

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc. (CCRG) was contracted by the Historic District Commission of the City of Jackson to carry out a reconnaissance and intensive level survey of a defined portion of the city's downtown area (Figure 1.1-1). The purpose of this investigation is to provide the necessary information for the future preparation of local and National Register nominations for eligible historic properties or districts in the project area.

The project area is roughly bounded by Van Dorn to the east, Pearl to the Grand River to Ganson Street on the north, Blackstone Street to the west, and Washington Avenue on the south. This area, comprising approximately 131.5 acres, is predominately commercial, although single family residential, religious, and government buildings are included in the project area. Approximately 114 above-ground resources were surveyed during the course of this project. Of these resources, 25 were selected for intensive level survey through consultation with the Jackson Historic District Commission (HDC), the Downtown Intensive Level Survey Study Committee (DILSSC), and the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Following this introduction is a discussion of the methodology employed for surveying the 114 properties included in this study. Sections 2.0 and 3.0 then discuss the historical and architectural contexts that apply to each property. Section 4.0 gives background information on previously documented properties, and general information on those properties not selected for intensive level survey. This section also documents the history and provides a description of each of the 25 properties selected for intensive level survey. Recommendations and conclusions are provided in Section 5.0. Appendix A is the table of information on the buildings within the project area, with Appendix B presenting current photographs of each building 50 years or older within the study area. Selected streetscape images of the project area are provided in Appendix C. Finally, Appendix D includes a series of maps illustrating the downtown survey area, and labeling each parcel with the City of Jackson Stencil Number.

The activity that is the subject of this project has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries. However, the contents and opinions herein do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior or the Department of History, Arts and Libraries, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products herein constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork followed procedures established in the *Manual of Historic and Architectural Surveys in Michigan* (Christensen 2001). As recommended for intensive level investigations, photographs of

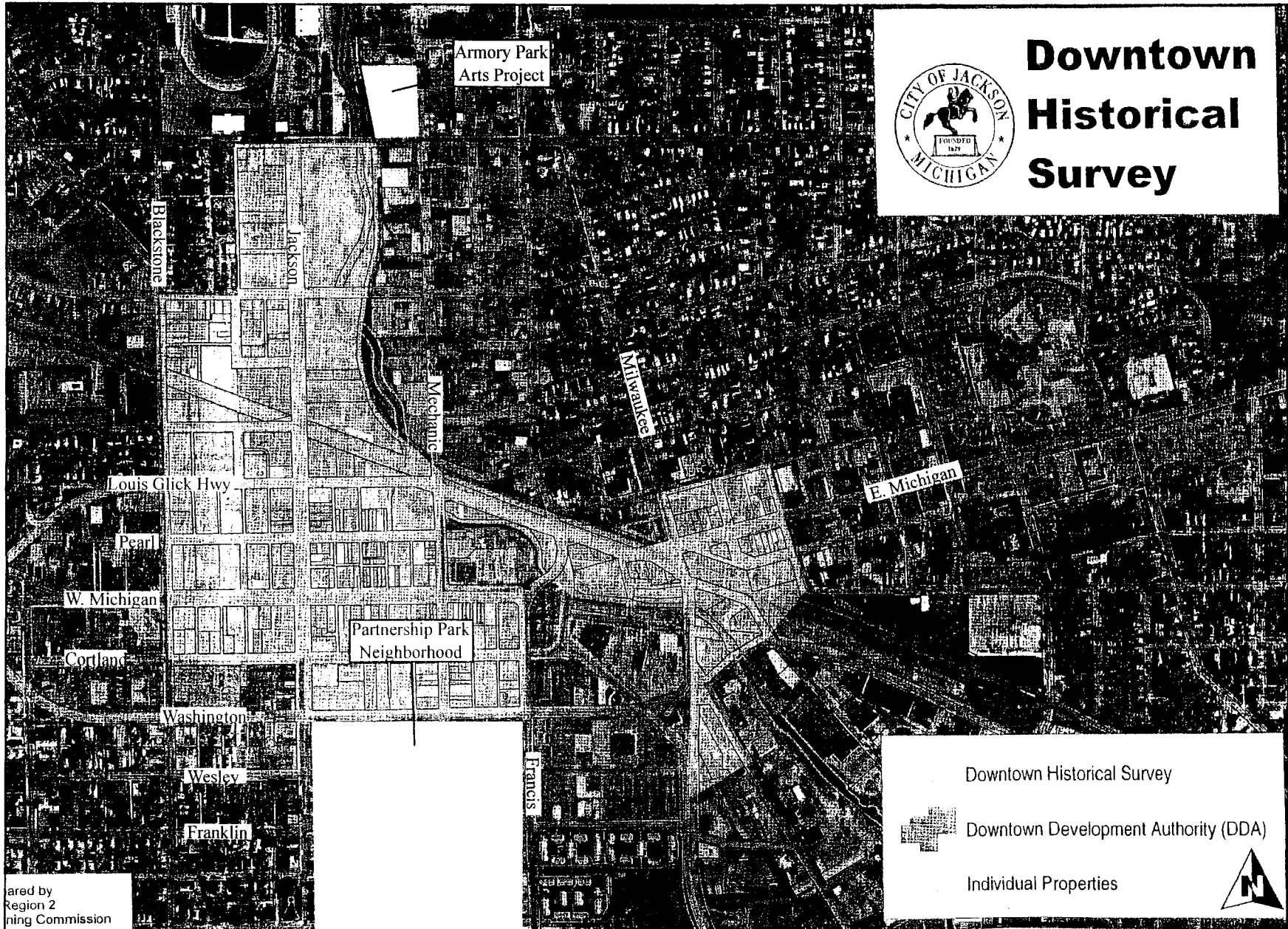


Figure 1.1-1. Project Area

each property within the project area were taken. Streetscape photographs were also taken illustrating each property to show their relationship to the surrounding landscape. Each property evaluated as part of the intensive level survey was also assessed according to standards established for listing on the NRHP, which require the resource to exhibit integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association and meet one or more of four NRHP criteria:

- 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 information important in prehistory or history.

In addition to the fieldwork, research was conducted at the Jackson District Library (Carnegie and Eastern Branches), the Ella Sharp Museum, both the Assessors Office and Office of the Historic District Commission in the City of Jackson, and the Jackson County Register of Deeds all in Jackson, Michigan. Additional background research was carried out at the Library of Michigan, Lansing. Personal interviews were conducted with building owners Vince Genco, Genco Boot and Shoes; Susan Murdie, Unique Clothing & Home; Charles Ahronheim, 140 W. Michigan; and Brian Surgener, 201 S. Mechanic.

Field investigations for this report were undertaken from January 2004 through April 2004 by Ms. Melissa Milton-Pung and Ms. Elaine Robinson. Additional research for the project was completed by Mr. Kent Taylor. Ms. Robinson authored this report and James A. Robertson, Ph.D. reviewed and edited the report. Mr. James Montney prepared the graphics, and Ms. Cynthia White was responsible for report production.

