

**EXPANDED CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BAY CITY, BAY COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**PREPARED ON BEHALF OF THE  
CITY OF BAY CITY AND  
THE CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The following report, prepared by Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc. (CCRG) on behalf of the Bay City Historic District Study Committee, identifies an almost 339.5-acre section of the City of Bay City which meets the requirements set forth in P.A. 169 of 1970 as amended, as a local historic district. The Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District includes 948 properties, some of which include multiple buildings or structures. The overall district includes 882 contributing building and sites, and 66 non-contributing resources. These contributing resources were constructed between 1870 and 1962 and meet the National Register of Historic Places Criteria A, B, and C for Community Development, Religion, Education, Recreation, Social History and Lifeways, Commerce, Industry, and Architecture.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 2005, the City of Bay City, Michigan adopted a historic preservation ordinance following the requirements of Michigan's Public Act (P.A.) 169 of 1970 as amended (a copy of this legislation is provided in Appendix A; a copy of the City of Bay City Ordinance, Chapter 64, Historic Preservation Districts is presented in Appendix B). Historic districts are a means to honor the buildings and cultural resources in our history, while providing current owners with recognition of that resource. Owners of commercial historic properties are eligible for a 20 percent reduction of their federal tax obligation when rehabilitation efforts of the property are undertaken following the requirements of the National Park Service (NPS) and meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. While a similar Michigan State tax credit has been eliminated, there is great hope in the preservation community that there will be some financial program developed to assist in those properties within recognized local historic districts in the near future, providing further incentive to establish local historic districts such as the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District in Bay City.

### 1.1 DEFINITIONS

To better understand the materials presented in the following report, a number of definitions have been provided for the convenience of the reader. These definitions are taken from the City of Bay City Ordinance, Chapter 64, Historic Preservation Districts.

- *Commission*, the historic district commission of the city.
- *Historic district*, an area, or group of areas, not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that contains one resource or a group of resources that are related by history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

- *Historic preservation*, the identification, evaluation, establishment, and protection of resources significant in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.
- *Historic resource*, a publicly or privately owned building, structure, site, object, feature or open space that is significant in the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of the city, the state, or the United States.
- *Proposed historic district*, an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that has delineated boundaries and that is under review by a committee or a standing committee for the purpose of making a recommendation as to whether it should be established as a historic district or added to an established historic district.
- *Resource*, one or more publicly or privately owned historic or non-historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, features, or open spaces located within a historic district.

To date, the City of Bay City Commission has designated two individual sites as historic districts. The first district, the Pere Marquette Depot, is mentioned in Chapter 64 of the Bay City Ordinance of 2009. The second district, Lumber Barons' Charcoal Grill and Brew Pub - Stables Martini and Cigar Bar, is noted on the City of Bay City Planning and Zoning website but has not yet been added to the standing ordinances (Bay City Planning and Zoning Department 2011). This report proposes to add one new historic district, the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District.

## **1.2 BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY**

Designation of sites as historic districts preserves the historic integrity of structures and sites, and also allows owners and developers an opportunity to utilize the federal historic preservation tax credits as part of their financial package to allow renovation of historic buildings that might otherwise be lost to vacancy, blight, or worse—demolition. Designation also assists the Historic

District Commission (HDC) to fulfill its mission to stabilize and improve property values, foster civic beauty, strengthen the local economy, and promote the use of historic districts.

### **1.3 CITY OF BAY CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION AND THE HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE**

The City of Bay City Historic District Commission (HDC) was created by ordinance in 2005. This ordinance, Chapter 64 of the City Code, created the HDC and allowed for Historic District Study Committee (HDSC) review of historic resources in the City of Bay City. The HDC, by recommendation of its HDSC, has reviewed and approved the proposed historic district and recommends it be incorporated into the ordinance.

In 2009, Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc. (CCRG) began work with the City of Bay City to inventory, define historic district boundaries, prepare a National Register of Historic Place (NRHP) nomination and assist with the preparation of the HDSC report. The establishment of this district would be one of the first moves to a P.A. 169 type local historic district. Known as the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District, this references the 1981 National Register listed historic district along Center Avenue but also acknowledges the much greater size of this district compared to the original.

The project was undertaken with the assistance of Ron Bloomfield, Patti Stowell, and Terry Moulthane, a number of volunteers were identified to assist with the building research and documentation. As a grant funded project, the use of volunteers not only provided a means to involve the residents of the district and the City of Bay City in the project, but also allowed for a larger undertaking at a lower cost.

### **1.4 METHODOLOGY**

Several training sessions were held in the fall of 2009 by CCRG to assist with the research and photography of the entire proposed district. The district boundaries were preliminarily

recommended by Ms. Sigrid Bergland of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) in conjunction with improvements being done on Center Avenue. This preliminary district was reviewed by CCRG staff, and slightly modified to the current configuration (Figures 1.4-1 and 1.4-2). The historic district boundary and its justification is presented in Chapter 3. Due to the scale of the mapping required for the large historic district, an index and detail maps are presented in Appendix C. Appendix D includes a list of each of the properties within the historic district, its contributing or noncontributing status, style/form, and date of construction.

In addition to the work carried out by the volunteers for this project, background work and some photography was completed by CCRG. CCRG, also using data supplied by the City of Bay City, prepared maps for both the NRHP and local historic district. The local historic district boundary matches that of the NRHP district and follows the same reasons for eligibility. As with all local historic districts, the eligibility is based on the standards established for listing in the NRHP. These standards state that to be eligible for listing, a resource must exhibit integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association and meet one or more of four NRHP evaluation criteria listed below:

- A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history;
- B. Association with the lives of persons significant in the past;
- C. Embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; representative of the work of a master; possession of high artistic values; or representation of a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Ability to yield or potentially yield information important in prehistory or history.

Map Reference: National Geographic Society 1:24,000 Series, Bay City and Essexville Quadrangles, Michigan (scale 1:24,000) 2011

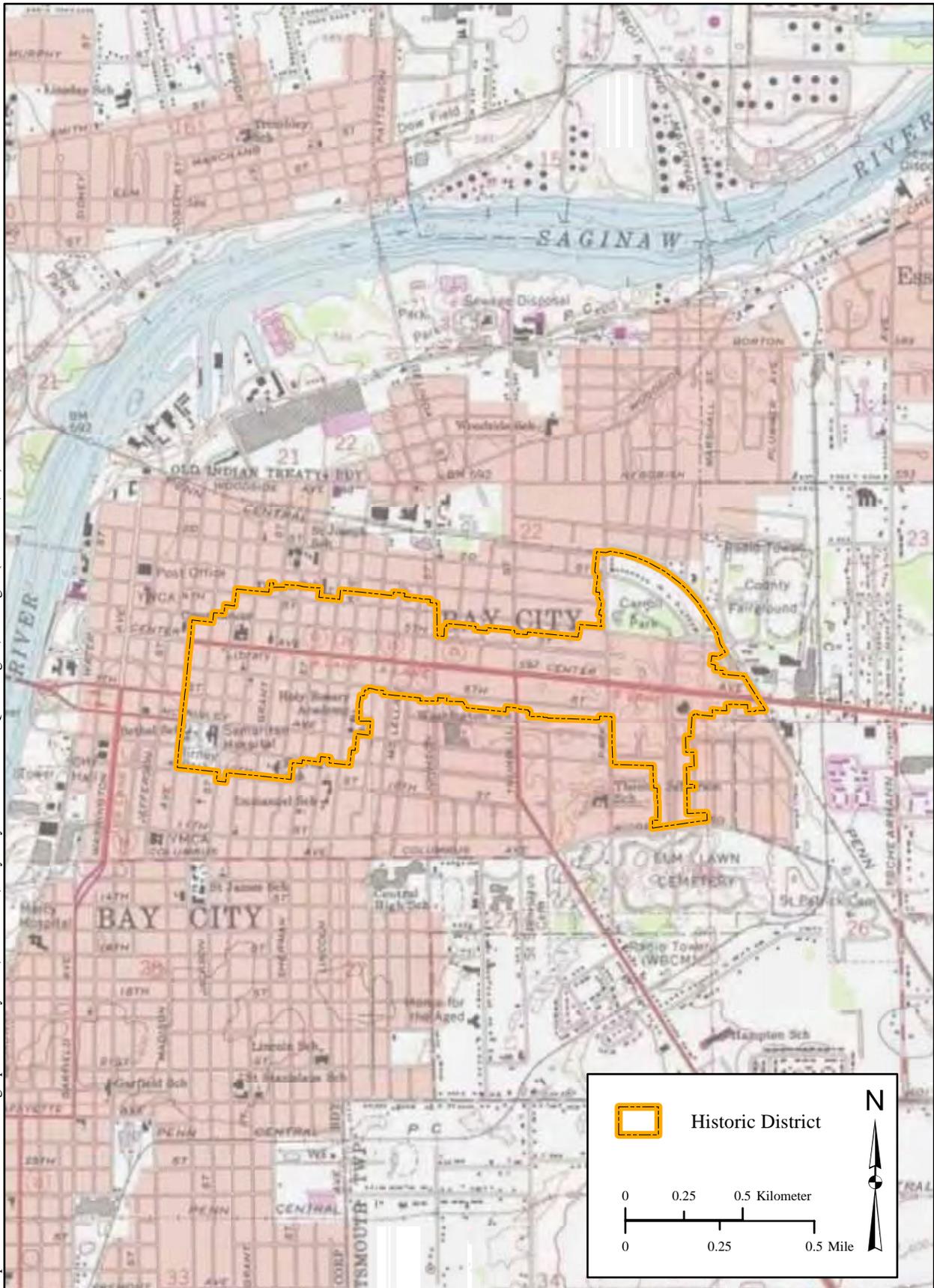
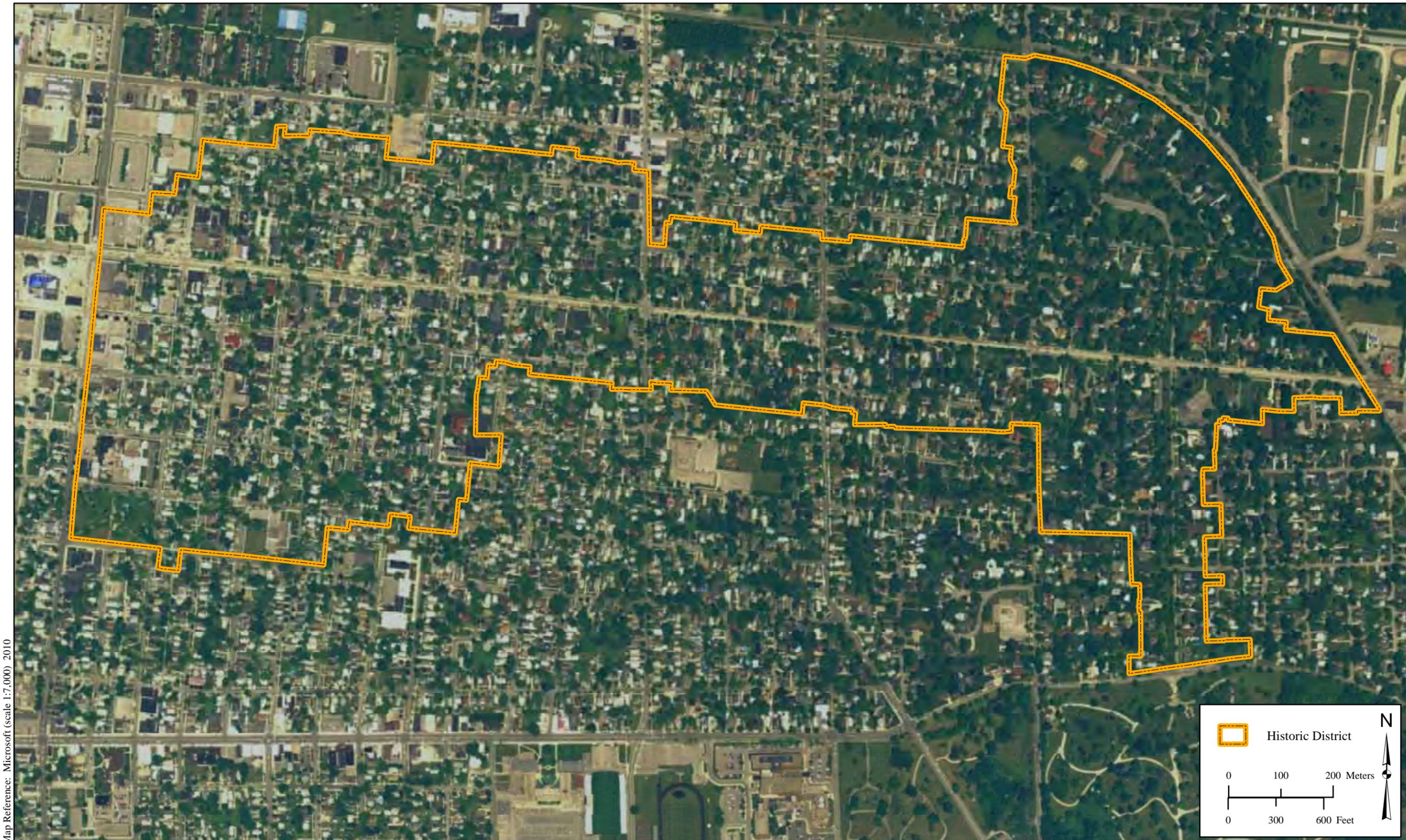


Figure 1.4-1. Historic District Location



Map Reference: Microsoft (scale 1:7,000) 2010

Figure 1.4-2. Historic District Aerial Map

## **2.0 EXPANDED CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE**

### **2.1 CHARGE OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE**

The City of Bay City Ordinance Sec. 64-4 addresses the HDSC and report. The HDSC, appointed by the City of Bay City Commission, must consist of a majority of volunteers who have “clearly demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation, and shall contain representation from one or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations.”

Once the committee members are determined, the HDSC is required to:

- Conduct a photographic inventory of resources within each proposed historic district following procedures established or approved by the State Historic Preservation Office.
- Conduct basic research of each proposed historic district and the historic resources located within that district.
- Determine the total number of historic and non-historic district resources within a proposed historic district and the percentage of historic resources of that total.

Once this effort is completed, the HDSC is then required to prepare a report of its findings. The report, which will be shared with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and State Historic Preservation Review Board (SHPRB) for review and comment, should include, at minimum:

- The charge of the committee
- The composition of the committee membership
- The historic district or districts studied
- The boundaries for each proposed district in writing and on maps
- The history of each proposed historic district

- The significance of each district as a whole, as well as a sufficient number of its individual resources to fully represent the variety of resources found within the district, relative to the evaluation criteria

Not less than 60 days after the report has been transmitted to the state for comments, the HDSC is required to hold a public hearing in compliance with Public Act 267 of 1976 as amended. Written notice of this meeting must be sent to those property owners within the proposed historic district by first class mail not less than 14 calendar days prior to the hearing.

Following the public hearing, the HDSC and the city commission have not more than one year, unless otherwise authorized by the city commission to take one of the following actions:

- Prepare and submit a final report, with any recommendations by the planning commission to the city commission to establish a local historic district or districts. If this path is selected, the report shall also include a draft proposed ordinance for the historic district.
- The city commission, at its discretion, may introduce and pass or reject an ordinance or ordinances.
- Make the final written study available to the public in compliance with P.A. 442 of 1976, as amended.

## **2.2 EXPANDED CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE**

The HDSC was appointed, as required by the City Commission. This committee includes:

**Jim Bedell**, City of Bay City Planning Department

**Ronald Bloomfield**, Director Bay County Historical Museum and local historian

**Robert Cuthbert**, area resident

**Alan Flood**, volunteer at the Bay County Historical Museum, historic district resident, and member of both the Local Historic District Commission and the Architectural Review Committee

**Judith Kerman**, instructor at Saginaw Valley State University and area resident

**Shirley Roberts**, historic district resident, Tall Ship Celebration Coordinator, former Executive Director at the Bay City Convention and Visitors Bureau

Following their appointment to the committee, both Robert Cuthbert and Judith Kerman have moved, and therefore did not serve on the committee.

Supporting the committee members, there were a number of individuals who took on much of the photography and individual building investigations. These individuals included:

**Amber Berkobein**, Saginaw Valley State University history student

**Tom Birch**, Bay County Library Director, historic district area resident

**Danni Bourdon-Burns**, area resident

**Kathy Branigan**, area resident and former Bay County Historical Society Board member

**Lloyd Buzzard**, volunteer at Bay County Historical Society

**Mary Buzzard**, volunteer at Bay County Historical Society

**Mike Chapman**, historic district resident

**Megan Farrell**, historic district resident

**Brad Jarvis**, Saginaw Valley State University professor

**Chad Keene**, former Bay County Historical Society Research Library intern and volunteer

**Jacob James Krueger**, Saginaw Valley State University history student

**Taylor Langstaff**, Bay County Historical Society research volunteer librarian, and area resident

**Maureen McDermott**, Bay County Historical Society Research Library volunteer

**Victor Mobley**, Bay County Historical Society Library/Collections volunteer, Central Michigan University history student

**Terry Moulane**, historic district area resident, City of Bay City Planning and Zoning Department, and staff representative for the City of Bay City on the Architectural Review Committee and Historic District Commission

**David Roberts**, historic district area resident

**Andy Rogers**, professional photographer, area resident and member of the Temple Israel Synagogue

**Margie Rooker**, Bay County Historical Society Research Library volunteer librarian

**Phil Rice**, Bay County Historical Society volunteer

**Charlotte Schultz**, Bay County Historical Society volunteer

**Fred Schultz**, Bay County Historical Society volunteer

**Warren Smith**, area resident and member of the Bay City Planning Commission

**Patti Stowell**, historic district area resident, City of Bay City Economic Development Marketing Manager, and staff representative for the City of Bay City on the Downtown Management Board.

**Rachel Walsh**, historic district resident

**Fred Welsh**, Bay County Historical Society Research Library volunteer librarian and local history researcher/presenter

### **3.0 EXPANDED CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT BONDARY**

#### **3.1 HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY**

The irregular boundary of the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District is roughly bounded on the west by North Madison Avenue, on the north by Fourth Street, Fifth Street, and Carroll Road, on the east by Carroll Road and Green Avenue, and on the south by Center Avenue, Nurmi Drive, Sixth Street, and Tenth Street (see Figures 1.4-1 and 1.4-2; Appendix C).

The specific boundary begins at the center point of Madison Avenue and a point even with the north property line of 605 Center Avenue. From this point, the boundary extends east along the north lot line of 605 Center Avenue and extends to reach the center point of Monroe Street. Here the boundary moves north along the centerline of Monroe Street to the centerpoint of Fifth Street then turns north again to extend along the west then north property lines of 903 North Jackson. The boundary extends from the northeast corner of 903 North Jackson to the centerline of North Jackson and turns north along that line to the centerline of Fourth Street where it again turns north to the west lot line of 913 Fourth Street. The boundary continues on the west and north lot lines of 913 Fourth Street before turning east along the rear property lines of the houses on the north side of Fourth Street until it reaches North Sherman Street. The boundary moves south to the centerline of Fourth Street turning east along this line between North Sherman Street and North Sheridan Street, then turns north again to the rear lot lines of the properties on the north side of Fourth Street between North Sheridan Street and North Johnson Street. At North Johnson Street, the boundary turns south to the centerline of Fifth Street where it turns east until it reaches the west property line of 1809 Fifth Street. From this point, it again follows the west property line north and continues east along the rear lot lines of the properties on the north side of Fifth Street until it reaches the west property line of 2156 Fourth Street where it turns north to the centerline of Fourth Street, then turns east to the rear lot line of 1001 Park Avenue. At this point, the historic district boundary turns north, following the rear lot lines of the properties on the west side of Park Avenue until it reaches First Street, then turns east again to the rear lot lines of the

properties along Carroll Road. The boundary crosses Carroll and Groveland Roads until it reaches the south lot line of side of 2316 Groveland Road where it follows the lot line to the point it intersects with the north lotline for 2491 Center Avenue. At this point, the boundary continues east along the rear lot lines of the properties on the north side of Center Avenue until it meets the west side of Livingston Street. The boundary extends southeast along the west side of Livingston Street until it reaches the south lot line of 2602 Center Avenue. From this point, the boundary turns west along the rear lot lines of the properties on the south side of Center Avenue, including 11 Center Court, until it reaches the rear lot line of 612 Green Avenue. From this point, the boundary turns south along the rear property lines of the lots on the east side of Green Avenue, crossing Seventh and Ninth streets. When the boundary reaches the north lot line of 100 Green Avenue, it turns east, following the north and east lot lines. At the junction of the boundary with Ridge Road, the boundary turns west along the south lot line of 100 Green Avenue then crossing Green Avenue and continuing along the south lot line of 101 Green Avenue. When the boundary reaches the west lot line of 101 Green Avenue it once again turns north to follow its west and north lot lines until it reaches the southwest corner of the property associated with 105 Green Avenue. From this point the boundary turns north to follow the rear lot lines of the properties on the west side of Green Avenue until it reaches the south lot line of 2316 Nurmi Drive. At this point, the boundary once again turns west to follow the rear lot lines of those properties on the south side of Nurmi Drive. The boundary continues west to the centerline of Park Avenue, where it turns north until it reaches a point even with the south lot line of those properties on the south side of Sixth Street. The historic district boundary turns west and runs along these rear lot lines until it reaches the northeast corner of the lot associated with 608 North Lincoln Street. From this point, the boundary turns south to follow the rear lot lines of those properties on the east side of North Lincoln Street until it reaches the southeast corner of the lot associated with 322 North Lincoln Street. From this point, the boundary turns west to follow the rear lot lines of those properties on the south side of Ninth Street until it reaches the northeast corner of 310 North Farragut Street. Here, the boundary again turns south along the rear lot lines of the properties fronting on North Farragut Street until it reaches the centerline of Tenth Street. The boundary then turns west to follow the centerline of Tenth Street

until it reaches a point even with the rear lot line of 252 North Jackson Street. At this point, the boundary turns south, then west to follow the east and south lot lines of the property. The boundary along the south property line extends to the center of Jackson Street where it turns north to meet the centerline of Tenth Street. At this point, the boundary turns west to the centerline of North Madison Avenue. From this point, the boundary turns north, following the centerline of North Madison Avenue to the point of the beginning.

### **3.2 BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION FOR EXPANDED CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The historic district boundary includes those properties that were platted and developed after 1870 along the central spine of Center Avenue. The district expands both north and south of Center Avenue to include properties that illustrate the development trends in the early residential area through the time of its greatest population. Although there have been losses of resources and some changes in historic integrity, the historic district illustrates distinct time periods and the changing social and architectural trends associated with them. In addition to the residential component of the district, the boundary includes resources developed within the area that resulted in a vibrant and vital part of Bay City's history. These resources include several churches, schools, and community gathering centers including both Carroll Park and Birney Park.

## **4.0 EXPANDED CENTER AVENUE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District was not the first area to be settled in Bay County, but the homes that are located within the boundaries illustrate the changing trends of the area. From the mansions of the wealthy city fathers and commercial entrepreneurs to the more modest dwellings of their managers and staff, the district includes all the features associated with residential development and the trends that supported and evolved over time. Places of worship, schools, and meeting and gathering places are all also present within the district.

The 329.5 total acres of the historic district include areas platted as early as the 1840s through the 1950s. Focused along the spine of Center Avenue, the historic district includes large properties of the city's business and industry leaders. On the streets north and south of Center Avenue, the building lots are slightly smaller, and houses are constructed more closely together. With some exceptions (such as the Carroll Park area) the social, political, and business standing of the community is represented in the architecture. Further enhancing the area is the obvious change in styles and the designs over time. Because the district is a defined area that has developed over time, it is possible to view the physical manifestation of time and community development

### **4.1 SETTLEMENT**

Prior to 1800, no permanent Euro-American settlements were located in the Saginaw Valley. Neither the French nor the English during their respective control of the area established a fort in the valley. During this period, neither a permanent mission nor trading post was established there (Butterfield 1957:35-37).

Following the Revolution, ownership of the valley remained in dispute until the negotiation of Jay's Treaty. Chief Justice John Jay traveled to London in 1794 to negotiate the treaty meant to settle differences that had remained between England and the newly formed United States

following the Revolution. One of the few concessions Jay won was the agreement that England would abandon its United States posts, which had been originally agreed to in 1783; however, the English had failed to relinquish control of the posts (Bailey and Kennedy 1994:192-193). The surrender of the posts, including forts at Detroit and Michilimackinac, finally gave the United States control of the Saginaw Valley (Butterfield 1957:34).

Though there was no permanent Euro-American presence in the Saginaw Valley prior to 1800, missionaries, traders, and government agents did visit the region. One of the first recorded traders in the valley was Louis Trombley, a relative of Joseph and Medor Trombley, two of Bay County's first permanent settlers. Louis Trombley was a goldsmith who used his skills to craft metal implements to trade with the indigenous people for furs. Trombley's last trip to the Saginaw River was reportedly in 1792 (Butterfield 1957:36).

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, incursions into the Saginaw Valley by Euro-Americans, primarily traders, intensified. These individuals began to spend more time in the valley, sometimes constructing temporary log huts along the river. Some traders married Native Americans and moved throughout the area trading in furs. By 1816, Louis Campau had settled at what would become Saginaw (Butterfield 1957:37).

Two important events that served to open the region to more trade and settlement were the invention of the steamboat and the completion of the Erie Canal. Robert Fulton's steamboat made its debut in 1807. In 1818, the *Walk-in-the-Water* became the first steamboat to travel the Great Lakes. The steamboat era allowed water trade to take place on the Great Lakes without dependence on wind conditions. Shortly following the beginning of steamboat travel on the Great Lakes, the Erie Canal opened in 1825. The impact of the opening of the canal was very significant for Michigan. Settlers were able to use the canal to proceed to the Great Lakes and then to settle in Michigan, whereas previously, settlers had proceeded west using the Ohio Valley (Butterfield 1957:48).

The 1819 Treaty of Saginaw was instrumental in providing Michigan's settlers the opportunity to safely settle in the area off the Saginaw Bay. Negotiated between the Chippewa people and the United States, the treaty granted a large portion of the lands between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron to the federal government (Mills 1918:79). As part of this treaty, there were reserves created for John, James, and Peter Riley, the sons of James V. S. (in some sources Stephen V. R.) Riley and Me-naw-cum-ego-qua, a Chippewa woman, in recognition of James' efforts in the American effort during the War of 1812 (Butterfield 1918:64). The land allotted to John Riley was east of the Saginaw River and formed a large portion of what would later be downtown Bay City. James Riley's land was part of the site of East Saginaw, and Peter Riley's land was situated on the west side of the river (Mills 1918:80). In spite of owning the large parcels of land, none of the sons ever visited his property, but instead they lived out their lives on tribal grounds near the head of the St. Clair River.

The community of Saginaw served as a catalyst for further settlement in the area. The small community offered traders and settlers a market for goods without the need to journey as far away as Detroit. The Saginaw community was approximately 10 years old in 1831, when Leon Trombley settled within the current limits of Bay County (Butterfield 1957:49). Trombley came to the area serving in the capacity of government agricultural agent. His task was to instruct the local Native Americans in agricultural methods (Page 1883:15). He also planned to supplement his income by engaging in the fur trade. Trombley established himself on the east bank of the river, near current Fourth Street. After clearing approximately half an acre of land, he planted potatoes, but apparently had no intention of making the site his permanent residence. Despite the inexpensive land, Trombley felt the area real estate a poor investment. He never purchased any land in the area, citing in part the swampy nature of the land (Butterfield 1957:49). He did remain in his home and lived long enough to see a town begin to take shape around the site of the small log home he constructed in 1831 (Page 1883:15).

Three years after the arrival of Trombley to the area, two more settlers established themselves along the river in the area. One man was Benjamin Cushway, who, like Trombley, was an agent

of the government. Cushway established his log cabin on the river's west bank, near current Salzburg Avenue. He also constructed a small blacksmith shop that was operated for the benefit of the local Native Americans. Cushway appears not to have remained in the area very long. The second settler to follow Leon Trombley into the area was fur trader John B. Trudell. Trudell built his cabin along the east bank of the river, near present-day intersection of Seventeenth and Broadway. Trudell purchased additional land along the river and made fishing his primary occupation (Butterfield 1957:49). In 1850, he relocated to the west side of the river and later moved yet again to the community of Banks (Page 1883:15; Butterfield 1957:49). Trudell is considered by many to be the first permanent settler of Bay County (Butterfield 1957:49).

The early history of the area continued to be closely tied with the Trombley family. Joseph Trombley, nephew of Leon Trombley, first visited the area in 1829 to trade in furs (Butterfield 1957:37, 50). Favorably impressed with the area, Trombley and his brother Medor obtained a 312-acre government land patent for the area. The patent, dated August 13, 1834, granted the brothers an area of land that extended roughly from present-day Twenty-Second Street south to about Cass Avenue, and from the river to present-day Jennison Street (Butterfield 1957:50). The brothers planned to operate a store on the tract to trade with Native Americans in the area. Joseph purchased goods in Detroit for the store and had them shipped aboard the *Savage* in 1835. Meanwhile, Medor set out from Detroit with livestock, bound for their newly acquired tract (Butterfield 1957:50; Page 1883:15). Once Joseph arrived in July 1835, he began construction of a log store measuring 24 feet by 30 feet near the corner of present-day Water and Twenty-Fourth streets (Chicago Biographical 1892:1032; Page 1883:15). Though John B. Trudell and others settled in the area earlier, the Trombley brothers are sometimes credited as Bay County's first "real" settlers because of their apparent plans to make the site of their land patent their permanent home (Butterfield 1957:50).

The trading post of the Trombley brothers conducted a brisk trade and prospered immediately. By 1837, the brothers constructed a frame building as a residence (Butterfield 1957:50). This building was the first frame building constructed within the current bounds of Bay County. The

house was known originally simply as the “Big House” and later as the “Center House” (Chicago Biographical 1892:1032). The house was located close to the log trading post, near the present-day intersection of Water and Twenty-Fourth streets (Chicago Biographical 1892:1032).

## **4.2 FORMATION OF PORTSMOUTH AND LOWER SAGINAW**

Shortly after the Trombley brothers established themselves on their new tract, a wave of land speculation swept Michigan, including in the Saginaw Valley (Gansser 1905:88). Saginaw County was organized in 1835, and Albert Miller, the new county’s judge of probate, became involved in area land speculation. Miller thought the area settled by the Trombley brothers, with its location so close to the mouth of the river, was destined to grow into a city (Butterfield 1957:51; Page 1883:18). As a result, he purchased land from Joseph and Medor in 1836, and drew up a plat for his planned village of “Portsmouth.” Although Miller was unable to initially find buyers for the Portsmouth lots, he remained convinced that the site was a good one for a town. He returned to his recently purchased tract, and along with two partners, Cromwell Barney and B. K. Hall, he established a steam sawmill between present-day Thirty-First and Thirty-Second streets, and between Harrison Street and the river. Miller was confident enough in his vision to establish a mill to supply settlers with lumber for their homes and businesses (Butterfield 1957:51).

Pushing forward with his vision, the Portsmouth Company—the land speculation company organized by Miller—filed another Portsmouth plat with the Saginaw County Register of Deeds in 1837. This second plat encompassed an even larger area, including an area that extended from present-day Columbus Avenue southward along the river to between Thirty-Second and Thirty-Third streets, and east from the river to present-day South Jefferson Street. The second plat filed by Miller was the one followed in the laying out of the town over time, though some changes were made. The north-south streets were originally given numbers from First Street (present-day Harrison) to Thirteenth Street (present-day South Jefferson). The east-west streets received names that included presidents, the Saginaw River and associated tributaries, and local varieties

of trees. The street names shown on the original plat were changed when Portsmouth became part of Bay City; only Water and Broadway streets retained their original names (Butterfield 1957:51).

Interest in the potential of the area near the mouth of the Saginaw River continued to grow. James Fraser, a Scotsman who moved to the United States in 1829, realized the potential of the Saginaw Valley and set out to establish a town. At the time, the area available near the mouth of the Saginaw River was limited. On the west side of the river—from the mouth of the Kawkawlin River to Willow Island—there was an established Native American reservation (Page 1883:19). On the east bank of the river, Miller was in the act of trying to establish the town of Portsmouth in 1837 (Butterfield 1957:53). One piece of property near the mouth of the river that Fraser began to consider was the Riley Reservation, owned by John Riley. The Riley Reservation was just north of the proposed town of Portsmouth (Butterfield 1957:53; Page 1883:19).

Fraser sought other investors to partner with on his venture. Among those who joined him was Governor Stevens T. Mason, who was also part of Judge Miller's Portsmouth Company. The company, formed in the early part of 1837, was named the Sagina (sic) Bay Company (Butterfield 1957:53; Page 1883:19). John Riley, who was living in Port Huron, sold part of the Riley Reservation for \$30,000. The zone laid out for the proposed town of Lower Saginaw included the area between present-day Woodside Avenue to about 400 feet south of present-day Tenth Street, and from the river to about 100 feet east of present-day Van Buren Street (Butterfield 1957:53). This 240-acre tract was to form the nucleus of modern-day Bay City (Bay City Centennial Association [BCCA] 1965). Following the example of Judge Miller and his partners who established a steam sawmill in Portsmouth to illustrate their faith in the village, Fraser and his partners constructed multiple buildings in Lower Saginaw as early as 1838. Among the buildings constructed were a warehouse, blockhouse, and bank. The community also quickly gave rise to about six houses, a hotel, and dock (BCCA 1965; Butterfield 1957:53).

The growth of the fledgling villages of Portsmouth and Lower Saginaw was harmed when the economic crisis known as the Panic of 1837 swept the nation. The crisis did not destroy the two towns, but lots were virtually impossible to sell during this period. The steam sawmill in Portsmouth was even forced to shut its doors (Butterfield 1957:53; Page 1883:21).

Many of the members of the Saginaw Bay Company were especially hard hit by the financial crisis. The company underwent reorganization during the early 1840s (Butterfield 1957:54). As part of the reorganization, James Fraser purchased shares held by the original investors (Kilar 1990:36). The reorganized company met in September 1843 and established two public parks. In addition, every other block along Washington Avenue was to have two lots set aside for church use (Butterfield 1957:54).

### **4.3 JAMES G. BIRNEY AND THE GROWTH OF LOWER SAGINAW INTO BAY CITY**

One of the key players in the development of Lower Saginaw was James G. Birney. Birney had become part of the Saginaw Bay Company during its reorganization. In 1843, he was instrumental in having two local parks established and lots set aside for churches. Birney ran for president in 1840 while a resident of New York, and following his failed bid for the presidency, he relocated and eventually settled in Lower Saginaw in the spring of 1842. He purchased land on both sides of the Saginaw River and began farming (Kilar 1990:36).

Birney was not only a religious man and an activist who battled against injustice, but also a strong advocate for his community. Birney held religious services in his home and spoke out against the unfair treatment of Native Americans. In 1844, Birney once again made a bid for the presidency while a resident of Lower Saginaw. Following his second failed bid, he returned to his work to develop Lower Saginaw (Butterfield 1918:62). Though population growth was slow for Lower Saginaw during the 1840s, Birney worked to establish a school and post office for the community (Kilar 1990:37). Using his political experience, Birney fought against ineffective or poor governing in the Saginaw County (Butterfield 1918:62).

During the 1850s, Lower Saginaw experienced significant growth in part due to the area's burgeoning lumber industry. In the winter of 1847-1848, Lower Saginaw opened its first sawmill. Twelve additional sawmills opened between 1850 and 1854. Although the lumber boom did not come to the area until after the Civil War, the small-scale lumber industry in Lower Saginaw during the 1850s did bring additional people, and spurred the construction of hotels and boarding houses (Kilar 1990:38).

Over the loud objections of the residents of the town of Saginaw, Bay County was formed in 1857 from Saginaw and Midland counties. The formation of the new county was so contentious that the act providing for the formation of the new county was challenged in the courts and eventually upheld in the Michigan Supreme Court in 1858. The animosity between the people of Bay County and the town of Saginaw created by the formation of the new county lasted for years (Gansser 1905:111; Kilar1990:38-39). James Birney drew up a resolution at this time that changed the name of Lower Saginaw to Bay City, a decision that might have been in part prompted to avoid confusion with the village of Saginaw to the south (Gansser 1905:112; Butterfield 1957:158). At the first meeting of Bay County's Board of Supervisors in 1858, Bay City was the county seat. Bay City, with its 700 residents, incorporated in 1859 (Gansser 1905:112; Kilar1990:39).

#### **4.4 BAY CITY**

Bay City as it exists today grew out of the villages of Portsmouth, Lower Saginaw (both east of the Saginaw River), Banks, Salzburg, and Wenona (Butterfield 1957:158). At the time of Bay County's creation and the renaming of Lower Saginaw to Bay City in 1858, all of these villages were separate entities. When Bay City was incorporated as a village the following year, its new boundaries included Portsmouth (Butterfield 1957:159).

Curtis Munger was installed as the first village president following the incorporation of the village. One of the first orders of business addressed by the new village's trustees was to order the construction of sidewalks along Washington Street between First and Tenth streets. The trustees also ordered that Jefferson and Madison streets north of Center Street be opened (Butterfield 1957:159).

The village form of government was used in Bay City until 1865, at which time the city's population had grown to the point that a different form of government was necessary. The northern part of the city incorporated again that year, but this time excluded Portsmouth (Butterfield 1957:159). The original Lower Saginaw plat included the area from Prairie Road (present-day Woodside Avenue) to a line 400 feet south of Tenth Street, and between the Saginaw River and Van Buren Street. The incorporation of 1865 set the southern boundary at Twenty-Third Street (present-day Lafayette Avenue), until Portsmouth rejoined Bay City in 1873 (BCCA 1965; Butterfield 1957:159). The 1865 charter provided the city government with more powers to govern its population of almost 3,400 people (BCCA 1965:36; Butterfield 1957:159). The first mayor elected for Bay City was Nathan B. Bradley, who settled in the town in 1858, successfully operated a sawmill, and later engaged in salt processing. Bradley also served as a state senator and United States congressman. He was very capable and held great respect among the people of Bay City (Butterfield 1957:159; Chicago Biographical 1892:371).

Bay City and the surrounding villages at the mouth of the Saginaw River were poised for tremendous growth in the years following the Civil War due to the area's lumber resources and access to the river and Great Lakes. Early residents of the area had recognized the potential held in the forests that surrounded them. James McCormick established the firm James McCormick and Son in 1841, which not only ran a mill in Portsmouth, but was the first to ship lumber out of the Saginaw Valley (Page 1883:64). During the 1870s, and particularly the 1880s, the lumber boom began in earnest.

The lumber industry spurred other industries in the Bay City area. Salt was extracted from brine water, using the sawdust and scrap wood generated from the sawmills to boil away the brine. By 1880, there were 48 different facilities engaged in salt production (Kilar 1990:39-40, 58). As the salt industry became more profitable, barrels were constructed in the Bay City area to ship the salt (Kilar 1990:61). Catering to the men who worked in the local industry, boardinghouses were constructed and saloons and restaurants opened to serve the growing population. These boardinghouses were usually two- or three-story structures that measured about 30 feet by 80 feet (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996). Shipbuilding also became a huge industry in the area (Kilar 1990:62, 69-71). The economic success of Bay City caused the population to swell to approximately 35,000 people by 1888, excluding West Bay City (the portion of present-day Bay City west of the Saginaw River) (BCCA 1965).

The evolving layout of Bay City during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was driven as much by socioeconomic factors as by practicality. This pattern was firmly entrenched by the 1880s. Bay City was no different than most nineteenth-century industrial towns during that period in that the wealthy resided near the center of town. The lumbermen quite understandably constructed their homes closer to their sawmills, which were located along the river. Residing close to the wealthy class was the merchant and professional class. The laborer neighborhoods were still farther away. In the case of Bay City, the more affluent neighborhoods were located along Center Avenue, as evidenced by the fine homes that remain there today. The homes of the merchants and professionals were constructed along Fifth and Sixth streets, which run parallel on either side of Center Avenue (Kilar 1990:106-107).

Construction of homes along Center Avenue was stalled for a time at about Johnson Street. According to a newspaper article published in 1890, the reason for this seems to have been the presence of the Farmer's Home Saloon and the street railway barn, located along Center Avenue to the east of Johnson Street (*Bay City Times* [BCT] 1890:4). The eastern end of Center Avenue was part of the W. D. Fitzhugh Subdivision, which was platted in the years following the Civil War. Very little construction took place in the subdivision until the 1890s, when the streetcar

lines were extended down Center Avenue (Dale Patrick Wolicki to Ron Bloomfield, letter, 25 September 2001, Dale Wolicki Files, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan).

The character of Bay City changed dramatically during the lumber boom, and while many of these changes were beneficial to the local populace, there were also consequences. As Bay City grew, the streets that had once been dirt paths were covered by planks or wooden blocks. The blocks of the city began to fill with the stores of merchants. Architects now aided in the design of not only the homes of the lumbermen, but also Bay City's public buildings (Kilar 1990:108-109). City improvements were sometimes a source of contention between the working class and the more affluent. The workers generally favored bond issues to make improvements to the city, while many of the city's wealthier residents opposed such bond issues (Kilar 1990:277).

Ironically, the river that gave life to Bay City was being killed by the city and the other towns along the Saginaw. Pollution from the sawmills and sewage from the towns caused great environmental harm to the river and significantly impacted the fish populations (Kilar 1990:109-110).

#### **4.5 TRANSPORTATION: FROM WATER TO RAIL**

As Bay City and the other communities near the mouth of the Saginaw River evolved, so did the transportation infrastructure that supported them. Early transportation for the Bay City area was dependent largely on the river. Water transportation remained important, but the communities began to develop overland links to other areas, first by road and then by rail. Even within the confines of a community, the transportation was improved by street improvements and streetcar systems.

Reliance on the Saginaw River as a link to the outside world was not simply due to the convenience of the river, but also due to other environmental factors, as the forests and swamps made construction of wagon roads very difficult. Overland traveling was largely limited to the

use of long-existing Native American paths that were hardly conducive to trade. Sometimes during the winter, sleighs could be used for transportation on the Saginaw River; however, when the ice began to break up with warming temperatures, both sleigh and boat use had to cease for a period (Butterfield 1957:59).

The Native American trails often offered the easiest and most logical routes for Euro-Americans to construct their roads. In 1836, Michigan's territorial government allocated money for construction of a road along a Native American trail leading from Detroit through Pontiac, Flint, Saginaw and on north to Saginaw Bay. Despite the plans, the road was never constructed all the way to Saginaw Bay (Fuller 1926:54).

When the roads did not simply follow the trails already cut by Native Americans, they generally followed sand ridges, so the wagons could avoid getting stuck in the low-lying areas. Often, the Native American trails followed these sand ridges anyway. One of the earliest roads in the vicinity of Bay City was Ridge Road. The road still bears its historic name (Historical Society of Michigan [HSM] 1957).

During the early part of Lower Saginaw's history, only a Native American trail (and the river) connected the village to its neighbor Saginaw to the south. In 1860, the trail located along the river was made into a road that finally connected the two communities. This road was probably typical of many of the roads of that period—simple dirt roads that were “corduroyed” when crossing areas of swampy land. Corduroying was simply the laying down of rows of logs over swampy areas and then covering the logs with dirt, clay, or gravel (Fuller 1926:54, 57-58).

Another Native American trail ran from Lower Saginaw to Mackinaw and the Soo. This route was later chosen by the federal government as a mail route (Fuller 1926:55).

The residents of the Bay City area used a rope ferry to travel back and forth across the Saginaw River prior to 1863. In 1863, with the construction of a large sawmill by Henry Sage on the

river's west side, a steam ferry took over transportation across the river, while a wooden bridge was constructed across the river at Third Street. The bridge was completed in 1865. In 1876, a steel bridge replaced this wooden one (Butterfield 1957:119; Fuller 1926:57).

The first plank road in the area was begun in 1859, when Benjamin F. Partridge organized a company to construct a toll plank road. The Tuscola Plank Road was completed to Blumfield Junction in 1860. This 12-mile stretch of road connected to another road that ran to Saginaw. This connection to Saginaw made the Tuscola Plank Road a very important transportation artery in the years prior to the railroad. The toll paid on the road was dependent upon how far the individual traveled on the road and the number of horses that person might be using on the road. One of the toll gates for the road was located at the current intersection of Tuscola Road and Trumbull Street (Butterfield 1957:121; HSM 1957).

A significant event in improving the roads connecting the Bay City area to other communities was the establishment of Bay City, West Bay City, and the six neighboring townships as a stone road district, the first such in Michigan. The act that established the district provided that three roads leading into Bay City and West Bay City be macadamized (BCCA 1965:209).

As roadways were established extending out from Bay City and the town became more established, the residents began to make improvements to their city streets. The first street to receive improvements was Water Street, followed by Third and Sixth streets (HSM 1957). Water Street was chosen as the first street to receive improvements, because this street held the town's nicest hotels and stores, as well as many of the professional offices. Water Street was initially planked with 3-inch-thick oak. Planking of the street was well underway in October 1864, but as soon as 1867, the city had to replace the planks with square pine blocks using a method known as the Nicholson system. A short section of Center Avenue was similarly paved eastward from Water Street. The remaining length of Center Avenue to Johnson Street used irregularly shaped pine blocks as pavement, using a method known as the McGonegal System (BCT 1937; Butterfield 1957:124). The remainder of the town's streets was paved using "live"

cedar blocks until about 1890 (Butterfield 1957:124). This method, the Wyckoff System, entailed cutting 5-inch cedar blocks right after the bark was removed from the tree and then laying the blocks over planks. The space between the blocks was filled with gravel, or sometimes a combination of gravel and tar. By 1890, this method was being discarded for more lasting road material. The scarcity and expense of lumber by this time also factored into the decision to seek other road construction methods (Butterfield 1957:124; HSM 1957).

By 1887, 11 miles of block pavement were in use throughout the city, while several more miles of streets utilized plank roads. The sidewalks at the time were of plank construction. The planks used for the sidewalks were 12 feet long and 2 inches wide. As of 1881, about 30 miles of these plank sidewalks were in use throughout the city (*BCT* 1937). By 1918, the plank sidewalks had been replaced by concrete sidewalks (Butterfield 1918:125). The demand for these sidewalks was such among the residents that property owners sometimes proposed funding the sidewalks themselves. An August 1892 newspaper article relates that the residents of Green Avenue desired a walk along that street from Center Avenue to the Elm Lawn Cemetery or Ridge Road. In petitioning the alderman for the walk, the property owners asserted that they were willing to pay for the construction (*Sunday Times* 1892:13).

Oil lamp street lights, found about every 10 blocks, initially illuminated the streets and sidewalks. Later, gas lamps replaced the oil lamps. The city's first electric light made its debut in 1882. Bay City was the first in the state to adopt electricity as a means of municipal lighting (*BCT* 1937). The city managed to preserve its beautiful trees in town as these improvements were made. The streets were "as a general rule, abundantly shaded with elm, maple, oak, and poplar" (Higginson ca. 1888:24).

The first brick pavement to be utilized in Bay City was laid in 1890. Center Avenue was paved with brick from Water Street to Johnson Street. The stretch of Center Avenue from Water Street to Madison Avenue was 47.5 feet wide; the remainder to Johnson Street was 39.5 feet wide. The cost of this project amounted to \$25,500. In 1916, the first stretch of brick pavement in the city

was repaved with asphalt (*BCT 1937*). The brick used for paving was produced at plants near the Frankenlust Lutheran Church and at the end of South Euclid Avenue. The coal mines in Frankenlust had ideal clay for the making of bricks. The bricks used in road construction typically weighed about 8 pounds and proved to be very durable for road use (*BCT 1978*).

As was the case with most communities during the second half of the nineteenth century, the establishment of the railroad through the town was of major interest. The process of establishing the first railroad line in Bay County was commenced in January 1857 with the formation of the Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad. Land was acquired for the line and grading was completed by August of 1859, at which time the ties and rails were laid. This line did not connect to Bay City, but only a short time passed before the lumber and salt industries of that city began contemplating how to get a rail connection (Fuller 1926:60).

In 1863, a company was formed with the express purpose of connecting Bay City to the Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad at East Saginaw. James Fraser served as the company president and was assisted by one of the leaders of the town's rail organization movement, Judge James Birney. Judge Birney succeeded Fraser as the company's president when Fraser moved to Connecticut. Once funding was secured, the grading of the line along the east side of the Saginaw River began. The construction superintendent, A. S. Munger, oversaw the completion of the line over very marshy ground. The Bay City & East Saginaw Railroad, as the line was called, was completed in November of 1867 (Fuller 1926:60-61).

The lumber giant of Sage, McGraw and Company, along with D. H. Fitzhugh, contacted the Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw Railroad with a proposal that would provide Wenona (now part of Bay City west of the Saginaw River) with a rail connection. The proposal was that Sage, McGraw and Company and D. H. Fitzhugh would construct the railroad bed, build necessary bridges, and provide ties for a stretch of line from the section of the Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw Railroad at the bridge at East Saginaw to Wenona. By December 1867, Wenona was receiving trains on that railroad (Fuller 1926:61).

In 1868, James F. Joy and other Detroit investors, the Fitzhughs, William and John McEwan, and other citizens of Bay City began work to establish the Northern Michigan Railroad. The goal of the company was to route a line from Detroit to Bay City and on to Superior City where the line would connect with Northern Pacific. The project was the subject of discussions and meetings over the next few years, but no actual construction began until James F. Joy asserted control over the project in 1872. By 1873, Bay City had a direct rail line to Detroit. This line was part of the Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw Railroad and later became part of the Michigan Central Railway (Fuller 1926:62; HSM 1957). The Michigan Central Railway erected a bridge over the Saginaw River to connect its line in Bay City to the former Jackson, Lansing & Jackson line in Wenona (BCCA 1965:28).

These rail lines continued to develop, increasing Bay City's overland connection with other markets. The Michigan Central extended its line from Bay City to Mackinaw by 1876 and from there to Midland by 1888 (BCCA 1965:28). By 1888, Bay City was the headquarters location for three divisions of the Michigan Central that provided overland contacts to the north, southeast, and southwest areas of Michigan and the Lake Huron shore. The Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad provided access to southeast Michigan and destinations in Ohio (Higginson ca. 1888:16).

The Grand Trunk System accessed Bay City by way of the Cincinnati, Saginaw & Mackinaw Railroad. The Cincinnati, Saginaw & Mackinaw Railroad was purchased in part from the Grand Trunk System. The Grand Trunk System connected Bay City to Chicago, the east, and Canada (Fuller 1926:63).

In 1905, construction began on the Detroit, Bay City & Western Railroad into the "Thumb" region of Michigan. The railroad was more popularly known as the Handy Railroad. Although the railroad was employed for a period in the transport of coal from the coalfields, it ended in failure (BCCA 1965:28; Fuller 1926:63).

Rails were also used early on to help connect different parts of Bay City and to connect the city with its immediate neighbors. As the mills began to spread out along the river in Bay City, Portsmouth, and the area in between, workers needed transportation to the mills, particularly when the weather was bad. At first, transportation between Portsmouth and Bay City was provided by an “omnibus” or stage. By that time, the Bay City village council had already voted to allow the Bay City and Portsmouth Street Railway to provide a rail service between Bay City and Portsmouth. The company began operation along Water Street between Third and Thirty-Fifth streets in November 1865. All of the cars were drawn by horses (Butterfield 1957:127).

Shortly after the unification of Portsmouth and Bay City, the company was restructured and more routes were added. In 1874, the year of the reorganization, the company became the Bay City Street and Transit Railway Company. The line was extended nearly to Essexville and also to McGraw Mill, located south of Cass Avenue. The use of the line was maximized by the installation of light T-rails. The T-rails allowed the use of the line during the day as a horse-drawn passenger service to transport people, but at night a “dummy” steam engine could pull freight cars from the mills and other riverfront industries to switch connections with the railroads (Butterfield 1957:127).

The street car service was very popular and continued to expand. In 1885, the Essexville line was constructed on Woodside Avenue to Pine Street. In 1886, Center Avenue received a double track that extended to Trumbull Street, and later to the intersection with the Michigan Central (BCCA 1965:31-32; Butterfield 1957:127). That same year, a barn was constructed at the intersection of Center Avenue and Trumbull Street (Butterfield 1918:134). Also in 1886, the line on Water Street became solely devoted to freight while the passenger lines were conducted on Washington, Bowery (present Garfield), and Broadway streets (BCCA 1965:31-32; Butterfield 1957:127).

By the 1890s, a new system of street car service was on the horizon. West Bay City, led by Spencer O. Fisher, test ran an electric car from the Third Street Bridge to the town's western city limits in 1889, making it one of the first two or three towns to do so in the state. A year later, additional routes were added that ran along Midland Street. These routes also connected to Salzburg and Wenona Beach via Banks. Cars were pulled across the Third Street Bridge to connect with Bay City's horse-drawn line until Bay City made its own switch to electric cars in 1893 (BCCA 1965:30).

An electric interurban line connecting Bay City and Saginaw was established in 1895. In Saginaw, one could connect to lines to other cities, including Flint and Detroit. The line left south Bay City and crossed the Saginaw River in the area of the current James Clements Municipal Airport, and then continued on to Saginaw via the communities of Zilwaukee and Carrollton.

Bus lines for passenger service eventually took the place of electric cars and trains. The electric car service for Bay City was ended in 1921. The private automobile hurt bus business. For a while, bus service ended in Bay City, only to be resurrected in 1975 in response to the energy crisis and as a service to the city's elderly (BCCA 1965:33).

As early as 1867, a published birds-eye view of the City of Bay City clearly illustrates Center Avenue (then Street) beginning at Water Street and stretching off to the horizon in the east (Ruger 1867). At that time, the commercial buildings were clustered close to the Saginaw River, with large residences occupying large lots well into the distance. Already, the street was well on its way to becoming the premier residential street of the city. After the Civil War, Center Avenue became the primary east-west street linking Bay City's central business district with the city's eastern limits (Busch 2003). Because lumber was still the primary industrial force in Bay City during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, many of company owners established their showplace homes on Center Avenue. Even with the demise of the lumber industry, sufficient other industrial means were available to continue providing for the city's wealthy elite,

who often were drawn to the prestige of a Center Avenue address. This trend continued into the twentieth century.

The broad width of Center Avenue made it a perfect location for streetcar tracks. Historic images of the street from the late nineteenth century and into the early 1930s typically include a view of the distinctive metal rails buried in the street; however, the availability of other transportation methods, including automobiles, ended the streetcar industry in Bay City in August 1921 (Hiner and Bloomfield 2008:40). Beginning in the early 1930s, a program of street widening was undertaken, with one of the results being removal or covering the streetcar tracks (Michigan Department of Highways and Transportation 1974).

In 1926, Center Avenue was designated as a segment of the M-29 route between Unionville and Bay City (Michigan Highways 2009a). Less than 10 years later, in 1933, the portion of M-29 between Port Austin and Bay City was redesignated M-25, which is the designation it carries today. Between 1933 and 1937, Center Avenue carried the additional designations of M-15 and M-24, but ultimately both M-15 and M-24 were scaled back, leaving Center Avenue as simply M-25.

A series of road widening and reconstruction projects occurred on Center Avenue first in the 1930s and then again in 1986. In 1993, Center Avenue was granted with the status of a Heritage Route. The Heritage Route program is administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation and was created by the Public Act 69 of 1993 (Michigan Highways 2009b). This program is designed to “identify, inventory, protect, enhance, and in some cases, promote state trunklines and adjacent land with distinctive or unique scenic, cultural, or historic qualities.” The Center Avenue Heritage Route was designated as a Historic Route that extends from Livingston Avenue on the east to Madison Avenue on the west, the entire length of the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District.

The most recent reconstruction of Center Avenue occurred in 2009. Currently, it consists of five lanes, two travel lanes each direction and a center turn lane. In spite of the modernization of the road way itself, it retains a number of the large trees overarchng the side of the road, and still provides a splendid view of Bay City's own millionaire's row residences.

#### **4.6 CONSOLIDATION OF BAY CITY AND WEST BAY CITY**

After the consolidation of the villages of Banks, Salzburg, and Wenona into West Bay City in 1877, very little time passed before individuals in West Bay City and Bay City began discussing the merits of the two cities joining. Bridge construction connecting the two cities eased travel and communication, making the prospect of unifying practical. Across the nation, cities separated by rivers were consolidating and reaping the benefits of combined governments and "added prestige" (BCCA 1965:37).

In 1887, responding to petitions circulated by civic groups in the two cities, the state legislature approved of the combining of West Bay City, Bay City, and the village of Essexville. When the issue was put to a vote, it was narrowly defeated in Bay City, but its defeat across the river was more decisive (BCCA 1965:37). Part of the reason for the opposition in West Bay City was the fact that the city was still a "company town" under the influence of Henry W. Sage. The shipping industry, especially the Wheeler and Davidson shipyards, were still economically successful. Once Sage closed his mill and West Bay City began to experience the accompanying economic downturn during the 1890s, many of that city's residents were more receptive to the idea of consolidation. Nevertheless, consolidation was defeated once more in 1897 (Kilar 1990:279).

The new century brought a new determination by those who were in favor of consolidation. Residents in favor of consolidation campaigned aggressively, spreading the word of the merits of consolidation, which included a larger tax base and the ability to more effectively attract industries. The two cities approved consolidation in 1903, and, following some last minute

efforts to stop consolidation in the state legislature, Bay City was created in 1905, embracing both sides of the river. The consolidation made Bay City the fourth largest city in Michigan with a population of 41,000 people (BCCA 1965:37-39; Kilar 1990:279).

#### **4.7 BAY CITY INDUSTRY**

In part because of its location on the shores of the Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron, industry has been a driving force behind development in Bay City. Earliest industrial efforts typically revolved around the local lumbering industry. By the 1870s, lumbering employed more workers than any other industrial occupation in the United States, with the center of much of the effort focused in the Saginaw Valley, including Bay City (Kilar and Bloomfield, 1996:34). In 1884, there were approximately 60 sawmills spread along the river's edge, and in peak production years, as many as 10,000 men came to the city from the logging camps to find work (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:42). The lumber industry not only provided work for thousands, it made the owners of the firms rich. Nearly 80 percent of the region's lumber barons established their permanent residence along a six-block stretch of Center Avenue.

As time passed and improvements were made to the sawing techniques, sawmills took on an even more industrial appearance. The development of gang-saws, which allowed for multiple boards to be cut at the same time, and narrower saw blades resulting in less waste, dramatically increased production. When the movement of the finished product was also taken into consideration, this further increased the productivity of the lumber industry and as a result, the wealth of its owners.

Like the lumber industry, the next major industrial force in the Bay City area was based on another natural material, salt. Situated below the Saginaw Valley were large areas of brine water. It was simply a matter of pumping the brine water up to the surface, boiling away the fluid, and packaging the salt for distribution. The salt industry was second only to the lumber industry in mid-nineteenth-century Bay City. The firm of Henry Sage, just one in the area,

estimated profits during the 1870s between \$25,000 and \$30,000 annually (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:44). So strong was the salt industry in the region that in the 1880s a group of manufacturers joined to create the Saginaw and Bay City Salt Company and was later known as the Michigan Salt Association (MSA). Strong enough to take on the competition from across the nation, the MSA set prices on everything from table salt to packing salt. It was not until the lumber industry, and thus the sawmills that provided the cheap fuel needed for the industry, took their downturn in the 1890s that the power of the MSA was lost (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:44-45).

Lumbering also played a role in the variety of businesses that produced wooden goods. Everything from barrels, to cisterns and water tanks, and even wooden shipbuilding had a place in Bay City. Prior to the 1850s, several small schooners, fishing boats, and sailing vessel were constructed in the area, but it was in the following decade that the industry launched into bigger and better ship construction. In 1889, both the shipyards of Frank W. Wheeler and Captain James Davidson were opened for business. Davidson's firm numbered as many as 500 employees and Wheelers nearly 1,000, making them the largest ship-buildings on the entire great lakes. Like the lumber and salt industries, both Wheeler and Davidson were out of business in the early 1900s, in part due to labor unrest, poor management, and financial difficulties (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:49).

By the early twentieth century, the prominence of Bay City in wood related industries had begun to fade. While seasonal industries of sugar beet farming, fishing, and some shipbuilding remained, they tended to be seasonal work with only sporadic employment (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:132). Bridging the lumber era to the new industrialism in Bay City was the William Clements firm, Industrial Works. Later known as Brownhoist, the company started out as a small shop that did repair for the area sawmills in 1873 but changed to making boilers, saws, and parts for the Davidson and Wheeler shipyards (Katzinger 2003:29). In 1883, they began to produce steam shovels and heavy lifting equipment and 30 years later, they were the biggest such company in the nation (Katzinger 2003:29).

Other firms that were part of the modernization of industry in Bay City included the North American Chemical Company which purchased the old McGraw sawmill site and Bay City Dredge Works, manufacturers of cranes and other heavy equipment. Although the earlier shipbuilding firm of Wheeler and Davidson were gone by the second decade of the twentieth century, Defoe Shipbuilding began about that same time and initially produced small knock-down boats sold around the world (these boats were the inspiration for the catalog home industry) but transitioned into steel torpedo chasers and mine planters for World War I (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:135). The firm continued to operate through most of the twentieth century, constructing ships for the Navy, and most famously building a large yacht for the chairman of Montgomery Ward stores that went on to serve as the Presidential yacht for Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon.

Perhaps the best known of all the industries in Bay City is that of the “knocked-down housing” firms. For a time, the city was the hub of the nationwide industry, calling three of the major firms their own. Sold for between a few hundred to a few thousand dollars and shipped across the country (and the world) these buildings were available until the early 1980s when other housing options resulted in the end of an era.

#### **4.8 DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

In part, the differences within the historic district can be explained by the development of the area itself. Plat development generally progressed from west to east between 1849 and 1903.

In 1838, James G. Birney of the Saginaw Bay Company surveyed the area around what is currently known as Bay City and produced the *Map of the Portion of Saginaw County Surrounding Lower Saginaw*, which included the village of Lower Saginaw, now named, Bay City (Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth 2011). The Saginaw Bay Company shares were subsequently sold to James Fraser, James G. Birney, and Dr. Daniel Fitzhugh who filed a revision of the original plat map on November 29, 1849. The eastern

portion of this plat overlaps with the west end of the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District.

An addition was made abutting the eastern edge of the Lower Saginaw plat in 1854 by Daniel Fitzhugh, James Fraser, James G. Birney, and Theodore Walker. The addition, known as the Lower Saginaw Addition, comprised a series of large outlots that expanded the village of Lower Saginaw eastward from Van Buren Street to present-day Johnson Street.

Beginning in the 1860s and into the mid-1870s, plats were established along the Center Avenue corridor. The earliest of these plats was Walkers Subdivision of Outlot No. 10 filed in 1864. This plat ran in a narrow band north of McKinley Avenue between Van Buren and Johnson streets.

As expected, the major development of the area continued to move east from the river, with the next earliest plats including Frasers First Addition and Daniel H. Fitzhughs Subdivision in 1868 and 1869, respectively. Fraser's plat essentially stretched from Van Buren Street on the west to North Johnson Street on the east. Fitzhugh's plat covered the same distance, but was situated immediately north, roughly following Fourth Street as a boundary between the two plats. In 1869, Birneys Addition to Bay City was established and covered the area south of Frasers First Addition, including the southwest corner of the current historic district.

Another extensive plat was filed by William D. Fitzhugh in 1866. This plat covered most of the area south of Center Avenue comprising the southeast section of the current historic district. Just three years later, Fitzhugh's Addition was platted and included the area north of the 1866 plat between Trumbull and Park streets. After the William D. Fitzhugh 1869 plat was filed, the only large plat remaining within the historic district was the Carroll Park Plat filed in 1875. This plat completed the historic district north of Center Avenue and east of Park Avenue.

While most of the plats of the area were large, several earlier plats filled the open areas to result in a solid patchwork of platted land. Examples of the smaller early plats include two established by H. J. H. Schutjes that resulted in a fully platted Center Avenue. The Schutjes plats included the land between North Johnson and North Trumbull streets and were established between 1868 and 1872. Another small early plat, C. E. Jennison's Third Addition to Bay City, filed in 1873, was situated between Walker's Subdivison and Birney's Addition along Van Buren Street.

Once the major plats were established, the trend was to subdivide earlier plats. This is a common practice and was exercised extensively in the historic district. Among the subdivisions within the historic district are the Green Avenue Addition (1903), Nurmi's Addition (1937), Washington Court Plat (1940), Center Court (1945), Wells Addition (1948), and W. W. Henrys Addition (1952).

## **5.0 HISTORIC CONTEXTS**

The early history of Bay City played an important part in both who lived in the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District and how the area looked. Perhaps because of the close proximity of the area to the commercial center of the city, there is little evidence of commercial efforts within the district boundaries. Other than businesses, what most consider the important parts of life are all present within the historic district boundaries; homes, churches, schools, libraries, social centers, and even parks defined the district. Although some of the homes have been lost over time—some to fire and others to make way for new buildings—the district has remained essentially the same for decades. The library was relocated to a new building, but the original Carnegie Library structure was renovated to accommodate a new bank in the community. Several gas stations, a sign of the switch from the horse drawn carriage to the modern motor car, have also been added to the historic district.

In addition to the architecture that makes the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District important, the district is also significant in the area of religion, education, recreation, social history and lifeways, and significant persons who worked or resided within the district.

### **5.1 RELIGION**

Religion has been an important part of Bay City's history and character since the mid-nineteenth century. As settlers moved into the small community, one of their first priorities was to establish places of worship. Missionaries started visiting the settlement in 1832. From 1836 until 1838, Lower Saginaw became part of the route between Flint, Saginaw, and East Saginaw favored by circuit riders, or traveling preachers, who held services in Lower Saginaw every four weeks (City's Oldest Church: Madison M.E. Organized in 1832, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). As the population grew, so did the need for a church and regular services. In 1842, James G. Birney established the first regular church services and Sunday school in Bay City (Younkman 2008). Eventually, the city's growing

ethnic and religious diversity ensured a range of religious denominations. In terms of building styles and materials, Bay City's religious architecture evolved from early wooden buildings to sophisticated brick and stone edifices designed by prominent local architects like Pratt and Koeppe.

### **5.1.1 Madison Avenue Methodist Church, 400 North Madison Avenue**

The Methodist Church had a very strong early presence in Bay City. Organized in 1832, Bay City's Methodist congregation is "the oldest church of any denomination north of Flint on the eastern part of the lower peninsula" (City's Oldest Church, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). The first Methodist church was constructed on Washington Street between Fourth and Fifth streets in 1853, under the guidance of Reverend George Bradley. Though it was officially called the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Lower Saginaw, people of all different denominations used the structure (History of Madison Avenue Methodist Church, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). After the Methodist Churches of the United States united in 1939, the church's name officially became Madison Avenue Methodist Church. The building was added onto several times as the congregations grew in size, and finally relocated to the corner of Van Buren and Eleventh streets following the 1877 purchase by a Jewish congregation (City's Oldest Church, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan).

Plans for the present Methodist Church, located on the corner of Madison and Ninth streets, were prepared by the architecture firm of Floeter and Company (*Bay City Evening Press [BCEP]* 1888). The congregation purchased the lot in 1884 and the cornerstone was laid on September 7, 1886. Once the church was complete, Dr. C. H. Payne conducted the dedication ceremony on November 18, 1888 (City's Oldest Church, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). The building is constructed of Bay County brick trimmed in stone. It originally included an auditorium, rooms for Sunday school and child care, classrooms, a ladies' parlor, choir room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, furnace room, and

restrooms (*BCEP* 1888). The brick façade was replaced in 1900, and the building underwent more alterations in the 1950s and 1960s. These include major alterations to the interior of the sanctuary and chancel, the addition of the east wing, conversion of the nursery into a chapel, demolition of the ladies' parlor, and conversion of other rooms into parlor space (Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan; Fugate 1986).

The church's most dramatic change occurred in 1987, when the congregation voted to disband the church due to dwindling membership and finances, along with the high cost of building maintenance. The de-consecration service took place on June 15, 1987, and the building was unoccupied until Created for Caring, a Bay City social work agency, moved in (Younkman 1985). As of 2011, the building was under the ownership of the Front Porch Renaissance Group who plans to use the building for the Madison Arts Academy (Terry Moulthane, personal communication 11 March 2011).

### **5.1.2 St. Boniface Catholic Church, 500 North Lincoln Street**

St. Boniface dates to the late nineteenth century and grew out of a movement among Catholic immigrants who wanted to establish churches which would retain their individual national identities, languages, and cultures. In 1874, Bay City's German Catholic congregation purchased all of the property on McKinley Street between Lincoln and Birney streets, with the intent to establish a school. The small congregation, numbering 40 families at the time and led by Fr. Presser, erected a two-story brick building which served as a both a school and a church (A Church of the People, St. Boniface Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan).

Under the leadership of Reverend John G. Wyss, the congregation began building the present church structure on McKinley and Lincoln streets. The cornerstone was laid in 1896. The celebration which followed included the "largest Catholic parade ever held in Bay City, with units representing all the various Catholic societies of Bay City and Saginaw" (St. Boniface

1937). The Gothic building is constructed of white brick and cut stone with a slate roof. Its two towers measure 100 and 150 feet in turn, and the interior sanctuary floor, altar steps, and communion rail were all made of imported marble (*Bay City Times Tribune [BCTT]* 1899). St. Boniface is unique because it was the first church to be consecrated in the Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids. In order to be consecrated, rather than merely dedicated, a church must be constructed of solid masonry and be debt-free on the day of dedication. The ceremony was held on June 4, 1899 (*BCT* 2009).

St. Boniface Church has undergone several repairs and renovations. In 1921, repairs had to be made after lightning struck the building and started a small fire. Then in 1967, the congregation installed carpet and removed sculptures, the altar steps, and the communion rail (*BCT* 2009). The building closed on January 1, 1996, for a \$1 million restoration. Projects included removing the carpet that covered the original marble floors, restoring the sanctuary to its original 1899 appearance, remodeling the basement, and expanding the church's hardwood wainscoting (unattributed newspaper clipping about St. Boniface Church, 3 March 1996, Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). In the mid-twentieth century, St. Boniface was nationally recognized as an "example of outstanding interior renovation, combining old gothic with new direction" (St. Boniface 1937). The church still retains its original structural elements, such as enormous wooden support beams, as well as the original bells, which were installed in 1909. Roughly one dozen stained glass windows are another character-defining feature of the building. The windows were gifts from parishioners and local societies who financially supported the church's construction (St. Boniface 1937).

### **5.1.3 Temple of Abraham/Bay City Community Church, 252 North Jackson Street**

Many of the early Jewish families to settle in Bay City came as peddlers, earning their living by traveling from place to place with a horse and wagon, frequently selling their goods for scrap "junk" they then sold in the Bay City salvage yards. Records indicate that by the middle of the nineteenth century a thriving Jewish community was developing in the city. The 1893-1894 Bay

City Directory included seventeen peddlers who were Jewish, with the number increasing in the 1900 census to 25 recognizable Jewish surnames (Greenstein 1985:10). Before the close of the nineteenth century, two congregations had been established in the city: Anshe Chesed, Reform; and Schari Zedeck (Shaary Zedek), Orthodox.

The Reform synagogue was located on Adams Street while the Orthodox synagogue was on Twelfth Street (later Columbus Avenue), considered by many to be the center of Jewish activity.

The City of Bay City boasted the second largest concentration of Jews in the state by 1907, with an estimated 900 (Greenstein 1985:13). This number was only surpassed by the Detroit population of 10,000. Perhaps it was due to this growing number of Jews in the city that a third synagogue, the second Orthodox congregation, was established. In December 1913 Thomas E. Miller purchased a lot on Jackson near Tenth Street for \$950. The following month, in January 1914, the property was donated to a committee that had gathered to start plans for the construction of a synagogue in the city (*BCT* 1914a). The intention was to hire a local architect and spend between \$12,000 and \$15,000 on the project. By March, the Bay City Times was reporting that Clark and Munger had been awarded the contract and had completed a design for the congregation estimated to be between 40 and 50 people (*BCT* 1914b:7). The new building, erected by the construction firm of James J. Kerns and Sons of Saginaw, was to be 38 feet by 67 feet and to be constructed of paving brick from the Bay City plant (*Bay City Daily Times* [*BCDT*] 1929:5).

Although initial plans called for the Temple of Abraham to have been completed by April 1914, the dedication of the synagogue was held on Saturday, July 25, 1915 (*BCT* 1915). The dedication services welcomed about 200 to the four-hour long service led by Dr. Rev. A. M. Feirstein (*BCDT* 1929:5). The actual service began in front of the new building at 252 North Jackson Street, where Thomas E. Miller, president of the congregation, presented the key to the new building to Abraham Hirshberg, the oldest member of the temple. The festivities then

moved inside the building for music, readings, and a sermon before the placement of the Torah in the Ark.

Newspaper accounts reported that:

The main auditorium where the congregation sits, has a seating capacity of 500 with the gallery, with runs around three sides of the room. All of the inside is done in an oak finish giving a striking effect in conjunction with the beautiful green stained glass windows. The altar and arch of the synagogue are especially striking because of their beauty.

In the basement of the church there is a large room forty feet square which will be used as a banquet hall and for evening services. Immediately back of the large room is a convenient and commodious kitchen beside which is the furnace room in which is a fine hot water heating system. The electronic fixtures throughout the building are very pretty [BCT 1915:2].

The synagogue was sold in the 1950s, and served for a time as the St. George Byzantine Catholic Church, but is today the home of the Bay City Community Church (Greenstein 1985:13).

#### **5.1.4 Temple Israel Synagogue, 2300 Center Avenue**

The Jewish community in Bay City was originally organized in 1865 as the Religious Assembly of the Israelites of the Saginaw Valley. In 1882, a disagreement caused the congregation to splinter into two groups. The congregation reunited in 1942 as the Bay City Jewish Community (Wolicki and Bay County Historical Society [Wolicki and BCHS] 1998).

Since the present synagogue on Center Avenue was not constructed until 1960, the congregations held religious services in several other buildings in Bay City. These included the McEwan Block on Water Street, the German Lutheran Church on Adams Street, and the old Methodist Episcopal Church, which the community purchased in 1877. Rabbi Jossef Kratzenstein began to organize

plans for the Center Avenue structure in the 1950s (Wolicki and BCHS 1998). Architect Alden B. Dow, who had worked with Frank Lloyd Wright and was the son of Dow Chemical founder Herbert Dow, designed the building. Dow classified the synagogue design as “Composed Order,” which was meant to reflect his interest in nature and how buildings interact with their environments (Temple Israel Synagogue Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). In his original plans, the structure was inspired by the Star of David, but the actual building is roughly rectangular and placed diagonally on the site. It is also generously set back from the street and surrounded by landscaping (Wolicki and BCHS 1998).

### **5.1.5 Trinity Episcopal Church, 911 Center Avenue**

Bay City’s Episcopalian congregation dates to the 1850s. Early services took place in a schoolhouse before the first parish was finished in 1864. Reverend Voltaire Spalding, a missionary from Saginaw, led the effort to officially organize the congregation as Trinity Church, Lower Saginaw, in 1854. Plans to build the present structure on Center Avenue began in April of 1870 when Mrs. James Birney “donated \$2,000 and three lots at the corner of Center Avenue and North Grant Street” (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:114).

The Center Avenue church, built between 1884 and 1887, was designed by Philip C. Floeter of Bay City and is recognized as one of the best examples of Victorian Gothic church architecture in Michigan (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:114). The building is constructed of Sandusky blue limestone and trimmed with Berea Ohio sandstone (Trinity Church, Bay City, Mich., to be Opened for Public Worship on Thursday in Easter Week, April 14, 1887, Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). Additionally, both the church and adjacent Stone Chapel, completed in 1885, are finished in native Michigan hardwoods. The congregation spent \$60,000 to erect the church, making it one of the most expensive religious structures in Bay City (*BCTT* 1891). To its parishioners and residents of Bay City, Trinity Episcopal represented the city’s growth, progress, and prosperity. The mayor spoke at the dedication service, saying “The era of the dug-out, the log cabin and the rude house of worship

had passed in this city and elegant churches are now required” (*BCTT* 1885). It was “a monument to the progressiveness of the Saginaw Valley...It was an indication of intelligence, culture, and that men and women are living in the fear of God, realizing a sense of duty toward each other” (*BCTT* 1885).

Some of the church’s character-defining features include 48 stained glass windows, four cross-shaped stained glass windows on the bell tower, stone tracery, finials and patterned masonry (Younkman 2009:D1-D2). Trinity Episcopal Church was listed in the State Register of Historic Sites in 1981 (Michigan State Housing Development Authority [MSHDA] 2009a).

#### **5.1.6 First Presbyterian Church, 805 Center Avenue**

The Presbyterian community in Bay City predates the Center Avenue edifice by almost 50 years. James G. Birney, lawyer, abolitionist, and two-time presidential candidate for the Liberty Party, conducted the first Presbyterian services in Bay City when he and his wife settled in the city in 1841 (Higgs 1993:2). First Presbyterian Church was officially organized in 1856, making it the third Protestant congregation in the city. Organized by Reverend Lucius Root in September of that year, the eight-member congregation held services in a schoolhouse and several other buildings until the first church was completed in 1861. A fire destroyed the structure in February of 1862, and the second building was constructed on the same lot, on Washington Street between Ninth and Tenth streets (Dow 1875:46-47).

Reverend Ambrose Wight became the church’s pastor in 1863, and the congregation purchased the lot on Center Avenue and Jackson Street in 1883 for \$4,000. Construction of the third (and present) building began in 1891, and the church was dedicated in 1893 (Higgs 1993:2, 8). Designed by local architects Leverett A. Pratt and Walter O. Koeppe, First Presbyterian was intended to be an inspirational building once the lumber industry declined. The structure is composed of Ionia sandstone, with 110 stained glass windows. Its spire soars to 145 feet, and was one of the tallest points in Bay City at the turn of the century. In addition, local building

firms performed most of the interior and exterior work and finishes. The building cost \$105,000 when it was finished, an extravagant amount of money in the late nineteenth century. The dedication celebration lasted three days, and other churches in town canceled services so that their members could attend First Presbyterian's dedication (Higgs 1993:8-11).

The congregation built a large addition in 1957. Acquiring the property for the 27,000-square-foot project placed the entire city block in the church's hands. The property is bounded by Center Avenue, Fifth Street, North Jackson Street, and North Van Buren Street. The addition included a ladies' parlor, offices, a chapel, areas for Sunday school, and fellowship hall (First Presbyterian Plans \$670,000 Building Project, 30 September 1957, Church Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). The church underwent a \$500,000 restoration in 1979 under the direction of architect John Meyer. The project included exterior restorations, roof repairs, an updated electric system, and stained glass window repair (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:160). The church was listed in the State Register of Historic Sites in 2000 (MSHDA 2009b).

### **5.1.7 First Congregational Church, 900 Sixth Street**

Bay City's First Congregational Church, located at the corner of Sixth and Van Buren streets, was organized in 1875, and led by Reverend J. Homer Parker of Pontiac, Michigan (unattributed newspaper clipping, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). Constructed at a cost of \$3,433.43, the church was dedicated on April 20, 1876 (Katzinger 2003:85).

### **5.1.8 First Church of Scientist, 701 North VanBuren Street**

The history of the First Church of Scientist is much shorter than some of the other denominations represented within the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District. The first small group of believers met in 1905 in the home of one of their members (*BCDT* 1939). By the following year

the group moved its meetings to a room in the Cranage Block, and it was there, on April 12, 1906, that the congregation was formally organized. After several moves, including the time in both the Cranage Block and the Ridotto Building, it secured larger quarters on the second floor of the Root Building in 1908. It was in this location that the congregation truly expanded. Here it also maintained a well-equipped Reading Room and for the first time engaged a paid librarian (*BCDT* 1939). While in the Root Building, plans were begun to secure a permanent location for the church. The architects Pratt, Bickel and Campbell were engaged to design the building that was constructed at the northwest corner of Sixth and Van Buren streets (*BCT* 1912a:2). Erected at a cost of \$24,000, the construction debt was shared among the congregants and totally eliminated by Sunday, March 27, 1927. Once debt free, the congregation was able to have a formal dedication of the building, previously not permitted by the requirement of the Christian Scientists that “no church building could be dedicated and publicly consecrated to God until it is wholly paid for” (*BCDT* 1939).

The modest Greek Revival building features a symmetrical façade. The pedimented center section of the building includes the sanctuary, which is flanked by flat roof dependencies that house lobbies and cloakrooms. Four Doric columns support the frieze and pediment, while two slightly shorter columns are situated at the outer corners of each of the flat roofed dependencies. The pediment obscures a 110-foot-circumference dome pierced by a skylight of colored glass. In addition to the colored glass windows of the skylight, most of the remaining windows also feature the same glass. Other classic features of the Doric Order are also utilized, including the carving on the frieze, the lack of a base on the column, and the entasis or bulge near the middle of the column shaft. The building itself rests on a stone foundation, has stucco walls, and a metal cornice and pediment.

The church was converted to the Van Buren Street Theatre in 2005, and continues to serve as Mid-Michigan’s only comedy dinner theater (Van Buren Street Theatre 2011).

## **5.2 EDUCATION**

The history of education in Bay City has its roots in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Among other regulations which shaped the American Midwest, the ordinance stated that “schools and the means of education shall ever be encouraged” in the territories (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:120). Residents of Bay City organized the community’s first school in 1842. Prior to the construction of permanent schoolhouses, teachers conducted classes out of private homes (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:120). The first class, under the direction of a Miss Clark, numbered only nine students in 1842. By 1864, the student body in Bay City had grown to 500, calling for the construction of larger permanent schools (Bay County Historical Society [BCHS] 2008:51). While the city has a rich history in both parochial and public education, two historic school buildings are located within the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District: St. Boniface School and Farragut School.

### **5.2.1 St. Boniface School, 510 Lincoln Avenue**

Bay City’s large Lutheran and Catholic populations prompted the establishment of parochial schools. The first co-educational Catholic high school, St. James High School, opened in 1873 (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:195). St. Boniface Catholic Church originally established a parochial school in 1874. A two-story building housed the school, church services, and rectory. Reverend John Wyss was influential in improving the school and church grounds, and in 1878, the congregation built a Sisters’ home on Birney Street. The Dominican Sisters resided on the property and took charge of the school. The first Mother General and Superior of the school was Sister Aquinas (Golden Jubilee, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan).

It quickly became clear that the church was outgrowing its building facility and needed a new school; however, Wyss wanted to be sure that there were sufficient building funds before any ground-breaking or construction began so the school could be debt-free when it opened. Ground-

breaking for the new school, located at the corner of North McKinley and North Birney streets, did not occur until 1920. Architect Robert E. Bickel designed the structure, which cost \$75,000 and opened in 1921. Due to Reverend Wyss's financial foresight, the school was debt-free when it was complete. It featured four classrooms, a superior's office, library, music room, kitchen, gymnasium/auditorium, and cafeteria. The new building was supposed to be one of the cleanest and most sanitary schools in Bay City. Finally, the modern structure was touted as "a distinct credit and adornment to the city, and bears striking testimony to the progress and the enterprise of the parish and its beloved pastor" (Golden Jubilee, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan). The original school building and rectory were demolished in 1922 and St. Boniface school closed in 1971 (Bay City St. Boniface, Churches Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan).

### **5.2.2 Farragut School, 301 North Farragut Street**

Farragut School, located at 301 N. Farragut Street, was designed by the well-known Bay City architect Joseph Goddeyne in 1939. The Moderne structure was funded through the Depression-era Works Progress Administration (WPA) and replaced the original French Second Empire style Farragut school building, which dated to 1868 (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:251). Community concerns over the safety and stability of the city's 10 school buildings, each 50 to 60 years old at the time, prompted Bay City leaders to apply for federal aid from the WPA in 1938 to update their educational facilities. In fact, the *Bay City Democrat* stated that the historic schools were "anything but a credit to our city today ... A way must be found to replace these old antiquated structures with modern buildings" (Copeland 1939). The government approved the application, and demolition of the old Farragut School began in June of 1939. Construction of the new building commenced in July and it opened in September of 1939 at a cost of \$95,000. The total cost of demolition, new construction, new equipment, site improvement, and architect fees amounted to \$104,000 (Dedicating the Farragut School Building, Schools Vertical File, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan, October 20, 1939).

In his Moderne school design, Goddeyne used concrete block as the primary building material to reduce the risk of fires. In addition, the building is only two stories high and all doors are located on ground level. These design features were meant to provide quick escape and easier search and rescue in case of an emergency. While the original French Second Empire school had a mansard roof, Goddeyne's plan called for a flat roof, which "was not only stylish but eliminated concern for concealed fires in the attic, a common problem among older school buildings" (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:251). Glazing consisted of glass block and awning windows rather than sash windows; the historic windows have since been replaced (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:251). The 12-classroom building included a library and gymnasium.

Farragut School closed in the 1970s and the American G.I. Forum acquired the building in 1985 (Younkman 1985). It is currently under the ownership of the Taste of Life Ministries. The structure was one of the best examples of Moderne architecture in the State of Michigan, but the walls and windows have been boarded over for many years and the historic building has deteriorated.

### **5.3 RECREATION/SOCIAL HISTORY AND LIFEWAYS**

Like most mid-sized cities in Michigan, Bay City has a variety of recreational options. Located on the Saginaw River and Saginaw Bay, water was important to the community. The Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District is situated well away from the water; however, there were other means of recreation for those who lived and worked in the area. If being out-of-doors was desired, there were two city parks available. But, for those with other interests, the historic district also boasted the Masonic Temple (700 Madison Avenue), the Consistory Scottish Rite Cathedral (612 Center Avenue), and the former Bay City Branch Library (708 Center Avenue).

### **5.3.1 Bay City Branch Library, 708 Center Avenue**

The first public library in Bay City was established in 1869 under the leadership of B. E. Warren and Aaron J. Cooke (*BCT* 1981). Initially, the library was housed in a variety of storefronts before moving to the City Hall. In 1922, with assistance from the Carnegie Corporation and the donation of the land by H. B. Smith, C. R. Wells, James E. Davidson, and William L. Clements, a new building dedicated to library use was constructed on Center Avenue.

The new library, designed by New York Architect Edward L. Tilton, opened in September 1922, following several days of “inspections” by the public and a kick-off lecture by the University of Michigan Librarian, William W. Bishop (*BCTT* 1922). At the time, the building was said to be “ideally arranged for library purposes, making the best possible provision for light, comfort, and for the care and preservation of its contents.” Features included windows in each of the rooms, placed near the ceiling to ensure the best possible and greatest amount of natural light; 10 hanging lamps in every room; a delivery lobby or desk directly across from the main entrance; marble floors; a large reading room; a second large room for reference materials and study; a children’s room; and cozy nooks built into the wall beneath each window.

The building remained a library until early in the twenty-first century, when a new building was constructed farther west on Center Avenue. In 2005, the library was closed and the building was purchased by the Thumb National Bank and Trust Company for \$323,000. The new owners renovated the building to meet the requirements of the bank, while retaining much of the historic materials. The bank opened for business in the fall of 2006 (*BCT* 2005)

### **5.3.2 Masonic Temple, 700 North Madison Street/Consistory Scottish Rite Cathedral, 612 Center Avenue**

The Masons came to Bay City as early as 1858, although no lodge was officially formed until October 1860, when dispensation was granted by the Grand Master of the State of Michigan (*Gansser* 1905:326). Meeting in various locations in downtown Bay City, it was not until 1890

that the site of the present building was purchased by several Masonic bodies. The architects Pratt and Koeppe were engaged to design the building, which had a Moorish flair, including several copper-clad onion domes and a 114-foot-tall tower (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:151). The building was completed in February 1893 and included parlors, drawing rooms, and reading rooms, as well as assembly rooms, and a chapter and commandery room, each with a stage. The final cost of the building was \$90,000. Twenty years later, in May 1903, a fire destroyed most of the building, resulting in an estimated loss of \$52,000. Fortunately, the two front walls survived, and the lodge was able to be reconstructed, with an added lodge room (Gansser 1905:328).

By the early 1920s, the Masonic Temple was proving to be inadequate to meet the requirements of the ever expanding membership. Following discussions on how to deal with the issue, it was determined that the best course of action would be to construct a new Temple, distinct from, but connected to, the old structure (Kreger 1981:8-20). In 1925-1926 the imposing Scottish Rite Cathedral was erected at 612 Center Avenue. Designed by the Grand Rapids firm of Osgood and Osgood, the building is an example of Collegiate Gothic, featuring massive windows with tracery on the façade and east elevation (Wolicki and BCHS 1988:237). The building includes an auditorium on the main floor, large enough to seat 1,000, in amphitheater plan (seats rise from the floor on three sides of the rectangular room) facing the 60-foot wide heavily ornamented proscenium arch. Kitchens, dining rooms, lounges, and reception rooms complete the building. Dedicated on May 3, 1926, the Scottish Rite Cathedral was constructed at a cost of \$500,000 (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:237).

### **5.3.3 Parks**

There are two formal parks within the historic district boundaries. These do not include the numerous wide planted boulevards found on Green Street, the cul-de-sac greenspace on the center island at the terminus of roads such as Nurmi Court, or the narrow boulevards in the center of Fifth Street between Johnson Street and Park Avenue. These two parks also do not take into account the open spaces around the former Farragut or St. Boniface schools.

### **Birney Park, 300 North Madison Avenue**

Bounded by Madison, Ninth, Jackson, and Tenth streets, is Birney Park. Originally known as Madison Park for its boundary on the major road, the name was later changed to Birney Park in honor of early Bay City leaders James Birney and his father James G. Birney (*Bay City Daily Tribune* 1884). The second oldest park in the city, it was established in 1883. Birney Park includes about 3 acres of flat and grassy land transected by walkways and boasting a playground, covered pavilion, barbeques, and mature trees (Bay City Parks Department 2011).

### **Carroll Park, 2201 Groveland Road**

The second park within the historic district is Carroll Park, dedicated in 1875. Located on property donated to the city by Mr. William D. Fitzhugh, the park is bounded on the west by Park Avenue, between Fourth and Third streets, and bounded by Carroll Road on the east. Fitzhugh named the park, and the plat it is situated in, for his father-in-law, Hon. Charles Carroll of Livingston County, New York (Dow 1875:21-22). The pie-shaped park takes its form from the Michigan Central Railroad that curved past the property and defined the arched north and east sides. An 1875 publication noted that the, "...ground is partly wooded and partly open, and the city has already begun the improvement of it by the construction of well-turnpiked drives through the wooded portion on various directions. The tract is quite extensive, and will in time be a very convenient and attractive resort" (Dow 1875:38).

A decade later, the park was living up to its promise. In 1884, it was reported that Carroll Park was the site of, "...pic-nics, and pleasure gatherings of the city folks. Being so near the residence portion of the city, it is very handy and businessmen and families can take their noonday meals there without the loss of much time" (*Bay City Daily Tribune* 1884).

Over time, Carroll Park underwent a variety of improvements, including the construction of a small boomerang-shaped pond crossed by a concrete bridge, a playground, tennis courts, and a picnic pavilion with grills. Although the park is reputed to have a landscape designed by the famed Fredrick Law Olmsted Jr., this was not confirmed during a check of the Olmstead projects (National Association for Olmstead Parks 2011).

#### **5.4 BAY CITY COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

In part because of its location on the shores of the Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron, industry has been a driving force behind development in Bay City. Earliest industrial efforts typically revolved around the local lumbering industry. By the 1870s, lumbering employed more workers than any other industrial occupation in the United States, with the center of much of the effort focused on the Saginaw Valley, including Bay City (Kilar and Bloomfield, 1996:34). In 1884, there were approximately 60 sawmills spread along the river's edge, and in peak production years, as many as 10,000 men came to the city from the logging camps to find work (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:42). The lumber industry not only provided work for thousands, it made the owners of the firms rich – with nearly 80 percent of the regions lumber barons establishing their permanent residence along a six-block stretch of Center Avenue.

As time passed, and improvements were made to the sawing techniques, sawmills took on an even more industrial appearance. The development of gang-saws, which allowed for multiple boards to be cut at the same time, and narrower saw blades resulting in less waste, dramatically increased production. When the movement of the finished product was also taken into consideration, this further increased the productivity of the lumber industry and as a result, the wealth of its owners.

Like the lumber industry, the next major industrial force in the Bay City area was based on another natural material, salt. Situated below the Saginaw Valley were large areas of brine water. It was simply a matter of pumping the brine water up to the surface, boiling away the

fluid, and packaging the salt for distribution. The salt industry was second only to the lumber industry in mid-nineteenth century Bay City. The firm of Henry Sage, just one in the area, estimated profits during the 1870s between \$25,000 and \$30,000 annually (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:44). So strong was the salt industry in the region that in the 1880s a group of manufacturers joined to create the Saginaw and Bay City Salt Company and was later known as the Michigan Salt Association (MSA). Strong enough to take on the competition from across the nation, for a MSA set prices on everything from table salt to packing salt. It wasn't until the lumber industry, and thus the sawmills that provided the cheap fuel needed for the industry, took their downturn in the 1890s that the power of the MSA was lost (Kilar and Bloomfield 1996:44-45).

Lumbering, or wood also played a role in the variety of businesses that produced wooden goods. Everything from barrels, to cisterns and water tanks, and even wooden shipbuilding had a place in Bay City. Prior to the 1850s several small schooners, fishing boats, and sailing vessel were constructed in the area, but it was in the following decade that the industry launched into bigger and better ship construction. In 1889 both the ship yards of Frank W. Wheeler and Captain James Davidson were opened for business. Davidson's firm numbered as many as 500 employees and Wheelers nearly 1,000, making them the largest ship-buildings on the entire great lakes. However, like the lumber and salt industries, both Wheeler and Davidson were out of business in the early 1900s, in part due to labor unrest, poor management, and financial difficulties (Kilar and Bloomington 1996:49).

By the early twentieth century, the prominence in wood related industries in Bay City had begun to fade. While seasonal industries of sugar beet farming, fishing, and some shipbuilding remained, these tended to be seasonal work with only sporadic employment (Kilar and Bloomington 1996:132). Bridging the lumber era to the new industrialism in Bay City was the William Clements firm, Industrial Works. Later known as Brownhoist, the company started out as a small shop that did repair for the area saw mills in 1873 but changed to making boilers, saws, and parts for the Davidson and Wheeler shipyards (Katzinger 203:29). In 1883, they

began to produce steam shovels and heavy lifting equipment and 30 years later, they were the biggest such company in the nation (Katzinger 203:29).

Other firms that were part of the modernization of industry in Bay City included the North American Chemical Company which purchased the old McGraw saw mill site and Bay City Dredge Works, manufacturers of cranes and other heavy equipment. Although the earlier shipbuilding firm of Wheeler and Davidson were gone by the second decade of the twentieth century Defoe Shipbuilding began about that same time and initially produced small knock-down boats sold around the world (these boats were the inspiration for the catalog home industry) but transitioned into steel torpedo chasers and mine planters for World War I (Kilar and Bloomington 1996:135). The firm continued to operate through most of the twentieth century, constructing ships for the Navy, and most famously building a large yacht for the chairman of Montgomery Ward stores that went on to serve as the Presidential yacht for Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon.

Perhaps the best known of all the industries in Bay City is that of the “Knocked-Down Housing” firms. For a time, the city was the hub of the nationwide industry, calling three of the major firms their own. Sold for between a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, and shipped across the country (and the world) these buildings were available until the early 1980s when other housing options resulted in the end of an era.

## **5.5 SIGNIFICANT RESIDENTS OF THE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The following people were leaders in the community or in their jobs and, for a time, each called a house within the historic district home. Individuals are listed by name, followed by residential address when available and an explanation of significance.

**George W. Ames**, 1908 Center Avenue, was a well-to-do real estate salesman in the early history of Bay City. In 1889, he became a founding member of Brigham, Ames, and Heatley,

Abstractors. This company served to draw banks, railroads, attorneys, and other prominent businessmen into the region. His real estate office was noted as being the most complete office of the kind in the state. In addition to these two ventures, Ames was the Secretary of the Avondale Land Company, chartered in 1891 (Chicago Biographical 1892).

**Dr. William Bishop**, 2412 Center Avenue, was considered a pioneer in abdominal surgery and worked with the Sisters of Mercy at Mercy Hospital. Dr. Bishop also served as a football coach at Bay City High School (D. Smith to M. Higgs, letter, February 9, 1993, Bay County Historical Museum Archives, Bay City, Michigan).

**Alfred E. Bousfield**, 1200 Center Avenue, was an industrialist and lumber baron. He became the president of the Bousfield Woodenware Works. The firm manufactured wooden buckets, tubs, butter churns, and other wooden staples of everyday life. Their factory employed 200 people and created 20,000 items every day (Laidman 1997). Bousfield was also the president of the Delphon Phonograph Company, president of the Bay County Savings Bank of Bay City, and was the first director of First National Bank. Bousfield is credited with convincing other community leaders to pool their capital in order to erect the Wenonah Hotel in 1906 (Laidman 1997).

**Frederick Bradley**, 1400 Center Avenue, was one of three co-owners of N. B. Bradley and Company, which manufactured salt and lumber. He withdrew from the family business in 1878 and served as director of the First National and Bay County Savings banks, and as president of Bradley Milling, a manufacturer of wooden boxes and crates (Chicago Biographical 1892:371; Wolicki and BCHS 1998:80).

**Homer Buck**, 820 Johnson Street, moved with his family to Bay City in 1871. Soon after the move, Buck's father passed away, leaving him to help support the family at the tender age of 12. Working and attending school diligently, Buck entered the grocery wholesale business in the firm of L. F. Miller and Company when he was 16 years old. Shortly thereafter, Buck began his

own produce brokerage firm. After 14 years, the successful endeavor was sold, and Buck turned his interests to becoming first a merchandise-broker, and eventually the director of the Argenta Gold Mining Company, president of the E. P. Roe Company in Bad Axe, Michigan, a member of the area's first Board of Trade, and promoter of the first efforts at local coal mining (Kreger 1981:8-18). Buck was also responsible for securing the first sugar beet brought to Bay City for Hon. Nathan B. Bradley, C. B. Chatfield, and their collaborators (Gansser 1905:709).

**Benjamin Burbridge**, 1403 Fifth Street, was considered a successful businessman in Bay City during the late nineteenth century. Burbridge was a dealer of mantels, grates, ornamental plaster and other architectural details (Kreger 1981:8-13). Many of these same details found their way into his 1884 home.

**Clifford B. and Irene Camp**, 2412 Center Avenue, took ownership of this home in 1936. Camp was the president of Woodcraft Company.

**Robert R. and Audrey H. Carson**, 2412 Center Avenue, purchased the home in 1965. Carson was president of the Aetna Portland Cement Company.

**Charles and Elizabeth Coryell**, 1400 Center Avenue, were the fourth residents of this house. In 1900, Coryell was one of the founding members of the Robert Gage Coal Company, which operated 14 mines in Bay and Saginaw counties at the peak of its operation and was the largest coal company in the state of Michigan while Coryell was president. Coryell was also the president of the Beaver Coal Mining Company of Bay City and the Saginaw Salt Company, and was secretary of the Republic Fuel Company. In 1931, Coryell founded Monitor Sugar serving as its chairman until his death in 1960 (Fuller and Butterfield 1925:712-713).

**Walter S. Cooley**, 1904 Fifth Street, was the superintendent of the Bradstreet Company and later the president of the Garber Machine Company. Although not the first owner of the house, Cooley moved there between 1906 and 1911 and remained until his death in 1929. Cooley was

involved with the Bay City Chamber of Commerce and was a member of the Rotary Club. After his death, his wife, Mary F. Cooley, became treasurer and later assumed his position as president of Garber Machine Company and president of Loetz Foundry Company. She continued to live at the home through the 1960s (Fuller and Butterfield 1925:182; Polk 1884-1885, 1889-1890, 1901-1902, 1906, 1911, 1922, 1929, 1935, 1940, 1966, 1971).

**Fremont P. Chesbrough**, 1515 Center Avenue, was one of the co-owners of Chesbrough Brothers, a firm with milling and lumbering interests in Bay City and in Chippewa County in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The company established the very first milling operation in White Fish Bay. Eventually, Chesbrough had a falling-out with his brothers, and went into business for himself. This business failed, and in 1915, Chesbrough lost everything, including his house (Chicago Biographical 1892:1017; Polk 1893-1894, 1913; Wolicki and BCHS 1998:34-35).

**Henry Clements**, 1601 Center Avenue, was the son of James Clements, a designer of a rail-mounted shovel and crane that is credited for the speedy installation of tracks along the Chicago & Western Michigan Railroad. The senior Clements was the owner of Industrial Works, a company that had its cranes featured at the Chicago Columbian Expedition in 1893. After graduating from the University of Michigan, Henry Clements joined his father in business, forming James Clements and Son. He married Luella Hovey in 1882 and constructed this residence in 1890 (Polk 1890-1891; Wolicki and BCHS 1998:101).

**William Clements**, 1712 Center Avenue and 105 Parkwood Court (2201 Center Avenue—demolished), was the son of James Clements and brother to Henry Clements. William was born in Ann Arbor, and like his brother was a graduate of the University of Michigan. He too worked at the Industrial Works in Bay City holding the positions of engineer, superintendent, and manager before becoming president, a position he held for 20 years until his retirement in 1925. His love of the University of Michigan and a fascination with American history resulted in Clements building a huge collection of works on early American history, which he donated to the university along with a building to house it in 1922 (*BCT* 1934). Mr. Clements lived with his

first wife, Jessie, in the Center Avenue home. He divorced Jessie in 1930 and married Miss Florence Fisher the following year. He lived with Florence in a second Center Avenue home that has subsequently been demolished; the stable, also designed by architect Albert Kahn, survives and was converted into a residence in 1955 (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:189).

**William Clift**, 1409 Sixth Street, was originally from New York. Clift lived and worked in Illinois and Ohio before moving to Michigan. In 1880, when Clift was 28 years old, he made his way to Bay City to assume the role of bookkeeper for the First National Bank. Over the next few years, he started an insurance company, Bush and Clift. By 1898, he was promoting his own firm, W. O. Clift and Company (Kreger 1981:8-14).

**Charles B. Curtiss**, 924 Center Avenue, came to Bay City in 1864 to work for John McGraw, co-owner with Henry Sage of the Sage Mill on the Saginaw River. When the McGraw-Sage partnership ended, Curtiss stayed with McGraw working in the mill, then the largest mill in the world, until it went out of business in 1893. In 1892, three years of construction began on the Curtiss' Center Avenue home, where four generations of the family would live until 1971 (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:97). After the mill closed, Curtiss went into the dredging business (McGee ca. 1986).

**Thomas Cranage**, 1001 Center Avenue, was a vessel owner and captain. He was also a member of the firm of Pitts and Cranage, manufactures of lumber and salt that operated out of Bay City. Cranage served as president on the Michigan Salt Company, president of the Bay County Savings Bank, and as vice president of the First National Bank (Chicago Biographical 1892:589-590). Cranage served on the Board of Water Commission and the Board of Education, and was the first president of the Bay City Association. He also served as warden of the Episcopalian Church for over 20 years, and was noted for his charitable donations to benevolent enterprises (Chicago Biographical 1892:589-590).

**Edward Cobb Davidson**, 701 Johnson Street, was the owner of the Davidson Shipyard and the third owner of this house. He later became vice president of the Peoples Commercial and Savings Bank, president of the Davidson Building Company, vice president of the Bay Trust Company, and eventually vice president of the Bay City Building Company (Polk 1935, 1940, 1950, 1956, 1972).

**Thomas Defoe**, 2324 Nurmi Drive, and **William Defoe**, 2324 Nurmi Drive, were the sons of **Harry J. Defoe**, who established Defoe Shipbuilding in 1905. The company produced gasoline-powered fishing skiffs, pleasure craft, and pre-cut boats, as well as warships, Navy torpedo chasers, and mine chasers. During the Prohibition period, they built federal cutters to chase rum runners. In the 1930s, they specialized in palatial yachts, including the *Lenore*, which was constructed for Sewell Avery, president of Montgomery Ward, and later served as the presidential yacht under numerous administrations. During World War II, the company perfected the roll-over method of construction, which allowed for faster production time. After the war, Defoe Shipbuilding built cargo ships and other military craft. Harry Defoe died in 1957, at which time Thomas assumed the role of president of the company and William became the secretary and chairman of the board. In 1948, Thomas and his wife Marjorie Germaine DeFoe commissioned Alden Dow to design their residence at 2324 Nurmi Drive. Thomas and his wife remained in the house until their deaths in 1983 and 1985, respectively (Polk 1952; Wolicki and BCHS 1998:259).

**Elias and Elizabeth Denison**, 1201 Center Avenue, constructed their Italianate house in 1864 (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:25). Mr. Denison moved to Bay City in 1862 where he met and married Elizabeth Fraser, the daughter of Bay City leader James Fraser. Denison himself became a business leader, working in commerce, banking, and real estate. He was responsible for the construction of several business blocks.

**Charles Eddy**, 1012 Fifth Street, and **Selwyn Eddy**, 1400 Center Avenue, were lumber barons associated with Eddy Brothers Company, manufacturers of lumber, lath, and salt. Selwyn Eddy

remodeled and enlarged the Center Avenue residence living there from 1891 until 1905, when the family moved to San Francisco (*Bay City Times-Press [BCTP]* 1891:4; *BCTT* 1891:5; Polk 1905).

**Richard H., Jr., and Marie B. Fletcher**, 604 Green Avenue, were residing in the house by 1960. The Fletchers were the owners of the Fletcher Oil Company, with Richard serving as president and Marie initially the company's treasurer and secretary, but eventually promoted to vice president. The couple owned several filling stations (Polk 1920, 1924, 1926, 1929, 1965, 1968, 1972, 1984).

**Walter I. Foss**, 2306 Nurmi Drive, was the son of Edgar B. Foss, a Bay County lumber baron (Chicago Biographical 1892:584). The younger Foss worked as a salesman (Polk 1940:95).

**John Gregory**, 1303 Fifth Street, was originally from Ontario, Canada, but in 1868 came to Bay City to work in the carpentry trade. By the 1880s, Gregory was financially able to invest in real estate and established his own development and building firm, Gregory and Holland (Kreger 1981:8-14).

**Charles Hawley**, 1514 Center Avenue, was president and owner of the Hawley Dry Goods Company and also served as president of the Commercial Bank of Bay City and as vice president of The People's Commercial and Savings Bank (Museum of the Great Lakes ca. 1976; Polk 1891-1892, 1910, 1916; Turner 2007). Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hawley purchased this property following the death of Joseph Turner.

**Hoyt E. Hayes**, 2230 Center Avenue, was president of Industrial Brownhoist Corporation. He was also active in community affairs, and served on the board for General Hospital, People's National Bank and Trust, Resistance Welding Corporation, and the YMCA (Polk 1974; Wolicki and BCHS 1998:231). Hayes owned this home with his wife Marie.

**Samuel Houghton**, 1601 Center Avenue, a judge of the Circuit Court, lived in the house during the 1930s and 1940s (Polk 1931, 1940, 1950).

**William F. Jennison**, 131 Carroll Road, was one of Bay City's leading business and civic figures, and was prominently identified with local commercial and sporting life for a half century. He was the president of Jennison Hardware Company for over 50 years, as well as the president of Riverside Truck and Storage Company, president of the Fulton Company, and the vice president of Northern Title and Trust Company. One of the founders of the Bay City Rotary Club and the Saginaw Bay Yacht Club, Mr. Jennison served on the boards of Mercy Hospital and the National Bank of Bay City (*BCT* 1998:73; Polk 1931:186, 380).

**Adna Lewis**, 701 Johnson Street, was the president of the Lewis Manufacturing Company, one of the three catalog home companies in Bay City (Polk 1913). Lewis owned this home with his wife Gertrude.

**Otto F. Louis**, 701 Johnson Street, was the president and manager of the Louis Drug Company, and the second owner of the house (Polk 1929).

**Glenn MacDonald**, 2231 Carroll Road, resided in the home from 1942 until his death in 1959. MacDonald was editor of the *Bay City Times* for 25 years and was inducted into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame in 1996 (Polk 1950; Michigan State University 2011).

**Hector McKinnon**, 1601 Center Avenue, purchased the home in 1913. McKinnon was the president of McKinnon Boiler and Machine Company (Wolicki and BCHS 1998:101).

**Ernest B. Perry**, 2230 Center Avenue, was president of Industrial Works and saw the company through its merger with Brownhoist Corporation in 1927. Mrs. Susie Harwood Perry continued to reside in the house until her death in 1944 (*BCT* 1998:70; Polk 1914-1915:635; Wolicki and BCHS 1998:231).

**James Shearer**, 701 Center Avenue, was a long-time resident of Detroit. There, Shearer was a successful architect and builder, in addition to serving on numerous city commissions. In 1865, Mr. Shearer moved to Bay City, where he engaged in lumbering, real estate, and banking, becoming one of the city's most prominent citizens. He was the first president of the Lumberman's Association of the Saginaw Valley, and purchased the former Raymond Mill, which he operated under the name James Shearer and Company. The mill was enlarged on several occasions, until it was so large that it could produce 10 million board feet of lumber annually (Chicago Biographical 1892:211, 213). Shearer served as the first president of the board of the city's water works; was appointed as one of the state building commissioners for the capital in 1871; was elected to the Board of Regents of the University of Michigan in 1880, serving a full eight-year term; was made a trustee of the Bay City Library in 1874; and was a member of the Semi-Centennial Commission of Michigan in May of 1885. He served as president of the First National Bank of Bay City from 1867 to 1881 (Chicago Biographical 1892:213).

**William Sovereign**, 2151 Fifth Street, was one of the forces behind the pre-cut home company known as Aladdin Homes, along with his brother Otto. William served as the president of the firm until his death in 1968

**Otto E. Sovereign**, 2157 Fifth Street, was one of the forces behind pre-cut home company Aladdin Homes, along with his brother William. Otto served as the secretary-manager of the company. Otto left money in his will for the Rachel Sovereign Memorial Home, dedicated to the memory of his mother. This \$240,000 gift helped construct the large women's home at 1014 Center Avenue.

**Joseph Turner**, 1514 Center Avenue, was a lumber baron and owner of J. Turner and Company and co-owner of Tousey and Turner. Turner later went into business with S. H. Webster, and subsequently, with the Miller and Lewis Company. In 1892, Turner served on the Bay City Bridge Commission. That same year, his Miller and Turner mill caught fire, burning 40 acres of

the town, destroying 232 homes, 38 barns, two churches, and 33 businesses, and leaving 1,300 people homeless. He rebuilt the mill with Spencer O. Fisher, and it became the Fisher and Turner Mill. The Turner Lumber Company was formed in 1900 (Museum of the Great Lakes ca. 1976; Turner 2007). Turner resided at this home with his wife Eliza.

**Carl G. Wagner**, 2221 Carroll Road, served as the vice president superintendent of Bay City Shovels, Inc. (Polk 1960:45, 1975:53, 484). Wagner resided at this home with his wife Helga.

**George H. Whitehouse**, 1811 Fifth Street, purchased the house from its original owners, carpenter Christian and his wife Lena Kirchner (Polk 1902-1903) Whitehouse was the manager of Bay City Cold Storage and Produce Company and treasurer of Defoe Boat and Motorworks (Polk 1908, 1911).

**William W. and Margaret E. Wildman**, 2412 Center Avenue, resided in the home beginning in 1921. Wildman was the president and general manager of the Wildman Rubber Company (D. Smith to M. Higgs, letter, February 9, 1993, Bay County Historical Museum, Bay City, Michigan).

**Amos J. Woolfitt**, 701 Grant Street, manager of the Bay City Beef Company, purchased the house in 1896, and four generations of his family continued to reside in the house over the subsequent 75 years.

## **6.0 ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXTS**

Because the resources in the historic district was constructed over a long period of time, a variety of building styles and forms are present. *Building forms* are those that are more closely associated with vernacular construction—those structures erected following the same design or pattern as the builder’s parents—and are typically associated with a footprint, floor plan, or roof form rather than ornamentation. Building forms include Upright and Wing, Side Gable, Gable Front, Gabled Ell/T-plan/Cross Gable, Foursquare, Bungalow, and Ranch. In contrast, *building styles* are often first designed by architects, with the popularity of certain features or characteristics shared through the popular press and catalogs. Among the styles found in the local historic district are Italianate, Queen Anne, Neoclassical, and Tudor Revival. The following text provides general descriptions of the major styles and forms found within the district.

### **6.1 BUILDING FORMS**

#### **6.1.1 Upright and Wing**

Popular as early as 1830, the Upright and Wing form house is typically associated with the New England-Great Lakes building tradition (Gordon 1992:132). The form traveled west from New England with the settlement of the county, although its popularity had largely waned by the period of heaviest settlement in the Saginaw Bay region. Earliest examples of the Upright and Wing house were constructed in phases, with the “upright,” or gable front element constructed first. As homeowners needed additional space, the side gable “wing” element was added to the building. The earliest examples have a door in the upright, as well as doors in the wing, often off a porch along the length of the wing. After approximately 1850, both the upright and wing were constructed simultaneously, with the main door moving to the wing (Gordon 1992:132). Often, with the shift in the door location, the upright was reduced in size from three fenestration bays to two. Upright and Wing form houses typically are constructed with an L-plan, although T-plan

residences were also popular (Gordon 1992:132). Examples of the Upright and Wing within the district include 501 North Farragut Street and 919 North Grant Street (Figures 6.1-1 and 6.1-2). Both houses were constructed in the last decade of the nineteenth century and feature a taller “upright” section with a lower side “wing.”

### **6.1.2 Side Gable**

The Side Gable form is characterized by a rectangular plan and side gable roof. It is among the earliest and most pervasive of the Midwestern house forms. Various examples in the historic district include one-story, one and one-half-story, and two-story versions. Roofs tend to be steeper in earlier versions. Plans are typically symmetrical with a central or offset entrance along the front elevation. A raised porch is usually attached to the front, either as a small entity or spanning the entire house width, and often has a shed or hipped roof. Embellishment is often limited to small brackets or turned posts, and windows and doors are often plain. Typically built between 1840 and 1940, early examples tend to be narrow, spanning only one room wide (Garfield and Wyatt 1986). Two examples of the house form in the historic district include the ca. 1900 residence at 806 Seventh Street and the ca. 1937 house at 516 North Sheridan Street (Figures 6.1-3 and 6.1-4).

### **6.1.3 Gable Front**

Gable Front house forms are characterized by a rectangular plan and front gable roof. Commonly occurring in both rural and urban settings, they were most popular from 1840 to 1925 (Garfield and Wyatt 1986). Like the Side Gable form, Gable Front houses may be linked to the influence of the Greek Revival style. In many Midwestern states, the one and one-half-story version dominates, but one-story, two-story, and two and one-half-story examples occur. Some have dormers on one or both planes of the roof. The main entryway is usually placed in the center of the façade or is offset and sheltered by a small entry porch or an uncovered stoop. Sometimes a full porch with a shed or hipped roof spans the entire façade. Early versions tend to



Figure 6.1-1. Upright and Wing House, 501 North Farragut Street



Figure 6.1-2. Upright and Wing House, 919 North Grant Street



Figure 6.1-3. Side Gable House, 806 Seventh Street



Figure 6.1-4. Side Gable House, 516 North Sheridan Street

be narrow with a steep roof, while later versions are wider with a gentler roof slope. Gable Front additions typically are limited to the rear elevation; those with side additions are classified as Upright and Wing and Gabled Ell forms (Garfield and Wyatt 1986).

Brick examples of the Gable Front form do occur, but the form is usually a balloon frame structure that is sheathed in clapboards. An important distinction of Gable Front houses is the absence of architectural details or decorative embellishments. Ornamentation often may include simply detailed sills, lintels, turned porch columns, decorative shingles, and oversized parlor windows. Simplicity of form helps to distinguish the Gable Front house from other houses with rectilinear forms. Examples of the Gable Front form can be seen at both 908 North Jackson Street and 1412 Fourth Street (Figures 6.1-5 and 6.1-6). The two-story Jackson Street home was erected in 1911 while the one-story Fourth Street building was erected in 1923.

#### **6.1.4 Gabled Ell/T-plan/Cross Gable**

The Gabled Ell house, and related forms of the T-plan and Cross Gable, were built for comfort and practicality, largely after the Civil War (Garfield and Wyatt 1986). The building form was most prevalent in the second half of the nineteenth century and may have evolved from the earlier Upright and Wing form. Gabled Ell houses generally have balloon frame or brick wall construction and an L- or T-shaped floor plan (Garfield and Wyatt 1986; Gordon 1992). The Gabled Ell house is commonly one or two stories with an intersecting gable roof (both ridges are at the same height and constructed at the same time, unlike most Upright and Wing buildings), and have symmetrical fenestration. In the Gabled Ell, the long wing usually faces the road and often exhibits a porch or porches flanked by the projecting gabled wing (Gordon 1992). This feature is illustrated in the house constructed in 1907 at 520 North Farragut Street (Figure 6.1-7).

The T-plan and Cross Gable houses tend to have the short face of the building parallel to the road, with the long leg of the footprint extending to the rear, particularly in urban areas where land was at a premium. Examples of these two house forms are illustrated by the house at



Figure 6.1-5. Gable Front House, 908 North Jackson Street



Figure 6.1-6. Gable Front House, 1412 Fourth Street



Figure 6.1-7. Gabled Ell House, 520 North Farragut Street



Figure 6.1-8. T-plan House, 1715 Fifth Street

1715 Fifth Street and 612 North Jackson Street. The T-plan house on Fifth Street was constructed in 1883 and has a slightly projecting box bay on the first story of the façade (Figure 6.1-8). The building on Jackson Street was erected in 1900 and includes a nod to the stylistic features of the Queen Anne style in its ornate bay window (Figure 6.1-9).

### **6.1.5 Foursquare**

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

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

The Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District includes a large number of Foursquare homes. Many are modest, or more typical examples of the style, with good examples found at 1102 Fourth Street, 703 Green Avenue, 1103 McKinley Avenue, 511 North Monroe, 2105 Sixth Street and 2138 Sixth Street.



Figure 6.1-9. Cross Gable House, 612 North Jackson Street

The house at 1103 McKinley Avenue features a rock-face concrete block foundation, with clapboard exterior walls and an asphalt shingle clad roof (Figure 6.1-10). The roof is pierced by the typical dormer, situated at the center of the roof slope, and in this case featuring the same hipped roof as the main building. Also typical of the Foursquare is the porch, in this case spanning the full width of the front façade. The elevated porch is accessed by steps set to one side and flanked by low walls of the rock-face concrete block that forms the main building foundation. This same material is used to form pedestals for each of the three posts supporting the open roof. Topping each pedestal is a battered, or tapered pier roof support.

Although part of the attraction of the Foursquare house was the ability to have almost a complete lack of ornamentation, this was not always the rule. A number of more elaborate examples of the style are found in the local historic district, such as the house at 1200 McKinley Avenue (Figure 6.1-11). This large residence uses the basic Foursquare as a canvas, and adds details associated with Colonial Revival, including the Corinthian capitals on the post columns, a low balustrade around the porch roof and echoed by a second balustrade encircling the porch deck add to the higher style elegance of the house.

### **6.1.6 Bungalow**

Single-story or one and one-half-story Bungalows occur frequently in the Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District. These generally have cross-, front-, or side-gabled roofs, with roof dormers occurring regularly on side-gabled examples. Exposed roof rafters and decorative triangle brackets characterize these buildings' wide eave overhangs. Most Bungalows in the district have full or partial porches contained either under the main roof or under a secondary roof structure on the front elevation. Often porches are distinguished by battered or tapered columns on pier supports. In the Bay City Expanded Center Avenue Local Historic District, the porch columns may rest on brick or concrete block piers or on a solid knee wall.



Figure 6.1-10. Foursquare House, 1103 McKinley Avenue



Figure 6.1-11. Foursquare House with Colonial Revival Details, 1200 McKinley Avenue



Figure 6.1-12. Bungalow House, 1212 Park Avenue

Outstanding examples of Bungalows are located at 1212 Park Avenue and 2163 Fifth Street. The residence at 1212 Park Avenue is a one and one-half-story building with a side-gabled roof (Figure 6.1-12). The pitch of the roof changes slightly as it extends over the full-length porch. Battered columns on concrete blocks support the porch roof structure. A large half-hipped roof dormer dominates the front elevation. Exposed rafters and triangle braces under the eaves further identify this house as a Bungalow. The residence at 2163 Fifth Street shares many of these same architectural qualities (Figure 6.1-13). It is a side-gabled building with a full-length porch protected under the main roof structure. Paired rectangular, rather than tapered, porch supports rest on a solid knee wall. A small gabled roof dormer is present on the front elevation, and exposed rafters and triangle braces are located under the wide eaves.

The house at 2160 Fourth Street is not only an outstanding example of a Bungalow, but it is also a fine example of an original Aladdin “Pomona” kit home (Figure 6.1-14). Unlike the two residences just discussed, the Fourth Street building has a cross-gabled, rather than side-gabled, roof. The open porch is contained under the cross gable that is supported by battered piers surmounted by square posts. Half-timbering, unique eave brackets and rhomboid-pane transom windows on the front elevation also set this home apart.

More typical examples of Bungalows occur at 2509 Center Avenue, 1123 Park Avenue, and 301 North Van Buren Street. These homes apply a range of Bungalow characteristics, and some have suffered the loss of original materials and architectural details. For example, 301 North Van Buren Street has modern replacement siding, and elements like brackets and rafter ends have been removed; however, the house retains its original form that clearly defines it as a Craftsman structure (Figure 6.1-15). Others, like 2156 Fourth Street, still feature original Craftsman details and are surviving examples of the Aladdin kit homes that are still prevalent around the community (Figures 6.1-16).



Figure 6.1-13. Bungalow House, 2163 Fifth Street



Figure 6.1-14. "Pomona" Aladdin Kit Bungalow House, 2160 Fourth Street



Figure 6.1-15. Bungalow House, 301 North Van Buren



Figure 6.1-16 . "Plaza" Aladdin Kit Bungalow House, 2156 Fourth Street

### **6.1.7 Ranch**

Originating in California during the mid-1930s, the Ranch form spread in popularity across the country by the 1940s (McAlester and McAlester 1984:479). A decreasing dependency on public transportation permitted homeowners to move away from crowded cities and construct rambling dwellings on large suburban lots. During the post-World War II building boom, the Ranch form was the most popular suburban house type constructed (Gordon 1992:141). More than six million Ranch homes were sold in the United States between 1948 and 1955 (Gordon 1992:141). Typical Ranch forms stand one story with low-pitched hipped or side gable roofs often with broad overhanging eaves. Wall cladding varies, with wood and brick being popular. Windows are expanded with the introduction of large picture windows. By the 1960s, even the door became a wall of glass with the introduction of the sliding door (Gordon 1992:141). The form remained popular well into the 1980s. Ranch forms are often loosely influenced by styles that typically include Colonial Revival, Prairie, Craftsman, and Spanish Colonial design. Typical Ranch houses in the historic district are located at 2491 Center Avenue, 2316 Groveland Road, and 100 Parkwood Court (Figures 6.1-17, 6.1-18, and 6.1-19).

## **6.2 BUILDING STYLES**

### **6.2.1 Italianate**

Although the Italianate style experienced its greatest popularity between 1850 and 1880, almost every city across the county boasts at least one commercial building in this style (Blumenson 1983:37). Italianate commercial buildings utilized many of the architectural forms and details of the residential architecture developed at the same time. Among the most familiar elements associated with the style are the bracketed cornice, tall heavily molded doors, and round or segmental arched windows with hoodmolds (Gordon 1992:86). Technological advances also furthered the popularity of the Italianate style through developments in cast iron and pressed metal production, which allowed merchants to have inexpensive ornamentation rather than the t



Figure 6.1-17. Ranch House, 2491 Center Avenue



Figure 6.1-18. Ranch House, 2316 Groveland Road



Figure 6.1-19. Ranch House, 100 Parkwood Court



Figure 6.2-1. High Style Italianate, 701 Center Avenue

raditional carved stone (Poppeliers et al. 1981:20). The historic district features numerous residential buildings that display typical Italianate stylistic details. Two outstanding examples of Bay City's Italianate residences are 701 Center Avenue and 306 North Van Buren Street. The building at 701 Center Avenue includes a central tower, commonly associated with Italianate buildings, as well as narrow paired windows, elaborate window crowns, and paired eave brackets (Figure 6.2-1). The house at 306 North Van Buren Street has similar details but lacks a tower. Its floor plan is asymmetrical with two cross-gabled bays on the front and side elevations (Figure 6.2-2).

Typical examples of Bay City's Italianate houses are found at 1201 Center Avenue, 615 North Grant Street, 901 Fifth Street, and 1415 Fifth Street (Figures 6.2-3 through 6.2-6). These structures represent common Italianate subtypes, such as simple hipped roof, asymmetrical plan, and centered front gable. Their low-pitched roofs and wide eave overhangs with brackets clearly distinguish them as Italianate buildings.

## **6.2.2 Queen Anne**

Popular from 1880 through 1910, the Queen Anne style includes such features as asymmetrical massing, irregular floor plans, variety of exterior finishes, bay and oriel windows, and wraparound porches (Gordon 1992:91; McAlester and McAlester 1984:263). Inspired by the British buildings for the Centennial Exposition of 1876 in Philadelphia, the Queen Anne style was featured in designs and plans of carpenter-builder manuals such as *Palliser's Model Homes* (1878) and Comstock's *Modern Architectural Designs and Details* (1881) (Gordon 1992:91).

Queen Anne style houses can be found widely throughout the district. These buildings are characterized by steeply pitched roofs, asymmetrical façades, single-story porches, cut-away bay windows, and texturing techniques such as decorative half-timbering and wall shingles. Two outstanding examples of Queen Anne residences are 1817 Center Avenue and 1315 McKinley Avenue. (Figures 6.2-7 and 6.2-8) The Center Avenue building has been very well preserved,