

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 19 1986

date entered APR 29 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

Historical Resources of the University-Cultural Center;  
historic Partial Inventory—Historic and Architectural Resources in Phase I Project Area

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Streets of Project Area, Detroit, Michigan N/A not for publication

city, town Detroit N/A vicinity of

state Michigan code 026 county Wayne code 163

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
Multiple Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Medical

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners (see attached list)

street & number

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wayne County Register of Deeds

street & number City-County Building

city, town Detroit state Michigan

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Detroit Urban Conservation Project has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1976-1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Michigan History Division

city, town Lansing state Michigan

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## 7. Description

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**Condition** excellent deteriorated good ruins fair unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

See attached continuation sheets.

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INTRODUCTION

This document contains nomination materials for eleven historically and architecturally significant structures in Detroit, Michigan. The study area of this Multiple Resource Nomination is part of Detroit's inner city and is known as the University-Cultural Center (UCC). The UCC provides a link along a north-south axis connecting the Central Business District to the New Center business district at Grand Boulevard. The heart of the UCC is located at the Woodward Avenue sites of the Detroit Public Library and the Detroit Institute of Arts. The boundaries of the UCC extend westward to the Lodge Expressway, taking in most of the main campus of Wayne State University, and to the Chrysler Expressway on the east. The Grand Trunk railway tracks and a series of streets (Selden, Parsons, E. Willis, and E. Warren) form the northern and southern borders of the UCC.

As no archeological work was done as part of this study, these nomination materials give no consideration to possible archeological sites within the UCC.

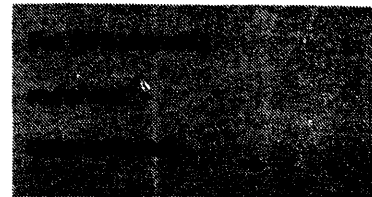
The UCC study area is rich in historically and architecturally significant structures, and the following ones are among those already on the National Register: the homes of David Mackenzie, David Whitney Jr., and Colonel Frank J. Hecker; the Hilberry Theatre, Scarab Club, and Orchestra Hall; the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit Public Library, Rackham Memorial Building, and Wayne State's Old Main building.

Prior interest and involvement in historic preservation in the UCC area among individuals and organizations form a major backdrop to this nomination. In 1975, students at Wayne State University founded Preservation Wayne with the goal of promoting and assisting the preservation of structures having historic and architectural significance. Through the identification and documentation of significant structures, Preservation Wayne began to lobby on behalf of those structures and influence planning decisions by major Cultural Center institutions. To this end, in 1978 Preservation Wayne undertook its own historic building survey of structures owned by the University. Two years earlier, the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State secured a grant, administered by the State of Michigan and the City of Detroit, to document structures in the city. Within the Grand Boulevard, the Detroit Urban Conservation Project, as the effort became known, surveyed and photographed every building and made a block by block survey for the remainder of the city.

But interest in historic preservation does not alone explain the efforts by people in the UCC area to act to protect their threatened properties. In the 1960s, concerns arose about the intent and ambitions of major UCC institu-

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tions which made use of urban renewal funds to physically expand into adjacent residential and commercial areas. Neighboring residents believed that institutional expansion occurred at their expense and that institutional and government officials seriously underestimated the full economic and historical value of their properties. Confronted with unexpected opposition, by the early 1970s UCC institutions had to make adjustments and recognize that future expansion might have to make at least partial accommodation with area residents and the existing residential and commercial structures.

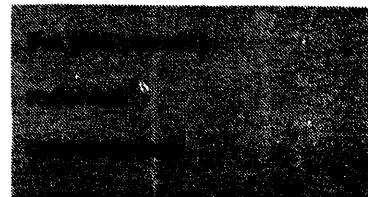
With the goal of identifying structures of historical and architectural significance, and encouraging the preservation and reuse of those structures as part of the development of the UCC area, in early 1984 Preservation Wayne obtained a grant from the Michigan History Division to undertake Phase I of a project to survey, research, and nominate to the National Register eligible structures located in the UCC study area. The grant project was also coordinated through the Wayne State University Office of Research & Sponsored Programs and the Wayne State History Department. The following discussion explains how the Phase I project has evolved.

In the early summer of 1984, Project Director William S. Colburn and Project Manager Thomas A. Klug made a reconnaissance survey of the study area and noted the structures that appeared to meet the criteria for historic designation. Earlier surveys by Preservation Wayne and the Detroit Urban Conservation Project helped expedite the process of determining which structures in the study area might be eligible as part of a Multiple Resource Nomination to the National Register. More than three dozen structures seemed important enough to warrant further detailed investigation.

Based on advice from the project's Advisory Board relative to the limited amount of funds, time, and the number of volunteer researchers available, a decision was made to restrict the immediate Phase I survey to the following area: west of Woodward Avenue and east of Second Boulevard (known as Gullen Mall on the Wayne State University campus); north of Warren Avenue and south of the Ford Expressway. The eleven block survey area was small enough to be adequately researched, yet large enough to pull in a diversity of commercial structures, former single-family residences, and apartment buildings. In addition, the survey area adequately reflects the spatial use history of the area: from upper-class, single-family residences starting in the 1870s and 1880s, to large apartment buildings in the 1920s, combined with the emergence of mixed usages of space among residences, commercial structures, and public educational and cultural institutions. The survey area also has within it five structures already listed on the National Register: the Detroit Public Library, the Belcrest Apartments, the Maccabees building, and the almost neighboring George L. Beecher and Lemuel C. Bowen houses on Woodward Avenue.

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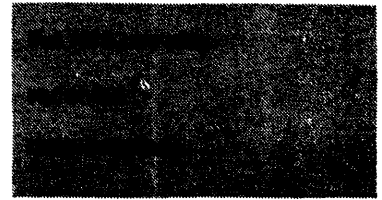
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In June, the Michigan History Division approved the project boundaries and research plans for eleven buildings located in the survey area. Volunteer researchers from Wayne State University, Lawrence Institute of Technology, and Preservation Wayne were then assigned to develop the histories and architectural descriptions of the twelve structures. Volunteers were given an initial workshop on identifying architectural styles and using relevant source materials housed in the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library. The project has demonstrated that volunteers who began with basic research skills could be trained quickly to do historical and architectural research with, of course, guidance along the way. The major task of the Project Manager was to attend to the difficulties encountered by the volunteers and to see that the research was completed in a timely fashion. The Project Manager also complemented the research of the volunteers by studying and piecing together the history of City of Detroit and Wayne State University plans for the development of the UCC area.

Several meetings of the Advisory Board took place during the life of the project. Upon completion of the volunteers' work, the entire body of research material was presented to the advisors for comment and suggestions. The advisors helped establish the main points of historical and architectural significance of each structure, both from the standpoint of the specific information gathered about the buildings and in view of the more general historical context of the development of the UCC from the late 19th century through 1945. The eleven structures researched in detail during the project are presented for nomination in this document to the National Register of Historic Places.

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THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE UNIVERSITY-CULTURAL CENTER

The University-Cultural Center study area is situated in Detroit, Michigan. It consists of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  square miles, has a population of about 10,000, and falls within the lower portion of the Woodward Avenue Corridor which begins just above the Central Business District at the Fisher Expressway and extends in a northerly direction for 8.5 miles to the Detroit City limits at 8 Mile Road. The sides of the Woodward Corridor are formed by the Lodge and Chrysler Expressways. Woodward Avenue has historically been the central axis of the City of Detroit and for much of the metropolitan area. The movement of population out along Woodward began after the Civil War and most of the original development was by wealthy middle-class people of an Anglo-Saxon Protestant background. They left their indelible mark throughout the Woodward Corridor in the form of the surviving and once fashionable residences, numerous commercial structures, and in the great monuments to education and the arts that form the inner core of the University-Cultural Center.

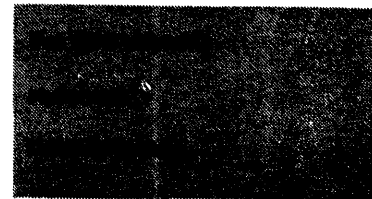
The most common access to the University-Cultural Center is through the expressway system which connects the UCC to southeastern Michigan, northern Ohio, and southwestern Ontario. Although regular bus transportation carries some students and employees into the UCC, the most frequent mode of transportation is the automobile. Since the 1940s, the City of Detroit has made plans to locate automobile parking in the UCC in below ground facilities, but apart from the underground lot adjacent to the Detroit Institute of Arts, the development of this kind of parking has not occurred. Two large, above ground parking structures on the main Wayne State campus, along with scattered surface lots and metered street parking serve most of the parking needs in the UCC.

The streets in the vicinity of the UCC are a combination of one and two-way avenues and are laid out in a conventional grid pattern. The most travelled streets are Woodward, Cass, Warren and Forest. Within the UCC, Woodward and Cass convey traffic from a mixed section of residences and commercial buildings on the south, through the UCC core between Forest and the Ford Expressway, to the business and manufacturing district at the northern end of the study area, just below the New Center area at Grand Boulevard. City plans since the 1940s have envisioned a ring of avenues surrounding the inner core of the UCC. Thus, Warren, St. Antoine, and Third (or Anthony Wayne) avenues encircle much of Wayne State University and the institutions of culture. The northern piece of the ring has not been completed, although Palmer might be developed as a widened avenue or boulevard from Second through to St. Antoine.

Since the construction of the Art Institute and Public Library at their present Woodward sites in the 1910s and 1920s, streets and expressways have been instrumental in giving the UCC a sense of geographic identity. The expressway network, for example, encloses most of the UCC study area, but there is not a clear line of demarcation on the south between the UCC and the Fisher Express-

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way. As another example, since the 1950s the development of a ring of avenues encompassing the central portions of the UCC has given the district a clearer sense of identity. Furthermore, the abolition of surface streets has been used to enhance the impression that UCC institutions have a unique cultural and educational mission to fulfill for the inhabitants not only of Detroit, but for the region surrounding the city as well. In the 1910s, the closing of Frederick Street between Woodward and John R made possible the subsequent building of the Detroit Institute of Arts and its surrounding by spacious landscaping. On the Wayne State Campus, portions of Second, Putnam, Merrick, W. Kirby, and W. Ferry have been closed to vehicular traffic.

The UCC contains three chief categories of buildings. First, there are those that are public oriented, such as the main Cultural Center institutions, educational structures, and religious buildings. A second group consists of commercial and industrial establishments. Residential dwellings, both single-family dwellings and large apartment buildings, comprise the third group of structures in the UCC.

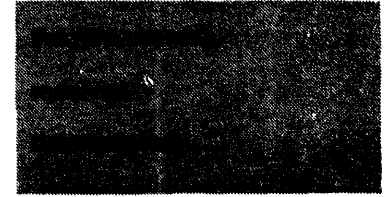
Today, the public-oriented buildings serving education and the arts give the University-Cultural Center its thematic identity. Such buildings include the Public Library, the Institute of Arts, the Detroit Historical Museum, the Detroit Science Center, the Rackham Memorial building, and the complex of structures created for the Center for Creative Studies by architect Minoru Yamasaki. One of Woodward's rare portals or open spaces is formed at the sites of the Library and Art Institute. Both buildings are situated on single large city blocks and are built quite some distance back from the forward property lines, unlike most of the unplanned development along Woodward that has led to the crowding and perceptual narrowing of the city's central avenue.

West of Cass, modernistic Wayne State University buildings dot the landscape. Of the structures created specifically for the University, the earliest date from the late 1940s. Many University buildings are from the 1950s and 1960s, including the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, the College of Education Building, and DeRoy Auditorium—all designed by Minoru Yamasaki. The University is also responsible for the large Matthai athletic complex located west of the Lodge Expressway and built during the 1960s. Wayne State has also been instrumental in the development of Detroit's up-to-date Medical Center situated within an area bounded by E. Warren, the Chrysler Expressway, Mack Avenue, and Woodward.

A number of churches and synagogues stand in the UCC. The original late 19th century movement of population out along Woodward Avenue generally was preceded by the construction of churches along the eastern side of the street. The First Congregational Church (1891), Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church

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(1896), and St. Paul's (Episcopal) Cathedral continued that pattern into the UCC and, in addition, are all on the National Register. Churches also can be found on Cass, as well as remnants of synagogues that were once quite common east of John R.

Commercial and industrial structures form the second major category of buildings in the UCC. Thriving businesses and commercial structures once occupied the lots along north/south transportation routes, especially Woodward and Cass. There is less of that activity today than in the past, but it still continues and two of the structures nominated in this document, the Gleaners' Temple at 5705 Woodward and Cass Motor Sales (Dalgleish Cadillac) at 5800 Cass, recall a time of much more intense, often automobile-related, business activity along these thoroughfares. Much of the commercial activity in the UCC today is geared to serving the needs of the students and employees who reside elsewhere and use the UCC during weekdays.

The journey northwards along Cass, Woodward, and other avenues leads into the southwest tail end of the once heavily industrialized Milwaukee Junction. The Junction is formed by the convergence of several railroad lines which create an industrial zone extending eastwards beyond the Chrysler Expressway and then north into the City of Hamtramck. Much of Detroit's automobile industry developed and matured in the Milwaukee Junction before spreading to places like Highland Park, Dearborn, and Warren. General Motors' Fisher Body plant at Hastings and Piquette closed within the last several years. Other automobile factories have long ago shut down: the factories of Ford and Studebaker on Piquette near Beaubien, and the Cadillac facility west of Cass on Amsterdam. Still very much in operation, however, is the Burroughs' complex off of Second Avenue, now the corporation's world headquarters. A second concentration of limited industrial activity in the UCC is located south of W. Forest and west of Woodward to about Cass and Second avenues. Until January, 1985, several hundred were employed at the only manufacturing establishment in the zone, the plant of Vernor's Corporation which bottled ginger ale.

Of the residential buildings that stand in the UCC, most are large, multiple-family structures. It is extremely difficult today to find single-family detached homes within the UCC. In addition, some 97% of the 6,723 year round housing units in the UCC are renter, not owner occupied. And the great majority of general residential structures in the UCC were built before 1914. Buildings constructed before 1914 make up 88% of general residential structures in the section of the Woodward Corridor south of the Ford Expressway, disproportionately more than the 13% average for Detroit at large.



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In the southern sections of the UCC, one finds a large concentration of apartment buildings. Second Avenue below Wayne State University serves as a highly concentrated strip of medium to large-size apartment buildings. So, too, do east/west streets such as W. Willis, Prentis, W. Forest, Hancock, and a section of W. Warren. Further north, E. Palmer for several blocks off Woodward hosts numerous small to medium-size apartment buildings and multiple-family flats. Another grouping of medium-size apartment structures can be found on the same block as the nominated Verona Apartments at 92 W. Ferry--all built between the mid-1890s and 1914. The largest apartment buildings and apartment hotels date from Detroit's building boom of the 1920s. Three are located within the immediate neighborhood of the main Wayne State campus: the Chatsworth, the Belcrest, and the nominated Webster (now Mackenzie) Hall at 5060 Cass. East of Woodward, the Park Shelton and the Art Centre Apartments overlook the northern end of the Detroit Institute of Arts.

In the past, a great number of single-family dwellings occupied the Wayne State campus west of Cass. Nearly all have long ago been demolished in the wake of University expansion. Nevertheless, in the midst of large and modern University buildings a few former residences remain and function as either office or classroom space. Several of these survivors are present in this nomination: the Linsell, Rands, Jacob, and Strasburg houses. Reflective of the homes of the very wealthy that formerly overlooked Woodward Avenue is the Samuel Smith House (5035 Woodward),

Two other previously single-family dwellings of Detroit's business and professional elite fall within the survey area: the James Joy House at 100 W. Kirby which serves as an annex for the Detroit Historical Museum, and the University-owned Thomas Sprague House at 80 W. Palmer.

East of Woodward, demolition has destroyed many of the circa 1900 structures that once covered the space east of the Institute of Arts and the Center for Creative Studies. Much has been destroyed or stands in near ruins between these latter named institutions and a settlement of recently built townhouses along the Chrysler Expressway service drive. Nevertheless, the few structures that make up the Frederick Street Historic District--Dunbar Hospital, for example--serve as a reminder of the area's once thriving Black residential and business community.

Within the UCC, the buildings belonging to the East Ferry Avenue Historic District (two blocks of which are on the National Register) present an intact neighborhood of elegant single-family structures, many originally constructed in the 1880s and 1890s. Comparable is the one block West Canfield Historic District, much farther south between Second and Third Avenues, whose residences appeared in the 1870s.

# 8. Significance

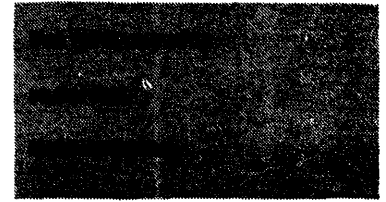
Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		Housing
<b>Specific dates</b>	See inventory	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	See inventory	Performing Arts

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

See attached continuation sheets.

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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY-CULTURAL CENTER

One of the major themes that has marked the history of the University-Cultural Center has been the movement away from a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional activities and structures to a situation characterized by an imbalance created primarily by the tremendous physical growth of large institutions, especially Wayne State University. From the mid-19th century to about 1920, upper-class families settled in the UCC. Attracted to the openness and semi-suburban quality to the area, these families had residences constructed by prominent Detroit builders and architects. Commercialization began to penetrate the UCC after the turn of the century, reaching a high level of development during the 1920s with the construction of several twelve-story luxury apartments and apartment hotels within the core of the UCC. Institutional growth also began early on in the UCC. In 1896, Central High School was built at the corner of Cass and Warren. In the 1900s and 1910s, educational and artistic-oriented institutions began to favor the UCC as an ideal location in which to erect new structures. The Detroit Public Library (completed in 1921) and the Detroit Institute of Arts (1927) represent this phase in institutional building in the UCC. Altogether, residential, commercial, and institutional activities and structures maintained a mutually beneficial relationship with each other--one of the factors that made the UCC a choice location for upper-class residential living, commercial opportunities, and the siting of cultural institutions.

Beginning in the 1940s, the balance among the three sectors gave way to an increasing monopolization of space by large and expanding institutions. Since 1941, Wayne (State) University has led the way in developing the UCC as a select realm for institutional growth which was backed with the approval of the City Plan Commission and the City Administration. Changes in Federal law in the 1950s and 1960s, especially in the financing of Urban Renewal projects, became an important funding vehicle enabling UCC institutions to expand their size and giving them, in the process, a predominant voice in many aspects of the utilization of space within the UCC.

The eleven buildings offered in this nomination each reflect some aspect of the first phase in the history of the UCC. The Thomas Sprague House (1884) and the Samuel Smith House (1889) recall the original settlement of the UCC by upper-class families. The James Joy House (1897) reflects the movement of upper-class residences along the side streets connected to Woodward Avenue. The Linsell (1904), Rands (1912), Jacob (1915) and Strasburg (1915) houses were among the first upper-class residences constructed on what later became the main campus of Wayne State University.

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Commercial development in the UCC can also be seen in the history of a number of the nominated buildings.

Cass Motor Sales (1928) was built at a time of intense commercial development along Cass Avenue, much of it related to the automobile. The Gleaners' Temple (1908-10) at the corner of Woodward and W. Palmer was the national headquarters for the Ancient Order of the Gleaners, a fraternal benefit society serving rural residents. The Verona Apartments (1896) and Webster Hall Hotel (1924) were two different versions of the same phenomenon: the development of large, multiple-unit buildings catering to an upper-class segment of the population.

Due to changes in ownership and use, several of the nominated buildings became converted to educational or cultural purposes. Thus, the Smith and Strasburg houses functioned as music or dance schools before they were acquired by the Board of Education and Wayne State University. Other structures, in addition however, became fully converted to an institutional purpose after their acquisition by the Board of Education for Wayne University. These include the Linsell, Rands, Jacob, and Joy houses. Webster (Mackenzie) Hall, most notably, underwent the transformation from a commercial enterprise to a dormitory, student center, and then finally academic and administrative offices for Wayne State University.

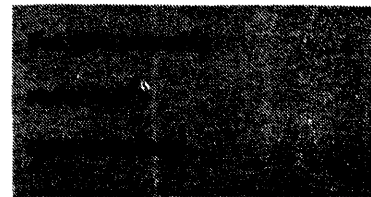
After the Civil War, the Park Lots along Woodward that the City had earlier platted and sold to private developers became attractive sites for well-designed and expensive upper-class homes and churches. Families settled along Woodward in the University-Cultural Center between the 1860s and 1890s. In 1876, C.R. Mabley's house was built at W. Palmer (then Holden) and Woodward. Colonel Frank J. Hecker's mansion went up nearly across the street from Mabley in 1888-91. The home of David C. Whitney Jr. appeared on Woodward at W. Canfield in 1894.

In the UCC, residential development on streets off of Woodward occurred in the 1880s and 1890s. The first block of E. Ferry was subdivided into lots in the mid-1880s, the first house going up in 1886-87. Between Woodward and Cass, the Verona Apartment building was virtually the only structure on W. Ferry when it was completed in 1896. One of the earliest houses built between Woodward and Cass was for lumberman Ellias Flynn (1886) at 61 Putnam.

West of Cass, however, the large tract of property owned by Matilda Cass Ledyard, the daughter of former Michigan governor Lewis Cass, remained undeveloped and unplatted until 1892 when she organized a joint stock company, the Cass Farm Company, Ltd., involving some of Detroit's wealthiest businessmen. Before the subdivision of this portion of the Cass Farm, the land west of Cass

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Avenue had been put to recreational uses. In 1875, the Detroit Free Press commented on the Cass Avenue Driving Park (located north of Putnam between Cass and Second). One reached the large skating park and the one-half mile horse track by passing through a main gate entrance "bordered with shade trees, a handsome gate, over which is an ornamented arch, and at the sides are the office and the ladies' parlor." In the 1880s and 1890s, the State Fair grounds were located in the area between Putnam and Holden, Cass and Third.

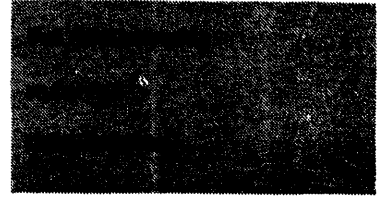
In 1893, the Cass Farm Company, Ltd., began to dispose of large tracts of property. The land involved was located principally between Cass and Second from Hancock to the Railway tracks; and north of W. Kirby it extended to Third Avenue. The company expended several hundred thousand dollars to develop the land tracts by constructing sewers and planting trees. Lot purchasers had to agree to erect only stone or brick buildings of at least \$6,000 in value. By 1895, the lot for the new Central High School had been sold for \$130,000. The block between Warren and Putnam, Cass and Second, went to James L. Gearing & Sons also for \$130,000.

Still, residential building east of Second (on what subsequently became the main campus of Wayne State University) did not begin in full until after 1908. Frederick Linsell's house, built in 1904 at the corner of Second and Putnam, must have been among the first houses in the area. A sample of building permits issued for Cass, W. Ferry, W. Kirby, and Merrick indicates that over 90% of homes built on these streets were constructed between 1909 and 1915. Most of the homes were two story, brick structures, with basements. A survey of building permits covering forty residences constructed (many with garages) between 1904 and 1916 shows approximate costs ranging from as low as \$3,500 to a high of \$22,000. The Max Jacob House (\$19,800) and the Strasburg House (\$16,000) were among the most expensive properties constructed in the area. The average cost, however, was about \$8,000.

One of the sources of wealth for the first residents of the University-Cultural Center stemmed from the development of lumbering and mining in northern Michigan and railroad promotion. Samuel Smith and Ellias Flynn made their fortunes in lumber and mining, the Joy family in railroads, and Colonel Hecker and Charles Freer in the construction of railway cars. They and others typically had important investments in real estate, both in Detroit and elsewhere. Some converted their fortunes into capital for the early automobile industry, as did Samuel Smith for Oldsmobile and the Joy family with Packard. William C. Rands made the not too uncommon move from bicycle manufacturing to supplying parts to automobile firms. By 1910, Detroit was well on its way to becoming the automobile capital of the world. The Milwaukee Junction industrial district located due north of the residential area under consideration proved a fertile ground for the development of modern automobile factories. In 1908,

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the Ford Model T made its first appearance in one of the factories located on Piquette Avenue.

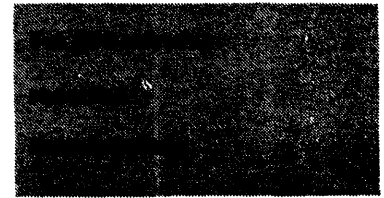
Between 1900 and World War I, an economic expansion based on the automobile led to a phenomenal increase in Detroit's population, from 285,000 in 1900 to 465,000 in 1910. The population reached nearly one million (993,000) in 1920. Commercial development, as a result of this economic activity, penetrated the UCC, principally along the major north-south thoroughfares like Cass and Woodward. An examination of the addresses along Cass in 1928-29 indicates the pattern of commercial development in the UCC. Of some 80 businesses along Cass between Selden and Warren, over one-third were automobile dealers (a total of 16) or automobile-related enterprises. Then, in the heart of the UCC between Warren and Palmer, the number of commercial shops decreased to 14 in number. Over half of these--including a barber and coffee shop, a bank, drug store, and a gift shop--occupied the first floor frontage provided by Webster Hall Hotel. From Palmer to the railway tracks, commercial development increased and automobile-related businesses (factories, suppliers, and dealerships) made up nearly two-thirds of the commercial addresses. Among these was Cass Motor Sales at 5800 Cass.

Thus, by 1929 the automobile industry had made the middle-class families of the UCC core prosperous, but they had largely managed to keep automobile businesses to the south of Warren and north of Palmer. Commercialization in the form of multi-unit dwellings maintained a similar pattern with relation to the UCC core. In 1928-29, there were a total of nineteen hotels and apartment buildings located on Second between Selden and Warren. Grocers, restaurants, and laundries surrounded these structures. On Second between Warren and Palmer, however, there was not a single hotel or apartment building, although there were three music studios operating out of houses.

As Detroit became more economically pivotal to the regional economy, the city became an ideal central location for fraternal organizations like the Maccabees and the Gleaners. In 1908-9, both societies moved to Detroit because it seemed the best place to administer benefits for a membership that lived in Michigan and in the surrounding states. In addition, both established their national headquarters along the west side of Woodward within the core of the UCC.

A critical point in the commercial development of the UCC came during the mid-1920s with the construction of upper-class apartments and apartment hotels. The sixteen suite Verona, built in 1896, was dwarfed in size by the twelve story and 800 room Webster Hall built in 1924; or the Belcrest, constructed in 1926. The Chatsworth on Merrick west of Second, and the Wardell

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Hotel (Park Shelton) and Art Centre Apartments on E. Kirby, also went up in the mid-1920s. Webster Hall and the Wardell Hotel also provided first level space for independent stores. These large-scale residences united the commercial development of the UCC with the provision of housing for upper-class Detroiters who found the immediate neighborhood and the Cultural Center amenities convincing arguments for living in the core of the UCC.

Not only did commercialization foster the building of elegant apartment buildings, but in time it also altered many of the single-family residences built before 1920.

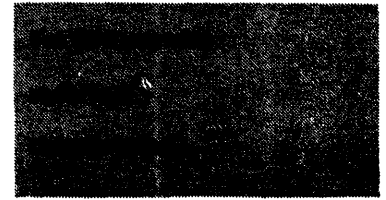
From 1926 to 1933, the James Joy House was used as office space for real estate, advertising, sales, and contracting businesses. Then from 1934 into the 1940s, the house served the Cavanaugh Mortuary. The Strasburg House was converted into furnished rooms from 1928 to 1931. In the 1930s, other dwellings changed from their former function as single-family residences. Thus, in 1933, 5063 Cass became a rooming house and then, in 1936, it was converted into office space. In 1937, 5451 Cass was changed into a store, later into three apartments and nine sleeping rooms. From 1931 to 1943, the Lemuel Bowen house at 5435 Woodward became La Casa Loma--a combined tea room, club, and provider of furnished rooms. In 1943, the Bowen house began to be used as space for a hospital. Similarly, in 1935, the dwelling at 466 W. Kirby became a hospital, and another at 438 W. Kirby became a convalescent home in 1943. The Business News Publishing Company took over the Rands House from 1933 to 1945.

Music schools also assumed space in the UCC. From 1917 to 1960, the Detroit Music Conservatory occupied the Smith House at 5035 Woodward. Between 1931 and 1944, the Netzorgs converted the former Strasburg House into part residence and part music school. Other organizations of an educational nature also moved into dwellings in the UCC. Thus, in 1936 the former home of John Kelsey, president of Kelsey Wheel Company, at 5205 Cass was remodeled for the Detroit Children's Museum. Twenty years later, the Children's Museum began occupying its current building, a former residence located at 67 E. Kirby. From 1945 to 1951, the Detroit Historical Society used the home of once Michigan governor, G. Mennan Williams, at 441 Merrick.

The first move in the conversion of the UCC to large-scale institutional usage began as early as 1896 with the completion of Central High School (now WSU's Old Main Building, at the southwest corner of Cass and Warren. By 1910, key civic leaders decided to situate both the new public library and art museum across the street from one another on Woodward. This decision was instrumental in ultimately targeting the surrounding residential and commercial

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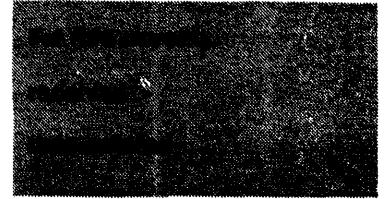
neighborhood as an area for the expansion of cultural and educational institutions.

In 1908, William C. Weber, a trustee of the Art Museum, began a movement to relocate the museum away from the congested environment at Jefferson and Hastings to a more open and cleaner site on Woodward north of Farnsworth. The new location would afford space not only away from polluting industries, but would also provide sufficient land to build a large and fireproof art museum complex. The two blocks of property acquired for the new museum at a cost of \$220,000 would, according to an editorial in 1910 in the Detroit Journal, provide "ample space for the next 100 years, at least." "Here," the editors added, "we can build for permanence and beauty. Here the citizens can really attempt and accomplish something worthwhile for the finer things and tastes and standards of civic life with no fear or worry of the future." The Detroit Journal approved the proposed Woodward site as "about the safest part of the city for an investment of this kind, for a public enterprise of this character and magnitude." The newspaper eased any fear that industrial development might seep into the area and drastically alter its residential and institutional character. "In these days of magical industrial growth, it is not always safe to prophesy [sic] where a factory may not appear." But, the paper added, "that particular portion of Woodward will undoubtedly remain a section of beautiful city homes."

Evidently, the upper-class residential character to the area surrounding the proposed new art museum was viewed as a positive asset that could contribute to the cultural mission of the institution. The decision to situate the art museum on Woodward at Farnsworth encouraged the Library Commission to choose the large tract bounded by Woodward, Kirby, Cass and Putnam as the place to build a new main library building. At this juncture, before the start of any construction, the decisions of civic leaders in favor of the two Woodward sites received a stamp of approval from experts in city planning.

In April 1913, the City Plan and Improvement Commission asked Edward Bennet of Chicago and Frank Miles Day of Philadelphia to study plans for the development of an art center at the proposed Woodward sites. Bennet had already been at work for the Commission making studies for a comprehensive city plan, and Day was already known to the Library Commission as an architectural advisor for the design competition to secure an architect for the new library building. In the fall of 1913, Bennet and Day made their recommendations in a short publication, A Center of Arts and Letters. The consultants recommended that the library and art museum sites be made more symmetrical as part of larger and squarer blocks. This required the acquisition of additional parcels of land to the north and south of each site. They called for the closing of Frederick Street between Woodward and John R in order to form a super block for the art



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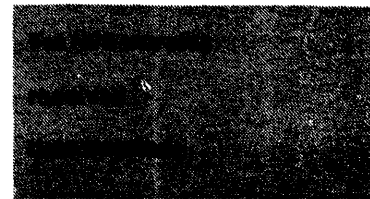
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museum. They also made suggestions concerning buildings surrounding the sites. The city, they believed, should pass an ordinance to limit the height of surrounding buildings to 80-100 feet. The new monumental buildings, they noted, "should not be disturbed by the immediate proximity of businesses or residential structures," by which they meant structures on the same blocks at the library and art museum. Both buildings required plenty of space, and most important was a large open space between the two structures overlooking Woodward Avenue. Bennet and Day foresaw the possibility of placing other buildings of a similar cultural or civic theme on land acquired around the two super blocks. The planners approved building the library and art museum at the Woodward sites because in a matter of years the growth of Detroit would make the area the center of the city. They proposed to reinforce the centrality of the location by offering to connect the art district to Belle Isle and the Michigan Central Railway Station by a pair of new diagonal avenues cutting across Detroit.

A couple portions of the Bennet and Day plan never materialized--for example, the diagonal avenues and the restriction on the height of surrounding buildings. Early on, there were other obstacles to the attempt to define the area around Woodward and Warren as a functionally distinct center of culture and education. In 1919, for example, Orchestra Hall opened up farther south along Woodward beyond the core of the UCC. There was also resistance to the idea of expanding cultural and civic institutions within the core area. This can be best illustrated by the controversy over the war veterans memorial hall that raged in the early 1920s. One proposal that circulated in Detroit was to develop a combined art and civic center by locating a memorial hall for Detroiters killed during World War I in the vicinity of the library and art museum. In the fall of 1921, Bennet, the former head of the City Plan Commission, Charles Moore, the Detroit Real Estate Board, and others favored placing the hall on a block formed by Cass, W. Kirby, Second and Putnam--directly across the street from the Detroit Public Library. Local property owners, led among others by John Mercier who resided in the home formerly owned by William C. Rands, voiced a strong protest. Mercier claimed that the homeowners would never get fair compensation for their property because it was underassessed. Furthermore, Mercier argued, practically every man who bought a home or built one in this locality did so with the intention of establishing a permanent home. None of us bought believing we would sell later at a great profit." Another resident objected to the memorial hall proposal, saying he would not dare give up his garden for the price of the entire property. The proposal died, as did one made by noted architect Albert Kahn who favored developing a "John R Plaza" by placing the hall east of John R opposite the rear of the Art Institute. The land for Kahn's option, however, was too highly assessed. Detroit did not construct a memorial hall until after World War II, and then as part of a functionally distinct Civic Center located on the riverfront.

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No significant construction occurred in the UCC core from the completion of the Art Institute (1927) to the construction of the Rackham Memorial building (1941). In the spring of 1941, the City Plan Commission began to prepare to make a comprehensive master plan for the entire city. That same year, Wayne University acquired the first of the residential blocks located north of the Old Main building. Wayne, at the time, was part of the Detroit school system. In 1917, the Michigan legislature had established a two year Detroit Junior College with David Mackenzie as its first dean. In 1923, the school became the College of the City of Detroit with a four year liberal arts program. The Board of Education united its several colleges--the oldest was the Medical College dating from 1868--into a University in 1933, and a year later changed the name to Wayne University. It became a state university in 1956.

During the mid to late 1930s, Wayne witnessed a tremendous expansion in student enrollment. In 1933-34, some 8,290 students registered for classes, more than doubling by 1937-38. Almost all university activities were concentrated in Old Main--built in 1896 to hold about 2,500 students. As its first response to growth, Wayne began to rent space in the residences in the vicinity of Old Main. In 1933, the first movement into the neighborhood occurred when Wayne rented a ten room house at 4847 Second for a men's union and 467 Hancock for the women's union. By 1937, Wayne University occupied all of Old Main and rented fourteen residences along Second, Cass, W. Warren, and Putnam.

Public school administrators decided to deal with the problem of crowding at Wayne University in an orderly fashion. In November 1936, Superintendent Frank Cody appointed eighteen influential people to a Citizen's Committee to investigate Wayne's housing difficulties. Issuing their report in February, 1937, they called for the expansion of the University in the vicinity of Old Main rather than locating elsewhere in the city. And based on a survey of assessed property values, the Committee recommended that the University expand into the three blocks north of Old Main.

The recommendations of the Citizen's Committee were not surprising, given that Charles Spain, Executive Vice-President of Wayne University, had made similar suggestions in a report to the Committee one month earlier. Spain's report to the Citizen's Committee is most significant in terms of the rationale it provided for expanding Wayne into the UCC core. Spain argued that building the University in its present location was preferable to moving to an open area somewhere on the edge of the city because the area was readily accessible to all parts of Detroit and beyond. Furthermore, Wayne's student body consisted of many part-time working students who would be too greatly inconvenienced if the campus were located elsewhere. Secondly, remaining in the area would enable the Board of Education to continue utilizing existing facilities. A building

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comparable to Old Main could not be constructed and sited without a large expenditure of money. And Old Main was no longer of any use to the Board of Education as a high school because of changes in the population of the surrounding neighborhood. Finally, Spain recommended the present location because it would put the University in direct relationship with the Public Library and Art Institute. The University, together with these other two institutions, would combine with some twenty-five other structures and activities to contribute to the development of a much larger cultural center. Among the twenty-five structures noted by Spain were Webster Hall Hotel, the Art Centre Apartments, the Wardell (Park Shelton) Hotel, the Maccabees Building, the Belcrest Apartments, the Merrill-Palmer school, the Detroit Children's Museum, and the Detroit Conservatory of Music (operating out of the Samuel Smith House). The expansion of Wayne University gave the city good reason to consider an enlarged cultural center.

According to the University Building and Planning Committee, the recommendations of the Citizen's Committee were extremely significant for the future of Wayne. Writing in Wayne Looks to the Future (1943), the Building and Planning Committee approved the linkage between the expanding University and the Library, Art Institute, and the Rackham Memorial building. The Citizen's Committee also realistically appraised the peculiar characteristics of Wayne's student population: adult working students who resided at a great distance from Wayne and for whom easy access to the University was of vital importance. Finally, the University planners praised the Committee for abandoning the concept that a university had to be made of ivy-mantled Gothic buildings and set apart from the enveloping city. Instead, Wayne would be a model for a university embedded and engaged in the city. By expanding at the junction of Warren and Cass, the University would remain open to Detroit and retain its distinctiveness as an urban institution.

In December 1937, the Board of Education managed to prod the City Council to limit the issuance of permits for new construction or major alterations in the proposed area of expansion--but received no money to acquire land and buildings. Finally, in 1941 the Council approved the purchase of the block from Warren to Putnam. The block, consisting of 26 lots with eleven houses and ten garages, was taken by eminent domain at a cost of \$291,082. In 1944, the second block from Putnam to Merrick was acquired for \$267,729. Among the sixteen houses obtained was the Linsell House. The Board of Education secured the last block, from Merrick to W. Kirby, in 1945 for \$402,546. The Rands and Jacob houses were part of this block.

Before acquiring the first block, the University reasoned that it had to plan for the use and future construction on its new property. In July, 1942, the Board of Education named Suren Pilafian the winner of two contests, one to design a new student center building, and another to prepare a group plan for the entire three blocks. The critique of the plan by one of the contest's

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jurors is significant. By and large, the jury approved Pilafian's placement of a University art center directly across the street from the Public Library, visually in line with the Art Institute. They were less attracted to Pilafian's purely functional exterior designs for the eight buildings he proposed for the new campus. However, Joseph Hudnot, the dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Design, went one step further in his criticism. Hudnot disagreed with Pilafian's building layout, calling it ill-suited for an urban university. Pilafian's layout was along the lines of a traditional campus, with buildings located on the perimeter and an island of open space (with a covered walkway, a swimming pool, and clock tower) in the interior. Hudnot recommended a more engaging style as, for example, New York University--a campus plan that would directly relate the University to the vital activities of the city.

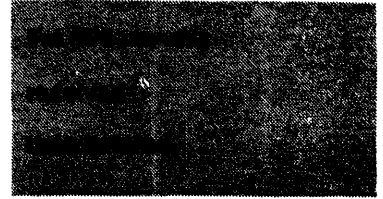
Proposals to expand the University far beyond the limited three block beachhead appeared over the next several years. In May 1943, the City Plan Commission advised the City Council that Wayne be allowed to expand over twenty-seven blocks to the north and west of Old Main. In Your Detroit (1944), the Mayor's Post-War Improvement Committee conceived of two new expressways--later known as the Ford and Lodge--as natural boundaries for Wayne University. The Committee reasoned that eighty-five acres southeast of the intersection of the expressways should be set aside and reserved for future University growth.

The Michigan legislature in 1946 allocated money for the construction of a new classroom building (the future State Hall) and a science building. Although both were to be built on land already acquired, in order to erect them the University had Pilafian develop a new general campus plan. The boundaries of the Pilafian Plan of 1946 extended from Hancock to the Ford Expressway, and Cass to the Lodge. The focal point of the plan was a University library building. Pilafian proposed closing Second north of Warren as a way of removing hazardous traffic from the campus. Four malls converged on the library from different directions. The malls related the campus to principal buildings outside the campus. Thus, Pilafian posed the eastern mall directly across from the Public Library, and the northern mall maintained a spacial relationship with the distant Fisher Building. Pilafian situated the fine arts building on W. Kirby as closely as possible to the Public Library. Future expansion for the fine arts building could be obtained by demolishing the building used by the Law School (that is, the Rands House). Pilafian set aside the broad area west of Third Avenue for physical education, and a new engineering complex at the northeast corner of Third and Warren in the future would expand westwards across Third.

Although not part of Pilafian's plan, in October, 1946, the Board of Education purchased Webster Hall and began its conversion into a University dormitory and student center. Wayne had already been renting the basement swimming

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pool in Webster Hall, and University faculty and students patronized the building's dining room and coffee shop. The acquisition of Webster Hall marked the first movement eastwards for the University.

In its 1947 Technical Report on the Cultural Center, the City Plan Commission incorporated Pilafian's University Plan of 1946. This was one of a number of technical reports issued as part of developing a total master plan for Detroit. The report endorsed the University's plans for expansion. In the document, the boundaries of the Cultural Center extended from Brush on the east to Brooklyn on the west. The north line followed the proposed Ford expressway to Cass, ran with W. Kirby between Cass and Woodward, then along E. Ferry from Woodward to John R, and finally E. Kirby from John R to Brush. On the south, Hancock served as the boundary between the Lodge and Cass, and Warren from Cass to Brush. Cass Avenue was the dividing line between the University and the Library-Museum group. To the already existing facilities, the City Plan proposed several new additions to the Library-Museum group: the Detroit Historical Museum (1951), an International Institute (1959), and between John R and Brush a Planetarium, a Museum of Natural History, and a Hall of Man. The plan considered closing Putnam, Kirby, and Merrick west of Cass, and possibly Second between Warren and W. Ferry. John R might also be closed so that the Art Institute could expand eastwards. Finally, the Master Plan report provided for "the retention of all the major structures now standing in the area." (p.8). Among the structures listed were four commercial buildings: the Art Centre, Chatsworth, and Wardell-Sheraton apartments, and the Maccabees Building. Despite their continuing presence in the Cultural Center, the plan "still achieves a harmonious arrangement and pleasant park-like effect." (p. 8).

The idea of making the University-Cultural Center into a park-like environment was commonplace in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1956, the Detroit News called for extending the University south of Warren and west of the Lodge Expressway. "The ultimate campus," the News envisioned, "would form a great green park, comparable to Central Park in New York, and would be ringed with apartment developments whose appraised valuation would more than compensate for property" demolished in their wake. Three years later, architect Minoru Yamasaki offered his vision of what the Wayne State campus might become. Obviously, the University should be pleasing to the eye. But, Yamasaki observed, "we will not try to make it open but rather closed and in keeping with its physically dense environment." Students would find the environment pleasant "by the use of small courtyards, some paved, some with trees, and some with ponds, scattered about the campus." "We hope," Yamasaki continued, "by the use of arcades and covered walkways to make it possible to go to any building on the campus under cover." The campus "will be modeled on Venice where there are no cars and it is a pleasant experience to walk."

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In a similar fashion, the 1965 Cultural Center revision to the Detroit Master Plan spoke of the Cultural Center in terms of "an atmosphere of repose" and as "an oasis of exceptional beauty." Eliminating above ground parking and many streets, the revised plan called for a large fountain, a sculpture park, sunken gardens, and an amphitheater east of the Art Institute. A Hall of Man, a Museum of Science and Technology, and a Planetarium would imitate similar structures found in New York and Chicago. The Cultural Center envisioned for 1990 would be comparable to "St. Mark's Square in Venice, with its panorama of life within a magnificently unified architectural composition, and Salzburg and Edinburgh, with their world famous music festivals." (p. 4).

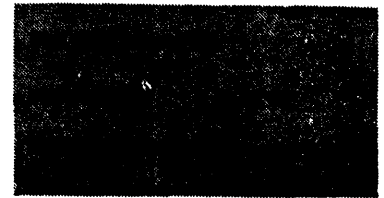
Detroit's urban renewal projects, tied in with Wayne State University's expansion, led city planners to make the 1965 revision to the Cultural Center portion of the Master Plan. In 1964, Charles Blessing, Director of City Planning, wrote to Mayor Cavanagh warning that the City's federally-funded renewal projects and Wayne State expansion were driving away small, private institutions (music schools, for example) that were important to the Cultural Center.

The vehicle for Wayne's tremendous physical growth during the 1960s was the Federal Urban Renewal program. The 1959 Housing Act featured a broadened section 112 which enabled municipalities to assist the growth of institutions of higher education located within their boundaries. Thus, the City of Detroit was able to acquire large tracts of land adjacent to Wayne State University very quickly and cheaply. Wayne State, together with the Detroit Housing Commission, established the University City General Neighborhood Renewal Plan covering 304 gross acres of a mostly residential character. The renewal project was divided into five phases, and a total of 92 acres were allotted for direct incorporation into Wayne State. Most of Wayne's land would come from Phase I (west of the Lodge) and Phase II (south of Warren). The 120 gross acres of Phase II would be set aside for mixed academic and, to a lesser extent, private residential uses. Regarding the construction of new residential housing, Wayne's Director of the Office of Capital Programs noted, "current thinking [c. 1966-67] envisions single family dwellings of the town house and patio court type, as well as medium and high rise apartments." The Director added, "conservation of appropriate structures is also planned," primarily on the Old Main block and the block formed by Cass, Warren, Forest and Woodward.

Wayne State University confronted a number of hostile residents during the acquisition of property for Phase I, and the public stir that was generated encouraged the University to alter its plans for Phase II. In early 1971, the Detroit Free Press reported that the University, counting on having 100,000 students by 1981, was in the process of drawing up a new ten year construction

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plan. To slow down Wayne's movement into residential areas and to manage a truce between the University and the residential inhabitants of the UCC, the new buildings proposed for Phase II would consist mainly of high-rise residences, not low-rise academic buildings that took up a lot of space.

A further check to University expansion came in 1975 when the Detroit City Council approved the sale of 33,000 square feet of property at the northwest corner of Warren and Woodward to the Cultural Center Merchants Association. The Council was more persuaded by the Association's plans to rehabilitate their shops at a cost of \$420,000 than the University's proposal to build two auditoriums for a \$25,000,000 Center for Performing Arts on W. Warren between Woodward and Cass. Sometimes, Wayne also suffered public criticism over the new buildings constructed for its campus. One Detroit News columnist labeled the modern buildings "cold, funless glass and steel birdcages." Referring to the old residences located on Putnam and Merrick, the writer queried, "couldn't they keep a couple of those old places, if for no other reason than to show the tourist that WSU wasn't built last week?" (Detroit News, April 7, 1966).

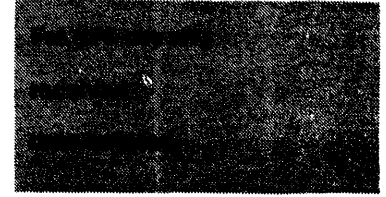
There were also obstacles to the fulfillment of Cultural Center plans, both of 1947 and 1965. Nothing apparently prevented the League of Catholic Women from having the Barat House (5250 John R) built in 1961-62 directly across the street from the Art Institute--and in the way of the envisioned Cultural Center fountain and pool. In September 1965, the Director of the Detroit Historical Commission, Henry D. Brown, expressed grief that the Historical Museum's natural route of expansion northwards along Woodward was blocked by structures that extended out to the property line.

At times, Cultural Center institutions and organizations found ways around the strictures of the Cultural Center plan. For example, the Detroit Public Library objected to the idea of closing Putnam between Cass and Woodward, insisting that the street had to remain open to allow access to the Library's above ground parking lot. In another instance, an administrator of the Art Institute, William A. Bostick, indicated to Blessing of the Planning Commission that the Board of Directors of the Scarab Club was very pleased that the Commission was able to accommodate the Club's building located east of the Art Institute at 217 Farnsworth. The Club's directors were particularly thankful that the Commission found an opportunity to spare the demolition of the structure (which is now on the National Register) while "practically every other building in the area east of John R is slated for demolition."

From the mid-19th century to the 1910s, upper-class single-family residences initially settled the University-Cultural Center. Commercialization seeped into the area in the early 20th century, much of it by the 1920s related

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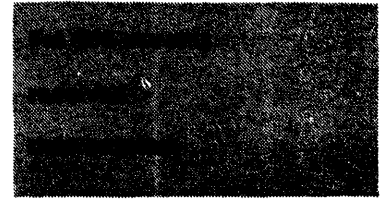
to the automobile industry. However, neither the residential or commercial sectors were individually able to control the area. Within the core of the UCC, residential structures by-and-large covered most space, although the development during the 1920s of large apartments and apartment hotels catering to the well-to-do brought commercial buildings into the very heart of the UCC. This was the environment which decision-makers and planners approved when they agreed to erect new buildings for the Detroit Public Library and Art Museum on Woodward north of Putnam and Farnsworth. Once allowing for the large tracts of land required for these monumental institutions, they originally seemed to fit perfectly into the mixed upper-class residential, commercial, and institutional composition of the UCC.

After 1945, educational and cultural center institutions secured greater control over the land-use decisions in the area. Wayne University, backed by City, State, and Federal assistance and money, expanded into the neighborhood around Old Main. The Historical Museum building, and east of John R the Center for Creative Studies complex, arose as part of the Library-Museum grouping of the Cultural Center. Nevertheless, to this day a number of once-fashionable single-family houses and commercial structures continue to have a function in the UCC. Eleven of those structures deemed to have historical and architectural significance are proposed in this document for nomination to the National Register.



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ARCHITECTURE AND THE UNIVERSITY-CULTURAL CENTER

From an architectural standpoint, the University-Cultural Center is significant for four main reasons. First, the UCC has historically reflected the achievements of architects whose reputations range from Detroit renown to international fame. Second, much of the history of American architectural styles that reigned from the 1880s through the 1920s can be found within the UCC. Third, the UCC is architecturally significant because the northern portion of it was the location of pioneering innovations in factory design and construction in the early 20th century. And fourth, the Detroit Public Library and the Detroit Institute of Arts which give the UCC so much of its identity reflect, in their spacial layout and style, the philosophy of the City Beautiful Movement that arose after the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.

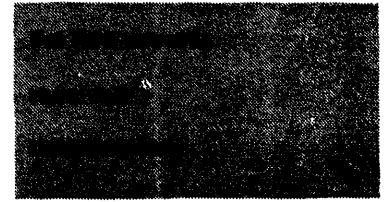
I. A distinguished list of builders and architects constructed houses, apartment buildings, commercial and office structures, and factories within the UCC. The architects of the twelve nominated properties--Mason & Rice, Malcolmson & Higginbotham, M.R. Burrowes, and Rogers & MacFarlane--will be discussed more fully in the nomination portion of this document. There were numerous other architects whose work can be found in the UCC but whose buildings are not part of this document. Albert Kahn (1869-1942), for example, in 1927 built the fourteen-story world headquarters of the Order of the Maccabees at Woodward and Putnam. Kahn's Maccabees' building drew on inspiration from Eliel Saarinen's Chicago Tribune Tower design entry of 1922, and from the New York Telephone Building constructed in 1926. Next to his leadership in the design of modern factories, Kahn built residences for some of Detroit's business elite together with other impressive commercial and office buildings: the General Motors building (1922) and his outstanding Fisher Building (1928), both located just north of the UCC on Grand Boulevard; the S.S. Kresge Administration building (1927); and the Detroit Free Press building (1923).

Albert Kahn's influence was instrumental in the decision by the Detroit Arts Commission in 1922 to name Paul Philippe Cret (1876-1945) as architect for the new Detroit Institute of Arts building. A 1901 graduate from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Cret came to the United States in 1903 and before his Detroit commission he designed the Pan-American building in Washington, D.C., and the Central Public Library in Indianapolis. Finished in 1927, the DIA was designed in the Italian Renaissance style, modified along the lines of the Beaux-Arts tradition.

Over the period 1915-21, MIT graduate Cass Gilbert (1859-1934) built the other pillar of the UCC, the Detroit Public Library. Gilbert by this time was already well-known in his profession, having previously worked in the New York offices of McKim, Mead and White and later obtaining a contract to design

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the Minnesota State Capital in St. Paul (1896), and libraries in St. Louis and New Haven. Louis Kamper, who like Gilbert once worked in the offices of McKim, Mead and White, came to Detroit in 1888. In 1891, Kamper together with John and Arthur Scott (who had worked on the Thomas Sprague House in 1884) finished the forty-nine room French Renaissance chateau for Colonel Frank J. Hecker at 5510 Woodward. Decades later, Kamper completed the mammoth, 1,200 room Book-Cadillac Hotel, one of several downtown buildings he designed for the Book brothers. Another MIT graduate, George V. Pottle, arrived in Detroit in 1901. Pottle built residences at 5451 and 5257 Cass, another at 449 W. Ferry, and in the Colonial Revival style he designed a National Register house at 222 E. Ferry for Samuel A. Sloman.

Gordon W. Lloyd, another architect whose work can be found in the UCC, came to Detroit from England in 1858. In the 1860s and early 1870s, Lloyd built several noteworthy Gothic churches. During the 1870s and 1880s, he designed Swiss chalet summer residences in Grosse Pointe for such prominent families as Newberry, McMillan, and Ledyard. In 1881, Lloyd constructed a Queen Anne residence for George F. Moore at the northeast corner of Woodward and Farnsworth. The house later became a repository for Dexter M. Ferry's large collection of paintings. The structure was demolished at a later date to make way for the Detroit Institute of Arts. Lloyd also designed the fifty-two room, three story house of David Whitney Jr. (completed in 1894) at Woodward and Canfield.

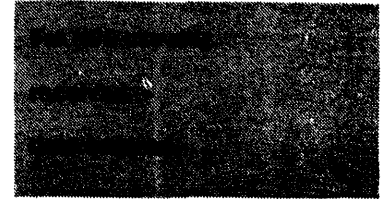
Architects John M. Donaldson and Henry J. Meier designed a house for Frank C. Hecker at 255 E. Ferry. That residence, built in 1893 in a mixed Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival style, is on the National Register. At 61 Putnam, they built a house for Elias Flynn, a banker and investor in northern pine forests and iron mines. That house no longer stands. In 1913, the firm produced the first series of plans for the new art museum, but they were rejected by the Trustees.

Donaldson and Meier became Detroit's leaders in skyscraper construction when their Union Trust Building went up in 1894-95. The building was the first in Detroit made with a steel skeleton--some ten years after the technique had been accomplished in Chicago. Later, Donaldson and Meier received a commission to design the thirteen-story Penobscot building; in 1916 they added another twenty-four stories. In 1895, the firm of Spier and Rohns built the steel-framed Chamber of Commerce building, for a short while the tallest building in the city. Spier and Rohns began their partnership in 1884. They subsequently designed railway stations throughout southern Michigan, and in 1893 built the Sweetest Heart of Mary Roman Catholic church on Russell and Canfield in Detroit. Hans Gehrke joined the pair in 1908, and three years later they built a house at 452 W. Ferry for the druggist, Oscar W. Gorenflo.

Independently, architects William S. Joy, Almon C. Varney, Richard Marr and Baxter and O'Dell built houses along Cass, W. Ferry, and W. Kirby avenues.

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At 200 E. Kirby, William H. Van Tine designed his home in 1916. Van Tine had come from Pittsburgh to take over the construction and landscape gardening for Henry Ford's 2,000 acre Fairlane manor in Dearborn. Completing the job in 1915, Van Tine deviated from the original Prairie design and, instead, built Ford's residence in the Early English Renaissance style.

Modern architectural styles also have their architects in the UCC. Suren Pilafian, born in 1911 in Turkish Armenia, and Japanese-born Minoru Yamasaki, have been jointly responsible for designing some nine buildings on the Wayne State University campus constructed from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s. Pilafian, who won a contest in the late 1930s for his design of a new stock exchange in Tehran, Iran, designed Wayne's State Hall (1948). State Hall was the first of many new buildings constructed specifically for the expanding University. Yamasaki, in addition to University buildings, designed one of the structures that make up the Center for Creative Studies at E. Kirby and Brush, and the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company building (1963).

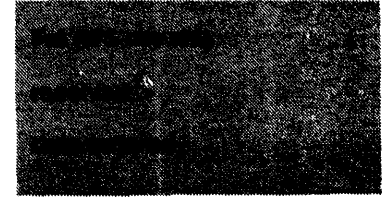
II. Architectural styles among structures in the UCC reflected nearly the entire range of designs available to growing Midwestern cities like Detroit from the 1880s through the 1920s. As architects and builders received commissions throughout this period, the individual and special consideration given to residences, offices, and public buildings created a collage-like stylistic effect in the UCC. Even the eleven-block study area contains sufficient variation in style and structures to make it appear as a living museum of American architectural styles.

By the time construction of upper-class residences worked its way along Woodward Avenue in a northerly direction during the 1870s and 1880s, Detroit architects had come upon solid alternatives to the formalism of Greek classicism that had prevailed everywhere in the early 19th century. The full reaction against classical formalism set in after mid-century when innovations in technology and construction techniques made possible the building of irregular and complicated house plans. The mass production of house ornaments, in turn, made possible the elaborate detailing on the exterior and interior of residences that characterized Victorian Age structures. Common to these houses were asymmetrical facades, steep pitch roofs, and multi-textured/multi-colored walls. Victorian styles generally reflected a somewhat random combination of what architects believed were classical and medieval forms.

The three Victorian Age architectural styles most common in the UCC were the Second Empire, Queen Anne, and Romanesque Revival.

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Many Second Empire style homes of Detroit's upper class once overlooked prestigious thoroughfares like Woodward, Trumbell, E. Jefferson, and W. Fort, but most have long ago been destroyed.

Far more common among surviving residences in the UCC is the Queen Anne style. The Queen Anne spanned the period from the late 1870s through the 1890s, the height reached sometime in the mid-1880s. The steep pitched and irregular shaped roof of the Queen Anne interacted with exterior walls whose surfaces were treated as decorative elements. Thus, towers, wall projections, overhangs, and different textured wall materials worked with lathe-turned porch posts to project a medieval English quality to the ideal Queen Anne residence. The nominated Thomas Sprague House at 80 W. Palmer, built in 1884, is just such an "ideal" Queen Anne structure. By the 1890s, however, Romanesque and Colonial Revival influences began to affect the appearance of Queen Anne homes. Thus, the nominated Samuel Smith House (5035 Woodward) was built in 1889 by Rogers and MacFarlane with a Romanesque front entry arch and Colonial Revival details on the four end gables.

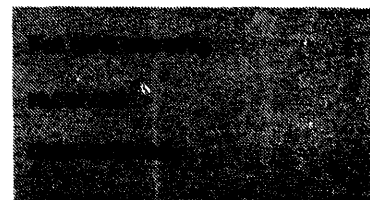
The solid masonry construction that characterized Romanesque Revival houses can also be found in the UCC. Gordon W. Lloyd used the style when he designed the three-story David Whitney Jr. house at Woodward and Canfield (1894). The firm of Malcolmson and Higginbotham constructed a Romanesque Revival home for William A. Pungs (1891) at 60 E. Ferry. Malcolmson and Higginbotham, indeed, were among Detroit's biggest names in Romanesque Revival during the 1890s, constructing numerous buildings for the Detroit Public Schools (including Central High School) and designing several Romanesque Revival churches located in the UCC. The firm's Verona Apartment building, completed in 1896 and a nominated property, also had a decidedly Romanesque Revival quality.

Starting in the 1880s, a reaction began to set in against Victorian irregularity in house design and excessive decoration. A movement toward directness emerged which emphasized greater simplicity, symmetry, lower roof lines, and the sparing use of ornamentation on facades. In addition, architects began to place great stress on the production of relatively pure copies--so-called "Period Styles"--of traditional European and New World styles.

The 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition revived interest in colonial American and Federal period architecture, and the 1893 Chicago World's Fair reawakened enthusiasm for the styles of ancient Greece and Rome. The subsequent emergence of post-Victorian architectural forms--Colonial Revival, Neoclassicism, Tudor Revival, and Renaissance styles--had two main consequences. First, by 1900 several competing styles of architecture became popular simultaneously.

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Each period style claimed different historical antecedents, but all stood in opposition to the first wave in American architectural modernism represented by the Prairie house developed by Frank Lloyd Wright of Chicago. The competition among various styles, secondly, had the effect of creating fashionable neighborhoods containing a pot pourri mixture of styles. Typically, such neighborhoods were first occupied by people of substantial wealth, as was the case with the UCC. Such neighborhoods as formed in the study area, much of which was built up between 1905 and 1915, became veritable museums of period revival style architecture with sporadic examples of contemporary architectural design.

Colonial and Federal Revival architecture provided the inspiration for residences in Detroit in the late 19th and early 20th century. Mason and Rice constructed one of the first Colonial Revival pieces in 1888 as a Grosse Pointe summer residence for William C. McMillan. Colonial Revival was also used by George J. Pottle when designing the home of Samuel A. Slogman (222 E. Ferry) in 1914. The Federal Revival Linsell House at 5104 (a nominated property) was built in 1904 by John C. Stahl Jr.

Renaissance and Mediterranean styles became very popular for upper-class residences in the late 19th century. Mason and Rice designed the nominated James Joy House (1897) in the Italian Renaissance manner. Italian Mediterranean influenced the nearby Max Jacob House, a nominated property built in 1915 and located at 451 W. Kirby. French Renaissance and Early English Renaissance were also represented in the UCC as, for example, in the chateau of Colonel Frank J. Hecker (1881-91) at 5510 Woodward, designed and built by Louis Kamper with John and Arthur Scott; and the Lemuel C. Bowen house (5425 Woodward) created by George Mason in 1912-13.

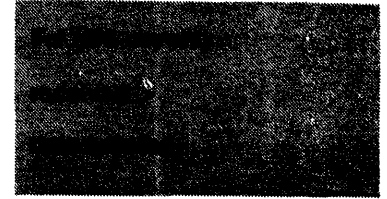
Italian Renaissance, sometimes with Beaux-Arts influence in decoration and building layout, greatly affected the builders of the two most important public monuments in the UCC: the Detroit Public Library (1921) and the Detroit Institute of Arts (1927). The style also was employed in the design of the Art Centre Apartments and the Park Shelton, both located on E. Kirby and built during the mid-1920s. Lombard Romanesque inspired the designers of the nominated Webster (Mackenzie) Hall, built in 1924.

In the early 20th century, period revival styles faced a new competitor in house design: the Prairie. The William C. Rands House (1912) at 5229 Cass offers a local interpretation of this style of architecture developed in Chicago. Prairie, however, did not long survive past World War I.

Art Deco emerged in the 1920s as another modernistic style. The great boost in Art Deco came in 1922 with Elieel Saarinen's entry in the design for the Chicago Tribune building. Although not very common in domestic building, the geometric motifs of Art Deco frequently appeared on apartment buildings

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and on commercial frontage like the nominated Cass Motor Sales, built in 1928 at 5800 Cass. Neoclassicism in the early 20th century was certainly not modernistic in its devotion to ancient Greece, but neoclassical facades became quite common on commercial buildings along Detroit's major avenues. Woodward, for example, displays numerous examples of neoclassical commercial buildings. One of them, the Gleaners' Temple (5705 Woodward) was built in 1908-10 and is a nominated property.

III. The era of eclecticism in residential architecture at the turn of the century corresponded to a period of tremendous innovation in factory design. The systematic use of reinforced concrete enabled architects and builders to construct large, spacious, multi-story fireproof buildings. With the help of architects like Albert Kahn and George Mason, the Detroit automobile industry became the nation's first industry to excel in the use of reinforced concrete.

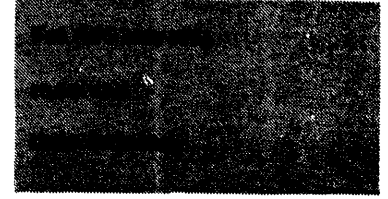
In 1899, financier Samuel L. Smith (whose house at 5035 Woodward is nominated in this document) was chiefly responsible for bringing Detroit's first automobile factory, the Olds Motor Works, from Lansing, Michigan. Other automobile companies soon opened plants in Detroit. Gradually, one major concentration of automobile factories emerged in the Milwaukee Junction, part of which carried into the northern end of the UCC. On Piquette at Beaubien, Field, Hinchman and Smith in 1904 built a three-story factory for the Ford Motor Company. The factory, designed as a traditional New England-style mill, was where the Ford Model T was first produced in 1908. When Ford moved to a new and larger complex in Highland Park, it sold the Piquette plant to Studebaker Corporation which, in turn, constructed a larger auto factory complex extending along Piquette. All of these buildings are still standing today.

In 1904, Albert Kahn built a one-story factory building off Second Ave. for the Burroughs Adding Machine Company. Although that plant no longer survives, between 1912 and 1919 Kahn built a much larger, five story, reinforced concrete structure for Burroughs--the original framework of which is still in use.

The first use of reinforced concrete in Detroit occurred in 1902-3 when Mason and Kahn collaborated in the design of the Palms Apartment building at 1001 East Jefferson. Two years later, in 1905, Kahn used the method in completing the tenth unit for Packard Motor Car Company. This was the first instance of the use of reinforced concrete in an automobile facility. Two months later, Mason finished a three-story reinforced concrete structure for Cadillac Motor Car Company at 450 Amsterdam Street, one block west of Cass. A milestone in the development of the modern factory occurred in 1909 when Kahn built Ford's Highland Park plant at 15050 Woodward, 3 miles north of the UCC factory district and the place where Ford perfected modern mass production techniques.

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In 1919, Fisher Body Corporation's Plant No. 21 opened at Hastings and Piquette. It, too, was made of reinforced concrete. This six-story factory, still standing today, originally produced automobile bodies for Cadillac and Buick. By the time the plant opened, reinforced concrete and the names of Kahn and Mason had become Detroit trademarks for modern, efficient, spacious and well-lighted factories. These qualities made Detroit, and the United States, unchallenged world leaders in mass production until after World War II. One of the cradles of American mass production was among the factories located--and most are still standing--at the northern end of the UCC.

IV. Detroit's primary Cultural Center institutions--the Public Library and Art Institute--reflect an important phase in the history of city planning where the major concern was the coordination of important streets with building and landscape architecture. The City Beautiful Movement, as this period was called, affected the inner core of the UCC. In Detroit, the monumental effect generated by the combined planning of impressive avenues, buildings, and surrounding land is best expressed within the Cultural Center core of the UCC.

The City Beautiful Movement represented a phase in early 20th century American city planning, particularly in the treatment it afforded to the integration of cultural, educational, and civic structures in one centralized urban location. The movement grew out of the 1893 World's Fair held in Chicago. The influential teachings of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts were apparent in the requirement that buildings for the exposition be done according to the styles of ancient Greece and Rome. The Exposition also demonstrated the unification of the arts. Daniel H. Burnham, placed in charge of construction, supervised the work of talented architects, sculptors, painters, landscape architects, and city planners. The success of the Fair gave a boost to the concept of planning cities and buildings on a monumental scale.

The neo-classical revival, especially in commercial and civic architecture, received a tremendous boost from the Chicago Fair. Classical stylization seemed just what the cities of the Second Industrial Revolution--Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Detroit--needed to give an artistic dimension to new accumulations of private wealth. The City Beautiful Movement in city planning also grew in the aftermath of the 1893 Exposition. The first manifestation of the movement came in 1896 when Burnham published his tentative plan for Chicago. With the assistance of Edward H. Bennet, Burnham completed the Chicago plan in 1909. By then, Burnham and Bennet had advised planners in other cities. Among them was Washington, D.C., where in 1901 Michigan Senator James McMillan established a commission to undertake the modernization and extension of the original plan for the city as laid down more than a century earlier by Major L'Enfant.

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In 1909, the Mayor of Detroit, Philip Breitmeyer, appointed a City Plan Commission. George Moore, former assistant to Senator McMillan, served as secretary to the Commission. Within a year, the Commission began to hear expert advice from Burnham and Bennet concerning grand plans for Belle Isle, the approach to the Michigan Central Railway Station, the development of a ring of parks to surround Detroit, and the siting of a new public library and art museum along Woodward. Bennet completed a preliminary plan for the Commission in 1915, the closest thing to an overall plan for Detroit since Judge Woodward's plan of 1807 made after a fire two years earlier had obliterated the city.

In 1913, when in the process of developing the preliminary city plan, Bennet along with Frank Miles Day of Philadelphia prepared a short report at the request of the officials in charge of the public library and art museum. In A Center of Arts and Letters, Bennet and Day approved of the siting of the new library and art museum at their present Woodward locations. In particular they applauded the acquisition of large tracts of land to surround the new buildings and to allow for their construction at a great distance from the street. Bennet and Day already knew that the public library would be a monumental structure before Cass Gilbert formally won the design competition in 1915. To match the expected grandeur and size of the new Cultural Center buildings, they recommended that additional tracts of land be acquired to enlarge the space surrounding the proposed buildings.

Thus, the present Cultural Center formed by the Public Library, the Art Institute, and later joined by the Rackham Memorial building (1941) was in large measure the consequence of a city planning movement that grew out of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. The City Beautiful Movement, with Chicago-based architects in charge, had an important advisory function in the siting of the Detroit Public Library and Art Institute across from one another on Woodward, setting the buildings back from the street on large tracts of land in order to provide a monumental streetscape, and the design of the large, white marble buildings designed according to the traditions of the Italian Renaissance. It should be pointed out that the Public Library, Art Institute, and the Rackham Building are listed on the National Register as the Cultural Center Historic District.



## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See general and individual property bibliographies.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property See attached

Quadrangle name Detroit, Michigan—Ontario

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See individual properties.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas A. Klug, Project Manager

organization Preservation Wayne

date February, 1985

street & number 4735 Cass

telephone (313) 577-3559

city or town Detroit

state Michigan

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Martha M. Bigelow*

title Director, Bureau of History

date 3/13/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*See continuation Sheet for Distings*  
Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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National Park Service

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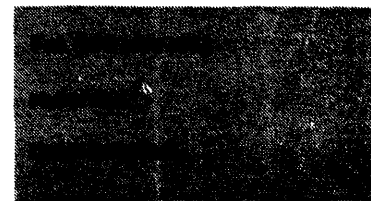
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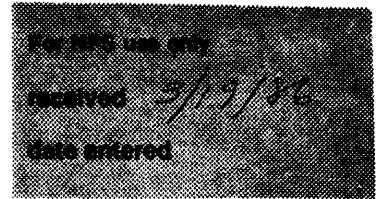
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Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name University-Cultural Center Phase I MRA  
State MICHIGAN

Nomination/Type of Review

COVER

Date/Signature

4/29/86

1. Cass Motor Sales

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrews 4/29/86

Attest

2. Jacob, Max, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

return PWA 4/29

Attest

3. Joy, James, House

Keeper

return PWA 4/29

Attest

4. Linsell, Frederick, House

Keeper

return PWA 4/29

Attest

5. Rands, William C., House

Keeper

return PWA 4/29

Attest

6. Smith, Samuel L., House

for Keeper

Patrick Andrews 4/29/86

Attest

7. Sprague, Thomas S., House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

8. Strasburg, Herman, House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

9. Verona Apartments

Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

10. Webster Hall

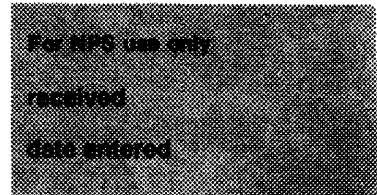
Keeper

return PWA 4/29

Attest

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name University-Cultural Center Phase I MRA  
State MICHIGAN

Nomination/Type of Review

Determination of Eligibility

Date/Signature

11. Gleaner's Temple

**JOE/OWNER OBJECTION**  
Substantive Review

Keeper

Latick Andrews 4/29/86

Attest

12.

Keeper

Attest

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Attest