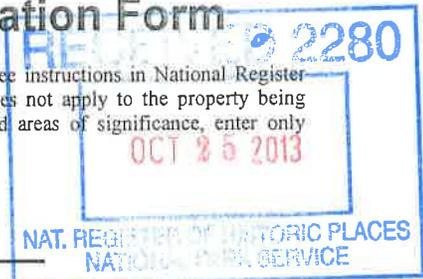


906

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: First Federal Building  
Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 1001 Woodward Avenue  
City or town: Detroit State: MI County: Wayne  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets  
the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.  
I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following  
level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

Brian D. Murray 10/22/13  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date  
MI SHPO  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official: Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

*Jan Eason H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

12-11-13  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce/Trade  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce/Trade  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: granite, steel, aluminum, glass

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The First Federal Building is an International Style, twenty-three-story dark brownish granite-faced skyscraper comprised of two towers, with lobby/elevator core between them, forming an L-shaped footprint at the intersection of Woodward and Michigan Avenues. At the ground level are a two-story lobby, corridor and retail spaces. The main floor's public spaces are finished in white marble and brownish granite. The building's exterior is faced primarily in long floor-to-ceiling windows, framed by granite-veneered precast window units, except for the upper four stories, which display shorter vertical window units. Tall windows of the first two stories light the retail spaces and former banking room in the southern half of the building. The tower facades each displays a three-part form, the two-story base with its tall windows, the tower shaft's next nineteen stories with its floor-to-ceiling windows, and a top or attic with four tiers of short panels with windows. The First Federal Building stands on a trapezoid-shaped lot at the acute-angle intersection of Michigan and Woodward Avenues. The building is sited standing at right angles to Woodward. The Woodward Avenue façade of its southeast tower is sited to line up with other large buildings to the north forming a clearly defined street wall along the avenue's west side. The total square footage of the building is 381,875 square feet.

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## Narrative Description

The First Federal Building stands at the northwest corner of two key Detroit streets, Woodward and Michigan Avenue. Woodward runs north-northwest to south-southeast, Michigan west, and the streets meet at an approximately sixty-degree angle. The L-footprint building stands with its slightly longer façade, the inside of the L's upright, facing the angling Michigan, and the shorter base of the L facing Woodward, the building components fronting on Woodward ranged parallel with it. Two more or less triangular plazas front the building on the Michigan side, a larger one in the angle of the L toward the west and small one at the street intersection in front (south) of the end of the L's foot.

The building's surrounding plaza and sidewalks are surfaced with square pavers of the same brownish granite on both street sides. Low matching granite slabs around the building's base, set at a forty-five-degree angle to the pavement, form a transition between the pavement and the base of the building's window walls. The Michigan Avenue side of the property contains a low, long brown granite rectangular planter which runs east-west along the façade. Currently there are two trees in the planter. Southeast of the planter, to the west of the entrance door, stand two flag poles.

The building is comprised of two rectangular twenty-three-story towers, one at the west at the head of the L, the other at the southeast, the end of the foot. The southeast tower has its long axis parallel with Woodward, the west one its long axis fronting on Michigan. A third nearly rectangular section, rising slightly above the office towers, forms the angle of the L, with one tower to the west and one to the south. This third section contains the main lobby, elevators and their lobby, staircases, and bathrooms on each floor. The building has three primary entrances, two facing Michigan, one at the west end and another off the larger plaza that enters the lobby area between the two towers, and a third off Woodward just north of the tower fronting on Woodward and leading into the lobby's other end. All of the entrances are set back from the adjoining building facades. The central entrance way and the connecting bridge between the two towers is faced with large plate glass windows in a dark brown stainless steel grid pattern. The grid is comprised of three vertical glass panes.

The narrow vertical wall strips rising the full height of the building above the recessed Michigan and Woodward entrances are faced in plate glass panels. To the right or north of the Woodward entrance's recessed window wall, the Woodward façade of the elevator/staircase block projects forward and is a blank wall faced in rectangular granite slab-panels in a rectangular grid pattern. At the base of this wall is a date stone inscribed with the date of the building's dedication: June 6, 1964.

A two-story extension of the lobby containing one of the entrances stands at the building's west end. It is faced in steel-framed glass panels. This western extension adjoins the First Independence Bank Building, which fills the rest of the Michigan Avenue frontage in this block west to Griswold Street. The First Independence Bank Building is a three-story bank structure, a 1915 building redesigned and renovated in 1964-65 for Manufacturers' National Bank. First Federal's north, mid-block façade, hiding extra storage space, is faced in brown granite panels through the sixth floor.

The granite used in the exterior facing panels and granite veneer for the precast window units was quarried and finished in northern Minnesota. The granite is a dark brown hue flecked with various shades of pink.

In the interior, the basement area extends out to the property lines along Woodward and Michigan Avenue beneath the plaza areas and contains a bank vault, kitchen, dining rooms and safe deposit box rooms. On the main floor, the Michigan and Woodward entrances both lead into a broad linear corridor extending through the building at a right angle to the Woodward façade. At the Woodward end the

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corridor fronts a staircase and an island of back-to-back elevator banks on the north and the former First Federal banking room, in the base of the southeast tower, on the south. In the west tower's single-story tall ground story the corridor subdivides rental commercial space to the north and south. Only the west tower contains a second story, the former banking room and lobby fronting it in the southeast tower rising nearly a full two stories. The third through twenty-first floors fill the footprint formed by the towers and lobby/elevator block. The building's twenty-second and twenty-third floors house air handling, elevator equipment, and storage rooms and other service functions.

The lobby and corridor features a white marble tile floor and brownish granite walls. The former main banking room retains its white marble-clad piers separating the tall windows and the original flat ceiling displaying a repeating pattern of small x-pattern pendentives.

In 2005-6 a twelve-story, 750-space parking garage (not included in the nomination) was constructed adjoining the building on Woodward Avenue to the north. At each of the first twelve floors of the First Federal building, there is a door connecting the parking structure to the office building at the northeast corner of the building. The parking structure takes up the remainder of the entire city block from the First Federal Building to State Street to the north and from Woodward on the east to the alley between the property line of Griswold and Woodward at the west. The parking structure contains retail on the first level, and it has the auto entrance/exit on the State Street side of the building.

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Community Planning & Development

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1963-1965

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1965

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Smith, Hinchman & Grylls Associates

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

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The First Federal Building meets National Register of Historic Places criterion "A" under Community Planning & Development as one of the major buildings in a downtown building boom that followed in the wake of the massive public investment in the development of a new Civic Center complex in the heart of Detroit's downtown in the 1950s. Along with First Federal, this small group of late 1950s-early 1960s buildings, including the National Bank of Detroit (Chase Bank) Building, Michigan Consolidated Gas Company Building (One Woodward Avenue), and 211 West Fort Street Building, brought about a major transformation in the downtown skyline from the last major development in the late 1920s. The First Federal Building meets National Register criterion "C" under Architecture as a prime example of Modernist, tall office building design in Detroit's downtown, notable for its planning with open plaza space around it and for its use of a highly distinctive material, dark brownish granite from Minnesota, as its exterior cladding material in contrast to the other new downtown office towers, which used more typical light-colored concrete aggregate panels, marble or enameled aluminum panels. The building is also significant in architectural terms as a major 1960s project of the old and leading Detroit architectural firm of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls (SH&G). Construction began in 1963, a formal dedication was held in June, 1964, and the building was fully completed and opened to the public in 1965.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Site of the New Building**

Construction of the First Federal Building required the demolition of two of the city's old landmarks, the Majestic Building and Old City Hall. The First Federal Building would occupy the site of the fourteen-story Majestic Building, one of Detroit's early skyscrapers. The Majestic Building was designed by renowned Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham's firm, D. H. Burnham & Co. Architects, in 1896. Its location at the Michigan Avenue and Woodward Avenue corner was a busy one across from Old City Hall and the Campus Martius public square, Detroit's historic city center. By 1960 the Majestic was in decline, with maintenance neglected, and the Detroit newspapers were reporting on its impending closure. The Majestic Building closed on July 14, 1961, and the building was demolished during the fall of 1961. Also demolished was the three-story Fintex Building located on the Michigan Avenue side of the structure. The Majestic Building stood in the heart of downtown Detroit for sixty-five years.<sup>1</sup>

Just south of the Majestic Building was the location of another downtown Detroit landmark, Old City Hall. Old City Hall was constructed in 1871 to house the Detroit and Wayne County governments and the related courtrooms. Designed by architect James Anderson, the Old City Hall building faced Campus Martius, a wide public space at the heart of downtown Detroit, named in Judge Augustus Woodward's 1805 plan for the city. City and county offices moved from the Old City Hall into the new City-County Building (now Coleman A. Young Municipal Center) in the Civic Center in the late 1950s, leaving the Old City Hall unused. Demolition of the building was approved by City Council in December 1960, but ongoing opposition to demolition from members of the public and preservation groups culminated in a legal battle. Demolition of the building, with salvaging of some features, such as sculptures from the tower, began in August, 1961. The site became the location of an underground parking garage for the new First Federal Building to be constructed the next year.<sup>2</sup> Several years later, Kennedy Square, a public plaza with fountain, was constructed on the site, over the underground parking structure. According news reports in 1960, the officials of the First Federal Savings and Loan Bank, early in the planning stage of their new building, had indicated that the size of their building would depend on the amount of available parking space.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the demolition of Old City Hall and the Majestic Building paved the way for the construction of the First Federal Building.

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<sup>1</sup> Austin, Dan, "Forgotten Landmarks of Detroit," History Press, Charleston, SC, 2012, pg. 101-121.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pg. 11-41.

<sup>3</sup> Casey, Jack, "Loop Skyscraper Plans Revealed," *Detroit Free Press*, October 21, 1961.

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It was the First Federal Building project that instigated the demolition of the Majestic Building and Old City Hall, and the project was championed by then Detroit Mayor Louis Miriani. First Federal Savings & Loan first announced plans to build on the Majestic Building site in 1960, but left the size of the building indefinite depending on whether the City would build an underground garage at the site of Old City Hall.<sup>4</sup> On October 20, 1961, First Federal officials set forth more details of their plan for building a new modern skyscraper downtown at an event at Mayor Miriani's office. It would be the first general office building with rental space to go up in downtown Detroit since the 1930s. The plans called for a building costing \$10 million.<sup>5</sup> It was reported that the architectural firm, Smith, Hinchman and Grylls Associates, Inc., had created thirty-five different miniature models, each placed on a scale model of downtown Detroit, to gauge which presented the best visual impact in relationship to nearby buildings. The lead designer for the First Federal Building at SH&G was Sigmund F. Blum.<sup>6</sup> Blum stated that the building was being designed to have the "dignity and reserve which is called for in this type of structure, the home of a large financial institution."<sup>7</sup> The bank's president, Hans Gehrke Jr., stated that the building was designed with three principal objectives, "beauty and function of the building, its relation to the modern environment of the new central core of the city and dramatic use of the site, which is the most dominant location in the heart of downtown Detroit."<sup>8</sup>

### First Federal Savings & Loan

The First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Detroit was founded in 1934 by Walter Gehrke and a group of associates. In the midst of widespread home foreclosures during the Great Depression, the bank founders secured a charter from the then new Federal Home Loan Bank. The bank's charter set forth the following purposes: "to promote thrift by providing a convenient and safe method for people to save and invest money, and to provide for the sound and economical financing of homes."<sup>9</sup> The bank's first location was in one of the downtown office buildings in the Financial District, but in 1942 First Federal moved to the former First State Bank Building at 751 Griswold Street (at Lafayette Street). The 751 Griswold building was home to First Federal from 1942 until the company moved into the new building nearby in 1965.

First Federal was the first bank to be chartered as a federal savings and loan association in Detroit. Many other "firsts" followed. First Federal was among the first to make FHA-insured mortgages, and it was the first to make loans in large volume to veterans under the Veterans Administration program. First Federal was the first savings association in Michigan to establish branch offices for the convenience of customers, who, at its peak in 1965, numbered over 250,000. In that year it had helped some 76,000 families towards home ownership with more than \$855,000,000 in mortgage loans, while paying over \$113,000,000 in earnings to its savings customers. In 1965 First Federal had directors, officers and staff of over 400, and had established retirement and pension plans for employees. At that time there were twenty-one branches of First Federal banks in the metro Detroit area. It was one of the first banks in Detroit install electronic bookkeeping and computing systems.

The location of the First Federal Savings and Loan headquarters at Michigan and Woodward Avenues is significant in that it is on Woodward Avenue, Detroit's main street, and at the edge of downtown Detroit's Financial District. Detroit's Financial District is a National Register of Historic Places listed district (2009) that encompassed leading banking and financial institution headquarters and office buildings concentrated in this one section of the downtown. The district boundary runs north to Lafayette Boulevard and Griswold Street, just south of the nominated First Federal Building location. The district area has housed financial institutions and prime office space since the 1850s and 60s and down to the

<sup>4</sup> Casey, *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Austin, *Ibid.*, pg. 116.

<sup>6</sup> Casey, *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *The First Federal Building: Detroit's New Landmark at Woodward and Michigan*, October 12, 1965.

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present and the buildings in the district have housed leading banks and financial institutions that made Detroit Michigan's financial center. The First Federal Savings and Loan Association had its headquarters office located in the district area from its establishment in 1934.

In 1960, when the bank was considering new headquarters locations, they undoubtedly considered suburban Detroit locations such as Southfield, Dearborn or Warren along with a new location in the Financial District area. The decision of the First Federal Savings to stay in the downtown Financial District was a significant commitment to the downtown at a time when many companies and retailers were moving out to suburban locations. At least in part as a result of First Federal's commitment in building its new headquarters, other large bank and office buildings followed First Federal: the Detroit Bank & Trust Building, 211 West Fort Street (1963-64); Detroit Federal Savings & Loan Association Building, 501 Woodward (1971); and Manufacturers National Bank Building, 411 West Lafayette (1971).

The dark brown granite used on the First Federal exterior was chosen after prolonged research by the architects. They found a source to make granite an economically feasible material by developing the granite-veneered precast window units. The dark color of the granite was said to give the impression of stability and permanency, and had the additional advantage of lowered maintenance costs.<sup>10</sup> The dark color also was in contrast to the other new buildings in the downtown area nearby clad in light materials such as the National Bank of Detroit Building (NBD) at 611 Woodward Avenue and Fort Street (1959). The NBD Building was clad in a checkerboard curtain wall pattern of white Georgia Cherokee marble panels alternating with rectangles containing windows and brown porcelain enameled steel panels. Two buildings under construction at that time were also clad in light colored materials – the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company Building at One Woodward and West Jefferson Avenues (1960-62) was clad in white pre-cast concrete aggregate panels and the Detroit Bank & Trust Co. Building at 211 West Fort Street and Washington Boulevard (1963-64) was clad in white pre-cast concrete.

### **Detroit's Mid-century Modern Development**

During the 1950s the new Civic Center complex, located at the key Woodward-Jefferson Avenue intersection at the edge of the Financial District, transformed this area, formerly of older low-rise buildings, in the heart of the downtown. Planned as a downtown revitalization project beginning in the 1940s, the Civic Center complex ultimately included the Veterans Memorial Building (1951), the City-County Building (1955), Henry and Edsel Ford Auditorium (1955) and Cobo Arena and Convention Center (1960). This immense public investment in the downtown's heart brought about a downtown office tower building boom beginning in the later 1950s. Prior to this, the downtown's last office building boom took place in the 1920s. The first of these new bank/office buildings, the National Bank of Detroit Building (NBD) at 611 Woodward Avenue and Fort Street, was constructed in 1959. This was the new bank headquarters for NBD, and its spare glass curtain wall of the lobby and generous setback from the street created a new modernist standard for Campus Martius. The Michigan Consolidated Gas Company Building at One Woodward and West Jefferson Avenues (1961-63), clad in white pre-cast concrete panels, and the Detroit Bank & Trust Co. Building at 211 West Fort Street and Washington Boulevard (1963-64) followed, along with the First Federal Building. A final large-scale Financial District bank/office tower, the Manufacturers National Bank tower, 411 W. Lafayette, was built in 1971. It is clad in concrete and dark glass panels but also employs polished black granite. After 1971 there was a lull in bank building construction in downtown Detroit as many firms relocated to the suburbs until 1992-93 when Comerica built the One Detroit Center (later called Comerica) Tower in 1992-93.

### **First Federal Building's Construction and Early History of Use**

The groundbreaking ceremony for the First Federal Building was held with Walter Gerhke, the board chairman, and Hans Gerhke Jr., First Federal's president, the Detroit City Council president, the architect and contractors on September 13, 1962. On March 30, 1963, a "start of construction" ceremony was held at the site when the Gehrkes turned down gold-painted nuts to secure an 8,000-pound beam. The R. C. Mahon Co. of Detroit erected the steel framework. In May 1963, it was announced that the Chicago firm

<sup>10</sup> Ferry, Hawkins W., *The Buildings of Detroit*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 1968, pg. 368.

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of George A. Fuller Co. would serve as the general contractor for the project. The Fuller Company had recently built the United Nations headquarters in New York, and it was one of the largest construction companies in the nation. Other contractors included the Spitzley Corp. for plumbing, Harrington & Reid Heating & Plumbing Co. for heating (both from Detroit), and Houghton Elevator Co. of Toledo, Ohio, for the elevators.

On October 29, 1963, a "topping out" ceremony was held when the top piece of steel went aloft on the 23<sup>rd</sup> story of the building. Speeches were given, and an American flag was raised at the top of the structure.<sup>11</sup> An article on the ceremony noted that "Deliveries [of steel] by Detroit's century-old Turner Cartage & Storage Co. were timed with precision through heavy traffic at the busy downtown intersection."<sup>12</sup> The building was dedicated on June 6, 1964, and that date is inscribed in granite at the base on the Woodward façade. First Federal Bank moved into their new towers and opened for business on August 2, 1965.<sup>13</sup> Initial tenants included the Equitable Life Insurance Agency, Hartford Insurance, Grey Advertising and the Michigan Court of Appeals.

The First Federal Building included spaces designated for the First Federal Savings offices in the lobby level of the eastern tower and seven of the first eight floors of the building. The basement level included the bank vault, kitchen, the large "Colonnade" restaurant and lounge and safe deposit box rooms. The main banking room was located on the ground story in the eastern tower. From the first-floor main hallway (originally called the arcade) two escalators, aligned consecutively, were installed to access the lower level.

The second floor was initially a tenant space – not used by First Federal. The third floor housed the building management office and had another tenant area. The fourth floor held the bank's bookkeeping, auditing and purchasing departments. The fifth floor held the home improvement loan department, controller, computer rooms and collection department. A description of the "new electronic data processing system" stated that it was the nerve center for record keeping and reporting throughout First Federal's network of offices. The installation of the computer system was in separate air conditioned and humidified rooms where earnings statements could be mailed to savings customers at the rate of 18,000 per hour.

The sixth floor housed the First Federal mortgage loan department, applications, processing, closing and servicing. The seventh floor held the employee cafeteria, auditorium, personnel office, library and public relations department. The eighth floor held the First Federal Bank's executive offices, and board of directors' room. The upper floors (nine through twenty-one) housed various tenants. Initial tenants included the Equitable Life Insurance Agency, Hartford Insurance, Grey Advertising and the Michigan Court of Appeals.

In 1966 the First Federal Building was given the Architectural Award of Merit by the American Institute of Steel Construction. The award included the general contractors for the building, the George A. Fuller Company of Chicago and the Walter L. Couse Company of Detroit. In 1968 the building won the National Award of Honor from the American Institute of Architects. This award is one of the most prestigious in the architectural field. The AIA jury saw this design as a "good use of a difficult site."<sup>14</sup>

### Smith, Hinchman & Grylls

The First Federal Building is important as a major 1960s project of the old and distinguished Detroit architectural firm Smith Hinchman & Grylls. SH&Gs' origins date back to the firm established in 1853 by Sheldon Smith in Sandusky, Ohio. After just two years, he moved on to the larger town of Detroit and

<sup>11</sup> "Their Work Was Done," *Detroit Free Press*, October 30, 1963, pg. 8 D.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> "From This to This in 4 Years," *Detroit Free Press*, August 2, 1965.

<sup>14</sup> Gallagher, John, and Eric J. Hill, *AIA Detroit: The American Institute of Architects Guide to Detroit Architecture*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 2003, pg. 98.

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began his practice there. Sheldon Smith's son Mortimer followed him into the profession, and he played an important role in the post-Civil War expansion of Detroit. Mortimer's son Fred (1862-1941) started a new organization when he partnered with a successful engineering firm in 1907 to create Smith, Hinchman & Grylls. The new organization was formed in time to play a significant role in the rebuilding of Detroit during the automobile industry's expansion of the 1920s. During those years, SH&G created imposing homes throughout residential areas like Indian Village and the Grosse Pointes, industrial buildings for automotive factories and a major part of Detroit's skyline came from the SH&G drawing boards. Icons such as the Guardian Building, the Penobscot Building and the Buhl Building were all from the firm. The Depression years were a struggle, but SH&G continued, and grew through the World War II years and beyond.

In the mid-1940s the firm turned to contemporary designs, under the direction of newly hired chief designer, Minoru Yamasaki. Significant among its work at that time was the annex to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago Detroit branch (1951-53). The Federal Reserve branch annex was Detroit's first curtain-wall structure, at eight stories tall. Commissions for hospitals, medical and dental schools, and airports were the main projects of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Also significant was the construction of the building at One Woodward for the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company (1961-63) in association with Minoru Yamasaki after he had established his own firm. This thirty-two-story office tower changed the skyline of downtown Detroit and was unique in Detroit at the time in the use of precast concrete panels. With the development of the First Federal Building at about the same time, SH&G was an established modernist skyscraper specialist. The First Federal Building represents one of the key commissions received in the 1960s. SH&G's president, Robert F. Hastings, attended the groundbreaking ceremonies and other dedication events, signifying the high importance of this project to the firm. The book *Smith, Hinchman & Grylls: 125 Years of Architecture and Engineering, 1853-1978* prominently describes the project. The firm continues today as the Smith Group, and views itself as the oldest continuously operating architectural firm in the United States.

Sigmund F. Blum was a renowned architect and designer who joined SH&G when he was in his early thirties in 1959. Blum came to Detroit from the firm of Kelly & Gruzen in New York City. Blum was eventually made Vice President and head of the SH&G design department at the time of the First Federal Building's design. He had created buildings in the United States and abroad, but the First Federal Building was his first contribution to Detroit, since he had joined the firm in 1959. After leaving SH&G in 1971, he formed his own firm, Blum, Vaporciyan & Mitch.

#### **First Federal Building More Recent History**

First Federal occupied the building until January 1998 when First Federal merged to become part of Charter One Financial, and the parent company put the building on the market. In December of 1998, the building was purchased by a partnership of the Carpenters Pension Trust Fund – Detroit & Vicinity and the Operating Engineers Local 324 Pension Fund for \$6.5 million. As part of the sale, Charter One leased the ground floor bank space, two office floors and the basement. The Michigan Court of Appeals occupied two floors under a lease which ended in 2001 (the court then relocated to Cadillac Place with several other State of Michigan offices). In March 1999 the pension fund partnership announced a \$1.5 million renovation of the building, and a new name for the building, Woodward Plaza. The pension fund partnership sold the building to Sky Development in April 2004.

In 2005-6 a twelve-story parking garage was constructed adjoining the building on Woodward Avenue. The parking structure's construction required the demolition of three buildings on Woodward including a former Sander's store (1037 Woodward), the Freud Building, a 1909 seven-story structure (1051 Woodward) and a former Hughes & Hatcher men's clothing store (1069 Woodward). The parking structure was built at a cost of \$16.4 million and holds 750 cars.

In 2004, an announcement was made that the building would be converted to office space and 144 condominiums by Lorenzo Cavaliere's holding company – 1001 Woodward Office LLC. Cavaliere's company purchased the building and parking structure on a land contract, but a few years later defaulted

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on the purchase, and several loans.<sup>15</sup> In 2008 the building was purchased from the land contract by Greektown businessman Dimitrios "Jim" Papas. He stated he would invest \$3 million in renovating the building to improve the heat, ventilation and air conditioning systems and upgrade the lobby. His plan was to lease the building as office space resulted in the addition of a large tenant for downtown, Galaxe Solutions Inc., picking the building as their home in 2010. The New Jersey-based information technology firm signed a lease for 28,000 square feet.

In 2013 the First Federal Building and parking structure sold again, this time to Dan Gilbert's firm Quicken Loans. Quicken Loans is to lease 65,000 square feet of space in the top portion of the building, bringing its occupancy to 87 percent.<sup>16</sup> Interior rehabilitation work is under way.

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<sup>15</sup> Snell, Robert, "Woodward condo project falters," *Detroit News*, October 16, 2007, pg. 1 A.

<sup>16</sup> Martinez, M., "Dan Gilbert buys 1001 Woodward Avenue building," *Detroit News*, March 19, 2013.

First Federal Building  
Name of Property

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Ankeny, Robert, "Papas pumping millions into Atheneum, 1001 Woodward," Crain's Detroit Business, February 20, 2008.

Austin, Dan, "Forgotten Landmarks of Detroit," History Press, Charleston, SC, 2012.

#### *Detroit News*

"Twin Towers to Rise on Majestic Building Site," October 12, 1961.

"Ground Is Broken for New Skyscraper," September 13, 1962.

"Start First Federal Building," September 14, 1962.

"Beginnings Of A Skyscraper," March 30, 1963.

"General Contract Is Let for 1<sup>st</sup> Federal Building," May 7, 1963.

"First Federal to Have Lounge and Cafeteria," October 16, 1963.

"Finish Steel Work on New Skyscraper," October 29, 1963.

"Bow to 1<sup>st</sup> Federal," August 3, 1965.

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Snell, Robert, "Woodward condo project falters," October 16, 2007, pg. 1 A.

Martinez, M., "Dan Gilbert buys 1001 Woodward Avenue building," March 19, 2013.

#### *Detroit Free Press*

Casey, Jack, "Loop Skyscraper Plans Revealed," October 21, 1961.

Sahs, Harry C., "Build 35, Pick 1."

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"Their Work Was Done," October 30, 1963, pg. 8 D.

"From This to This in 4 Years," August 2, 1965.

Ferry, Hawkins W., *The Buildings of Detroit*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 1968.

First Federal Bldg. Tenants, 11/4/69.

*The First Federal Building: Detroit's New Landmark at Woodward and Michigan*, October 12, 1965.

Gallagher, John, and Eric J. Hill, *AIA Detroit: The American Institute of Architects Guide to Detroit Architecture*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 2003.

Holleman, Thomas J., and James P. Gallagher, *Smith, Hinchman & Grylls: 125 Years of Architecture and Engineering, 1853-1978*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 1978.

News from American Institute of Steel Construction, "First Federal Building Cited For Outstanding Design In Steel."

Savage, Rebecca Binno and Robert Christensen, *Detroit Financial District, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, October, 2009.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than one

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

First Federal Building  
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Or

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: 331300 | Northing: 4688430 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Situated in the City of Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, described as:

Parcel 1: Lots 44 and 45, in section 8 of the Governor and Judges Plan of the City of Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan as recorded in liber 19, page 83 of plats, Wayne County Records, excepting from said Lot 44 that part thereof described as: The northeasterly 1 foot of Lot 44, plan of section 8 in the City of Detroit, Governor and Judges Plan, as recorded in liber 45 on page 543 of Deeds, Wayne County Records, said 1 foot being more described as: Beginning at the northeast corner of said lot 44; thence south 60 degrees 01 minutes 05 seconds west along the northerly line of Lot 44, 1.00 foot; thence south 30 degrees 12 minutes east on a line parallel to the westerly line of Woodward Avenue, 120 feet wide, 83.12 feet; thence north 0 degrees 13 minutes 15 seconds west along the east line of said lot 44, 2.00 feet; thence north 30 degrees 12 minutes west along the westerly line of Woodward Avenue, 120 feet wide, 81.39 feet to the point of beginning, and excepting from said Lot 45 that part thereof described as: A southeasterly part of Lot 45, plan of section 8 to the City of Detroit, Governor and Judges Plan as recorded in liber 34 on page 543 of Deeds; recorded in 1848 being further described in liber 19 on page 83 of Plats, Wayne County Records, said part being described as: Beginning at the southeast corner of said Lot 45, said corner being on the north line of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, and measuring south 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds west 46.46 feet from the intersection of the north line of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, with the extension having a bearing of south 30 degrees 12 minutes east, of the westerly line of that part of Woodward Avenue being 120 feet wide; thence from said southeast corner of Lot 45, north 0 degrees 13 minutes 15 seconds west, 12.80 feet; thence

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south 59 degrees 48 minutes west 25.54 feet; thence north 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds east 22.12 feet along the north line of Michigan Avenue to the point of beginning.

Parcel 2: Lot 46, Section 8, Plat of Governor and Judges Plan of the City of Detroit, recorded in liber 34, page 543 of Deeds, Wayne County Records, also known as Lot 46, Change of Line of an alley in Section No. 8, Governor and Judges Plan of the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan, as recorded in liber 3, page 89 of Plats, Wayne County Records.

Parcel 3: A part of the alley being adjacent to the rear of Lot 44, Plan of Section 8, Governor and Judges Plan in the City of Detroit, as recorded in liber 34 on page 543 of Deeds, recorded in 1848, being described as: Beginning at the angle point in the northerly line of said Lot 44, said point being south 60 degrees 01 minutes 05 seconds west from the northeast corner of said Lot 44, distant 81.92 feet; thence continuing south 60 degrees 01 minute 05 seconds west 7.08 feet; thence south 30 degrees 12 minutes east 4.11 feet; thence north 29 degrees 48 minutes 45 seconds east along the rear line of said Lot 44, 8.17 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel 4: A parcel of the alley adjacent to the rear of Lots 45 and 48, Plan of Section 8, Governor and Judges plan in the City of Detroit, as recorded in liber 34 on page 543 of Deeds, recorded in liber 1848, being described as: Beginning at a point in the rear line of said Lot 45; said point being south 60 degrees 01 minute 05 seconds west along the rear line of said Lots 44 and 45, 18.50 feet; thence continuing south 29 degrees 48 minutes 45 seconds west 11.93 feet to the common corner of said Lots 45 and 46; thence north 62 degrees 01 minute west 7.08 feet along a line common to the rear of said Lot 46 and the adjacent alley; thence north 60 degrees 01 minute 06 seconds east, 14.06 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel 5: That westerly part of that part of Woodward Avenue being wider than 120 feet wide lying North of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, and east of and adjacent to Lots 44 and 45, plan of Section 8 in the City of Detroit, Governor and Judges Plan as recorded in liber 34, on page 543 of Deeds, recorded in 1848, said lots being further described in liber 19 on page 83 of Plats, Wayne County Records, said part being described as: Beginning at a point in the east line of said Lot 45, distant south 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds west 46.46 feet, as measured along the north line of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, and north 0 degrees 13 minutes 15 seconds west 12.80 feet as measured along said east line of Lot 45, from the intersection of the north line of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, with the extension, having a bearing of south 30 degrees 12 minutes east of the westerly line of that part of Woodward Avenue being 120 feet wide; thence continuing north 0 degrees 13 minutes 15 seconds west along the east line of said Lots 45 and 44, 65.66 feet; thence south 30 degrees 12 minutes east along a line parallel and one foot (1.00 ) westerly of the extension of the westerly line of that part to Woodward Avenue being 120 feet wide, 56.88 feet; thence south 59 degrees 48 minutes west at right angles, 32.81 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel 6: A part of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, lying south of and adjacent to the southerly line of Lot 45, plan of Section 8 in the City of Detroit, Governor and Judges Plan as recorded in liber 34 on page 543 of Deeds, recorded in 1848, said lot being further described in liber 19 on page 83 of Plats, Wayne County Records, said part being described as:

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Beginning at a point in the north line of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, said point being south 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds west 22.12 feet from the southeast corner of said Lot 45; thence south 59 degrees 48 minutes west 2.00 feet; thence north 30 degrees 12 minutes west 1.16 feet; thence north 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds east along the north line of Michigan Avenue, 2.31 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel 7: A part of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, lying south of and adjacent to the southerly line of Lot 45, Plan of Section 8 in the City of Detroit, Governor and Judges Plan as recorded in liber 34 on page 543 of Deeds, recorded in 1848, said lot being further described in liber 19 on page 83 of Plats, Wayne County Records, said part being described as: Beginning at a point in the north line of Michigan Avenue 100 feet wide, said point being south 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds west 24.43 feet from the southeast corner of said Lot 45; thence south 30 degrees 12 minutes east 1.16 feet; thence south 59 degrees 48 minutes west 1.31 feet; thence north 75 degrees 12 minutes west 1.41 feet; thence north 30 degrees 12 minutes west 1.50 feet; thence north 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds east along the north line of Michigan Avenue, 2.67 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel 8: A part of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, lying south of and adjacent to the southerly line of Lot 46, Plan of Section 8 in the City of Detroit, Governor and Judges Plan, as recorded in liber 34 on page 543 of Deeds, recorded in 1848, said part being described as: Beginning at a point in the north line of Michigan Avenue, 100 feet wide, said point being north 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds east 29.42 feet from the southwest corner of said Lot 46; thence south 30 degrees 12 minutes east 1.59 feet; thence south 75 degrees 12 minutes east 1.41 feet; thence north 59 degrees 48 minutes east 3.47 feet; thence south 89 degrees 52 minutes 15 seconds west along the north line of Michigan Avenue 5.17 feet to the point of beginning.

Ward 02, Tax Item No. 1892  
Ward 24, Tax Item No. 0207

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Includes the entire property on which the building stands.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

First Federal Building  
Name of Property

Wayne, Michigan  
County and State

name/title: Rebecca Binno Savage  
organization: Kraemer Design Group  
street & number: 1420 Broadway  
city or town: Detroit state: MI zip code: 48226  
e-mail rebecca.savage@thekraemeredge.com  
telephone: (313) 965-3399  
date: September, 2013

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

First Federal Building  
Name of Property

Wayne, Michigan  
County and State

### Photo Log

Name of Property: First Federal Building

City or Vicinity: Detroit

County: Wayne

State: MI

Photographer: Rebecca Binno Savage

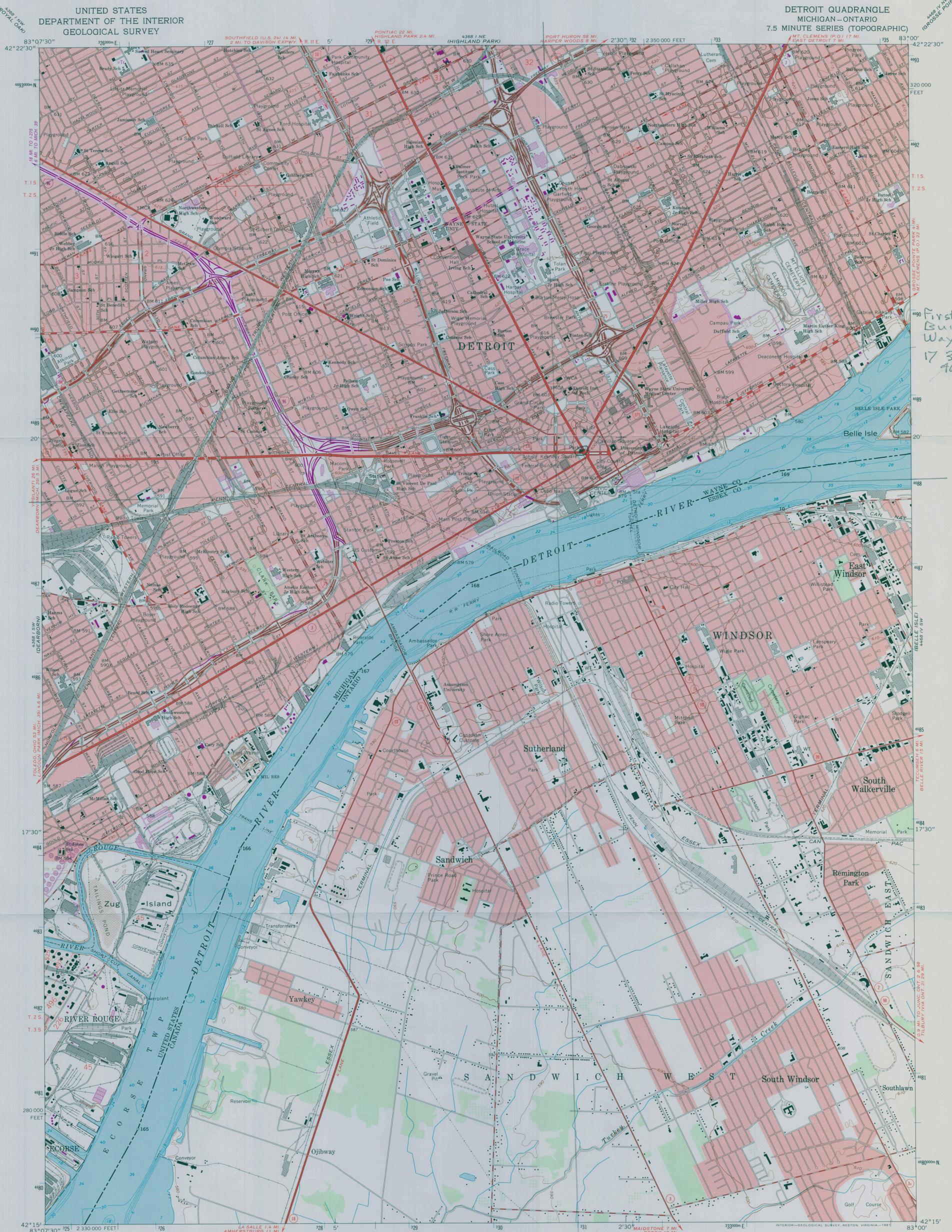
Date Photographed: March 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 9: West-southwest and south-southeast facades facing Michigan Avenue
- 2 of 9: West-northwest and west-southwest façades, Michigan Avenue on right
- 3 of 9: East-northeast façade facing Woodward Avenue
- 4 of 9: Michigan Avenue entrance, looking north
- 5 of 9: Woodward Avenue entrance, looking southwest
- 6 of 9: Main floor former banking room, looking west-southwest
- 7 of 9: First-floor lobby, looking east-northeast toward Woodward Avenue
- 8 of 9: First-floor lobby, looking west-southwest
- 9 of 9: Basement escalator

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



First Federal Building  
Wayne Co. MI  
17 331300  
4688430

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with State of Michigan agencies  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, U. S. Lake Survey, and City of Detroit  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
Topography by plane table surveys 1938. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966-67. Field checked 1968  
Canadian portion copied in part from Windsor quadrangle (1:25 000) 1960, Army Survey Establishment, R. C. E.  
Selected hydrographic data compiled from U. S. Lake Survey Charts 41 and 412 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue  
Tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

UTM GRID AND 1980 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 7 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

SCALE 1:24 000  
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET  
1 KILOMETER  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET IN THE UNITED STATES AND 10 FEET IN CANADA  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS RIVER SURFACE AT FOLLOWING STAGES: LAKE ST. CLAIR-571.7 AND LAKE ERIE-568.6  
THE U. S. PORTION OF THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DIVISION  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973 and 1978. Map edited 1980. This information not field checked. Canadian portion not revised

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface  
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface  
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface  
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather  
Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route  
DETROIT, MICH.—ONT.  
N4215—W8300/7.5  
1968  
PHOTOREVISED 1973 AND 1980  
DMA 4368 1 SE—SERIES V862







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