

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

FEB 08 1993

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lower Prospect/Huron  
District of Cleveland, Ohio

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Commercial Development of Downtown Cleveland, 1875-1950

C. Geographical Data

Downtown Cleveland, Ohio, bounded approximately by Ontario Street,  
Huron Road NW, and West 9th Street on the west; Lake Erie on the north;  
and the Innerbelt Freeway on the east and south.

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

*Barbara Paven*

Signature of certifying official

2-3-93

Date

Ohio Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*Patricia Andrews*

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

3/24/93

Date

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## E. Statement of Historic Contexts

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Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

### COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND, 1875-1950

The "Original Plan of the Town and Village of Cleaveland, Ohio,"<sup>1</sup> as surveyed by Augustus Porter, Seth Pease, and other members of the Connecticut Land Company in 1796, laid down a 10-acre Public Square bisected by two wide streets, Superior and Ontario. Huron and Ontario were among the principal thoroughfares of the projected town. In 1797 a second surveying party returned and laid out three highways radiating east and south from the center of town. Among these was Central Highway (later Euclid Avenue), which followed the shoreline of glacial Lake Warren east of Huron Road. Popularly known as the "Buffalo Road," Central Highway became the main route to the east. Together with yet a third survey, made in 1801, these early streets became the framework on which the future city would grow. Thus platted, the "town" remained an unbroken forest for many years, emerging only gradually according to the paper plan. Settlement was retarded by the hardships of the frontier, including diseases attributed to the swampy land at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River. In 1812 the forest still stood "in its native grandeur" to the east and south of Public Square. By 1816, part of Ontario had been cleared, but Erie (East 9th) Street was still in the woods. Two decades after its founding, Cleveland was still a "very primitive place," with 30-odd houses and a population of about 150.<sup>2</sup>

When Cleveland was incorporated as a village in 1815, the village limits extended from Erie Street west to the Cuyahoga River, and from Huron Street north to Lake Erie. Between 1815 and 1830, Cleveland gradually assumed the appearance of a small New England village. New roads and the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 greatly stimulated western trade and settlement, and Cleveland grew in population and activity. In 1815 Central Highway (Euclid) was cut through from its terminus at Huron Street to the southeast corner of Public Square. In 1831 Prospect Street was laid out from Ontario to Erie. These two thoroughfares, the first diagonal streets, allowed the village to expand south and east of Public Square. By 1835, Bolivar, Eagle, High, Sheriff (East 4th), and Ohio (Carnegie) had all been added to the map.

Completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal in 1832, with its northern terminus at Cleveland, was the single most important stimulus to growth during these early years. The canal made Cleveland an important transshipment point for farm products from the interior and manufactured goods from the East. In 1830 Cleveland's population stood at just over a thousand; by 1840, it had grown to 6,071; by 1850, to 17,034. As population increased, residential development pushed to the south and east of Public Square. Beginning in the 1830s, Euclid Street (it was not designated an "avenue" until 1865) was lined with a succession of imposing homes built by Cleveland's leading citizens; by the 1850s, it was well launched on its illustrious career as "Millionaires' Row." The streets south of Euclid, meanwhile, gradually filled with the homes of tradesmen and artisans. The first city directory, published in 1837, suggests the character of the area, which was then home to carpenters and joiners, masons, merchants, schoolmasters, laborers, shoe makers, grocers, butchers, and a "botanic physician."<sup>3</sup>

Churches, synagogues, and schools followed the migration of the residential areas to the east and south. The "Plan of the City of

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Cleveland" published by Knight & Parsons in 1853 shows that, by this date, more than a dozen churches and one Jewish synagogue occupied the southeastern sector of the village. These included the Wesleyan Methodist Church (1840) and St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1851), on the south side of Euclid between Public Square and Sheriff (East 4th); Grace Episcopal Church (1848), on the southwest corner of Huron and Erie; the Second Baptist Church (1853), on the northeast corner of Ohio and Erie; and Anshe Chesed (1846), the city's first Jewish synagogue, on Eagle Street. A second synagogue, Tifereth Israel, was dedicated on Huron Street in 1856, and in 1878 a new church was erected by St. John's African Methodist Episcopal Church on Erie Street, south of Eagle. Founded in 1830, St. John's AME was the first and only permanent black church established in Cleveland before the Civil War. To meet the educational needs of the growing community, meanwhile, Prospect Street School was opened in 1840, Eagle Street School in 1855, and Brownell Street School in 1865. Cleveland's first high school opened in 1846 with 34 pupils occupying rented rooms. In 1852 the first high school building, a temporary wood-frame structure, was built on Euclid near Erie. It served until 1856, when the first Central High School was erected on the same site.

From 1815 until the 1830s, Cleveland's retail businesses were clustered on Superior Street west of Public Square, while the Square itself was almost entirely surrounded by private dwellings. Between 1830 and 1854, however, the commercial district expanded into the residential area north of Superior, between Ontario and Water (West 9th) streets, then gradually migrated east. By 1854, Public Square had lost its early residential character and was almost entirely surrounded by three- and four-story commercial blocks. Ontario Street south of the Square, site of the city's first public market in 1829, also had attained the character of a retail district by the mid-nineteenth century. The new business center developed gradually, with construction of the first municipal market house in 1839 on Michigan Street near the intersection of Prospect and Ontario probably providing some impetus. An editorial in the *Daily True Democrat* of November 7, 1848, observed: "We notice that business is fast centering around the Market. Several buildings have recently been erected in that neighborhood and more will soon be required for business purposes." In 1867 a new market house containing 100 stalls for fish, meat, and vegetables was completed on Ontario Street between Bolivar and Eagle. The Central Market spawned a host of ancillary businesses nearby, as well as an extensive farmers' curb market, which shared quarters with the city's food brokers in the vicinity of Broadway and Woodland avenues until 1950 when it was banished as a traffic and sanitary nuisance.

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In the 1830s and 1840s, water-borne transportation had been the chief stimulus to growth. After mid-century, railroads and industry provided the impetus. The first railroads, the Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati and the Cleveland & Pittsburgh, entered Cleveland in 1850. As a terminus for both rail and water transportation, Cleveland was in an ideal position to attract industries which depended on an abundance of raw materials. Roundhouses, warehouses, oil tanks, lumberyards, and factories filled the Flats (the lowland along the river), gradually forcing the city's wholesale trade out of that area and into the retail district off Superior Avenue. A growing population, meanwhile, prompted a proportionate increase in retail trade and stimulated the migration of retail businesses to the east and south of Public Square--the only directions in which the commercial center, contained by the Cuyahoga River to the west and Lake Erie to the north, could grow.

The pace of commercial building accelerated following the Civil War as foreign immigrants seeking work began arriving in large numbers. Cleveland's population climbed from 43,417 in 1860 to 92,829 in 1870 to 160,146 in 1880. The Superior Avenue Viaduct over the Cuyahoga River, completed in 1878, united the east and west sides of the city and fostered trade; 10 years later, the new Central Viaduct brought South Side residents within easy reach of an expanding downtown center. By 1881, business blocks filled Ontario Street from Public Square to High Street. The Euclid Avenue Opera House (since demolished), built in 1875 at the corner of Sheriff (East 4th) and Euclid and rebuilt in 1893 following a fire, prompted the establishment nearby of other theaters, as well as cafes, restaurants, and such businesses as William Krause & Son, a theatrical and masquerade costumer. By 1878, Euclid Avenue near Public Square was lined on both sides by stores, and only 13 private homes remained in that stretch between Public Square and Huntington (East 18th) Street; in 1851 there had been 33.<sup>4</sup> Prospect remained the chief rival to Euclid as a fashionable residential street. But by 1860 it carried the horse-drawn streetcars of the East Cleveland Railway Company and would also gradually succumb to the inroads of commerce. Among the first commercial establishments to be located on Prospect was the three-story Weisgerber Block (ca. 1870, since demolished) at Prospect and Brownell (East 14th), containing a confectionery, bakery, corset factory, and dance hall.<sup>5</sup>

Few buildings--and not a single church or synagogue--from this period remain, suggesting the intensity with which this section of the city was redeveloped after 1890. Notable survivors include the Italianate-style Stanley Block (ca. 1875), on the west side of Ontario between Prospect and High; the Windsor Block (1876), at the southeast corner of Euclid and East

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4th, a rare example of the High-Victorian Gothic style in this section of the city; the stone gateway of the Erie Street Cemetery (1871) on East 9th Street; and the Queen Anne-style Brownell School (1885) on East 14th (formerly Brownell) Street, erected on the site of an earlier school of the same name.

Cleveland was on the cusp of change in 1890, and the next four decades would witness unprecedented economic growth and construction activity. With few exceptions, the district's existing physical fabric is the product of this period, when Cleveland's population grew from 261,353 in 1890, to 381,768 in 1900, to 560,663 in 1910, to 796,841 in 1920, to 900,429 in 1930. With the onset of the Great Depression, construction activity virtually ceased and, south of Euclid Avenue, never again approached that of the earlier period.

As the city's commercial heart expanded from its center around Public Square, it quickly overwhelmed residential neighborhoods to the east. The rapidity of the transformation is suggested by old photographs of streetscapes long since vanished.<sup>6</sup> A view of the six-pointed intersection of Huron, Prospect, and Erie streets in 1890, for example, shows a neat residential district, with a church spire in the distance and Italianate-style houses dotting the tree-lined streets; a single horsecar ("Garden, Ohio & Erie Sts.") passes by. A decade later, the residential district has become a commercial district. Dubbed "The New Center," it is solidly built with commercial buildings, its streets scored by the tracks of electric streetcars and crowded with pedestrians and carriages, its buildings advertising their occupants in large block letters: a piano company, a tailor, a business college, an interior furnishings store, a drug store, a bank, the Y.M.C.A. Evening School. By the mid-1890s, the stretch of Euclid Avenue between Public Square and Erie Street was solidly built with commercial buildings, offices, and institutional buildings; the last two private homes, the Benjamin Strickland and Henry Chisholm houses, were razed in 1893 to make way for the 10-story Garfield Building (1893) and the 14-story New England Building (1896).<sup>7</sup> On adjacent streets, meanwhile, retail and other businesses moved in to capitalize on the burgeoning pedestrian, carriage, and streetcar traffic.

Architecture, and the architectural profession, had come of age in Cleveland in the 1880s. By 1890, the city directory listed 36 architects, and that year the Cleveland chapter of the American Institute of Architects was organized. Along with New York, Chicago, and other large cities, Cleveland participated in what architectural historian Eric Johannesen has called a "revolution in commercial architecture" characterized by a concern

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for fireproof construction, the provision of lighter and more open structure, and iron and steel skeletal construction.<sup>8</sup> The most important building erected during this period was The Arcade (1890), designed by John Eisenmann and George H. Smith, the first and grandest of four arcades built in Cleveland between 1890 and 1911. Other notable buildings included the Cleveland Grays Armory (1894), the Marine Block (1894), the Osborn Building (1896, enlarged 1904), and the Colonial Hotel and Arcade (1898).

The city's rapid population growth led to the opening of several privately owned and operated food markets. The largest of these was the Sheriff Street Market, opened in 1891 (since demolished), which occupied the entire block of Sheriff (East 4th) Street between Huron and Bolivar. Designed by the Cleveland firm of Lehman and Schmitt, the Sheriff Street Market was an architectural wonder, with a great central iron and glass dome flanked by two cold-storage towers. It competed with the adjacent Central Market until it was closed in 1936. Both markets spawned a clot of provision companies, butcher supply shops, poultry companies, wholesale grocers, cold-storage warehouses, and other related businesses. Small manufacturers also chose to locate here. In 1893 the Central Market district was home to a cigar maker, a manufacturer of foundry supplies, a paper box factory, a wood carver and modeler, and a manufacturer of umbrellas and parasols.<sup>9</sup>

The first three decades of the new century were an expansive era in Cleveland. The city's iron and steel industry, and machine tool, paint, clothing, and automobile factories were thriving. Mirroring the city's industrial well-being, building construction downtown intensified. New buildings--including the Rose (1900), Caxton (1900), Schofield (1902), Citizens (1903), Park (1904), Columbia (1908), Hippodrome (1908), Cleveland Athletic Club (1911), and Statler Hotel (1912)--were higher, larger, and more spacious. In 1908 the new Cleveland Trust Company opened on the former site of the First Methodist Church; the Beaux-Arts gem with its stained-glass dome was one of several opulent bank interiors erected downtown between 1890 and 1925. This period also saw construction of the Winton Auto Showroom (1905) on Huron Road, among the first automobile-related buildings in the city. Stylistically, Victorian revivalism gave way to neoclassicism, while glazed terra cotta became a popular choice for exterior walls.

With rapid population growth came a rapid increase in the volume of retail sales and the number of retail establishments. The number of dry-goods stores in Cleveland jumped from 20 in 1860 to 200 in 1900, to 504 in 1920. As more families acquired wealth, retailers positioned themselves to

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meet the demand for new luxury goods. Specialty stores mushroomed, while dry-goods establishments added new product lines and blossomed into department stores. By 1915, the department stores that would dominate Cleveland retailing until the 1960s--William Taylor Son, Bailey, May, Higbee, and Halle Bros. companies--were firmly entrenched downtown. By the 1920s, such national chain stores as S. S. Kresge, F. W. Woolworth, McCrory, and W. T. Grant had also become an important part of local retailing.<sup>10</sup>

Halle Bros. Company astonished everyone in 1910 when it decided to build a new store "uptown," on Euclid Avenue near East 12th Street. The new store, an elegant terra cotta-clad structure designed by Henry Bacon, was three times as large as the space the company had occupied in the Nottingham Building on Euclid near East 6th.<sup>11</sup> Specialty stores gradually followed Halle's lead--Cowell & Hubbard, for example, and the Lindner Company--making upper Euclid Avenue one of Ohio's leading shopping centers. The upper Euclid commercial district reached a high point in the early 1920s with the development of a cluster of opulent vaudeville and motion-picture theaters known as Playhouse Square. Keith's Palace, opened in 1922 in the 21-story Keith Building, together with the earlier Stillman (1916, since demolished), State (1921), Ohio (1921), Allen (1921), and Lake (1928, since demolished), made a remarkable grouping of fine theaters on Euclid Avenue. Nearby, on East 14th Street, the Hanna Theater (1921) became the successor to the famous Euclid Avenue Opera House, presenting the leading road shows. The theater occupied the 16-story Hanna Building, then one of the largest in the city.<sup>12</sup> By the 1920s, Cleveland's finest retail establishments preferred to locate in Playhouse Square. Specialty shops lined Huron Road. Capitalizing on the district's success, in 1927 Halle Bros. opened its new six-story Huron-Prospect Building, doubling the store's selling space; a tunnel between the two buildings functioned as a continuous selling aisle.<sup>13</sup>

Early photographs of Playhouse Square show a busy, vibrant district of brightly lit theaters and smart shops, cluttered with marquees and billboards, streetcar tracks and pedestrian and automobile traffic. South of Euclid Avenue, meanwhile, businesses in the Prospect/Huron vicinity served the more prosaic needs of Clevelanders. There, electrical supply shops and cheap lunch rooms mingled with sign painters, printing companies, furniture and shoe stores, jewelers, money lenders, tailors, and camera stores. East 4th Street probably was typical, serving as home to jewelers, picture framers, barbers, an electrical workers union, a railway and steamship clerks union, dental and advertising offices, cafes, milliners, insurance and real estate companies, and music and art schools.<sup>14</sup> In the

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midst of this eclectic district, in 1927 the Ohio Bell Telephone Company completed a new building housing its executive and business offices and telephone equipment. The modernistic limestone-clad tower rose 22 stories, dominating its neighborhood and claiming title, albeit briefly, as the tallest building in Cleveland. With completion of the "Temple to Telephony"--for so the building was touted--dial telephone service reached the downtown business district. Elsewhere downtown, construction of the Group Plan of public buildings envisioned by architect Daniel Burnham, among others, was gradually and successfully advanced. The new county courthouse (1912), city hall (1916), public auditorium (1922), main library (1925), music hall (1929), and board of education building (1930) all reflected the uniform height and generally classical formula prescribed by the Group Plan Commission in 1903. The handsome ensemble put Cleveland at the forefront of civic planning nationwide.

By 1930, the massive Cleveland Union Terminal (Terminal Tower) project and other commercial development had displaced thousands of people who had once lived and shopped downtown. Refrigeration (which meant that consumers no longer had to buy their food fresh each day) and the advent of chain supermarkets further drained the Central and Sheriff Street markets of much of their trade. Following a serious fire in 1930, the Sheriff Street Market was closed and converted to a parking garage.<sup>15</sup> Declining population, meanwhile, caused St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church--erected in 1904 to serve Italian immigrants living in the Haymarket area on the southern edge of the downtown, most of whom had since dispersed to other neighborhoods--to merge with another parish and vacate its Romanesque-style building on Carnegie Avenue.<sup>16</sup>

With the onset of the Depression, privately financed construction downtown came to a virtual standstill and never again matched the heady pre-Depression years. In the 1930s and 40s, only a few new buildings were built downtown. The most important of these were Cleveland Municipal Stadium, planned in the late 1920s by Walker & Weeks and completed in 1931; the modernistic U.S. Post Office, a Public Works Administration project completed in 1934 as part of the Terminal Group; and the Bond Store (1947, since demolished) on Euclid Avenue at East 9th Street, designed by Walker & Weeks in association with Herbert B. Beidler. Other buildings of note were a three-story Art Deco-style commercial building (1936, now Petries), cited by the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce as the year's best small commercial building; the five-story Central National Bank (1947, now Union Eye Care); and the F. W. Woolworth Company store (1949-50). All four buildings were located on Euclid Avenue between Public Square and East 9th Street. Meanwhile, with little new construction occurring, owners remodeled their



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existing buildings with zest, following modernism's dictate that anything old was obsolete and anything new was better. Storefronts throughout the downtown were "updated." Later, in the 1960s, entire buildings--the Schofield, for example, and the former Taylor department store--would be concealed behind new, "modern" facades.

The four decades of suburban development following World War II took an inevitable toll on the health and prosperity of the historic commercial core. The city's population, which crested in 1950 at 914,808, declined rapidly after 1960, with new highways, urban renewal, low-cost federally insured mortgages, worsening crime, and a newly affluent and expanding middle class all contributing to the large-scale movement to the suburbs. By 1980, Cleveland was home to 573,822 residents, representing just 38 percent of the 1.5 million residents of Cuyahoga County. (In 1950 the city had been home to 66 percent of county residents.) As retail businesses sprang up to serve customers in the convenience of their new suburban neighborhoods, sales downtown declined. The suburban retail industry came to resemble the city's retail industry in size and, in the 1960s, surpassed it. In 1929 Cleveland had 84 percent of the retail stores in the county and 87 percent of retail business; by 1982, Cleveland had only 35 percent of the stores and 28 percent of the business.<sup>17</sup> Vacant storefronts multiplied, while the upper floors of many older commercial buildings emptied and remained vacant. In the 1960s the theaters at Playhouse Square all closed their doors, and with the closing of Halle's in 1982 just two department stores remained downtown.

Although private investment rebounded beginning in the 1970s and Cleveland's central business district actually expanded as an office center, most construction activity was concentrated in the Erievue urban-renewal area northeast of the traditional retail core. The historic commercial center has seen few new buildings since 1930. "Development" instead has meant the replacement of historic buildings with parking facilities. At the prominent northeast corner of Ontario and Prospect, for example, an 11-story parking garage replaced Bailey's department store, while the Hippodrome, once hailed as "the finest playhouse in the city,"<sup>18</sup> was demolished and replaced with a six-story parking garage. Today many buildings stand vacant; where ground-floor storefronts are occupied, the upper floors of buildings commonly are empty.

Downtown Cleveland has witnessed a modest revival in recent years. At Playhouse Square, an ambitious theater restoration project launched in 1975 has become a showcase for civic pride; the restored Ohio, State, and Palace theaters (at this writing, the Allen is slated for demolition) now are home to theatrical and dance troupes, and present an array of popular

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entertainment. At Public Square, the former Cleveland Union Terminal has been redeveloped as an upscale shopping mall. The Gateway sports complex, meanwhile, promises to have the greatest impact on a changing city. The new professional baseball stadium and basketball arena rising in the old Central Market district are slated for completion in 1994. Civic leaders look to that project, the largest since construction of the Terminal Tower, to serve as a catalyst for renewal of the old commercial core it will adjoin.

1. The "a" in "Cleaveland" remained in general use until about 1832. That year, the *Cleaveland Herald* (which made its debut in 1819) dropped it from its masthead for reasons that cannot be documented. See William Ganson Rose, *Cleveland: The Making of a City* (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1950), p. 127.
2. This account of the early development of Cleveland relies principally on Edmund Chapman, *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis: A Case Study of Problems of Urban Development in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cleveland: The Western Reserve Historical Society and The Press of Western Reserve University, 1964), pp. 3-25; and Rose, *Cleveland: The Making of a City*, pp. 75-76.
3. Julius P. Bolivar MacCabe, *Directory [of] Cleveland and Ohio City, For the Years 1837-38* (Cleveland: Sanford & Lott, 1837).
4. Jan Cigliano, *Showplace of America: Cleveland's Euclid Avenue, 1850-1910* (Kent, O.: The Kent State University Press, 1991), p. 39.
5. William Payne, *Cleveland Illustrated: A Pictorial Hand-book of the Forest City* (Cleveland: Faribanks, Benedict & Co., 1876), p. 178.
6. These observations are based on photographs in the Cleveland Picture Collection, History Department, Cleveland Public Library, and on the author's own collection of early Cleveland postcards.
7. Cigliano, *Showplace of America*, pp. 310, 331.
8. "Architecture," in David D. Van Tassel and John J. Grabowski, comps. and eds., *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 41-42.

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9. *Cleveland Illustrated 1893* (Cleveland: The Consolidated Illustrating Co., 1893).
10. Kenneth W. Rose, "Business, Retail," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, p. 141.
11. James M. Wood, *Halle's: Memoirs of a Family Department Store* (Cleveland: Geranium Press, 1987), p. 68.
12. Rose, *Cleveland*, p. 783.
13. Wood, *Halle's*, pp. 112-13.
14. Cleveland Picture Collection, Cleveland Public Library; and Gaede Serne Zofcin, "East Fourth Street, Cleveland, Ohio: Proposal to Create a Cleveland Landmark Historic District," October 25, 1985.
15. Carol Poh Miller, "Markets and Market Houses," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, pp. 659-60.
16. *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, pp. 96, 853, 860. Since 1939, the church building has been occupied by St. Maron Church (Maronite rite), formed in 1914 to serve the city's Syrian and Lebanese families.
17. Rose, "Business, Retail," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, pp. 142-43.
18. Rose, *Cleveland*, p. 603.

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## F. Associated Property Types

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I. Name of Property Type Commercial Architecture of Downtown Cleveland

### II. Description

Commercial architecture of downtown Cleveland can be divided into the following subtypes: small commercial buildings of one to five stories; large commercial buildings of six or more stories; and functional buildings. Some buildings are significant for their association with a longtime or notable Cleveland business; others are significant for their workmanship and design, or as the work of a master architect.

Small commercial buildings, one to five stories in height, are usually of mill construction, with brick walls, flat roofs, and a cornice and/or parapet. They are usually built to the property line, completely filling

### III. Significance

Eligible buildings will qualify under Criteria A and/or C for their association with the historic context "Commercial Development of Downtown Cleveland, 1871-1950."

The commercial architecture of downtown Cleveland is significant for its association with the development of the city's commercial center during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Downtown Cleveland grew proportionately with the city's population, which was itself the product of dynamic industrial expansion and the influx of immigrant and migrant labor following the Civil War. The most dramatic growth occurred between 1890 and 1930, when the city more than tripled in size, from 261,000 to 900,000. In the space of four decades, the area east and south of Public Square was transformed from a residential neighborhood served by its own churches and schools to a dynamic commercial district, home to retailers, small industries, wholesale grocers, vaudeville and movie

### IV. Registration Requirements

For listing in the National Register, properties must be intact examples of one of the identified subtypes and must possess integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, association, and feeling. After 1930, commercial buildings in downtown Cleveland were frequently remodeled, especially at ground level, in an attempt to remain competitive with suburban retail stores and office buildings. Other changes have been made in the process of adapting buildings to new uses. Storefront alterations, the replacement of windows, and other such material changes are acceptable only if they do not alter the essential form and integrity of the structure, and, in the case of historic districts, if the structure contributes to the setting, association, and feeling of the nominated district despite the changes that have occurred.

☒ See continuation sheet

☐ See continuation sheet for additional property types

## G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

This multiple property nomination is based on an inventory of buildings in downtown Cleveland conducted in 1987 and 1988 by the Cleveland Landmarks Commission for the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. There are approximately 1,200 structures built between 1850 and the present, of which 6 historic districts, 3 bridges, and 14 individual buildings already are listed in the National Register. Many other properties are eligible for listing. The Gateway sports complex, a professional baseball stadium and basketball arena currently under construction at the southern edge of the downtown, is scheduled for completion in 1994. Concerns about the project's impact on adjacent historic resources prompted the preparation of this document, which is intended to serve as a planning tool. The associated National Register nominations will identify properties of historic and architectural significance and provide an economic incentive for their rehabilitation by making property owners eligible for federal tax benefits.

The historic context was determined based on the historic functions of the property (i.e., the majority of extant structures in downtown Cleveland were built to serve a commercial purpose). The typology of property types

☒ See continuation sheet

## H. Major Bibliographical References

*Atlas of Cuyahoga County and the City of Cleveland, Ohio.* Chicago: Geo. F. Cram & Co., 1892.

Avery, Elroy McKendree. *A History of Cleveland and Its Environs.* 3 vols. Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1918.

Campbell, Thomas F., and Edward M. Miggins. *The Birth of Modern Cleveland, 1865-1930.* Cleveland: The Western Reserve Historical Society, 1988.

Chapman, Edmund. *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis: A Case Study of Problems of Urban Development in Nineteenth-Century America.* Cleveland: The Western Reserve Historical Society and The Press of Western Reserve University, 1964.

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- ☐ State historic preservation office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency

- ☒ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

Specify repository: Cleveland Landmarks Commission

## I. Form Prepared By

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## Description--continued

the lot, with a sidewalk in front, an alley to the rear or to one side, and neighboring buildings attached to one or both sides. Retail stores usually occupy the ground level; the upper floors, originally built to house offices, today more commonly are vacant. While some small commercial buildings are high style, most are vernacular structures; some incorporate high-style elements. Most date from the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century. Most have been remodeled at ground level.

Large commercial buildings, six or more stories in height, usually are of steel-frame construction, with brick walls, brick or terra cotta facades, flat roofs, and a cornice and/or parapet. They are usually built to the property line, completely filling the lot, with a sidewalk in front, an alley to the rear or to one side, and neighboring buildings attached to one or both sides. Retail stores usually occupy the ground level; the upper floors contain offices. Some large commercial buildings were erected to house special uses, such as hotels or department stores; some of these--the Halle Bros. department store, for example, and the Pick-Carter Hotel--no longer serve their original function but have been adapted to new uses. A few large commercial buildings incorporated (or were retrofitted to accommodate) arcades, theaters, and other specialized functions. Most large commercial buildings are high style; virtually all are architect-designed. Most date from the twentieth century, the products of Cleveland's rapid urbanization. Most have been remodeled at ground level.

Functional buildings include warehouses, factories, automobile-related buildings, and other transportation-related buildings. These buildings, which rarely exceed five stories in height, are usually of steel-frame construction and clad with masonry (usually brick but sometimes stone or terra cotta), with flat roofs and a cornice and/or parapet. They are usually built to the property line, completely filling the lot, with a sidewalk in front, an alley to the rear or to one side, and neighboring buildings attached to one or both sides. Most functional buildings are vernacular structures. Some, especially automobile-related buildings (the Winton showroom, for example), incorporate the same high-style elements as other commercial buildings of the period. Most were erected in the early twentieth century. Most have been remodeled for other uses.

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**Significance--continued**

theaters, restaurants, banks, trade schools, medical offices, auto showrooms and repair garages, and businesses of every description. It continued to serve as Greater Cleveland's principal trading and entertainment center until it was eclipsed by suburban shopping centers in the 1960s.

Some of the commercial architecture of downtown Cleveland is also significant for its workmanship and design, or as the work of a master architect. During the context period, the city's commercial buildings became increasingly sophisticated, evolving from late Victorian styles to neoclassicism. Few buildings from the 1870s and 1880s have survived; most of the city's historic commercial buildings date from the period of 1890 to 1930. The majority are neoclassical in style.

**Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods--continued**

was based on the results of the inventory. They represent the majority of structural types and functions located within the boundaries of the Lower Prospect/Huron district of downtown Cleveland as drawn for the purposes of this project.

The standards of integrity were based on those of the National Register. Information from literature and photograph searches, together with personal knowledge about Cleveland and its architecture, were used to assess the integrity and scarcity of each property and to determine the degree to which allowances should be made for alteration and deterioration.

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