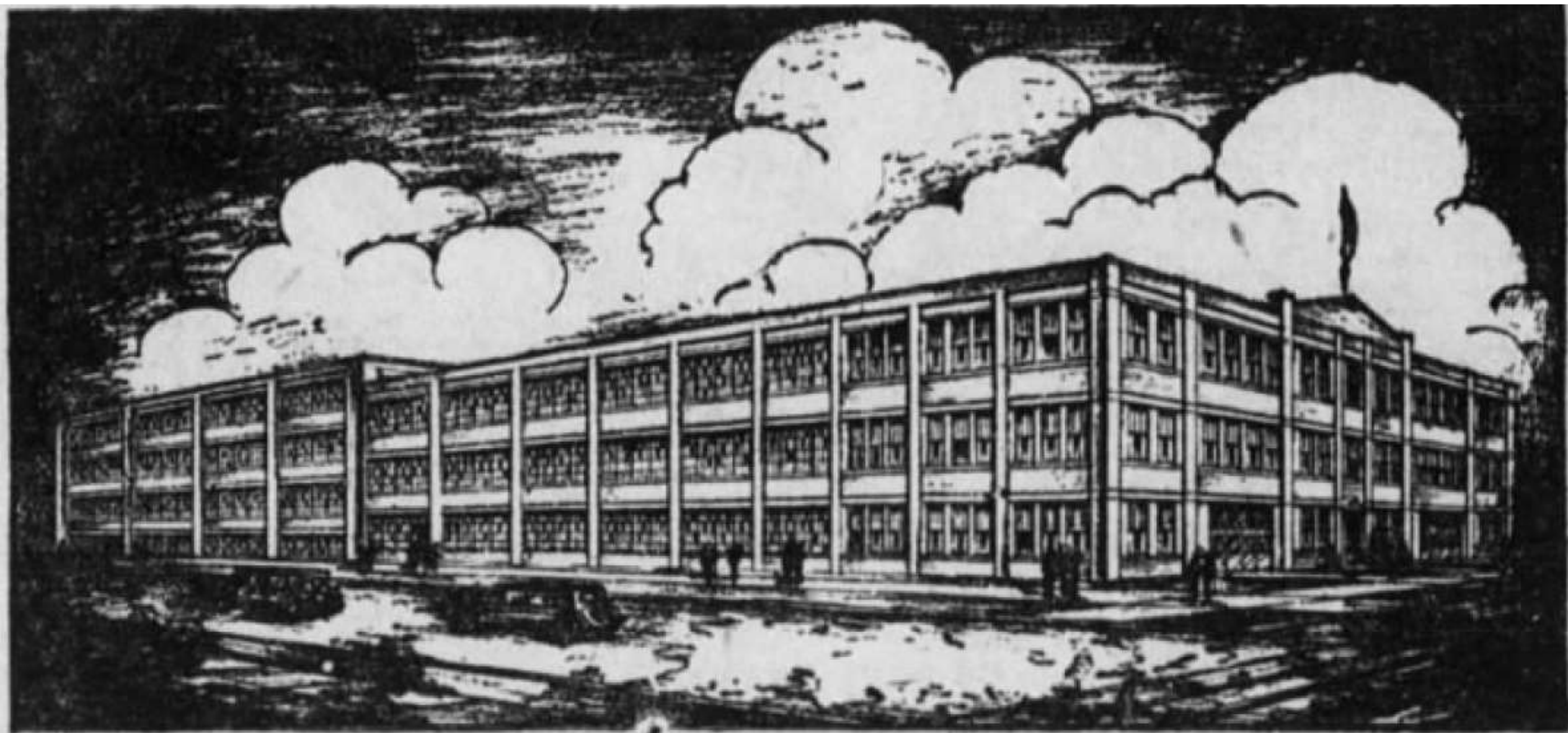
BROOKS LUMBER

Bennett Park

Trumbull Ave

Trumbull Ave

Trumbull Ave



DETROIT CAB BUILDING (As it will appear when completed) Southeast corner of Trumbull Avenue and Plum Street

Plot Plan showing location
of Garage Building for
The Detroit Cab Company

Design by

Miscorin Bridge & Iron Co.

1318 Penobscot Bldg.

Detroit Michigan

Sheet 1 of

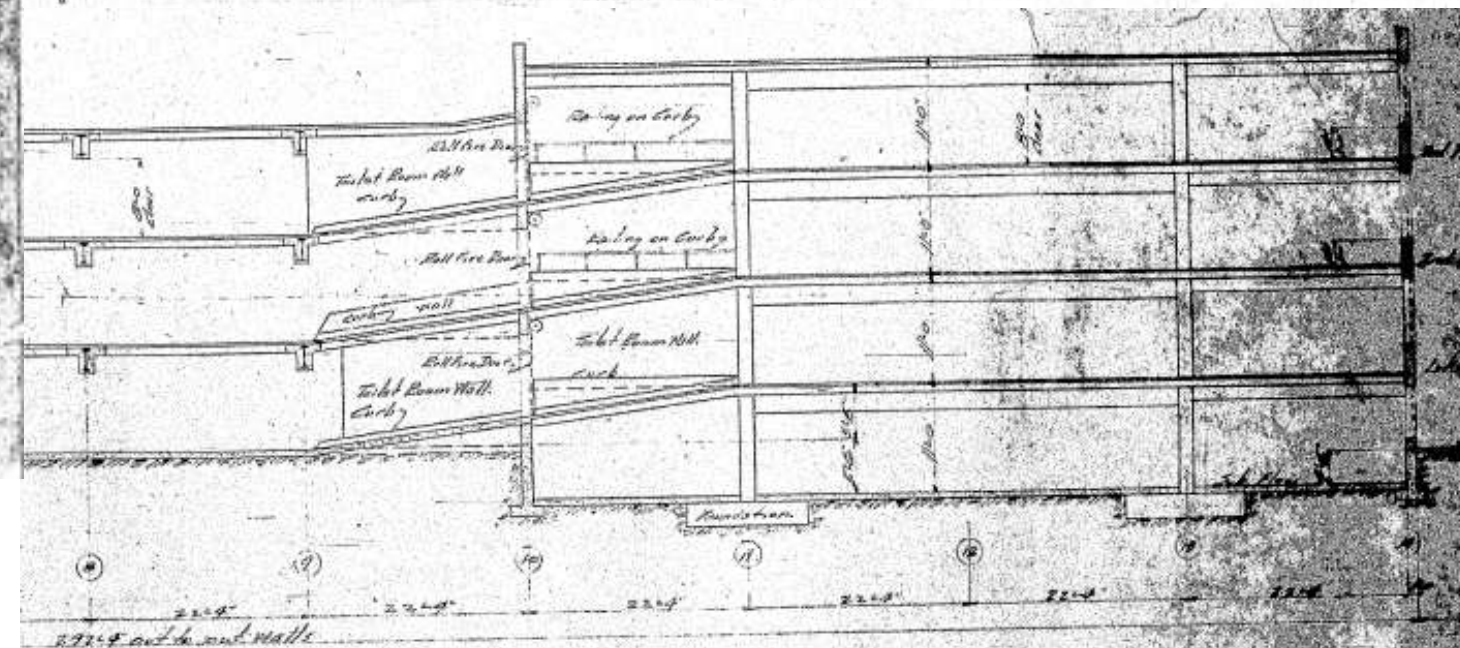
Ex/ 57-27 3687



glass not marked in 4' 11" class also marked 2' 6" is 4' clear w/c class

West Elevation
Trumbull Ave.

Architect's Name
1742 E. Grand Ave.
Detroit, Mich.
Geo. H. H. & W. S.
1917











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Small sign above the entrance door.

White van with "Papa John's" logo.





ELTON PARK
KIMBERLY CLARK
NOW LEASING
800.441.1111
WWW.ELTONPARK.COM















DELIVERING BEST



CHECKER CAB COMPANY

313-963-7000















Checker Cab Taxi Garage and Office
Detroit, Wayne County