

Existing Historic Designation

The following properties from the survey time period and area are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

Areas of Significance	Date	NR Number	Name	Address	City
Architecture	1948	05000755	Fairborn Theatre	34 S. Broad St.	Fairborn
Art	1965	91001582	Holy Cross Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church	1924 Leo St.	Dayton
Entertainment/ Recreation Performing Arts	1942	05000756	Deeds Carillon	100 Carillon Rd.	Dayton
Science	1943	06000480	Unit III, Dayton Project	1601 W. First St.	Dayton

Proposed Historic Designation

Summary of Findings

The Dayton metropolitan area has a wealth of mid-20th-century residential and non-residential resources, representing a broad cross-section of building types and architectural styles common to the era. Many individual properties and some potential historic districts have been identified as likely eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. As with any historic resource, when determining National Register eligibility for mid-20th-century properties, historic integrity is an important consideration. See separate discussion in the next sections for general observations related to historic integrity in the project area, as well as a list of potentially eligible properties.

Most of the identified properties would be National Register eligible under Criterion C, illustrating a particular building type, architectural style, work of an architect, or construction method. Perhaps more than any other era, the post-WWII decades saw a huge increase of experimentation with new construction materials and methods. The innovative use of these materials and methods yielded expressive architectural forms such as canopies, wing walls, curtain walls, and other prominent features. Innovation in materials is a more important consideration during the mid-20th century than in earlier generations of architecture.

Due to the nature of the Ohio Modern- Dayton Survey, fewer individual properties were noted that would qualify under National Register Criteria A, B, or D. Examples of properties that might qualify under Criterion A are the Hoover Skate Arena, which exemplifies the broad pattern of Dayton's African-American commerce and recreation, and the Dixie Drive-in, which exemplifies the broad pattern of transportation-related roadside commerce and entertainment along the Dixie Highway. Examples of resources that might qualify under Criterion B (pending further research) are the Loritts-Neilson Funeral Home, for its association with a local African-American community leader, and early sections of Huber Heights, for the community's association with Charles H. Huber and his influence on large-scale post-WWII residential development in the Dayton metro area. No properties were identified that would qualify under Criterion D.

With the exception of an occasional architect-designed house or one with specific historic associations, residences would usually only be eligible as part of historic districts. There are several districts that have National Register listing potential for their architectural merit. There are also a few residential districts that may be eligible for their association with broad patterns of events, specifically government-sponsored WWII housing.

Non-residential properties may be eligible as individual buildings or as historic districts. Several office buildings, road-related properties, banks, schools, and churches might be eligible as representatives of particular building types. Many of these buildings also illustrate a particular architectural style. The McCook Field Industrial Park in Dayton and the Governor's Hill Office Park in Kettering are two examples of clusters of a similar building type that have both architectural merit and an interesting development history. Other possibilities for small historic districts include school campuses, church complexes, and governmental groupings.

Historic Integrity

Because the Ohio Modern - Dayton Survey was a representative sampling of properties spread over several communities rather than a comprehensive survey, properties that lacked historic integrity were largely excluded. The survey methodology was selective at the outset, with the most intact properties from the 1940-1970 era chosen for documentation. This approach was particularly true for nonresidential properties. Residential properties were chosen for their ability to represent different house types, with historic integrity a secondary consideration.

The seven defined qualities of historic integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association) were evaluated for individual properties as well as for historic districts. Observations from the field work and windshield survey of nearly all of the metropolitan area revealed an overall difference between residential and non-residential properties with respect to historic integrity. Lack of proper maintenance and underutilization of a property can contribute to the decline of historic integrity, and this pattern was noticed more often in commercial properties. On the other hand, residential properties collectively had less integrity than non-residential.

Residential

Although parts of neighborhoods and individual houses maintained integrity, there was an overall lack of historic integrity in the residential sector. The removal of original windows was the most common alteration noted among residential properties. As with housing stock from earlier eras, mid-20th-century houses have been susceptible to subsequent alterations, such as the installation of vinyl siding. The narrower replacement vinyl siding presents a busier appearance than the wider wood clapboard or aluminum siding historically found on Ranch and Split-Level houses. The wider siding better emphasizes the horizontal nature that was intended in the original designs. Conversion of the attached garage into another room also alters the appearance of the façade and was a frequently observed, but less common, alteration. The fenestration of garage conversions often does not match that of the original house, and the loss

of the attached garage changes one of the character-defining features of mid-20th-century housing.

Housing stock during the years 1940-1970 had less ornamentation than housing of earlier decades; therefore even a small alteration affects the overall historic integrity. The replacement of original windows on a Ranch or Split-Level house makes a big difference to the house's character, especially if it does not have any other character-defining features. For example, if a Craftsman house loses its original windows or an Italianate house loses its historic brackets, there are still several other characteristics that help to define the style. Retention of original materials and components is critically important with respect to integrity for mid-20th-century housing.

Housing of the mid-20th century is often maligned as being unattractive, uninspired, uninteresting or lacking in character. In comparison to the housing of the early 20th century or the late 19th century, the post-WWII era of residential properties is certainly more simplistic with regards to aesthetics. However, houses of the mid-20th-century era, upon closer examination, do have their own set of design characteristics. For example, Ranch houses alone have many different variables with respect to plan, layout, and details than originally imagined. Mid-20th-century housing is more appealing and resonates when intact, but when altered reads differently.

Two nearly identical houses in the Northern Hills neighborhood, Dayton, illustrate the difference that replacement windows can have on the appearance of a basic Ranch house. The house at 2315 Hickorydale Drive retains its paired horizontal-slider picture window and wood two-over-two windows, but the house at 2446 Marchmont Drive has had vinyl replacement windows installed.



2315 Hickorydale Dr., Dayton (1956)
MOT-05367-39



2446 Marchmont Dr., Dayton (1956)
MOT-05368-39

The vinyl windows along with the vinyl-clad framing on 2446 Marchmont are out of proportion compared to the original design and reduce its clean simplicity. The original windows of 2315 Hickorydale reinforce the intentional horizontality of the house.

Nonresidential

Throughout the Dayton metro area, non-residential properties were found to have a higher level of historic integrity overall than residential properties. An additional factor that affected historic integrity that was observed among nonresidential properties was location. In particular, commercial buildings located in areas that have experienced economic decline suffered from a lack of maintenance and higher vacancy rates. This unfortunate cycle ultimately can lead to loss of historic integrity, as the property deteriorates and historic fabric is replaced rather than repaired. Vacancy and property neglect were especially noticeable along the Salem Avenue corridor in Dayton and Trotwood. For example, medical arts buildings on Salem Avenue suffered a greater rate of vacancy and deferred maintenance than the same building type located in Kettering.

Because the primary characteristic of much of the mid-20th-century built environment is its simplicity of line, there is more subtle and often less ornament used than in earlier architectural styles. Resources from this period have less architectural fabric to lose, so retention of original materials is essential for maintaining integrity of Modernist era architecture. The mid-20th century was an era of great experimentation with new construction materials, which was especially evident on nonresidential buildings. The presence of the often innovative historic materials is important in conveying the original essence of the property's design. Lava rock, porcelain-enameled panels, exposed aggregate finish, simulated masonry, ceramic tile, various metals, many different glazing and curtainwall systems, and decorative concrete block were all popular construction materials for non-residential buildings. These materials should remain intact, unpainted, and uncovered, in order to maintain historic integrity.

Two examples of commercial buildings that have lost their historic integrity and would not qualify for National Register listing are the Capri Lanes and the Hasty Tasty Drive-in. Coincidentally, both enterprises do retain their historic roadside signs. The Capri Lanes is only moderately intact. The masonry has been painted, and part of the entrance canopy has been enclosed with modern materials. Two horizontal windows on the front façade have been covered. The Hasty Tasty Drive-in has been dramatically altered with additions, a new roof configuration, and the replacement of storefront windows. As a result, it now has a late 20th-century appearance.



Capri Lanes (1959)
2727 S. Dixie Hwy., Kettering
MOT-05497-06



Hasty Tasty Drive-in (1952)
3509 Linden Ave., Dayton
MOT-05184-61

Potential National Register Eligible Properties

Although every effort has been made to include all likely eligible properties identified during the Ohio Modern-Dayton Survey, the following list is not exhaustive. Further research would probably yield additional historic resources that are eligible for designation. Future access to interior spaces could reveal other eligible properties. Conversely, access to interior spaces may prove that a building that has been suggested for individual listing does not maintain sufficient integrity for nomination to the National Register.

Representative individual properties were noted for Oakwood. The entire community, however, retains a great deal of historic integrity, and a majority of the village might be eligible for National Register listing for architectural significance. Neighborhoods in the eastern portion of the village represent early 20th century through mid-1940s development. The western portion of the village predominantly represents post-WWII residential development. In addition to the Kettering properties in the table below, the neighborhoods of West Kettering had such a quantity of potentially eligible mid-century modern resources with high integrity that comprehensive neighborhood-wide surveys and designation should be explored.

List of Potential National Register Eligible Properties

	Associated OHI Number	Property	Location	Construction Date	Architect/Developer	Criteria			Area of Significance
						A	B	C	
Individual Residential	GRE-01209-10	Rockafeld House - WSU President's House	Fairborn	1969	E.A. Glendenning			x	Architecture
	MOT-02577-24	Joseph Haverstick House	Oakwood	1949	J.N. Haverstick and Sons		x		Community Planning, Architecture
	MOT-05159-57	Dayton Towers	Dayton	1963		x		x	Community Planning, Architecture
	MOT-05176-62	AFL-CIO - The Lakewoods Apartments	Dayton	1966	Paul Deneau			x	Architecture
Individual Non-Residential	GRE-01202-10	Wright Elementary	Fairborn	1966-1967	Richard Thomas	x		x	Education, Architecture
	GRE-01208-10	Skyborn Drive-in Theatre	Fairborn	1950		x			Recreation
	MOT-05153-15	Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library	Dayton	1962	Pretzinger & Pretzinger	x		x	Education, Architecture
	MOT-05154-15	Grant-Deneau Tower	Dayton	1969	Paul Deneau	x		x	Commerce, Architecture
	MOT-05157-64	University of Dayton Arena	Dayton	1969	Pretzinger & Pretzinger	x		x	Recreation, Architecture
	MOT-05158-60	Roesch Library (University of Dayton)	Dayton	1969	Pretzinger & Pretzinger	x		x	Education, Architecture
	MOT-05160-57	United States Post Office	Dayton	1970	Samborn, Stekette, Otis & Evans / Dunker & Schioler			x	Architecture
	MOT-05174-61	Memorial Presbyterian Church	Dayton	1948				x	Architecture

	<i>Associated OHI Number</i>	<i>Property</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Construction Date</i>	<i>Architect/Developer</i>	<i>Criteria</i>			<i>Area of Significance</i>
						A	B	C	
<i>Individual Non-Residential</i>	MOT-05175-63	Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Church	Dayton	1966	Robert Louis Holtmeier			x	Architecture
	MOT-05205-60	Shelton's Prescriptions	Dayton	1962		x		x	Commerce, Architecture
	MOT-05216-24	State Fidelity Building	Oakwood	1963		x		x	Commerce, Architecture
	MOT-05278-59	Wilbur Wright High School Addition	Dayton	c. 1951	John Fred Surman	x		x	Education, Architecture
	MOT-05283-59	Orville Wright Elementary School	Dayton	1952-1954		x		x	Education, Architecture
	MOT-05304-15	Antioch Shrine Temple	Dayton	1955		x		x	Architecture
	MOT-05331-09	Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church	Dayton	1963				x	Architecture
	MOT-05332-09	Fairview Baptist Church	Dayton	1965				x	Architecture
	MOT-05335-09	St. Rita's Catholic Church	Dayton	1964	Elmer H. Schmidt			x	Architecture
	MOT-05339-09	Fox Cleaners & Laundromat	Vandalia	1947		x		x	Commerce, Architecture
	MOT-05399-08	Hara Arena	Dayton	1965		x		x	Recreation, Architecture
	MOT-05407-09	Vandalia State Bank	Dayton	1950		x		x	Commerce, Architecture
	MOT-05413-09	Dixie Drive-in Theater	Dayton	1959		x		x	Recreation, Architecture

	<i>Associated OHI Number</i>	<i>Property</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Construction Date</i>	<i>Architect/Developer</i>	<i>Criteria</i>			<i>Area of Significance</i>
						A	B	C	
Individual Non-Residential	MOT-05437-13	Vandalia Evangelical United Brethren Church	Dayton	1963			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05441-13	Leland Electric	Vandalia	1953		x	x	Industry, Architecture	
	MOT-05469-08	Trotwood Government Center	Trotwood	1970		x	x	Government, Architecture	
	MOT-05471-08	Mt. Olive United Church of Christ	Trotwood	1965			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05488-06	Kettering City Hall	Kettering	1970	Eugene W Betz	x	x	Government, Architecture	
	MOT-05491-06	Fairmont East High School	Kettering	1962-1965		x	x	Education, Architecture	
	MOT-05492-06	Architect's Office (Eugene Betz)	Kettering	1965	Eugene Betz		x	Architecture	
	MOT-05493-06	Imperial Car Wash	Kettering	1966		x	x	Commerce, Architecture	
	MOT-05494-03	Far Hills Financial Center	Kettering	1968		x	x	Commerce, Architecture	
	MOT-05496-06	John F Kennedy Jr. High	Kettering	1967	Keith L Dunker	x	x	Education, Architecture	
	MOT-05499-06	135 W. Dorothy Lane	Kettering	1963		x	x	Commerce, Architecture	
	MOT-05503-06	Kettering Masonic Center	Kettering	1958	Howard Templin/Henry Stock & Son	x	x	Architecture	
	MOT-05504-06	Central Christian Church	Kettering	1957, 1962			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05520-14	Brandt Medical Center	Huber Heights	1963		x	x	Health, Architecture	

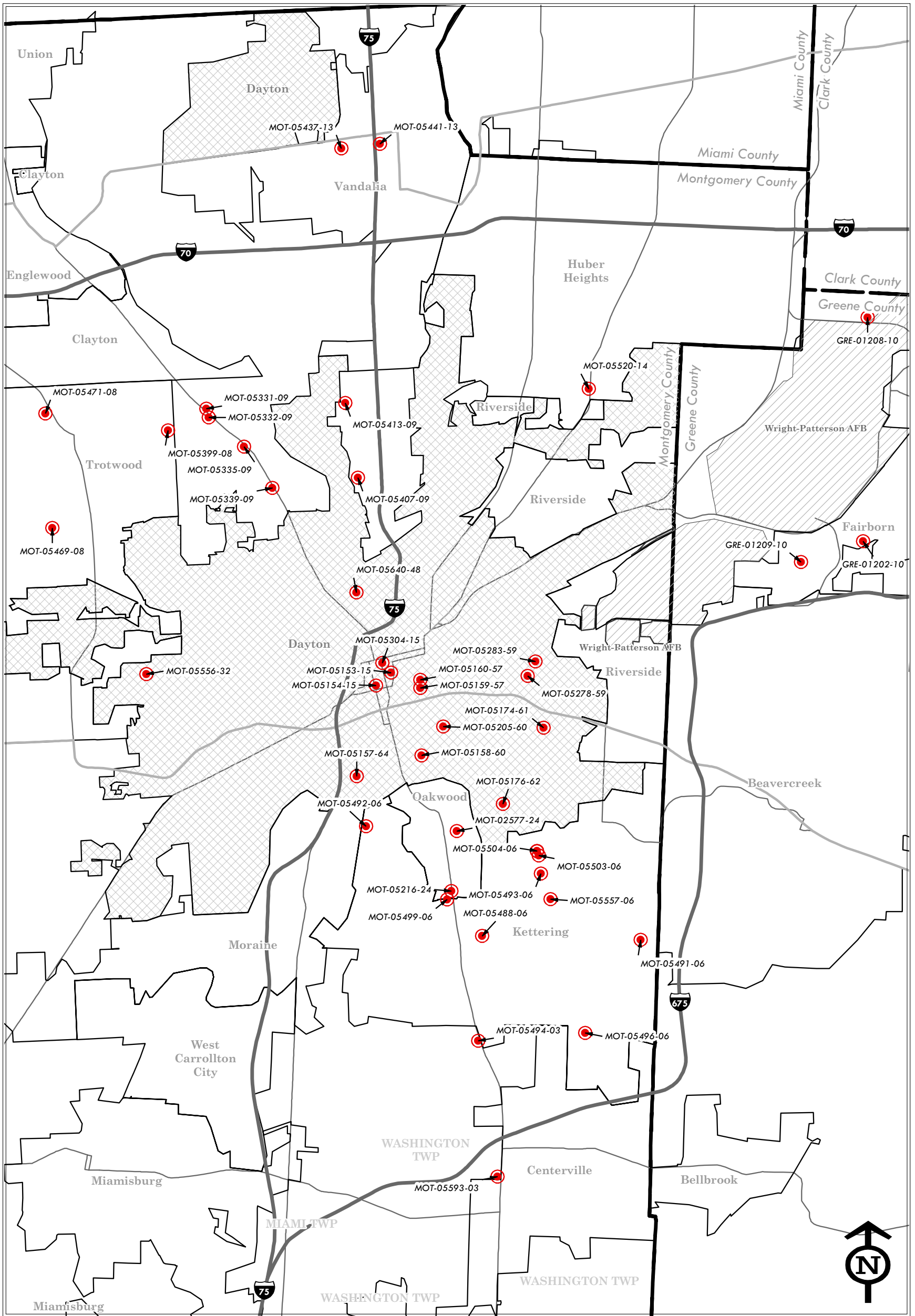
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						A	B	C	
Individual Non-Residential	MOT-05556-32	Hoover Skate Arena	Dayton	1965		x			Recreation, Ethnic Heritage
	MOT-05557-06	Fox Kettering Theatre	Kettering	1967		x		x	Recreation, Architecture
	MOT-05593-03	Church of the Incarnation	Centerville	1969	William Paul Craig			x	Architecture
	MOT-05640-48	Diehl Band Shell	Dayton	1940	Works Progress Administration	x		x	Government, Architecture
Residential Districts	MOT-05182-183-19	Carillon Neighborhood	Dayton	1943-1944				x	Architecture
	MOT-05346-354-39 & MOT-05356-367-39	Northern Hills Neighborhood	Dayton	1954-1966				x	Architecture
	MOT-05369-21	DeSoto Bass Courts	Dayton	1940		x			Government, Ethnic Heritage
	MOT-05186-194-62	Patterson Park	Dayton	1946-1949				x	Architecture
	MOT-05388-395-32	Residence Park	Dayton	1941-1963				x	Architecture
	MOT-05272-290-59 & MOT-05355-59	Wright View	Dayton	1951-1957				x	Architecture
	MOT-05177-181-62 & MOT-05307-311-62	Belmont Woods	Dayton	1940-1945				x	Architecture
	MOT-05455-13	Continental Court Apartments	Vandalia	1969				x	Architecture
	MOT-05177-62	White Oak Apartments	Dayton	1951				x	Architecture

	<i>Associated OHI Number</i>	<i>Property</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Construction Date</i>	<i>Architect/Developer</i>	<i>Criteria</i>			<i>Area of Significance</i>
						A	B	C	
Residential Districts	MOT-05271-59	E. Third St. Apartments	Dayton	1944			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05597-611-14	Sections Built 1956-1970	Huber Heights	1956-1970	Charles Huber	x		Community Planning, Architecture	
	GRE-01184-185-10 & GRE-01188-10	Bonomo Drive	Fairborn	1956-1957			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05209-214-06	Huber Apartments	Kettering	1952			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05641-06	Greenmont Village	Kettering	1942		x		Government	
	MOT-05527-531-06	Residential District along South Wilmington	Kettering	1960-1970			x	Architecture	
	MOT-05583-03 & MOT-05587-03	Pleasant Hill Neighborhood	Centerville	1953-1960	Zengel Construction Co.	x		Community Planning, Architecture	
	MOT-05649-06	Apartment cluster on Southdale	Kettering	1962			x	Architecture	
Non-Residential Districts	GRE-01182-10	Wright State University - Founder's Quad buildings	Fairborn	1964	Lorenz and Williams	x		Education, Architecture	
	MOT-05202-203-15	Sinclair Community College	Dayton	1972	Edward Durell Stone	x		Education, Architecture, Landscape Architecture	
	MOT-05511-512-49 & MOT-05513-50	Warehouse district along Stanley near I-75	Dayton	1968		x		Industry, Architecture	
	MOT-05505-515-48	McCook Field Industrial Park	Dayton	1941-1968		x		Industry, Architecture	

	<i>Associated OHI Number</i>	<i>Property</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Construction Date</i>	<i>Architect/Developer</i>	<i>Criteria</i>			<i>Area of Significance</i>
						A	B	C	
<i>Non-Residential Districts</i>	MOT-05648-06 & MOT-05650-06	Governor's Hill Office Park	Kettering	1964-1965		x		x	Commerce, Architecture
<i>Multiple Property Document</i>	Multiple	Multiple downtown civic buildings	Dayton	Various					
	Multiple	Metropolitan library system	Dayton & Environs	Various					
	Multiple	Banks	Dayton & Environs	Various					
	Multiple	Churches	Dayton & Environs	Various					
	Multiple	Schools	Dayton & Environs	Various					
	Multiple	Medical Arts Offices	Dayton & Environs	Various					
	Multiple	Automobile or commercial roadside properties	Dayton & Environs	Various					

Ohio Modern

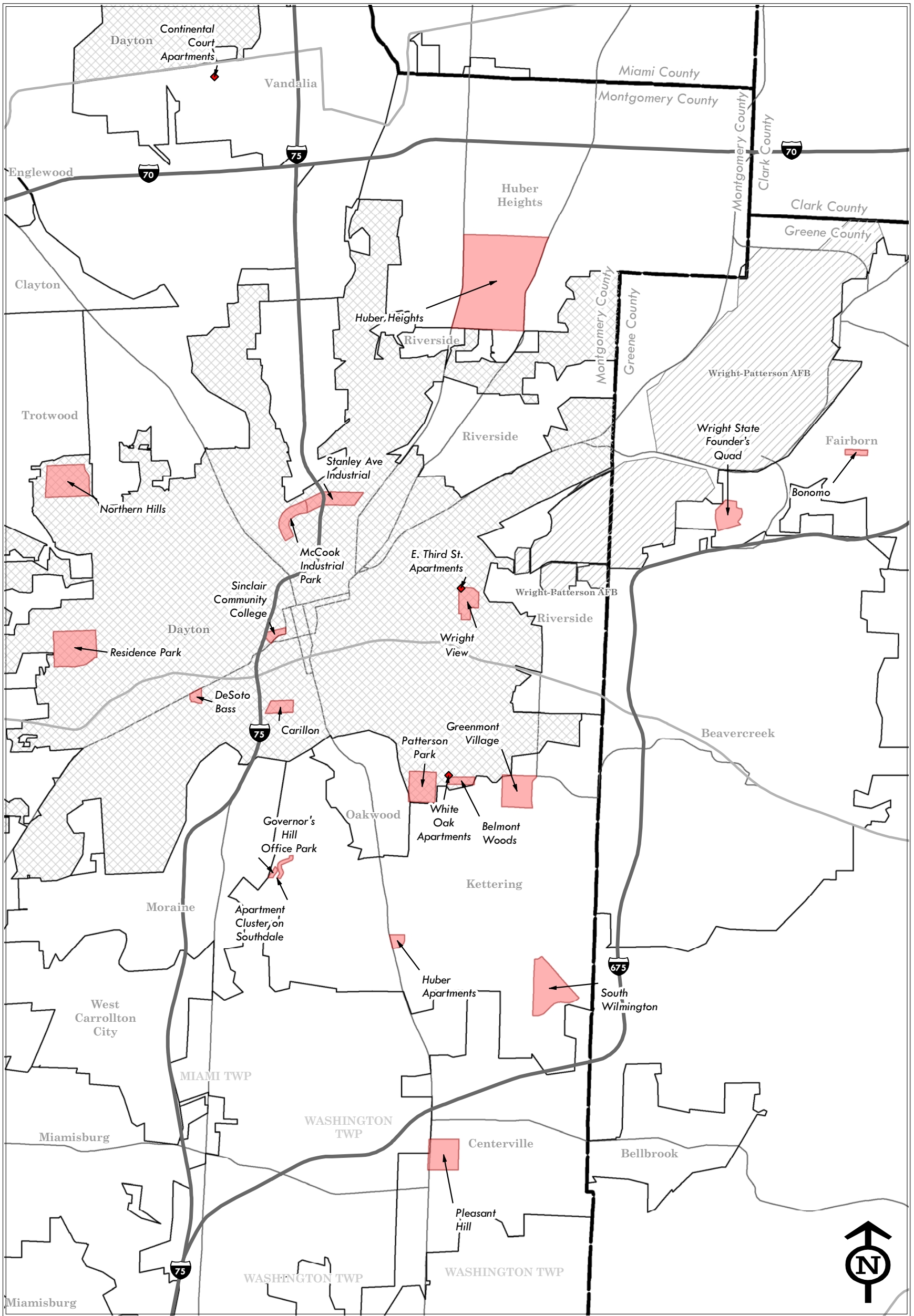
Potential Individual National Register Properties



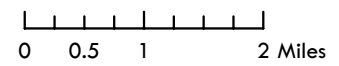
● Potential Individual National Register Properties

Ohio Modern

Potential National Register Historic Districts



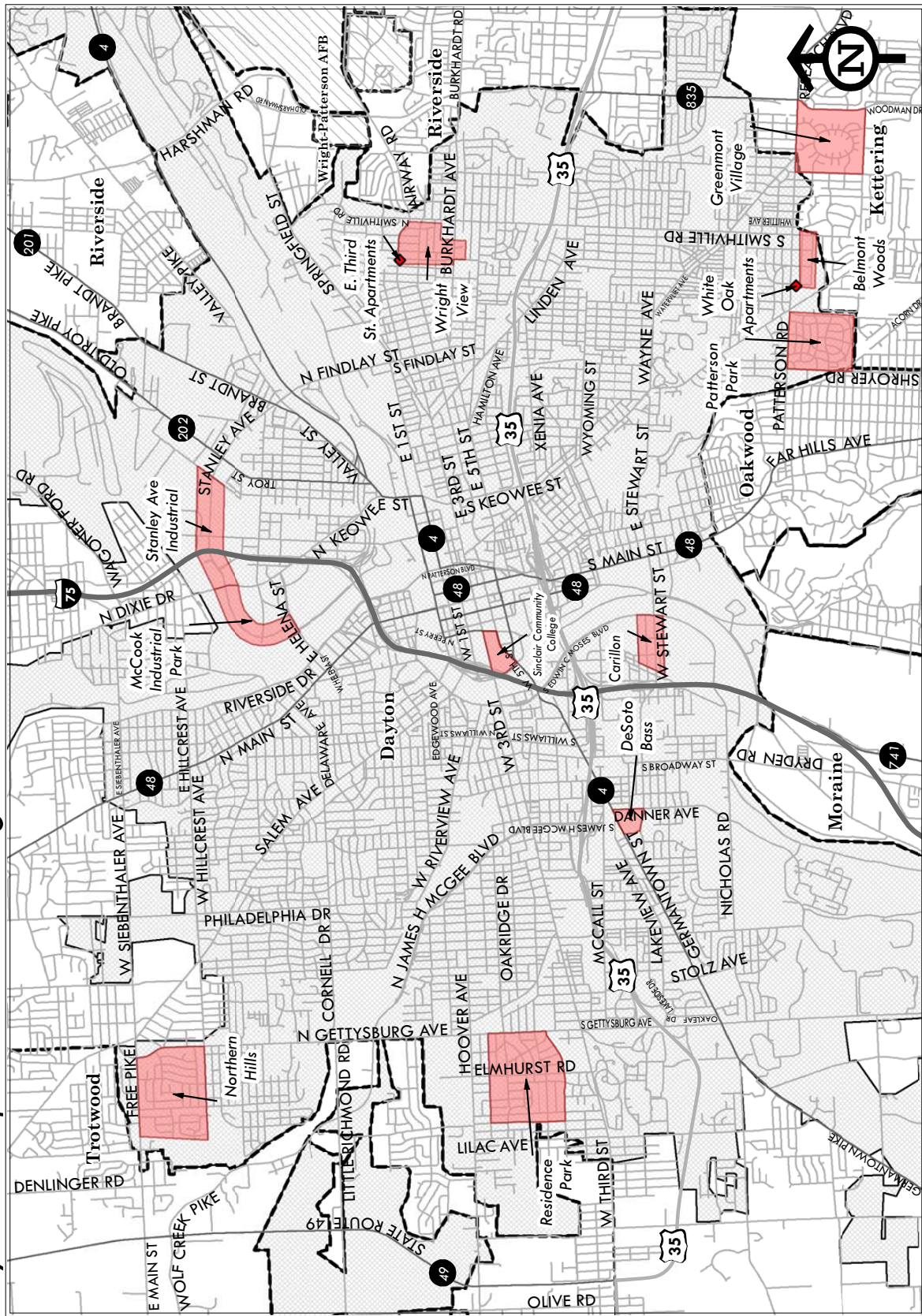
◆ Potential Districts
 ■ Approximate Potential District Boundaries



Ohio Modern

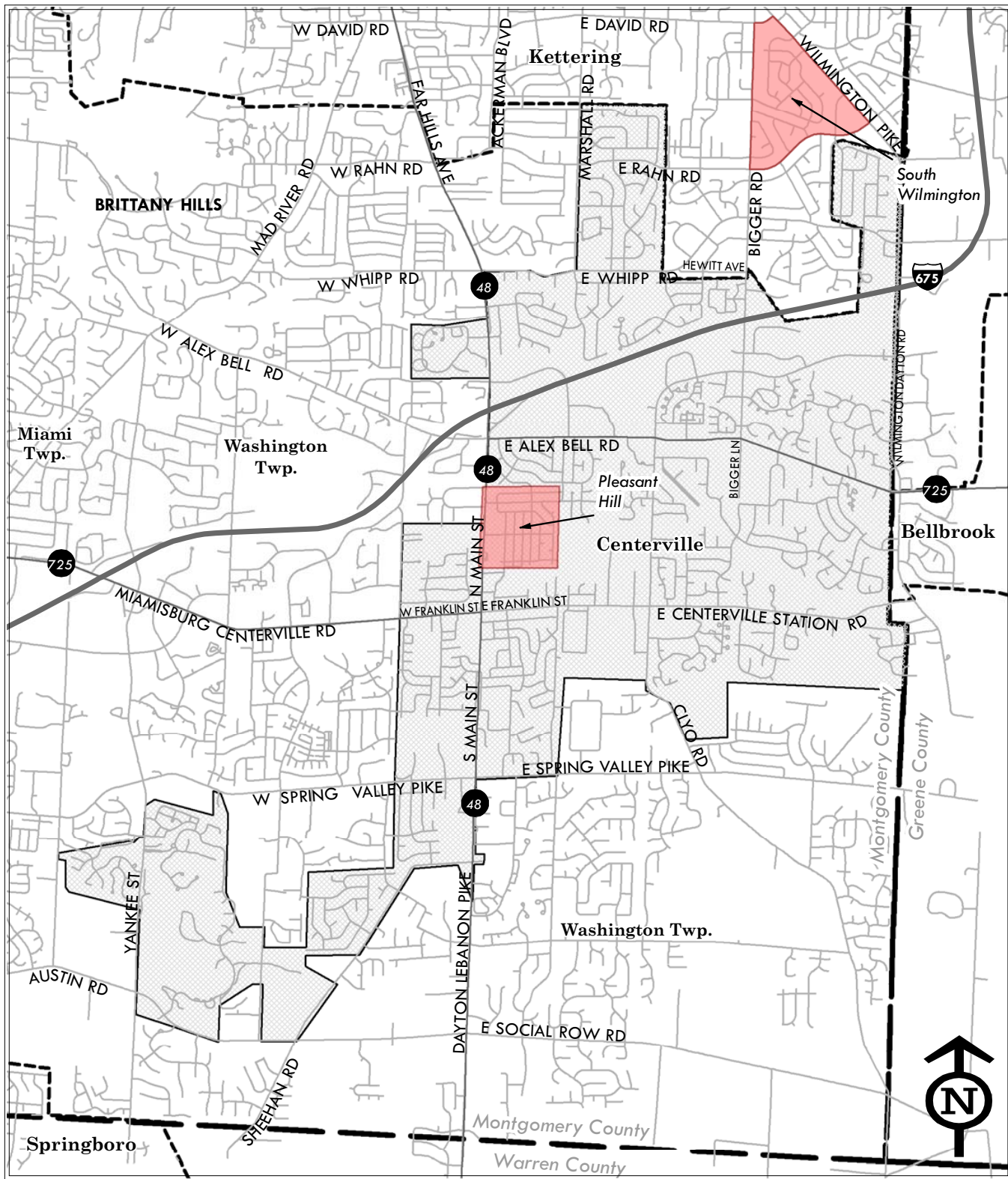
Dayton - Proposed National Register Historic Districts

- ◆ Potential Districts
- Approximate Potential District Boundaries

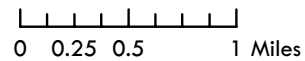


Ohio Modern

Centerville - Potential National Register Historic Districts

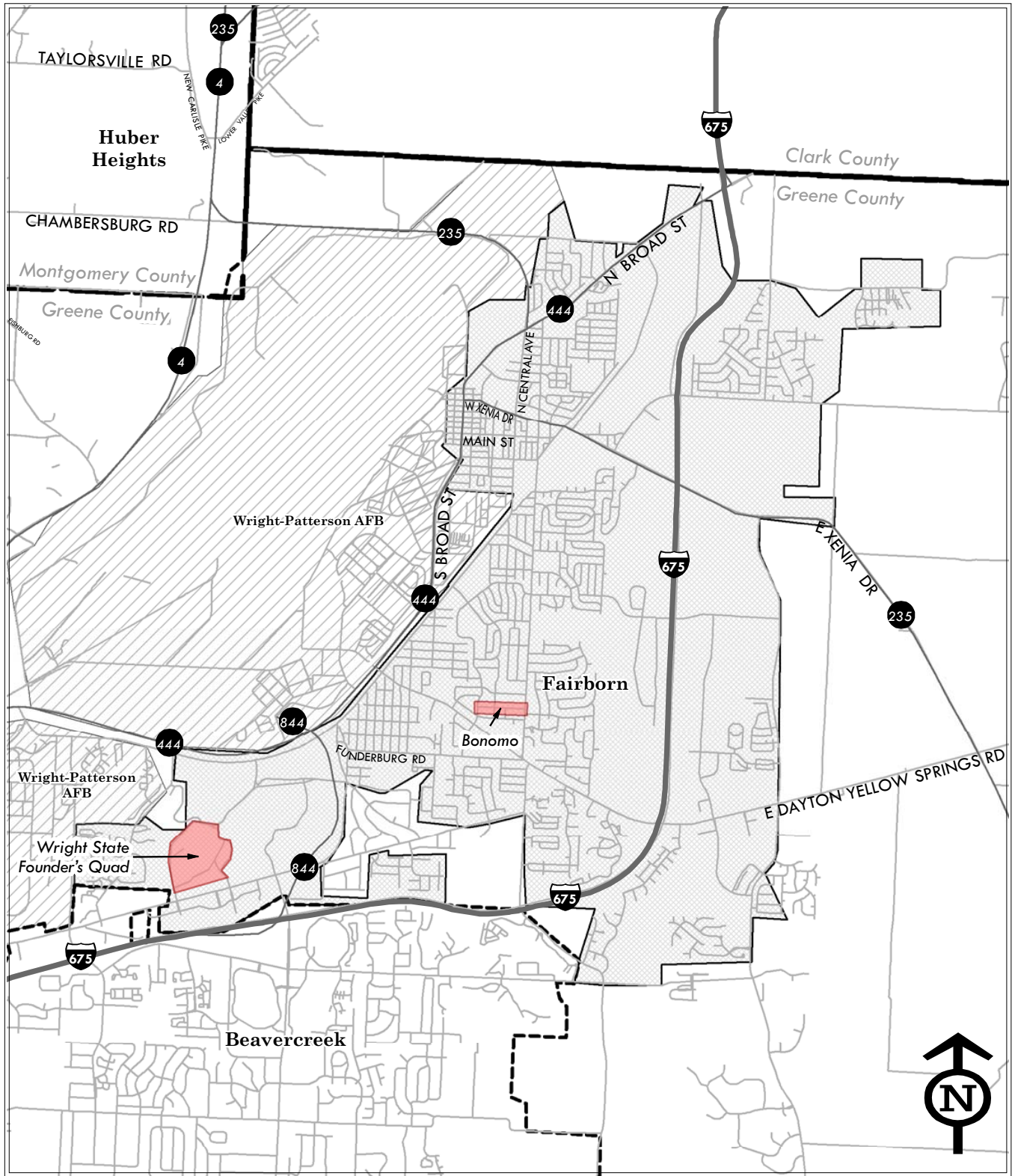


 Approximate Potential District Boundaries



Ohio Modern

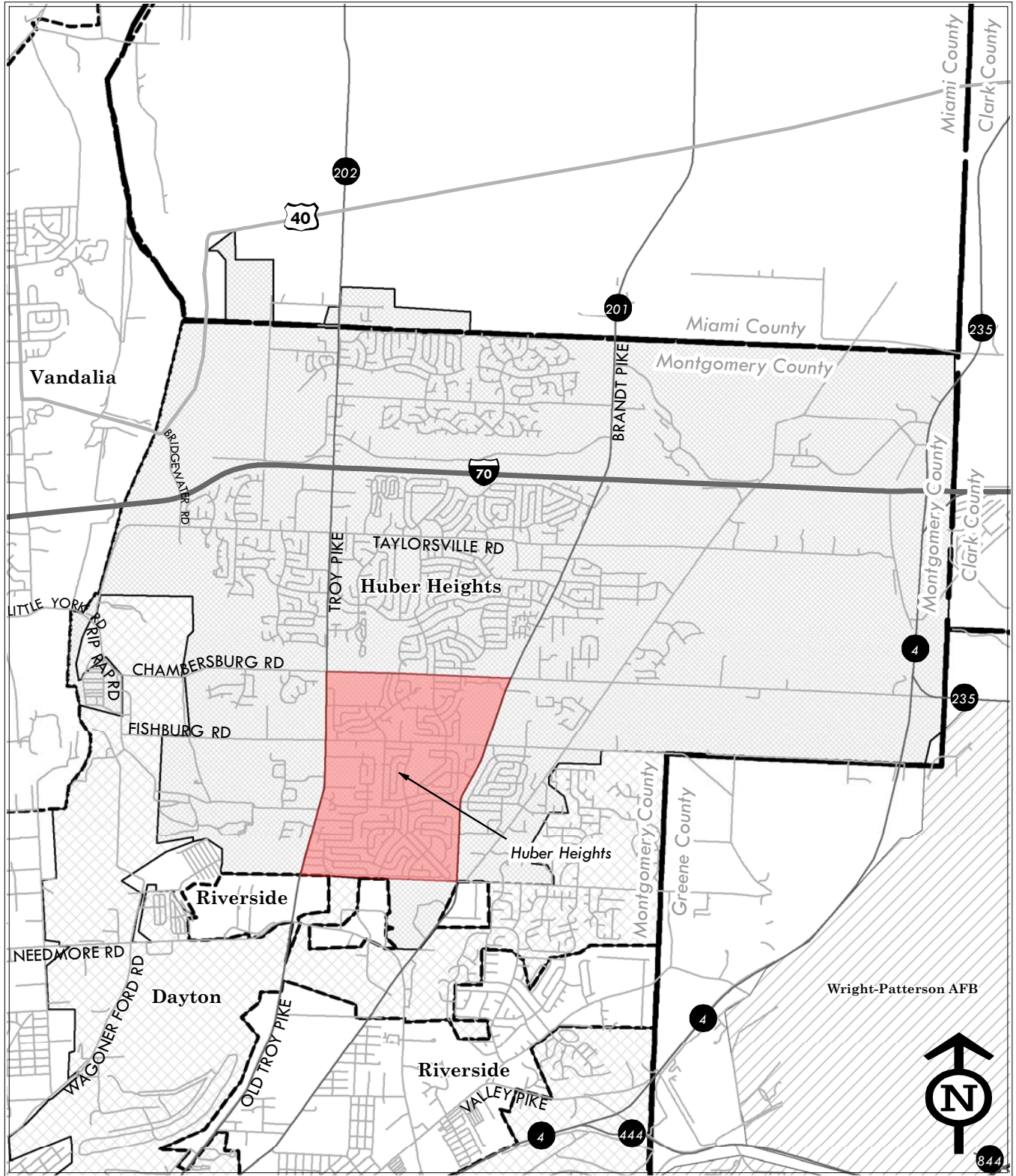
Fairborn - Potential National Register Historic Districts



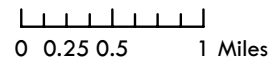
 Approximate Potential District Boundaries

Ohio Modern

Huber Heights - Potential National Register Historic Districts

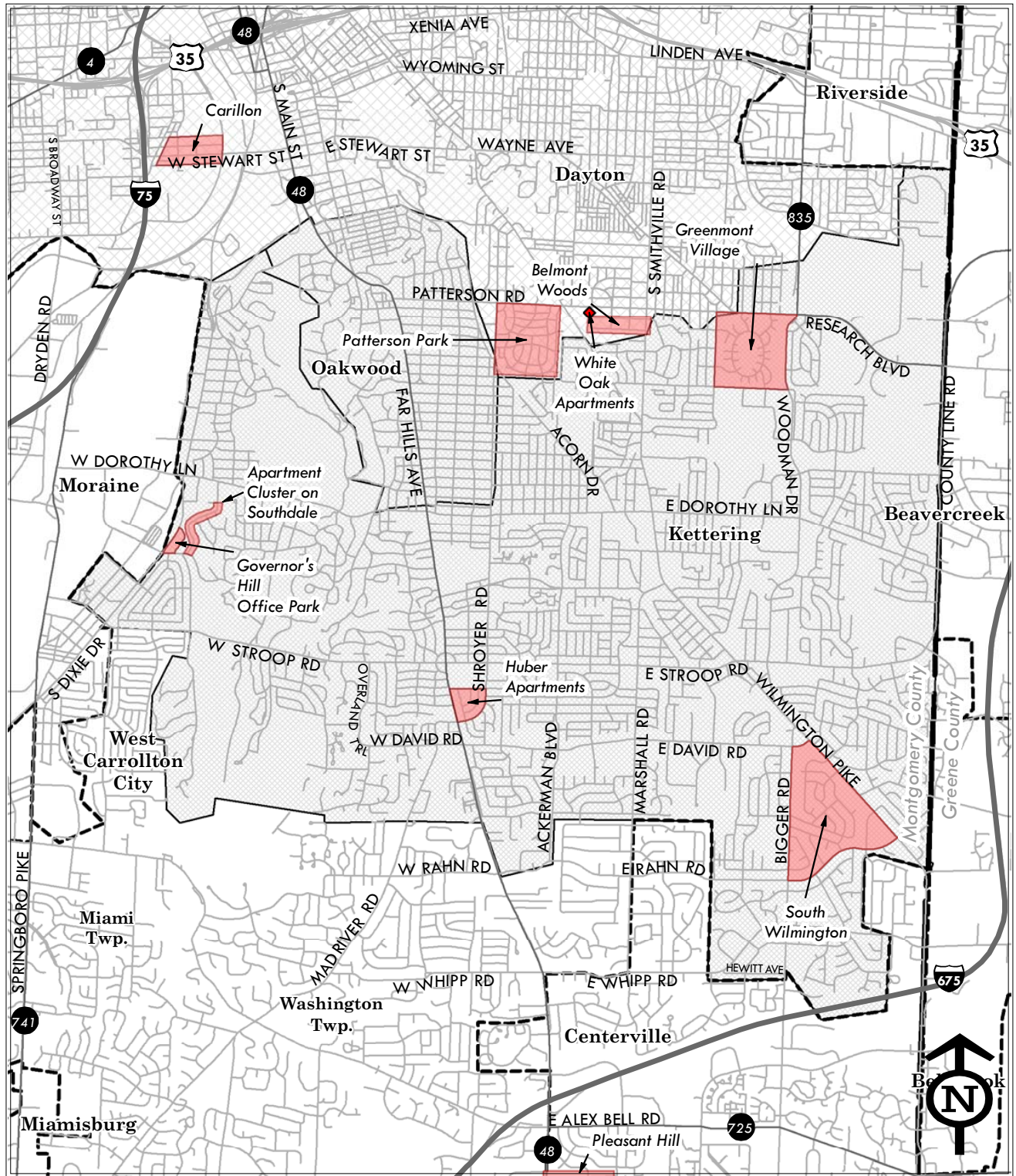


 Approximate Potential District Boundaries

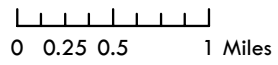


Ohio Modern

Kettering/Oakwood - Potential National Register Historic Districts

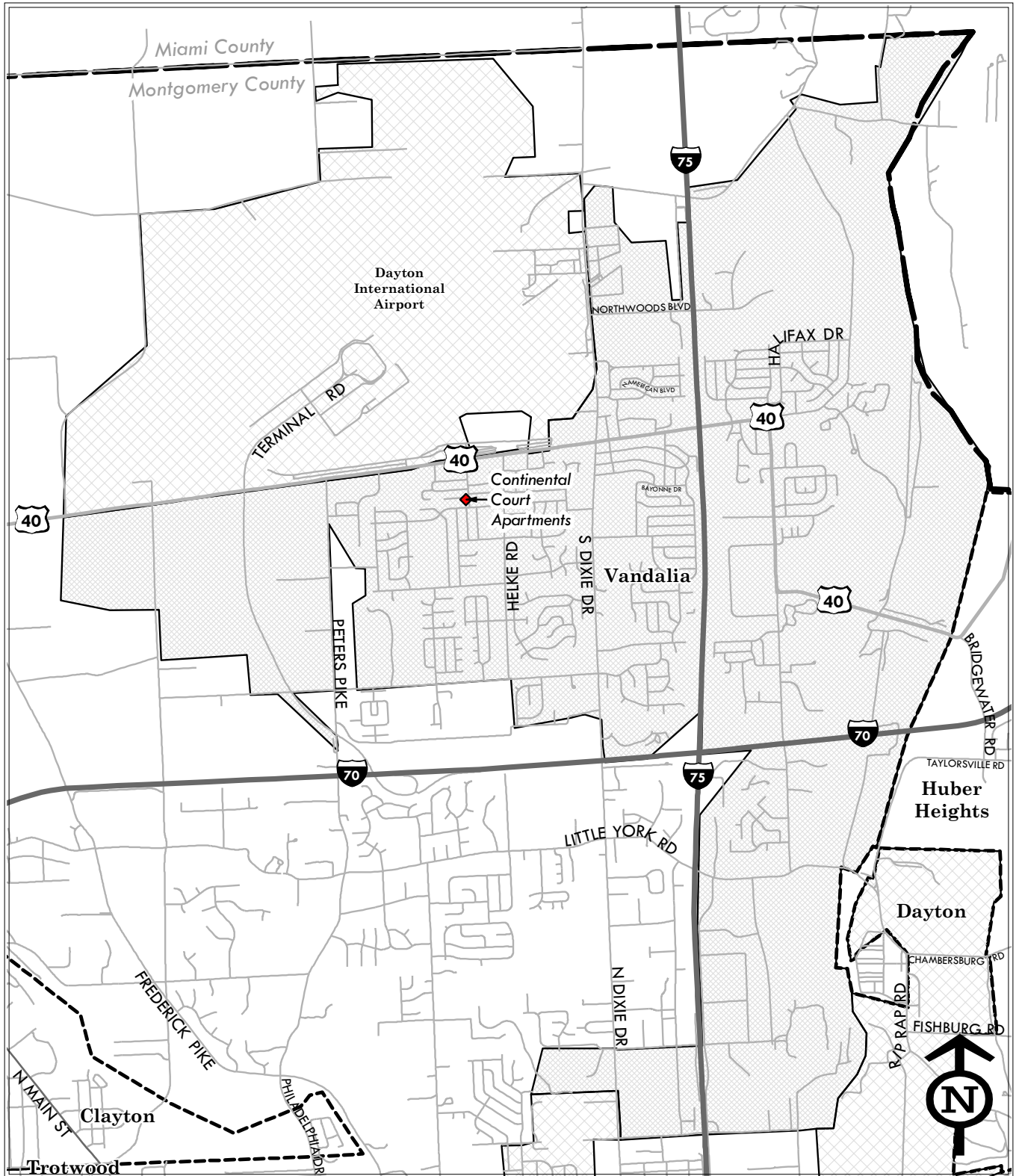


- ◆ Potential Districts
- Approximate Potential District Boundaries



Ohio Modern

Vandalia - Potential National Register Historic Districts



◆ Potential Districts

Recommendations for Further Survey in the Dayton Area

Because a significant objective of the Ohio Modern survey was to document a broad cross-section and representative sampling of properties of many different types, uses, styles, ages, conditions, and qualities of construction, it was not possible to fully document any one property type, style, builder, or architect. Some property types were so numerous that they merit additional documentation. During the course of research following completion of the survey, it became evident that additional properties should be documented.

Another result of the broad cross-section sampling was an awareness of multiple categories of properties that are potentially endangered. Under-appreciated and often viewed as disposable, mid-century modern resources appear to be quickly disappearing from the survey area's landscape. For example, the Rike's Department Store parking garage, located at the southeast corner of N. Main and E. Monument Streets in downtown Dayton, has been razed. Built in 1959, it was the first multi-level parking garage in the city. (Zumwald 190) A second Rike's parking garage, built by 1965 on W. Second Street, has also been replaced with a newer parking garage that does not have the distinctive towering round access ramp.



Rike's Parking Garage, 1959
(Historic Image 47)

Also, an entire era of “updated” mid-century commercial façades, or “slipcovers” and commercial signage have been removed or left unmaintained and in deteriorated condition. An example of a removed mid-20th-century slipcover is the former Metropolitan Building, located beside the Victoria Theater on N. Main Street. It was added to the building in the 1950s and removed ca. 1989, when the adjacent Citizen Federal Tower was constructed. The building was then covered with Dryvit.



Metropolitan Building, 1959
(Historic Image 48)

Several roadside restaurants along the metropolitan area’s transportation corridors have been demolished. Significantly, the entire 1966 Salem Mall in Trotwood, with the exception of Sears (MOT-05297-08), was demolished in 2006.

As discussed elsewhere in the report, five representatives of building construction companies were interviewed as part of the survey project. The names of other people associated with mid-20th-century builders were discovered during the course of research. In addition to further property documentation, we recommend interviews with other identified builders, including Charles Simms, who built many homes in Kettering, and Donald Huber, a son of Herbert C. Huber who is now associated with the Huber apartments and Huber South rentals (both in

Kettering). Other interviewees could include representatives from local construction suppliers and subcontractors from the era, including Schriber Roofing, Siebenthaler Company (landscaping), Requarth Lumber, and Gem City Brick.

Following World War II, the booming economy, vast industrial infrastructure, and military presence contributed towards a population explosion, which in turn affected the built environment. Future efforts should be made to continue the process started by the Ohio Modern survey project, continuing to record what remains from this vital era of the built environment in the Dayton metropolitan area. It is the hope that this project will serve as a starting point engaging the many local individuals and organizations that expressed an interest in the preservation of these resources. Among the many organizations that offered information or supported the Ohio Modern project were Preservation Dayton, Inc., Oakwood Historical Society, Totally Trotwood, Historical Society of Vandalia-Butler, and a number of Dayton neighborhood associations.

Resources Meriting Additional Documentation

Hundreds of religious structures were built between 1940 and 1970 in the Dayton area, designed by many local architects and featuring a wide range of design influences, materials, and styles. Only a relatively small sample of this important chapter of Dayton's ecclesiastical architecture was documented.

Although a generous sampling of banks and office buildings was included in the survey, each of these building types could be further explored throughout the region. For example, a pattern of sophisticated designs for medical arts professional buildings was observed, and further investigation of this office type is warranted.

With respect to residential properties, the project's focus was an inventory of representative house types, rather than the development of geographic representation. As such, some neighborhoods were only cursorily examined, and some neighborhoods, such as Eastmont in Dayton and Rona Hills in Fairborn, were not explored. A more comprehensive survey approach to Dayton's and the surrounding suburbs' mid-20th-century neighborhoods should be undertaken.

List of Addresses Noted, But Not Inventoried

The following list of recommendations for additional properties to survey was brought to the survey team's attention through research or by recommendation from interested citizens, historical societies, and municipal officials. Due to scope limitations, it was not possible to explore all of the suggested properties. As the properties on the list have not been field

verified, it is possible that not all of them are still standing or have sufficient integrity to merit documentation.

Name	Address	Date	Source
Lustron house	162 W. Franklin St. Centerville	ca. 1947	Citizen recommendation
Hithergreen Middle School	5900 Hithergreen Dr. Centerville	1966	General research
Meadowdale High School	Dayton	1958	<i>Dayton Daily News</i> , "Buildings of the Century," 12/18/99
Ponderosa Headquarters	Dayton	ca. 1965	<i>Dayton Daily News</i> , "Williams '10'," 1/24/93
Multiple 1966 buildings	Dayton	1966	<i>Dayton USA</i> , v 3, no 2, 2/67
Frank L. Smith Realty Co.	609 Watervliet Ave., Belmont neighborhood Dayton	1959 Addition	Citizen recommendation – historic images
Streets around Germantown, Maplegrove, Lakeview, Argonne	West Side Dayton	Early 1950s	Home Builders Association scrapbooks
Harold Mitchell House	5 Kimberly Circle Dayton	1953	Identified in <i>Dayton's African American Heritage</i>
International Union of Operating Engineers	6061 N. Dixie Dr. Dayton	ca. 1960	General research
County Administration Bldg.	451 W. Third Dayton	1972	General research
Office/Industrial Building	2551 Needmore Rd. Dayton	1961	General research
Dayton Convention Center	Dayton	1972	General research

Name	Address	Date	Source
Courthouse Square	Dayton	1974	General research
Former NCR Buildings	S. Main St. Dayton	Various	General research
Winters National Bank-Kettering Tower	Dayton	1970-72	General research
House models not surveyed	Huber Heights	1956-1970	General research
Office Building	1563 Dorothy Ln. Kettering	1968	General research
Kettering Justice Building	Kettering	1974	General research
Kettering Memorial Hospital	3535 Southern Blvd. Kettering	1958	General research
Town & Country Shopping Center	Far Hills Ave. and Stroop Rd. Kettering	1950-51	General research
Concrete block Modernist house	930 Runnymede Oakwood	1970	General research
Vacant commercial building	W. National Road Vandalia	ca. 1960	Historic image in City of Vandalia office – contact Julie Trick., Assistant to City Manager (her father’s business)
Dayton Airport	Vandalia	1961	General research
Amateur Trapshooting Association	W. National Road Vandalia	Clubhouse, remodeled in 1968	Vandalia Historical Society
Vandalia City Building	Vandalia	1971	Vandalia Historical Society
Vandalia Elementary	346 Dixie Dr. Vandalia	1945	Vandalia Historical Society – to be demolished

Name	Address	Date	Source
Vandalia-Butler High School	Vandalia	1958	Vandalia Historical Society
Helke Elementary School	Vandalia	1970	Vandalia Historical Society – open classroom design
Cory Building (office building)	117 Dixie Dr. Vandalia	ca. 1965	Vandalia Historical Society
Imperial Hills Plaza	Vandalia	Unknown	Citizen recommendation
Vandalia Firehouse #1	N. Dixie Dr. Vandalia	1960	Vandalia Historical Society – to be replaced by new station
Beardshear Methodist Church	3145 Stop Eight Rd. Vandalia	Unknown	Vandalia Historical Society

Threatened Resources

Within the historic preservation community, it is a well known observation that mid-20th-century properties are often more endangered by neglect or demolition than older properties. Post-WWII buildings suffer from a perception problem about their relative historic value and architectural significance, contributing to their endangerment. It is commonplace that people judge the materials or design of the mid-20th century as inferior to other eras of design. Because the design aesthetic was simpler, less ornate, and more subtle than earlier periods, it is often perceived that buildings did not exhibit artistic thought or craftsmanship, resulting in a devaluing of mid-20th-century design. Due to the massive scale of construction undertaken in the post-WWII era in Dayton and throughout the country, buildings from the mid-20th century are relatively plentiful. Consequently, they do not appear to have the “scarcity” factor necessary for their value to be perceived. Whether it’s due to the relatively young age, the sheer volume of post-WWII construction, or the use of materials that are no longer routine, there is a sense of disposability for properties of the recent past. Consideration of specific threatened properties should be given during any future documentation of the mid-20th-century built environment.

Perhaps of greatest concern are Dayton’s and Huber Heights’ entire inventory of schools, many of which were built in response to the post-World War II population boom. All schools within these jurisdictions are scheduled for demolition as part of present-day facilities improvement

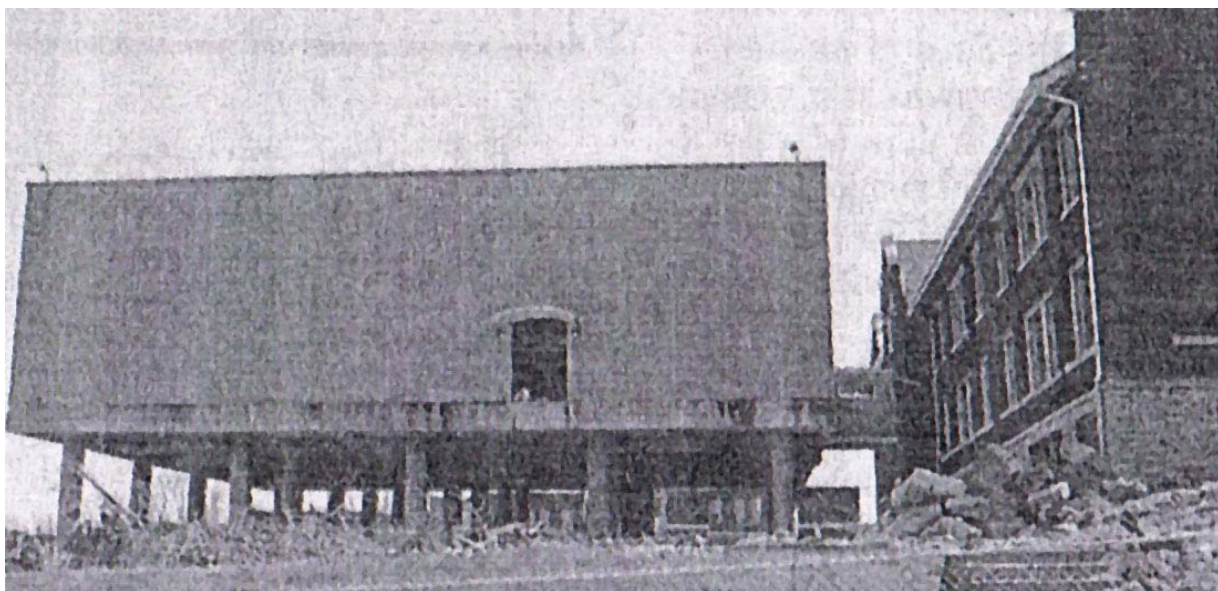
initiatives. Many of these schools have served as the hearts of their residential neighborhoods. An effort should be made to document all schools within these districts prior to their demolition.

Already lost among Dayton’s schools are the unique raised gymnasiums. In response to crowded inner-city neighborhoods, gym additions were built on stilts, which allowed for outdoor play during bad weather and parking after hours. “The gym on stilts at Van Cleve Elementary School – just the second of its kind in the nation – was hailed in 1963 as an innovative ‘space architecture’ answer for crowded urban schools.” (Elliot)



Van Cleve Elementary School, 1975
(Historic Image 49)

Between 1961 and 1966, two other elementary schools (Cleveland, Edison) and Colonel White High School also received stilted gym additions. The creative design solution generated interest nationally, from school officials in places such as Milwaukee, Baltimore, and New Jersey. Although once considered innovative, the gyms were eventually deemed a failure as they were hard to heat and highly susceptible to mold. All four stilted gyms have been demolished within the last six years.



Cleveland Elementary School gym (built early 1960s), under demolition, 2004
(Historic Image 50)

Another resource that proliferated in response to the mid-century growth of the metropolitan area was library branches. Three examples were surveyed, and some have been altered, but several others remain undocumented. Threats to this specific type of resource have been recognized nationally due primarily to budgetary constraints.

Other threatened resources from the era include movie theaters, automobile tourist-related buildings such as motels, and roadside signage. Single and twin screen movie theaters are endangered nationwide. Once the predominant type of movie theater, they have largely disappeared due to competition from multi-plex cinemas. The multi-screen cineplexes, typically owned and operated by national chains, eventually forced the majority of the smaller, independently owned cinemas out of business. Within the survey area, the Fox Kettering Theatre (MOT-05557-06) was recorded. The theatre's exterior is intact, but the building is for sale and has been vacant since 2006. Located near the corner of a busy intersection, it is a prime candidate for demolition if no creative buyer comes forward to either reopen the theatre or adaptively reuse the space. An identical theater, known as Fox Northwest Plaza Theater, at 3375 W. Siebenthaler Avenue on Dayton's northwest side, is also vacant. Closed in 1998, it does not have the same level of historic integrity as the Kettering theater and is also a likely candidate for demolition. Dayton's Polynesian-themed Kon-Tiki Theatre was demolished in 2005, after six years of vacancy. Constructed in 1968, it was on the Salem Avenue commercial corridor in Trotwood. Locally owned, it faced increased competition from larger cineplexes and in the 1980s was leased by a national theater chain. Ultimately the demolition of the nearby Salem Mall and the decline of commercial activity on Salem Avenue also contributed to the destruction of the Kon-Tiki. Documentation of any other remaining single or twin screen cinemas should be completed.

Small independent motels are particularly threatened due to real or perceived crime problems. By the late 20th century, with the ascension of the interstate highway system, most travelers frequented chain hotels and motels which proliferated on these new corridors, rather than the "mom and pop" motels which predominated along the previous generation of transportation routes. Consequently, many locally owned independent motels often deteriorated into the seedy havens that they were purported to be. Of the eight motels surveyed, four were vacant, one was temporarily closed due to public nuisance violations, and three were still in operation, at least one of which is of dubious character. The vacant motels are not likely to be rehabilitated or adaptively re-used and are probable demolition candidates. The former Howard Johnson's on Wagner Ford Rd. (MOT-05554-09) has had half of the exterior walls removed from the rooms and certainly will be demolished, as the building is exposed to the weather. Several motels remain on the Dayton metro area's pre-interstate transportation corridors, and they should be documented for their association with roadside commerce.

Mid-20th-century roadside signs are very susceptible to demolition, and the need to document the fast disappearing roadside signs from the metropolitan area's commercial streetscape is important. Although signs are frequently altered with a new business name, they are likely to be replaced or demolished if a property changes ownership or use. Signs located on vacant properties are in danger of deterioration without proper maintenance. Once deteriorated, roadside signs are rarely repaired. Often perceived as ephemeral and unnecessary, signs are readily torn down or left to collapse, even at functioning businesses. Small in scale in comparison to buildings, roadside signs are also vulnerable to removal due to changing tastes regarding what is visually pleasing on a commercial strip. By the end of the 20th century, people began to lament the clutter of roadside signage along major transportation corridors. What today might be considered a valuable relic of the mid-20th-century automobile culture was often readily torn down in an effort to homogenize the commercial streetscape.

The Tasty Bird Poultry sign (MOT-05165-38) is an example of a large-scale, flashy design. The juxtaposition of the shapes and angles of the sign and the Swiss cheese base give it elements of the Googie style. The “over-the-top” sign also featured a band of exposed light bulbs and neon over the lettering. A slightly abstracted chicken stands on top of the projecting band of bulbs (now missing). The Tasty Bird sign advertised a poultry farm store and was recorded as part of that property. The building is currently vacant and boarded up.



Tasty Bird Poultry
2860 Salem Ave., Dayton

Schultz's Breakfast Nook (MOT-05268-57), now known as Abner's, was a former hot dog stand. The business's sign is a horizontal platform with a cartoonish dog at each end. The dogs flank the outline of a house, which is missing its plastic panels. A horizontal section with plastic panels, featuring the Abner's name and a cowboy, is below the platform. The metal components of the sign are rusted. Once a very nicely designed sign, it is now endangered from neglect. The overall property is in fair condition and located in a low-income neighborhood. The sign is a likely candidate to be demolished.



Schultz's Breakfast Nook
2424 E. Third St., Dayton

This 1971 image of Trotwood's 700 block of E. Main Street shows the extent of roadside signage that was once present on the community's suburban edge and illustrates the types of signs still to be documented. Located east of the historic village center and State Route 49, the basic structure of the Beeber Center sign is intact, including the name and giant arrow. Constructed in 1961, it has been altered, with the individual business nameplates simplified into a larger back-lit plastic sign. The sign was noted but not inventoried during the survey and would be a good prospect for OHI recording.



Trotwood signs, 1971
(Historic Image 51)

The photo and the accompanying newspaper article also illustrate the beginning of sign debates in the waning decades of the 20th century. As Trotwood's administration struggled to create a succinct sign ordinance that would regulate size and setback, William Beeber, owner of the largest sign, ironically stated "we've let signs get out of hand. They're like a jungle." (Riley) Hal

Koinis, owner of the neighboring Flint's Hamburgers, took the opposite view, stating that there would be "a blight on business if any drastic change is made...hamburgers won't sell unless the sign is out front." Constructed in 1969 for \$5,000, the fantastic Flint's sign, topped with a revolving starburst, no longer exists. While Trotwood's E. Main Street was certainly hectic in 1971, contemporary observers might note that Googie signs such as Flint's were a work of artistry, and their loss lessens the visual tapestry of the commercial roadside.

Recommendations for Mid-Century Modern Survey in Other Communities

The mid-20th century is an architecturally important era that should not be overlooked. While architecture from the decades 1940 through 1970 is sometimes casually dismissed as being cold or as consisting of generic, nondescript boxes (particularly among nonresidential properties), the reality is quite different. The Ohio Modern Survey in Dayton revealed that much of the built environment from the era in this community exhibits a great deal of design detail. Because people often do not understand or value the design sensibilities of mid-20th-century architecture, buildings of the era frequently suffer unsympathetic alterations. As discussed in the previous sections, certain building types, such as schools, libraries, motels, and theaters, are especially likely to be demolished.

Although generally defined as the recent past, many properties from the mid-20th century are approaching or have reached 50 years old. In order to understand the evolving historic preservation needs within a city or neighborhood, it will become increasingly important for communities, as well as entities dealing with Section 106, to document and evaluate buildings from the Modernist era.

Items of consideration for recent past surveys include:

- **Determining the community's priority for developing a survey project.**
Many mid-20th-century surveys around the United States have first focused on the residential sector. Some cities such as New Canaan, Connecticut, further refined their residential survey to document only architect-designed houses. Conversely, some communities have begun their recent past documentation with non-residential properties, such as the *Recent Past Survey - Suburban Cook County*, completed 2006-2008. Thus far, all-encompassing surveys, such as Dayton's are in the minority of known projects. Another similar example, completed in 2006, is *The Development of Modernism in Raleigh, 1945-1965* survey, which included residential, both typical and architect-designed, and non-residential resources.
- **Determining the date range of the survey.**
Some communities merely begin the survey where their previous one stopped at the 50 year cutoff and extend to, or just beyond, the current 50 year cutoff. During the Ohio Modern – Dayton Survey, it was observed that properties from 1940-45 generally were the same as pre-1940 properties. It was not until after World War II that a noticeable difference in architectural styles and building types took place. Depending on that and other historic development factors, a community may choose to begin their survey at 1945. It was also observed that

the architectural styles that came into prominence during the 1950s and 60s continued to the mid-1970s. Therefore, 1975 might be more logical ending date for a survey project, as architectural style was beginning to shift from Modernism to Post-Modernism around that time.

- **Determining the survey location.**

In addition to the obvious subdivisions, suburban strips, and historic transportation corridors, good mid-20th-century representatives can be found interspersed among older buildings in historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial clusters.

Conclusion

Dayton and the suburbs included in the Ohio Modern: Preserving Our Recent Past History-Architecture Survey experienced a tremendous amount of growth from 1940 to 1970. A wealth of resources remains intact throughout the metropolitan region, reflecting the area's post-World War II prosperity. The resulting architecture has left a tangible legacy on each community's streetscape. Many of these buildings have architectural merit and are worthy of historic preservation. They also are noteworthy in their ability to convey the region's story of mid-20th-century development. From restrained Modernist offices to the artistic forms of Brutalism and Neo-Expressionism, to the soaring angles of Googie buildings and signs, to the rambling Ranch house, the architecture of the mid-20th century has much to be celebrated and preserved. The challenge for the preservation community is to raise awareness of the value of these resources that reflect the apex of Dayton's-- and Ohio's--manufacturing-based economic prosperity.