

# Above-Ground Resources Survey Volume I

The Detroit River International Crossing Study



FEBRUARY 2008

**ABOVE-GROUND RESOURCES SURVEY FOR THE DETROIT RIVER INTERNATIONAL  
CROSSING (DRIC) STUDY  
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

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**February 2008**

**R-0681**

**Volume I**

## **ABSTRACT**

Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc. was contracted by The Corradino Group to document the built environment in and near the proposed Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) project area in southwest Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, and to offer National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) evaluations for possible historic resources. The DRIC above-ground resources survey resulted in the documentation of approximately 1,026 pre-1957 primary structures. CCRG recommends that, within the DRIC study area, 20 properties/complexes and three multi-property historic districts are eligible for listing in the NRHP. The remaining architectural resources in the DRIC study area lack significance and/or integrity and are not recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP.

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# **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Purpose of Analysis and Background**

In December 2005, the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) through its consultant, The Corradino Group of Michigan, Inc. (Corradino), contracted Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc. (CCRG) to conduct architectural/historical investigations in support of the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) Study, City of Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. The DRIC Study is regulated by the Federal Highway Administration and, as such, it is subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (Public Law 89-665), and the NHPA implementing regulations (36 CFR 800). In Section 106, the NHPA requires that proposed projects be evaluated for effects they may have on cultural resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

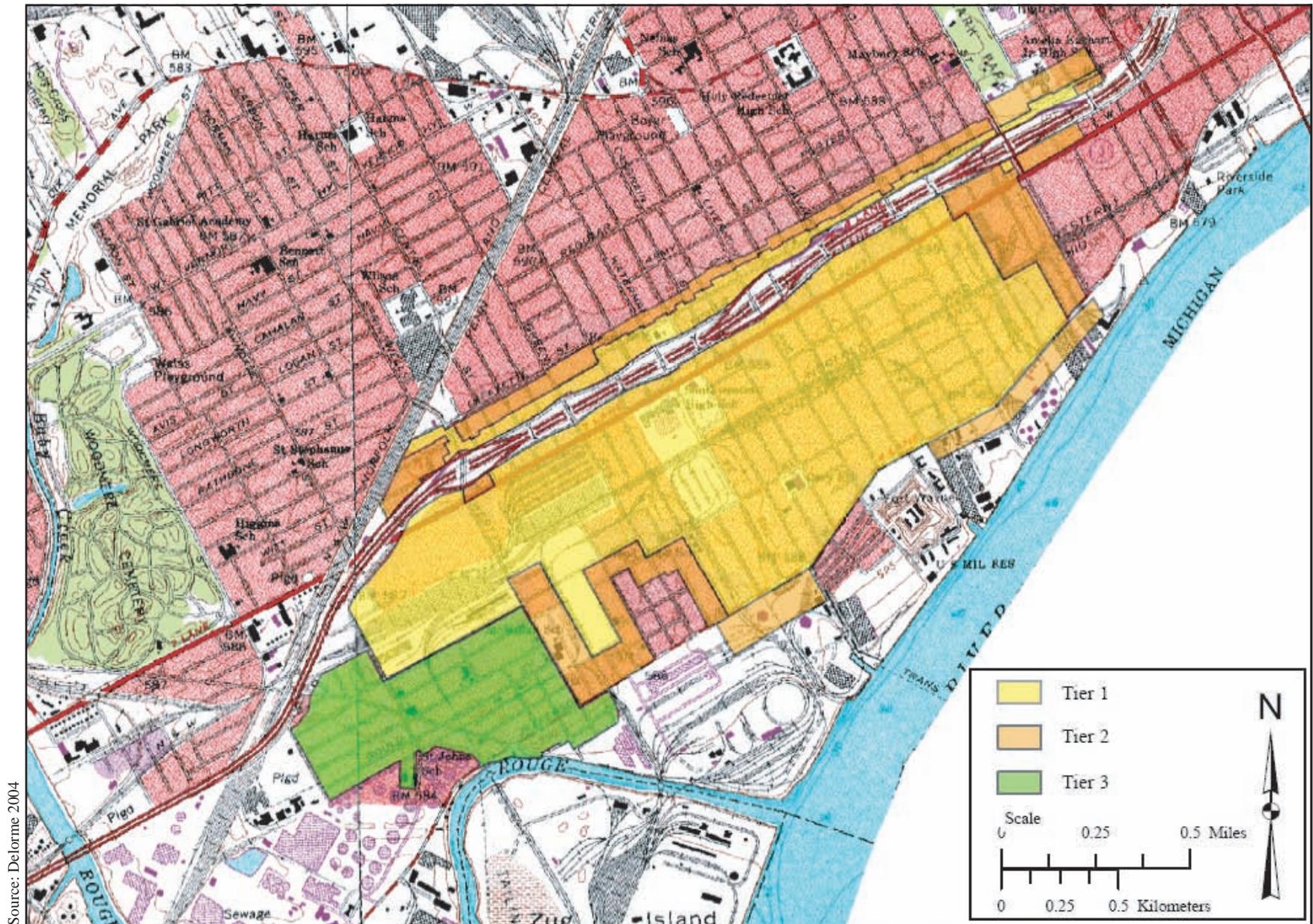
Prior to conducting fieldwork, CCRG, in consultation with MDOT and the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), identified the DRIC study area, i.e., that area where the project could have direct or indirect effects on historic resources. Direct effects include impacts that could physically alter the resource; indirect effects are primarily impacts to a resource's setting and include visual or noise intrusions and changes to traffic (vehicular and pedestrian) patterns. The DRIC study area takes into account impacts in two areas, the Area of Concern and the Area of Potential Acquisition. The Area of Concern refers to the possible plaza locations (where tolls are collected), and the Area of Potential Acquisition refers to property that might be required for bridge pier siting. The Area of Potential Acquisition also encompasses locations of possible interchanges that would be required to connect the plaza to existing surface streets and I-75.

A three-tiered study area was developed to account for differing project impacts within the study area (Figure 1.0-1). Property within Tiers 1 and 2 comprise the majority of the DRIC study area. This area is bounded on the north by Lexington, on the east by Vinewood (north of I-75) and Scotten (south of I-75), on the south by Jefferson and the Detroit and Rouge Rivers, and on the west by Springwells/West End/I-75. Tier 3, located west of Tiers 1 and 2, takes into account indirect impacts on the area known as West Delray. Tier 3 boundaries include Sire/Melville (north), West End (east), Jefferson/Copland (south), and Leigh/I-75 (west). Tier 3 is bisected by Dearborn Street.

### **1.1.1 Historical Summary and Study Area Description**

European settlement of the DRIC study area and surrounding areas was initiated during the mid-eighteenth century with the establishment of farm tracts along the Detroit River. More intensive urban development began in the mid-nineteenth century with the construction of the Michigan Central Railroad. Area industries, most of which were concentrated along the riverfront, facilitated dense neighborhood development of worker housing, schools, churches, municipal services, and commercial establishment. The more northern neighborhoods were marked by pockets of professional- and management-class housing and commercial development.

Currently, the riverfront contains heavy industry and municipal facilities, notably the Ford Motor Company Rouge complex (northwest of the study area) and the Detroit Wastewater Treatment Plant (immediately south of Tier 3). Historic Ft. Wayne is situated between the Detroit River and Jefferson (the south boundary of Tier 1), approximately midway between the east and west study area boundaries.



Source: Delorme 2004

Figure 1.0-1. Detroit River International Crossing Above-Ground Resources Project Location

Pockets of dense residential development are scattered throughout the DRIC study area however, the older neighborhoods at the far south of the study area are distinguished by vast areas of vacant land and abandoned housing. The older commercial strip along Jefferson is only sparsely occupied, and most of the former commercial properties are vacant. The northernmost study area is marked by a higher density of occupied housing and commercial land use. Some areas in Tier 3 reflect their earlier residential character; however, much of the once-residential land and commercial property stands vacant or abandoned.

Ethnic diversity has been the distinguishing feature of the DRIC study area's population since its earliest urban expansion. Prior to the Civil War, immigrants from Poland, Italy, and Holland settled in the DRIC study area, drawn by Detroit's industry. Another wave of immigration into the study area occurred in the first decades of the twentieth century, as immigrants from eastern and southern Europe settled in the area. In general, the succeeding generations of the original immigrants moved into the suburbs north and downriver; however, the DRIC study area retains its ethnic flavor and is currently populated by more recently established ethnic (e.g., Hispanic) neighborhoods. A number of residents of Delray (Tier 3) still have ties to the original Hungarian population.

### **1.1.2 Survey Coverage**

CCRG conducted fieldwork within the DRIC study area from February 2006 through April 9, 2007, to document resources aged 50 years or older (i.e., constructed before 1957). Throughout these months, the built environment of the DRIC study area was continually modified as a result of demolition (primarily by fire). Consequently, April 9, 2007, was chosen as the terminus for formal survey, at which time the study area was investigated for newly vacant or destroyed properties. Final evaluations were completed based on the April 9, 2007, findings. A final visit to the study area was conducted on May 24, 2007, to obtain additional images of properties in and near the DRIC study area. At that time, CCRG's architectural historian noted that, in Tier 3, several houses that had been damaged from earlier fires had been demolished, and several previously intact houses (as of the April 9 survey terminus) had been destroyed by fire and stood in ruins. Supplementary fieldwork was conducted on August 8 – 9, 2007, September 17, 20, and 25, 2007, and January 29, 2008 for additional building information (including recent demolitions and/or fire damage), and photo documentation. Several personal interviews with local residents, religious leaders and business owners were also conducted at this time.

All pre-1957 above-ground resources encountered during the investigations were documented. Those resources in Tiers 1 and 2 were fully recorded, including individual photographs, general stylistic evaluations, and a determination of possible NRHP eligibility. The resources in Tier 3 were also surveyed; however, individual resource images were limited to those buildings that were possibly individually eligible for listing on the NRHP. Photography for much of Tier 3 was limited to streetscapes.

All investigations and reporting for the DRIC above-ground cultural resources was completed in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines for archaeology and historic preservation, the Michigan Department of Transportation/Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries Work Specifications for Survey of Above-Ground Cultural Resources, and the Department of History, Arts and Libraries *Manual for Historic and Architectural Survey in Michigan*. All of CCRG's DRIC key personnel meet or exceed the standards established by the Secretary of the Interior's professional qualifications.

### 1.1.3 Summary Survey Results

A total of 1,026 pre-1957 properties were surveyed during the DRIC above-ground resources investigations. Twenty possibly NRHP-eligible properties are documented within the study area, and three proposed multiple-property historic districts were identified (Table 1.1.3-1) (Figure 1.0-2). Seventeen of the recommended properties are commercial, religious, government/public, or industrial buildings. The remaining three resources are educational, social/ethnic, and residential resources, respectively. Three multi-property districts are recommended eligible for listing. The proposed West Lafayette Boulevard Rowhouse District is located in Tier 1, and both the Delray Community Historic District and Delray Commercial Historic District are located in Tier 3.

**Table 1.1.3-1 Above-Ground Resources Recommended Eligible for Listing in the NRHP**

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Resource/District Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Map Reference</b>	<b>Figure Reference</b>
1	Detroit Union Produce Terminal	7210 West Fort Street	App. B2, 6	3.2.1-1
1	Michigan Bell Telephone Vinewood Dial Office Building	7420 West Fort Street	B:2	3.2.1-3
1	Fort Street/Green Street Detroit Police Station	7140 West Fort Street	B:6	3.2.1-5
1	Findlater Masonic Temple	6705 West Lafayette Boulevard	B:5	3.2.1-7
1	Southwestern High School	6921 West Fort Street	B:5, 6	3.2.1-9
1	Olivet Presbyterian/Old Landmark Church of God in Christ	6908 West Fort Street	B:5	3.2.1-11
1	Detroit Savings Bank/George International Building	5705 West Fort Street	B:10, 11	3.2.1-13
1	Berwalt Manor Apartment Building	760 Campbell Street	B:10	3.2.1-15
1	Roberts Brass Manufacturing Company Building	5436 West Fort Street	B:10	3.2.1-17
1	Military Avenue Evangelical Presbyterian Church	6051 West Lafayette Boulevard	B:10	3.2.1-19-20
1	St. Paul AME Church	579 South Rademacher Street	B:6, 12	3.2.1-22
1	Kovacs Bar	6982 West Jefferson Avenue	B:7	3.2.1-24-25
1	Motz's Burgers	7208 West Fort Street	B:6	3.2.1-27
1	West Lafayette Boulevard Rowhouse District	West Lafayette Boulevard/ Military Avenue	B:4:10	3.2.2-1-5
2	Detroit Copper and Brass Rolling Mills Complex	174 S. Clark Street	B:15, 16	3.2.1-29
2	Mistersky Power Station Complex/City of Detroit Public Lighting Commission	5425 West Jefferson Avenue	B:12, 16, 17	3.2.1-31
2	Detroit Fire Department Engine Company No. 29	7600 West Jefferson Avenue	B:7	3.2.1-33
2	Detroit Harbor Terminal Building	4468 West Jefferson Avenue	B:16	3.2.1-35-36
3	Holy Cross Hungarian Roman Catholic Church Complex	8423 South Street	3.2.2-6	3.2.1-38
3	Szent Janos Gor Kath. Magyar Templom/Jehovah Jireh	441 South Harbaugh Street	3.2.2-6	3.2.1-40
3	St. John Cantius Polish Catholic Church Complex	844 S. Harbaugh Street	3.2.2-6	3.2.1-42
3	Delray Community Historic District	Delray	3.2.2-6	3.2.2-7-26
3	Delray Commercial Historic District	Delray	3.2.2-6	3.2.2-27-61

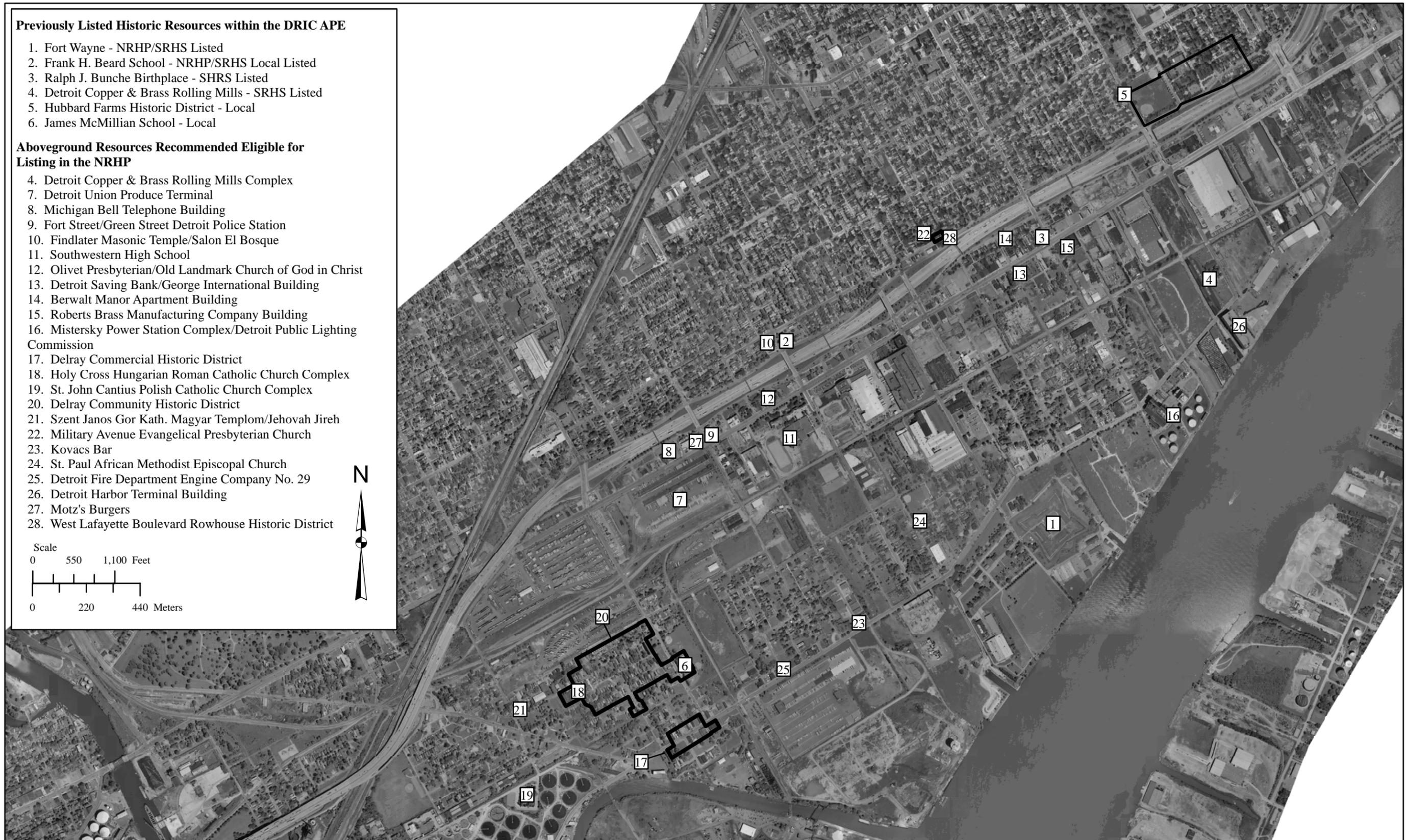


Figure 1.0-2. Previously Recorded and NRHP-Recommended Historic Resources in and Near the DRIC APE

### **1.1.4 Report Content**

This report contains the results of the above-ground resources investigations conducted through September 25, 2007. Section 1 presents the historic background of the DRIC study area, and the historic and architectural contexts relevant to the area. The section concludes with a description of resources that have been previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the State Register of Historic Sites (SRHS), and those that have been formally identified as locally significant. Section 2 documents the methods employed in defining the DRIC study area, as well as the pre-field and field methods used during investigations. Section 3 contains descriptions and NRHP assessments for the pre-1957 above-ground resources identified during the investigations and ends with conclusions and recommendations. The body of the report is supported by: 1) a comprehensive list of references cited in the report (Section 4); 2) tables documenting those resources recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP and streetscape images of resources contained in Tier 3 (Appendix A); 3) aerial photographs of the DRIC study area depicting the location of significant historic resources identified either prior to or during the DRIC investigations (Appendix B); 4) detail images of above-ground resources recommended for listing in the NRHP (Appendix C); and 5) a complete list of contributing resources in the proposed Delray Community Historic District (Appendix D).

The DRIC above-ground resources report was authored by Rachel Bankowitz, CCRG's architectural historian. C. Stephan Demeter, CCRG's principal historical archaeologist, contributed the historic background used in Section 1.2. Donald J. Weir served as project manager. James Montney prepared graphics, Nancy Demeter edited the report, and Cynthia White coordinated report production.

## **1.2 Historic Background**

### **1.2.1 Native American Settlement in Detroit**

Soon after the French founding of Detroit (1701), the French negotiated peace with the Native American populations of the area. As a result, Iroquois acquiescence to the French occupation of the Straits (of Detroit) opened the region to settlement by other Native groups such as the Wyandot/Huron, Ottawa, and Miami. These movements into new territories and the opening of alternative economic opportunities tended, however, to create their own sets of problems as traditional boundary networks were reshaped or discarded in order to take advantage of new situations. These new Native settlers also reportedly aimed at bypassing the French supply monopoly by dealing directly through the Iroquois for English goods, eventually resulting in open warfare.

A 1730 description of lands bordering the Detroit River noted a Potawatomi village situated downriver from the French fort, in the area that is now immediately adjacent to the Ambassador Bridge. It was depicted as the only Potawatomi village extant along the Detroit River, as illustrated on the ca. 1735 De Boishebert map (Figure 1.2.1-1), and it continued to be depicted on maps of the Detroit area over the next half century (Figures 1.2.1-2, 1.2.1-3, and 1.2.1-4). In 1796, these lands were depicted in the McNiff map as tract "17," a 4-arpent-wide farm owned by Robert Navarre (one French arpent equals approximately 192 U.S. feet) (Figure 1.2.1-5). Fourteen years later, with the confirmation of Navarre's title by the federal government, the property was designated as Private Claim 20.



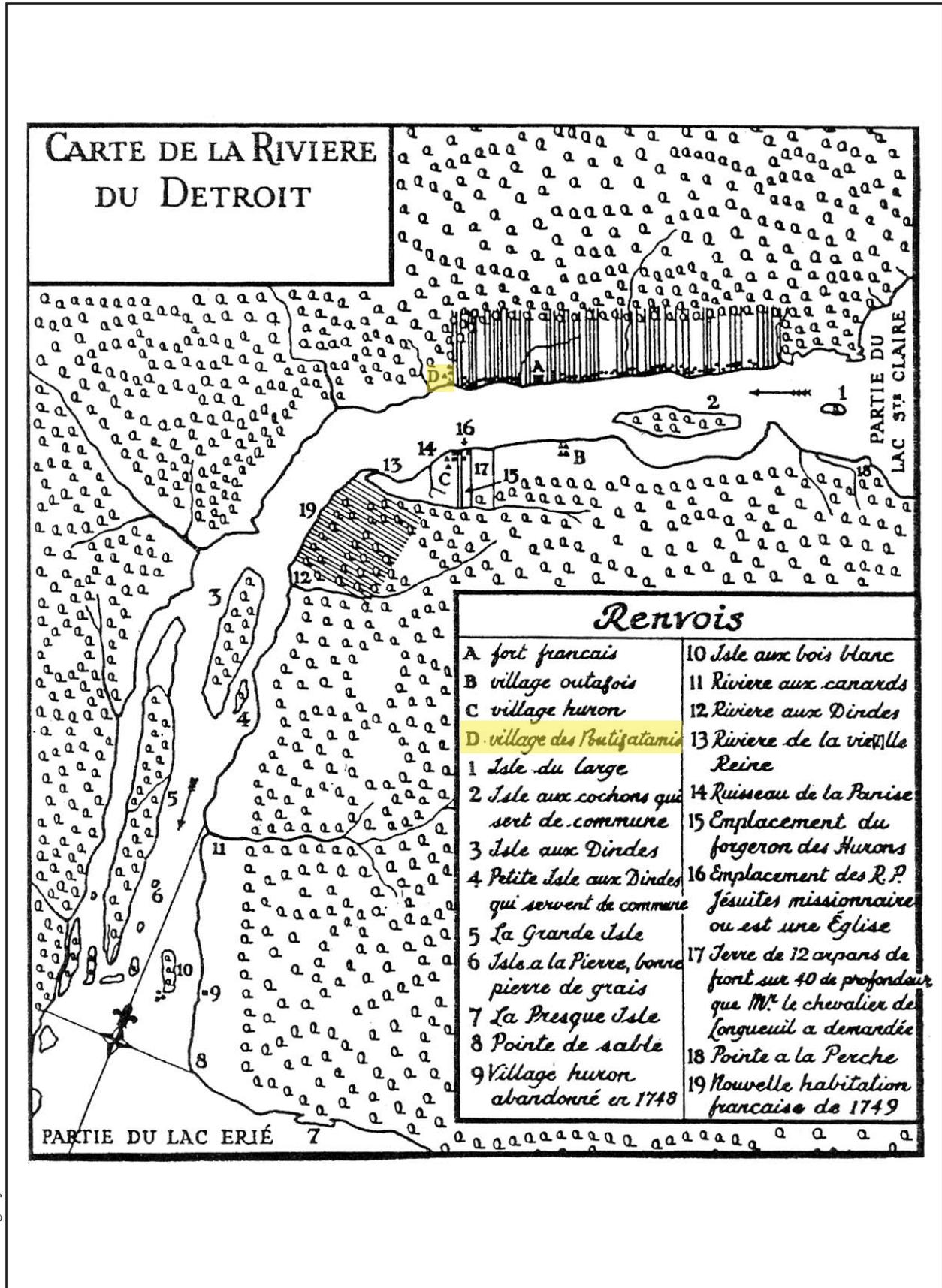


Figure 1.2.1-2. Native American and French Settlements on the Detroit River in 1749

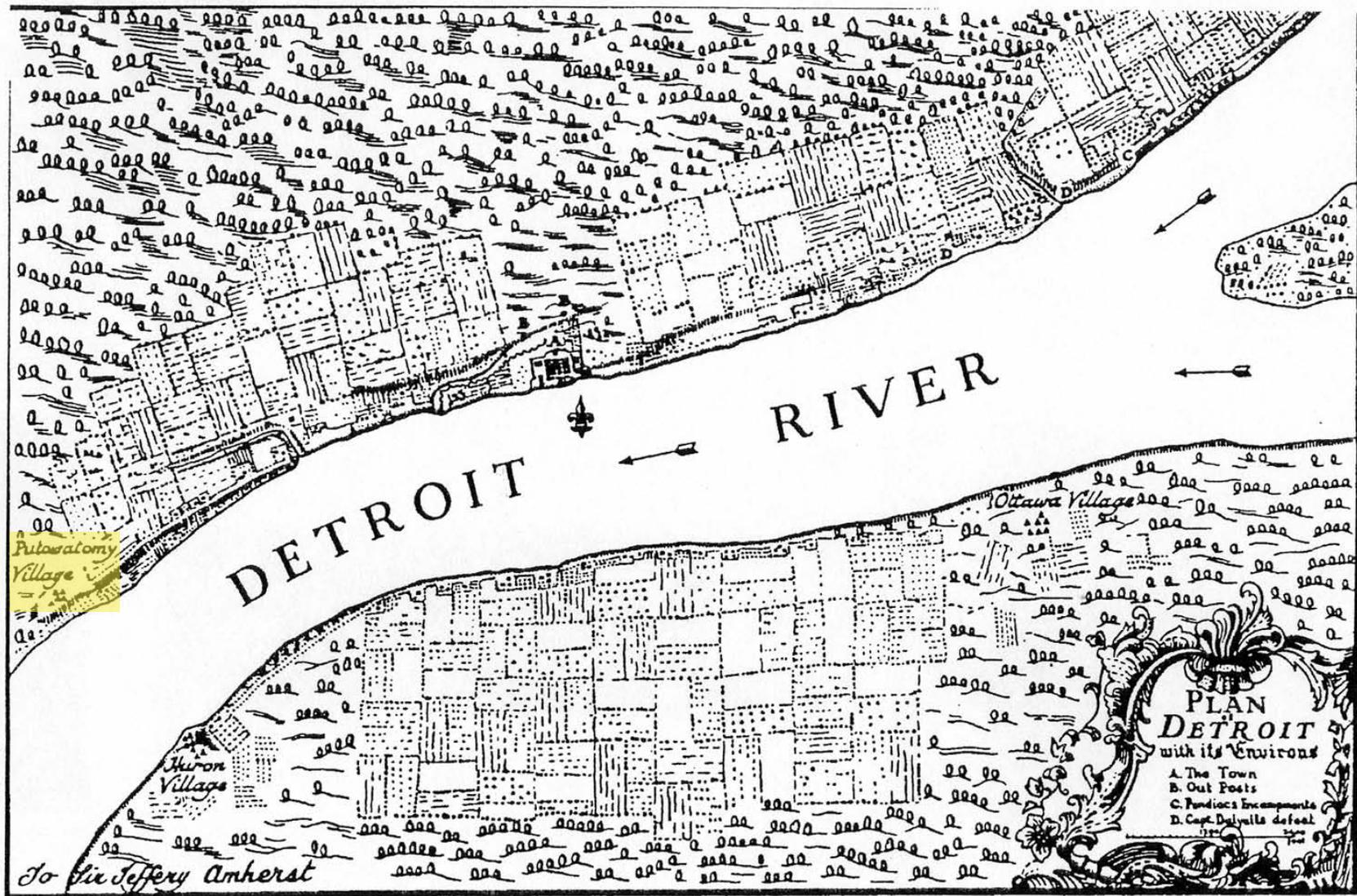
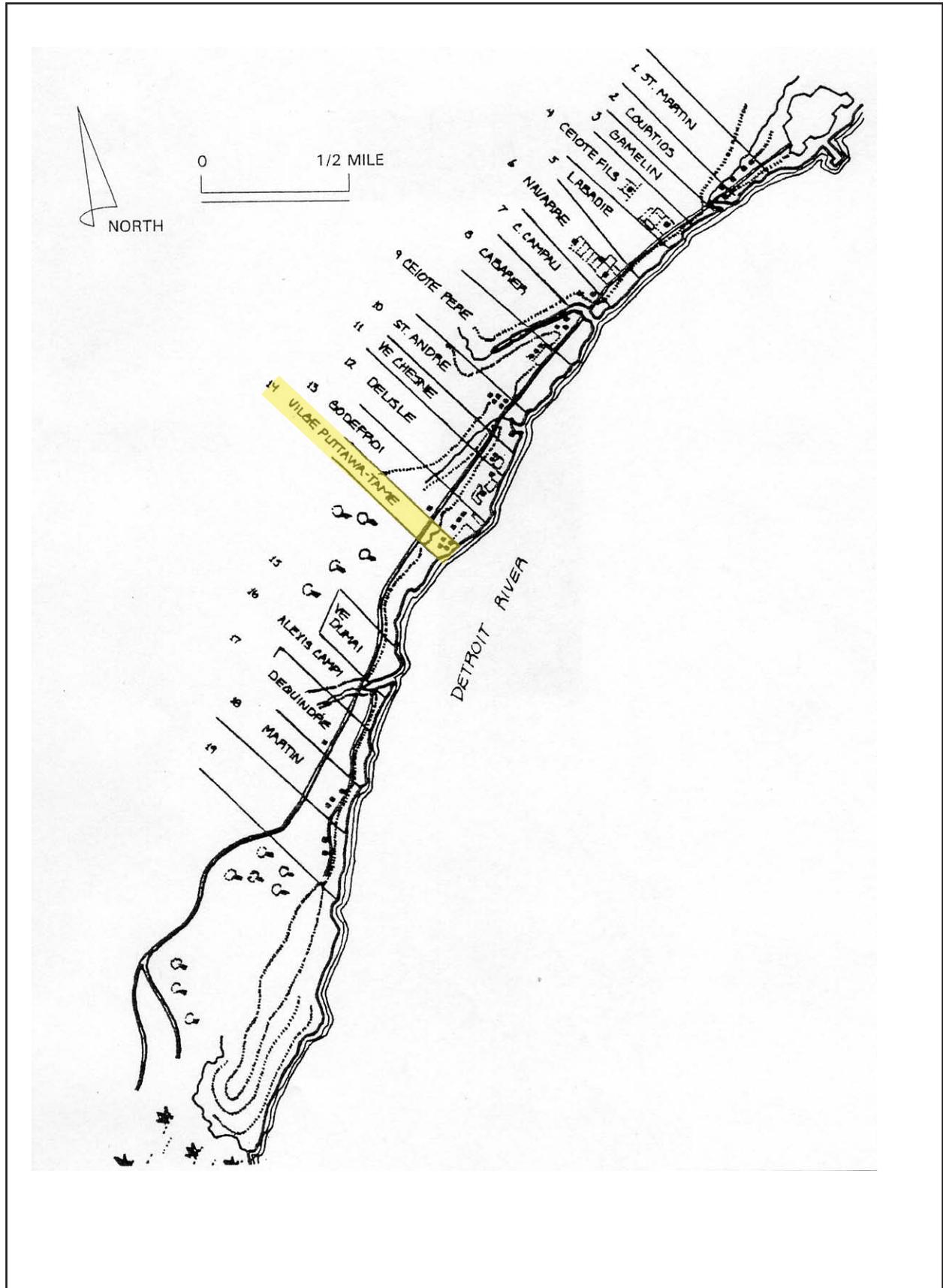


Figure 1.2.1-3. Native American and French Settlements on the Detroit River in 1763



Source: Collot 1796

Figure 1.2.1-4. Native American and French Settlements on the Detroit River, ca. 1770

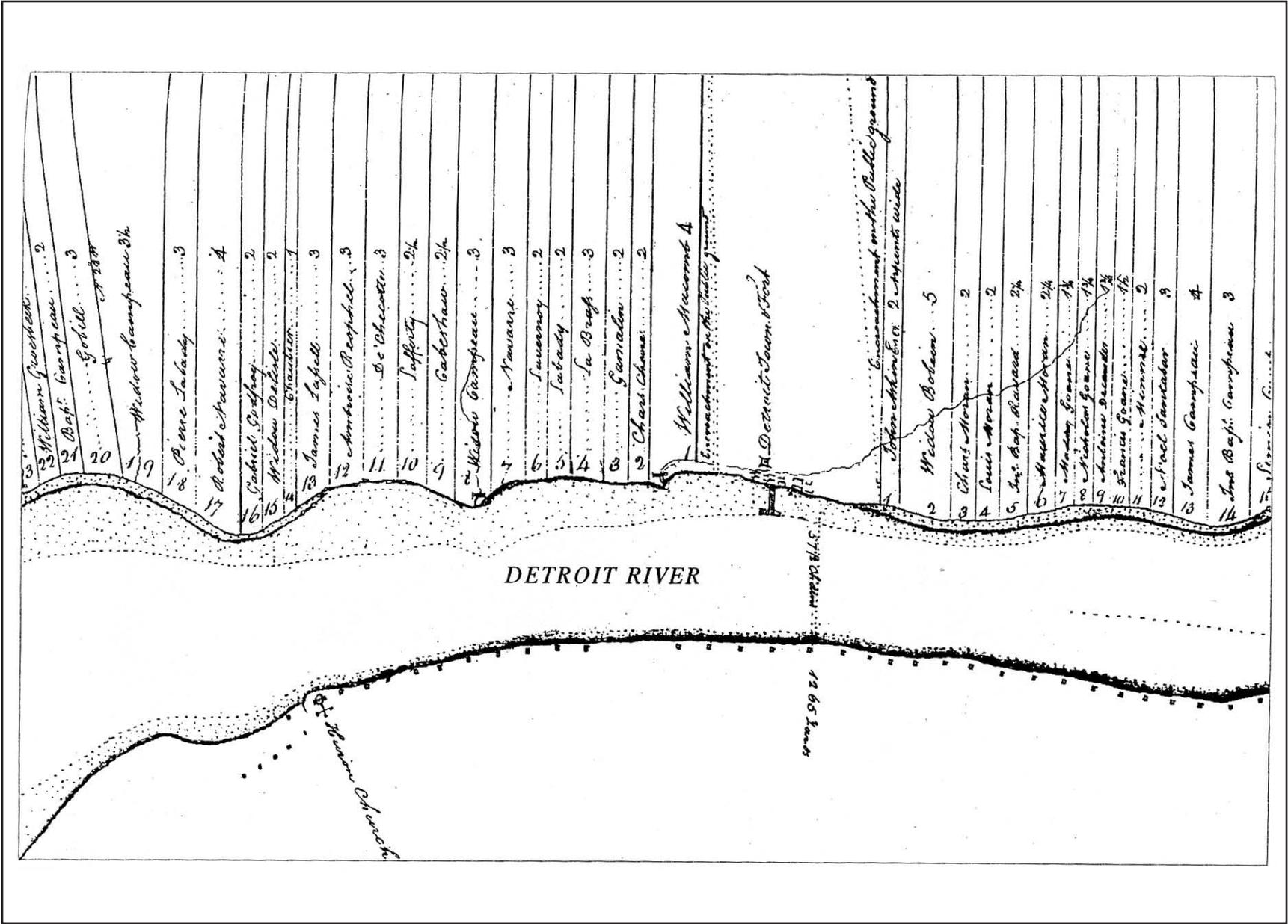


Figure 1.2.1-5. French Farms along the Detroit River, 1796

The origin of Navarre's title to this property is generally viewed as originating in a "deed of gift" executed by the Potawatomi chiefs and ratified by the British Commandant of Detroit, Major Henry Basset, on July 15, 1772.<sup>1-1</sup> Its provisions granted Navarre "...this land forever, that he may cultivate the same, light a fire thereon, and take care of our dead..." (Lowrie and Clarke 1832:277). As surveyed two weeks later, the farm was described as "situate on the river Detroit, at the ancient village of the Pattawatamies, joining on the E.N.E. Jacques Godfroy [Private Claims 727 and 729], and on the W.S.W. vacant land..." (Lowrie and Clarke 1832:277). Four years later the tribe gifted their interpreter Isidore Chene, an adjoining 3-arpent wide parcel.

The conferring of these two farms upon Navarre and Chene is generally taken as evidencing the period of village abandonment by the Potawatomi. Other data, however, such as a survey of the area conducted by James Sterling in October 1776, continued to illustrate the existence of the village on the Chene Farm between the "Robt. Navarre, Jun" and "Widow Dumai" tract (Figure 1.2.1-6). More significantly, in 1780, the commandant of Detroit, Major Arent De Peyster, received, "...a grant from the whole Pottawatimis Nation of Five Thousand Acres of excellent land upon the River from near the River Rouge to the Pottawatimis Village, exclusive of other Lands heretofore granted to different People, which they are desirous to have settled" (Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (MPHS) 1892:553).

The village, it would seem, still existed at this point in time. The extent of occupation was likely only a vestige of its former size and may have represented a sporadic use area occupied by members of the tribe while trading in Detroit or organizing war parties against the frontier settlements of Pennsylvania and Virginia during the Revolutionary War. Throughout the period of Navarre's tenure over Private Claim 20, and extending into the early 1820s, the lands comprising the farm continued to be used by the Potawatomi, as later (1879) recounted by a granddaughter, Mary Ann Brevoort Bristol, "When I attained the age of ten years, I remember how they came to bury their dead, and took possession of the house. We gave them food, beds, etc.; we had to do it – it was the agreement" (Bristol 1908:300).

### **1.2.2 European Settlement and Rural Land Use**

The 5,000-acre grant made by the Potawatomi in 1780 effectively opened the Rouge River area to European settlement. United States title to these grounds was confirmed through the treaty concluded at Greenville in 1795. Patent deed titles to lands settled prior to the 1796 American occupation of Detroit were largely confirmed as "Private Claims" between 1807 and 1811 (Figure 1.2.2-1). As of 1803, the settled tracts along the Rouge River extended inland from the Detroit River for a distance of about eight miles. Forty-three individual holdings were extant at that time, the majority (38) had been established immediately after the 1780 transfer of Native title. The farms along the south side of the Rouge were generally considered as more valuable. The soils on the north side were described as "poor, gray, sandy, and unproductive" (Lowrie and Clarke 1832:191). Their importance, as stressed in British naval correspondence of the period, was primarily as a source of oak timber for ship construction and repair (MPHS 1892:496).

During the eight-year period from 1771 to 1779, a total of eight ships (one brig, three schooners, four sloops) and one gunboat were built at Detroit by the Royal Navy. During the winter of 1797, the United States established its shipyard on a 586.11-acre reserve at the mouth of Baby Creek under the direction of Captain Peter Curry (Bald 1948:125; Dunnigan 2001:109) (Figure 1.2.2-1). By 1810, at

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<sup>1-1</sup>Farmer (1890:52) dates the deed to May 26, 1771.

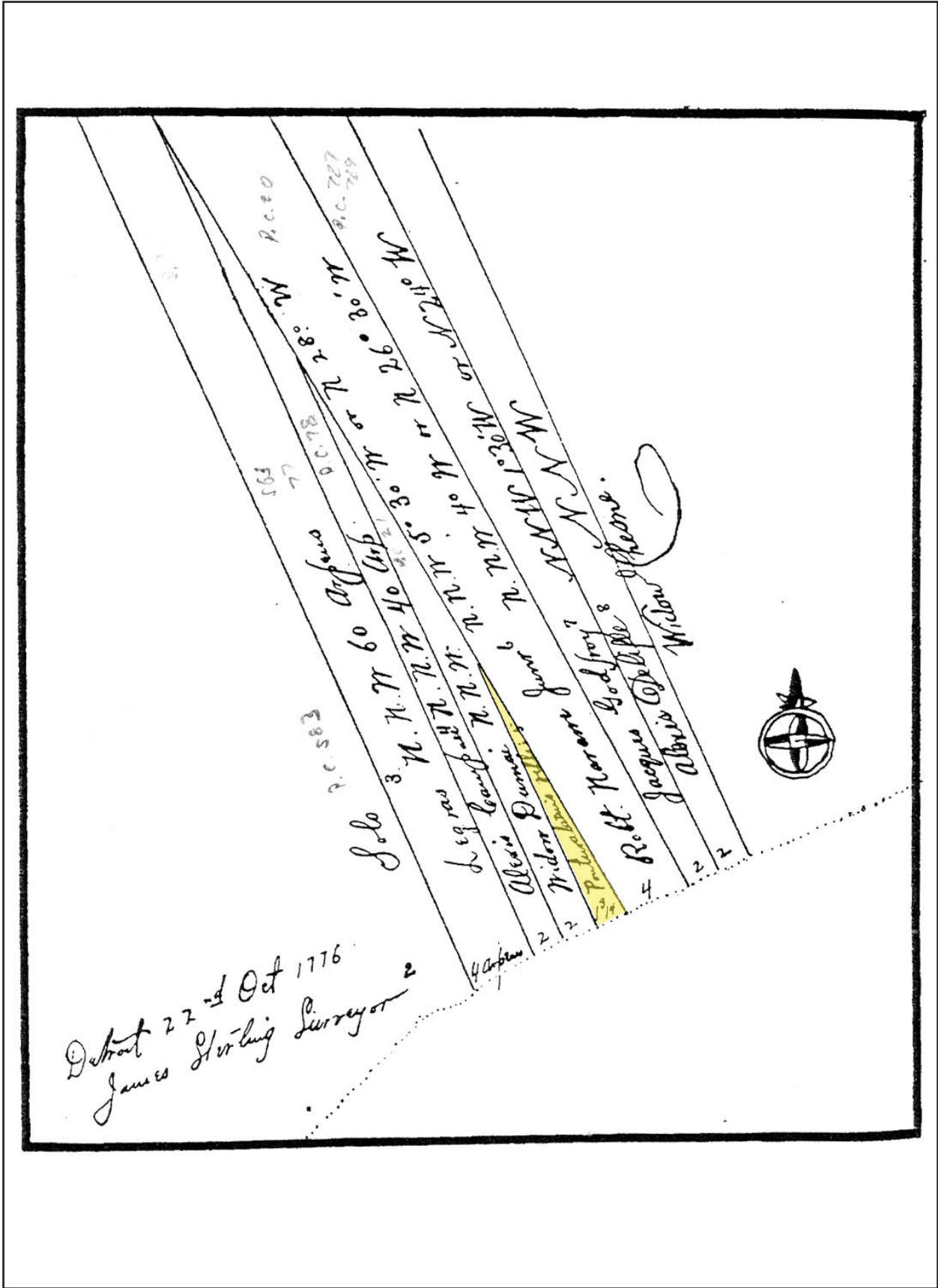


Figure 1.2.1-6. Claims in 1776



least two additional yards had been opened on the Rouge River by Captain John Connelly, on the existing site of Fordson Island (Private Claim 28) and Captain Jonathan Nelson, of the North West Company, on Private Claim 671. Jacques Baby's mills on Baby Creek (Private Claim 60) and the Rouge River (Private Claim 11) had been established as early as 1793 and were quite likely devoted to both lumber and grain processing (Dunnigan 2001:98, 129) (Figure 1.2.2-1). By 1810, Charles Rouleau had also established a mill on the "Mill Creek" drainage through Private Claim 29 (Figure 1.2.2-1).

Brick manufacturing emerged as a local industry at about this time. In 1799, John Askin's kilns near the mouth of the Rouge River produced 70,000 bricks, available at \$8.00 per 1,000 at the brickyard or \$10.00 delivered (Bald 1948:152). While the effort was short-lived and the exact location of the yard remains obscure, more extensive operations were later established by John Greusel (1847) on Private Claim 39 adjacent to Fort Wayne (Figure 1.2.2-1) (Greusel 1915:378).

It is actually quite probable that both the Askin and Greusel operations were located on the same property. Prior to the awarding of Federal patent deeds, virtually the entire southwest Detroit riverfront, consisting of Private Claims 32, 39, 67, 267, 268, 269, 270, and 718, was widely recognized as being an Askin possession. Early use of these grounds was reportedly limited to cattle raising, or as a "pasture, for cutting firewood and hay" (Lowrie and Clark 1832:338). As of 1796, Askin had established three riverfront dwellings for rental use on the tract. These appear to have been located on what later became Private Claims 39, 32, and 718. Portions of Private Claim 32 were originally designated under two separate headings as the Mill lot, or Private Claim 271, and the Todd Claim, or Private Claim 269. An adjacent lot fronting Private Claim 39 was described in 1808 as being "formerly" the site of a "house and garden...on what is called the race ground" (Lowrie and Clark 1832:389). As depicted on the 1796 McNiff map of the Detroit region, this feature appears as a circular track that surrounded the Belle Fontain, or natural spring from which Springwells Township acquired its name. As of 1808, the location figured as the site of Fr. Gabriel Richard's short-lived "Spring Hill" school primarily designed to promote vocational training among area Indian children (Woodford and Hyma 1958:55). As a well-known camping and gathering location it is probably not surprising that "Spring Wells" (Figures 1.2.2-2 and 1.2.2-3) was later chosen, in 1815, as the site of the treaty establishing peace between the United States and hostile tribes at the close of the War of 1812 (Deloria and Kickingbird 1973:18-20). The point drove home yet another element of consideration: it was this location which had also witnessed the British landing that led to the fall of Detroit on August 5, 1812 (Figure 1.2.2-3).

Settlement of the lands inland from the riverfront claims did not generally occur until after the sectional survey of this area following the close of the War of 1812. In 1818, the upriver and downriver areas bounding the east and west sides of Detroit were respectively reorganized as Hamtramck and Springwells townships. Over the following decade virtually all lands within the townships passed from federal to private ownership; however, the transition from wilderness to agricultural use was slow. It was not until the great wave of immigration during the mid-1830s that any significant shift in this direction emerged. As of 1837, Springwells Township, with its 960 residents, accounted for 4.1 percent of the total county population. Thirteen years later, in 1850, its 1,263 inhabitants accounted for only 2.5 percent of the total county population. During the same period, the population of Detroit increased from 8,273 to 21,019.

Prior to 1850, the primary nonagricultural developments in Springwells Township were either state or federally sponsored. These included the opening of the River Road (West Jefferson) to the Rapids of the Maumee (1817), the opening of the Military Road (Michigan Avenue) to Chicago in 1825, the establishment of the United States arsenal (1833) in nearby Dearborn Township, the construction of





Source: Anonymous 1813

Figure 1.2.2-3. DRIC Project Vicinity, 1813

Fort Wayne (1842-48) on the Detroit River, and the state sponsored construction (1837) of the Michigan Central Railroad (MCRR). The military interest in the area had the immediate effect of sparking an expansion in local brick manufacturing as government contracts were let in order to meet the vast amounts of material required for the arsenal and fort facilities (Greusel 1915). The construction of the roads and railroad established the beginnings of a transportation network that, by the early 1870s, served to draw a substantial portion of Detroit's emerging industrial infrastructure both downriver and inland from the riverfront.

The area known as Delray has come to have a variety of meanings within the last century. In the cultural sense, it refers to the neighborhoods and communities that developed in the study area. At the beginning of the twentieth century, this area was populated primarily by Hungarian immigrants who had arrived in Detroit in the late nineteenth century (Figure 1.2.2-4). In a geographic sense, "Delray" has been used in both a larger and a more narrow sense. In the larger sense, Delray refers to an area encompassing the DRIC study area, sometimes known as Southwest Detroit. In the more narrow sense, Delray is a more confined geographic center situated on the Rouge River, immediately east of Zug Island. This area, the Village of Delray, was an independent village for only a short time before it was annexed by the city in 1905 (Scott 2001). The locale is labeled "Delray Village" on the 1897 Sanborn Insurance atlas key map, bounded approximately by South (north), West End (east), River (i.e., Jefferson) (south), and Dearborn (west) (Figure 1.2.2-5). By 1910, the Sanborn atlas shows the area as part of the neighboring developments to the north, east, and west (note also the presence of Solvay Process Company adjacent to former east limit of the Village of Delray), and it is no longer labeled as an independent settlement (Figure 1.2.2-6). The term "Delray" as used in this report refers to the more restricted area on the Rouge River, rather than the larger area of Southwest Detroit.

During the twentieth century, the greater DRIC Study area has been marked by waves of industrial development, followed by immigration, settlement, and residential and commercial expansion and, eventually, abandonment. This more recent history of the area is the subject of the remainder of this report and is detailed in the following historical contexts.

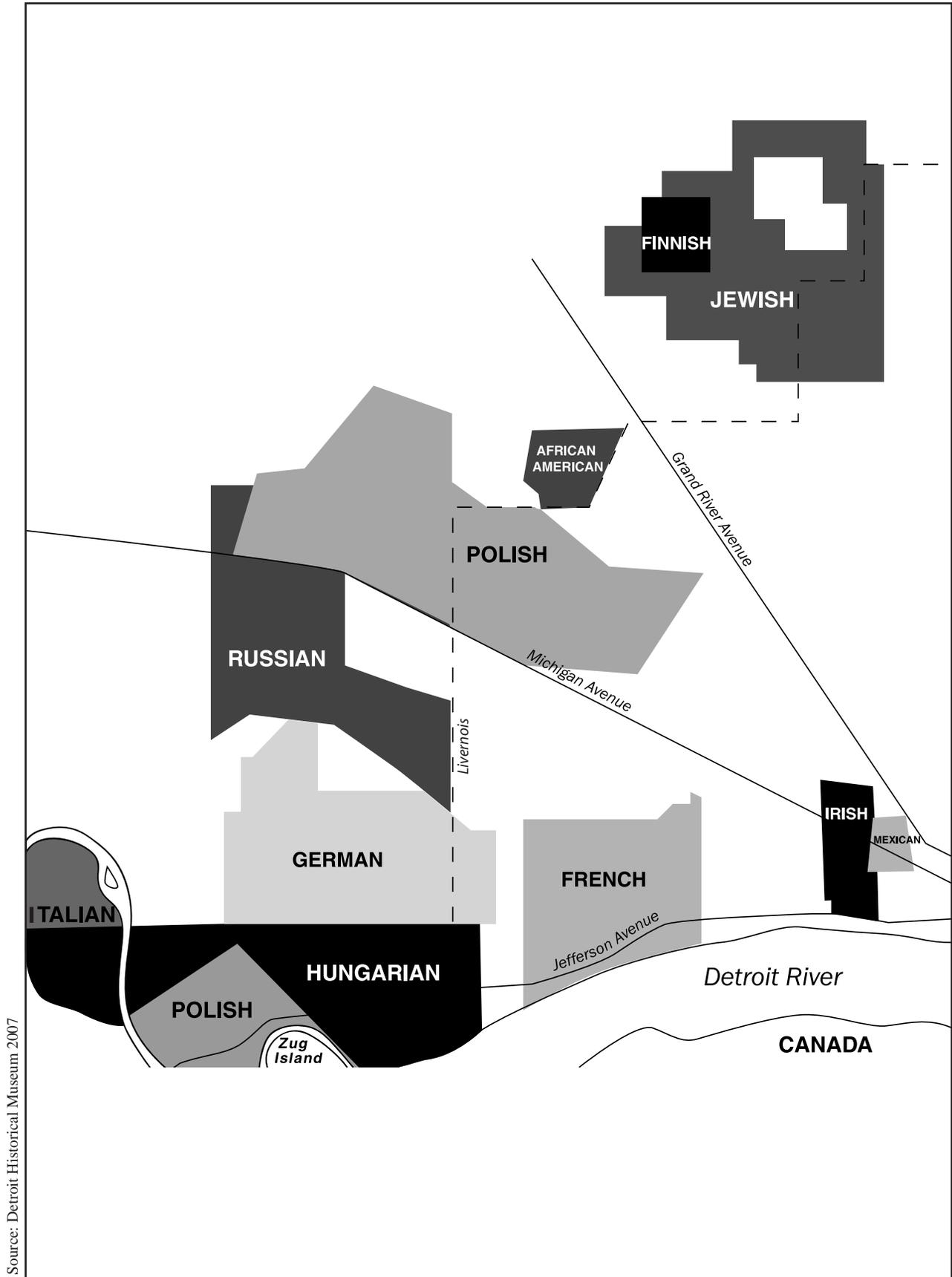
### **1.3 Historic Contexts**

The following text is a discussion of various contexts, or the ways that the properties in the study area have achieved historic significance. Pertinent regional information can provide a framework for addressing site significance and suggests research questions about the historic cultural resources in the study area. Within the DRIC study area, six contexts are relevant: transportation, industry, social history, education, ethnic heritage, and religion. CCRG's previous land use history report (see Demeter and Weir 2006) forms the foundation for the following context development. That information was further expanded here with context-specific source material.

#### **1.3.1 Transportation**

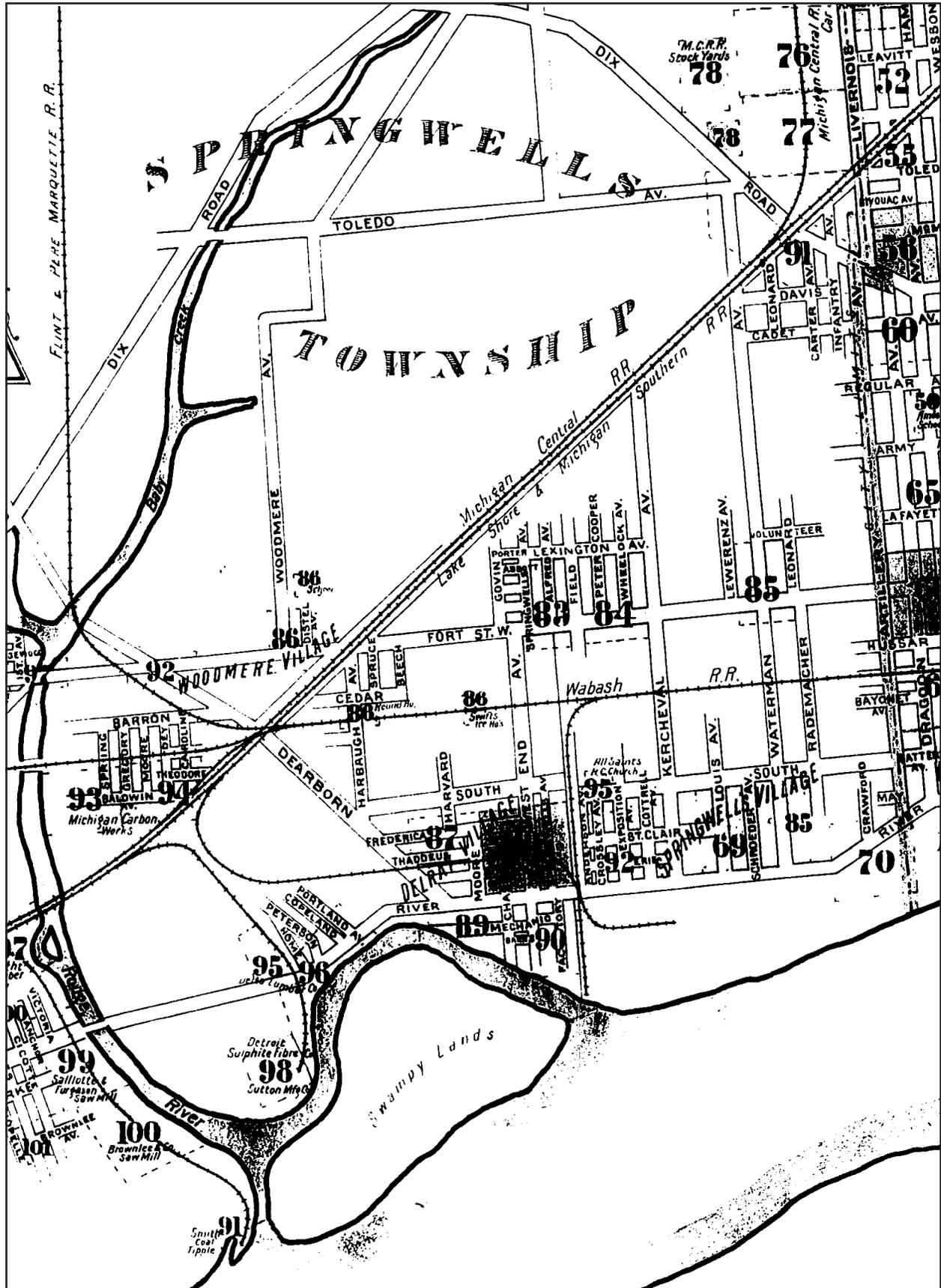
It is hard to say if the expansion of transportation routes, including roadways, streetcar, and railroad precipitated the growth of industry in the study area, or if the reverse is true. Either way, the initial limit of transportation via the Detroit River and steam powered ships was quickly broadened to include a variety of inland transportation options.

Prior to 1850, the primary nonagricultural developments in Springwells Township were either state or federally sponsored. These included the opening of the River Road (West Jefferson Avenue) to the Rapids of the Maumee (1817), the opening of the Military Road (Michigan Avenue) to Chicago in 1825, the establishment of the United States arsenal in nearby Dearborn Township (1833), the



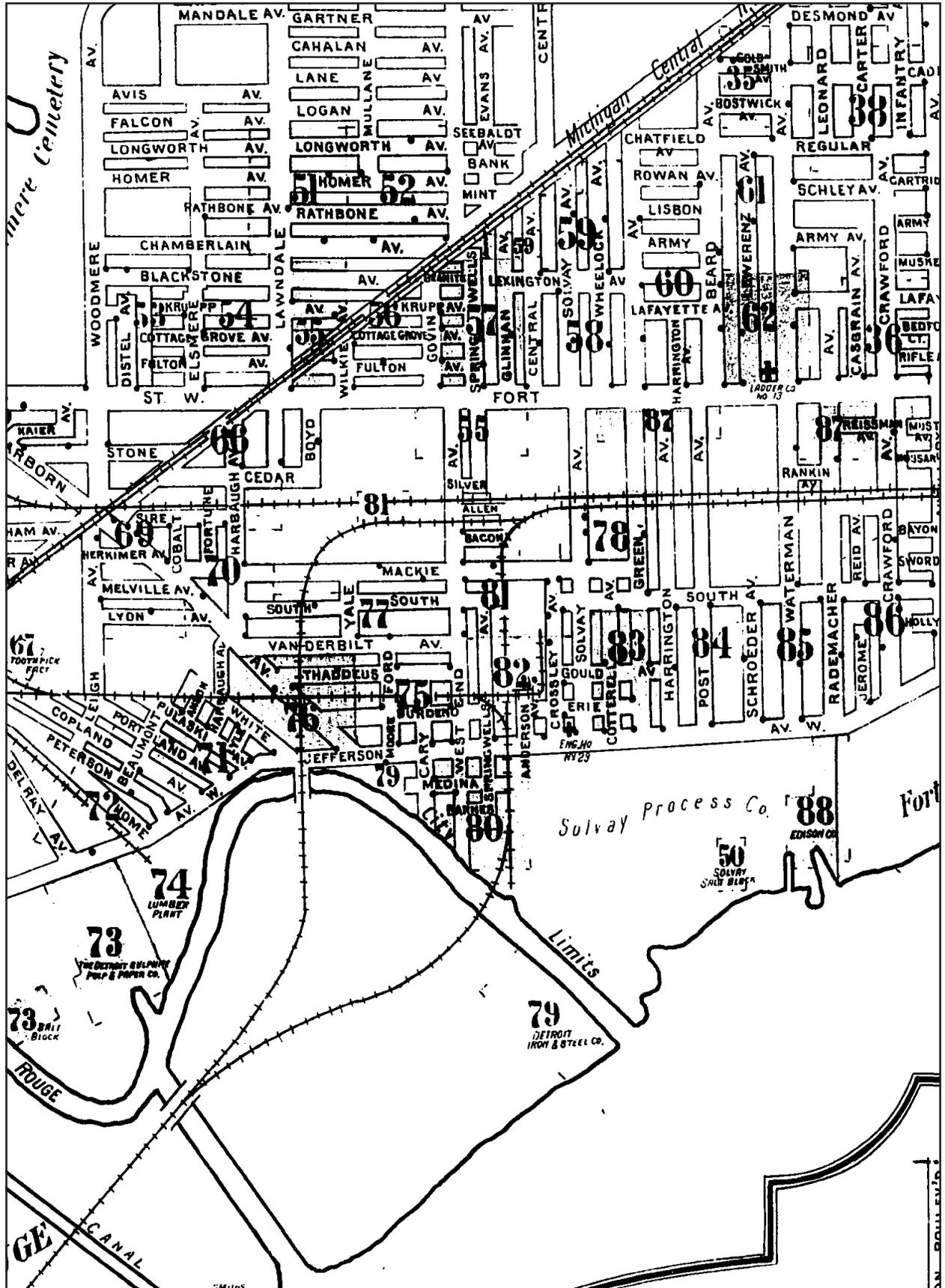
Source: Detroit Historical Museum 2007

Figure 1.2.2-4. Delray Hungarian Settlement, 1904



Source: Sanborn 1897

Figure 1.2.2-5. Village of Delray, ca. 1897



Source: Sanborn 1910

Figure 1.2.2-6. Delray Area, ca. 1910

construction of Fort Wayne on the Detroit River (1842-48), and the state sponsored construction of the Michigan Central Railroad (MCRR) (1837). The construction of the roads and railroad established the beginnings of a transportation network that, by the early 1870s, served to draw a substantial portion of Detroit's emerging industrial infrastructure both downriver and inland from the riverfront.

Perhaps the first major road in the area was River Road, today known as Jefferson Avenue. For much of the nineteenth century, Jefferson Avenue (also known for a short period time as Ste. Anne Street), was Detroit's main street (Catlin 1926:49). The road was laid out to follow the route of the Detroit River and led travelers to points north and south from Detroit, including the Grosse Pointes and Delray. One of the first streetcar lines in Detroit was constructed on East Jefferson Avenue (Schramm and Henning 1978:13), and the road was the first street on which great numbers of affluent families built lavish homes, and the first road on which many large factories were built (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:238; Scott 2001).

Jefferson Avenue was relocated in the plan by Judge Woodward in 1807 (Catlin 1926:122). The new plan placed the central street in the city (Woodward Avenue) at a right angle to the river, with Jefferson Avenue, Woodbridge, and Atwater placed at right angles to it. For decades, development in Detroit clung to the edge of the Detroit River. As a result, first Woodbridge and later Jefferson Avenue served as the principal business street of the city. By 1830, Jefferson had gained the distinction of the central business avenue, which it retained for more than 20 years, when the city began to expand north following Woodward Avenue (Catlin 1926:556). By 1851, stagecoaches traveled over Jefferson Avenue (then a plank road), carrying travelers to Toledo and stopping at the numerous taverns along the way (Detroit Public Library [DPL] 1953:107). In 1892, it was paved. At that time, Jefferson was only one of four asphalt paved roads in the entire city, the others were Lafayette, Cass, and Second (Catlin 1926:593; Schramm et al. 1984:10). By 1930, the portion of Jefferson Avenue that passed through Delray had become a thriving central business district for the neighborhood, boasting shops, restaurants, and small businesses catering to the occupants of the community.

The trend toward the urbanization of the DRIC study area is directly linked to the expansion of an existing railroad routing, coupled with the opening of Michigan's northern mineral ranges beginning in the 1850s. Mineral processing plants handling bulk ores shipped to Detroit by lake freighters were located along the riverfront. Transport, and thus production, was constrained by the seasonal limitation of winter weather conditions. The railroad offered a viable alternative to water transport by establishing factory siding locations that could operate on a year-round basis. While the process was not fully integrated into a working regional network until the last quarter of the century, its initiation within the DRIC study area during the late 1850s offered proof of its potential. The crossing of the existing Michigan Central Railroad in Springwells Township (at Junction Avenue) by the Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana (i.e., Detroit, Monroe & Toledo Railroad) in 1856 represented an important step in this direction, one that was further augmented by the subsequent routing of the Grand Trunk Railroad through the junction in 1859.

By the early 1860s, horse-drawn streetcars and, later, the electrified street railway, had become the chief instrument of transportation. They also had a dramatic impact on housing within the city and adjacent townships. As of November 1863, the Grand Trunk Junction was serviced by a 3.25-mile line extending down Michigan Avenue to the intersection of Jefferson and Woodward Avenues. Several years later, in 1866, the 12.5-mile long Fort Wayne and Elmwood line was completed to Fort Wayne, with its West Side stables and car shops located on Clark Avenue. In 1873, the 3-mile long Congress and Baker Street line was established, running from Randolph Street to 24<sup>th</sup> Street. By

1880, the Fort Wayne and Elmwood line extended its route along West Jefferson to Delray on the Rouge River. A spur line along Fort Street was added in 1886 running to Woodmere Cemetery. At about the same time, the Baker Street line was opened to Dragoon Avenue, when an extensive brick car shed was erected on the site of Boyer Park (Farmer 1890:932). In 1900, the Fort Wayne and Belle Isle Street Railway Company built a switch from the tracks on Jefferson Avenue near Schroeder Avenue to a sand pit on the north side of Jefferson Avenue (Burton Historic Collection [BHC] 2006). The population serviced by this transit network on the city's west side was extensive. As of 1880, Detroit's Ninth and Twelfth wards, to the west of Eighth Street, were respectively enumerated at 16,296 and 7,102 inhabitants. Springwells Township's population stood at 7,960 (Walker and Seaton 1883:221).

In 1881, the Detroit, Butler & St. Louis Railroad (later known as the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific, or simply the Wabash), received a charter to open a line from Delray to the Ohio state line near Morenci, Michigan (Leake 1912:1031). The first through-train of the line from St. Louis reached Detroit on August 14, 1881 (Farmer 1890:907). The near riverfront placement of the Wabash, coupled with the availability of open farmland, proved a significant attraction for industrial growth. The Michigan Carbon Works, whose business depended heavily on bone supplies from the West, took up a location adjacent to the trackage in 1881. One year later, the Detroit Union Railroad Depot and Station Company completed a line from Delray to Eighteenth Street, Detroit. According to Farmer's *History of Detroit*, in 1883, Wabash trains began arriving and departing from the Twelfth Street Union Depot, located between Woodbridge (west of Jefferson) and the Detroit River (Farmer 1890).

In the 1890s, several railroad lines opened up passenger and rail traffic into and out of the DRIC study area, including the Detroit, Lansing & Northern Railroad (1892), Flint & Pere Marquette (1893), and the Detroit, Delray & Dearborn Railroad (1895). In May 1897 the Detroit & Lima Northern Railway completed its line from Delray to Tecumseh, Michigan (using partially existing track), and by August 1898 to the Ohio state line (Meints 1992:59).

Perhaps one of the more important industrial rail lines opened in 1904. That year, the Delray Connecting Railroad (DCR) completed a 2-mile line from Delray to the Detroit Southern Railroad on Zug Island and the Delray Terminal Railroad completed a 2-mile line from Delray to the Detroit Edison Company, located on Jefferson Avenue. The purpose of the latter line was to bring in coal and other supplies to the Delray plant and a coal yard once located on South Street, and to serve Fort Wayne. It continues to function as a switching and terminal line for the National Steel Corporation on Zug Island (Meints 1992:56-7).

In 1912, the Detroit, Delray & Dearborn (DD&D) Railroad completed a 2.46-mile line from their home base in Melvindale to the Junction Yard (later known as the Junction Yard Branch). The DCR line continued to prosper, and in 1915 it purchased right-of-way on 10 miles of Detroit Toledo & Ironton (DT&I) track from Detroit to the Solvay quarry at Sibley Street. In the fall of 1916, the DD&D was sold to MCRR, further expanding their empire (Meints 1992:63).

Between 1916 and 1918, two bridges were constructed on the DCR/DT&I track at Zug Island. In the early 1920s, the Pennsylvania Railroad (later absorbed by Conrail and subsequently Norfolk Southern [NS]), opened a line from Carleton to River Rouge (just south of Delray). Through Delray, the line begins just east of the NS drawbridge over the Rouge River and curves around to connect with the CSX line just north of the Fort Street overpass.

Between 1915 and 1925, Detroit grew from a city of approximately 45 square miles to one of 139 square miles. That Detroit's future development required a planned design fell in line with a popular trend in urban reform of the period, and the adoption of a new city charter in June 1918 allowed for the creation of a city plan commission (Colby 1920:162; Glazer 1965:89). As late as 1921, however, Detroit still had not implemented any defining set of zoning ordinances that could serve as a guide to future growth (Colby 1922:155). A pivotal factor of urban design as it emerged during this period was directed at revamping existing transportation networks to accommodate the flow of automobile traffic within the city, to outlying zones, and between cities. Important legislation that contributed to this goal was provided through the grants embodied in the Federal Aid Acts of 1916 and 1921 (Colby 1922:624). The development of a more fully integrated national roadway program was further implemented in 1925 when the Joint Board of Inter-State Highways designated 79,884 miles of road under the heading of United States Highway Routes (Colby 1926:612). The move was fundamental to modern urban-suburban growth. As of 1929, West Fort Street, between the Rouge River and Woodward Avenue, was dedicated as a component of the Dixie Highway (U.S. 25) running from Mackinaw City to Miami (Van Wagoner 1937:2). The roadway ran directly below the Ambassador Bridge linking the United States to Canada (Figure 1.3.1-1).

Within Detroit and the surrounding suburban communities, roadway development and redevelopment increasingly adopted wide-boulevard or super highway formats, which promoted the regional movement of goods and people. During the two-year period from 1924 through 1926, the City of Detroit was responsible for paving 187.4 miles of new growth area streets (City of Detroit:139-140). While many roadway improvements required the condemnation of privately owned properties, West Fort Street had existed as a 100-foot-wide right-of-way since the 1880s. Its placement along the north side of the Wabash Railroad, coupled with the parallel placement of South Street to the south, could have served as a template for the planned industrial zone recommended by a regional planning Advisory Committee to the City of Detroit. Their proposed design had included the placement of "thoroughfares paralleling the railroads on the sides at 1,200 feet distance." It was felt that this design format could lend, "protection...[to]...industrial sites from encroachment of residential subdivisions, and the protection of highways giving access to the industries from crossing by the railroad service tracks." The idea was to some degree given credence by the construction of the Detroit-Timken Axle Complex, Turnsted's, and the Fisher Body buildings on West Fort Street between Scotten and Lawndale Avenues.

In 1929 the Detroit Union Produce Terminal took up a 40-acre site between West End and Green Avenues. Developed under a partnership agreement between the Wabash, Pennsylvania, and Pere Marquette railroads, the terminal shipping docks were located well beyond those that had earlier spread out around the Detroit port facility and nearby railroad warehouse district adjacent to the MCRR tunnel crossing (Figure 1.3.1-2), which had been opened for regular passenger and freight use on October 14, 1910 (New York Central Railroad System n.d.). The fact that the terminal dealt in perishables made it a primary source for the heaviest movement of truck traffic occurring throughout the city. This, in combination with nearby automotive plant traffic, rendered West Fort Street and Livernois Avenue as the busiest commercial routes within the city (Figure 1.3.1-3).

### **1.3.2 Industry**

The waterfront location of the study area made it perfect for early development, particularly for industries that could take advantage of the river as a source of transportation. By the mid-nineteenth century, industrial activities were well underway in the study area.

Source: Standard Oil Company, 1934

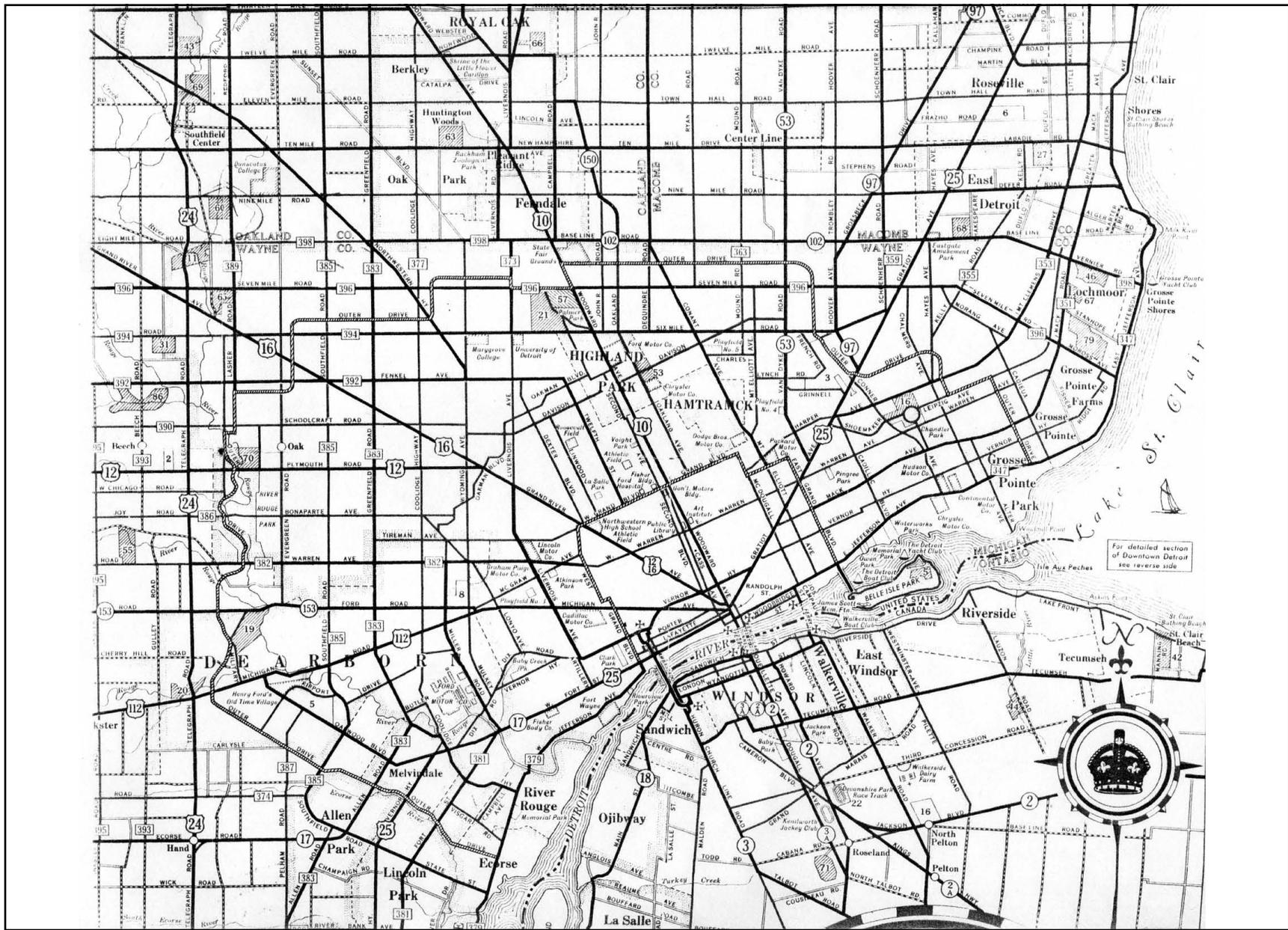
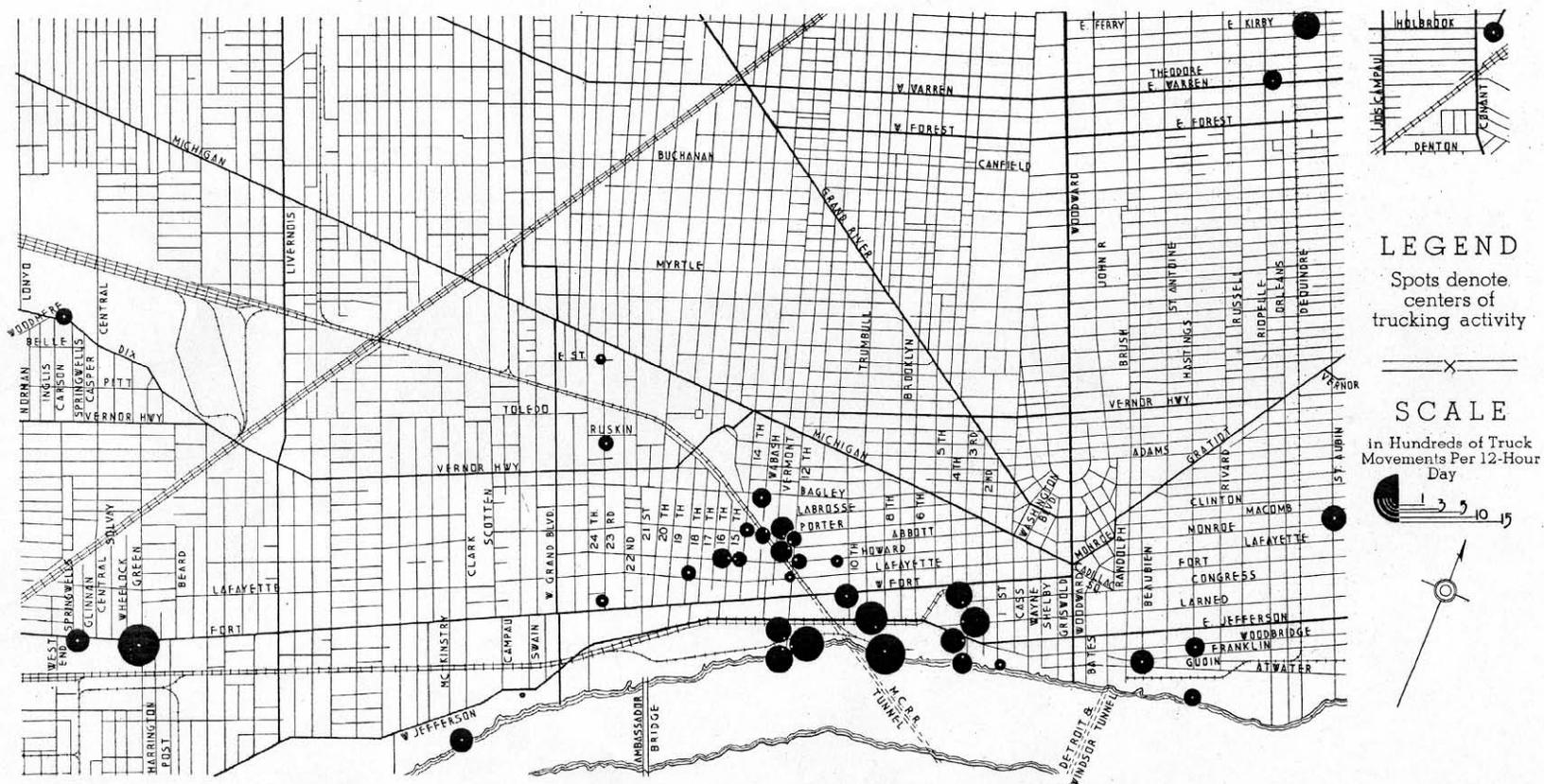


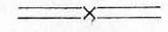
Figure 1.3.1-1. Detroit Metropolitan Roadways, 1934

# LOCATION OF FREIGHT TERMINALS, DOCKS AND WAREHOUSES 1936



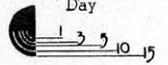
### LEGEND

Spots denote centers of trucking activity



### SCALE

in Hundreds of Truck Movements Per 12-Hour Day



## DETROIT TRAFFIC SURVEY

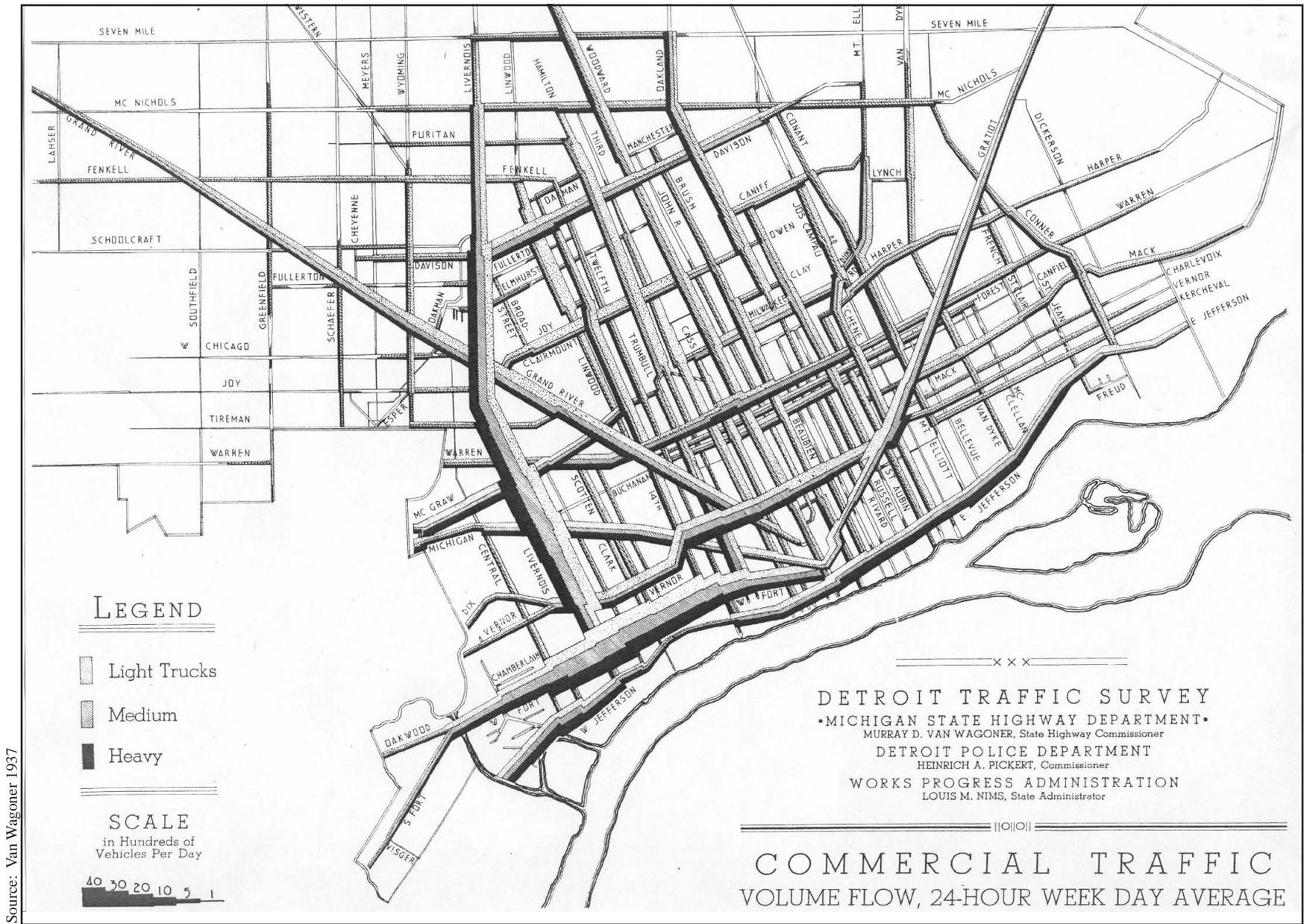
MICHIGAN STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT  
MURRAY D. VAN WAGONER, State Highway Commissioner

DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT  
HEINRICH A. PICKERT, Commissioner

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
LOUIS M. NIMS, State Administrator

Source: Van Wagoner 1937

Figure 1.3.1-2. Detroit Terminals, 1936



Source: Van Wagoner 1937

Figure 1.3.1-3. Detroit Truck Routes, 1936

The trend toward industrialization of the Detroit riverfront was directly linked to the opening of Michigan's northern mineral ranges. The enabling technology that allowed for the procurement, processing, and movement of this mineral wealth was based on steam power. The steam engine not only lent itself to increased loading capacities, it offset the importance of wind and currents in lake shipping and eliminated the restrictions of seasonality in land transport. Mineral processing plants handling bulk ores shipped by lake freighters were typically located along the riverfront.

The steam engine freighters, however, were constrained by winter conditions, limiting transportation, and therefore production, to the warm weather months. The railroad offered a transportation system that could operate on a year-round basis. While the process was not fully integrated into a working network until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, its initiation in Springwells Township during the late 1850s offered an early advantage in promoting the area's industrial potential.

In 1850, the Waterbury and Detroit Copper Company established a smelter in Springwells Township at the foot of Junction Avenue on Private Claim 30 (Figure 1.3.2-1). Several years later the Eureka Iron and Steel Works established its massive facility several miles farther downriver creating the community of Wyandotte.

The 1850s establishment of the Ives dry dock, at the foot of Swain, and Joseph P. Clark's shipyard at the foot of Clark Avenue during the early 1850s was a direct spin-off of this emergent economic system. Similarly, the crossing of the Michigan Central Railroad (MCRR) at Junction Avenue by the Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana (i.e., Detroit, Monroe & Toledo Railroad) in 1856 represented yet another important step in this direction, one that was further enhanced with the subsequent routing of the Grand Trunk Railroad through the junction in 1859.

Within the limits of the City of Detroit, which were extended to about Twenty-fifth Street in 1857, the MCRR stimulated the growth of the local meat packing industry with the establishment (ca. 1855) of a 10-acre stockyard on Twentieth Street. Among the first to take advantage of this location was the Hammond, Standish and Company packing house, which introduced the use of refrigerated railroad cars in 1868/69.

Perhaps one of the only transportation projects to have a negative consequence on the DRIC study area was the construction of the northbound-southbound Fisher Freeway, a 14-mile-long segment in the Interstate-75 (I-75) system linking the downriver area and downtown Detroit. Constructed in 1964, the Fisher Freeway dissected the study area and removed hundreds of houses between West Fort Street and Lafayette Boulevard (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:235). In fact, the number of dwelling units in the study area decreased from 4,434 in 1960 to 3,326 in 1970 (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monreal 1975; Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:234-235).

Taking advantage of the increased loads that could be moved by rail, combined with the discovery of a vast area of suitable clay deposits, the already well-established Springwells brick industry had, by 1853, begun to shift its operations inland towards Michigan and Junction Avenues (Ross and Catlin 1898). As of 1880 the 50-acre Richard H. Hall yard at this location was manufacturing upwards of 20 million bricks per year. Employment figures at the various yards are not well documented; however, small brick works, producing from 2.5 million to 3 million bricks per year, typically employed 15 to 20 seasonal workers as evidenced at the 9-acre yard of August Little at Michigan and Larkins and the 13-acre yard of Francis Hynes at Michigan and Martin (Edwards 1880:195, 223, 261, 263, 271).

Source: Farmer 1890

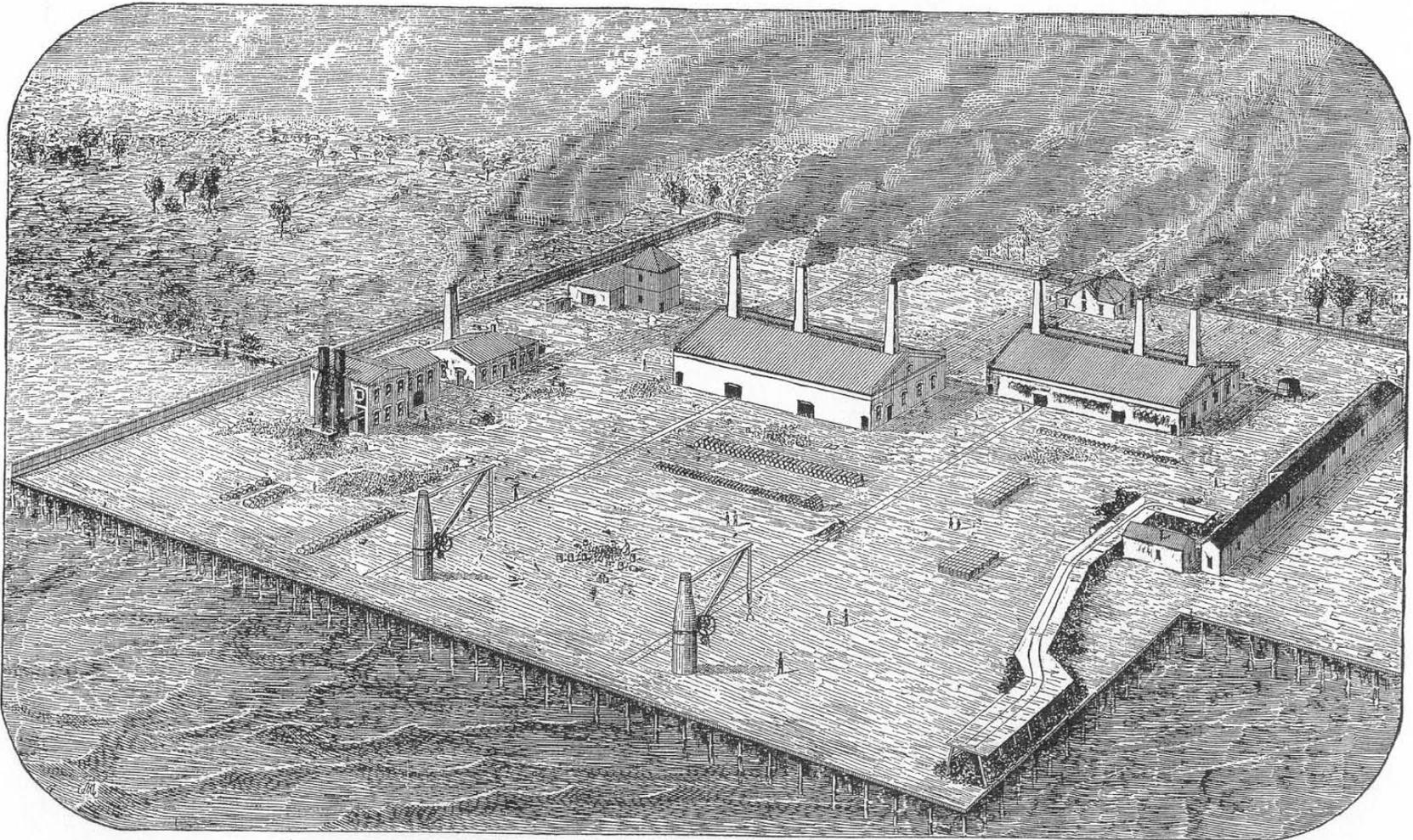


Figure 1.3.2-1. Waterbury and Detroit Copper Company, 1850

The local clay industry received a significant boost with the reconstruction of Fort Wayne as a masonry structure during the Civil War (Phenix 1981). The war also fostered the further growth of the local iron and copper industries. Baugh's iron steam forge was established at this time at the foot of Clark Avenue. While much of its product was devoted to railroad usage, the adjacent Clark shipyard also benefited as it shifted its interests toward building steam-driven vessels. Between 1868 and 1878 the yard launched five steamers ranging in size from 153.8 tons to 551.7 tons (Farmer 1890:914; Leake 1912:984). Farther downriver, at the foot of West End, the Detroit City Glass Works was established in 1868, likely taking advantage of area brine deposits along the Rouge River for the production of soda glass. The facility served as one of the founding industries of the Delray community platted several years earlier in 1860.

In 1863, the Detroit Bridge and Iron Works established a factory on the west side of Foundry (Twenty-first) Street. After 1877, the east side of this street, along the railroad tracks, was dominated by the extensive plant of the Griffin Car Wheel Company. During the same period, the MCRR established (1872) a 130-acre repair yard on the west side of Livernois Avenue, with additional operations also opened near Junction Avenue by the Michigan Car Company (1872), the Detroit Car Wheel Company (1872), and the Detroit Steel and Spring Works (1879) (Farmer 1890:804, 806, 813, 899).

In 1880, the Detroit Copper and Brass Rolling Mills incorporated at 174 Clark Street (Figure 1.3.2-2). Christian Buhl, a former alderman, city mayor, police commissioner and banker, served as the company's first president. The company prospered and became the largest fabricator of copper and brass in Michigan, especially after Henry Ford began using copper and brass on his cars. The company played a major role in helping build Detroit's reputation as "the city that put America on wheels" (Detroit Historic District Commission [DHDC] 2007a). Located near the Detroit River and surrounding rail lines, the company found it easy to ship products by water or by land. Two structures formerly associated with the company remain: the office building and a factory building.

The Michigan Carbon Works, whose business depended heavily on bone supplies from the West, took up a location adjacent to the Wabash trackage in 1881. By 1895 the facility, located on a 100-acre portion of the Harbaugh Farm, consisted of a 50-building complex providing work to a force of some 750 employees. Literally mountains of buffalo bone were rendered into fertilizers, glue, Neatsfoot oil, and related bone-char products at this location on the bank of the Rouge River (Figure 1.3.2-3). Other businesses established in the DRIC study area during this period were the Delta Lumber Company, Anchor Manufacturing (stoves), Detroit Sulphite Fibre, and the Fisher Brothers Glue Works (Polk 1891:439).

By 1885, the westerly limits of Detroit were extended to Ponchartrain/Artillery (Livernois) Avenues (Figure 1.3.2-4). This move placed the industrial hub areas that had grown up around the related Baugh Steam Forge Company and Detroit Car Wheel and Michigan Car companies directly within the city. All three businesses were under the control of James McMillan, who was elected United States Senator in 1889. After their reorganization as part of the Michigan Peninsular Car Company in 1892, the new corporation figures as the city's largest single employer, with a work force ranging from 5,000 to 6,000, and capital stock amounting to an estimated \$8 million (Holli 1969:58; Leake 1912:459).

As the Michigan basin is one of the largest areas of salt deposition in the world, brine wells were common in the DRIC study area beginning in the late 1880s. Brine is a salt solution, containing sodium chloride (NaCl, table salt) or calcium chloride (CaCl), the latter of which can contain varying amounts of magnesium, bromine, and iodine. Extracted from underground salt beds, the brine well

Source: Farmer 1890

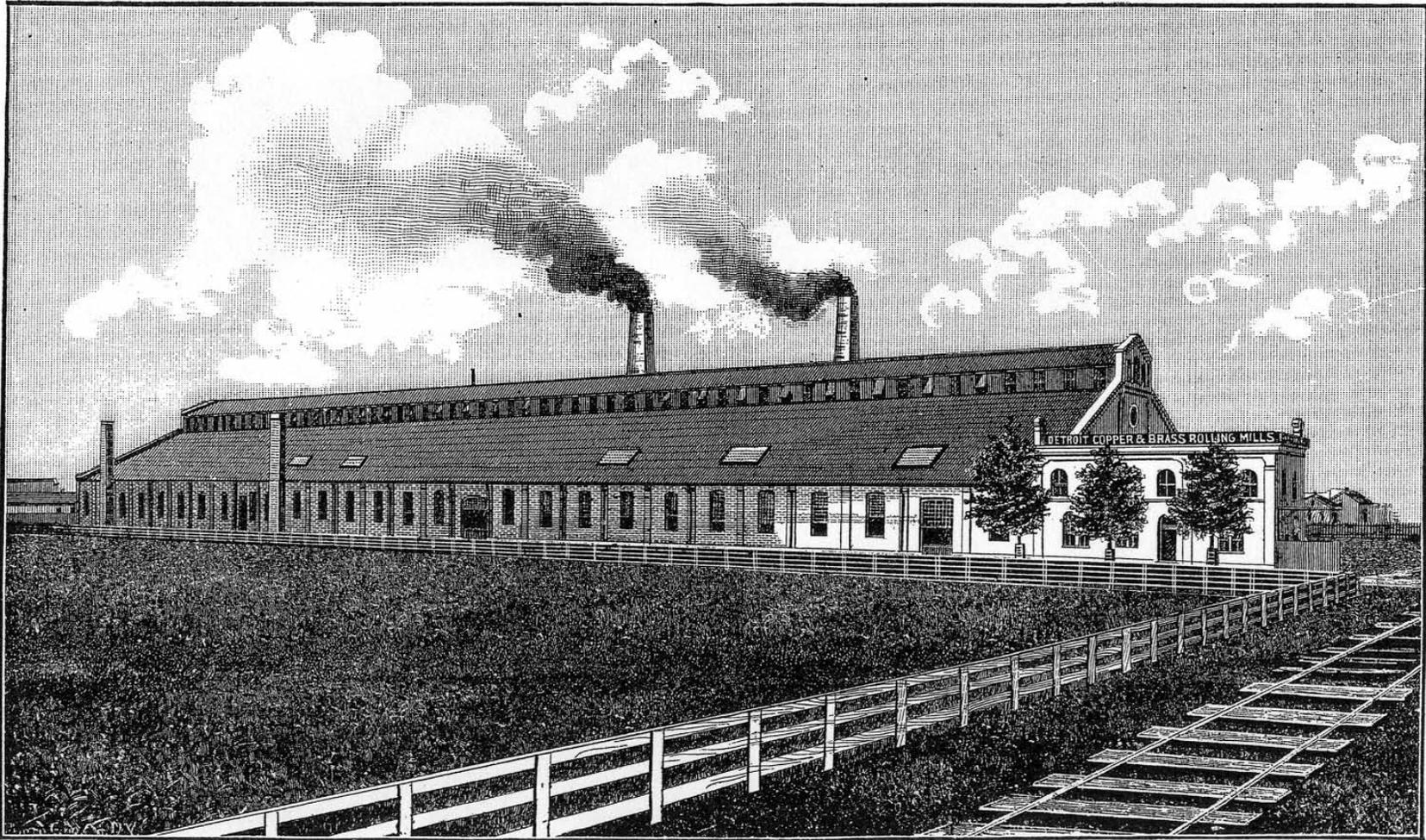


Figure 1.3.2-2. Detroit Copper and Brass Rolling Mills, 1888

Source: Burton Historical Collection

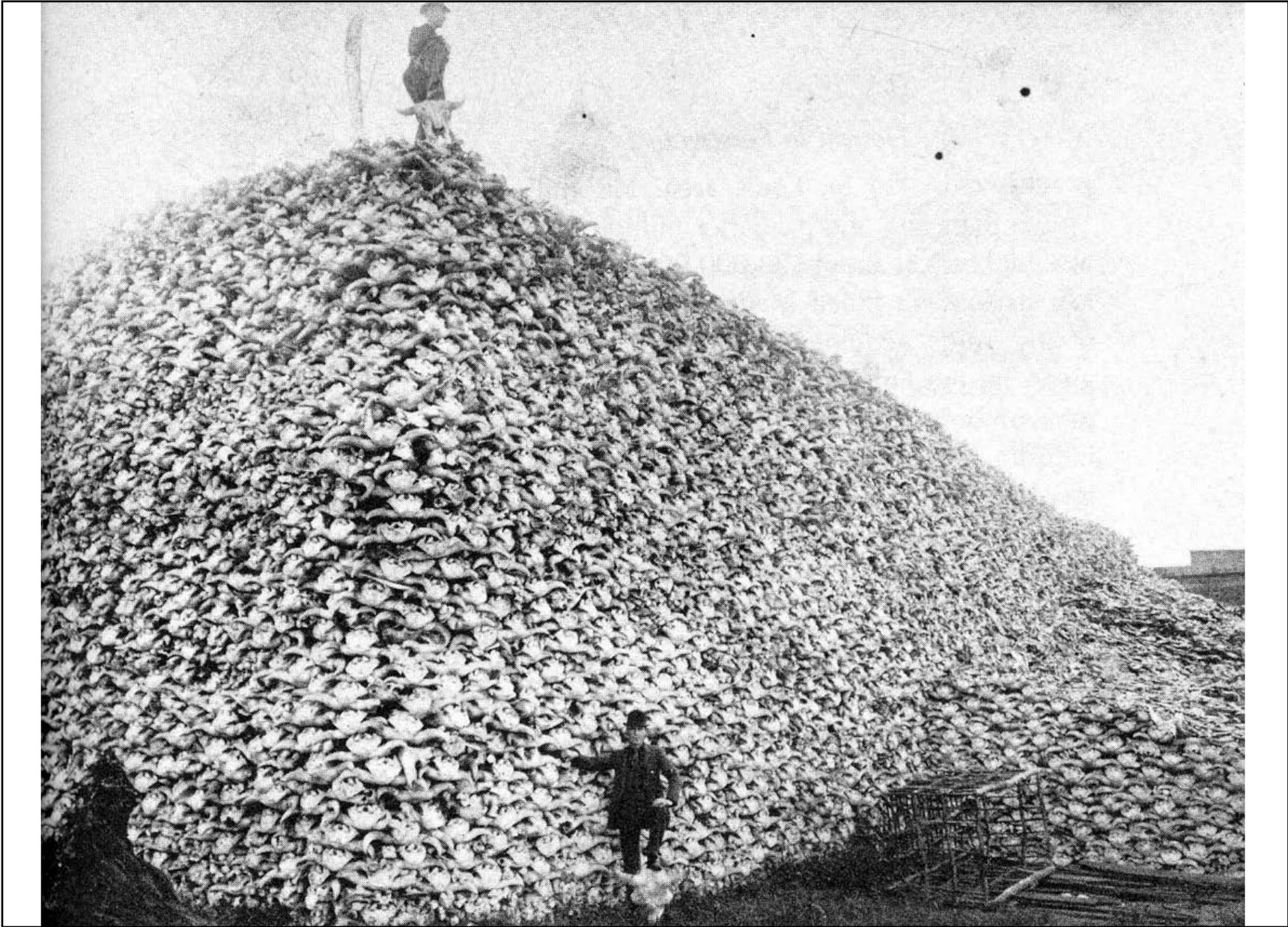


Figure 1.3.2-3. Michigan Carbon Works Buffalo Bone Stockpile, 1895



Source: Hyde 1980

Figure 1.3.2-4. Area Industrialization, 1940

process begins with the pumping of water down a well located about 1,200 feet below ground. The salt is then turned into brine by the water and is flushed out of the ground by the force of the water, resulting in a series of underground caverns. The brine that is gathered is then processed to extract desired chemicals, most commonly bromine (then used as a pharmaceutical) and bleach powder (calcium hypochlorite).

One such company that located to the DRIC study area to take advantage of the underground salt beds was the Solvay Process Company. Originally based in Syracuse, New York, the company bought the land area encompassing the former Detroit International Exposition grounds (approximately 67 acres), in 1894 (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:9-10). The vast underground salt mines located beneath the property provided brine which was essential to its chemical products. Reportedly, one of the largest underground salt mines in the entire U.S. was located there. Upon occupation, Solvay immediately began grading the ground, constructing buildings, and developing the salt beds underlying Zug Island (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:9-10).

The company soon became the largest industry in the DRIC study area, and proved to be a major player in the growth and development of the community, erecting light poles, paving streets, constructing sewers, and providing a horse-drawn four-wheeled fire truck. The company also opened a hospital to care for workers of Solvay, the Carbon Works, the Michigan Malleable Iron Works, and the Great Lakes Shipbuilding Plant (BHC 2006). Solvay became the largest employer of immigrants in Delray in the early 1900s (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:5). No buildings representing Solvay's occupancy remain extant.

Shortly before the dawn of the twentieth century, salt mining began in Detroit. Numerous companies tapped into the prospect of accessing deep salt veins located beneath southwestern Detroit. Operations began in 1896, and for more than 100 years, hundreds of Detroiters made their living by "...mining the sparkling rock" (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:168). The Detroit mine used the room-and-pillar method of removing salt from the ground. In this method, shafts were sunk into the ground and miners broke up the rock salt with drills after detonation engineers had blasted a section. Each blast brought down 800 to 900 tons of rock salt. The miners then removed chunks of salt, creating huge rooms separated by pillars of salt. This method required that about half of the salt be left behind as pillars for support (Zacharias 2004; Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:168). By 1983, slow sales, plummeting profits and cut-rate competition from Canadian mines forced the closure of the salt mine; it reopened twice briefly for tours. In 1985, Crystal Mines bought the mine for \$2.5 million and sought to turn it into a massive toxic waste storage facility (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:168). The mines recently opened under the auspices of the Detroit Salt Company (Zacharias 2004).

The early 1900s marked the beginning of the most productive period of the industrial era in the DRIC study area. At that time, the area had begun to figure as a center of the region's iron, chemical and brine well industries. In addition to the ammonia-soda products of the Solvay plant, other brine and sodium products became available with the opening of the Delray Salt Company works in 1901 (Zacharias 2004). During the same period the Michigan Carbon Works was absorbed as a component of the American Agricultural Company, with Detroit Sulphite Fiber transitioning into the Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company. After having absorbed Anchor Manufacturing in 1898, the Michigan Malleable Iron Company figured as an important area employer, contributing to the establishment of the Hanna Iron Furnace Company (Detroit Iron and Steel) on Zug Island and the

Great Lakes Engineering Company (ship building) in River Rouge. The Michigan Malleable Iron Company, as with much of Detroit's ferric metal industry, was a McMillan family enterprise, with the senator's son, William C. McMillan, serving as president.

Farther to the east, on the up-river side of Fort Wayne, the Detroit and Lake Superior Copper Company (the former Waterbury and Detroit Copper Company) expanded its operations in 1880 (Farmer 1890:817). In 1906, the Detroit Copper and Brass Rolling Mill Company erected the present brick Georgian Revival office building and attached factory (listed on the State Register of Historic Sites [SRHS] in 1979). Anaconda Copper and Brass purchased Detroit Copper in 1927. Much of the company's original building stock has been demolished, but the office building at 174 Clark Street, which served as a grocery for some time, and portions of the factory along South McKinstry still stand. The complex now houses offices for the city of Detroit (DHDC 2007a).

In combination with the nearby Detroit and Lake Superior Works, and number of satellite parts plants, the neighborhood upriver from Fort Wayne had transitioned into an important copper and brass manufacturing center by the close of the nineteenth century. Over the succeeding years the Detroit and Lake Superior properties were acquired by the Michigan Copper and Brass Company (in 1906), followed in 1928, by Republic Brass and, in 1936, by Revere Copper and Brass.

With a railroad and riverfront location, the production of brass steam fittings figured as an early article of local manufacture. In 1896 William McRae, a resident of Wallaceburg, Ontario, opened one such factory with Dougald H. Roberts, along the railroad at 227-235 Campbell Avenue (Polk 1894:881; 1896:951). Earlier, in 1887, Roberts had developed and owned a patent on a water gauge for steam boilers (Canadian Patent 25929, February 7, 1887). A decade later, Roberts established the Roberts Brass Manufacturing Company at 1395-1407 West Fort Street where he produced "High-Grade Brass Goods for Steam, Water, and Gas." At about the same time he also held an interest in the newly established Roberts Tube Works, located at 868 Military Avenue (Polk 1911:1816, 1818). In 1911, the President of the Detroit Copper and Brass Rolling Mills, Louis, H. Jones, established the Diamond Manufacturing Company on Summit Avenue. Its product line included a wide range of copper and brass specialties and automobile parts (Polk 1911:933).

By 1915, copper and brass production was the city's fifth most valuable industry, equal to \$12 million annually. Copper and brass products were then stated as being "largely used in motor car manufacture" (Polk 1915:33). The point is squarely exemplified by the Diamond Manufacturing Company. Having moved to a new location on the southwest corner of Muster and Artillery Avenues, the plant was listed, in 1915, as a manufacturer solely of "auto parts" (Polk 1913:802, 2323; 1915:2873).

Automotive production in Detroit might reasonably be stated as having begun with the Anderson Electric Car in 1895, followed by the 1899 establishment of the Oldsmobile plant on the city's east side. Although the number of units produced during this initial period was minimal, their potential did not go unrecognized. In the debate over public transportation that dominated city politics during the 1890s, Mayor William C. Maybury cautioned restraint and a wait-and-see-attitude in his address to the Detroit Common Council. The insight was uncanny:

Before we pass from this all-important subject, let me call attention, merely as a matter of precaution, to the fast developing automobile, which is bound to be a feature of the century on which we are about to enter. It is an invention not distant, but at our doors, and before either investing in street railways built by others, or before running hastily into building ourselves, the place of this most convenient,

cheap and swift-running conveyance, must be given careful-yes, serious consideration. If all that is claimed for is obtained, even moderately, it will extend and revolutionize the existing modes of transit in cities, and will render apparently valueless, equipment that to-day seems to have a permanent and unchangeable value [Maybury 1900:9].

Oldsmobile production in 1900 was calculated at no more than 400 vehicles. By 1901, the figure ballooned to 4,000 (Burton 1930:1359). Over the next several years the success of Detroit's newly established Cadillac (1901), Packard (1903), Ford (1903), and Lozier (1904) automobile companies proved the accuracy of Maybury's observations. In 1905 the competing Detroit-based firms held their first jointly sponsored auto show, as an open-air affair in Riverside Park at the foot of Morrell Avenue (Burton 1930:1379). Between 1904 and 1917, the number of Detroit workers employed in the automobile and parts industries grew from 2,034 to 136,576. Its contribution to the City's overall industrial product during this period rose from approximately "one-twentieth" to "about one-half" (Burton 1930:1361, 1632). In 1904, manufacturers throughout the United States produced a total of about 25,000 automobiles worth about \$28.5 million. It was estimated at that time that roughly half of this product had been built "in or about the city of Detroit" (Pulitzer 1905:552). In 1917 Detroit manufacturers produced one million automobiles valued at about \$880 million (Burton 1930:1362).

Automotive plant development in the project vicinity began in 1909 with the establishment of the Everett, Metzger, Flanders (E.M.F) Company and the Page-Detroit Motor Car factories along West Fort Street, between Scotten and Ferdinand. The year 1911 witnessed the establishment of the Commercial Motor Car plant farther to the west, between Green and Solvay, and the acquisition of the E.M.F. properties by the Studebaker Corporation (Base 1970; Burton 1930:1379). All of these factories took advantage of sidings located along the Wabash Railroad. The E.M.F. and Page-Detroit plants were additionally positioned immediately adjacent to the Detroit Copper and Brass Rolling Mills, with the Commercial plant occupying a site near the Michigan Malleable Iron Works in Delray. All took advantage of an existing industrial infrastructure that included a force of trained factory workers.

While the total value of Wayne County industrial products was calculated at \$63,163,499 in 1894, ten years later Detroit's industrial production was individually calculated at \$128,761,658. Its position among United States manufacturing cities had shifted from sixteenth place in 1899 to fourth place as of 1910. Over the next seven years, the number of city inhabitants employed in industry grew from 113,000 to 284,000. During the one-year period from 1920 to 1921 the figure reportedly further increased from 320,000 to 385,000 (Catlin 1926:650; Polk 1921:31, 34). The fiscal growth of area industry during the second decade of the twentieth century was tremendous. From 1915 to 1916, the value of Detroit's industrial products rose from \$600 million to \$900 million. At the same time, the city's population more than doubled, standing at 993,678 as of 1920. The growth witnessed during this decade was credited as being a direct result of the outbreak of World War I. Although the United States did not enter the conflict until 1917, its impact on the city's economy was early and decisive.

Burton (1930:1384) later estimated the value of Detroit war contracts, in 1917 and 1918, in the range of \$900 million. Production included the Liberty aircraft engine manufactured by a number of Detroit firms led by Packard, Ford, Lincoln, and Cadillac. The American Car and Foundry Company, whose holdings included a new rolling mill at the site of the Baugh Steam Forge, produced an array of cannon shells, gun caissons, and limbers. Great Lakes Engineering, in River Rouge, launched 61 ocean-going cargo ships under government contract during a 6-month period in 1918. The future site of the Fisher Body-Fleetwood Complex, on West Fort Street and West End Avenue,

was developed as a government-owned airplane production plant. Originally built to manufacture the large Italian-designed Caproni bomber, it also produced J-1 trainers and the British DeHaviland fighter. By November 1918, the firm displayed its one thousandth fighter for public inspection at the Liberty Forum on Cadillac Square (Hyde 1980:37; Burton 1930:1383). The development of the Ford Motor Company's Rouge River Complex had received a boost from a contract for the construction of 112 Eagle Boats (submarine chasers). As of 1919, while the bulk of Ford Workers (41,489) were still employed at the Highland Park plant, the number at the Rouge had grown to nearly 17,000. Another 4,013 were employed at the Dearborn Tractor plant (Burton 1930:1373, 1384).

Farther to the east along the Detroit River, the Studebaker Corporation, in association with the Timken Detroit Axle Company, had further expanded their holdings towards the riverfront. Studebaker was one of the Allies' largest suppliers of gun carriages, ammunition caissons, and harnesses. In 1917 the Diamond Manufacturing Company building, at the southwest corner of Muster and Artillery (Livernois), was occupied by the International Metal Stamping Company and the Ternstedt Manufacturing Company (Polk 1917:1809). The association continued through 1919, after which the entire facility was occupied by Ternstedt. Originally listed as an auto parts manufacturer, by 1921 its product line included "Closed Body Hardware" (Polk 1921).

Although technically not an integral component of the Fisher Body Corporation at the time, Ternstedt's corporate officers included L. W. Fisher and William A. Fisher. The latter also served as vice president of Hinkley Motors Corporation, which produced "Auto Truck, Tractor and Aeroplane Motors" at a West Fort and Twenty-third Street location (Polk 1918:962). The president of Ternstedt, John T. Allmand, had earlier served as vice president of Fisher Body (Polk 1912:970; 1917:1809; 1918:1702). Both William A. Fisher and John T. Allmand were listed with Fisher Body in 1925. William A. was, at that time, president of the firm. L. W. Fisher evades easy identification in city directories of the period; however, Lawrence P. Fisher, a manager at Fisher Body in 1917, may be the person in question. In 1925 he became president of Cadillac Motor Car Company and a vice president of General Motors Corporation (Polk 1917:867; 1925:912). Cadillac became a southwest Detroit area fixture with the 1921 completion of its new plant at 2860 Clark Avenue (Demeter 2006:22-23).

As the role of Cadillac was expanding in southwest Detroit, its former head of production, Wilfred C. Leland, served as vice president of Atlas Foundry. Located at 131 South Artillery (Livernois) Avenue, the foundry had early figured as a manufacturer of grey iron castings and automobile cylinders (Polk 1911:453; 1931:261). Another individual involved in the iron casting industry was Michigan Governor Alexander J. Groesbeck, who served as president of the Steward Foundry Company on Cavalry Avenue (Polk 1924:1703).

Other developments occurring along the riverfront at this time included the reconstruction of Detroit Edison's Delray powerhouse and substation facilities located along the downriver side of Fort Wayne. The original facility had been built in 1904, and it was subsequently replaced in 1908 only to be demolished and replaced once again in 1929 (Burton 1930; Hyde 1980:39). On the upriver side of the fort, at the foot of Morrell and Junction Avenues, the grounds of Riverside Park were similarly included in the Detroit Public Lighting Commission's Mistersky Power Station. The City had, since 1895, been equipped to furnish the electrical needs of public buildings and street lighting out of its Atwater Street generating plant. This facility remained in operation until June 1927 when it was replaced with the Mistersky Plant. This transition boosted city electrical output from a maximum of 7,350 kW to 75,000 kW. The transition was prompted by the public take-over of the privately owned

Detroit United Railway. It was estimated that the cost of running this service, based on existing Detroit Edison rates, would have required an additional annual expenditure of \$607,500 (City of Detroit 1922:353; 1930:287).

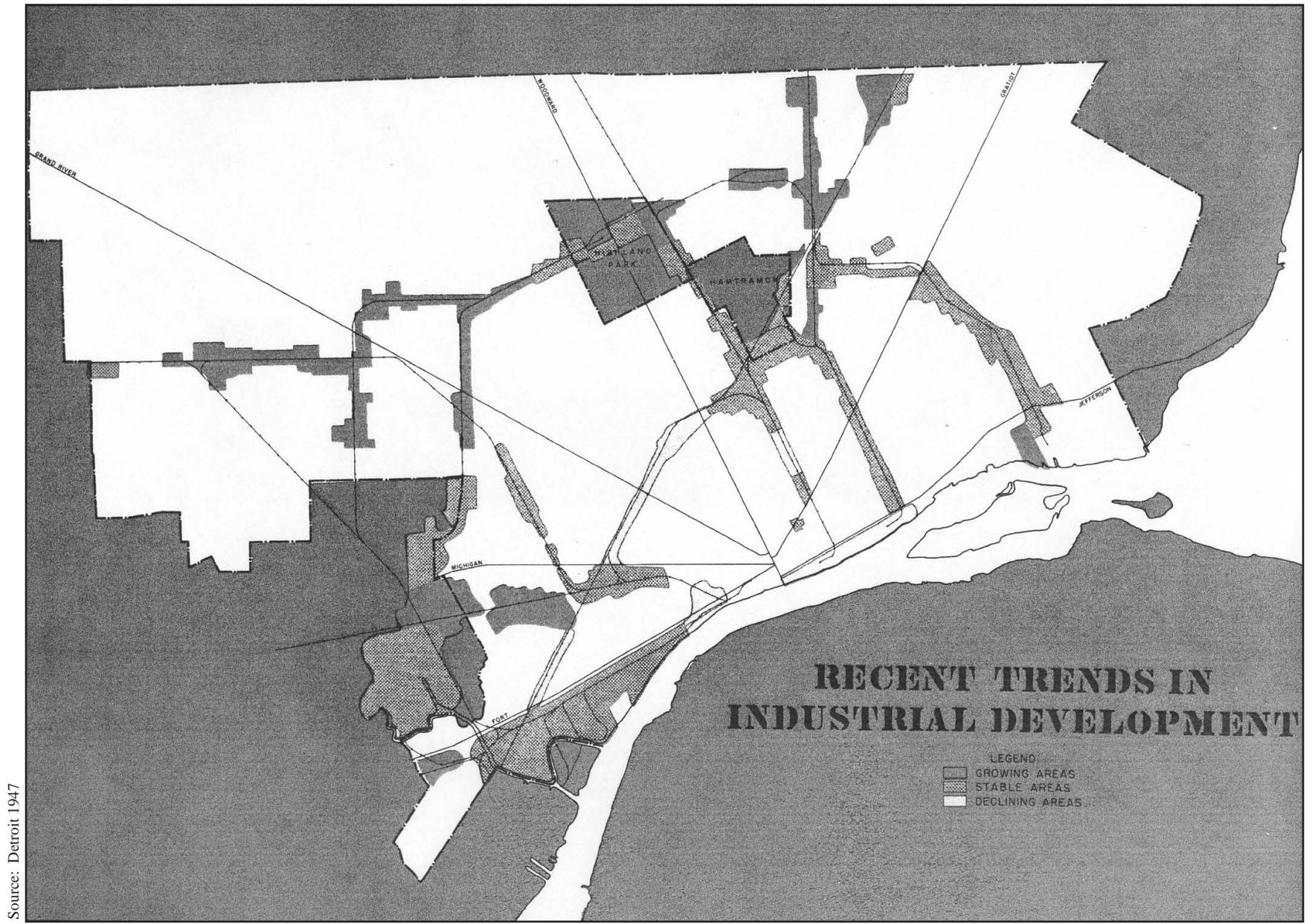
Both the Edison and Public Lighting Commission's power plants were coal fueled, as was virtually all industry of the period. Local steel and iron production had depended on fuels such as wood charcoal and coke. Retort ovens converting coal to coke, coupled with the manufacture of other by-products such as ammonia (ammonium sulphate), coal gas, and light oil, were first established in Solvay's Delray plant in about 1900. Coal was delivered by ship during the summer and by train during the winter. As of 1930, the six oven blocks of the facility were capable of manufacturing 3,000 tons of coke per day. Although early production was far below this level, the use of coke as the primary fuel in iron manufacturing contributed directly to the 1902 creation of the Detroit Iron and Steel Company's works on Zug Island (Burton 1930:721, 1327; Colby et al. 1916:155).

While the construction of blast furnaces on the Rouge River was ongoing in November 1916 by the Ford Motor Company, the effort was almost immediately curtailed due to legal arguments over funding issues among the Ford partners (Burton 1930:1369). By the following year, company activities were focused on the erection of the Eagle Boat plant and related war production. Subsequent deepening and widening of the Rouge River in 1919 was, however, followed by the construction of the multi-structure Dearborn Iron Foundry in 1920/21. Ford's 1920 acquisition of the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton Railroad soon provided direct access to Ford-owned coal fields in Kentucky and West Virginia. The 240 coke ovens at the Rouge plant produced an average of 3,300 tons of coke per day along with 50 million cubic feet of gas, 40,000 gallons of tar, 110,000 pounds of ammonium sulphate, and 12,000 gallons of light oil.

By 1929 both Ford and other Detroit automobile companies were identified as the nation's largest consumers of steel, amounting to over 7 million tons, or approximately 18 percent of the total yearly production of the United States (Burton 1930:715, 1392). That same year witnessed the initiation of work on Great Lakes Steel Corporation's \$25 million complex in Ecorse. In December 1929, the Zug Island-based Detroit Iron and Steel Company was also merged with Great Lakes Steel. By the following year the island contained four blast furnaces, coke ovens, and a sintering plant. The environmental setting of the lower Rouge River, the Detroit's lower west side, was completely altered during this period (Figure 1.3.2-4).

While the Great Depression had an overall cooling effect on area growth, the advent of World War II placed a new emphasis on industrial expansion, which continued throughout most of the succeeding Cold War period. By 1947, in recognition of an already ongoing reality, the Detroit Plan Commission proposed the inclusion of the entirety of the area lying between West Fort Street and the Detroit River within a vast industrially zoned district spread along the complicated network of railroads that criss-crossed the city (Figure 1.3.2-5). By the 1960s the location figured as the northerly hinge-point of a downriver industrial corridor that extended as far south as Trenton (Figure 1.3.2-6).

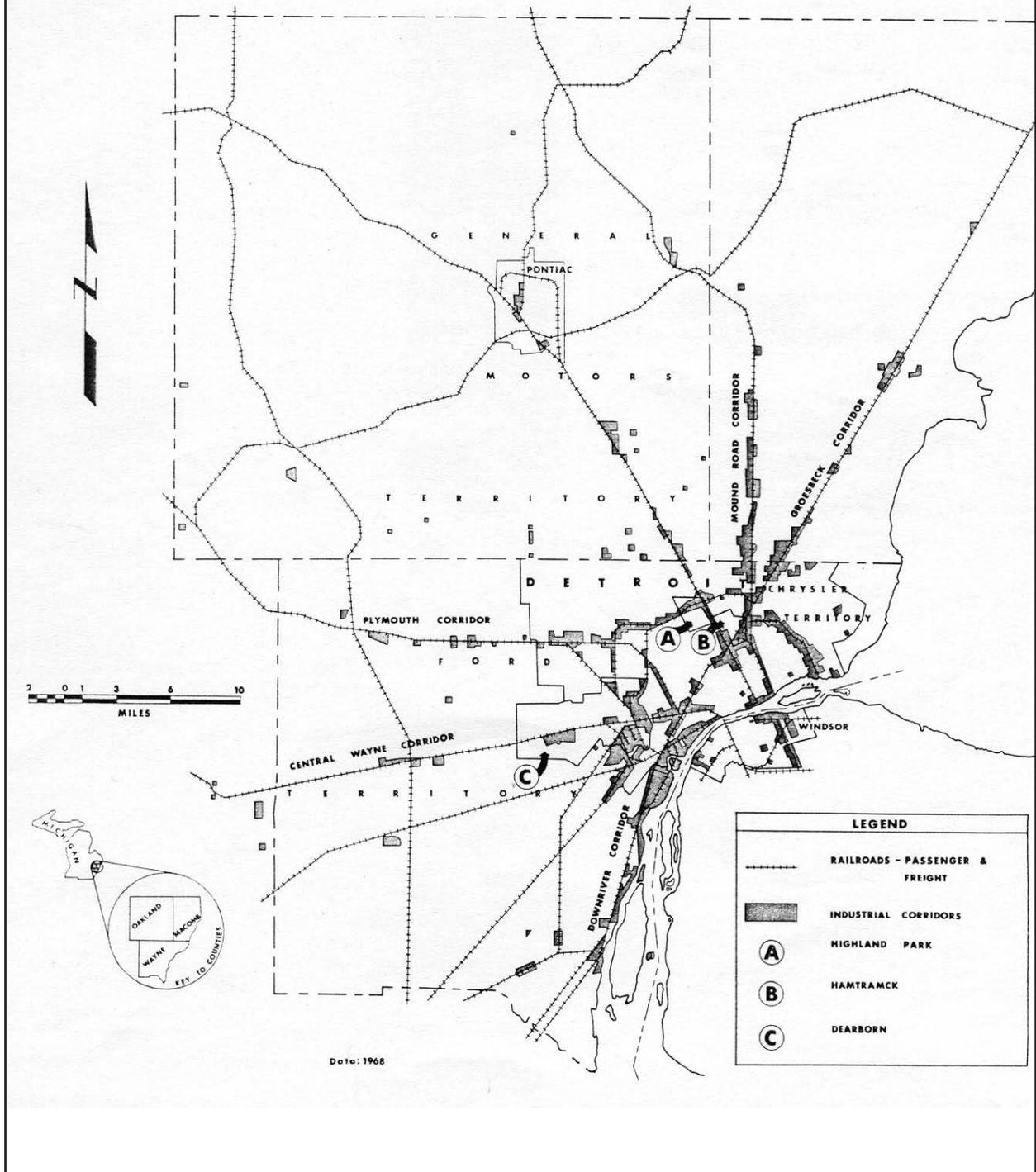
While many industries in the DRIC study area have either closed or relocated, the area remains one of the largest industrial areas in the city of Detroit. The designation of the area as a federal Empowerment Zone and a state Renaissance Zone has drawn a number of industries to the area, eager for the tax breaks such a designation offers, as well as the proximity to the Ambassador Bridge, and shipping by rail, water, and freeways (Lowry 2004).



Source: Detroit 1947

Figure 1.3.2-5. Detroit Industrial Zones, 1947

# INDUSTRIAL CORRIDORS OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT



Source: Sinclair 1970

Figure 1.3.2-6. Detroit Region Industrial Corridors, 1968

### 1.3.3 Social History and Lifeways

The City of Detroit as we know today was formed in large part by annexing to its core a number of villages into a sort of supercity near the turn of the century. Yet a number of these villages and townships retained their character and identity as distinct neighborhoods long after being incorporated into Detroit. One of these villages is Delray, located on the southwest border of the city. The hand of European settlement was first felt in what would become the Delray community in 1836 when the area was platted and recorded as Belgrade (Catlin 1926:351; Romig 1986:152). The area was replatted twice in the following years, once in 1851 and again in 1856, although this last replat was not recorded for four more years. Finally in 1897, having boasted its own post office since 1870, the village was incorporated (Romig 1986:152).

Although transportation corridors and river margin industrialization were pivotal to area growth, prior to its incorporation into the city of Detroit, Springwells Township remained a predominantly farming district through the turn of the century. The pattern of agricultural land use was dominated by small tract farms (see e.g., Figure 1.2.2-1). In 1876, township farms were described as, "Well-tilled and for the most part devoted to market gardening, dairy purposes, etc., and, on account of their proximity to the city, are exceedingly valuable. Any one journeying in this direction...will be struck with the village-like aspect of the whole township" (Belden 1876:69).

As the population in the DRIC study area grew, so did the need for housing. Early settlement was in the villages, and later surrounding the burgeoning industrial growth of the region. Key to the early settlement was their proximity to work, so transportation was often a vital factor in selecting a residence. The introduction of horse-drawn street cars in August 1863 had a dramatic impact on housing within the city and adjacent townships. As of November 1863, the Grand Trunk Junction was serviced by a 3.25-mile line extending down Michigan Avenue to the intersection of Jefferson and Woodward Avenues. Three years later, in 1866, the 12.5-mile-long Fort Wayne and Elmwood line was completed to Fort Wayne, with its West Side stables and car shops located on Clark Avenue. In 1873, the 3-mile-long Congress and Baker Street line was established, running from Randolph Street to Twenty-fourth Street. By 1880, the Fort Wayne and Elmwood line extended its routing along West Jefferson to Delray on the Rouge River. A spur line along Fort Street was added in 1886 running to Woodmere Cemetery. At about the same time, the Baker Street line was opened to Dragoon Avenue, where an extensive brick car shed was erected on the site of Boyer Park (Farmer 1890:932). The population serviced by this transit network on the city's west side was extensive. As of 1880, Detroit's Ninth and Twelfth wards, to the west of Eighth Street, were respectively enumerated at 16,296 and 7,102 inhabitants, and Springwells Township population stood at 7,960 (Walker and Seaton 1883:221).

The 1876 atlas of Springwells Township points to the most intensively developed zones adjacent to portions of Michigan Avenue, the riverfront, the railroad junction, and the area east of Junction Avenue. Between 1860 and 1870, census counts show that township population grew from 1,316 to 3,488. During the same period, Detroit's West Side Ninth Ward, between Eighth and Twenty-fifth Streets, grew from 3,521 to 11,734 inhabitants. In 1870, the number of dwellings in Springwells Township stood at 627. The Ninth Ward count stood at 2,404 (Walker 1872:176; *Detroit Tribune* 1872:71). Between 1860 and 1870 the number of individually owned Springwells Township farms increased from 69 to 150. Within the six surrounding townships of Detroit's downriver area, the number of farms witnessed an overall increase of some 147 percent, from 484 to 1,195 tracts. Although not included as a part of this count, as late as 1884, upwards of 38 working farms continued to exist within the limits of the City of Detroit (Conant 1886:154-156). This growth in the number of Wayne County farms was fostered by increased consumer demand resulting from area urbanization.

The growth of industry also fostered the expansion of public services such as water and sewer lines, which, in turn, stimulated neighborhood growth. By the close of the Civil War, industrial production became a year-round activity, and for the wage earner, reliable employment offered a greater potential to accumulate wealth. It also allowed for long-range planning and investment, not possible when families had to fall back on savings during seasonally determined economic slack periods. The advent of year-round employment also furnished residential developers with a large pool of potential buyers. The establishment of the Michigan Car Works, for example, had an immediate impact on area land use as the demand for worker housing increased. An item offered in the May 23, 1873, issue of the *Detroit Free Press* noted that, "Cottages are springing up in every direction, and it is estimated that at least one thousand cottage houses will be built by fall" (BHC 2006).

Many of the new structures built during this period were low cost, one-story frame dwellings first introduced in 1867 by the immigrant English carpenter John Gibson (*Detroit Advertiser and Tribune* 1867:1). As with other urban centers in the nation's Midwest, the older sections of Detroit offered limited older housing suitable for middle income families. Rather than investing in the construction of multi-story tenements, Detroit capitalists aimed at development of the low cost lands around the periphery of the city. The subdivision and sale of the surrounding farmlands for middle income housing was buoyed, as stated above, by such factors as local industrialization, low land cost, and the introduction of public transportation systems that allowed residents ready access between home and the workplace. Of equal importance was the demand for new housing on the part of a socially mobile population with adequate income to handle the cost of down payment, purchase, and subsequent mortgage schedules.

During the 1850s, house lot purchases in new city subdivisions were often sold on a 10-year mortgage with a \$10.00 down payment. A decade later, in 1867, ready-made tract housing sold on a land contract basis was first introduced. Consisting of one-story cottages, averaging some 20 ft by 40 ft, these structures sold from between \$1,000 to \$4,000. Although the cash down payment was set at \$100, the monthly payment was often calculated to match the ability of the purchaser, who received a warranty deed upon fulfillment of the contract.

Both Silas Farmer (1890:4) and John Lodge (1949:34) credited the use of land contracts as chiefly responsible for Detroit's dynamic housing growth during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The simple single-family cottages that dominated large portions of the city's built environment during this period had the advantages of low cost and easy maintenance. Essentially designed as worker homes, many original purchasers subsequently let them out for rental income. This transition in use became quite noticeable during the late 1880s and 1890s as the need for unskilled labor multiplied with continued industrial expansion. As that time the increased demand for housing, coupled with the shrinking pool of inexpensive building sites, led to the more widespread development of two-story flats and the introduction, in 1892, of multi-family apartment units (Davies n.d.:51). During the same period, the construction of multiple dwellings on single lots became common in old neighborhoods to accommodate an ever growing population.

The combination of low-cost cottage housing and the implementation of a marketing strategy based on land contract sales had, by 1890, placed Detroit in a truly unique position in terms of urban working-class home ownership patterns. Census data for that year indicates that in cities with populations numbering over 100,000, Detroit ranked third (41.67 percent), behind Rochester, New York (43.98 percent), and Milwaukee, Wisconsin (42.13 percent), in the percentage of home-owning residents. More startling is the fact that upwards of 26 percent of the city's population owned without mortgages. This represented the highest rate of unencumbered urban home ownership in the nation

(Holmes and Lord 1896:32). A state survey undertaken by the Michigan Bureau of Labor in 1892 reported that approximately one-half of the city's married working men owned their own homes, and roughly one-third actually owned without mortgages or other related debts (Glazer 1965:69).

Between 1900 and 1910, the annual number of building permits issued by the city jumped from 1,964 to 5,498, with the value of new construction rising from \$4,142,400 to \$17,415,950 (Leake 1912:323). Detroit's population during this decade grew from 285,704 to 465,766. The majority of Springwells Township residents, enumerated at 13,034 in 1900, were absorbed into Detroit's population after 1906. The city limits were, at that time, extended 16 blocks west from Livernois to the alley west of Lumbly Street. Another expansion into Springwells Township occurred in 1916 when the city annexed an additional tract extending to the alley west of Western Avenue. A small remnant of the township remained intact as the Village of Fordson until it was incorporated as a part of the City of Dearborn in 1929 (Hunt 1913:918; Truesdell 1942:512).

As of 1899, Detroit ranked sixteenth in a survey of United States manufacturing centers. The growth of the automobile industry over the next decade was extraordinary. By 1910, the city had risen to a fourth-place ranking. Over the next seven years, the number of city inhabitants employed in industry grew from 113,000 to 284,000. During the one-year period of 1920 to 1921 the figure increased from 320,000 to 385,000 (Catlin 1926:650; Polk 1921:31, 34). The expansion of area industrialization production during the second decade of the twentieth century was tremendous. During the one-year period from 1915 to 1916, the value of Detroit's industrial products rose from \$600 million to \$900 million (Glazer 1965:86). At the same time, city population more than doubled, standing at 993,678 as of 1920. The growth witnessed during this decade was credited as being a direct result of the outbreak of World War I. Although the United States did not enter the conflict until 1917, its impact on the city's economy was both immediate and decisive.

The open landscape of West Detroit and Springwells Township was additionally targeted by industry for yet another reason. The tremendous growth in residential neighborhood development witnessed during the second decade of the century had landlocked older plant sites, leading to a race for space along the city's urban fringe. Under the topic heading, "Development Hampered," a staff writer for the R.L. Polk publishing Company noted that the "...lack of segregated factory districts has created a condition where the factories and the railroads now find themselves unable to make the necessary extensions of trackage and warehouse space to take care of enormously increased business. And moreover, residence property values in many sections of the city have been seriously affected by the smoke and noise of factories" (Polk 1921:37).

As a result of this trend, land values in outlying areas reportedly increased by about 1,000 percent during the decade between 1910 and 1920. Residential housing that had sold for \$1,600.00 in the former year rose to as much as \$6,000.00 and \$8,000.00 in the latter (Polk 1921:650). The value of new investments in housing and factory development had, by 1921, prompted Detroit government to implement a series of zoning ordinances directed at preserving both components of its rapidly expanding tax based. The approach was not always ideal, as industry tended to draw residential growth out from the city center.

Statistics for housing development in the DRIC study area reveal that dwellings were built primarily between 1900 and 1929 (Truesdell 1943a:49, 51). The residents of the study area were largely industrial workers, living in houses flanking the factories they toiled in during the day. One long-term feature of the industrial growth that resulted from World War I production was the escalating level of the industrial worker's wage. In 1910, Detroit's 125,000 workers brought home some \$245,090 on a daily basis, or approximately \$1.96 per worker. By 1919 the daily average had risen

to \$5.30 per worker, and then increased to \$6.20 the following year (Leake 1912:225; Glazer 1965:94). This growth in earning potential was, however, offset to some degree by dramatic increases in the cost of living. Working class housing, for instance, increased in value from an average new home cost of \$3,000 in 1918, to between \$6,000 and \$8,000 in 1920 (Colby 1921:328).

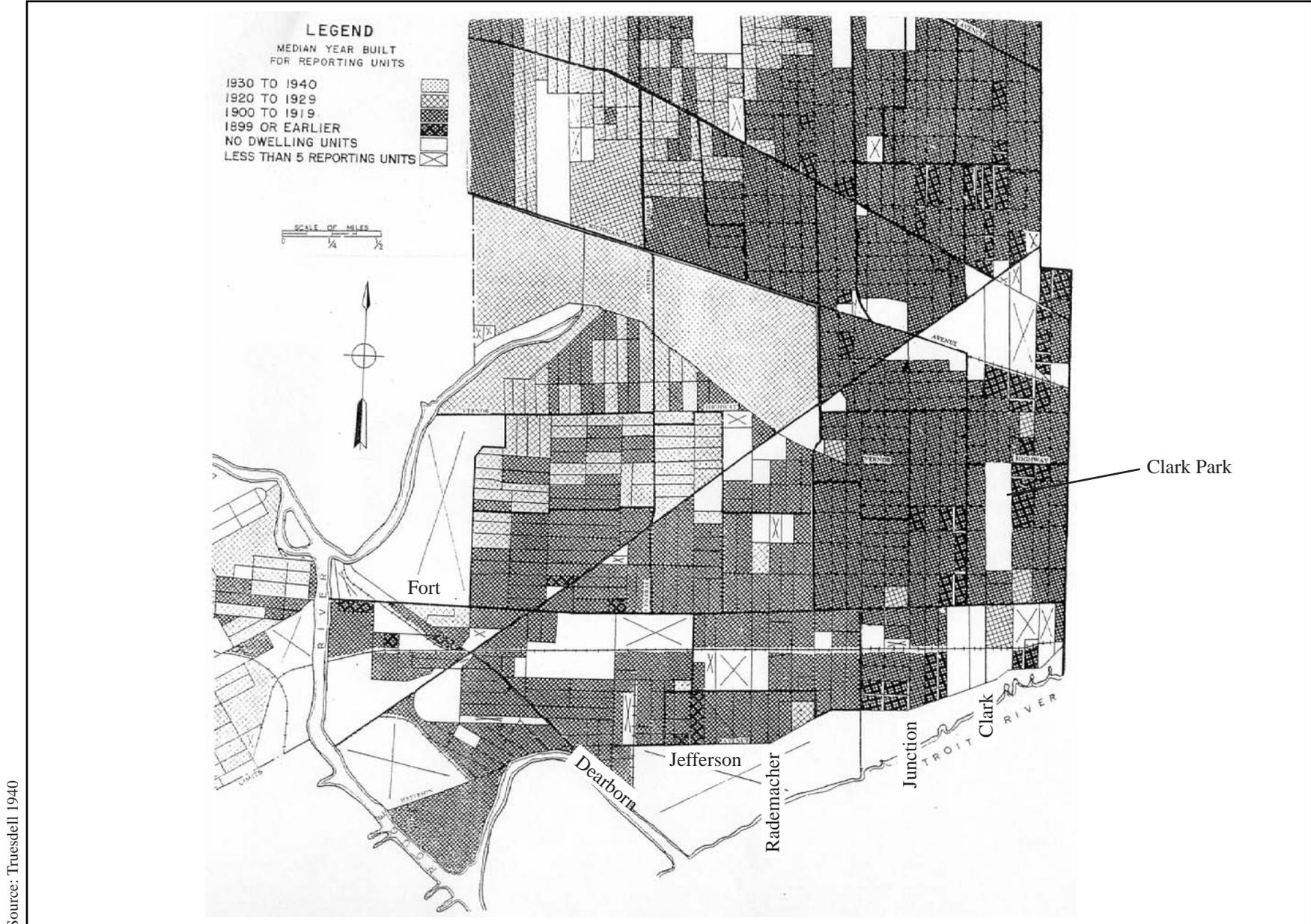
New neighborhood growth tended to spread out from the central city following factory development along railroad lines and the waterfront, and residential infilling of the spaces between factories created a dilemma. Neighborhood development witnessed during the second decade of the century had landlocked older industrial plant sites, leading to a race for space along the city's urban fringe. Under the heading "Development Hampered," a staff writer for the R. L. Polk Publishing Company noted that the "...lack of segregated factory districts has created a condition where the factories and the railroads now find themselves unable to make the necessary extensions of trackage and warehouse space to take care of enormously increased business. And moreover, residence property values in many sections of the city have been seriously affected by the smoke and noise of factories" (Polk 1921:37).

In the southwest Detroit area bounded by the Detroit and Rouge Rivers, West Fort Street, and Clark Avenue, the impact of this unplanned expansion was especially evident. Residential-industrial growth had occurred concurrently with little effort made at limiting spill-over from one category of land use into the other. Housing growth, as later determined through federal census block inventories, was primarily a by-product of this early period of industrialization with upwards of 85 percent of all dwellings having been built between 1900 and 1919 (Figure 1.3.3-1).

The early twentieth century saw people flock to southwest Detroit to work in the local industries or in auto-related businesses. The burgeoning auto companies even advertised for skilled trades in Europe's major cities. More immigrants settled in Detroit between 1900 and 1920 than in any other U.S. city, except New York and Chicago. Traditionally, the men arrived first and obtained a job at one of the local factories, settling into a house nearby. After saving enough money, families eventually joined them. Until their families could join them, some of the men lived in boarding houses with similar ethnic groups (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monreal 1975:5).

In the late 1920s the population expansion in Detroit had begun to fill the areas near the western border of the city. This was illustrated in part by the need for a new police station to replace the station at Scotten and Fairbanks Avenues. When the Scotten Precinct station was constructed in 1889, it was situated near the city limits; however, in the years following its construction, annexation and population growth resulted in the station being situated well east of the area it served (*Detroit News* 1929:44). So another station, designed by Gustave Mueller and constructed by the firm of Moore and Brown, was located on West Fort Street and Green Avenue, in the approximate center of its district (*Michigan Contractor and Builder* 1928:14). The new Fourth Precinct Police Station was dedicated on February 28, 1929, amid band music and supporters representing various civic organizations (*Detroit News* 1929:44). Considered to be a "most modern and complete police precinct station," the new facility was constructed at a cost of \$94,000, with an additional \$114,000 required to purchase the land (City of Detroit 1929:554). That station is still extant.

From its beginning, the residential community of Delray struggled to thrive as it was surrounded by heavy manufacturing and industrial plants producing everything from copper pots to trains. Many of the first factories were located along Jefferson Avenue. Nevertheless, Delray was a lively community of many ethnicities that formed enclaves in the community. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the DRIC study area was a community of German, Polish, Armenian, and Hungarian immigrants



Source: Truesdell 1940

Figure 1.3.3-1. Detroit Age Graded Housing, 1940

settling in the neighborhoods. Immigrants began buying the houses they lived in, as well as businesses along Jefferson Avenue (Scott 2001). Delray had a population of 5,000 in 1900, and 8,000 in 1905 (Lowry 2001; Polk 1905:561).

The immigrants generally did not mix with other groups, primarily due to language barriers, and many established their own churches, schools, shops, and social centers (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:5). These buildings established a social network for the different ethnic enclaves, offering them a place to meet for their amusements and to celebrate holidays and other special days in the Old Country manner. Many community centers also offered organized recreational and educational opportunities. For example, they often offered immigrants free English classes where they learned about American culture, as well as the scientific care of their home and children. Some of the local theaters often showed native films. And finally, once one had passed on, community members went to a specific ethnic undertaker and were buried in the nearby cemeteries (BHC 2006).

Even after it was annexed into Detroit, Delray maintained a close community feeling that remained well into the late twentieth century. At its height, one never had to leave Delray. It was a neighborhood, even if it reeked with odors from soapmaking, animal fat rendering, and waste plants. People lived, worked, ate, and shopped there (Lowry 2004). They worked at one of the many industries lining the Detroit River or at one of the auto and steel factories located nearby. They rented a house (until they saved enough money to purchase it), and either walked or took the streetcar to work. They shopped at the grocery stores on Jefferson Avenue, Dearborn Street, and West End Avenue, frequented the local theaters, bars and restaurants, and bakeries and meat markets providing native specialties. They went to church there, often helping to build the ethnic church where they could hear services in their native language. They sent their children to one of the many local schools (Scott 2001).

During the 1930s, Delray reached its population peak of 23,617. The Depression hit Delray hard, but most businesses were thriving, particularly along Jefferson Avenue. People came from other areas of Detroit to eat, drink, and listen to music; however, by the 1940s, many older ethnic groups began moving away, several thousand in fact, as the population of Delray for the 1940s dropped to 20,191 (Scott 2001). Those who could afford to, began moving downriver, with the majority settling in Lincoln Park. World War II accelerated the process of moving out. Other ethnic groups began moving in, particularly African-Americans, Hispanics, Puerto Ricans, and southern whites. These groups were attracted by jobs and inexpensive housing (Scott 2001).

By the 1950s, the population of Delray had dropped to 17,753. Concerns about crime, the quality of schools, and declining property values, combined with the attraction of jobs and cheap land, made the suburbs attractive throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The African-American community grew, and they tended to settle in the area bounded by West End Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, Livernois Street, and Fort Street. The substantial number of factory jobs that still remained in Delray attracted them; however, the population continued to dwindle, as children of the original immigrants to Delray moved downriver to suburbs like Taylor and Wyandotte. Factories began closing, and many jobs disappeared. To make matters worse, a 1955 City of Detroit Master Plan zoned Delray for the development of heavy industry, further accelerating the flight to the suburbs (Scott 2001).

With the coming of the freeways (I-75) and suburban growth, shifting job markets and social upheaval (Detroit riots of 1967), the population of Delray continued to decline during the 1960s. In just about 30 years, the population of Delray had dwindled from 23,617 people in the 1930s to just 13,581 people in the 1960s. More industrial zoning and factory development further isolated the population.

By the 1970s, only 9,797 people called Delray home. Census figures show that the largest ethnic group living in Delray were African-Americans (74.6%), followed by Hungarians (12%), Poles (4.9%), and Hispanics (4%) (Lowry 2004; Scott 2001).

It was during the 1970s and 1980s that the deterioration of the community and building fabric reached new heights in Delray. By then, most of the area's businesses had closed, as customers moved out of the neighborhoods; this also included Delray General Hospital, opened since 1904 (the field review found this building to be demolished). The Detroit Water Board development of the 1970s practically wiped out the Polish community, which was forced to relocate. The development later became one of the largest wastewater disposal and treatment plants in the country (Scott 2001).

The fight to save the community lingers on. In 1998, the City of Detroit designated the area as a Renaissance Zone to encourage industrial development (Dixon 1998:B1), but the neighborhood continued to decline. Most of the ethnic restaurants and markets had by that time closed their Delray locations, and the population continued to drop, with more than 8,000 residents in 1980 and 5,588 in 1990. In 2001, the population of Delray was 1900 (Scott 2001).

There is little to even hint at the long history of Delray as a vital area that generations of people knew and loved as home (Lowry 2004). Like many other communities in the Rust Belt, it has been hit hard by factory closings, the decline of manufacturing, and freeway construction (Scott 2001). Unemployment and poverty are major challenges confronting residents today (Scott 2001).

The study area endures as a city neighborhood in the midst of big industry (Scott 2001). The Detroit City Planning Department, until recently, continued to fully industrialize the area, and in fact, moved three cement silos to Delray from their current place on the riverfront just east of downtown. An expansion of a composting center on Jefferson Avenue has also been approved. It is across from the Wastewater Treatment Plant and will accept and recycle yard wastes. The designation of the area as a federal Empowerment Zone and a state Renaissance Zone has drawn a number of industries to the area, attracted by tax breaks and proximity to shipping by rail, water, and freeways, and the Ambassador Bridge (City of Detroit Finance Department 2007). Despite all this, thousands still continue to live in the area and have managed to successfully fight the introduction of some industries, such as incinerators, over the years.

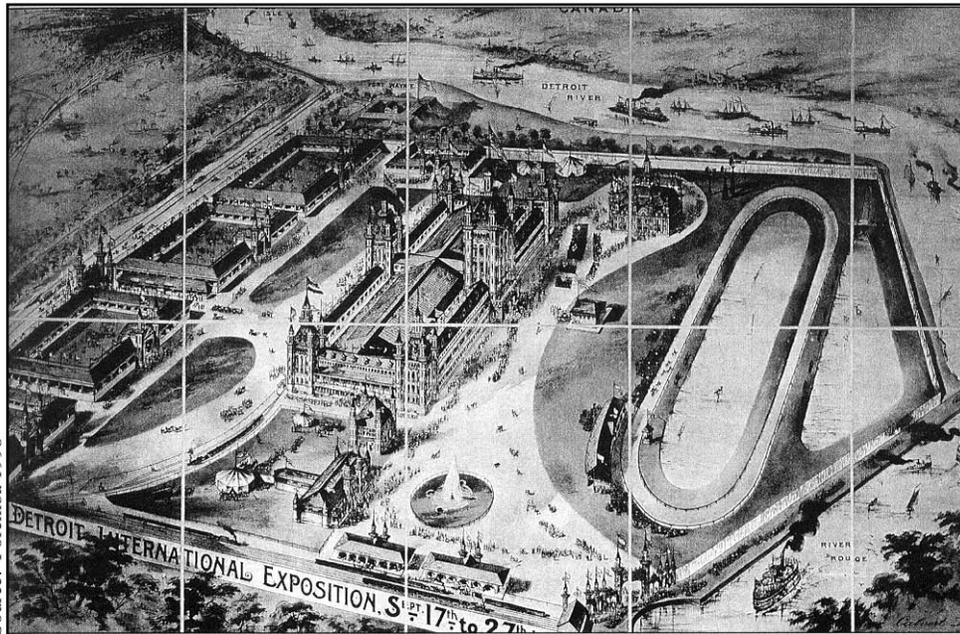
Although life was sometimes difficult for the residents of the DRIC study area, there were plenty of opportunities for fun and relaxation. Located just west of Fort Wayne, the Detroit International Exposition was situated on a 14-acre parcel of land along the banks of the Detroit River (Poremba 1998:85) (Figures 1.3.3-2 and 1.3.3-3). First held September 17 - 27, 1889, the annual event was a combination agricultural and industrial fair, as well as an exposition. The fair earned the right to the moniker of "International" with its placement of the main boat landing at the fairgrounds, docking passenger ferries daily from Detroit, Port Huron, and Canada (Poremba 1998:82). In addition to the river access to the grounds, there was an extensive ground network of transportation to the fairgrounds, including streetcar, electric railways and railroad lines.

The main pavilion at the fairgrounds was most certainly the largest building in the entire area, with exhibit space totaling over 200,000 square feet, and it was touted as the largest exhibit building in the world (Poremba 1998:83) (Figure 1.3.3-3). Designed by Louis Kamper, the building combined Gothic and Romanesque features inspired by the Houses of Parliament in London (Ferry 1968:142). The structure was 500 feet long and boasted towers at each corner as well as in the center of the façade. The central tower rose to 200 feet and included 4.5 acres of glass in its walls (Poremba 1998:83). Additional buildings at the 70-acre site included horse and cattle barns, swine and sheep



Source: Poremba 1998

Figure 1.3.3-2. International Exposition, 1889



Source: Poremba 1998

Figure 1.3.3-3. International Exposition, 1889

sheds, a race track, a restaurant, and an art gallery (Ferry 1968:143). The fair featured exhibits, canoe rides, music, and picnics. Fairgoers flocked to the area by interurban, train, horse-drawn wagon, and boat (Lowry 2004). At its height, the fair attracted 50,000 visitors a day (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:4, 9). In 1893, it was replaced by the Solvay Process Company (DPL 1953:169; Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:4, 9).

Although the buildings of the Detroit International Exposition disappeared before the end of the nineteenth century, there were still plenty of opportunities for the area residents to enjoy themselves. Social clubs, particularly those associated with the different ethnic groups, were common. The Magyar Haz (Hungarian House), which featured a large ballroom, bar and kitchen, was open nights and weekends for members, often holding dinners, programs, and dances. The building was also the location of the annual *Szureti Mulatsag* (Grape Festival), held behind the club. The festival was complete with Hungarian music, dancing, and wines (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:14). The use of sprits was so integral to many of the Hungarian celebrations, that even Prohibition did not end the party. During Prohibition, the Detroit and Rouge Rivers were used as delivery routes for rum-runners who delivered whiskey from Canada in false bottomed boats for consumption in Detroit's blind pigs<sup>1-2</sup> (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:4, 5). One of these locations is believed to have been situated on the south side of Jefferson, between Dearborn Street and former Pulaski Street (no longer evident). Several families occupied houseboats here (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:12).

While the chance to have a party was always welcomed by the residents of the DRIC study area, service clubs and fraternal organizations also have been prevalent in the area. Today these clubs often take the form of Parent-Teacher organizations, but there are still signs of organizations such as the Masonic Lodge. This stately brick and stone Findlater Masonic Temple remains on Lafayette Boulevard just east of Waterman Street. Constructed by the Free and Accepted Masons (i.e., the Masons), the building was completed in 1926 (Sanborn Map Company 1950 [1923]). The area Findlater Chapter of the Masons called the Temple home until around 1941, when the building became the Armenian Community Center (Sanborn Map Company 1950 [1923]). It later housed the G.I. Forum, a war veterans group (Historic Designation Advisory Board [HDAB] 2001:8). Continuing its service as a meeting place, the building is presently named the Salon El Bosque.

## **Religion**

Initially, religious services in the study area were held in make-shift structures, but soon the community began to construct houses of worship to meet their religious needs. The period between 1880 and 1940 saw a variety of historical styles utilized for religious architecture. Many architects had extensive academic training, and the stylistic revivals were frequently more historically accurate than in the preceding decades. These historical revivals provided a counterpoint to the modernism that was also to develop during this period (Howe 2003:247).

Many houses of worship in Delray were built by specific ethnic groups who sought to maintain their cultural identity through the symbolism of their traditional religious architecture. The design of their religious structures provided a link to their ancestral home, just as it did for the first European colonists in America. Religious architecture provided continuity in exile (Howe 2003:247). In addition to serving as the center for religious life, the houses of worship of the area filled a social

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<sup>1-2</sup>An establishment engaged in the illegal distribution or sale of liquor. The phrase blind pig (also, blind tiger) derives from the nineteenth-century practice of charging admission to view animal curiosities at saloons, at which time the saloonkeeper would serve complimentary alcoholic beverages, thereby circumventing laws that prohibited the sale of intoxicants during proscribed times (e.g., on Sundays) (i.e., blue laws).

aspect as well. Clubs met in the basements of these structures on Saturday nights for dancing and music. These revelries were not limited to the young and single; it was common for entire families, including young children, to join in the party.

The houses of worship in the DRIC study area represent the variety of religions and denominations that have been formed in the study area through the years. Among those identified are African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal, Evangelical, Lutheran, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian; one Jewish temple served the Hungarian Orthodox Jewish community in Delray. Although not all of these religions are represented today, and some new denominations have converted buildings to meet their needs, historically these houses of worship all existed to serve their faithful congregants. The following text presents brief histories of some of the larger structures and congregations within the DRIC study area.

#### African Methodist Episcopal (AME)

The influx of thousands of African-Americans from the south gave impetus to the development and growth of religious establishments. Churches were often more than centers of worship for the African-American community - they spawned political activism and served as outlets for social and cultural entertainment and expressionism (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:107). In Detroit, most African-Americans were of the AME or Baptist faith. In fact, in 1926 there were 44,000 African-American church members, of which approximately 7,000 were of the African Methodist Episcopal faith (Woodson 1949:81)

At least one AME church was located in the DRIC study area and is still extant. The St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, at 579 South Rademacher Street, was constructed in 1928, although the congregation has been in existence since 1917.

#### Baptist

During the first half of the twentieth century, the majority of African-Americans in Detroit were Baptist. Since the Baptist had had neither rules nor regulations about the founding of new churches, they out-numbered the second most popular African-American faith, Methodist Episcopal, to a great extent (Woodson 1949:81). In 1926, there were 44,000 African-American church members, of which some 30,000 were of the Baptist faith (Woodson 1949:81).

At least two extant churches in the DRIC study area are associated with the Baptist faith. The First Baptist Church of Southwest Detroit, located near the intersection of Crossley and Gould Streets, is said to be one of the first African-American churches in the DRIC study area. The congregation moved to this location ca. 1925, after it was vacated by the All Saints congregation, who had initially worshipped in the church. The First Baptist congregation used the original All Saints Church building until 1989, when it burned. A new church has since been located at the site, and the First Baptist congregation is still associated with the property (Maher 1996:23).

At the height of Delray's Hungarian occupancy, Baptists of Hungarian ethnicity called the First Hungarian Baptist Church at 8400 Vanderbilt Street home for many years (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975). Today the True Light Church of God in Christ occupies the building.

## Catholic

Among the larger churches within the study area are those belonging to the Catholic faith. The earliest church was All Saints Church, located at 7824 Fort Street. This Roman Catholic parish was initially organized in 1896. Until that year, if you were a Roman Catholic in Delray, you probably attended Holy Redeemer Parish, located at Junction and Dix. Initially, All Saints Roman Catholic Church was located along St. Clair Avenue, between the Solvay Process Company grounds and Crossley Avenue. This location served the needs of the congregation until the late 1920s, when encroaching industrial development and shifting population demographics contributed to the relocation of the church to its present location on Fort Street. Here the congregation established a new church, school, rectory, and convent. The complex was dedicated in May 1927 (BHC 2006).

A second Catholic parish was established in the area shortly after 1900, when steadily increasing Polish immigration led to the formation of St. John Cantius Polish Catholic Church. The church, located at 844 Harbaugh on the western edge of Delray, marks the center of what was once Delray's Polish community. The church complex, which also includes a rectory and a school (extant until destroyed by fire in 2006), was named in honor of John Cantius, renowned Polish priest and academic, who was born in Poland sometime between 1403 and 1412 (Farley and Mullin 2007a). In 1902, the Roman Catholic diocese of Detroit appointed the Reverend John Walczak the founding pastor. The intent of the church was to serve the Polish population of Delray (Farley and Mullin 2007a). Construction for the church began in 1910 and was completed in 1911; however, this first church was only used for a few years before construction began on the present church in 1923, which was dedicated that same year (cornerstone). In April of 2006 Archbishop of Detroit Adam Joseph Cardinal Maida, informed the public that the church would close in October 2007 due to declining membership and shifting population trends. The church held its final mass on Sunday, October 28, 2007.

The largest of the Roman Catholic churches within the DRIC study area is the Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church located at 8423 South Street. A majority of the Hungarians who settled in Delray were Roman Catholic, which resulted in the organization in 1906 of Holy Cross, the oldest remaining Hungarian church in Delray. It was reputedly the first Catholic church to serve the Delray Hungarian population (Vinyard 1998:152). The land for the church was purchased in 1904 with funds gathered from the community for the church and an associated school. The original church and the present school were constructed in 1908 and designed from plans prepared by architect Harry J. Rill (BHC 2006). Several years later, however, the parish demolished the original structure and built the present church. Even with the large number and concentration of Hungarians in the Delray neighborhood, the construction of the grand brick church was a costly undertaking, one that was not completed until ca. 1924-1925 (BHC 2006; Vinyard 1998:153). The second church was designed by Hungarian-born architect Henry Kohner, a resident of the neighborhood (Solvay Street) and the designer of the nearby Szent Janos Gor Kath. Magyar Templom (Saint John Hungarian Greek Catholic Church), a church catering to the needs of Hungarian Greek Catholics. Other buildings/structures were added through the years to the complex as needed. The church contains many fine stained glass windows, Hungarian art work, and an interesting carving listing the names of the counties in Hungary from which the immigrants came.

Greek Catholics were essentially comprised of Orthodox Greeks, who, displaced by Turkish invasions in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, moved into Hungary and became Catholic but retained their Byzantine heritage. Small numbers eventually made their way to Delray and attended St. John. The architect-designed church was constructed from plans drawn by Henry Kohner, a Hungarian-born architect who spent the early years of his career in Delray, even residing on Solvay

Szent Janos. Gor Kath. Magyar Templom (St. John Greek Catholic Hungarian Church) served the Hungarian Greek Catholic population of Delray from at least 1918 to the early 1960s.<sup>1-3</sup> Hungarian Street for a time. Kohner also designed nearby Holy Cross. Although it is no longer associated with Hungarian Greek Catholics of Delray, the building continues to serve as church, most recently functioning as the Jehovah Jireh Church.

### Evangelical

Several known Evangelical churches were constructed within the DRIC study area. The first served the needs of the German population of the area. Originally known as the German Evangelical Church of Delray, St. John Evangelical Church was located at the intersection of Burdeno and Sloan Streets. Its cornerstone was laid in 1885. A school serving the congregation was added to the rear of the church that same year. The church was maintained at the Burdeno and Sloan location briefly before the congregation relocated to the intersection of Fort Street and Woodmere. The new church building currently houses the Trinity Church and Congregation, and the original building is no longer extant (BHC 2006).

In addition to St. John Evangelical Church, there was at least one Hungarian church of that denomination. The First Hungarian Reformed Church/Hungarian Evangelical Reformed Church was originally known as the Magyar Reformed Church of Delray. Formed as a mission unit of the Presbyterian Church of Hungary, the church, which is no longer extant, was located at the intersection of West End Avenue and Vanderbilt Street. The congregation originally organized in the fall of 1904 and is reputed to be the first Hungarian Church in Delray (*Detroit News* 1954; Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:13). After two years of meeting in homes and rented halls, the congregation, which at the time numbered 75, built its first church on the West End Avenue/Vanderbilt Street site. That building remained in use until 1929 when it was remodeled and a three-story hall was built adjoining the church (BHC 2006). Until the outbreak of World War I, the church had a school; however, after the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, the funds were cut off and the school was discontinued (BHC 2006). At its height, the school was attended by approximately 800 students (*Detroit News* 1954).

### Lutheran

Two known ethnic Lutheran churches were once located within the DRIC study area. The First Hungarian Lutheran Church, at 8151 Thaddeus Street, was primarily attended by Hungarians. The church is now known as the New Greater Love Missionary Baptist Church.

An Evangelical Lutheran church in the DRIC study area served the German community. Founded ca. 1880, by Reverend G. F. Meiser (BHC 2006), the congregation initially located in a small frame building. Several years later, in 1889, the congregation was officially organized and incorporated as the German Evangelical Lutheran Good Hope Congregation of Springwells, Michigan. Less than a decade later, the congregation had outgrown its original quarters, and in the summer of 1900 the architectural firm of Spier and Rohns was engaged to complete designs for a new church (BHC 2006). The new church replaced the original building at the corner of South and Post Avenues, with the cornerstone laid in September 1900 and the church dedicated December 16 of the same year. In

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<sup>1-3</sup>A second church catering to the Greek Catholic population of Delray was St. Stephen Greek Catholic Church, once located at 8345 Thaddeus Street. The church was established by the Ruthenians; St. Stephen is the only known Ruthenian church in the DRIC study area. Little else is known about this church, which has been demolished.

1905, the Solvay Process Company helped the congregation hang three large bells in the lower part of the steeple (which has since been removed). In the 1920s and 1930s, the area surrounding the church became increasingly industrial. Eventually the congregation relocated to Oakman Boulevard and Littlefield Avenue in Detroit, with their Southwest Detroit-area home sold in 1946 (BHC 2006). The church building is still extant at 507 South Post Street.

### Presbyterian

Another distinctive church building in the DRIC study area was the original home of the Olivet Presbyterian Church (see also Section 3.2.1). Located at 6908 Fort Street between Lewerenz and the Fisher Freeway Service Drive, the church was sited based on the shifting population trends in the region during the early twentieth century. As the population became more and more crowded in Delray, people began moving north, and churches were no exception. Ground was broken for this concrete block and stone church in April 1913 with the cornerstone laid on July 17, 1913; the church's dedication occurred on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1914 (HDAB 2001:8). The church construction project was undertaken by the Church Extension Board of Detroit Presbytery at a cost of \$22,000, including the land.

The Olivet Presbyterian Church became the new home to a combination of two separate churches, the Fort Wayne Church and the Woodmere Mission congregation. Fort Wayne Church began as an army camp mission providing Sunday School in the guard house at historic Fort Wayne in 1901 (BHC 2006; HDAB 2001: 8). By 1906, the church outgrew its location and formally became the Fort Wayne Church, with a facility located at the corner of South and Artillery Avenues. The second congregation began in a store front on West Fort Street in 1907 (HDAB 2001:8). The two congregations merged with the construction of the church on Fort Street. Although the Presbyterians have long since moved on to a new location, the building has subsequently served as a home for a Seventh Day Adventist congregation and currently is known as the Old Landmark Church of God in Christ (BHC 2006; HDAB 200:8).

Presbyterians have a long-standing congregation in the area north of the existing Fisher Freeway. The Military Avenue Evangelical Presbyterian Church at 1000 North Military Avenue, is illustrated on the Sanborn Insurance Maps beginning in 1910 as the Military Avenue United Presbyterian Church (Sanborn 1910:43). This church has served members of the Presbyterian faith since it was established in 1885. At that time, it was known as the Military Presbyterian Church (it would later become an Evangelical Presbyterian church). The congregation was organized as an extension of the Second Presbyterian Church, located on Woodward Avenue (Dr. Brown, personal communication 2007). When first established, the congregation had no facility to worship in, so they improvised and held religious services in the private residences of the congregation. Eventually, enough money was raised to build a church for worship services, locating at the corner of Military Avenue and West Lafayette Boulevard. Construction on the church began in 1900, but the church did not officially take its first members until 1902 (Brown 2006:1-2; Dr. Brown, personal communication 2007). It has remained a Presbyterian church since its founding (see also Section 3.2.1).

### Jewish

Seventeen Jewish congregations were identified within the City of Detroit in 1920 (Cohen 2003:69), but only one was located in the DRIC study area. The First Hebrew Congregation of Delray, also called the Orthodox Hungarian Jewish Congregation, was officially formed ca. 1916-1917 in a private home on Burdeno Street. Members worshipped here for several years until 1926, when the congregation established their temple in a former church at 8124 Burdeno Street (Cohen 2003:60,

69). Rabbi Solomon H. Rubin served as their spiritual leader (Michigan Historical Records Survey Project 1940:30). The congregation sold the building to the Petofi Club in 1947, who sold the building at an unknown date. Since then, the building at 8124 Burdeno has offered a place of worship for several religious organizations, including the current House of God Which is the Church of the Living God the Pillar and Ground of the Truth Without Controversy.

### **1.3.4 Education**

An important part in the development of any community is the establishment of a local school system. The unique history of the study area, from its early establishment as a village (Delray) and township (Springwells), to its annexation to the City of Detroit, has played a role in the development of the schools in the area. Before formal school buildings were established, classes were held for area students in “various vacant buildings including saloons, stores, and homes” (HDAB 1999:3). Once formal schools were established, many of the children residing in Springwells Township attended either the Amos or Bellefontaine schools (Varga and Cotman 1983). As these first schools were faced with overcrowding, new schools were added to the community’s infrastructure.

The study area currently includes four extant school buildings, two of which were originally constructed for Springwells Township (McMillan<sup>4</sup> and Beard), one constructed by the Hungarian Catholic Community (Holy Cross School), and one constructed by the Detroit Public School system to serve as a regional high school (Southwestern High School). Three primarily functioned as elementary schools, although one was briefly pressed into service as a high school. The final school was constructed as an upper grades and high school. Although pared down to include just grades nine through 12, the building continues to function as Southwestern High School today.

#### **Elementary Education**

##### James McMillan School

*As of January 2008, the James McMillan School had been gutted by fire. The roof was no longer visible, though the majority of the school’s exterior walls were still standing. Despite some portions of the building remaining intact, McMillan no longer retains sufficient integrity to be considered a historic resource.*

The earliest extant elementary school within the study area is the James McMillan School located at 615 South West End Avenue, within the limits of the former village of Delray. The village approved the construction of the school, its second in the area, in 1885 (HDAB 1999:3). The building was to have four rooms and was constructed on a lot donated by school board member John Frank and his wife Carolina. Ground was broken for the new four-room school in September 1886, and classes were first held in the building on September 7, 1891 (HDAB 1999:3). The new school was named for local area businessman, philanthropist, and U.S. Senator, James McMillan.

Three years after its completion, the school was destroyed by fire. The fire provided an opportunity for the community to construct a larger school on the same site. The new school was to be constructed of brick, two stories in height, and to include 16 classrooms. The new school design was completed by the architectural firm of Malcomson and Higginbotham, who were quickly gaining a reputation as the school designers for the City of Detroit. Beginning in 1891, just one year after the

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<sup>1-4</sup>The James McMillan School was heavily damaged by fire in January 2008, but the exterior walls of the structure remain.

firm was established, the city began hiring Malcomson and Higginbotham on an annual basis. Among their commissions was the nearby Frank H. Beard School (1896) and the Detroit Central High School (Old Main, Wayne State University) (1894).

When the school reopened, the new building continued to house the area elementary school students, but at some time before Delray and the school were annexed to the City of Detroit, the building was converted to a high school (HDAB 1999:3). In September 1916, then school principal Mr. George Murdock was transferred to the new Nordstrum School (now Southwestern High School). With the departure of Mr. Murdock from McMillan school, the building reverted to its elementary school roots (HDAB 1999:3). From 1916 until its closing in 2001, the school continued to serve the educational needs of the area's elementary age children (Ross 2001:9A).

### Frank H. Beard School

A similar story can be told for the Frank H. Beard School located at 840 Waterman Avenue. On August 21, 1886, School District No. 1 of the Township of Springwells accepted James F. and May B. Joy's price of \$2,000 for the future site of Garfield School, named for President James Garfield. Pupils in the school district attended classes in a store on Fort Street until September 1886, when a four-room school was built on the present site at Waterman near Fort Street (Board of Education of the City of Detroit [BECD] 1967:53). In 1895, the four-room building became so overcrowded that it was declared unsafe and was demolished. Classes were temporarily held in a hotel at Fort Street and Rademacher while the new building was designed and constructed (BECD 1967:53).

Like the McMillan School constructed the year before, the new Garfield School was also designed by school architects Malcomson and Higginbotham. The new school was a two-story brick building and boasted 12 classrooms (Varga and Cotman 1983). In 1900, two additional classrooms were added to the building, bringing the total number of rooms to 14 and the capacity to 670 students.

Several years after the Garfield School was expanded, the City of Detroit annexed the portion of Springwells Township in which the school was located. This unwittingly created a problem for the Detroit Public Schools, who found themselves with two schools named in honor of President Garfield. The problem was resolved when the Waterman Avenue school was renamed in honor of area resident, Frank Herbert Beard (Varga and Cotman 1983). A resident of the Village of Woodmere, Springwells Township, since childhood, Frank H. Beard took active interest in the affairs of the village and its schools. Mr. Beard was elected to serve on the school board where he was instrumental in the building of Garfield School. He hired teachers and followed the progress of area schools as a member of the Springwells School Board for 17 years until the time of his death at the age of 42 (HDAB 1993:3).

During the 1960s, declining enrollment, and population shifts in the neighborhoods surrounding the school negatively impacted the school. These impacts were heightened by the construction of the Fisher Freeway that same decade. The route, passing just south of the school, spared the building but it faced further declining enrollment and high maintenance costs. Today the school no longer functions as a traditional elementary school but is utilized by the Detroit School Board as the Beard Early Childhood Center (DHDC 2007b).

## Holy Cross School

In addition to the public elementary schools, at least one school was constructed by a local church congregation specifically for their youth. The school associated with the Delray Hungarian community's Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church was constructed on South Avenue beginning in 1906 and was open for students in January 1907 (Vinyard 1998:154). The "school" actually consisted of two rudimentary rooms within the larger church. One room was used for the kindergarten, first and second grades, and the second room used by all the older children (Vinyard 1998:154). In part, it was hoped that the school would help the children deal with the language barrier experienced at McMillan, the public elementary school on West End, where English was the preferred language, or the German parochial school at St. Elizabeth's. This issue was not totally resolved, however, since the nuns assigned to work at the school did not speak Hungarian, nor did they understand the Hungarian community's customs and social order, resulting in constant friction (Vinyard 1998:155).

Initially children from the Hungarian community only attended the earliest years of school. It wasn't until outside pressure was placed on the community that anyone went beyond the fifth or sixth grade. Andrew Untener became the first graduate from the eighth grade at Holy Cross in 1910 (Vinyard 1998:156). Over the next few years, only eight additional children completed grade eight at the school.

By the early 1920s, with the requirement for youngsters to attend school, the tiny church school at Holy Cross proved much too small. In 1921, a new priest arrived at Holy Cross, and insisted that a separate school be constructed. In spite of the parishioners' displeasure at the \$42,000 debt, the following year saw the largest eighth grade graduating class to date, 27 children. In 1923, Holy Cross' priest reported that there were 500 in the parish school, but another 500 children from the Hungarian community who were forced to attend public school since the parochial facility simply could not accommodate them (Vinyard 1998:155-6).

Changes in the demographics of the Delray community, with an increasing number of different ethnic groups buying homes vacated by the second and third generation Hungarians, resulted in the lack of funds and students to justify the construction of their own high school. For a time, students who wished to further their education attended the public Southwestern High School, but this action met with disapproval from the parish priest, Father Nagy. By the early 1930s the high school issue was resolved, when an agreement was reached with nearby All Saints parish. All Saints accepted tuition paying students from the Holy Cross parish, providing interested students an opportunity to continue their education in a parochial setting (Vinyard 1998:159).

## **High School Education**

While at least one other high school was located within the study area historically, today just one high school complex remains extant. Constructed in 1916, the building was originally known as Nordstrum High School and was named for John Nordstrum, a Delray resident and member of the Board of Education in Delray for 15 years (HDAB 2001:9). Located at the southwest corner of Fort Street at Waterman Avenue, the school was originally intended to serve 550 students between grades seven and 12. The population explosion in the area following World War I resulted in so many new students, that the building was quickly overcrowded. To counteract the crowding of the building, an addition was made to the structure in 1922, and the name was changed to Southwestern High School (HDAB 2001:9). In spite of the name change, it wasn't until 1933 that the building was changed to

serve only as a four-year high school. Additions to the school in 1968 made the school one of the largest in Detroit.

### **1.3.5 Ethnic Heritage**

Probably no community in the U.S. celebrates such a mix of cultures as Detroit, and the study area is one of Detroit's most historically diverse neighborhoods. Residents come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including French, German, Armenian, Hungarian, Polish, Ruthenian, African-American, and Hispanic (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:94; Stanfel 2002). The neighborhoods within the study area are home to residents who remember the old country and promote an understanding of varied cultures and customs. Churches, social/ethnic clubs, and specialty stores serve as further evidence of the study area's diverse character. Detroit offered room to grow, to start a business, or to find a haven from famine and turmoil.

Between 1850 and 1930, the number of foreign-born people living in Detroit grew every year (DHM 2007). While nineteenth-century immigrants came primarily from western Europe, after 1900, more people came from eastern and southern Europe. Poles, Russians, Italians, Greeks, Hungarians, Armenians, Ruthenians, Slovenes, Syrians, Romanians, Lebanese, and others were drawn to the area by Detroit business recruiters who promised economic opportunities. They found jobs in new factories, businesses, and industries, and at the beginning of the twentieth century, many found jobs in the booming automotive industry.

In the late twentieth century, thousands of people from Asia, the Middle East, and southeast Europe began to flock to Detroit. Koreans, Chinese, Taiwanese, Filipinos, Asian Indians, Iraqis, Chaldeans, Kurds, and Albanians all became the region's new immigrants. As change coursed through Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East in the 1980s and 1990s, immigrants arrived from Poland, Nigeria, and Yemen. The numbers of immigrants from southern and Latin American continued to rise (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:94).

Historically, the newcomers were not always accepted and treated fairly in the workplace or in the community. Consequently, they made their homes near others with similar backgrounds or language for security and acceptance. The neighborhoods in the DRIC study area reflect this pattern, and the following text highlights the ethnic groups that have played a significant role in the historical development of the DRIC study area.

#### **French**

The French were the first recorded Europeans to lay out formal settlements along the Detroit River after the founding of Fort Pontchartrain du Detroit in 1701 (see also Section 1.2); however, nothing from the built environment remains. Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal (1975:11) suggest that by 1900, a small French neighborhood was located along Thaddeus Street, the majority of which were likely holdover families from the early French settlement of Detroit. By the early 1920s, however, the street became occupied by Hungarians, and the French residents abandoned the increasingly industrial area in favor of other areas of Detroit (see also Vinyard 1998:151).

#### **Germans**

The Germans first began arriving in Detroit in the 1830s, settling on Detroit's east side, and they were the dominant ethnic group in Detroit for much of the nineteenth century. The first Germans,

many of whom were Jewish, are thought to have escaped political ferment in their homeland (Woodford and Woodford 1969:245-246). By 1880, 28 percent of Detroit homes were headed by German immigrants, who, for much of the nineteenth century, worked in the tobacco and stone/marble works industries. They also worked as brewers, bar keepers, and in skilled trades (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:99).

As of 1880, foreign-born Germans were a ubiquitous component of most Detroit neighborhoods, comprising nearly 15 percent (17,292) of the total (116,340) city population. Succeeding population figures rose to 44,000 by 1910. In 1920 the figure dropped to 30,000, rising slightly to 32,716 by 1930.

Three distinct settlements of Germans and their descendants occurred in the DRIC study area, one located near the eastern border between Artillery (now Livernois) and Harrington Avenue, one located between West End Avenue and Dearborn Street, and one clustered around the Michigan Carbon Works. St. John's Evangelical Church (once located near the central part of the village on Burdeno and Moore Streets), and the Good Hope Church, located nearer to the eastern part of South Street and Post Avenue, served the Germans (BHC 2006).

The Germans worked hard to preserve their culture, and emphasized education, art, music, and the theater. Social gatherings were often held to promote the German heritage (Woodford and Woodford 1969:246), often revolving around religion. Two former German religious structures are still extant in the DRIC study area, the Good Hope Church at 507 South Post Street and the private residence at 1012 North Morrell Street (formerly known as the German Spiritual Church) (Polk 1929:916). No other known German-associated buildings were located in the DRIC study area.

The Germans, along with descendants of the original French settlers, primarily occupied Delray until the late 1890s, when they began moving away from the area. Several theories are noted as to the justification for the relocation of the Germans from Delray. One author notes that by the early years of the twentieth century, many of the German residents had begun to abandon the increasingly industrial area (Vinyard 1998:151); however, another author counters that much antipathy was shown by the Germans toward the Hungarians when they began moving into Delray in the late 1890s. In time, the Germans gave way and the area was abandoned by them (Beynon 1936:9-10). Many of the original Delray Germans are thought to have relocated to an area around Fort Street and Woodmere Street (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:5)

### **Armenians**

The first Armenian in Detroit arrived around 1895 (Aprahamian 1959:7). A slow trickle of Armenians had arrived in the United States for several decades prior to 1895, but violence and political instability in Armenia that year forced many in the country to flee their homeland (Aprahamian 1959:3-4). Armenian immigration to Detroit was generally heaviest between 1900 and 1919 (Woodford and Woodford 1969:249). Once in Detroit, Armenians settled in two different areas of the city. The first area centered around the Ford Highland Park Plant, an area bounded by Brush Street on the east, Kendall Street on the north, Fourteenth Street on the west, and Cortland Street on the south (Aprahamian 1959:17-18). The second area was located within the DRIC study area, in the vicinity of Cottrell, Solvay and Crossley Streets, just north of West Jefferson Avenue (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:5).

The exact date of concentrated Armenian settlement is unknown, but Armenians generally first appeared in the DRIC study area in 1904 (Hauk-Aboyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:5). Many of

these people were young men who came to earn money to take back to Armenia. Because of their motives in coming to Detroit for only a short time before going back home, many lived as bachelors in boarding houses. It was common for a group of ten or so from the same village to get together and rent a house. With little knowledge of the English language, they kept to themselves and formed social outlets and political societies (Arahamian 1959:10-11).

With the influx of Armenians, several Armenian-owned businesses were established in the Delray Armenian community, most popularly, coffee houses. Traditionally, coffee houses were the meeting place for the men of the Armenian community. Often, the men would sit in the coffee house for hours discussing politics and the independence of Turkish Armenia (Arahamian 1959:11). In time, the number of coffee houses and restaurants increased, and the Delray Armenian community, still isolated from the rest of the city because of the language barrier, began to take on a different atmosphere. The growing community, still preponderantly made up of single young men, became less sedate. Some of the coffee houses became places for gambling and drinking (Arahamian 1959:12-13).

As the immigrants got used to life in Detroit, it was no longer common for groups to set up housekeeping, but rather it became the usual practice to rent or board. In fact, most of the restaurants and coffee houses in the area had upstairs rooms for rent. Once they could afford to do so, other Armenians began buying houses in the area of South Solvay Street and West Jefferson Avenue, which at the time were selling for between \$1,500 and \$2,000 (Arahamian 1959:13). Single owners often turned these dwellings into boarding houses, and married Armenian couples took in boarders (Arahamian 1959:14).

Many Armenians prior to World War I were factory workers, working in and around the factories in Delray. Some of these factories were German Brass (Michigan Brass), the Solvay Process Company, Michigan Malleable Iron, and Michigan Marble. Many were also employed by the auto factories. Prosperity finally came at the start of World War I when the men were needed to fill the shoes of others serving war-time duties (Arahamian 1959:23).

After World War I, as the last wave of Armenian immigrants swelled Detroit's population, the number of Armenians in Delray on West Jefferson Avenue, and Solvay, Greene, Cotterall, Harrington, and Post Streets increased. Though the Armenian Delray community had been quite lively before the war with the coffee houses and other Armenian businesses, the number of Armenian-owned businesses increased, especially on the first two blocks of South Solvay Street (north of Cottrell Street). At the height of the Delray Armenian community in the 1920s, there were approximately ten coffee houses and at least as many restaurants. There were also numerous other business establishments, including grocery stores, barber shops, shoe repair shops, dry goods stores and confectionary shops. Many residents considered South Solvay Street the center of the Armenian community and often referred to it as "Armenian Boulevard" (Arahamian 1959:15). According to the 1915 Detroit City Directory, at least nine commercial, Armenian-owned businesses were located on the street, including three coffee houses (the Dermanelian Hachij Coffee House [108], the Upduzpe Upupus Coffee House [126], and the Markarian Michl Coffee House [160]); three restaurants (the Hairbedian V.H. Restaurant [110], the Manogian K.G. Restaurant [118], and the Bakjedian Hagob Rastaruant [142]), the Dagavialian Karakin Confectioner Store (114), the Tarzian & Manavian Grocery Store (150), and the Bedrossian Archad Barber Shop (151) (Polk 1915:2948).

In 1928, a meeting hall serving the social needs of the Delray Armenian community was constructed. The building, located at 803 South Cottrell Street, was named Zavarian Hall and became the social center of the community. Named for Simon Zavarian, founder of the Armenian Revolutionary

Federation (established in Tblisi, Georgi, in 1890), the building soon became the center of religious functions, as the Armenians had no church to call their own (until the establishment of St. John in 1931, outside of the study area), and was commonly the scene of Armenian weddings. It remained in operation until 1951, when it was sold due to declining membership as more and more Armenians moved away from Delray (Arahamian 1959:32-34). This building is still extant, although no longer associated with the Armenian community.

By the 1930s, Armenians in Delray numbered approximately 2,000 (Arahamian 1959:15); however, as the economic situation improved following the Great Depression, Armenians in Delray gradually moved out. The majority left for the suburbs, attracted by jobs and inexpensive housing (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:10). However, a small number moved northward to the area around West Lafayette Boulevard and North Waterman Street. In fact, in 1941, the Dashnags, an Armenian family, acquired the former Findlater Masonic Temple at 6705 West Lafayette Boulevard and renamed it the Armenian Community Center. The building is indicated as such on the 1923 Sanborn map (revised in 1950), and remained in that use until at least 1973 (Polk 1964, 1968, 1973). The building is still extant and is known as the Salon El Bosque.

In 1951, approximately 15,000 Armenians were living in Detroit (Wayne State University 1951). At this time, however, only two Armenian halls in the city existed to serve the social needs of the Armenian community, the Armenian Cultural Hall at 1335 Oakman Street, and the Armenian Community Center at 6705 West Lafayette Boulevard (Wayne State University 1951:2). Zavarian Hall had closed by this time. As indicated above, the Armenian Community Center served the needs of the Armenians living around the intersection of North Waterman Street and West Lafayette Boulevard. The building served as a meeting place for various political, social and religious Armenian-based organizations, including the St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Antranik Committee, the Azadamard Committee, the Daniel Varoujan Committee, the Goruon Committee, the Moorad Committee, the Sebouh Committee, the Zavarian Committee, the Armenian Relief Society, the Astig Seniors, the Astig Junior Chapter, the Highland Park Senior Chapter, the Highland Park Junior Chapter, the Maro Chapter, the Satenig Senior Chapter, the Satenig Junior Chapter, the American Vartan Post #307, the Armenian Youth Federation, the Detroit Christopher Chapter, the Detroit Moorad, the Detroit Zavarian (Arahamian 1959:20). The center also offered Armenian language classes (Wayne State University 1951: 2-3).

As the Armenians moved out of the South Solvay Street area, Hungarians and African-Americans began buying the buildings. A 1958 Armenian population estimate of Delray counted only 100 people, many of whom were older; however, though many Armenians had moved out of the neighborhood by then, several businesses in the area were still owned or operated by Armenians. A 1958 census counted two Armenian-owned coffee houses on South Solvay Street (Arahamian 1959:17). Although many buildings have been demolished along South Solvay Street, several former Armenian-owned commercial buildings (with residential components) survive, including the buildings at 502, 588, 600, and 730.

As mentioned above, not all Armenians settled in Delray. Many settled in and near the Ford Highland Park Plant (Arahamian 1959:17). Living there signified a social climb in status. These Armenians came to supply the leadership and financial support for the activities of the Detroit Armenian community. In fact, St. John's Church, the first Armenian Church in Detroit, was established to be near this concentration of Armenians (Arahamian 1959:18).

The Armenians of Highland Park never developed a community quite like the Delray Armenian community (Arahamian 1959:19). One of the important reasons for this difference between the two

communities was that the Armenian population of Delray was tight-knit and the Highland Park population was more dispersed. Also, the Highland Park men usually worked full time and did not have time so socialize at establishments as did the men in Delray (Aprahamian 1959:19).

## **Hungarians**

Lured by job opportunities in the factories, foundries and manufacturing plants of Detroit during a particularly brisk industrial boom, the first Hungarians arrived in the city in 1896 (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:16; Huseby-Darvas 2003:17). Many worked in the mills located along the Detroit River (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:16). The majority of Hungarians settling in Detroit at this time were immigrants but a few left other factory jobs in Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana because of promised wage increases and better working conditions in Michigan (Huseby-Darvas 2003:17).

Once in Detroit, the primary settlement for Hungarians was Delray, where a large Hungarian colony grew (Huseby-Darvas 2003:18-19; Woodford and Woodford 1969:250). The readily available housing in the area and plenty of work nearby in the large industrial plants in southwest Detroit made the region a perfect place to establish a cohesive community (Vinyard 1998:151). Delray was a pleasant, fairly prosperous community, even after it was annexed to Detroit. Various sources from the early twentieth century paint a rather idyllic image of early American industrial life in Delray, which included flowers, gardens, cow pastures alongside foundries, factories, and manufacturing plants, and chickens pecking near nicely paved streets under fancy street lights. The opening of the Michigan Malleable Iron Company in 1898 also influenced newly transplanted Hungarians to settle in the DRIC study area (Huseby-Darvas 2003:18-19).

Many Hungarians settled in the area bounded by Jefferson Avenue, Dearborn Street, Fort Street, and Livernois Avenue (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975), settling into an area originally occupied by the French and German. Beynon (1937) notes that until the late 1890s, the French and Germans populated Delray, and much antipathy was shown by them against the invading Hungarians. In time, the French and German inhabitants gave way and the entire Delray area was abandoned by them (Beynon 1937:9-10).

By 1900, the census indicated that 91 persons living in the city proper were originally from Hungary (this figure excludes the residents of the Delray area which was at the time still outside the city limits) (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:16). At the time of annexation, approximately 30 Hungarian families owned property in Delray. There was one Hungarian saloon at this time, in operation since 1901; this saloon served multiple social, economic and cultural functions. As the widow of its original proprietor recalled,

There was no center for the Hungarians of Delray. Our saloon was everything, all in one... We did all kinds of business besides selling liquor. We made the place home-like and lots of single men ate in our saloon. We had a kind of bank too... the people brought us their money to deposit for them. We remitted money to Europe... We sold steamship tickets and real estate. If the people wanted to have a meeting, they held it in the hall above our salon. We conducted a sort of general merchandise store right there also [Huseby-Darvas 2003:18-19].

Hungarian immigration to America generally reached its peak in 1907, but Detroit's Hungarian population was just starting to grow (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:20). Lucrative work in auto factories attracted thousands more to the area after 1910. That year, the majority of the 8,000 Hungarians in Detroit lived in Delray (Huseby-Darvas 2003:20).

By the eve of the First World War, the Delray section was known as Little Hungary, Little Budapest, or Hunkytown. The rapid influx essentially displaced most of the Armenians and Poles from the center of Delray to the peripheries. Thus, there was a marked and identifiable geographic separation of the three major ethnic groups in the relatively small settlement (Huseby-Darvas 2003:18-19). Regardless of ethnic affiliation, most Delray residents worked together in one of the local factories, foundries, or plants; however, communication was limited due to language barriers, and the lack of a common language. Learning English was not considered to be important, old informants said, since most of the Delray Hungarians were planning to stay in America just long enough to save enough money to return to their villages, buy some land, or pay the back taxes, and resume their traditional rural lives (Huseby-Darvas 2003:18-19)

During this phase, a large number of Delray Hungarians were either single men or married men whose families remained in Hungary. Until the advent of World War I, many Hungarian immigrants in Delray planned to earn sufficient money in America to return to their homeland and buy their own land. Largely having come from the rural portions of Hungary where they toiled as itinerant farm day laborers, owning land was seen as the ultimate goal (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:13). Seeing their experiences here as temporary phases in their lives, many lived like guest workers, maintaining a transient lifestyle. It was common for them to live in boardinghouses, or as they called it, a *burdoshazak*, among their own kind, saved as much of their income as they could, and concentrated all their energies on going back home (Huseby-Darvas 2003:20). With the onset of the war, however, the immigrants realized their dream to return to their homeland would not be fulfilled. With this realization, the Hungarian families went about becoming legal citizens of the United States.

Initially the men in the family learned English sufficient only for work, while the children learned English in school. With the new desire for citizenship, however, the men began taking language classes at nearby Southwestern High School in preparation for their citizenship test (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:33).

Detroit's Hungarian population continued to grow, and in fact, between the two World Wars, about 30,000 arrived (Huseby-Darvas 2003:21). The 1930 Hungarian population of Detroit was 22,311 or 1.42 percent of the total population of the city (Beynon 1936:430). In the Detroit area, as in other immigrant enclaves, this was the time of the crystallization of the Hungarian American community. At this time the Hungarian ethnic radio and press began to flourish, as did amateur plays, poetry and prose readings, church and cultural center suppers, dances, and such. The churches, with their formal and informal groups and social networks, were instrumental in the economic survival of the entire community during the Great Depression (Huseby-Darvas 2003:22).

Beynon (1936:423-434) states that Hungarian immigrants in Detroit were divided into two distinct social classes. Well-educated Hungarians with trades and occupations (typically engineers, physicians, and musicians), lived anywhere but Delray, which was often reserved for laborers. Despite the fact that both groups shared similar ethnicity, class prejudice carried over from Europe often caused hostility shown between the Hungarian laborers in Delray and the wealthier Hungarians in other parts of the city. Delray, a working-class neighborhood was hazy from nearby smokestacks and often seen as undesirable to Hungarians of higher economic status (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monreal 1975:7; Beynon 1936:423-434). Hindered by their lack of mobility and unfamiliarity with the English language, Delray Hungarians tended to live near the factories in which they earned their living.

The large concentration of Hungarians in the DRIC study area made it easy for the community to maintain its customs and celebrations. Traditional events that revolved around such activities as wine

making or hog slaughtering or religious celebrations including the days before Lent, and the Easter and Christmas season continued to be celebrated (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:27). Every spring the community held a *Kriandulas*, a big community picnic in the woods. In the fall the locals made wine at the *Szureti Mulatsag*, the grape festival. Delray was filled with so many Hungarians that the neighborhood developed a sense of family. People were not simply addressed by their name on the street, the greeting inevitably included some sort of familiarity, such as “brother,” “friend,” or simply “neighbor” (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:32).

The Hungarians who called Delray home still had to deal with antagonism and discrimination from the surrounding neighborhoods. This may have been best illustrated by the streetcar ride to and from work for many of the local men. The streetcar had tracks down the center of River Road (Jefferson), and it was said that the smell of lunch pails filled with home-made sausages, rye bread, hot peppers, and the odor of garlic, announced to other passengers that they had arrived in Delray, or as it was also known “Garlictown” or even worse, “Hunkytown” after the slur on the Hungarians who were often called “Hunkies” (Abonyi and Anderson 1977:24).

Perhaps it was in part this adversity that reinforced the sense of community the locals felt; but, this was not the only way that they were encouraged to turn their attention to “their own.” During the 1920s the church actively promoted Hungarian support of the businesses and clubs within the DRIC study area. Father Nagy, of Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, urged the community that they must “patronize always their own independent merchants” rather than the chain stores that were moving in to the area. Nagy went on to warn the community that the chains were interested “only in profits” and not “in schools or other civic projects” (Vinyard 1998:158).

By 1920, 35 percent of the Hungarian families living in the DRIC study area owned or were buying their homes (Vinyard 1998:152). By 1930, Metro Detroit was the fifth largest center of Hungarians in the country, and 10 years later, Delray community boasted almost an entirely Hungarian owned commercial district. Department stores Zolkower and Zuieback, were joined by furniture stores, numerous grocery, meat, poultry and specialty shops, bakeries, clothing stores, shoemakers, small restaurants, and bars (Pepper 1984:4A; Abonyi and Anderson 1977:36). Two movie theaters provided entertainment (the Delray Theater and the Grande Theater, both located on West Jefferson Avenue). The Delray Theater, at 8022, is still extant. Practically everything a person could need or desire was available within walking distance of home during the boom time in Delray (see also the West Jefferson Avenue Commercial Historic District).

There was also pride in the community. People swept their streets and planted flowers to spruce up their modest residences. But the Hungarian community that defined Delray for so many years was already disappearing. The original Hungarian settlers in Delray were dying, and the second and third generations were moving away from the old neighborhood. A new group of Europeans and southern Americans began moving into the cheaper houses in the community. But still, those Hungarians who moved away from the old neighborhood continued to return for Sunday mass, to shop in Hungarian markets, and to gather with their friends (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:7).

The Hungarian character in the DRIC study area continued for years. It was not uncommon to hear gypsies roaming the streets playing Hungarian songs throughout the neighborhood (Scott 2001). Residents spoke Hungarian in Lehotsky’s Bakery, Zolkower’s Department Store, the Delray Meat Market and Rozi Neni’s Bar. They danced at the Verhovay and the Petofi social clubs, ate chicken paprikash at Al’s Lounge and walnut torte at the Fancy Pastry Shop, and bought hurka (rice sausage) at Szabo’s Meat Market (closed in 1995). There were many bars, among the most famous being Kovacs Bar (still extant), a well-known workingmen’s night spot that often featured a Gypsy

orchestra, and the Soltesz Bar (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:10; Scott 2001). Many were employed at Solvay Process, Peninsular Stove, International Salt Mine, Revere Copper & Brass, and the Ford Rouge Plant (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:100).

Delray, remained for many decades the most important focus of Hungarian life, not only in southeast Michigan but also beyond, as Zoltan Veres so fondly recalled:

Delray, a compact Hungarian residential/business/entertainment center (which has developed under the shadow of the factories that provided jobs for eager working families), was a magnet for Windsorites, who crossed over to Detroit by bridge, ferry-boat and tunnel, to visit relatives, to attend churches or church functions, to dine and dance at favorite night spots (*Ne Tovabb*, Kovacs Bar, Hungarian Village and so many others) to the beat of Gypsy orchestras (*Janos Brenkacs*, Ziggy Bela), to buy imported foods from Hungary (preserves, paprika from *Szeged*, salamis, etc) and of course to attend the movie theater which featured Hungarian film stars such as *Javor Pal*, *Kabos Gyula*....On Sunday afternoons, Windsorites flocked to Detroit to catch the latest....film. Hungarian radio....connected Detroit and Windsor and ensured that Hungarians were up to snuff on popular tunes and upcoming events. [Huseby-Darvas 2003:24].

In 1951, approximately 55,000 Hungarians were living in the city of Detroit. Delray was, of course, the primary residential location of the Hungarians, but still others were living in Highland Park, Lincoln Park, Allen Park, East Detroit, and a few in Grosse Pointe and Birmingham (Wayne State University 1951:25). According the ethnic study conducted by Wayne State University in 1951, Hungarian-associated properties dominated the ethnic buildings located in the DRIC study area, in particular Tier 3 (Delray District). At that time, eight Hungarian-based churches were located in Delray alone. Two of the eight structures have since been demolished, and six remain extant; however, only one of the churches is still associated with the Hungarians. The eight churches located in Delray in 1951 included the First Hungarian Evangelical and Reformed Church, at 8016 Vanderbilt Street (demolished); the First Hungarian Lutheran Church at 8151 Thaddeus Street (extant); the Free Magyar Reformed Church at 8020 Thaddeus Street (extant); the Holy Cross Hungarian Roman Catholic Church Complex at 8423 South Street (extant); the Hungarian Baptist Church at 8400 Vanderbilt Street (extant); the Hungarian Pentecostal Church at 8505 Dearborn Street (demolished); the Hungarian Reformed Church at 8676 Dearborn Street (extant); and the St. John's Greek Catholic Hungarian Church at 441 Harbaugh Street (extant) (Wayne State University 1951:25).

In addition to churches there were a number of social clubs located in Delray, including the Detroit First Szekely-Magyar Association at 8020 Thaddeus Street (extant); the Hungarian Butchers and Grocers Association of Detroit and Vicinity at 8117 Burdeno Street (demolished); and the Hungarian American Democratic Club, Hungarian Women's Club, and Szatmarmegyei Association, all at 8005 West Jefferson Avenue (extant). Although the buildings at 8020 Thaddeus Street and 8005 West Jefferson Avenue are still extant, the Hungarian clubs associated with them are no longer in operation (Wayne State University 1951:25).

A number of Hungarian benefit societies were also located in Delray, including the Bridgeport Association Lodge #14 at 608-610 West End Street (extant); the Hungarian Reformed Association Lodges #35, 241, 316, 11, 358, and 239 at 7907 West Jefferson Avenue (demolished); the Louis Kossuth Society located at the intersection of West End Street and Vanderbilt Street (unknown); the Verhovay Association, at 8005 West Jefferson Avenue (extant); and the Woodmen of the World

Lodges #189 and 215 at 8129 West Jefferson Avenue (extant). Although four of the five buildings are still standing, none of the aforementioned Hungarian benefit societies are associated with them (Wayne State University 1951:25).

It took years for the transition from the largest Hungarian community in Michigan to its present demographic to occur. Although the Hungarian population seemingly began declining after the Second World War, as late as 1957, Hungarian immigrants were drawn to Delray as refugees of the Hungarian Freedom Fight (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:7). Hungarian immigrants who arrived at this time were generally referred to as displaced persons fleeing the political oppression of Communism; however, these people merely stopped off in the DRIC study area neighborhoods, and, by reason of education, trade or profession, found jobs and moved into more affluent areas.

While an estimated 12,000 Hungarian-born individuals and their offspring still lived in Delray during the early 1960s, the community was devastated by the riots in Detroit in the late 1960s. The riots were followed by plummeting property values, by a major demographic and ethnic shift in the population, and concomitantly, by the Hungarians' massive flight to nearby suburbs. By the 1980s of the estimated 27,000 Hungarian Americans who lived in the Metro Detroit area, less than 100 still resided in Delray (Huseby-Darvas 2003:54). In 1984, during an economic downturn that devastated the DRIC study area, one newspaper article claimed, "most of the Hungarian neighbors have either moved downriver or through Solosy Funeral Home" (Pepper 1984:3A). Still, the area retained enough Hungarian vestiges that a Hungarian Cardinal visited the area in the 1980s and held Mass at Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, which still draws Hungarian Catholics from the suburbs and beyond, many of whom are descendents of the original Delray residents and some who lived in Delray not long ago. Currently, descendants of the original Hungarian and Polish immigrants still live in the small, workingmen's homes on the side streets (Widen 2006).

Many former and current Hungarian residents call the Delray neighborhood the *vegvar*, the last bastion, the fortress, the last outpost of what they call "Real Hungarianess." As Jan Keri recalled Huseby-Darvas in 2003:

Yes, the rich ones, who moved away from here, look down on us because we still live in Delray. But here we stayed real Hungarians, whereas they left their Hungarianess back here when they moved. If they want to feel good, they come back for a visit...they come and visit whenever they can, or call on the phone just to talk about the old days. They are lonely for us in those fancy suburbs. There they don't even know their neighbors. [Huseby-Darvas 2003:53]

Huseby-Darvas (2003:53) notes that, perhaps there may be some validity to this statement. For instance, the older people who moved away from the community refer to their present houses or apartments as *lakas*, meaning dwelling, living quarters, or residence, which has an emotionally neutral connotation, whereas they call their former Delray residences *otthon*, meaning home, which is an emotionally loaded term connoting warmth, belonging, hearth. There is ambivalence in their feelings about Delray. Their expressions of compassion, concern, and pity for kin, friends, and former neighbors who are left there alternate with self-pity for no longer being a part of that community, and remorse that the community is no longer is existence. Then there is also among them a sense of self satisfaction for selling their homes in time, escaping while it was still financially feasible. Former Delray residents still care about and know practically everything that occurs there.

## **Poles**

The largest ethnic group to call Detroit home was the Poles (Woodford and Woodford 1969:248). The earliest Poles arrived in Detroit in 1837, but the peak of Polish immigration did not occur until the period between 1901 and 1919, when thousands of Poles settled on the city's east side and in Hamtramck. (Wayne State University 1951:47). As of 1880 the Polish-born component of the city's population was calculated at only 1,771 (Leake 1912:247). The majority settled on the city's northeast side, east of Hastings and to the north of High. As defined at that time, the "Polacktown" community was centered around St. Albertus Roman Catholic Church on St. Aubin Street (Farmer 1890:542, 928).

High wages and the potential of year-round employment served to augment Detroit's attraction among virtually all immigrant groups. Prior to 1900, Poles generally worked laying railways, paving streets, digging sewers, and laying water pipes, helping to develop the infrastructure of Detroit. Those who were able to find it preferred year-round work at the American Car and Foundry, Michigan Central Depot, or various stove works, mostly as unskilled laborers (Badaczewski 2002:13). With the dawn of the automobile era, after the turn of the twentieth century, many Poles found work in auto-related factories

First generation American-born Poles residing in Detroit in 1920 numbered upwards of 104,561. Detroit's ethnic Polish population accounted for 16.2 percent of the city's inhabitants, and included its mayor, John W. Smith. As of this period Detroit ranked as the fourth largest Polish city in the world following directly behind Warsaw, Lodz, and Chicago (Vinyard 1998:149, 173, and 249). Among foreign-born Poles the heaviest concentration (12,698) resided in the city's 16<sup>th</sup> Ward, between Junction and Livernois, when they accounted for 17.5 percent of the ward population. In the adjoining 18<sup>th</sup> Ward, between Livernois and Central, Poles (5,859) made up 13.6 percent of its inhabitants (Hunt 1922:496).

The presence of a Polish ethnic component within the DRIC study area has been a feature of neighborhood identity since the opening decades of the last century. Following World War I, Polish immigrants settled Downriver and on the city's southwest side, in the Delray area, which offered abundant employment in the automobile plants and other local industries (Woodford and Woodford 1969:248). They tended to reside at the west end of Delray, bounded by the Rouge and Detroit Rivers, and Dearborn and Fort Streets.

Poles, perhaps more than any other group, are closely identified with one religious group. While a few Poles are Protestant, and some are Jewish, the vast majority are members of the Roman Catholic Church. For most, the church is a hallmark of their Polishness. The Poles who immigrated to the United States and to Michigan kept his allegiance. They chose to live in Polish neighborhoods, usually built around a Catholic church staffed by Polish priests (Badaczewski 2002:24-25). In fact, the Poles resisted the trend toward American inclusion more forcefully than other ethnic groups. In Poland the church was the main source of resistance to foreign domination, while in the United States, Poles encountered a church leadership dedicated both to centralizing its authority and swift assimilation (Badaczewski 2002:27).

Churches invariably stand as the outwardly visible manifestation of ethnic enclaves, and in the DRIC study area, St. John Cantius Polish Catholic Church is a testament to the Poles who once lived in Delray. St. John Cantius was built in 1923. Prior to its establishment, Poles living in the DRIC study area attended other Catholic-based churches, including the Church of the Holy Redeemer, established outside the study area at the corner of Dix (i.e. West Vernor) and Junction in 1881 (Farmer

1890:543). St. John was one of 52 Polish Catholic churches in Detroit in 1951, but the only one located in the DRIC study area at the time (Badaczewski 2002:47).

At the start of World War II, higher wages in blue-collar jobs and new federal policies regarding housing finance caused many Poles to relocate from Delray to the downriver suburbs. Moreover, the inexpensive workmen's cottages initially built in the DRIC study area lacked architectural appeal and the amenities that many prosperous individuals expected. Many Poles found it easy and desirable to move to the suburbs (Farley and Mullin 2007a).

The Polish neighborhoods of Delray were greatly impacted several times in the later years of the twentieth century. In the 1960s, the construction of the Fisher Freeway link along I-75 resulted in the demolition of hundreds of houses. Then, in the 1970s, the development of the Detroit Wastewater Treatment Plant resulted in additional bulldozing of residential block after block. Most neighborhoods had the political clout to keep waste water facilities out; however, in the DRIC study area, the low-income, aging population and poor quality of housing led Detroit city officials to purchase approximately 300 homes and other significant buildings in the area for the establishment of the plant (Farley and Mullin 2007a; Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monreal 1975:8). In fact, a very popular Polish-American restaurant, Joey's Stables, was once located on West Jefferson Avenue. In operation from 1933 to 1989, it was demolished for the enlargement of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

### **Ruthenians**

There is little information available as to the dates of the first Ruthenian arrivals or their peak period of immigration to Detroit, but in the DRIC study area, they primarily comprised the Greek Catholic population. In 1951, the estimated Ruthenian population of Detroit was approximately 15,000. The Ruthenians tended to congregate in two areas of the city, on the east side, between St. Aubin and Connors and East Warren and Seven Mile Road, and near Plymouth Road west of Livernois Avenue (Wayne State University 1951:66). Although no distinct areas of Ruthenian settlement were located within the DRIC study area, according to ethnic studies conducted by Wayne State University in 1951, two churches serving the spiritual and social needs of the Ruthenian population of the city were located in Detroit, one of which was established in the DRIC study area. Located at 8345 Thaddeus Street, St. Stephen's Greek Catholic Church served the spiritual and social needs of the Ruthenian population in the study area (the church has since been demolished). The other church in 1951 offering services to Ruthenians was St. Nicholas, located at 2390 East Grand Boulevard. The same 1951 study mentioned that, at the time, no Ruthenian restaurants or grocery stores were located in Detroit (Wayne State University 1951:66). Similarly, in 2007, no buildings representing the Ruthenian occupancy of the DRIC study area were located during the field review.

### **Slovenes**

The Slovenes were perhaps one of the smallest groups to settle in the DRIC study area. The Slovenes first arrived in Detroit in 1853, but their peak immigration was marked by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1951, the estimated Slovene population of Detroit was approximately 4,000 (Wayne State University 1951:69). According to Wayne State University (1951:69), the Slovenes tended to congregate in two areas of Detroit: on the east side, in an area bounded by St. Aubin, Connors East Warren, and Seven Mile Road; and on the west side, near Plymouth Road, west of Livernois Avenue. Although no distinct areas of Slovene settlement were located within the DRIC study area, one extant building representing their imprint on the DRIC study area is located at 437 South Livernois Avenue. The building at 437 South Livernois, now the Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God,

formerly housed several Slovene social/ethnic groups, including the East Side Juvenile Circle, the Slovenian National Benefit Society Lodges #518, 677, and 711, and the West Side Juvenile Circle (Wayne State University 1951:69). No other buildings representing the Slovene occupancy of the DRIC study area were located during the field review.

### **African-Americans**

From 1830 to 1861, Detroit was a major stop on the Underground Railroad, the network of trails leading to freedom for people held as slaves in the American South (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:104). Canada abolished slavery in 1834, and many enslaved African-Americans came by way of Detroit to reach freedom in Canada. One such route ran along the waterways of Lake Erie, the Detroit River, Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River (Walker et al. 2001:8). In fact, Samuel Zug, (who originally owned Zug Island), is said to have been an integral part of Detroit's Underground Railroad, although he's conspicuously absent from most published histories. The covert operation provided handbills and newspaper ads (in code language), to announce meetings and gave updates on safe arrivals of people fleeing slavery. Instead of continuing on to Canada, however, many African Americans remained in Detroit (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:104).

During the period of Reconstruction (1855 to 1877), many African-Americans were attracted to Michigan by such notables as Sojourner Truth, the nineteenth-century African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist. Following the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment (abolition of slavery), the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment (granting of citizenship), and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment (granting of voting rights), African-Americans arrived from Ontario, drawn by the abundant open land in central Michigan (Walker 2001:15). By the industrial period of the late nineteenth century, African-American immigration to Detroit gained momentum. It was not uncommon for local factories and industries to send recruiters to the South to entice African-Americans to move north (Walker 2001:16). From 1870 to 1910, the black population of Detroit grew slowly, never exceeding 6,000 (Woodson 1949:53). Most African-Americans at this time were employed in industrial organizations (Woodson 1949:57).

Detroit's African-American population increased dramatically as a result of the major exodus from the South, especially during World War I (Walker 2001:17). During World War I, European immigration was temporarily halted, and the general job vacancy rate skyrocketed as men enlisted in the military, thus cutting off prime labor sources. Detroit faced a manpower shortage (Woodford and Woodford 1969:252). Suddenly, the African-Americans who had always been agricultural workers were sought by Northern labor agents for the war, automobile, and railroad industries. In many instances, they needed only a slight prospect of betterment to forsake their southern domiciles. For the most part they came from Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Tennessee, where the low price of cotton, massive floods and droughts had created a depression (Woodson 1949:67). During the next 40 years, thousands of African-Americans poured into northern industrial states in search of higher wages and the prospect of a better life. Between 1915 and 1950, blacks settled mainly on Detroit's west side where they found work in foundries and other heavy industries (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:109; Woodford and Woodford 1969:252).

African-American life in Detroit was challenging; many were forced to live in overcrowded, segregated neighborhoods, attend segregated schools and churches, and face exclusion from public places in general. Often they were forced to live in the older sections of the city (Walker 2001:21). Although African-Americans were living in the DRIC study area prior to 1940, sizeable numbers began moving into the area during that decade. World War II and other factors accelerated the process of the Hungarian departure from the DRIC study area, and African-Americans settled among the remaining Poles, Hungarians, and Armenians (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monrreal 1975:7).

The influx of thousands of African-Americans from the south gave impetus to the development and growth of religious establishments. Churches answered a deep religious longing which had to express itself in practical constructive community service; secondly, they were important centers for social activity, some offering both educational and recreational diversions (Woodson 1949:80). In Detroit, most African-Americans were either African Methodist Episcopal (AME) or Baptist. Since the Baptists had had neither rules nor regulations about the founding of new churches, they outnumbered the African Methodists to a great extent. On the other hand, the Black Methodist churches of the branch, African Methodist Episcopal, had a clear-cut system and officialdom composed of bishops and general officers. These bishops made assignments of ministers to churches and choices of territories in which new churches were to be established (Woodson 1949:81). In 1926, there were 44,000 black church members. More than one-half of the African-American population was enrolled in some church. No other ethnic or national group had reached that high total. There were 30,000 Baptists, and 7,000 Methodist Episcopalians (Woodson 1949:81).

By the 1950s, the African-American community of the DRIC study area had grown considerably, and most new residents to Delray settled in the area bounded by West End Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, Livernois Avenue, and Fort Street (Hauk-Abonyi and Horvath-Monreal 1975:7). Although challenged by city life, many newly transplanted residents brought with them a legacy of faith and trust in their community, particularly through their churches (Walker 2001:21). Through church membership, the African-American community of the DRIC study area became tightly knit. Churches were often more than centers of worship, they spawned political activism and served as outlets for social and cultural entertainment and expressionism (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:107).

### **Hispanics**

Although a trickle of Hispanics immigrated to Detroit prior to 1920, many did not arrive in the city until shortly after the start of World War I. The Hispanics were one of the last foreign-born groups to settle in the neighborhoods of southwestern Detroit (Skendzel 1980:4-5). Records from the 1920s indicate that there were Hispanic families scattered in pockets located on East Congress Street, Fort Street, Macomb Street, Monroe Avenue, and Michigan Avenue (Skendzel 1980).

Many Hispanics came to escape the general revolutionary conditions of the country, which brought great instability to life in Mexico. Others came to join family. Many of Detroit's Hispanic community came from Mexico, but a significant number also relocated from Texas and New Mexico. New arrivals to the city tended to live in rooming houses or found homes with relatives or friends (Skendzel 1980:14-15).

Once in Detroit, some Hispanics tried to guard against discrimination and being deported by calling themselves Spanish. During a Depression-era backlash, about 90 percent of Detroit's Hispanic community was sent away by the federal government (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:101). The 1930 census counted approximately 5,615 Hispanics living in Detroit (Skendzel 1980:10). By 1940, there were 1,565 foreign-born Hispanics in Detroit (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2001:101).

Hispanics differed from other ethnic groups, as they did not form concentrated communities, like other immigrant groups. Instead they settled throughout the DRIC study area, uniting only a few times a year during the celebration of national holidays. Usually the only factor in the decision of where to settle was if it were near a church (Skendzel 1980:5).

During World War I, Detroit became one of the chief regions for the manufacturer of war materials. Workers were badly needed to replace soldiers who had left the factories to bear arms. Despite the hard manual labor, Hispanic immigrants found it more desirable than life in an unstable Mexico. As a result, the Hispanics became one of the largest sources of population growth in Detroit (Booza 2004). In the 1950s, approximately 15,000 to 17,000 Hispanics were living in the city (Wayne State University 1951:43)

Since the 1940s, the Hispanic community has been concentrated in an area between Fort Street and Vernor Highway, from Holy Trinity Church (Sixth Street) to several miles westward, principally along Bagley Avenue up to East Grand Boulevard and beyond. To many in the community, Bagley Avenue is the commercial corridor, or rather the main street (Skendzel 1980:8). Since the 1950s, many Hispanics have moved into the DRIC study area, and also out to the Detroit suburbs of Ecorse, River Rouge, and Lincoln Park (Skendzel 1980:9). A growing number of Hispanics reside near All Saints Church on West Fort Street (Skendzel 1980:9). In a 1980 study of Detroit's Hispanic population, the author considers the group a colony, rather than a community, since it is a relatively unorganized group lacking its own commercial, social, or religious center (Skendzel 1980:5). This definition no longer seems appropriate, with a large Hispanic business community located on Bagley, including restaurants and stores, and a number of social organizations, such as the Latino Family Services on Fort Street, have developed in the last quarter of a century.

In 1958, Father Jerome Fraser, who was educated in a seminary in San Antonio, was appointed an assistant at All Saints Church on Fort Street and began to serve the Hispanic community (Skendzel 1980:42). He was followed in 1959 by Father Jacob Samonie, who also spoke Spanish but who left the parish for other duties in 1961, at which time there were 75 Hispanic families in the parish. Besides confessions in Spanish, a Guadalupe Society had been formed for both men and women, with a membership of some 20 persons. Weekly, the rosary was recited in various Hispanic homes (Skendzel 1980:42). Similarly, the Hispanic community has established centers of worship at both Holy Cross Church on South Street in the DRIC study area and Most Holy Trinity on Sixth Street in the Corktown neighborhood (Skendzel 1980:42-43).

Unlike many groups that immigrated to Detroit around World War I, Hispanics continue to arrive in significant numbers and maintain a strong presence in the DRIC Study area (Skendzel 1980:5). As established Hispanics move from the neighborhoods into other areas of Detroit (and out into the suburbs), they are replaced by other Hispanics, many of whom are newly-oriented to the city, and even the country (Skendzel 1980:7)

## **1.4 Architectural Contexts**

One means to learn about a community is to understand its built environment, which refers to the houses, commercial structures and industrial facilities that shelter the people who live and work in an area. In some cases, engineering structures, such as train tunnels, bridges, and even culverts are examined to learn more about the community, how it grew, and how people moved within it. Smaller features, like street lights, or landscape elements, may also be considered, because these, too, contribute to the distinct character that defines an area.

This section looks at the buildings that comprise the study area. Different architectural styles and forms from within the area are defined and illustrated by local examples. For the ease of the reader, the information has been divided into sections on residential architecture, commercial and public architecture. Within the residential section, forms and styles are defined. Typically, a vernacular

building type is described by its shape, and often the roof shape, because they lack the architectural details that often are identified with popular or architect-designed styles. Under the public architecture headings are resources such as schools, churches, commercial buildings, and industrial facilities.

#### **1.4.1 Residential Forms and Styles**

Architectural forms and styles are discussed separately below.

##### **Forms**

###### Gable Front

The Gable Front house is a vernacular form characterized by a rectangular plan and front gable roof. The building form recognizes the orientation of the gable roof, which presents the roof peak at the front of the structure (Garfield and Wyatt 1986:3-2). Popularized during the mid-1800s, Gable Front houses are linked to the narrow lot sizes of nineteenth century city neighborhoods. In many Midwest states, the one and one-half-story versions dominate, but two and two and one-half-story examples also occur. Some have dormers on one or both planes of the roof, such as the house at 520 Harrington Street (Figure 1.4.1-1). The main entryway is either central or offset along the front façade, and sheltered by a small entry porch or an uncovered stoop. Sometimes a full porch with a shed or hipped roof spans along the front. Gable Front additions typically are limited to the rear elevation; those with side additions are classified as Gabled Ell forms (Garfield and Wyatt 1986:3-2).

Unlike the numerous houses constructed in a specific style, the Gable Front house remained popular for over a century, with most of the houses attributed to the form constructed between 1840 and 1925 (Garfield and Wyatt 1986:3-2). The extended popularity of the house form was due to its typically narrow width, making it appropriate for narrow urban lots (McAlester and McAlester 1984:90). The form is common to Detroit working class neighborhoods that were built during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because of the popularity of the building form within urban areas, and its extremely long tenure as one of the most popular house forms constructed, numerous examples of this building form are present within the DRIC study area. For example, numerous versions of the form (one and one-half, two, and two and one-half-stories) are located on Anthon Street. The residence at 5645 is a rare example of the two and one-half-story, Gable Front house form in the DRIC study area (Figure 1.4.1-2).

###### Side Gable

The simple Side Gable house is a vernacular form characterized by a rectangular plan. One-story, one and one-half-story, and two-story versions each occur throughout the Midwest. Plans are typically symmetrical with a central or offset entrance. A raised porch is usually attached to the front, either as a small entity, or spanning the entire house width, and can have shed, front gable, or hipped roof. Considered plain in appearance, simplistic details such as sills and lintels, turned posts, decorative shingles, oversized parlor windows, and etched or stained glass are often evident. The house at 810 Casgrain Street is a Side Gable house that also has Colonial Revival style elements (Figure 1.4.1-3). The Side Gable house is extremely rare in the DRIC study area.



Figure 1.4.1-1. Gable Front House, 520 Harrington Street



Figure 1.4.1-2. Two and One-Half Story Gable Front House, 5645 Anthon Street



Figure 1.4.1-3. Side Gable House, 810 Casgrain Street



Figure 1.4.1-4. Cross Gable House, 835 North Wheelock Street

### Cross Gable

Unlike other vernacular types, the cross gable form did not appear until late in the nineteenth century. The “cross” refers to two intersecting, identical roofs, the ridges of which form a cruciform. The simple, often unadorned vernacular form is not strongly associated with any particular style. Instead, popular elements of the period were often incorporated into the construction of Cross Gable/Hipped Cottage homes. Early nineteenth-century examples often embrace elements of the Queen Anne style, while twentieth-century examples exhibit elements of the Foursquare and Bungalow forms (Wyatt 1986:3-9).

The Cross Gable form can range from one to two stories, is roughly square in plan, and has a cross gable or cross gambrel roof. Full porches with low roofs typically span the front of Cross Gable buildings. Porches often incorporating elements of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century architectural styles add décor to the vernacular form (Wyatt 1986:3-9). One example of Cross Gable residences in the DRIC study area can be found at 835 North Wheelock Street (Figure 1.4.1-4).

### T-Plan

A particularly common sub-type of the Gable Front house has a perpendicular rear element, which forms a T-shape plan. Referred to as a T-Plan house, examples are found in a variety of heights, and both front and rear portions of T-plan houses are integrated (Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana 1997). It was easy for builders to apply elements of architectural style to the basic building, and this appears to have frequently been the case with the homes of the DRIC study area, with the T-Plan house often exhibiting small areas of Queen Anne influenced details. T-Plan residences are abundant in all tiers of the DRIC study area. The house at 520 Post Street is an example of the form (Figure 1.4.1-5).

### Gabled Ell

The Gabled Ell form incorporates the wing into the main body of the building, creating an L-shaped footprint. Houses are typically oriented with the wing paralleling the road. This housing form is related to an earlier form, the Upright and Wing, which was popular between Michigan’s early settlement period through the Civil War Era (1820s through 1860/1865). The major difference between the two forms is that, in the Gabled Ell, the side wing has become an integral part of the building core (McLennan 1987:8). An additional diagnostic feature distinguishing the Gabled Ell is its use of a one and one-half or two-story form with an intersecting gabled roof, on which the apexes are the same, or almost the same, height (McLennan 1987:8).

Common elements associated with the Gabled Ell is the presence of a porch running along the length of the long wing of the building, and the lack of a door in the gabled facade facing the street, which typically remains only one or two fenestration bays wide (Gordon 1992:136). The greatest popularity of the Gabled Ell in Detroit probably occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This form easily accepted the features of popular styles during these decades, most popularly the Queen Anne style, although other styles may be seen with less frequency. The Gabled Ell form succeeded in maintaining the familiar shape of the earlier Upright and Wing, while providing much more living space for large families. Examples of the Gabled Ell form, such as the house at 710 South Green Street (Figure 1.4.1-6) can be found throughout the DRIC study area.



Figure 1.4.1-5. T-Plan House, 520 Post Street



Figure 1.4.1-6. Gabled Ell House, 710 South Green Street

### Foursquare

The Foursquare house was the most popular new house type from the end of the nineteenth century into the early years of the twentieth century (Massey and Maxwell 1995:29). A building form, rather than style, it could be easily adapted to most owner's tastes, by changing the construction materials or adding ornamental details. Almost as a rebellion against the overly decorated Victorian era, Foursquares shied away from the ornamentation of the previous generation (Massey and Maxwell 1995:31).

By definition, the Foursquare stands from two to two and one-half stories, exhibits a nearly square floor plan and block-like shape, with a hipped roof (Gordon 1992:137). Additional elements associated with the form include dormers and a one-story porch, often stretching across the entire facade (Massey and Maxwell 1995:31). Modern, as well as more traditional, building materials were well suited to the Foursquare. Houses were clad with everything from wood clapboards, shingles, and brick veneer, or cast-concrete blocks. With the improvements made in the modern concrete industry, this too became an accepted building material, providing the smooth stucco finish popular with many Foursquare builders (Massey and Maxwell 1995:31). The Foursquare is perhaps one of the most popular house forms in the DRIC study area. The house 7124 West Lafayette Boulevard is an example of the form in the DRIC study area (Figure 1.4.1-7).

### Rowhouse

A Rowhouse is one of a row of contiguous houses, each sharing at least one common wall with another in the row. Typically, a Rowhouse is two or three stories with a two- or three-bay façade, a raised basement, and stepped entrance or porch. Brick is the favored building material. Most Rowhouses have a modified side hallway plan with outside doors at the front and back. Rear wings are common additions. Adjoining Rowhouses may be unrelated to one another in design, be similar or even identical, or be elements of a larger composition encompassing several houses. Even where an entire row was built at once by one builder or developer, each Rowhouse almost always occupies an individual lot and is owned independently (Gordon 1992:129). An example of a Rowhouse in the DRIC study area is located at 8032-8040 Witt Street (Figure 1.4.1-8).

### Two-Family Flat

The Two-Family Flat is a two to two and one-half-story, horizontally divided building with identical flats or apartments on each floor. The most distinctive physical feature of this gable-fronted house is the two-story porch that extends the full width of the façade. Most of the porch railings originally were open; solid railings usually are more recent alterations. Two-Family Flats, popular during the early twentieth century, were often considered good investment properties during the second and third decades (Gordon 1992:160). An example of a Two-Family Flat in the DRIC study area is located at 730 Harrington Street (Figure 1.4.1-9).

### Duplex

A Duplex is any detached residential building containing two separate dwelling units sharing a common interior wall. Duplexes were popularly constructed between 1880 and 1940 and are almost always two or two and one-half stories with front or side-facing gable roofs. Floor plans vary according to the number of bedrooms and the location of the stairway. Invariably, duplexes are



Figure 1.4.1-7. Foursquare House, 7124 West Lafayette Boulevard



Figure 1.4.1-8. Rowhouse, 8032-8040 Witt Street



Figure 1.4.1-9. Two-Family Flat, 730 Harrington Street



Figure 1.4.1-10. Duplex, 6319-6321 West Lafayette Boulevard

several rooms deep and only one room wide at the front of each unit. Duplexes can be both owner-occupied and rental units (Gordon 1992:160). The building at 6319-21 West Lafayette Street is an example of a Duplex in the DRIC study area (Figure 1.4.1-10).

### Fourplex

The first half of the twentieth century saw an increase in the demand for inexpensive building sites and housing, leading to the creation of the Fourplex apartment building. The Fourplex is characteristically two-stories tall, constructed of brick, and features a center hallway serving two apartments on each floor. The building type was popularly seen as an excellent investment property for their respective owners, many of whom often lived in one of the units. The Fourplex is not commonly seen in the DRIC study area; however, two side-by-side examples are located at 1048/1050 and 1058/1060 North Waterman Street (Figure 1.4.1-11).

### **Styles**

#### Queen Anne

Popular from 1880 through 1910, the Queen Anne style was inspired by the British buildings for the Centennial Exposition of 1876 in Philadelphia. The style was further promoted by the designs of English Victorian era architect Richard Norman Shaw, whose early works were widely publicized in architectural journals. In the years following the Exposition, designs and plans for the style appeared in carpenter-builder manuals such as *Palliser's Model Homes* (1878) and *Comstock's Modern Architectural Designs and Details* (1881) (Gordon 1992:91). Queen Anne styling exerted a dominating effect on Detroit area domestic architecture during the 1890s. Over the succeeding decade it influenced detailing on more vernacular forms. This ongoing blending of traits has led some researchers to categorize a sub-style sometimes referred to as Princess Anne. Calling them Queen Anne Vernacular might better convey the ides of this ongoing process.

The Queen Anne style included such features as asymmetrical massing, irregular floor plans, variety of exterior finishes, bay and oriel windows, and wrap-around porches in an attempt to avoid smooth wall surfaces and achieve an aged look (McAlester and McAlester 1984:263; Gordon 1992:91). An example of house displaying elements of the Queen Anne style in the DRIC study area is located at 1011-1017 North Morrell Street (Figure 1.4.1-12).

#### Colonial Revival

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a renewed interest in the earlier styles of the United States occurred. This resurgence in popularity was in part due to the influence of the architectural design firm of McKim, Mead and White (Gordon 1992:100). Early examples of Colonial Revival styles tended to be free interpretations of earlier styles in which details were often exaggerated (McAlester and McAlester 1984:326). After 1925, the Colonial Williamsburg restoration greatly contributed to interest in the styles of colonial days. The fashion shifted to carefully researched copies with more correct proportions and details. Aided by the distribution of plans and drawings, as well as photographs of original Georgian buildings, the houses built between 1915 and 1935 more closely resemble ancestral prototypes (McAlester and McAlester 1984:326).

Elements commonly associated with the Colonial Revival style include double-pile plan houses (two rooms deep) with a central entrance and hallway, gabled roofs, large chimneys, formal symmetry (typically with three or five bays), raised basements, and multi-pane windows (Gordon 1992:101).



Figure 1.4.1-11. Fourplexes, 1048-1050 and 1058-1060 North Waterman Street



Figure 1.4.1-12. Queen Anne Style House, 1011-1017 North Morrell Street

Colonial Revival style buildings were predominately wood prior to ca. 1920 when brick veneer was introduced (McAlester and McAlester 1984:324). Examples of the buildings with Colonial Revival style elements are abundant in the DRIC study area; one such house is located at 803-805 Casgrain Street (Figure 1.4.1-13).

#### Dutch Colonial Revival

In the early part of the twentieth century an extensive number of publications introduced several exciting “new” house forms through the popular press. Architects and builders were moving away from Victorian excess in an attempt to restore order to the built environment (Gordon 1992:100). Many architects turned to a “simpler time,” and drew their inspiration from the buildings constructed in the colonial era of America. Among the styles resulting from this movement was the Dutch Colonial Revival.

Loosely based on early Dutch dwellings constructed on the Hudson River, the Dutch Colonial Revival style was popular from 1900 to 1935 (Gordon 1992:104). Its most distinctive and defining trait was the use of a gambrel roof. Early varieties are invariably front gambrel forms, which were well adapted to narrow city lots. Houses constructed prior to ca. 1915 had front gambrel roofs; the predominant form into the 1930s featured side gambrels (McAlester and McAlester 1984:322). The latter is not found in the DRIC study area. Additionally, there are no examples of cross-gambrel Dutch Colonial Revival houses in the DRIC study area. Other common elements of the form include roof dormers, shingled dormer and gable ends, and colonial style elements such as doorway hoods and porticos (Gordon 1992:104). Examples of residences incorporated elements of the Dutch Colonial Revival style scattered throughout the DRIC study area. One such property is located at 1033 North Livernois Avenue (Figure 1.4.1-14).

#### Tudor Revival

Although technically not a revival of an American architectural style, Tudor Revival is based on the revived interest in the sixteenth-century English vernacular architecture associated with the reign of the Tudor family and other late Medieval English prototypes (Gordon 1992:109; McAlester and McAlester 1984:358). Promoted in England by Richard Norman Shaw beginning in the 1880s, the earliest examples of the style in the United States were architect designed buildings, often closely copying British prototypes. In the early years of the twentieth century, a more modest Tudor style made its way onto the landscape, often featuring clapboard or stucco clad walls, but avoiding expensive brick sheathing until after World War I (McAlester and McAlester 1984:358). In the 1920s and 1930s, the popularity of the Tudor Revival style exploded, having made its way into house plan books and ready-made catalogs (Gordon 1992:109). By the end of the 1930s, the popularity of the style faded.

Typically, the Tudor Revival home featured an asymmetrical plan, a steeply pitched roof, prominent chimneys, and casement windows placed in groups. The roof often featured front facing gables, frequently overlapping each other to create additional visual interest (Gordon 1992:109). Chimneys tended to be large, and on higher style examples were often highly ornamented with patterned brickwork, stone, and the use of multiple shafts (McAlester and McAlester 1984:357). Wall cladding materials included stucco, brick, stone, and half-timbering using either stucco or brick as infill between the timbers. Tudor Revival house roof cladding on higher styles often utilized slate, or featured false-thatching with rolled eaves (Gordon 1992:109). Only a handful of houses with Tudor Revival style elements are located in the DRIC study area. The house at 1037 North Green Street is an example of the style (Figure 1.4.1-15).



Figure 1.4.1-13. Colonial Revival Style House, 803-805 Casgrain Street



Figure 1.4.1-14. Dutch Colonial Revival Style House, 1033 North Livernois Avenue



Figure 1.4.1-15. Tudor Revival Style House, 1037 North Green Street



Figure 1.4.1-16. Side Gable Bungalow, 1003 North Waterman Street

## Bungalow

Beginning with the advent of the Craftsman movement led by Gustave Stickley in the United States, the Bungalow house was felt to express convenience, thrift, and practicality (Duchscherer and Keister 1995:15). Stickley, who took up the cause of the Arts and Crafts movement begun in England by William Morris, dismissed the earlier Victorian era opulence and machine crafted ornamentation for simpler, hand-crafted designs that featured low horizontal lines and natural materials. The Bungalow was one of the most popular house styles constructed in the early years of the twentieth century. Its greatest popularity occurred between 1905 and 1930 (Gordon 1992:136), which coincided with the period of rapid population growth in Detroit.

Typical side gable Bungalows range from one, one and one-half, or two stories, and feature long, sweeping side-gable roofs with overhanging eaves (Gordon 1992:138). There is often a centered shed or gable dormer on the front roof slope. The unbraced porches are the full width of the house (McAlester and McAlester 1984:453). Wall surfaces tended to include a variety of textures and colors. The majority of Bungalows in the DRIC study area are side gable forms, such as the house at 1003 North Waterman Street (Figure 1.4.1-16). Fewer examples of one-story, hipped roof Bungalows are also located in the DRIC study area, such as the house at 815 Glinnan Street (Figure 1.4.1-17).

## Mediterranean

The Mediterranean style is popularly applied to those styles having their origin in southwestern Europe, particularly Spain, Italy, Southern France. First popularized by the Pan-American Exhibition in San Diego in 1915, Mediterranean later became a favorite of many early twentieth-century filmmakers. Mediterranean style buildings differ from the earlier Mission style in that they generally employ fewer arches with more rectangular windows and doors. In its later phase, the Mediterranean style detailing became more ornate and the walls more textured. The Mediterranean style enjoyed popularity from about 1915 to 1940 (Gordon 1992:111). The Berwalt Manor Apartment Building located at 760 South Campbell Street is the only representation of the Mediterranean style in the DRIC study area (Figure 1.4.1-18).

## Minimal Traditional

Constructed in the years following the Depression, Minimal Traditional homes combine the traditional Eclectic house form with a limited amount of decorative detailing (McAlester and McAlester 1984:478). The steeply pitched roof of the Tudor Revival period was replaced by low to intermediate pitched Side or Cross Gable forms. There is also a conservation of materials, with eaves and rake constructed close, which distinguishes the style from the later Ranch house with its broad overhanging roof. The Minimal Traditional house often boasts a large chimney and at least one front-facing gable. Built in large quantities in the years preceding and following World War II, Minimal Traditional houses dominate tract housing developments of the era (McAlester and McAlester 1984:478). Few examples of the Minimal Traditional building form are located in the DRIC study area. One such house is located at 521 South Crawford Street (Figure 1.4.1-19).



Figure 1.4.1-17. Hipped Roof Bungalow, 815 Glinnan Street



Figure 1.4.1-18. Mediterranean Style Apartment Building, 760 Campbell Street



Figure 1.4.1-19. Minimal Traditional Style House, 521 South Crawford Street