

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: Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Other names/site number: _____

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: 3701 Van Buren Avenue

City or town: Flint State: MI County: Genesee

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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

<u>Brian D. Macey</u>	<u>12/13/17</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>MI SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

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:) _____

Patrick Andrews 2/1/2018
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

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

1

Noncontributing

0

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Tudor Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Limestone, Metal

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 Tudor Revival style Calvin Coolidge Elementary School faces east and south toward Van Buren and Westcombe Avenues on the west side of Flint, about two miles west of downtown. The school is on an approximately five-acre flat piece of property that extends to Ballenger Highway to the west. It is on the edge of a residential neighborhood that contains one and two story-tall houses constructed primarily before World War II. Newer commercial buildings line Ballenger Highway. The red brick two-story school has limestone trim and a hip roof clad in red standing seam metal roofing. The hip roof acts as a parapet, disguising a flat central roof. Three massive brick chimneys project from the what appears to be the roof peak, two in the east wing and one in the south wing. There is an expanse of grassy lawn with mature trees and a flagpole between the south and east facades of the building and Van Buren and Westcombe Avenues. A concrete walkway leads from the public sidewalk to the entrance on each side of the building. Asphalt paved parking lots are located to the south of the gymnasium, to the north of the classroom, and behind the building. The original building has a roughly backwards C-shaped footprint with a former gymnasium in the crook of the C. There is a one-story red brick clad addition (1952) extending to the north end of the original building, and a one-and-a-half story red

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI

Name of Property

County and State

brick clad gymnasium (c. 1970) addition connected to the west end of the original building by a one-story tall connector.

Narrative Description

Setting

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School faces south and east to Westcombe and Van Buren Avenues respectively on the edge of a residential neighborhood. The building is set far back from both streets, there is a large flat grassy lawn between the building and the public sidewalk. The lawn extends around the site to the rear and sides of the building. The front lawn has a few trees, one evergreen and several deciduous, primarily near the building entrances. Concrete walkways lead from the public sidewalk to each building entrance, and there is a concrete walkway around the building perimeter. A metal flagpole on a six-sided stepped concrete base is located in the southeast corner of the lawn. Asphalt paved driveways enter the property both near the southwest and northeast corners. The driveways lead to the asphalt paved parking lots located on the south side of the gymnasium and in the northeast corner of the property. There is a paved area immediately behind the building. The grassy areas north and west of the building contain playground equipment.

Exterior

The original building is on a slightly raised basement, an angled limestone water table runs across the east and south elevations. A second limestone band runs across the top of the wall just below the roofline. All of the masonry openings are framed in limestone with quoins at the edges. The original windows have been replaced in the same masonry openings with aluminum framed windows that have glass in the bottom half and metal panels in the top half. The hip roof is covered in a metal standing seam roof, hiding the flat roof behind. The original roof material and when it was changed to the metal roof is unknown, it may have been clay tile as the current roof is a red terra cotta color.

The east elevation of the original building that faces Van Buren Avenue is five bays wide, the center entrance bay projects slightly and is about half as wide as the other four bays. The first-floor entrance has three stone steps leading up to a pair of wood doors in a limestone framed Tudor arch opening. The wood panel doors have small windows near the top, and the tops of the doors are arched to match the masonry opening. A limestone panel above the door has carved letters reading "Calvin Coolidge." At the second floor, a limestone band runs along the sill line of a group of three tall, narrow one-over-one window openings with transoms that reach to the underside of the limestone band running along the roof line. The upper half of the windows and the transoms above are metal panels. The entrance bay has a brick pediment parapet wall with limestone coping extending upward in front of the roof. The pediment has a carved limestone panel depicting a shield in a floral field with "A. D. 1929" engraved into the shield.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Name of Property

Genesee County, MI

County and State

The bay of the building immediately to the north (right) of the central entrance bay has large masonry openings at the first and second floors each containing a group of five one-over-one windows separated by aluminum mullions. The upper half of each window is filled with a metal panel. A tall brick pedimented parapet wall with limestone coping extends above the bay. There is a single four-over-four, double-hung window framed in limestone in the center of the pediment. The original building's northernmost bay has a large central masonry framed opening at both floors. Each opening contains a group of three one-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper half. The large center openings are flanked on both sides with a single masonry framed one-over-one window with a metal panel in the upper half. A brick parapet wall with a blind limestone balustrade extends above the roof line. A one-story, red-brick addition, constructed in 1952, projects from the north façade

The south elevation of the original building is five bays wide; the narrower entrance bay projects slightly forward and is located one bay east of the west end of the building. The hip roof on this side of the building extends down to the top of the wall and there is a massive brick chimney extending from the top of the roof near the center of the elevation. The easternmost bay of the elevation has a one-story tall, canted bay window projecting from the first-floor kindergarten room. The two angled sides of the bay window each contain a limestone framed one-over-one window with a metal panel in the upper half of the opening, while the front has a larger limestone framed masonry opening that contains a group of three one-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper half. Above the projecting bay the second floor has a limestone framed opening containing a group of three one-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper sash. The next two bays of the building west of the kindergarten room both have large limestone framed masonry openings at both floors that each contain a group of five one-over-one windows separated by aluminum mullions. The upper sash of each window is a metal panel.

Moving westward on the elevation the entrance bay is identical to the entrance on the east elevation. There is a pair of wood doors in a limestone framed Tudor arch opening. The wood panel doors have small windows near the top and the top of the doors are arched to follow the top of the opening. A limestone panel above the door has carved letters reading "Calvin Coolidge." At the second floor a limestone band runs along the sill line of a group of three tall, narrow one-over-one windows with transoms which reach to the underside of the limestone band running along the roof line. The upper half of the windows and the transoms are metal panels. The entrance bay has a brick pediment parapet wall with limestone coping extending upward in front of the roof. The pediment has a carved limestone panel depicting a shield in a floral field with "A. D. 1929" engraved into the shield.

The westernmost bay of the original building has a large limestone framed masonry opening at both floors each containing five one-over-one windows separated by aluminum mullions. The upper half of each window is a metal panel. Turning the corner, before the connector, the west wall of the original building has a set of three windows that are boarded within a limestone frame at the first floor and no openings at the second floor.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Name of Property

Genesee County, MI

County and State

The rear of the original building consists of the north wall of the south wing and the west wall of the east wing. Starting on the south wing, there is a two-story tall block with a second hip roof extending to the rear. It is two bays deep and is set back slightly from the west end of the building. The west wall of the block has a large limestone framed masonry opening at the first floor containing a set of three one-over-one windows separated by aluminum mullions. The top half of the windows are metal panels. At the second floor, there are two limestone framed openings that intersect with the limestone band running along the top of the wall next to the edge of the metal clad hip roof. Each opening contains a set of two one-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper half. The north wall of the block contains a large limestone framed opening at the first floor with a set of five-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper half. The east half of the elevation has one large and one small limestone framed masonry opening at the first and second floors. The large openings each contain a set of five-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper sash. The small openings on both floors contain a pair of one-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper sash.

The rear of the east wing has a two-story projecting block with a flat roof that originally contained a gymnasium. It is clad in brick and is two bays deep by three bays wide. The bays are separated by limestone capped brick piers. Each bay contains a two-story tall masonry opening with limestone sills and lintels. The openings each contain a group of three-part windows separated by aluminum mullions. The top two sections of the windows are metal panels. The parapet wall has a single crenellation in the center of each bay. The center bay on the west elevation is narrower than the other bays and has a small one-story flat roof entrance vestibule projecting at the first floor. A wood panel door is located on the north façade of this wing, near the intersection of 1952 classroom addition.

Between the south wall of the gymnasium wing and the north wall of the south wing there is a one-story brick-clad connector that is partially underground and is below the first-floor windows of the main building. The wall that is partially underground has two sets of two one-over-one windows. The taller section of the connector has a solid metal door and an opening with a large metal louver and panel. Behind the connector, the main wall of the building has a limestone framed masonry opening with three one-over-one windows with metal panels in the upper half at the first floor, and a matching limestone framed opening at the second floor above it. A second limestone framed opening at the second floor has a single one-over-one window with metal panel in the upper half.

Classroom Addition Exterior

A one-story red brick addition (1952) with a flat roof extends to the north end of the original building. The east elevation has a large limestone framed masonry opening with four large sections of windows that are separated by smooth limestone piers. The upper two thirds of the four window sections are covered by vertical metal siding. The lower third of each section contains four aluminum hopper windows. Near the north end of the elevation there is a smaller limestone framed window opening that has been infilled with vertical metal siding.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

The north elevation of the 1952 addition has a pair of entrance doors under a flat metal canopy supported by brick walls. The east and west elevations of the addition have one large and one small masonry opening, including the vertical metal siding.

Gymnasium Addition Exterior

A one-story connector with a metal mansard roof runs between the west end of the original school and the gymnasium. Both the connection and the gymnasium were constructed in the 1970s. The connector is set well back and has a pair of flush metal doors with lights in the center flanked by two windows on both sides. The red brick walls of the two-story tall gymnasium are void of any fenestration. The north elevation of the 1970s gymnasium is devoid of openings. The west elevation of the gymnasium contains two pairs of metal entrance doors with shed roof metal canopies created by extending the metal mansard roof down and out above them. There is a metal standing seam clad mansard roof on the gymnasium.

Interior

The entrances in the south and east wings of the original building each lead past a staircase with terrazzo steps, plaster walls and wood handrails. The south entrance lobby has marble floors and marble wainscoting on the walls. The corridors have terrazzo floors, plaster walls with built-in lockers, and acoustical tile ceilings. The corridors are double-loaded and follow the footprint of the building. In the second-floor corridor, there is a tile lined niche for a drinking fountain. To the left of the south entrance door is what was originally the library but most recently served as the office for the building. It retains some of the built-in wood shelving. The classrooms originally had wood floors although most have been covered in either carpet or vinyl tile. The classrooms retain their plaster walls and ceilings and some rooms have original wood trim, built-in cabinets and blackboards remain. The condition and materials in each classroom vary. A small auditorium is located at the west end of the second floor. It has a carpeted floor and plaster walls and ceiling. There is a wood wainscot that runs around the room and at the north end of the room it forms the base of the stage which has a plaster proscenium arch.

The original gymnasium has been converted to a library, presumably at the time the new gymnasium was added to the building, and has a dropped ceiling and 1970s paneling and shelves along the walls. There are drywall partitions and there is no sense of the original interior gymnasium space.

Classroom Addition Interior

The 1952 classroom wing continues the double-loaded corridor with vinyl tile floors, painted concrete block walls and an acoustical tile ceiling. The classrooms in this section of the building have carpeted floors, painted concrete block walls and acoustical tile ceilings. The chalkboards have wood frames but there are no built-in cabinets or furniture.

Gymnasium Addition Interior

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

The interior of the 1970s gymnasium has vinyl floors, painted concrete block walls and a metal truss ceiling. The space does not contribute to the historic character of the building.

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

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Education

Period of Significance

1929-1952

Significant Dates

1929

1952

c. 1970

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Malcomson, Higginbotham & Trout

C. Schollenberger Co. - contractor

MacKenzie, Knuth and Klein – classroom addition

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 Calvin Coolidge Elementary School is significant at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the education of elementary school age children in Flint, Michigan, and Criterion C for its architecture. Designed by the Detroit firm of Malcomson, Higginbotham, and Trout, the school building is an intact example of a late 1920s urban neighborhood school in

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI

Name of Property

County and State

Flint. Its existence represents the rapid population growth of Flint in the first half of the twentieth century in response to the burgeoning auto industry. The period of significance is from the year the school was constructed in 1929 until the year of the classroom addition in 1952.

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

The City of Flint began with the 1819 establishment of a trading post by Jacob Smith near a crossing of the Flint River that the local Native Americans had used for centuries. The river crossing, known as the Grand Traverse, was instrumental in the settlement of the area. The Saginaw Pike – now Saginaw Street in downtown Flint – from Detroit to Saginaw, completed in 1833, used the Grand Traverse. A commercial settlement grew around the strategic crossing. The designation of Flint as the Genesee County seat in 1837, helped to stimulate settlement. In 1855, Flint was incorporated as a city, and the population reached two thousand people. ,

A sizeable lumber industry contributed to Flint’s growth from 1850 to the early 1880s. As the local tree supply was depleted lumbering gave way to the production of horse-drawn vehicles. Several vehicle companies were operating in Flint by the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Built along the river in 1886, the Durant-Dort Carriage factory was the largest carriage producer in the United States by 1910 (*Michigan Historical Commission*, “Durant-Dort Carriage Factory No. 1”). Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, the company was producing 150,000 carriages annually. The many producers of horse-drawn vehicles and the number of carriages, wagons, carts, and other wheeled vehicles produced in Flint caused the city to call itself “The Vehicle City” by 1905 (*Michigan Historical Commission*, “The Vehicle City”).

Flint’s population nearly tripled between 1900 and 1910, rising from thirteen thousand to 38,550. It more than doubled again by 1920 to 91,599 people, and reached an estimated 165,000 in 1931. In just thirty years the population rose to twelve times its 1900 level. The dramatic rise in population relates directly to the rise of the automobile industry in the city. The city’s rise as an automobile-manufacturing center resulted directly from its earlier role as a leading producer of horse-drawn vehicles. Leading manufacturers of horse-drawn vehicles such as William A. Patterson, William C. Durant, and J. Dallas Dort became pioneers in the city’s auto industry after the turn of the twentieth century. A. B. C. Hardy’s Flint Automobile Company, established in 1901, was the city’s first auto manufacturer, but Buick, which moved to Flint from Detroit in 1904, and Chevrolet, which moved from Detroit in 1913, soon became the mainstays of the auto industry. Newcomers from the rural Midwest and from as far away as the rural South and Mexico swarmed to Flint and other Michigan auto towns to take advantage of the booming job market and comparatively high industrial wages. Although manufacturing in Flint declined during the Depression, military production during World War II and post-war automotive growth resulted in a significant increase in the population of Flint. An increasing number of people began to move to the outlying neighborhoods of the city as well as to surrounding townships. General Motors employment in Flint peaked in 1968 at about eighty thousand workers (*Facilities Advisory Committee’s Report*, p. 27). According to the United States Census, the population of Flint in 1970 was 193,317 people, already a decrease from the peak 1960 population of 196,940.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI

Name of Property

County and State

The 1970s and 1980s decline of the United States auto industry had a devastating effect on Flint. Population declined dramatically as General Motors closed factories and reduced the Flint workforce. By 1990 the city had 140,761. Over the next twenty years, the number of people in Flint decreased to 102,434, another decrease of nearly thirty percent. These dramatic changes in population had profound effects on the city that transformed the structural organization of public institutions, including the local school district.

Schools in Michigan

The construction and use of Calvin Coolidge Elementary is in line with school trends in Michigan at the time. The City Beautiful movement encouraged good design of schools which were to be asset to the communities and neighborhoods they were constructed in. In an address to the National Education Association (Strickland, p.41) in 1917, Fred Keeler, Michigan's Superintendent of Public Instruction, emphasized that school buildings should be beautiful in addition to being serviceable, hygienic, and safe.

Coolidge's Tudor Revival style exterior is part of the early twentieth century trend of urban schools being in the Collegiate Gothic or Jacobethan styles which reached its peak in the 1920s. Coolidge's Tudor arched openings, carved stone shields, and quoins in the limestone trimmed window openings, combined with the hip parapet and massive brick chimneys are a good representation of a 1920s-elementary school in Michigan. Its original size of sixteen rooms was slightly larger than a typical twelve room ward school in urban areas. Urban schools in general began to have a more unified appearance as a result of having a district architect, or utilizing firms that specialized in school design (*ibid.*, p. 25). Flint's use of Malcomson and Higginbotham was certainly part of this trend. As the state of Michigan's second largest district, only behind Detroit, it seems logical that Flint would try to use the best school design practices from Detroit's school system.

Considered a public investment, the idea of schools being a neighborhood asset to be fully utilized by taxpayers was encouraged across the country. "School is viewed as the symbolic, as well as a logical, central gathering spot for the entire community, for recreation, voting, meeting, adult education and cultural assimilation" (*ibid.*, p. 33). This community use spurred the need for auditoriums and gymnasiums on the first floor, close to the entrance in newer school designs. Although Coolidge's auditorium is on the second floor, the original gymnasium had a separate entrance and could be easily used independently from the rest of the building. The 1970s gymnasium also has two separate entrances for community access. Most of Flint's schools are situated adjacent to or near parks, or are located on large properties to provide recreational space for the neighborhood as well.

Elementary schools began to have a standardized function and program in the early twentieth-century. Kindergarten rooms became a regular feature and were typically located on the first floor near an entrance. The rooms were designed to have a more home-like appearance with fireplaces, sand boxes and built in benches and furniture. Coolidge's kindergarten room has a large bay window with built in benches.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Name of Property

Genesee County, MI

County and State

It is likely that Coolidge Elementary was operated on a platoon system, or at least was constructed to allow for it if the need arose. The system was developed for the most intensive use of classrooms at all times by having teachers teach the same lessons to two sets of students who moved from homerooms to specialized study rooms on a regimented time schedule. This system of operation allowed for larger enrollments and eliminated wasted space. It required a separate auditorium and gymnasium, which Coolidge had from the onset. Malcomson and Higginbotham had extensive experience in designing and modifying buildings for the platoon system, and the platoon system use in Detroit received national attention (*ibid.*, p. 42).

Flint Public Schools

The huge influxes of population in the early and middle years of the twentieth century had a tremendous impact on Flint's public school system which had its beginnings in 1834 with just twelve students. Formal public education in the city began in 1837 with the organization of the first school district. In 1846 a second district was added and a union school was constructed. Oak Street school, a grade school, was constructed about 1856 soon after Flint was incorporated as a city. The districts and school locations were based on the city's wards. In 1861, District No. 2 determined their building would be the Flint High School and in 1875 a new brick three-story building was built for that purpose. This was also the result of District No. 1 being annexed to the city in 1871 as the Fourth Ward and the state legislature creating a consolidated district in the city in 1872.

As the number and geographic range of Flint's residents increased between the late 1800s and the 1920s the number of schools increased as well. In 1898 two elementary schools were constructed. Two more schools were erected in 1902 and in 1903. The public library, at that time affiliated with the local Board of Education, was constructed in 1904. Two schools were constructed in 1907, and another in 1911.

In 1912 voters approved a millage for the district, and this appears to be the start of Malcomson and Higginbotham's relationship with the Flint School District. Although records have not been found to substantiate this, it appears the board hired the firm as the district's architects. This conclusion is based on the similarity of the school designs, the number of schools during the period that can be verified as designed by the firm, and the firm's opening of a Flint office. It does not appear that any other architects designed schools in the district constructed during this period. This all indicates that Malcomson and Higginbotham, and the successor firm of Malcomson, Higginbotham and Trout likely designed all of the new schools and additions in the district until 1930 when construction of school buildings ceased.

The first two schools designed by Malcomson and Higginbotham, Homedale and Parkland elementary schools, opened in 1914. Fairview Elementary School opened in 1915. All three buildings have been demolished.

In 1921, Malcomson & Higginbotham designed the new Flint High School (later named Flint Central High School) which was constructed on the site of the former Oak Grove Hospital (later Oak Grove Sanitarium) campus. Some of the existing buildings were used for the district's

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI

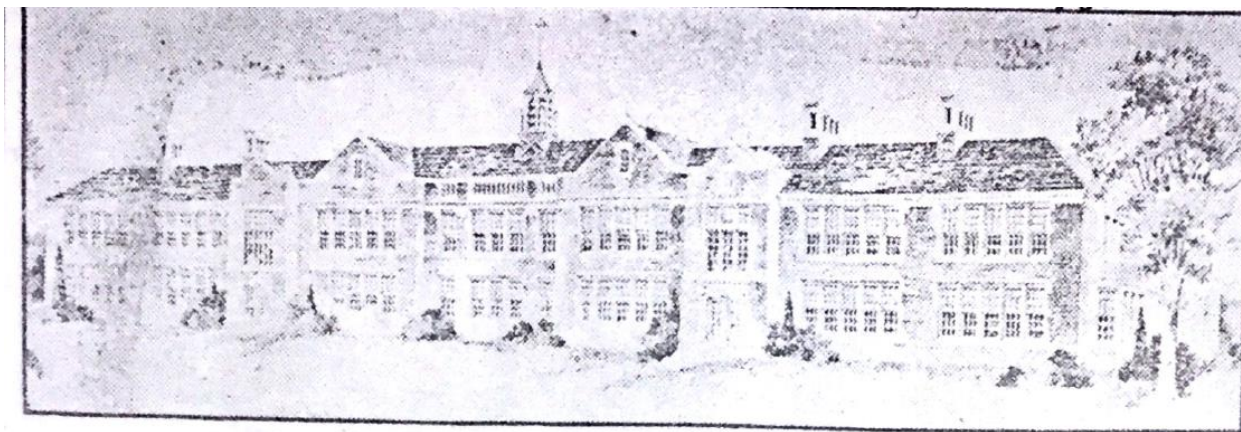
Name of Property

County and State

junior college. Although the high school building still stands it has been abandoned. In 1924, Whittier Junior High School was added to the campus. That same year Zimmerman Junior High School was constructed on the city's west side in the Fourth Ward, the building still stands but has been altered. The district constructed eleven buildings between 1924 and 1929, including a second high school, Flint Northern High School, in 1928 (demolished).

By March 1928 the Flint district had the second highest number of pupils (28,169) in Michigan. Flint's two largest elementary schools, Pierson (demolished) and Garfield (abandoned), were designed in 1928 and constructed in 1929. A third junior high school, Longfellow (abandoned), Flint's largest, was constructed in 1928.

The Calvin Coolidge Elementary School was constructed in 1929 for the Fourth Ward – in 1928 the school board promised residents of the ward their own elementary and junior high schools. The elementary school was named after United States President Calvin Coolidge, who sent a letter and portrait to the school in response. Located near the western edge of the city, the land that was originally called the Fourth Ward was annexed to the city in 1871. It reportedly had a fairly large pine forest that was used in constructing the state school for the deaf (Wood, p. 584). The original ward consisted of the entire southwest section of the city, south of the Flint River and west of Thread Creek and Fenton Road. The area is now primarily the Sixth Ward. As the central part of Flint increased in density, residents began building in the Fourth Ward. One of the Chevrolet plants was located on the east edge of the Fourth Ward, just west of downtown, which likely contributed to the growth of the area.



Architect's drawing of the proposed "Calvin Coolidge" elementary school, which will be erected in the Fourth Ward on Beecher-rd at Van Buren-st. The board of education has asked President Coolidge for an autographed portrait, which will be displayed in the school upon its completion.

Rendering of Calvin Coolidge Elementary School in the June 17, 1928, issue of the *Flint News Advertiser*. The building was not constructed as shown in the rendering.

In 1930 the district completed Lowell Junior High School (abandoned) and McKinley Elementary and Junior High (demolished); both designed by Malcomson and Higginbotham. They were the last two schools constructed in the district until 1950.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

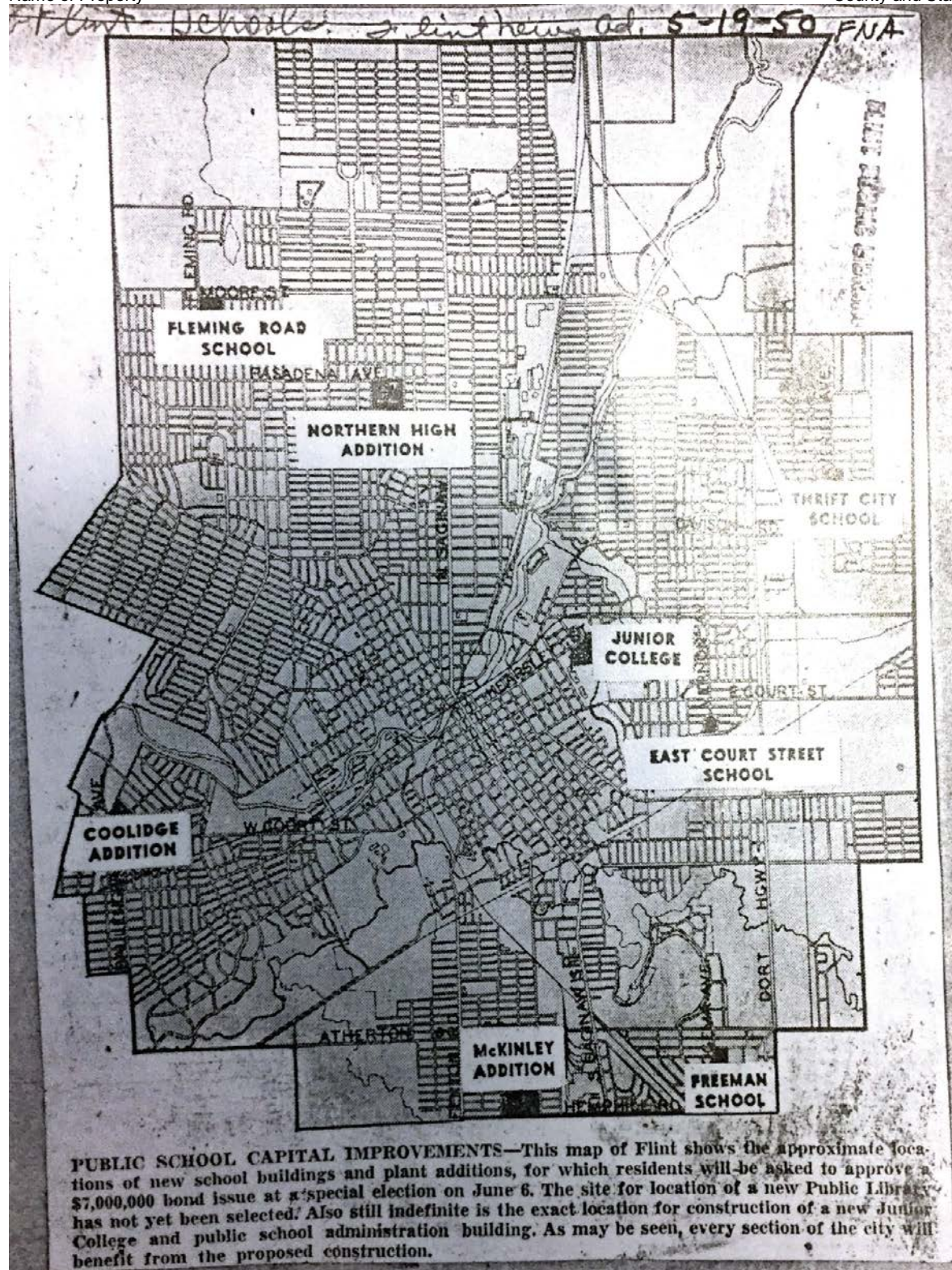
Genesee County, MI
County and State

Despite the large number of pupils, financial problems plagued the district from the late 1920s through the 1940s due to the Depression and outstanding debt from the district's needed building program. Flint's population continued to increase after World War II and residents moved outward from the center of the city. This necessitated new schools in the new outlying neighborhoods along with additions to the older buildings. During the 1950s the district responded to Flint's continued population growth and undertook a new building program that included replacing some of the older school buildings, the junior college (now Mott Community College) and the library. In 1952 an addition was constructed to the north end of Coolidge School. Sometime in the 1970s a gymnasium was added to the west end of the original building. Neither addition affects the historic integrity of the original school.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI
County and State

Name of Property



Map of the Flint School District from the May 19, 1950 *Flint News Advertiser* showing the locations of new buildings and additions planned for the district.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

Due to a precipitous decline in population beginning in the 1970s, the district closed Calvin Coolidge Elementary school in 2008. It is currently vacant and a local non-profit is planning to rehabilitate the building for housing.

Malcomson, Higginbotham & Trout

It seems likely that the Detroit architecture firm Malcomson and Higginbotham, and the successor firm of Malcomson, Higginbotham and Trout, designed up to twenty-five schools in the Flint school district between 1913 and 1930, including Calvin Coolidge Elementary School.

William G. Malcomson (1853-1937) was born in Ontario, Canada, and moved to Detroit with his family when he was four years old. His initial training was as a draftsman for Detroit architect Mortimer L. Smith. Malcomson opened his own office in 1885, and five years later he formed a partnership with William E. Higginbotham. William E. Higginbotham (1858-1923) was a native Detroiter, attended the Detroit public schools and trained with Detroit architect J. V. Smith starting in 1877.

After the firm's founding about 1890, the office designed Detroit's Grace Hospital and several Detroit fire stations. Higginbotham was appointed consulting architect for the Detroit City School Board in 1895 (Collum, p. 238). The firm is credited with designing three-quarters of Detroit's public school buildings, including Central High School in 1894. Their school plans were so popular they were copied by other communities, and in 1918 the state school board adopted their 1918 platoon plan (Strickland, Appendix C). In the late 1920s the firm expanded into college and university buildings, including Mosher-Jordan Hall (1928) at the University of Michigan; and the Chemistry Building (1926), Mary Mayo Hall (1928), and Sarah L. Williams Hall (1937) all at Michigan State University (Strickland, p.101).

In addition to their school work the firm designed churches in Detroit including Cass Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church (1891) and Saint Joseph Episcopal Church (1893).

After Higginbotham's death in 1923, Malcomson continued to practice on his own until 1927 when Alexander L. Trout became a partner and the firm was renamed Malcomson, Higginbotham and Trout. It was during this period that Calvin Coolidge Elementary School was designed. Newspaper articles list payments be approved for the firm of Malcomson, Higginbotham and Trout for their work in Flint, where the firm had a second office, likely because of the relationship with the school board.

In 1935 Trout left the firm and before his death in 1937, Malcomson formed associations with Henry A. Fowler, Ralph R. Calder, and Maurice E. Hammond (Collum, p. 240). The firm name of Malcomson, Calder and Hammond was used until 1945 when Calder left. Malcomson's name was used in successor firm names at least until 1962, sources conflict on the exact firm names.

The year the firm began to work with the Flint district, 1912, is the same year that architect Wirt C. Rowland left the firm of Albert Kahn Architect, Ernest Wilby Associate, Albert Kahn and

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI

Name of Property

County and State

joined Malcomson and Higginbotham as a junior partner. The firm's name was changed to Malcomson and Higginbotham, Wirt C. Rowland, Associate (Smith, p.43). He was valued by the firm for his expertise with reinforced concrete design, which the Detroit board of education wanted incorporated into their new schools as a fire-safety feature. Rowland is credited with designing three elementary schools in Flint which were similar in design but utilized different details, such as a hip roof, to differentiate the buildings. The Homedale and Parkland elementary schools opened in the fall of 1914, both have been demolished. The third school, Fairview Elementary School, opened in 1915 and has also been demolished. Rowland left the firm in late 1915 and returned to the firm of Albert Kahn, Architect, Ernest Wilby, Associate.

Most of the Flint schools designed by Malcomson and Higginbotham and Malcomson, Higginbotham and Trout, are two or three stories in height. The majority of the surviving schools designed by the firm are in the Collegiate Gothic style, including Central High School (1921), Whittier Junior High School (1924), Durant Elementary School (1921), Longfellow Junior High School (1928), and Zimmerman Junior and Elementary School (1924) which features five sided towers trimmed in limestone at the two front entrances. Not many have hip roofs. Durant Elementary School (1921) and Whittier Junior High School appear to be the only other surviving Malcomson and Higginbotham designed schools that have hip roofs.

What is now Northridge Academy (original name and date unknown) limits the exterior decoration to light colored brick and arched windows at the entrances to create a Romanesque style building. The last school constructed by the district and designed by Malcomson, Higginbotham and Trout, the former Lowell Junior High School (1930) on the city's east side, has horizontal limestone banding and trim, giving a Prairie style feel to the building.

Forest Monarchs on new High School Site

The New High School and Technical College

Flint's educational needs, rapidly growing with the population, have called into being a program of expansion designed to give the city one of the best school plants in the country.

Upon the Oak Grove site of 57 acres will be located the new High School Building. This structure will contain upwards of sixty rooms, in addition to a large modern gymnasium and an auditorium to seat 1500 persons. It will face the East Second street opening, with dimensions of 270 by 207 feet, the greater length being the north and south dimension. Directly back of the main building and connected with it by extensions around an enclosed court will be the school shops, 270 feet wide and 204 feet deep, which depth brings the structure back to the edge of the ravine. In the valley east and south of the High School will be placed the athletic field, school gardens and facilities for other outdoor pursuits. The present plan is to use two of the existing buildings as dormitories for teachers, and the rest of the Oak Grove plant for vocational work. A grade school of twenty rooms will be erected in the future on the northeast corner of the property facing Kearsley street. The architects are Malcomson & Higginbotham of Detroit, specialists in school design. In placing the High School and its attendant buildings the Board of Education will retain as far as possible the magnificent forest trees which cover much of the tract.

A description of Flint's new high school on the Oak Grove Campus in the 1920 Flint City Plan.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“Bids Wanted For Construction of Calvin Coolidge Elementary School, Flint, Michigan.”
Michigan Contractor and Builder, October 20, 1928, p. 16.

“The City Plan of Flint, Michigan,” The City Planning Board, 1920.

Collum, Marla O., Barbara E. Krueger and Dorothy Kostuch, ed. *Detroit’s Historic Places of Worship*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2012.

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Ellis, Frank. *History of Genesee County*. Philadelphia: Everts & Abbott, 1879.

“The Facilities Advisory Committee’s Report to the Flint Board of Education,” Flint Board of Education, Wednesday, December 17, 2008.

Flint Public Library, a collection of scrapbooks on Flint Schools containing newspaper articles, and district documents. Books 1 – 6 1837 - 1956, unknown compiler. Including: "Chronology--Schools" unknown source, January 1, 1929.

"City had 6 Grade Schools and one High School in 1877," *Flint Journal*. July 7, 1948.

“From Little Log Cabin to \$30,000,000 System is Flint School History,” *Flint Journal*. March 19, 1929.

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Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

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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
- 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: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 5.12

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 43.003369 Longitude: -83.440052

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. 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: |

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

Beecher Heights Lot 57, Except that part lying southwesterly of the northeasterly line of Ballenger Highway situated in the County of Genesee, City of Flint, State of Michigan. Part of the Southeast ¼, Section 15, T7N-R6E. Tax Item No. 40-15-435-017.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property is the entire parcel historically and presently belonging to the school.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kristine Kidorf
organization: Kidorf Preservation Consulting
street & number: 451 E. Ferry Street

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

Genesee County, MI
County and State

city or town: Detroit state: MI zip code: 48202
e-mail kristine@kidorfpreservationconsulting.com
telephone: 313-300-9376
date: July 2017

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.)

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: Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

City or Vicinity: Flint

County: Genesee

State: MI

Photographer: Kristine M. Kidorf

Date Photographed: October 20, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 14. Looking northwest at south and east facades.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0001

2 of 14. Looking northwest at east facade.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0002

3 of 14. Looking west at detail of east entrance.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0003

4 of 14. Looking west at detail of east entrance.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0004

5 of 14. Looking northeast at west end of south elevation.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0005

6 of 14. Looking east at rear of original gymnasium.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0006

7 of 14. Looking southeast at rear of building.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0007

8 of 14. Looking south at rear of building.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0008

9 of 14. Looking south at north end of building.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0009

10 of 14. Looking southwest at east facade.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0010

11 of 14. Looking south at stair and south entrance.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0011

12 of 14. Looking south in kindergarten room.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0012

13 of 14. Looking north in second floor auditorium.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0013

14 of 14. Looking Looking southwest in second floor classroom.

MI_Genesee County_Coolidge Elementary_0014

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School
Name of Property

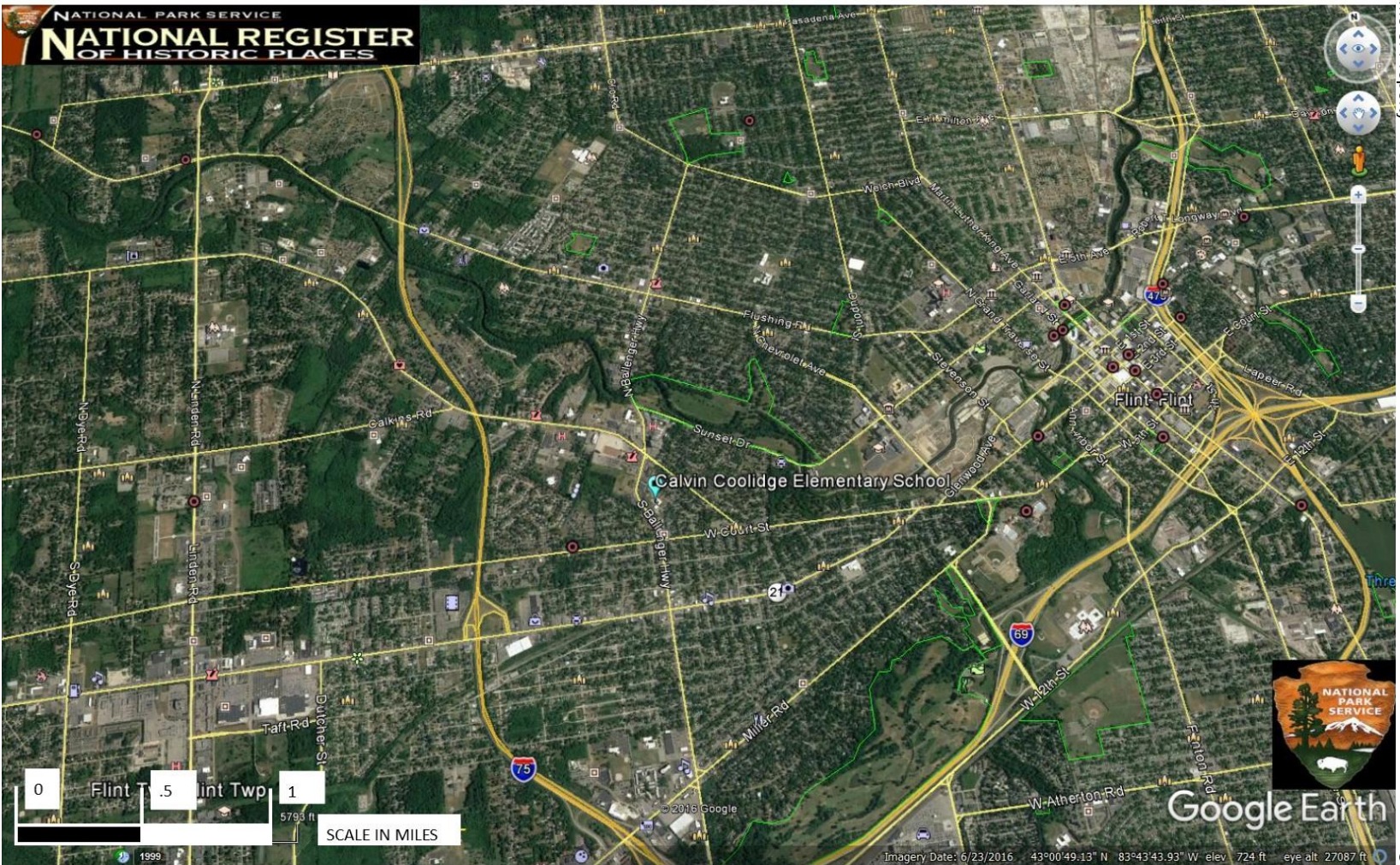
Genesee County, MI
County and State

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.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI
County and State



CALVIN COOLIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FLINT, GENESSEE COUNTY, MI

CONTEXT MAP

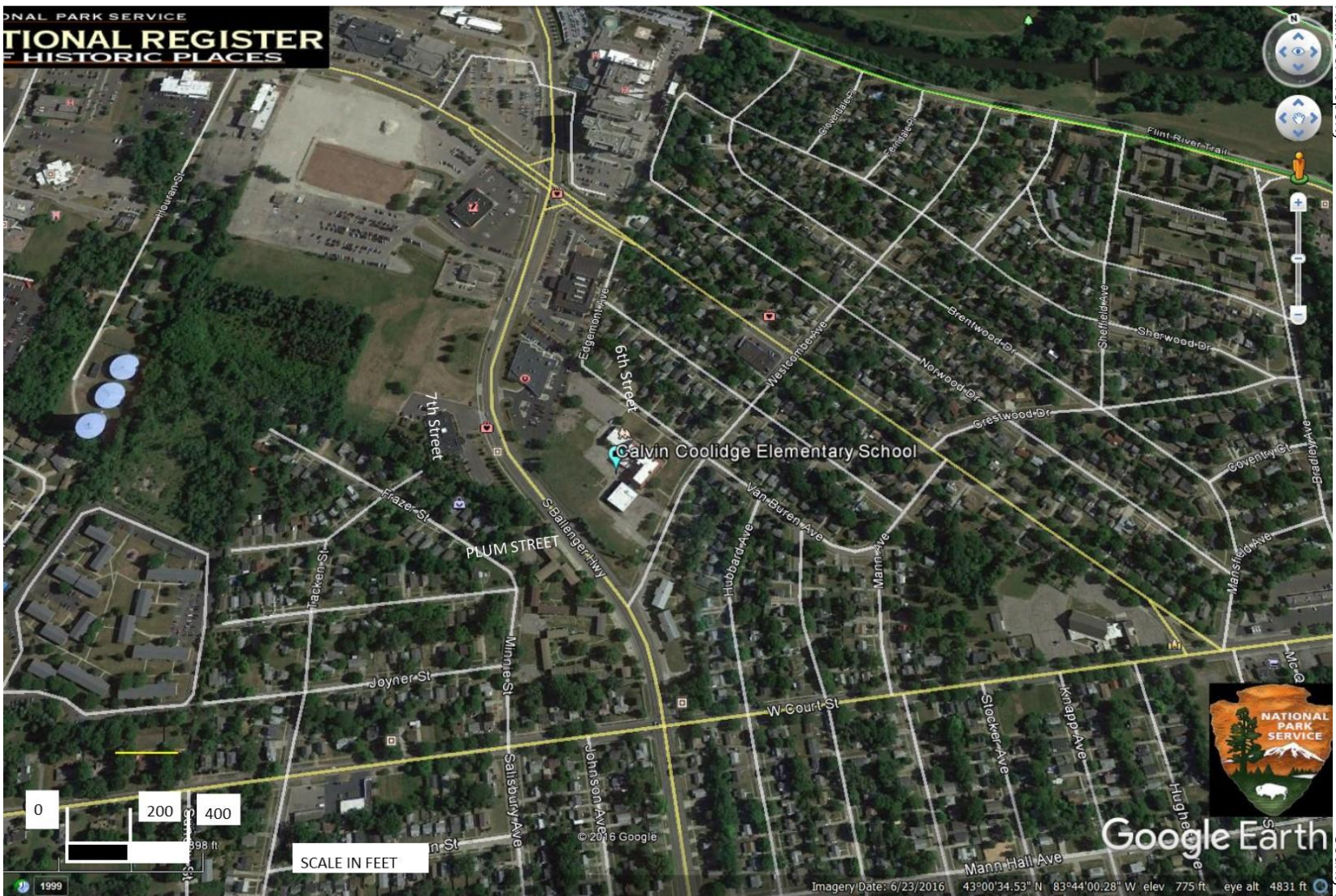


Latitude: 43.003369

Longitude: -83.440052

Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Genesee County, MI



CALVIN COOLIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FLINT, GENESSEE COUNTY, MI
LARGE SCALE MAP



Latitude: 43.003369

Longitude: -83.440052



COOLIDGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL





AD
1970

CALVIN COOLIDGE

MASS
ENT

MASS
P. 1199N

MASS

BLOOD

BUCK TOON

CALVIN CULLIDGE























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Coolidge, Calvin, Elementary School

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: MICHIGAN, Genesee

Date Received: 12/19/2017 Date of Pending List: 1/29/2018 Date of 16th Day: 2/13/2018 Date of 45th Day: 2/2/2018 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100002067

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 2/1/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: _____

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus* Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 2/1/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

EARL J. POLESKI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 13, 2017



Mr. J. Paul Loether, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed discs contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Calvin Coolidge Elementary School, Flint, Genesee County, Michigan**. Disc 1 contains correspondence and the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, which includes site maps. Disc 2 contains photographs of this site. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, Interim National Register Coordinator, at (517) 373-1979 or WalshT@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway
State Historic Preservation Officer

