

District Survey Form

<u>DISTRICT</u> NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT		<u>SURVEYOR</u> Resource Design Group	<u>SHSW STAFF</u>
<u>CITY</u> Milwaukee	<u>COUNTY</u> Milwaukee	<u>SURVEY</u> Brewers Hill	<u>DATE</u> Fall 1982

FILM ROLLS/NEGATIVES
See attached

<u>STREETS:</u>	<u>NUMBERS:</u>	<u>STREETS:</u>	<u>NUMBERS:</u>
See attached			

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
*Roughly N. 3rd St between
W. North Ave. and Vine St.*
See Continuation Sheet

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION
See Continuation Sheet

- SOURCES OF INFORMATION
- A. Built in Milwaukee - Landscape Research
 - B. Building Permit Files - City of Milwaukee
 - C. Sanborn Insurance Maps of Milwaukee
 - D. Homes Savings Bank Report Robin Wenger, 1983
 - E. Wright's City Directories of Milwaukee

MAP REFERENCE

USGS quad: Milwaukee 7.5 min. SW/4
scale: 1:24,000 Zone 16

<u>UIM references:</u>	
A. 425610/4767710	H. 425560/4767430
B. 425420/4767710	I. 425560/4767580
C. 425430/4767520	J. 425670/4767590
D. 425500/4767520	K.
E. 425500/4766950	L.
F. 425600/4766940	M.
G. 425610/4767430	N.
	O.

OPINION OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY
date: _____ initials: _____

eligible not eligible unknown
 national state local



HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
WISCONSIN

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Boundary Description:

The North Third Street Historic District boundaries are described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the south property line of 1742-44 North Third Street and the alley; then west to the west property line of 325 West Vine Street; then north along this line to the centerline of West Vine Street, then east to the west property lines of the properties on the west side of North Third Street; then north along the centerline of the block to the south property line of 2153 North Third Street; then west to the centerline of North Fourth Street; then north to the centerline of North Avenue; then east to the east property lines of the properties on the east side of North Third Street; then south along the centerline of the block to the centerline of West Garfield Avenue; then west to the centerline of North Third Street; then south along the centerline to the centerline of West Lloyd Street; then east to the east property lines of the property lines of the properties on the east side of North Third Street; then south to the point of beginning, in the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the North Third Street Historic District are largely determined by changes in land use. North Third Street is a historical commercial strip development that is a separate entity oriented almost exclusively to the street with little or no integration of the commercial uses with the adjacent neighborhoods. In general the east boundary is the alley between North Third and Second Streets. This line marks an abrupt change in the land use from commercial to residential. The north boundary is west North Avenue. This line does not mark a change in use but in character. The commercial fabric of Third Street extends well above this line, but in the block immediately above North Avenue a substantial portion of the historical fabric has been destroyed. At the northeast corner and extending to about mid-block is the new field office of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources erected in 1982-83. Across the street from this on the northwest corner, a major retail complex is presently under construction that will occupy about 2/3 of that blockface between Third Street and the alley. The west boundary is in general the alley between North Third and Fourth Streets. Like the east boundary there is a change in land use. The commercial district gives way to residential and institutional uses. The change here is more contrasting than on the east as a considerable portion of the historic fabric once associated with Third Street has been destroyed and replaced in part with suburban-like tract housing. The south boundary is the south property lines of 1739-45 and 1742-44 North Third Street. This line marks the first intact node of commercial structures that significantly contribute to the architectural and historical associations of the district. Below this line the block has had a severe loss of historic fabric and those extant buildings have had their integrity substantially compromised. Also at this point the topography changes and Third Street begins its descent to the Milwaukee River Valley. Located here on the east side of the street is the massive Schlitz Brewing Complex. This change to an industrial use separates the district from any commercial development that was once previously associated with it.

7 Description

General character, building types, styles, environment, important natural and man-made features, qualities that distinguish district from surroundings, nature of intrusions and generally excepted properties.

General Character

The North Third Street Historic District is a 5-1/2 block strip of commercial buildings that date from the 1850's to the 1930's. The district is located on Milwaukee's near north side in one of the oldest settled parts of the city. Approximately one mile north of downtown, the district is sited on the high ground overlooking the Milwaukee River Valley to the southeast. The district begins just below Vine Street and ends at North Avenue. It includes both sides of the street except the east side of the 2100 block. It includes the east side of the 2100 block of North Fourth Street.

North Third Street was developed as the first major business and retail center outside of the central business district (CBD). Originally, it was a continuum of commercial activity that stretched for over two miles from State Street in the CBD to where it merged with Green Bay Avenue. The continuity of Third Street's commercial character has been severely interrupted with the extensive demolition and redevelopment of the original fabric. The district is a surviving remnant that exemplifies the historical patterns of development associated with the street and this part of the city.

Because of its long development history, the district represents a diverse array of commercial buildings that vary in form, style and materials; yet the scale is fairly uniform. Building heights are mostly two or three stories with some one-story structures, and widths are between 20 and 50 feet. At the intersection of Third Street and Garfield Avenue are the largest structures in the district. These buildings are four and five stories in height and have frontages of up to 100 feet. Roof lines are either simple gables or flat surfaces that are sometimes adorned with parapets or balustrades. The earliest buildings from the 1850's through the 1870's were constructed of both wood and masonry. These were a combination of shops and residences. Sometimes the proprietor would live above his business and sometimes he or she would live next door. Facades were simple with a minimum of embellishment. After the 1870's new construction was limited to fire proof materials. These were more substantial than the early buildings and would almost always have flats above. Facades became highly articulated with cut stone trim, elaborate window treatments, pressed metal cornices and an occasional turret. After 1900 the largest buildings were constructed. These were solely business blocks and terra cotta was used extensively as both decorative trim and to clad the facades. Pre-cast concrete and metal panels were used after 1930.

There are a total of 92 structures in the district; 18 that are pivotal, 56 that are contributing and 18 that are non-contributing. Of this total 80% are pivotal and contributing buildings. Over 65% of these two groups were built before 1900 with 30% of these built before 1880 and 20% of these before 1870. This represents one of the highest concentrations of pre-Civil War and Civil War era commercial buildings in the city. Those in the district built after 1900 account for 25% of the pivotal and contributing buildings. Pivotal structures were selected primarily on the basis of architectural integrity. The main facade had to be intact or with minor alterations and the original form and design completely discernable. Also buildings of exemplary historical significance were included in the pivotal list. Non-contributing buildings are those outside the period of significance or have a complete loss of architectural integrity with no historical reference to the original condition. The non-contributing buildings are concentrated in the 2200 block where there is the greatest loss of facade integrity. The remaining non-contributing buildings are dispersed throughout the district.

DISTRICT SURVEY FORM

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The district's integrity, in addition to the non-contributing buildings, has been compromised by the loss of building fabric. This is particularly evident in the 1800 block between Vine Street and Reservoir Avenue. In this block are the highest number of vacant lots in the district, but there is an even distribution of the extant buildings that provides an important visual link with the intact node of largely pivotal buildings at the north end of the 1700 block with the rest of the district above Reservoir Avenue. More importantly this block provides significant examples of the earliest commercial building forms in the district. With two buildings from the 1850's and another two from the 1800's, this block contributes to the understanding of the historical development and context of the street as associated with this part of the city. Above Reservoir the integrity of the district is more consistent with fewer vacant lots and largely intact block faces. The only exception to this is the east-side of the 2100 block which is completely vacant and is not included in the district.

The architecture of the district represents most of the major styles that were manifest in commercial design during the district's period of significance. The earliest buildings were largely transitional with Greek Revival forms and Italianate details. These structures were often gable roofed, two-story, three bay residence/shop combinations. The extant structures show evidence of bracketed eaves and entrances with transoms and sidelights. An early masonry example is the Italianate Hardt Block built c.1854-55 at 1739-45 North Third (MI 38-4). Contemporary to this is the frame Greek Revival building at 1848 North Third (MI 37-3) built c.1859 for Bernard and Conrad Meyer. This earliest building form persisted into the 1860's and 1870's largely in the Italianate with the Charles Kurbs House, a frame residence built in 1868 at 1948 North Third (MI 36-38); August Spent's cream brick butcher shop built in 1867 at 1926-28 North Third (MI 36-34); and a cream brick commercial block built in 1874 at 1943-45 North Third (MI 38-20).

In the 1880's and 1890's larger and more substantial commercial blocks were built with facades designed in eclectic variations that included Italianate, Gothic, Romanesque, Queen Anne and German Renaissance influences. The simple gable block form was succeeded by flat-roofed buildings that were a full two or three stories in height. The main facade usually extended above the roof as either a parapet or balustrade. Examples of this are the Deffner Building, built in 1885, at 2034-36 North Third (MI 36-18); and the LaGrand Building, built in 1882, at 2016 North Third (MI 36-23). Both constructed of cream brick, their designs exhibit influences from both the Italianate and Gothic. Two outstanding examples that exhibit the eclectic design influence of the period are the Herman Mayer Building, built in 1891, at 2002-02 North Third (MI 36-26); and its adjacent neighborhood, built also in 1891, at 2004-06 North Third (MI 36-25). In addition to the Italianate and Gothic elements employed in their designs, also the influence of the Queen Anne is seen, specifically in the later. The major Queen Anne example is the Fred Vogt's Buildings. These are a series of buildings built in 1890 at 2107-2115 North Third (MI 38-31, 32, 33). The facades of these buildings are articulated by a series of undulating bays on the second and third floors. Also from this period is the former Geiger Horseradish Factory at 325 West Vine (MI 34-21). Built c.1895 its facade is designed in the Victorian Romanesque with German Renaissance overtones as seen in the stepped parapet end gable.

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Buildings constructed after 1900 are among the largest in the district. Their styles, materials and functions exemplified the major building trends prior to 1940. Flats on the upper floors were replaced by additional retail space and offices. An example of the Commercial Style is the Schuster Department Store, built in 1907, at 2153 North Third Street (MI 38-35). Its steel skeleton frame is evidenced by the slender outer piers which separate the broad expanses of glass. The facade was clad with two new popular materials of the period, pressed brick and terra cotta. The later was used as an overall cladding material in the Neo-Classical adaptations of the Dorsen Office Building, built in 1923, at 2208-18 North Third Third (MI 36-13), and the Porth Building, built in 1926, at 333 West North (MI 40-8). The last major styles used in the district are the Art Deco and Art Moderne. The former is seen in the 1927 commercial building at 2215 North Third Street (MI 36-1); and the later in the Home Savings Bank, built in 1930, at 2200 North Third Street (MI 36-14) and the Grants Building, built in 1936, at 2235 North Third Street (MI 36-6). Both of these last structures used pre-cast concrete panels in their facade construction.

Acreage: The nominated district is approximately 18 acres.

8 Significance

Areas of significance

architecture: architecture

history: commerce

Period of significance: 1854-1936

Historical development and statement of significance.

The North Third Street Historic District is an important cultural resource that is locally significant for both its architectural and historical associations. The architecture of the district represents one of the most complete spectrums of its kind in the city from the period 1854 to 1936. In a relatively intact setting are examples of the earliest surviving building forms used in commercial development as well as exemplary works of leading Milwaukee architects from the period. Historically, the district was associated with the German business community which flourished here from the 1840s until World War II. During the period of significance, North Third Street was the most important business center outside of the central business district.

Area of significance: Architecture

The earliest buildings in the district were constructed in the 1850s and 1860s with 20% built before 1870. This is one of the largest concentrations of pre-Civil War and Civil War era commercial structures in the city. The architecture of these buildings is largely transitional Greek Revival-Italianate. Examples of this are the Hardt Block, built c.1854, at 1739-45 North Third (MI38-4) and a row of frame structures at 1840 North Third (MI37-5), 1844 North Third (MI37-4), and 1848 North Third (MI37-3). All three of these were constructed as shops with residences above. The first two were built c.1868 and the later one c.1858. An excellent example from this period is the Charles Kurbs Home, built in c.1868, at 1948 North Third (MI36-28). These are probably one of the last major groupings of this type of early commercial building form and architectural design in the city.

After the Civil War, the structures became more substantial and were of cream brick, masonry, construction and were designed in the Victorian Italianate Style with elaborate masonry cornices and door and window moldings. One of the finest block face groupings in the entire city from this period are six commercial buildings in the 1900 block of North Third from 1933 to 1951. All of these were built between 1865 and 1888, and their designs are attributed to architect, Henry Messmer. He was a master designer from the period and was known for both his commercial and residential works. Messmer continued on through the 1890s with the design of the Mayer Buildings at 2000 and 2004 North Third (MI 36-25, 26). These buildings are his two finest examples extant in the district. As was characteristic of Milwaukee neighborhoods and areas dominated by Germans there were usually several buildings with German Renaissance facades embellished with Flemish gables or stepped parapets. A former grocery warehouse and later horseradish factory at 325 West Vine Street (MI 34-21) is an excellent example of this architectural phenomenon that occurred in Milwaukee during this period.

The 20th century styles of the district paralleled those found in the central business district. Though smaller in scale, the attention to detail and the quality of the craftsmanship emphasized the importance of the street as a major business center. Charles Kirchoff and Thomas L. Rose designed the 1907, Commercial Style, Schuster's Department Store at 2153 North Third (MI 38-35). The firm was regarded among their peers as one of the most versatile and in-depth design partnerships of the period. This building was the flagship store of the Schuster chain and is one of Milwaukee's best examples of the style. After Kirchoff died in 1915, his son, Roger C. joined the firm and continued the tradition of excellent design as established by his father. This is seen in the 1930, Moderne Style, Home Savings Bank at 2200 North Third (MI 36-14).

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When this building was erected the firm was the oldest in continuous operation. Other prominent architects whose designs were built on North Third Street: Martin Tullgren & Sons who designed the Dorsen Office Building in 1923 at 2208 North Third (MI 36-13), and George Zagel & Bro. who designed the Porth Building in 1926 at 333 West North Avenue (MI 40-8). Both buildings employed Neo-Classical Revival motifs and extensive terra cotta cladding. The Dorsen Building was erected one year after Tullgren's death and the firm was then headed by his son, Herbert. Later the firm would become nationally recognized for their innovative design of apartment buildings. Though Zagel did not achieve the notoriety of either Kirchoff and Rose or the Tullgrens, he was an important 20th century architect for his hundreds of designs of residences, apartment buildings and small business blocks that were built throughout the city.

Area of significance: Commerce

The earliest development on North Third Street took place at the intersection with Juneau Avenue, spreading northward in the 1850s. It initially was residential but by the post-Civil War era it was predominantly commercial, consisting of wood frame structures with businesses on the ground floor and residences above. In the 1870s and 1880s, most of the frame buildings were replaced by larger brick structures, some incorporating the residences of the shop owners above. But increasingly rental apartments were incorporated above, as successful proprietors built more substantial houses on nearby streets. Almost all of the establishments along North Third Street were small, serving the immediate neighborhood a few blocks to either side. An example is the Deffner Building, 2034-36 North Third Street (MI 36-18). John Deffner, a harness maker, operated a horse furnishings business, establishing a wide reputation in the 1880s. The Hausmann Building, 1748-50 North Third Street (MI 37-12) is another example. Hannah and Julius Hausmann operated a dry goods store in the building from its construction in 1891 until 1926. However, beginning with the 20th century, North Third Street emerged from being a neighborhood shopping district primarily dominated by the German community to a commercial district with shops and services that served the entire City of Milwaukee. The two most significant examples of this are the former Schuster's Department Store and the former Home Savings Bank. Schusters was a major Milwaukee department store with the building at 2153 North Third (MI 38-35) as its headquarters and five branch stores throughout the city. Begun in 1884 by Edward Schuster and Albert Friedmann, the company became the symbol of North Third Street's ultimate rise as a major commercial center. The company would operate at this location from 1907 to 1961 when Gimbel Brothers Inc. would merge the Schuster chain into its own retail merchandise company in a \$16 million stock exchange. The Home Savings Bank was founded on the present site in 1910 by Faustin Prinz. This bank provided important financial services to the adjacent neighborhoods, primarily in convenient home loans. As their operations expanded, the original bank building was replaced with the present structure in 1930. Over the next 40 years, the Home Savings Bank would rise in prominence among all Milwaukee banking institutions as one of the largest banks outside of the central business district. In 1970 banking operations ceased at this location because of Home Savings acquisition by the Midland National Bank.

Period of significance: The period of significance extends from 1854 to 1936 during which time the district was a thriving business district for the city's German community and the major commercial artery outside the central business district. One building built after 1934, the Grants Building at 2235 North Third Street, is an outstanding example of Art Moderne commercial style and is among the finest examples in the city and therefore is eligible despite being less than fifty years old. All other contributing buildings were constructed before 1934.

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT PIVOTAL STRUCTURES

Address	Map Code	Historic Name
<u>North Third Street</u>		
1739-45	38/4	Hardt Block
1748-50	37/12	Hausmann Building
1751	38/5,38/6	Geiger Building
1806-08	37/9	Commercial Building
1941	38/19	Commercial Building
1943-45	38/20	Commercial Building
1948	36/28	Charles Kurbs House
2000-02	36/26	Mayer Building
2004-06	36/25	Mayer Building
2007	38/24	Edward Schuster/Fein Brothers Building
2034-36	36/18	Deffner Building
2153	38/35	Edward Schuster & Company
2200	36/14	Home Savings Bank
2208-18	36/13	Dorsen Office Building
2215	36/1	Commercial Building
<u>West North Avenue</u>		
331-39	40/8	Porth Building
<u>West Vine Street</u>		
325	34/21	Warehouse Building

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

West Vine Street

226-226(a)	c	57-33
227-29	c	
325	p	34-21

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Address</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Map Code</u>
<u>North Third Street</u>		
1739-45	p	38-4
1742-44	c	37-13
1748-50	p	37-12
1751	p	38-05
1751	p	38-6
1801	c	38-7
1806-08	p	37-9
1806(b,c)	c	51-16
1812	c	37-38
1817-19	c	38-9
1818	c	37-7
1821	c	38-10
1823-25	c	38-11
1829	n	38-12
1830	n	37-6
1835-37	c	38-13
1839	c	38-14
1840-42	c	37-5
1844-46	c	37-4
1848	c	37-3
1913-19	n	38-15
1914	c	36-37
1916-18	c	36-36
1921	n	38-16
1922	c	36-35
1926-28	c	36-34
1930	c	36-33
1933-35	c	38-17
1934	n	36-32
1936	c	36-31
1937-39	c	38-18
1940	c	36-30
1941	p	38-19

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

North Third Street (Cont'd.)

1943-45	p	38-20
1944	c	36-29
1947	c	38-21
1948	p	36-28
1950-52	c	36-27 a/k/a 235 W. Brown St.
1951	c	38-22
2000-02	p	36-26
2001-03	c	38-23
2004-06	p	36-25
2007	p	38-24
2013-19	c	38-25
2016	c	36-23
2018-20	c	36-22
2024-26	c	36-21
2039	c	38-26; 38-27
2028	c	36-20
2030	c	36-19
2034-36	p	36-18
2040	c	36-17
2044	n	36-16
2045	n	38-28
2050	c	36-15
2053	c	38-29
2105	c	38-30
2107	c	38-31
2109	c	38-32
2111-15	c	38-33
2153	c	38-34
2153	p	38-35
2200	p	36-14
2201	c	38-36
2208-18	p	36-13
2209	n	38-37

NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

North Third Street (Cont'd.)

2213	n	36-0
2215	p	36-1
2219-23	c	36-2
2220-28	n	36-12
2225	n	36-3
2227	n	36-4
2230	c	36-11
2231	n	36-5
2234	c	36-10
2235	c	36-6
2238-40	n	36-9
2244	c	36-8
2245	c	36-7

North Fourth Street

2236	c	55-4
2238	c	55-3

West North Avenue

333	p	40-8
329-31	c	40-9

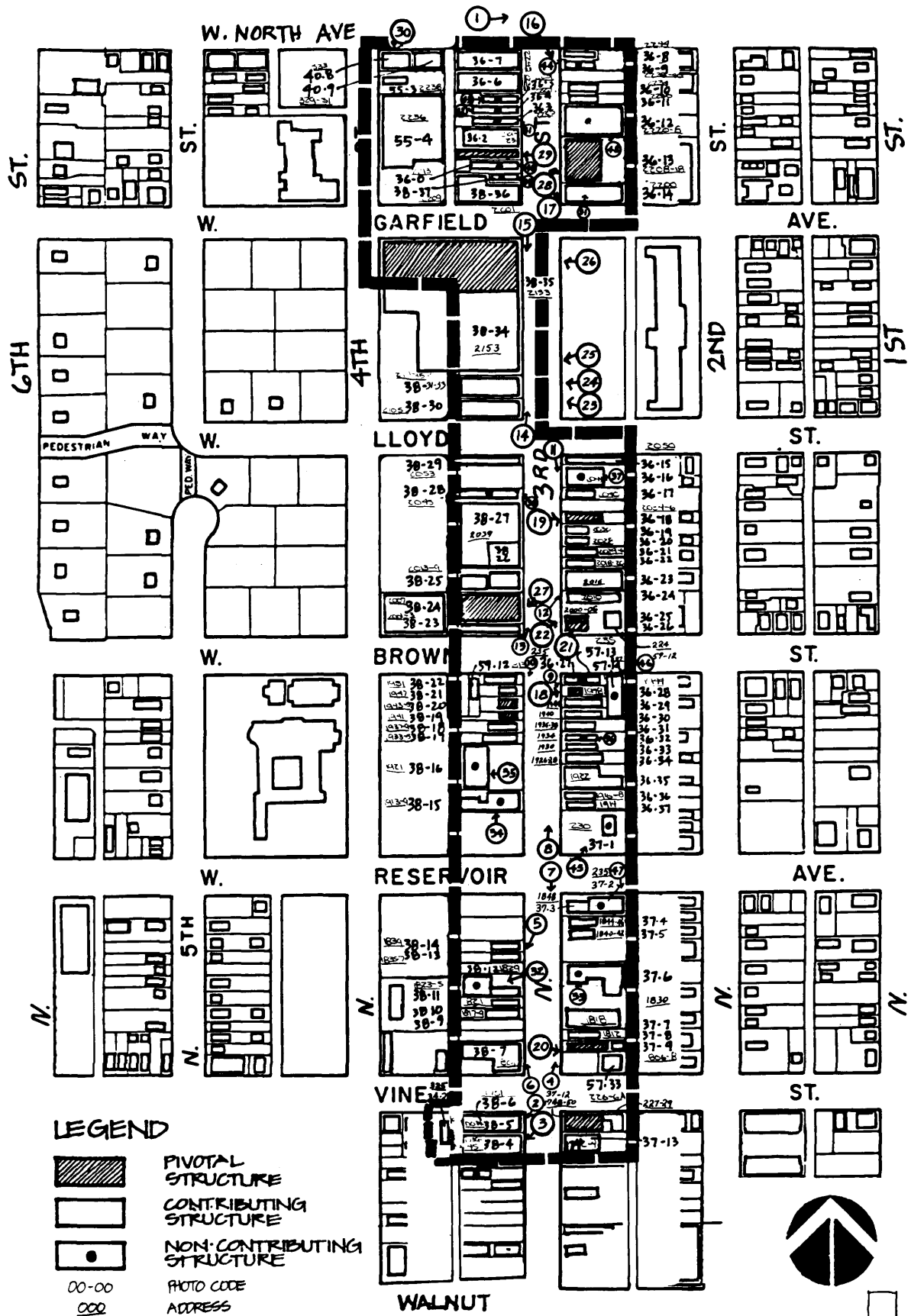
West Brown Street

224	c	57-12
227	n	57-14
235	c	36-27
235	n	57-13
313	c	59-12




NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

West Reservoir Avenue

230	n	37-1
235	n	37-2



LEGEND

-  PIVOTAL STRUCTURE
-  CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE
-  NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE
- 00-00 PHOTO CODE
- 000 ADDRESS

**NORTH THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN**

RESOURCE DESIGN GROUP

AUGUST 1983

