United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

__X__ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

The Civil Rights Movement and the African American Experience in 20th Century Detroit

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Periods of Significance
1900-1941: Rekindling Civil Rights in Detroit
1941-1954: Birth of the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit
1954-1964: Modern Civil Rights Movement in Detroit
1964-1976: The Second Revolution in Detroit

Thematic Framework:
Equal Education
Public Accommodation
Voting,
Housing,
Equal Employment,
Criminal Injustice

Context Themes:
The Role of Detroit's Black Churches in the Civil Rights Movement 1900-1976
The Demand for Fair Housing in Detroit 1918-1976
Equity in Health Care 1900-1976
African Americans and Detroit's Automobile Industry 1914-1976
Detroit and Equal Education 1900-1976
Detroit's Black-Owned Businesses 1900-1976
Detroit's African American Social Clubs and Civil Rights Organizations 1900-1976
Politics, Law, and Representation in Detroit 1919-1976
Finding a Voice: Detroit's African American Population and the Media1900-1976
Music & Civil Rights in Detroit 1900-1976

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

The Civil Rights Movement and the African American Experience in 20th Century Detroit — Michigan
Name of Multiple Property Listing — State

D. Certification

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

Signature of certifying official | Deputy SHPO (Title) | December 18, 2020 (Date)

Michigan State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of the Keeper | 1/27/2021 (Date of Action)

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.
Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

Page Numbers

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

A few notes about terminology: In June 2020 the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) published a statement on its website indicating that the organization had updated its style guide regarding the capitalization of color when referring to race. In part, NABJ recommends capitalizing color whenever it "is used to appropriately describe race then it should be capitalized, including White and Brown."[1] Likewise, the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) revised its style guide in June 2020 to recognize the capitalization of color terms when they refer to race and ethnicity. Previously, CMOS recommended using lower case letters for terms that refer to one's race or ethnicity, "unless a particular author or publisher prefers otherwise."[2] In this Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) and associated nominations, the State Historic Preservation Office will "prefer otherwise" and follow NABJ and CMOS in the capitalization of Black, White, and other colors when they are used to appropriately describe race and ethnicity.

This MPDF and associated nominations will also use the words "uprising" or "rebellion" when referring to the events of July 1967, rather than "riot". The term "riot" has been used historically, by many groups and organizations, though not all, to describe those events, yet the word is a simplification of the myriad causes that led to the uprising. The term "riot" is inherently limited, does not account for the deep and long-standing social, political, and economic frustrations of Black Detroiters, and wrongly, whether intentionally or unintentionally, assigns a veneer of criminality to Black citizens. To illustrate that point, a report published by the Detroit Urban League, in August 1967, identified rioters as a distinct group within all of those who participated in and were affected by the uprising. Even in the wake of the uprising, many Black Detroiters did not see the events of late July simply as a riot. The historical record does not often reflect the diversity of thought and emotion of that time. While this MPDF cannot begin to account for the entire uprising, it will employ terminology that better reflects a broader experience. We do this with the goal and hope of creating a better understanding through improved dialogue.

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction

This Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) documents the history and typology of buildings, districts, structures, objects, and sites related to *The Civil Rights Movement and the African American Experience in 20th Century Detroit*. The National Park Service (NPS) developed a framework of "broad themes within the civil rights story," published under the title *Civil Rights in American: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites*. The report identified the overall period of significance as 1900 to 1976. Within that timeframe the following periods of significance related to twentieth century African American civil rights history were identified.

- Rekindling Civil Rights 1900-1941
- Birth of Civil Rights 1941-1954
- Modern Civil Rights 1954-1964
- Second Revolution 1964-1976

[1] "NABJ Statement on Capitalizing Black and Other Racial Identifiers," NABJ Style Guide, June 2020, www.nabj.org/page/styleguide.
[2] "Black and White: A Matter of Capitalization," CMOS Shop Talk website, June 22, 2020, http://cmosshoptalk.com/2020/06/22/black-and-white-a-matter-of-capitalization/.

The NPS thematic framework identified the following broad themes related to the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan:

- Equal Education
- Public Accommodation
- Voting
- Housing
- Equal Employment
- Criminal Injustice

All of the above themes directly apply to the civil rights struggle in Detroit and can be used to shape a civil rights context for the city.

The NPS has also identified Areas of Significance for designating properties to the National Register of Historic Places. The overriding area of significance for civil rights resources in Detroit is Ethnic Heritage-Black. Under that category, individual resources are most likely to be significant under commerce, education, health/medicine, law, politics/government, performing arts (music), and social history. Other categories such as art, community development, entertainment/recreation, literature, and transportation may apply. The NPS categories can be found in *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Nomination Form*.

In addition to the general themes noted above, the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) identified the following themes that directly relate to the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit and apply to all periods of significance:

The Role of Detroit's Black Churches in the Civil Rights Movement 1900-1976 – At the turn of the century, Detroit's Black churches focused on social welfare tending to the basic needs of Black Southern migrants then entering the city. They soon added programs that addressed the social skills rural migrants needed to adapt to urban life; established hiring programs for African Americans with companies like Ford. In the 1920s and 1930s they provided banking and loan programs for African Americans; supported the implementation of fair employment practices in defense work during World War II; and provided a platform for national civil rights activists in the 1960s. Church leaders such as the Reverends Robert Bradby, C.L. Franklin, and Albert B. Cleage Jr. (later Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman) were at the forefront of civil rights activism in the city.

The Demand for Fair Housing in Detroit 1918-1976 –Detroit's most significant civil rights issue during this period was housing equity. Though the city's traditional African American neighborhood of Black Bottom/Paradise Valley offered a sense of community and shared culture—especially a popular music scene--by 1917 the vast numbers of African Americans moving to the city put a severe strain on the neighborhood's resources. Though Detroit's back middle class had some mobility and were able to move into established White neighborhoods such as Arden Park, the city's Black working class was more tightly bound by restrictive, racial neighborhood covenants that kept them out of White working-class neighborhoods. The housing shortage caused by the Great Depression and World War II exacerbated the situation. The New Deal's federal housing programs kept Detroit's neighborhoods segregated through unfair lending practices and "redlining" neighborhoods, which ensured disinvestment in Black neighborhoods. The lack of housing for defense workers during World War II brought racial conflicts to a head as Black and White workers vied for public housing

opportunities and pioneering Blacks met with violence when they attempted to move into all White neighborhoods. The era of the 1950s saw block busting, White flight, and conflict over a proposed open housing ordinance. By the 1960s anger over continued injustices, including discrimination in housing, erupted in the 1967 Rebellion.

Under the Employment theme two subthemes were identified:

- **African Americans and Detroit's Automobile Industry 1914-1976** - The automobile industry became Detroit's largest industry in 1914 after Henry Ford introduced the assembly line. Mass production required thousands of workers and attracted a large population of Southern Blacks to Detroit. The Ford Motor Company was the first major automobile company to hire African American workers and remained the only automobile company to do so on a measurable scale until World War II. The demand for fair labor practices for defense work in Detroit's factories during World War II and the fight for equal representation within the United Autoworkers Union (UAW) shaped civil rights issues nationally.

- **Detroit's Black-Owned Businesses 1900-1976** - Because African Americans were denied access to services in areas outside traditional Black neighborhoods, there was a strong push within the African American community for the establishment of Black-owned businesses. They not only offered services to Blacks, successful business owners reinvested in the Black community. Organizations such as the Housewife's League the Booker T. Washington Business Association promoted both the establishment and patronage of Detroit's Black-owned businesses.

African American Social Clubs and Civil Rights Organizations 1900-1976 - Social clubs and civil rights organizations provided needed assistance to Detroit's African American community. The NAACP provided legal aid, the Detroit Urban League worked for better racial conditions and equal opportunities, and the Interracial Commission provided education programs. Dozens of organizations such as women's clubs, sororities and fraternities, and organizations like the Cotillion Club offered special programs and assistance to improve the lives of African Americans throughout the city.

Voter suppression was not experienced in Detroit at the same magnitude it was in Southern states. African Americans could vote—they just weren't able to gain representation. Under the Voting theme, the following subtheme was identified:

- **Politics, Law, and African American Representation in Detroit 1919-1976 -** In 1919 the Detroit Common Council abolished the Ward system and adopted city-wide elections. As a result, no African American won an elected office in Detroit until 1957. Thus, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, the city's African American community had no formal representation in city government. The city's first Black mayor, Coleman Young, wasn't elected until 1974.

Finding a Voice: Detroit's African American Community and the Media 1900-1976 - Excluded from traditional sources of communication, African Americans established Black-owned newspapers, radio stations, television stations, publishing houses, newsletters, and bookstores to promote Black life and culture and provide an Afrocentric point of view. The Black Arts Movement in Detroit emphasized the contributions of African culture through plays, music, poetry, art, and dance, while universities began offering Afro-American studies to document Black heritage.

Music and Civil Rights in Detroit 1900-1976 - Music afforded African Americans a means of independence and control they weren't able to access in most industries, not only as performing artists but as owners of clubs, record labels, and recording studio. Motown Records was one of the most successful Black-owned businesses of the period and strongly influenced the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

Associated Historic Context

The Civil Rights Movement and the African American Experience in Detroit prior to 1900

African Americans, both free and enslaved, were citizens of Detroit from its earliest days in the eighteenth century. Many of the early French settlers, and later the British, brought enslaved people to Detroit, with a census carried out by the British in 1778 recording 138 enslaved persons. The Northwest Ordinance outlawed slavery in the Michigan Territory in 1787, but as slavery remained legal in British Ontario until 1793, for a short time enslaved people from Canada escaped across the river to Detroit. In 1793, Jacob Young became the first Black man to own land in Detroit.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Detroit became a key stop on the Underground Railroad, a network of safe houses used by African Americans to escape slavery in the South. Given its strategic location across the river from Canada, Detroit was a natural point at which to cross. Blacks who reached Detroit were aided by a community of abolitionists, both Black and White, living in the city. Some chose to stay in the city, a practice that led to Detroit's first incident of unrest related to civil rights.

Thornton and Lucie (also called Ruth or Rutha) Blackburn, an enslaved couple, had escaped to Detroit from Louisville in 1831. Two years later, slave hunters arrested the couple, planning to return them to the South. Detroit's community of free Blacks strongly protested their arrest, and conspired to smuggle Lucie Blackburn out of jail and across to Canada. They then stormed the jail and freed Thornton Blackburn, who also escaped to Canada. White Detroiters angered by the escape of the Thorntons attacked the Black community, assaulting African American men and women and their property. Over forty buildings belonging to African Americans were burned down. In the wake of this incident, the city government enacted harsh measures on the African American population, and many Blacks subsequently left the city for Canada. The Blackburns were later captured again in Canada, and became the subject of a court case that established that Blacks could not be involuntarily returned to the United States.

Although many formerly enslaved Blacks left Detroit for the safety of Canada following the Blackburn incident, the free Blacks who stayed continued to advocate for their civil rights and to work towards the abolition of slavery. The city's first African American church, Second Baptist, formed when Black congregants objected to segregated seating in the First Baptist Church. The leaders and congregation of Second Baptist were deeply involved in the Underground Railroad, serving as a safe house and assisting those fleeing to cross the river. Second Baptist also hosted the state's first Convention of Colored Citizens in 1843, part of a national movement from the 1830s to the end of the century to bring together Black citizens to strategize for achieving racial justice.

During the Civil War, racial tension increased in the city, resulting in a second incident of unrest. In 1863, after a White girl reported she had been raped by a Black man (she later recanted, and the man she accused was not Black), a White mob again attacked Black citizens, burning their homes and businesses. While this incident prompted the city to establish a police force, it was an all-White institution, and would remain so for many

years. In 1865, Second Baptist Church again hosted the State Convention of Colored Men, a meeting which also established a constitution for the Equal Rights League of the State of Michigan, a branch of the National Equal Rights League that had been established the previous year.

The Black population of Detroit grew steadily following the Civil War, from 2,235 in 1870 to 4,111 in 1900, although its relative size as a percentage of the city's overall population declined from around three percent in 1860 to a low of a little over one percent in 1910. Blacks lived mostly in the city's lower east side, in the areas along St. Antoine and Hastings streets. They were joined there by successive waves of immigrants to the city, including Germans, Italians, Poles, and Russians; in the 1890s, the city's Jewish population also swelled during the latter years of the nineteenth century, with many settling in the same area along Hastings Street.

While Detroit in the latter part of the nineteenth century transitioned from land-based wealth to an economy based on industry and trade, African Americans remained mostly employed in the service industries as hotel waiters, porters, and barbers or as servants in private houses. However, there were a small number of entrepreneurs, such as Robert and Benjamin Pelham, who established the first successful Black newspaper, the *Detroit Plaindealer*, in 1883, which served as a model for the *Chicago Defender* before it folded in 1893. The Pelhams were also involved in the short-lived National Afro-American League, a precursor to the NAACP. African Americans were also some of the city's earliest professional musicians, and their bands were among the first to feature syncopated music. Musicians like Theodore Finney, Fred Stone, and Emma Azalia Hackley were also activists who promoted Black pride through their music.

As the twentieth century dawned the Black population of Detroit was still relatively small and mostly confined to a small geographic area on the city's lower east side. Despite the achievements of the Black community in promoting the abolition of slavery and equal rights for Black citizens, it still struggled against discrimination and segregation, which had been upheld by the United States Supreme Court in its 1896 Plessy *v*. Ferguson decision.

In the Plessy case, Justice Henry B. Brown of Michigan wrote the opinion for the majority. The Court's decision upheld the Jim Crow doctrine of "separate but equal" (i.e. segregation). It was the opinion of the majority of the Court, "the enforced separation of the races… neither abridges the privileges or immunities of the colored man, deprives him of his property without due process of law, nor denies him the equal protection of the laws." The majority opinion further noted that separation of races does not "necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other." If inferiority were to be assumed, the majority held, it was "solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it."

The lone dissenting justice (one justice did not participate in the case), Justice John M. Harlan of Kentucky, himself a member of a slave-owning family, wrote a stirring and powerful dissent. Harlan observed, in part:

> The Thirteenth Amendment does not permit the withholding or the deprivation of any right… It not only struck down the institution of slavery… it prevents the imposition of any burdens or disabilities that constitute badges of slavery or servitude. It decreed universal civil freedom in this country… Every one knows that the statute in question had its origin in the purpose… to exclude colored people from coaches occupied by or assigned to white persons… If a State can prescribe, as a rule of civil conduct, that whites and blacks shall not travel as passengers in the same railroad coach… why may not the State require the separation in railroad coaches of native and naturalized citizens

> of the United States, or of Protestants and Roman Catholics… The white race deems itself to be the dominant race in this country. And so it is, in prestige, in achievements, in education, in wealth and in power…. But in view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens… The humblest is the peer of the most powerful. The law regards man as man, and takes no account of his surroundings or of his color."

Justice Harlan wrote later in his opinion that the decision of the majority, and the continued enactment of state laws that "proceed on the ground that colored citizens are so inferior" would only serve to stimulate racial animosity, distrust, and hatred.

1900-1941: Rekindling Civil Rights

In the early twentieth century, two dominate philosophies emerged regarding the approach African Americans should take to obtain equality. Booker T. Washington, the African American educator who founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, supported Black uplift, the belief that education and economic success would enable African Americans to gain acceptance into mainstream—White--society. W.E.B. DuBois, sociologist, author, and founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), took a more radical approach advocating for Black Nationalism—unity among all Black people no matter their country of origin. DuBois believed that organizing as a group would mean greater strength in challenging inequality and demanding civil rights.[3] Both philosophies strongly influenced the civil rights activities of Detroit's African American community prior to World War II. In Detroit, much of the work of the city's Black leaders during the period 1900 to 1917 can be connected to the ideology of "racial uplift," the idea that Black material and "moral" progress would work to diminish White racism. By the 1930s the jobs available to African Americans in Detroit's automobile industry, Ford Motor Company in particular, had increased their economic and social progress and they could begin to demand equal treatment and opportunity under the law through the courts.

The early decades of the twentieth century saw the beginning of the Great Migration, the movement of African Americans from the agricultural south to the industrial north. Often considered the largest and most rapid internal movement in American history, the Great Migration came in two distinct waves, the first between World War I and the Great Depression, and a second following World War II, ending in about 1970. During the Great Migration, Blacks fled the southern United States to escape the oppressive atmosphere of the Jim Crow racial caste system, which was frequently enforced by violence and lynching, and to seek better economic opportunities in the rapidly industrializing north. Detroit, with its growing automobile industry, was a natural destination for many of the estimated 1.6 million Blacks who moved north during the first Great Migration from about 1916 to 1930. The city's Black population stood at just under 6,000 in 1910; by 1920 it had increased to over 40,000, and in 1930 there were over 120,000 African Americans in the city. African Americans as a percentage of the overall population had also increased from a little over one percent in 1910 to over seven and a half percent in 1930.

As they had in the nineteenth century, Black Detroiters continued to actively work to secure civil and political rights for African Americans. They approached this on many fronts, including pursuing legal action in cases like the Ossian Sweet trial, as well as efforts to secure better working and living conditions. Much of the work

[3] "Two Nations of Black America. The Debate between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington." *Frontline.* February 1998. www.pbs.org.

of Black leaders in Detroit during this period can be connected to the ideology of "racial uplift," the idea that Black material and "moral" progress would diminish White racism.

One of the most active uplift organizations in Detroit was the Detroit Urban League (DUL). Founded in 1916 as an affiliate of the National Urban League, the DUL spent much of its early history helping to assimilate Black migrants who arrived in the city during the first Great Migration. The DUL helped new arrivals find jobs and places to live, operated a clinic to provide health services for babies, founded the Pen and Palette club to help young Black artists, and opened the Green Pastures camp for Black children, who were barred from White camps. When rural Southern Blacks arrived in Detroit, they were really refugees, directionless with no local contacts, no place to stay, and little money for food. There was a pressing need by "thousands of newcomers for employment, housing, religion, and health care."[4] Two organizations, the Second Baptist Church (441 Monroe Street) and the Detroit Urban League (DUL), initially took on the responsibility of welcoming newcomers and assisting them with basic needs. A member of the DUL tried to meet every train from the South that arrived at Detroit's Michigan Central Depot armed with information about the services the organization provided. The DUL opened a community center building at 553 East Columbia (demolished) in 1918 to provide temporary shelter for migrants. They created a list of landlords that rented to African Americans, kept information on potential job opportunities, and provided legal assistance when needed.[5] Over time, they operated a clinic for African American children, founded the Pen and Palette Club to encourage young Black artists, and opened the Green Pastures summer camp for African American children in Jackson County, Michigan. Though the DUL's first locations at 449 (2509) St. Antoine and 606 East Vernor Highway have been demolished, the organization purchased the former home of architect Albert Kahn (208 Mack Avenue) in 1944 and it remains its headquarters today.

Black middle-class women were especially actively engaged in social uplift activities. Clubs such as the aforementioned Entre Nous Club, the Detroit Study Club, and the Original Willing Workers combined social activities with outreach and politics. In 1921 eight of these clubs formed the Detroit Association of Colored Women's Clubs to coordinate their philanthropic, educational, and political activities. Incorporated in 1941, the Association purchased the former home of William Lennane on Brush Street at the corner of East Ferry the same year.[6] In 1930, a group of Black women under Fannie Peck founded the Housewives League of Detroit. Established to encourage African American housewives to patronize African American businesses, the League also pressured White businesses to hire Black workers, using their buying power as leverage. The Detroit League was one of several groups involved in founding the National Housewives League of America several years later, and it worked in conjunction with the Booker T. Washington Trade Association, a similar men's organization founded around the same time by Fannie Peck's husband, the Reverend William H. Peck, and the National Negro Business League.

In 1918 the Division of Negro Economics of the United States Department of Labor, surveyed the conditions of Black migrants in Detroit. Its director George Haynes reported that the large number of poor southern Blacks that had poured into the city between 1916 and 1918 had altered the existing relationship between Detroit's White and Black populations. Prior to 1918, Blacks in Detroit had been able to gain a level of acceptance and social class. However, the lack of education and rough, rural ways of Southern Black migrants led the city's

[4] Elizabeth Anne Martin. *Detroit and the Great Migration*. (Ann Arbor, MI: The Bentley Historical Library), 1993.
[5] Ibid.
[6] The Detroit Association of Colored Women's Clubs, now known as the Detroit Association of Women's Clubs, is a contributing resource within the National Register-listed East Ferry Avenue Historic District (1980). The City of Detroit has also designated the area as the East Ferry Avenue Historic District (1981). The association was recognized with a Michigan Historical Marker in 1986. The building is also included in the National Park Service's travel itinerary for Detroit.

White middle class to begin to view all Blacks in a negative light. This in turn created a class rift between the city's middle- and lower-income Blacks. Haynes challenged Detroit's church leaders and their congregations to help improve the conditions of Black migrants stating that, "If directives for service and social responsibility could be nourished by religious imperatives, Black uplift efforts could possibly transcend petty class boundaries between migrants and Black bourgeoisie."[7] According to religious scholar Julia Robinson Moore, "Many African American pastors worked in tandem with local Black elites in creating programs and services, which would help transform the Black migrant's dress, demeanor, and behavior in the public forums of larger society."[8] Black congregations took up Haynes's recommendations. One example, Second Baptist Church under Reverend Robert Bradby, who headed the congregation from 1910 to 1946, provided a welcome shelter for Black migrants and the church created "over thirty-five auxiliaries dealing with everything from employment, hygiene, proper dress, cooking, and education."[9]

The sudden increase in Black migrants to the city also caused White laborers to fear the competition for jobs. That fear increased when the city's African American population doubled in just four years from 40,838 in 1921 to 81,831 in 1925. The perceived threat led to increased membership in the Detroit branch of the Ku Klux Klan, which increased from three thousand in 1921 to twenty-two thousand by 1924.[10] The Klan, which had been established during Reconstruction, saw a national resurgence with membership growing to almost five million by 1925. The Klan used Prohibition to exploit fear against European immigrants, whom they associated with drinking and crime.[11] In Detroit, their target was often African Americans. The Klan became so emboldened in 1923 that they burned a cross on the city hall lawn, and in 1925 sponsored a mayoral candidate, Charles Bowles. Though he was defeated, Bowles ran again and was elected in 1929 but recalled soon after. According to prominent attorney Clarence Darrow:

> The negroes were not the only people who came from the south to the north during the war. White workmen as well as colored ones came up to all our industrial centers. The Whites brought with them their deep racial prejudices, and they also brought with them the Ku Klux Klan, which was very powerful for a time at least in every northern city. . . In Detroit the Klan was strong. . .[12]

By the early 1930s, however, the Klan was in decline, but a violent sibling had been established in Bellaire, Ohio, sometime in the mid-1920s, was in ascendance. This outfit, which eventually came to be called the Black Guard, was borne out of a stagnant Klan chapter that had lost its national charter. Reports in 1936 suggest the group "actually has no definite name,"[13] but in Michigan it was known as the Black Legion,[14] and occasionally

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[7] Julia Robinson. *Race, Religion, and the Pulpit*. (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2015), 42.
[8] Ibid,41.
[9] Ibid,47.
[10] Beth Tompkins Bates, *The Making of Black Detroit in the Age of Henry Ford*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 82
[11] Becky Little. "How Prohibition Fueled the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan." *History*. January 15, 2019. https://www.history.com/news/kkk-terror-during-prohibition
[12] Clarence Darrow, "Clarence Darrow on the Sweet Trials, Detroit 1925-1926." *The Story of My Life*. American Class. Becoming Modern" America in the 1920s. http://americainclass.org/sources/becomingmodern/divisions/text2/darrowsweettrials.pdf
[13] "Black Legion's Roll Call Held Exaggerated," *Dayton Daily News* (Dayton, Ohio), June 1, 1936.
[14] Ibid. The same article goes on to state the Black Legion was also known as the Black Guard (Ohio), the Black Brigade (West Virginia), the Bucktails (Pennsylvania), the Red Legs (Indiana), and in other places the Black Knights and the Night Riders.

the Night Riders.[15] The Black Legion (used here for simplification) adopted a military-like structure, black robes, a skull-and-crossbones insignia, and were made up "renegade klansmen who sought more militant action."[16]

The Black Legion expanded into surrounding states throughout the early 1930s. The center of Michigan's Black Legion activity appears to have been Highland Park, Michigan, where its leader lived. The group reached a peak of between twenty and thirty thousand members statewide. They terrorized Blacks, Jews, Catholics, and others with threats, beatings, violence, and murder. In 1934 the Black Legion burned the house of James E. Bailey. Bailey was in his home at the time of the attack, and burned to death.[17] In February 1935 a group of Black Legion members shot Edward Armour, a resident of Ecorse, Michigan, who was working for the campaign of a mayoral candidate.[18] Armour was seriously wounded in the shooting, but survived. Later in 1936, members of the Black Legion murdered Silas Coleman, a husband, father, and World War I veteran, "to provide entertainment for a week-end party."[19] All of these men were attacked simply because they were Black. While arrests were made for some of the violence perpetrated upon African Americans, it was not until eleven Black Legion members were convicted of the murder of Charles A. Poole, a White WPA organizer, who was killed in 1936.[20]

Racism in Detroit was further inflamed in the 1930s by Father Charles Coughlin, a Catholic priest with a pioneering radio show that broadcasted his anti-Semitic rants to millions of Americans. He was perceived as a fascist, and Detroit's African American church leaders called upon the city's Black population to ignore the divide he tried to create between its Jewish and African American citizens.[21]

Detroit's Black population, both native and migrant, directly competed for work with the waves of White immigrants also flooding the city during this period. These White immigrants vied with Blacks for the good-paying service jobs, and were also preferred for skilled jobs in industry. During the pre-World War II period, White employers in general were only willing to hire Blacks for unskilled and menial jobs. In government they were the street sweepers and trash collectors; in the service industries like hotels and retail, they were relegated to back of house operations like janitors. While a few industrial employers, notably Henry Ford, were willing to hire Blacks to work in the automobile factories and some other industries, they typically were hired for only the most dangerous and unskilled jobs, such as pouring metal in the foundries as well as janitorial and maintenance tasks. Blacks also experienced discrimination in the early labor union movements.

During the early twentieth century, the main alternative to unskilled work for Detroit's African Americans was to establish their own businesses. Not only did these businesses provide greater opportunity for their owners and employees, but Black-owned businesses also catered to the growing Black population of the city, which often faced discrimination and segregation in White-owned businesses. One of the first Black-owned businesses in the city was the James H. Cole Home for Funerals. Cole's family had been in business in the city since the Civil War, building wealth first on a grain store and livery stable, then moving into real estate investments. In 1919, James H. Cole, Sr. opened an undertaking practice on St. Aubin in the lower east side. It joined numerous other businesses in the Black neighborhood including restaurants, grocers, cigar vendors, billiards parlors, launderers,

[15] "Crowley Rules Him Out of Grand Jury's Inquiry," *Detroit Free Press*, May 27, 1936.
[16] "Black Legion's Roll Call Held Exaggerated," *Dayton Daily News* (Dayton, Ohio), June 1, 1936.
[17] "Victim of 'Prank' will See Cultists," *Detroit Free Press*, July 27, 1936.
[18] "Dean Reveals Shooting as a Cultist Prank," *Detroit Free Press*, July 26, 1936.
[19] "Dean Reveals Shooting as a Cultist Prank," *Detroit Free Press*, July 26, 1936.
[20] "The murder that brought down the Black Legion." *Detroit News.* August 4, 1997.
[21] "Blow is aimed at propaganda: Fascism is assailed at Negro session." *Detroit Free Press*. April 14, 1939:9

tailors, shoemakers, locksmiths, barbers, and drug stores. In 1928 the Black-owned Great Lakes Mutual Insurance Company began offering insurance policies to Black homeowners. Two years earlier, Detroit's Black business owners had established a branch of the National Negro Business League, an organization founded in 1900 by Booker T. Washington to promote the commercial and financial development of Black-owned businesses. While Washington had spoken at the Detroit Light Guard Armory as early as 1903, Detroit did not establish a branch of the league until 1926. In August 1930, Detroit hosted the national convention of the League, which focused on the topic of the grocery trade.

Employment was not the only realm in which Detroit's African Americans struggled against discrimination in the early part of the twentieth century. Although over a hundred thousand Blacks arrived in the city between 1910 and 1930, sometimes at a rate of thousands per month, they were very limited geographically in where they could settle. Detroit's African American community had historically occupied a small area on the lower east side, centered around St. Antoine and Adams streets. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they often shared this area with other recent immigrants to the city, including Germans, Italians, and a large contingent of Jewish people from Russia and Poland. Prejudice on the part of Detroit's native White and Christian population discouraged ethnic, racial, and religious minorities from settling in the older neighborhoods or in the expanding middle- and upper-class districts. Within Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, recent immigrants tended to form their own enclaves for support and to maintain their cultural traditions, for example the "Little Berlin" area around Gratiot Avenue and the Jewish districts along Hastings Street.

As this area became increasingly crowded in the early decades of the twentieth century, the non-Black immigrant groups found it relatively easy to move out, forming their own enclaves in other areas of the city, such as the Jewish neighborhoods along Dexter Avenue north of downtown, or Poletown near the southern border of Hamtramck, or, eventually, assimilating into existing White neighborhoods. These options were generally not open to Detroit's Black residents.

Instead, the formerly mixed racial neighborhood around the lower east side became almost exclusively Black. This area divided generally into two zones, although precise boundaries remain a topic of debate. The mostly residential district of Black Bottom was located south of Gratiot Avenue between Brush Street and the Grand Trunk Railroad Tracks, eventually extending all the way to the Detroit River on the south. The commercial counterpart to Black Bottom was Paradise Valley, extending a few blocks to either side of the main commercial corridors of Hastings and St. Antoine streets from Gratiot to Mack, and eventually expanding north toward Forest Avenue.

Paradise Valley in the 1920s and 1930s became the center of Detroit's Black entertainment district, and one of the few areas where Blacks and Whites could mingle to listen to jazz music, albeit in a limited manner. Although historically Black Bottom was considered a residential area and Paradise Valley a commercial one, in practice there were businesses located throughout Black Bottom and Blacks lived in homes, boarding houses, and apartments on the side streets of Paradise Valley. Most of the historically Black churches, businesses, and social and political organizations founded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were located in Black Bottom and Paradise Valley.

One of the distinctive outcomes of the Black community's segregation into a relatively small geographic area was the physical proximity of multiple social and economic classes within the community, where even the Black "bourgeoisie" and prominent citizens lived close to their poorer neighbors. However, by the 1920s there were several small middle-class enclaves developing outside of the lower east side. Like their White

counterparts, Black Detroiters aspired to home ownership, but due to restrictive racial covenants and racial prejudice, there were few areas open to them. Blacks looking to purchase homes had to search for areas well away from established White neighborhoods. The largest of these was the "Black West Side," a community bounded by Tireman Avenue, Epworth Street, Warren Avenue, and Grand River Avenue. Over a third of the homes in the West Side were owner-occupied, compared to only ten percent in Black Bottom/Paradise Valley, and they were for the most part well-built and well-kept. The West Side had a thriving commercial corridor, Milford Street, and a strong community ethic. Social clubs were popular among the middle class in early twentieth century Detroit, but very few clubs were integrated, so Blacks of the West Side founded their own clubs, including the Entre Nous Club for women, and the Nacirema Club, for men. Club members engaged in social events like dinner parties and dances, sponsored speakers and children's events, and engaged in charitable activities.

The most exclusive African American enclave in Detroit in the 1920s was undoubtedly Conant Gardens, a small neighborhood bound by Seven Mile Road, Conant Street, and Nevada Avenue. As with the West Side neighborhood, Blacks pursuing home ownership on the east side had to go all the way out to a relatively unpopulated area of the city to establish a new neighborhood. Conant Gardens was surrounded by open fields, in a setting that was at the time more suburban than urban. Here, African Americans built substantial homes of wood and brick in the most popular styles of the times, such as Tudor Revival and Craftsman.

Although these pioneering middle-class homeowners were able to establish small enclaves in what was at the time the outer areas of the city, they remained relatively self-contained, and color lines solidified around them as Whites expanded toward and around them.

Attempts by Blacks to move into White neighborhoods were met by harassment and violence. When physician Ossian Sweet purchased a house on Garland Street near Charlevoix, on the city's east side, hostile crowds gathered outside. Shots were eventually fired, killing one man and wounding another, and Sweet, his wife, and friends who were helping him guard the house were arrested and tried for murder. With the assistance of the NAACP, who hired the nationally famous lawyer Clarence Darrow, the defendants were eventually acquitted. The Ossian Sweet incident became known as one of the pivotal events in United States civil rights history, although it did little to ease racial segregation in the city.

While some middle-class Blacks were able to move out of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, the majority of the city's Black inhabitants, and virtually all of its working class and poor, remained confined to that area prior to World War II. One small group of about 1000 migrants were able to settle on former farmland in the Eight Mile Road and Wyoming area in the 1920s. Encouraged by the Detroit Urban League, the settlers scraped together resources to build small frame homes on lots purchased on land contract from the friendly White land speculator who owned the tract. Although city property surveys considered this one of the poorest areas of the city in the 1930s, nearly all the residents lived in single-family, detached homes, two-thirds of them owner-occupied.

This neighborhood remained the exception, rather than the rule. In contrast, most of the Black Bottom/Paradise Valley residents were housed in rental properties, older houses that were frequently subdivided to accommodate the increased numbers of Blacks streaming into the city. The crowding, relatively poor economic situation, and absentee landlords who refused to upgrade the nineteenth century building stock, meant that the quality of the housing in the area declined steadily during the period. Conditions were greatly exacerbated by the Great Depression beginning in 1929, as Blacks, who were often "last hired, first fired" suffered proportionately worse

from unemployment. The Detroit Housing Commission, in an attempt to relieve at least some of the overcrowded and dilapidated housing situation, secured funding from the federal government to build public housing, the first such federally-funded housing development for African Americans. However, this development, called the Brewster Homes would not be built on vacant land, but on an already densely packed neighborhood on the western edge of Paradise Valley, south of Mack Avenue between Brush and Hastings Streets. Although the project encountered significant opposition from the Black families in the areas who did not want to lose their homes, clearance and construction proceeded, with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt on hand to break ground in 1935. The first units opened in 1938, with additional row houses and apartment buildings constructed in the following decades. One building from the previous neighborhood did survive, though. Shiloh Baptist Church, under its Pastor Solomon David Ross, successfully argued that the church would serve as a continued anchor for the neighborhood.

While the Plessy v. Ferguson decision had espoused the concept of "separate but equal," in upholding segregation, segregated facilities for Blacks in Detroit were generally anything but equal. The influx of Black migrants to the city created a healthcare crisis as the hospitals remained segregated, only rarely admitting Black patients. In addition to programs like the Detroit Urban League's baby clinic, a group of thirty Black physicians opened a hospital, named for Black poet Paul Laurence Dunbar, in a house on Frederick Street near St. Antoine in 1918. The hospital also had an associated nursing school to train African American nurses. Higher education was another area where separate but equal did not apply. While Black colleges had been present since the mid nineteenth century in other parts of the country, Michigan did not have a Black college until 1939, when the Lewis College of Business opened on West Warren Avenue in Detroit. Two years later, the College moved to a converted house on East Ferry Street, where nearby White residents promptly sued to shut the college down, ostensibly on the grounds that it was a business use in a residential neighborhood. So, Lewis converted the college to nonprofit status, and the case was dismissed. Lewis College of Business is considered the first Historical Black College or University (HBCU) in Michigan.

Although many of the activities of Detroit's activist community focused on charitable work and social uplift, Black Detroiters also engaged in more overt legal and political avenues to secure civil rights. Perhaps the most venerable of the organizations devoted to legal and political equality was the Detroit Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Detroit's branch of the NAACP was founded in 1912, shortly after the national organization formed. Initially meeting at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, and later Second Baptist Church, the NAACP grew to be the nation's largest chapter during World War II. The group sued to overturn racial restrictive covenants, mounted the legal defense of Ossian Sweet, and combatted discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations.

Black Detroiters also sought political office, albeit with very little success during this period. Although Black men had the right to vote since the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, and Black women had gained the right to vote along with White women in 1920, their small numbers compared to the White population and racial prejudice had kept them from nearly all elected offices in the city. In 1892, William W. Ferguson was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives from Detroit, but Black representation in local and state elected government remained rare through the early years of the twentieth century. It was not until nearly forty years later, in 1930, that Michigan's first Black state senator, Charles A Roxborough, was elected. Roxborough, a Republican, practiced law out of an office in the Breitmeyer-Tobin Building, one of the first downtown buildings to rent office space to Black tenants. A few years later, Detroiters Charles C. Diggs, Sr. (whose family owned the House of Diggs, a well-known funeral home founded just a few years after James H. Cole's House of Funerals), Joseph Coles, Harold Bledsoe, and Joseph Craigen, formed the Michigan Federated Democratic

Club, the first all-Black Democratic organization in the country. In 1936, Diggs was the first Black Democrat elected to the Michigan state senate. When Diggs was forced into segregated housing in Lansing, he introduced bills to strengthen anti-discrimination laws in the state, resulting in the passage of the so-called "Diggs Law" – the Equal Accommodations Act of 1938.

The importance of the church in African American spiritual, social, and political life can hardly be overstated and during this period Detroit's Black churches remained, as they had since the nineteenth century, the physical locus and main driver in securing civil rights for all Black Detroiters. Second Baptist Church, Detroit's oldest Black congregation, had been active in the Underground Railroad and the abolition movement in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, it continued as one of the most influential religious organizations in the city. The church not only saw to the spiritual needs of its congregation, but also its physical ones. Automaker Henry Ford went to the pastors of Second Baptist and St. Matthew's Episcopal church to hire workers, as he preferred sober church-goers who had been vetted through the church, and many of Detroit's Black churches used their formal and informal social networks to find jobs for their members. Black churches also helped their members find housing and provided other support. In 1936, Fannie Peck, founder of the Housewives League of Detroit, opened a credit union in the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church. The Detroit Branch of the NAACP was housed for several decades in Detroit churches, including St. Matthew's Episcopal and Second Baptist.

1941-1954: Birth of the Civil Rights Movement

Throughout World War II, and during the immediate postwar years, a growing intensity in the struggle for civil rights was evident in Detroit, as in the rest of the United States. Black civil rights activists in the city increasingly took the fight for equality into formerly White spaces, particularly the factory floor and residential neighborhoods. Focusing on conflict rather than uplift as a strategy for demanding rights, Black Detroiters began to gain ground.

The growth of the Black population in Detroit, which had begun in the 1910s and continued through the 1920s, stagnated during the 1930s, as the demand for labor declined, especially in the industrial north. In Detroit the collapse of the American economy hit Blacks especially hard. Widick observed that unemployment among Detroit's Black population reached eighty percent during the depths of the Great Depression.[22] He found that African Americans:

> They had been lured to the city to work in the growing automobile industry, but now many who had worked at menial jobs in the industry were laid off. The city's economy was in chaos, and workers everywhere found themselves on relief. The soup lines were a common sight, and so was fierce competition for the few remaining jobs. Needless to say, racial tensions were high, as they always are at times of scarcity.[23]

The Black population in Detroit only increased by about thirty thousand between 1930 and 1940, compared to the nearly eighty thousand who had arrived in the previous ten-year period. However, movement picked up again during the Second Great Migration, when some five million Blacks moved from south to north in the period from 1940 to 1970. In Detroit, the Black population nearly doubled from 1940 to 1950 (from 149,119 in

[22] B. J. Widick, *Detroit: City of Race and Class Violence*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 44.
[23] Wilbur Rich, *Coleman Young and Detroit Politics: From Social Activist to Power Broker*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999), 49.

1940 to 300,506 in 1950), with an increase of a further 181,717 between 1950 and 1960. By 1960, Blacks as a percentage of the city's population had increased from just under ten percent in 1940 to over twenty-five percent in 1960 (1950 was the peak of Detroit's White population; it began to decline steadily in the following decades).

World War II was a time of opportunity for Detroit's Blacks, but also a source of increased racial tension. Detroit's automobile factories had converted to wartime production, making them the "Arsenal of Democracy," but they needed more and more workers at the same time as most of their young male workers were entering the service to fight overseas. The wartime industries turned to women and African Americans to meet the considerable materiel demands of the United States and its allies. Thousands of Blacks from the south arrived in Detroit to take up jobs, and for the first time, they were needed for skilled work, instead of the maintenance and unskilled labor they had been relegated to for the past decades. Civil rights and labor activists used the opportunity to push for workplace equality, couching their demands in patriotic terms to argue that discrimination was unpatriotic, and placing ads in the employment section of the local newspapers giving resources for workers to contact if they had experienced discrimination. The United Autoworkers union (UAW) began opening membership to African Americans and lobbying for civil rights protections for African Americans, despite incurring the opposition of some of their own rank and file members and corporate managers. Advocacy for equality in the workplace was aided by President Franklin Roosevelt's executive order mandating non-discrimination in wartime industries. The war proved to be a turning point in Black access to skilled work in the factories, with the proportion of Black men in factories rising from twenty-nine percent in 1940 to forty-five percent in 1950, much of the gain in skilled positions. Black women, however, gained the least from wartime employment; although labor shortages did create some opportunity for them, it was harder for civil rights activists to break the barrier of both race and gender.

The Great Depression had created a housing shortage throughout the city, only slightly alleviated by federally-funded housing developments such as the Brewster Homes and others in White areas of the city. Although World War II helped fuel economic recovery, housing construction remained very sluggish due a shortage of skilled workers and materials, both of which were prioritized for the war effort. Black Detroiters, still squeezed into the lower east side and a few middle-class enclaves, bore a disproportionate share of that burden. Although they represented nearly two-thirds of the city's population growth in the 1940s, virtually no new housing was built. The only housing construction of any scale during World War II was for defense worker housing.

The Roosevelt administration was under immense pressure from civil rights activists to provide housing for Black as well as White defense workers, so in 1941, the Detroit Housing Commission approved two sites for federally-sponsored public housing, one White, one Black. For the African American development, the city's housing commission chose a location already close to a segregated African American area, at the northwest corner of Dequindre and Modern streets. Shortly thereafter, federal housing officials overrode local officials and designated a location at the intersection of Nevada and Fenelon, closer to an industrial site and not far from a small African American enclave at Conant Gardens, but still in what the city considered a "White" area. In September of 1941, the project was named the Sojourner Truth Homes, but throughout the fall, while construction proceeded, Whites in the area protested strongly, backed by the city's housing commission, which had adopted a policy not to "change the racial characteristics of any neighborhood through…housing projects under its jurisdiction." In January of 1942, the Federal Housing Administration changed its mind and determined that the Sojourner Truth project would instead be for Whites, promising African Americans another development.

Arthur S, Siegel photographer. *Detroit, Michigan. Riot at the Sojourner Truth homes, a new U.S. federal housing project, caused by white neighbors' attempt to prevent Negro tenants from moving in. Sign with American flag "We want white tenants in our white community," directly opposite the housing project*. Detroit, Michigan, 1942. Feb. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017844754/.

A coalition of Detroit's civil rights activists, backed by a telegram from Mayor Edward Jeffries, themselves protested, and the FHA relented and allowed African Americans to begin moving into the apartments in early 1942. This touched off physical confrontations and fighting between African Americans determined to defend their homes and Whites determined to prevent them from doing so. According to the March 16, 1942, issue of *Life*:

> White residents of the [nearby] neighborhood threw a 24-hour picket line around Sojourner Truth Homes. Few nights before the riot they staged a "call-out." Cars tooted through the streets and in 15 minutes a mob of 200 men had convened. The Ku-Klux Klan met, urged violent action, burned several fiery crosses. At 7:30 a.m. on Feb. 28 – the day set for occupancy – a picket line of 700 white surrounded the project. Several moving vans… were halted a few blocks away. Some 300 Negroes massed behind them. A thin line of police stood between. On both sides clubs, brickbats, guns and knives appeared.

At the end of the melee, scores of people were either arrested or injured, the homes were unoccupied, and "Axis propagandists dwelt lovingly on the affair." Photograph captions also noted that several of the intended occupants returned to their former homes only to find them already occupied by new tenants.

Eventually, a show of force by city and state police officers and the Michigan National Guard enabled the African American residents of Sojourner Truth to move into their new homes.

White Detroiters who felt threatened by Black progress toward equality in labor and housing expressed their frustration through racial animosity. Tensions came to a head in June 1943, a year after the physical confrontations at Sojourner Truth. The month had begun with the NAACP holding its national conference in Detroit. Over the four-day conference, held at Second Baptist Church with a mass meeting at Olympia Stadium on the final day, attendees had considered the question of "The Status of the Negro in the War for Freedom." Later that month, the Packard Plant promoted three Black workers to the assembly line to work alongside Whites, as required by President Roosevelt's executive order. This led to a "wildcat" strike involving over twenty-five thousand White workers, and a physical altercation at Edgewood Park. On June 20, brawls between young people on a hot summer day sparked rumors of a race war. After some Blacks broke into White-owned stores in Paradise Valley, a mob of over ten thousand Whites attacked Paradise Valley, aided by the police. As they had in 1833 and 1863, the Black community bore the brunt of the damage, with twenty-five of the thirty-four people killed and most of the property damage.

Following the qualified gains of World War II, Blacks lost ground in employment and housing in the immediate post war period. Both women and African Americans were forced out of the skilled wartime jobs when White men returned to the factory floor following the war. Unions, which had sometimes advocated for civil rights

protections during the war, were uneven in their support following the war, a situation that varied depending on the industry, corporation, and even sometimes from plant to plant within an automaker. Unskilled jobs in industry, government, and retail remained open to Blacks, as well as low-level clerical work and education. However, Black-owned businesses and professions remained an alternative for the Black middle class. One growing sector for Black business was the automobile sales and service industry. In 1938, Ed Davis opened a used car lot and gasoline station on East Vernor, and on the strength of his success, Studebaker offered him a franchise in 1940. Davis would later become the first African American to be awarded a Big Three franchise when he opened a Chrysler dealership on Dexter Avenue in 1963. And in 1950, lawyer George Crockett became the first African American to join a racially integrated law firm, Goodman, Crockett, Eden, and Robb. Middle class Blacks continued to participate in social and politic activities to promote equality and improve conditions for African Americans in general. A number of Black leaders formed the Cotillion Club in 1949. While the organization became best known later for sponsoring an annual cotillion for young Black women, it also engaged in politic activity, pushing for integration in the police force and organizing a boycott against a local beer company for not hiring Black drivers.

Housing was similarly problematic. As residential construction picked up following World War II, White neighborhoods continued to expand into the northern reaches of the city. For Blacks, however, racial covenants and the threat of violence, established in the Sojourner Truth incident, hampered their expansion. At the same time, the city was planning to demolish the heart of the Black community, Paradise Valley and Black Bottom. The combination of increased density, poor infrastructure, and lack of maintenance by absentee landlords meant that conditions were further deteriorating in Black Bottom. Detroit's master plan of 1946 put a priority on clearing out what it considered a blighted slum, and the availability of urban renewal funds in the late 1940s gave them the opportunity. A combination of highway construction and clearance through urban renewal decimated Black Bottom and Paradise Valley over the next twenty years. Along with it went many of the sites of important civil rights activities and achievements from the previous century. Since early federal funding for urban renewal carried few restrictions, city officials were not required to provide alternative housing for those displaced. Aside from a few public housing high rises, such as Brewster-Douglass and the Jeffries Homes, African Americans were left to find their own housing.

This task was made even more difficult by continued resistance by White neighborhoods to integration, enforced through practices both legal and informal. Restrictive covenants were technically struck down by the United States Supreme Court in 1948, in part due to a Detroit case. Orsel and Minnie McGhee had purchased a house on Seebaldt Avenue just north of the informal "color line" of Tireman Avenue in the Black West Side. A neighbor sued to enforce the restrictive covenant, and the McGhees' case was eventually rolled into several others on restrictive covenants, decided in Shelley v. Kraemer in 1948. However, despite this, African Americans still found it difficult if not impossible to purchase or occupy homes in majority White neighborhoods. Lending institutions would not grant mortgages to African Americans to purchase homes, especially in White neighborhoods. White developers and property owners generally refused to sell homes to African Americans in White neighborhoods, and those few who did manage to purchase experienced an overtly hostile atmosphere when they tried to move in. When an African American family did move into a majority White neighborhood in the city, it often triggered a wave of departures by White homeowners. Once the neighborhood became more diverse, White residents feared becoming minorities in their own neighborhoods, further accelerating the cycle.

Another practice that enforced de facto segregation was redlining as practiced by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). As part of an effort to provide low-cost housing loans during the Depression, President

Roosevelt created the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1933. To help establish national standards and ensure the stability of the loans it would give, the HOLC prepared color-coded maps known as "residential security maps," ranking each neighborhood by its eligibility to receive financing. Green and blue properties were the most likely to maintain or see increases in values, while yellow and red properties were likely to or had already declined in value. In practice, African American neighborhoods, or those seen "at risk" for settlement by African Americans, were marked in red (hence "redlining"), whatever the actual condition of the neighborhood. The FHA used these maps, and those created by private organizations, to evaluate where they would provide mortgage insurance for housing, institutionalizing the practices in their underwriting manuals, and banks and insurers also privately adopted these practices and standards to deny mortgages to minorities and in minority neighborhoods. One of the most egregious examples of the effects of such discriminatory FHA practices in Detroit is the still-extant concrete wall extending half a mile south from 8 Mile Road to Pembroke Avenue between Birwood and Mendota streets. The FHA had previously refused to approve loans for this White housing development due to the proximity of an African American neighborhood. The construction of the wall was required by the FHA as a condition for its approval for insuring mortgage loans for the new White neighborhood. Built in 1941, it separated new housing for Whites from the existing African American 8 Mile-Wyoming neighborhood. Redlining was outlawed with the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968 although, like restrictive covenants, this did not succeed in completely obliterating the informal practice of redlining.

One area that began to open up to African Americans during the late 1940s and early 1950s was the historically Jewish neighborhood centered on Dexter Avenue north of Grand Boulevard. Because restrictive covenants had been used against Jewish residents as well as Blacks, Jewish neighborhoods tended not to have them in place, and Jewish homeowners were more open to selling to Blacks. This neighborhood, as well as adjacent areas like Russell Woods, experienced relatively rapid turnover in the 1940s and 1950s as Jewish residents moved farther north and west and Black residents moved in.

On the city's northern edge, White developers were eyeing the historically Black neighborhood of Eight Mile and Wyoming. The city's housing commission targeted the neighborhood, which had some of the lowest property values in the city, as blighted. In their view, it was a slum to be cleared and replaced with White-owned homes that would bring up the values of the surrounding area, while the Black residents could be moved to areas closer to their places of employment and other segregated neighborhoods. In response, the neighborhood organized two community groups, the Carver Progressive Association and the Eight Mile Road Civic Association. The spirited resistance by the community eventually resulted in a compromise that enabled homeowners to secure loans for single family homes, stabilizing the neighborhood and creating the opportunity for hundreds more owner-occupied homes.

1954-1964: Modern Civil Rights Movement

If the modern Civil Rights Movement was born in the labor and housing struggles of World War II and the immediate post war period, it came of age in the ten years between 1954 and 1964. Civil rights activists in both Detroit and the United States as a whole became increasingly impatient with opposition by Whites to full equality in housing, employment, and public accommodations. Two strands of activism emerged, both represented in Detroit: the nonviolent resistance espoused by Martin Luther King, Jr., and the responses represented by Malcolm X, which were perceived by many as radical. Both leaders spent time in Detroit during key moments in the early 1960s.

In the early part of the decade, Dr. King rose as the leader who challenged Jim Crow laws in the South, especially in relation to voting rights, education, and public services. Though King's philosophy was one of non-violence, his supporters were often met with violence and hatred as they peacefully exercised their constitutional rights.

As King pushed for the integration of Blacks into traditional White society, a second and more radical response had developed – fueled by the Black Nationalist philosophies of W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, and the Nation of Islam. Fed up with waiting for access to the rights that African Americans had continuously been promised and denied for decades, patience finally wore out. The nation's young Black population began to demand political action.

Both of these civil rights philosophies and approaches were well represented in Detroit, but it was the latter in which Detroit played a significant role it its development.

The Nation of Islam (NOI) had been founded in Detroit by W. D. Fard[24] in the early 1930s. Fard sought "to teach African Americans a thorough knowledge of God and of themselves, to promote self-independence, and inspire a 'superior culture and higher civilization.'"[25] Between 1930 and 1934, Fard met and taught Elijah Poole, whom Fard had given "a Muslim holy name, Elijah Karriem, which later became Elijah Muhammad, and appointed him Supreme Minister of the Nation of Islam."[26] Fard disappeared in 1934, at which time the Honorable Elijah Muhammad assumed leadership of NOI. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad expanded NOI and its programs over the ensuing years, though not without difficulty. Local and federal governments were concerned with NOI, which they considered anti-American. For years, local newspaper reports referred to NOI as a "secret cult," a "voodoo cult," or the like.[27] The Honorable Elijah Muhammad was arrested an imprisoned in the early 1940s for failing to register for the draft. Upon his release from prison, Honorable Elijah Muhammad resumed leadership of NOI.

Though NOI had grown during the 1930s and 1940s, it was not until the mid-1950s that NOI experienced significant and widespread growth. Much of which can be attributed to Malcolm X.

Malcolm X, formerly Malcolm Little, and later El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, was born in Nebraska, and raised in Mid-Michigan communities of Lansing, East Lansing, and Mason. His older brother Wilfred had moved from Lansing to the Detroit area and became involved with the National of Islam. Wilfred Little, who became Wilfred X, and many members of his family corresponded with Malcolm while he was imprisoned in Massachusetts. In 1953, upon his release from prison, Malcolm came to metropolitan Detroit to live with his brother. By that time, Wilfred had become the minister of Temple No. 1 in Detroit. During his time with Wilfred, Malcolm received his X from Elijah Muhammad and had become an assistant minister at Temple No. 1. He was later sent by Elijah Muhammad to the East Coast to build and establish temples there.

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[24] Federal Bureau of Investigation reports identify W. D. Fard as Wallace Don Fard. Fard used a number of pseudonyms including: Prophet W. D. Fard, Prophet W. D. Fard Muk-Mud, W. D. Foard, Mr. Wali Farrad, Professor Ford, Mr. Farrad Muhammed, and Mr. F. Mohammed Ali.

[25] *The Proposed Masjid Wali Muhammad/Temple No. 1 Historic District (Originally known as Workmen's Circle) Final Report*, Detroit: City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board, 2013, 8.

[26] Ibid.

[27] "Trouble is Old Stuff for Secret Cult," *Detroit Free Press*, August 14, 1959; "Voodoo University Raided by Police; 13 Cultists Seized," *Detroit Free Press*, April 17, 1934.

As they had been for the past century, Detroit's churches were the epicenter of Black activism during this period. At New Bethel Baptist, Pastor C. L. Franklin was a friend of Martin Luther King, Jr. New Bethel was forced out of its previous home on Hastings Street in 1961, so it was at the converted Oriole Theater on Linwood, its new building, that Franklin and his congregation organized the 1963 Walk to Freedom. Franklin was assisted by another Black Detroit clergyman, Albert Cleage. Together, they formed the Detroit Council for Human Rights to organize the Walk. However, the planning process exposed many of the fissures developing between Detroit's various civil rights factions. Cleage, who represented the more militant wing of civil rights activism, wanted to limit the walk to Blacks only. The NAACP threatened a boycott, not surprising since the organization, which had been the largest local branch in the country during World War II, saw its membership drop significantly in the 1950s after it expelled some of its more militant members. In the end there was biracial participation in the walk, which was partially financed by the United Autoworkers under Walter Reuther. On June 23, 1963, marchers met at Woodward and Adelaide streets and walked toward Jefferson Avenue. The walk ended at Cobo Hall, where Martin Luther King, Jr. among others, gave an address. King adapted portions of this speech for his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial two months later. In his Detroit speech, King stated:

> Something has happened to the Negro. Circumstances made it possible and necessary for him to travel more: the coming of the automobile, the upheavals of two world wars, the Great Depression. And so his rural, plantation background gradually gave way to urban, industrial life. And even his economic life was rising through the growth of industry, the influence of organized labor, expanded education opportunities. And even his cultural life was rising through the steady decline of crippling literacy. And all of these forces conjoined to cause the Negro to take a new look at himself. Negro masses, Negro masses all over began to re-evaluate themselves, and the Negro came to feel that he was somebody.[28]

A few months later, on November 10, 1963, Malcolm X delivered a very different speech during the Northern Negro Grass Roots Leadership Conference, held at King Solomon Baptist Church on 14th Street just south of Grand Boulevard. Malcolm's speech, "Message to the Grass Roots," criticized the March on Washington and the nonviolent and integrationist goals of King, and identified the White man as the common enemy of all Black people:

> We have a common enemy. We have this in common: We have a common oppressor, a common exploiter, and a common discriminator. But once we all realize that we have a common enemy, then we unite -- on the basis of what we have in common. And what we have foremost in common is that enemy -- the white man. He's an enemy to all of us. I know some of you all think that some of them aren't enemies. Time will tell…
>
> when you and I here in Detroit and in Michigan and in America who have been awakened today look around us, we too realize here in America we all have a common enemy, whether he's in Georgia or Michigan, whether he's in California or New York. He's the same man -- blue eyes and blond hair and pale skin -- the same man.

He further observed that revolutions, by their nature involved bloodshed, and that African Americans should unite against the White enemy. In part, stating:

[28] Martin Luther King, Jr., Speech at the Walk to Freedom. Detroit, Michigan, June 23, 1963.

> Revolution is bloody, revolution is hostile, revolution knows no compromise, revolution overturns and destroys everything that gets in its way. And you, sitting around here like a knot on the way, saying, "I'm going to love these folks no matter how much they hate me," No, you need a revolution. Whoever heard of a revolution where they lock arms....singing "We Shall Overcome?" You don't do that in a revolution. You don't do any singing, you're too busy swinging. It's based on land. A revolutionary wants land so he can set up his own nation, an independent nation. These Negroes aren't asking for any nation -- they're trying to crawl back on the plantation.

Malcolm also drew comparisons between his (and NOI's) call for a Black revolution and the earlier American, French, and Russian revolutions:

> When you want a nation, that's called nationalism. When the white man became involved in a revolution in this country against England, what was it for? He wanted this land so he could set up another white nation. That's white nationalism. The American Revolution was white nationalism. The French Revolution was white nationalism. The Russian Revolution too -- yes, it was -- white nationalism.

It was one of Malcolm X's last speeches as a leader of the Nation of Islam, and one that may have led to his departure from that organization the following spring.

His speech also reflected a strand of increasingly radical left activism developing in the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit during the 1950s and 1960s. Activists like James and Grace Lee Boggs were brought together by their involvement in Marxist politics in the 1940s and early 1950s, and their work in Detroit during the height of the civil rights struggles would form the philosophical foundation for the Black Power movement. There was a strong element of intellectualism to the movement. Ed Vaughn opened a bookstore on Dexter Avenue in 1959, where he stocked books by left wing publishers and hosted weekly forums to discuss Black history and current events. Activities by leftist organizations drew the attention of anti-Communist leaders such as Joseph McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. A young Detroit activist named Coleman Young was called before HUAC in 1952 on suspicion of being a communist due to his involvement in labor and civil rights organizations like the United Auto Workers and the National Negro Labor Council. Young's aggressive performance at the hearing, where he denounced the denial of voting rights in the south as un-American themselves, was admired in Detroit's Black activist community.

With Black Bottom and Paradise Valley virtually destroyed, the center of Black social and cultural life in the city shifted to the northwest neighborhood along Linwood and Dexter. Black businesses and churches moved here from their original locations on the lower east side. Blacks converted houses along West Grand Boulevard into business and professional offices. Perhaps the best known of these was Berry Gordy's Motown recording studio, founded here in 1959. Gordy's studio, which he likened to a factory for recording stars, produced hundreds of hit records and made stars out of artists like Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, and the Temptations, among many others. Motown, which eventually grew to encompass seven houses on the block, was key in promoting the racial integration of music in the 1960s and 1970s. The trajectory of Motown stars like Smokey Robinson and Diana Ross reflected changes to the physical geography of the city during the mid-twentieth century. Ross and Robinson had grown up near each other in a segregated neighborhood in the North End, with Ross later relocating to the Brewster-Douglass housing

development. After passing through the Motown hit factory, Ross and her fellow Supremes were able to buy houses in the Russell Woods neighborhood, while Robinson eventually purchased a home in Southfield, just over the border in one of the first integrated suburban neighborhoods. Berry Gordy himself purchased a home on "Millionaires Row" in the Boston-Edison neighborhood, originally home to the mansions of some of Detroit's leading White citizens in the 1920s, where he was joined by other members of the Black elite after wealthy White Detroiters moved to the suburbs.

1964-1976: The Second Revolution

The passage of the national Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act the following year, represented a significant shift in the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit. The goals had evolved from securing civil rights to enforcing them. While Blacks in Detroit saw measurable gains in equal access to housing, employment, and public accommodations, there were still deep divisions between the races in the city, which were demonstrated vividly just three years later.

This final period in the context of civil rights in Detroit opened at the tail end of the Great Migration, and it occurred at the same time the city underwent another enormous demographic shift. While Detroit had seen the peak of its overall population growth in 1950, the African American population continued to rise in the next several decades. Though this growth was not at the fantastic rates seen in the 1920s and 1950s, the number of African Americans rose from 482,223 in 1960, to 660,428 in 1970 and 758,939 in 1980. After that, the Black population would hold relatively steady until the twenty-first century. The most significant change, though, came in African Americans as a percentage of the population. In 1960, Blacks were just over twenty-five percent of the city's total population. By 1970, it had risen to forty-three percent. Then, sometime between 1970 and 1980, Detroit became a majority Black city. While the 1967 uprising is often cited as the catalyst for Whites abandoning Detroit, close attention to population statistics show that Whites had been declining both in real numbers and as a percentage of the population steadily since 1950. While the unrest certainly did nothing to arrest the decline in the White population, the beginnings of so-called White flight from the city coincides more closely with the initiation of desegregation in housing with the abolition of restrictive covenants in the late 1940s, although undoubtedly there were many relevant factors.

Detroit's social geography had also transformed in the first few decades after World War II, changes that became clear during this period. While segregation had confined the city's Black population into small geographic areas, it also fostered interaction across economic and social classes and supported Black-owned businesses that catered to a Black clientele that often had little access to businesses in White districts. Following desegregation and the gradual movement of Blacks into all areas of the city, many Black-owned businesses closed as Blacks were able to shop in downtown Detroit and other formerly White-only areas. Black business areas like Milford Street in the old Black West Side declined and the buildings that once housed the thriving commercial district were gradually abandoned and demolished. The northern reaches of Paradise Valley, which had survived the initial urban renewal that destroyed Black Bottom, finally fell to the Medical Center urban renewal project in the late 1950s and early 1960s, although traces remain along Canfield, Garfield, and Forest Streets. As segregation declined, the Black middle class found it easier to physically distance themselves from the working class and the poor, fostering class divisions within the Black community. Increasingly Detroit's urban Black poor found themselves crowded into high rise towers or living in aging houses, both poorly maintained.

The early to mid-1960s had seen some real improvement in labor and political equality. Although Detroit in general was in a period of industrial decline, Black workers had a larger percentage of skilled jobs, and even unskilled workers had better wages than they had in previous decades. Good jobs were also opening up in government, education, and the retail sector. Blacks had small but not token representation in the Michigan legislature, the courts, and city government.

In the mid-1950s, the Detroit NAACP became "the office of record" for incidents of police brutality against Blacks, recording 149 incidents between 1956 and 1960.[29] Things worsened in 1960 when in a response to the murders of two white women, Detroit's Mayor Louis Miriani instituted a program to cut down on "Black crime" in the city. Within forty-eight hours of the program's announcement, six hundred people were arrested. By the end of the week 1500 had been questioned and detained—the majority African American males.[30] Four-man units of elite undercover officers created under Mayor Miriani became known as the "Big Four." They were infamous within the Black community for their verbal abuse and violent physical harassment tactics. In response to the injustice, Detroit's outraged Black citizens organized to defeat Mayor Miriani and elect a new liberal mayor, Jerome Cavanaugh. Cavanaugh promised to improve relations between the Black community and the Detroit police force and did so by appointing a new police commissioner George Edwards Jr. A former union organizer and national director of the UAW welfare department, Edwards was a strong liberal and had served as director of the Detroit Housing Commission during the Sojourner Truth Homes protests where he gained the respect of Black leaders.[31] Edwards's appointment caused internal tension within the police department and he was unable to maintain the support of the Black community during the turbulence of the next two years (1962-1963). He left in 1963 to serve on the 6th United States Circuit Court of Appeals.[32]

While Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh had attempted to institute police reform in the early 1960s, the police force was overwhelmingly White and Blacks complained of, at best, lack of response to Black neighborhoods, and at worst, outright brutality. Efforts to integrate the Detroit Police Department moved slowly. Even though Mayor Cavanaugh had pledged to integrate the Detroit Police Department by the beginning of 1965, in January there had been no new hires and the percentage of African Americans on the force remained at 3.6 percent. Only three of the city's thirteen patrol cars had been integrated. A Black police officer had been named to the staff of the Police Academy, one Black police officer was assigned to the 100-member city's Accident Prevention Bureau, and a Black patrolman was named to the Traffic Safety Bureau. [33]

So, it is not surprising that it was a police raid on an after-hours party at Twelfth and Clairmount in a Black neighborhood that touched off the events of the 1967 uprising. Over a period of five days, forty-three people were killed, thirty-three of them Black, and over four hundred buildings were destroyed. Just as urban renewal decimated the civil rights sites of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, the uprising, and the demolition that took place afterwards, eliminated the locations of important Black businesses and events, including Joe Von Battle's Record Store, the law office from which Carl Levin, the first general counsel for the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, had practiced law, and the office of the United Community League for Civic Action, in the same building as the after-hours club whose raid sparked the uprising.

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[29] Arthur Johnson, *Race and Remembrance: A Memoir*. (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2008), 55.
[30] Joseph Turrini, "Phooie on Louie: African American Detroit and the Election of Jerry Cavanaugh." *Michigan History Magazine*. November-December 1999:12
[31] "The Old Guard." http://www.detroits-great-rebellion.com/The-Old-Guard.html
[32]"George C. Edwards Jr. Dies." *The Washington Post.* April 9, 1995.
[33] Harry Golden, "3 Divisions Integrated by Police." *Detroit Free Press*. January 19, 1965.:16-A.

In the aftermath of the uprising, leftist Black activists continued their efforts to bring about radical social and political change. The movement centered around Black pride and self-determination as a means to fight oppression and reverse social injustice. Once again, Black religious organizations were central to this movement. Malcolm X, an early leader in the Black Power movement, came out of the Nation of Islam, a religious and political movement founded in Detroit in 1930. In the 1940s, Nation of Islam leader the Honorable Elijah Muhammed had advocated for an independent Black nation in America. Freedom through independence was continued in some form through the 1960s and into the 1970s.

The city was still racially divided by the traumatic and violent events of the 1967 Rebellion and its White population was fleeing to the suburbs. A sixty-seven percent rise in street robberies led Detroit police commissioner John Nichols to create an elite unit of eighty undercover, plain clothes policemen whose purpose was to make criminals "fear the victim" in an effort to reduce street crime in the city. The program was named "Stop the Robberies and Enjoy Safe Streets," more commonly known as STRESS. Within its first year of existence thirteen men were killed—twelve of them Black. According to *The Crisis*, "during the first year of STRESS, the Detroit Police Department had the highest number of civilian killings, 33 percent committed by 1 percent of the force"[34] of any American police force. The heavy-handed actions of STRESS officers and their harassment of Detroit's Black citizens worsened racial tension in the city.

In Detroit, Reverend Albert B. Cleage Jr., one of the organizers of the 1963 Walk to Freedom, embraced the Black Power movement and developed a new vision for his church, one he called Black Christian Nationalism. In March 1967, just months before the uprising, Cleage unveiled a new painting of the Black Madonna and Child, and announced that his church on Linwood Street would now be known as the Shrine of the Black Madonna.

In the late 1960s, the Malcolm X Society was established by Richard and Milton Henry in the wake of the murder of Malcolm X. Richard (later Imari Obadele) and Milton (later Gaidi Obadele), who were living in Detroit at that time, were instrumental in the formation of the Republic of New Africa (RNA). The RNA was a Black nationalist organization that advocated for an independent nation created from several southern states and reparations for the injustices of slavery and segregation, among other things. The Henrys' Malcolm X Society organized the Black Government Conference in Detroit in March 1968. It was then that the Republic of New Africa was formed.

The Malcolm X Society also sought to rebuild the community in the wake of the July 1967 uprising. In August 1967, Richard Henry and Henry King wrote a proposal, *New Community: A Proposal for Reconstruction Area #1 in Detroit*, which laid out a significant cooperative development centered on 12th and Linwood Streets. The plan called for a variety residential, commercial, industrial, and community buildings to be constructed through the citizen-led Land Co-Operative.

In a city known for its industrial might through its numerous factories, it is no surprise that radicalism also made its way to the factory floor. In the late 1960s, Black autoworkers across Detroit organized "Revolutionary Union Movements" or RUMs to pressure both the UAW leadership and the automotive companies for concessions.

The first RUM was formed in May 1968 in the Chrysler Corporation's Dodge Main assembly plant in Hamtramck, Michigan. The organization, known as DRUM, for Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement, was

[34] Margo Williams, "What happens when the police department goes from white to black: The changing face of the Detroit Police Department." *The Crisis*. December 1991.Vol. 90. No.10:15.

followed by a number of others including FRUM at the Ford Rouge Plant and ELRUM at Chrysler's Eldon Avenue Plant.

In 1969 the various RUMs were united under the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW). As well as advocating for the concerns of Black workers, the League sought to develop political consciousness among its workers and build ties to the community outside the plant. In April 1969, the League sponsored, with financing from the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organizing (IFCO), a Black Economic Development Conference (BEDC). The major product of the conference was the Black Manifesto, written by James Forman. The manifesto called for White religious institutions to pay up to 500 million dollars in reparations, to be used by the BEDC to promote economic self-sufficiency among Blacks. Among the plans of the BEDC were the establishment of cooperative farms in the south, training centers for industrial skills, and funding of welfare organizations. Some of the funds actually raised by the BEDC were used by Mike Hamlin, one of the LRBW leaders, to establish Black Star Publishing. Led by Hamlin, Helen Jones and others, Black Star purchased a building on Fenkell Street (appears to be extant), some equipment of its own, and used some equipment at the Detroit Printing Co-op, which had been established by Fredy and Lorraine Perlman in 1969. Black Star existed for only a short period, from approximately 1970 to 1972. In that time, the organization produced a number of newsletters and pamphlets, as well as one book, *The Political Thought of James Forman*, before it went defunct, along with the LRBW.

In the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s the Black Conscience Library operated from several locations. Between the winter of 1969 to the spring of 1970, the library operated from the second floor of 12019 Linwood (extant).[35] The LRBW moved into that space when the library moved out. The library then moved to 6505 Grand River Avenue (appears to be no longer extant) until 1972.[36] The library may have operated at other locations during the time of its operation. In addition to provide reading material, the library hosted RNA meetings in which RNA "consulate workers conducted nation building classes."[37] The library also held showings of films.[38]

Vaughn's Book Store, 12123 Dexter Avenue, was established by Ed Vaughn in the mid-1960s. Prior to Vaughn's there had not been a Black bookstore in Detroit.[39] The bookstore provided Black Detroiters books, magazines, and other literature they could not obtain elsewhere. Vaughn's also offered space for meetings for Black nationalists, Pan-Africanists, and other community advocates, including prominent figures like Rosa Parks. These meetings led to a series of Forums that occurred between 1965 and 1967. These Forums brought together activists and prominent artists. Vaughn's Book Store, and Ed Vaugh himself, made significant contributions to Black consciousness in the mid-1960s and beyond.

Individuals and organizations, both so-called radical and not, continued their work into the 1970s. A radical Black lawyer in Detroit named Kenneth Cockrel Sr., defended a number of Black men arrested by STRESS

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[35] Kristin Cleage, "L" is for Linwood, *Finding Eliza* website, July 29, 2012, https://findingeliza.com/archives/5612
[36] Kristin Cleage, "G" is for Grand River Avenue," *Finding Eliza* website, October 4, 2017, https://findingeliza.com/archives/tag/black-conscience-library/
[37] Paul Karolcyzk, "Subjugated Territory: The New Afrikan Independence Movement and the Space of Black Power," dissertation, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College Department of Geography and Anthropology, 2014, p. 192.
[38] Pearl Cleage, *Things I Should Have Told My Daughter: Lies, Lessons & Love Affairs* (New York: Simon & Schuster), 2014,
[39] Sam Pollard, Interview with Ed Vaugh, Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive website, Henry Hampton Collection, http://digital.wustl.edu/e/eii/eiiweb/vau5427.0309.166edvaughn.html

officers and was instrumental in forming the "State of Emergency Committee" in September 1971 that called for the dismantling of the STRESS unit. More than five thousand people participated in an anti-STRESS demonstration on September 23, 1971. The violence and antagonism under STRESS continued throughout 1972 and 1973, until Coleman Young was elected Detroit's first Black mayor and closed the program in 1974 after making "integration of the police force one of his top priorities." Young appointed Detroit's first Black police chief, William Hart, in 1976.

Conclusion

The struggle for Civil Rights did not end in 1976, nor 1980, nor any of the years that followed. While significant gains have been made since 1900, African Americans, and all people of color, continue to face a number of barriers to full equality. The legacy of historical discrimination and inequities in housing, education, and employment continues to affect many people in Detroit, in Michigan, and across the country. Some longstanding issues continue without resolution. Other problems, such as White nationalism continue to reappear in various forms. As importantly, attempts to disenfranchise or discount or deny the political equality of African Americans were made in 2020, continuing a trend that has been ongoing since the first Black person voted in America. This MPDF does not address the full breadth of the African American experience, and future research should address those areas, identify significant themes, and devise registration requirements for those themes and resources.

F. Associated Property Types and Registration Requirements

Introduction

Properties significant for their association with the history of the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, represent a wide range of property types, from modest houses and residential districts to commercial buildings, churches, schools, hospitals, and social institutions. Properties that may be eligible include individual buildings; complexes of a number of historically related buildings or districts; sites where important events occurred; as well as structures and/or objects.

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under this MPDF, properties must be located with the boundaries of the city of Detroit. They must demonstrate significance in relation to the historic contexts, time periods, and themes outlined in Section E of this MPDF. They must retain integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association as defined by the National Park Service in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. However, when evaluating properties related to the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, consideration of the effect of racial and ethnic discrimination in federal, state, and local policies; in mortgage and lending programs and housing practices; in employment; in education; and other forms of racial and ethnic discrimination must be taken into account. African Americans in Detroit often found it difficult to build new buildings and instead adapted existing buildings for a new use. The activities and associations of the Civil Rights Movement will generally be more important than a building's architectural or design integrity. In addition, unfair employment practices contributed to economic hardship in the African American community that often made upkeep and maintenance of properties difficult. It is expected that common alterations, such as replacement windows and doors and the removal of or damage to architectural and ornamental elements, will not automatically disqualify a property for listing if the essential spaces and characteristics related to its civil rights significance remain intact. Any alterations, interior or exterior, must be evaluated within the context of the building's overall ability to convey the association and feeling related to its significance within the historic contexts established in Section E before deeming the building eligible or not due to material or design changes.

The places associated with the struggle for civil rights in the city of Detroit represent a particularly fragile class of property. Many important buildings and sites have been lost as a result of urban renewal, aggressive blight removal programs, so-called "right-sizing," which seeks to address population loss through demolition, gentrification, economic hardship, and years of neglect. As the property pool is diminished, the cultural legacy and story that the remaining buildings, structures, sites, and objects portray rises in importance.

The property types identified here represent the most common resources identified during a survey conducted in 2019, but property types not listed may be considered if it can be demonstrated that they have a significant connection to the established contexts and themes in Section E and retain integrity.

I. Districts

Description

Subtype: Residential Districts

The district property type encompasses contiguous groupings of resources related to the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976. One example would be the historically Black neighborhoods that developed as a consequence of and in response to *de facto* segregation, such as the African American neighborhoods, the Old West Side and Eight Mile-Wyoming. Many associated residential districts, such as the Arden Park-Boston Boulevard and the Virginia Park neighborhoods, were originally built for White residents and repopulated by African Americans in the early twentieth century when Black professionals and business owners were able to purchase homes in established White neighborhoods. These neighborhoods may be listed in the National Register for their architectural or historic significance in other areas, but such properties should be evaluated for significance under this MPDF. In those cases where previously listed properties demonstrate significance with the context of the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, additional documentation should be submitted to address that particular significance.

Residential neighborhood districts consist of both single- and multi-family homes and associated buildings, structures, sites, and objects. Within these neighborhoods, there may also be scattered apartment buildings as well as commercial clusters or the remnants of a larger commercial corridor. Examples include the commercial cluster at intersection of the Clairpointe-Tennessee-Conner neighborhood, or the remaining commercial buildings along Milford Street in the Tireman Avenue neighborhood. Typically, these neighborhoods adhere to the street grid established by the original platting when they were surveyed and annexed into the city. Residential neighborhood districts are generally characterized by uniform lot sizes and shapes, uniform building setbacks, and typical residential features such as sidewalks, manicured lawns, domestic plantings, and street trees. In addition to residential and commercial buildings, they also may contain institutional buildings such as schools, libraries, and recreational centers. Because of the use of racially restrictive neighborhood covenants in Detroit, a residential district may include a home that is significant for an event, such as a protest, that occurred when a pioneering Black family tried to move into the neighborhood.

While residential historic districts are typically significant for their architectural distinction, the residential districts evaluated as significant under this MPDF will likely be defined by their association with historic events or patterns of events. Indeed, the historical unity of the neighborhood, more so than its perceived architectural unity, is key to the consideration of residential historic districts associated with the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, between 1900 and 1976.

Subtype: Districts Built by and for African Americans

This subtype is significant because racial restrictions in federal loan and mortgage programs, the practice of redlining, and discrimination within the insurance, mortgage, and building industries made it almost impossible for African Americans to engage in new construction until the 1970s. On rare occasions, Black businessmen were able to fund the construction of a small residential development of single-family homes for African Americans, such as the Conant Gardens neighborhood in the 1920s. The dire need for defense worker housing during World War II and the relaxing of restrictive lending practices after the war led to the construction of a handful of neighborhoods by and for African Americans. When looking at such neighborhoods, adherence to

Federal Housing Administration (FHA) design requirements should be explored. The homes built by and for African Americans typically follow the design trends of the period in which they were built, such as Bungalows, Foursquares, and Tudor Revivals during the 1910s and 1920s or Cape Cods, Minimal Traditional, or Ranch homes during the 1940s-60s.

Subtype: Commercial Districts

Because of racial restrictions and segregation, small commercial corridors or nodes of commercial buildings typically grew around key cross streets in African American residential neighborhoods. Black business owners or professionals also frequently adapted residential buildings to function as commercial businesses, sometimes combining live and work space in one building. Some African American commercial areas such as West Grand Boulevard, which houses the Motown music complex as well as other Black-owned businesses, converted a number of Foursquare residences for commercial use. African American commercial properties located on Detroit's main arteries, such as Woodward Avenue, were seen as a measure of success and acceptance into traditional society.

In many cases, these corridors and nodes may be included with residential historic districts, as described above. In other cases, commercial districts may be evaluated independently. Similar to residential historic districts, the historical unity of the district should be key to any evaluation of significance under this MPDF.

Subtype: Public Housing

The public housing subtype consists of complexes of residential buildings built as public housing from the 1930s through 1960s. Typically these consist of multi-family housing including attached townhomes, small-scale apartment buildings, garden apartment complexes, and high-rise apartments. Public housing was made available to African Americans in both segregated and mixed-raced complexes. Built under federal programs, these apartment buildings followed established design standards. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, they were typically low rise two-story brick buildings housing eight or twelve units placed in a landscaped site. Toward the end of the 1950s, public housing developments were more likely to be high-rise apartment towers based on the International style. Examples of these complexes include the Brewster Homes, Sojourner Truth Homes, and Jeffries Homes.

Significance

Criterion A

Districts eligible under Criterion A for their association with events that have made an important contribution to the broad patterns of African American civil rights history may relate to the following areas of significance: community planning and development (reflecting the establishment of African American neighborhoods in the city as a result of or in response to formal and informal policies of segregation), ethnic history (for association with African American residents of those neighborhoods), social history (reflecting the creation of cohesive social groups within African American neighborhoods and the meeting of community commercial, social, and recreational needs within such areas).

Residential districts may be significant for their ability to illustrate the struggle against racially restrictive housing in Detroit and the changing residential patterns that resulted from that struggle. This property type

includes both neighborhoods built by and for working and middle-class African Americans and existing neighborhoods that were populated by Blacks as they moved into formerly White areas, demolishing segregation barriers in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. The former is reflected in neighborhoods built for working- and middle-class African Americans as alternatives to the densely packed and often dilapidated housing that characterized Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, the area into which most African Americans were segregated at the beginning of the context period. Small groups of working- and middle-class African Americans were able to move into self-contained enclaves in what were then outlying areas of the city, in part because there were few or no White neighbors to object and because they were able to purchase land not already subject to restrictive covenants. These included areas such as the Tireman Avenue neighborhood on the west side, Conant Gardens on the northeast side, and Eight Mile-Wyoming on the northwest.

African American residential districts may also be significant in reflecting an important pattern in housing change in Detroit. Beginning in the 1920s, and accelerating in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, African Americans began moving into previously established White neighborhoods. In many cases, the most easily accessible areas were former Jewish neighborhoods, as there were no restrictive covenants. An early example of this phenomenon is the East Kirby Street neighborhood, where Black professionals and business classes moved into the single-family residences, flats, and apartment buildings, often turning them into businesses or social institutions. East Kirby Street was followed in the 1930s and 1940s by Sugar Hill, Twelfth Street, Arden Park-East Boston Edison, the North End, and Russell Woods-Sullivan, while the later 1950s into the 1960s saw Virginia Park, Northwest Goldberg, and the Bagley neighborhood being populated by African American residents.

Districts in the public housing subtype may be significant for their contribution to the history of the provision of public housing for African Americans in both segregated and mixed-race complexes, such as defense worker housing (Sojourner Truth Homes) and housing for low-income families, particularly those displaced by urban renewal programs that decimated the Black Bottom and Paradise Valley neighborhoods (Brewster Homes, Jeffries Homes). They may be significant for their association with seminal events in the struggle for equal housing, such as the violent conflict over whether the Sojourner Truth Homes would house Blacks or Whites, and for their ability to illustrate institutionalized segregation in such programs into the middle decades of the twentieth century.

Commercial districts may also be significant under the areas of social history and commerce, for their association with the common practice of locating Black businesses, professional offices, and social institutions within residential neighborhoods to a degree not generally seen in their White neighborhood counterparts as a result of discrimination that prevented Blacks from patronizing White businesses and Blacks from opening businesses, offices, and institutions in White commercial districts. In many cases, a residence may have also doubled as a small business or professional office, or small clusters of businesses were located on residential streets or at street intersections. Other commercial areas may have developed after the demolition of historically Black areas like Paradise Valley when Black businessmen moved to an area where other Black businesses were forming and where they found acceptance, such as West Grand Boulevard.

Criterion B

A district as a whole will typically not be significant in relation to an important person, except in a case where an individually significant person was responsible for building a neighborhood, for example Everett Watson, who developed the Welch-Oakwood Hills neighborhood for African American residents. However, individual

properties within these districts may be significant under Criterion B for their direct association with the life and/or career of a person who made important contributions to the history of civil rights. For example, the practice of prominent Black architect Nathan Johnson in the Northwest Goldberg neighborhood, or the home of poet and publisher Dudley Randall in the Russell Woods-Sullivan neighborhood.

Criterion C

Under this MPDF districts will typically not be independently significant under Criterion C, as their architectural or design characteristics usually do not directly relate to the theme of civil rights. However, districts may be significant under Criterion C **in addition** to their significance under Criteria A or B. In this case, Criterion C may be applied to document their significance as collections of buildings that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of construction, or for their representation of the work of Black master architects, builders, or landscape architects. Districts are most likely to be significant in the areas of architecture (for reflection of a design, style, or method of construction), or landscape architecture (for overall design or plan and artistic design of landscape features).

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing as a historic district under this MPDF, a district must be located within the geographic area defined in Section G (i.e., within the boundaries of the city of Detroit); possess historical associations related to the theme of the Civil Rights in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, as described in this document; have been developed for or by African Americans; and retain integrity.

Districts should retain the major spatial organizational features such as an urban grid, lot sizes, building setbacks, physical relationships between resources, a sense of their original urban fabric, and the residential or mixed-use nature of the historic neighborhood. Public housing districts should retain their historic organizational characteristics, in terms of the orientation of buildings and their placement within a designed landscape.

Housing stock from the major developmental period must clearly dominate the district, with limited encroachment of buildings from outside the period of significance for the district. Resources within the district should also, in general, be identifiable in terms of their original architectural styles (Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, etc.) with the understanding that, in the case of previously established neighborhoods, stylistic alterations may reflect specific cultural practices of their African American residents that were employed to make a neighborhood their own.

Resources within a historic district should retain integrity from the period of significance identified in the particular district nomination. Common alterations such as replacement of doors and windows within original openings, roof replacement, covering original siding, and small-scale additions will not generally diminish the historic integrity of the district. More significant changes to individual resources, including but not limited to the removal of character-defining features, additions of incompatible scale, removals of significant portions of resources, and the relocation of numerous resources may negatively impact integrity of a resource. Such changes may also impact the integrity of the historic district if they are widespread throughout the district and occurred after the period of significance.

Special consideration should be given to understanding the ongoing impacts of segregation and discrimination when evaluating integrity of neighborhood districts. Alterations that happened both during and after the period of significance reflect strategies necessary for survival under these circumstances. Overcrowding often resulted in the subdivision of single-family homes. Because many properties were rentals owned by absentee landlords, they may have a history of deterioration and loss of original architectural character. African Americans left in a rapidly depopulating city due to suburbanization and White flight were especially vulnerable to economic insecurity, which has affected their ability to maintain the historic fabric of their homes. Historically African American neighborhoods were also highly susceptible to charges of blight and were disproportionately targeted for demolition of buildings, leaving gaps in an otherwise cohesive neighborhood. This is part of the story and the legacy of segregation in the city of Detroit.

II. Buildings

Description

The building property type encompasses single buildings or small groupings of buildings (a house and detached garage, for example) that are associated with significant events, people, or institutions important to the history of the African American Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan. Related buildings may include residences; commercial buildings; professional offices; religious, social, or educational institutions; hospitals; or recreational facilities. Examples include Dunbar Hospital, one of the first African American hospitals in Detroit; the Ossian Sweet House where events resulted in a civil rights case of national importance decided by the United States Supreme Court; or the Breitmeyer-Tobin Office building, among the first in downtown Detroit to lease office space to African American professionals.

An individual building located within a larger potential historic district must be eligible for the National Register in its own right for its association with an important person, event, or institution beyond the criteria associated with the district if it is to be listed singly. For example, the home of poet Dudley Randall, located in the Russell Woods neighborhood, is where he operated the Broadside Press and published the work of important Black poets. Because of that significance, Randall's home could be nominated individually even though it is within a larger potential district. As with historic districts, some buildings may already be listed in the National Register under non civil rights-related themes, such as the Albert Kahn House at 208 Mack Avenue, which has served as the office of the Detroit Urban League since 1944, or Orchestra Hall, which once served as an African American music venue known as the Paradise Theatre. Earlier nominations may be amended to document and recognize their significance under the theme of the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, and the requirements of this MPDF.

Subtype: Residential Dwellings

Residential dwellings may range from a single-family home to a two-family flat or a large apartment building. Residential dwellings significant for their association with the history of civil rights in the city may be located anywhere in the city, especially because significant events often occurred when African Americans attempted to move outside of historically segregated neighborhoods. Residential dwellings are typically located in neighborhoods that adhere to the street grid established by the original platting of the areas as they were surveyed and annexed into the city. They typically conform to the character of their surrounding neighborhood in terms of uniform lot sizes and shapes, uniform building setbacks, and residential features such as sidewalks, manicured lawns, domestic plantings, and street trees. Common house styles include brick and frame homes

that reflect the design trends of the period during which they were built, such as Victorian, Beaux Arts, and Colonial Tudor Revival in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Bungalows, Foursquares, and Tudor Revivals during the 1910s and 1920s or Cape Cods, Minimal Traditional, or Ranch homes during the 1940s through the 1960s. Larger apartment buildings tended to be constructed during two major periods of development. In the 1910s and 1920s, styles where highly varied, including Romanesque, Colonial Revival/Georgian, Neoclassical, Italian Renaissance, English Revival, Spanish Revival, Art Deco, and simpler Commercial Brick. In the late 1940s through 1960s, Moderne, Neo-Georgian, and International styles predominated.

Subtype: Commercial Buildings

Commercial buildings are buildings that housed significant African American businesses or professional offices. Because of the restrictions they encountered, African Americans worked in, operated, and founded businesses and professions in a variety of building types that were available to them. Such buildings may range from a converted house or portion of a house, to a small neighborhood storefront, to a standalone building. Initially, commercial buildings associated with the history of twentieth Century African American civil rights in Detroit were set within the handful of segregated neighborhoods open to African Americans during much of the context period. With the destruction of the Black business corridor along Hastings Street in the Black Bottom/Paradise Valley in the 1960s, Black businesses expanded into new areas such as West Grand Boulevard and the formerly Jewish neighborhoods along Dexter and Linwood, among others. Many Black businesses were opened in existing buildings, including repurposed residential dwellings and existing commercial dwellings. Others were new construction, suited to the unique nature of the business, such as auto dealerships and financial institutions.

Subtype: Industrial Buildings

Equal opportunity in employment was a priority for African Americans throughout the twentieth century. In Detroit, the automobile manufacturers were among the largest employers of African Americans. Demands for racially equality often played out on the factory floor. For example, when African Americans were first placed on an assembly line at a Chrysler plant, Whites walked off the job. Industrial buildings could also relate to a Black-owned business. Industrial buildings are typically simple, unadorned buildings of brick or concrete and with flat roofs. Buildings built prior to 1930 typically have large expanses of glass, most often steel framed casement window, separated by narrow brick supports. In the 1930s and 1940s the Art Deco or Moderne style was utilized and buildings took on a streamlined look with long ribbons of horizontal windows, sometimes in glass block. In the 1950s and 1960s decorative concrete block screens were often used at entryways.

Subtype: Religious Institutions

Religious properties were the locus of most African American civil rights activities from the nineteenth century to present day. In the early twentieth century, many Black congregations moved into churches and synagogues left by White congregations when they moved to the suburbs, repurposing them and making them their own. Other congregations constructed their own places of worship. In some cases, one of the city's few Black architects designed a church, or the addition to an existing church. During the latter part of the period, as congregations moved into formerly White areas, they also repurposed non-religious building types, such as bank branches and theaters, which were particularly suited to the needs of the congregations because they included large open areas for worship. Religious institutions often have auxiliary buildings that served as church

halls, auditoriums, or recreation centers. In some cases, religious institutions, like the Nation of Islam, operated commercial properties like grocery stores and restaurants that were designed to serve their members.

Subtype: Social Institutions

African Americans in Detroit approached the struggle for civil rights through different avenues during the context period, including social and political institutions. Social institutions range from women's clubs housing the social welfare activities of Black women in the early twentieth century, to fraternal organizations that sponsored civil rights activities, as well as properties associated so-called moderate groups such as the NAACP and Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) and those associated with more revolutionary movements and ideologies, including Black Nationalism, Black Power, Pan-Africanism, League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), Republic of New Africa (RNA), Malcolm X Society, and other, similar organizations. In some cases, these organizations are associated with properties that offered programs and facilities to African Americans, others often leased space within existing buildings – churches, office buildings, repurposed residential dwellings and commercial storefronts – others still had no official home, but met at various locations like houses, local restaurants, and social halls. Political institutions might include a political party headquarters or a student activity room at a university where radical group was formed and met.

Subtype: Educational Institutions

African Americans in Detroit experienced discrimination and inequality in primary and secondary education facilities. School locations reflected the *de facto* segregation settlement patterns that were created by restrictive housing covenants. The segregation of educational resources was widespread. Typically, as African Americans populations became predominate in a changing neighborhood, the neighborhood school would be designated for Blacks. Thus, Black school buildings can be found in a variety of traditional school styles from Collegiate Gothic to Beaux Arts to Modern. City government was responsible for providing schools in both Black and White neighborhoods, but Black-majority schools were often more crowded and more poorly maintained than White-majority schools. Protests occurred against this inequality, such as the one at Northern High School in 1966. African Americans experienced discrimination in higher education in the city as well, resulting in the establishment of academic and trade schools to serve them. These facilities, such as Detroit's historically Black college, the Lewis College of Business, and Shaw College used existing, repurposed buildings to house educate their students.

Subtype: Recreational Resources

Recreational facilities for African Americans were typically segregated and often inadequate for their underserved populations. The city established the first recreational facilities in African American neighborhoods around 1920s, like the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center in Paradise Valley, which was initially housed in a converted library. Institutions such as churches also provided recreational facilities for their neighborhoods, like the Saint Cecelia Gym on the west side. Roller rinks, swimming pools, ballparks, tennis courts, etc. where protests occurred may also qualify under this MPDF.

Subtype: Legal and Political Institutions

Legal and political activities, including the interpretation and enforcement of legal codes, the enactment of civil rights laws, and political advocacy, were critical in the struggle for twentieth Century African American civil

rights in Detroit, and buildings that are associated with significant events, people, and activities are included in this subtype. Examples would include courthouses where major civil rights cases were tried or the office building of a lawyer at the time they defended civil rights cases. They could include the offices or places where organized groups worked in support of voting rights or other civil rights issues, which may have been located in a residential building, commercial space, or on a university campus.

Significance

Criterion A

Resources in the building type category may be eligible under Criterion A for their association with events that have made an important contribution to the broad patterns of African American civil rights history. Buildings important under Criterion A may relate to a number of areas of significance, depending on their history and subtype, including social history, ethnic history, commerce, religion, education, entertainment/recreation, law, and politics/government.

Equal opportunity in housing has special significance in Detroit as it was one of three goals set by the Detroit Chapter of the NAACP, the largest in the nation. Based on Detroit housing cases, the U.S. Supreme Court rendered two landmark equal housing decisions. Residential properties purchased by pioneering African Americans in what were formerly White neighborhoods often resulted in a seminal event that led to changes in policies and practices at the local, state and national levels, such as ending the use of restrictive covenants. Residential dwellings may also be significant for their association with an important person or event associated with the history of civil rights in the city of Detroit, for example, the home of activists James and Grace Lee Boggs, where many political activities occurred. Sometimes residential dwellings were used for businesses, such as the row of Foursquare homes on West Grand Boulevard that housed Motown's enterprises.

Commercial buildings may be significant for their ability to reflect the provision of business and professional services to African Americans who were limited in their access to White-owned and operated businesses, either through lack of public accommodation and equality, or because such businesses were located too far from segregated neighborhoods. Commercial buildings may also represent the efforts of African Americans to develop economic self-sufficiency and success for themselves and their employees in an era when they were often limited to unskilled and service jobs. Commercial properties may be the site of significant civil rights activities, such as printing presses or bookstores associated with the printing and sale of African American literature. Some properties, while not specifically Black-owned and operated, may be the site of important events related to the struggle for parity in employment and the labor movement, for example, a downtown savings and loan building where the NAACP sponsored sit-ins to spotlight racist hiring practices and the lack of Black managers within the corporation.

Buildings associated with religious institutions may be important in the context of civil rights activities undertaken by their leaders and/or congregation. Religious buildings were often the location of important civil rights events, such as speeches by civil rights leader like Martin Luther King, Jr., or meetings by a council of church leaders that forged a new civil rights directive, or where an organization like the NAACP had its offices. A religious building may be the location where services such as social welfare, employment assistance, health, etc. were provided to the African American community in the absence/inadequacy of such support from the local government and White-oriented institutions. Religious institutions may need to meet Criteria Consideration A for Religious Properties. Religious institutions listed under this MPDF may be eligible if they

derive their primary significance from their historic importance related to the history of civil rights in the city of Detroit, not solely as places of religious services.

Buildings associated with social institutions may be significant for civil rights activities undertaken by their leaders and/or members. They may be important as the location of an important civil rights event or patterns of events, such as activities related to the fight for equality in employment, access to certain professions or employment sectors, and labor institutions. These buildings may also reflect the institution's provision of services such as social welfare, employment assistance, health, etc. to the African American community in the absence/inadequacy of such support from the local government and White-oriented institutions.

Educational buildings may be significant if they reflect the provision of educational or recreational services to underserved populations as a result of discrimination and inequality of access. They may be important examples of educational facilities within segregated neighborhoods of the city. They may be important as the location of an important civil rights event or patterns of events.

Recreational facilities may be significant for their provision of recreational services to underserved populations as a result of discrimination and inequality of access. The St. Antoine YMCA was the heart of Detroit's African American community, providing recreational activities and hosting speakers and events related to civil rights before it was demolished. Negro baseball leagues could only play at designated ballfields like the Hamtramck Stadium (outside of Detroit). They may be important as the location of an important civil rights event or patterns of events.

Buildings associated with legal and political Institutions may be important in the context of civil rights activities undertaken by their leaders and/or members. There was a major shift in the approach to civil rights in the second half of the twentieth century. The strategy in the 1920 and 1930s had been "uplift," to obtain equality through actions, i.e. excelling in business, medicine, education, sport, the arts, etc. After World War II civil rights groups turned to the legal system, demanding that existing racial equality laws be enforced and new ones was passed. The national Civil Rights Act of 1964 was undoubtedly the most significant example. The City of Detroit was home to Damon Keith, a federal circuit court judge, who decided a number of seminal cases on civil rights in the Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in downtown Detroit. The first integrated law office in America was located in Detroit's Cadillac Tower. The firm provided free legal services to hundreds of civil rights protestors arrested in the South in 1964. Voting rights for African Americans was a national issue and branch offices of national organizations such as the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were established in Detroit to help the cause.

Criterion B

Buildings may also be significant for their association with an important person connected to the history of civil rights in the city of Detroit. Examples include the home of noted activists James and Grace Lee Boggs; a religious building associated with the career of a popular singer like Aretha Franklin, whose success enabled her to cross color lines and break racial barriers; a building housing a social institution closely associated with the contributions of an individual, such as Fannie Lee Peck, who opened a credit union for African Americans in 1936, or a school associated with an important educator. In Detroit, music unified the city's African American community and the jazz and blues clubs in Black neighborhoods had Black owners, who were a symbol of empowerment. The Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center was the training facility for the prizefighter Joe Louis,

whose outstanding success helped to expose injustice in America in accommodations, theaters, restaurants, travel, etc., aiding the cause of civil rights.

Criterion C

Most resources under the building type and its subtypes will typically not be independently significant under Criterion C, as their physical characteristics usually do not directly relate to the theme of civil rights. However, buildings may be significant under Criterion C IN ADDITION to their significance under Criteria A and/or B. In this case, Criterion C may be applied to document their significance as embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of construction, or for their representation of the work of one or more notable architects, builders, or landscape architects. They are most likely to be significant in the areas of architecture, especially if the building was designed by or altered by an African American architect such as Nathan Johnson. Another example is a church designed for a Black congregation on an urban renewal site, such as the Calvary Baptist Church designed by Gunnar Birkerts.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing as a building type or subtype under this MPDF, the property must be located within the geographic area defined in Section G (i.e., within the boundaries of the city of Detroit); possess historical associations related to the theme of twentieth Century African American civil rights; have attained its significance during the context period (1900 to 1976); and retain sufficient physical integrity related to the theme to convey its significance.

Buildings should retain integrity in terms of their relation to the urban fabric of the city and their neighborhood or area setting, including major spatial organizational features such as street grid and building orientation setbacks. Buildings should retain integrity from the context period/period of significance. They should, in general, be identifiable in terms of their original architectural styles (Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Commercial Brick, International style, etc.) with the understanding that, in the case of some resources, stylistic alterations may reflect specific cultural practices of residents or building owners that were employed to make a property their own. Common alterations such as replacement of doors and windows within original openings, roof replacement, covering original siding, and small-scale additions will not generally diminish the historic integrity of a building. More significant changes to buildings, such as removal of character-defining features, additions of incompatible scale, etc. may negatively impact integrity if they occurred after the period of significance.

Integrity of building interiors should prioritize the spaces most closely associated with the significant events or with the significant activities of the person or institution. For example, the home office of an important architect or lawyer should be relatively intact, while the integrity of other rooms in the house may be diminished without disqualifying the property for listing. Similarly, in large buildings, the spaces in which significant events took place are more relevant to integrity than other rooms.

Special consideration should be given to understanding the ongoing impacts of segregation and discrimination when evaluating the integrity of buildings. Alterations that happened both during and after the period of significance reflect strategies necessary for survival under these circumstances. Overcrowding caused subdivision of single-family homes. Because many properties were rentals owned by absentee landlords, they may have a history of deterioration and loss of original architectural character. African Americans left in a rapidly depopulating city due to suburbanization and White flight were especially vulnerable to economic

insecurity that affected their ability to maintain the historic fabric of their homes, businesses, and institutions. Historically African American properties were also highly susceptible to charges of blight and were disproportionately targeted for demolition of buildings. This is part of the story and the legacy of segregation in the city of Detroit.

III. Sites, Structures, and Objects

Description

These property types encompass non-building properties that are associated with significant events, people, and/or institutions important to the history of civil rights in the city of Detroit.

A **site** is the location of a significant event, a historic or prehistoric activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished where the location itself possesses historic, cultural or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure. Examples related to Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, might include the location of a protest rally; the site of an auto plant where a major sit-in occurred that changed employment practices in the industry; a bank building where sit-ins orchestrated by the Detroit NAACP took place; or a park where a civil rights rally occurred. Some important events or patterns of events connected to civil rights history, such as marches and racial conflicts, took place on the streets and public spaces of the city.

A **structure** encompasses resources that were not built for human shelter such as a bandstand, bridge, swimming pool, tunnel, or wall. A structure like the Birwood Wall illustrates, literally in concrete, the measures taken under redlining to separate Black and White neighborhoods and enforce *de facto* segregation.

An **object** refers to constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are small in scale. Examples include a fountain, statute, sculpture, or monument. A god example is the “Black Jesus” in the grotto of the Sacred Heart Major Seminary is an enduring reminder of the events of the uprising in the summer of 1967.

Significance

Criterion A

Resources in the sites, structures, and objects category may be eligible under Criterion A for their association with events that have made an important contribution to the broad patterns of African American civil rights history. Resources important under Criterion A are most likely to be significant in the areas of social and ethnic history or politics/government and law, though other themes may apply.

Sites may be significant as the location of important events in the history of civil rights, for example marches to advocate for a change in social or legal policy, racial conflicts over the provision of housing that challenged boundaries of segregation. Sites may also be, similar to traditional cultural properties, a location that contains resources defined by African Americans in the city as important to their civil rights heritage and in maintaining their continuing cultural identity. The site must be directly associated with a significant historical event and/or a pattern of events related to the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976. The site must be the original, physical location where the event occurred.

Structures and objects may be significant for their association with a specific event, such as the statue of the Black Jesus associated with the 1967 Rebellion, or for a pattern events, such as Birwood Wall that symbolizes the practice of redlining. Sites, structures, and objects that are commemorative in nature must meet the requirements under Criteria Consideration F for commemorative properties.

Criterion B

Sites, structures, and objects will more rarely be significant in relation to an important person. Eligibility under Criterion B requires that the property be associated with a prominent person in Detroit's twentieth century African American civil rights history during the period of significance of the Civil Rights Movement (1900-1976). The site should be the primary property associated with the person during the time of involvement with the Civil Rights Movement. For example, the site of Martin Luther King Jr's speech at Cobo Hall on June 23, 1963, during the "Walk of Freedom," the precursor of his "I Have a Dream" speech, would be considered the primary property associated with him, even though he may have given other speeches at churches and rallies throughout the city in the 1960s because of the national importance of the walk and the speech. The importance of a site must be considered in the wider context of Detroit's civil rights history. Prominent persons could be anyone associated with the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit--ministers, lawyers, political leaders, activists, doctors, businessmen—at the local, state, or national level.

Criterion C

Sites, structures, and objects will typically not be independently significant under Criterion C, as their physical characteristics usually do not directly relate to the theme of civil rights. However, a site may be significant under Criterion C **in addition** to its significance under Criterion A, mostly likely in the area of landscape architecture.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing as a site, structure, or object under this MPDF, the property must be located within the geographic area defined in Section G (i.e., within the boundaries of the city of Detroit); possess historical associations related to the theme of African American civil rights; have attained its significance during the context period (1900 to 1976); and retain sufficient physical integrity related to the theme to convey its significance.

Sites should retain integrity in terms of their relation to the urban fabric of the city and their neighborhood or area setting. The individual site should retain integrity from the context period/period of significance. It should, in general, be recognizable in terms of the spatial organization of the site and major features present during the period, such as boundaries, circulation patterns, building clusters, topography, patterns of vegetation, and views. Common alterations such as building materials, small scale features, individual plantings, etc. will not generally diminish the historic integrity of a site, while significant alterations to its setting and spatial organization as well as the intrusion of large-scale features may negatively impact integrity if they occurred after the period of significance. Structures and objects should retain integrity in relation to their historic setting, design and materials.

Special consideration should be given to understanding the ongoing impacts of segregation and discrimination when evaluating the integrity of sites, structures, and objects. Particularly in the case of sites, events often took

place in public spaces that are considered common property, and cities are subject to constant evolution and change. As well, sites connected to civil rights history have often been undervalued by those responsible for maintaining them. This is part of the story and the legacy of segregation in the city of Detroit.

G. Geographical Data

The geographical limits of this Multiple Property Documentation Form are the municipal boundaries of the City of Detroit.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) was prepared by Quinn Evans Architects and Centric Design Studio under contract to the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a division of the Michigan Strategic Fund. SHPO was awarded a grant from the National Park Service to fund this study, to be based on the NPS publication, *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites*. The goal of the project was to research the history and context of the Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, prepare reconnaissance and intensive-level survey information, develop a National Register of Historic Places MPDF, nominate five individual properties under the MPDF, and develop the content for a bike tour of properties associated with the Civil Rights Movement and African American Experience in 20th Century Detroit.

Archival research was conducted primarily at repositories within the city of Detroit, including the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library, the City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board collections, and the Reuther Library at Wayne State University. Both SHPO and stakeholders in the city of Detroit provided significant review and input for the draft historic contexts. Stakeholders suggested refinements and further areas of research. Two stakeholder engagement meetings were held at the beginning of the project. Attendees suggested significant sites, persons, events, and themes that were then further developed by the project team. An Advisory Board consisting of volunteers from stakeholder groups, local historians, and other interested parties assisted in selecting the sites for intensive-level survey, the five nominations, and the bike tour.

The context sub-periods and themes were based on the National Park Service's theme study entitled "*Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites."* A concurrent survey of all extant civil rights properties was conducted as part of this project. These properties were primarily constructed in the twentieth century. All identified properties and sites were surveyed at the reconnaissance level. Thirty sites were then selected from that list for intensive level survey, then further reduced to five sites chosen for nomination under the MPDF. Each site was individually surveyed, photographed, and entered into a GIS database. Survey forms were also prepared for all sites, either at the reconnaissance or intensive level, including appropriate descriptions, history, locational data, and photographs.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	COVER DOCUMENTATION
Multiple Name:	The Civil Rights Movement and the African American Experience in 20th Century Detroit MPS
State & County:	,

Date Received: 12/22/2020
Date of 45th Day: 2/5/2021

Reference number: MC100006099

Reason For Review:

__ Appeal	__ PDIL	__ Text/Data Issue
__ SHPO Request	__ Landscape	__ Photo
__ Waiver	__ National	__ Map/Boundary
__ Resubmission	__ Mobile Resource	__ Period
__ Other	__ TCP	__ Less than 50 years
	__ CLG	

__X__ Accept _____ Return _____ Reject _____ Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Provides a historic context for evaluating resources in Detroit reflecting the African American experience and focusing on the Civil Rights movement. Provides property types ranging from residential district to institutions to private businesses that are associated with significant events and persons in Detroit's Black community in the 20th century. Detroit's Black population swelled as the auto industry grew and the Great Migration moved whole populations into northern cities. By the 1980s, the city became majority African American. Good registration requirements for the property types.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept Cover document

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

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

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

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN STRATEGIC FUND
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

MARK A. BURTON
PRESIDENT

Monday, December 21, 2020

Ms. Joy Beasley, Keeper
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

The enclosed files contain the true and correct copy of the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) for the **Civil Rights Movement in Detroit, Michigan, 1900-1976, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan**. This MPDF is being submitted for approval for the National Register of Historic Places. This MPDF is a _X_ New Submission ____ Resubmission ____ Additional Documentation ____ Removal.

1 Signed National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
0 Locational maps
0 Sketch map(s) / figures(s) / exhibits(s)
0 Pieces of correspondence
0 Digital photographs
n/a Other:

COMMENTS:

____ Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed.
____ This property has been approved under 36 CFR 67.
____ The enclosed owner objections constitute a majority of property owners.
____ Other:

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, National Register Coordinator, at (517) 335-9854 or walsht@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Martha MacFarlane-Faes
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

MICHIGAN SHPO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

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