Greater Cincinnati African American and Black Historic Context Study

Cincinnati Preservation

GRAY & PAPE
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Greater Cincinnati African American and Black History Context Study

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Cincinnati Preservation staff who contributed to this report include Beth Johnson and Raina Regan. The Sites of Black History and Underrepresented Communities Committee provided overall direction for the project and valuable editorial assistance for this context document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Overview

The *Greater Cincinnati African American and Black History Context Study* was commissioned by Cincinnati Preservation with funding through the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Carol and Ralph V. Haile, Jr., Foundation. This context study was completed by Gray & Pape, Inc. (Gray & Pape), with assistance and direction from Cincinnati Preservation and its Black Historic Sites Committee, as part of Cincinnati Preservation's Sites of Black History Initiative. The overall objective of this project is to identify places—buildings, structures, sites, or entire districts—important to the history of Greater Cincinnati's Black community, that are likely to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) but that have not previously been identified or recognized as such.

The National Register, authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and maintained by the National Park Service, is "the nation's list of historic places worthy of preservation."[1] Listing in the National Register brings intangible benefits such as enhanced recognition and prestige, along with documentation of the property for posterity; in some cases, it also facilitates more tangible impacts: National Register properties may be eligible for the federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, plus federal Certified Local Government Grants and other funding opportunities. In addition, state, county, and local programs—such as historical markers and local historic preservation ordinances—often use the same or similar eligibility criteria as the National Register. Thus, eligibility for the National Register often facilitates access to these, more local, programs as well.

According to Cincinnati Preservation's Sites of Black History Initiative:

> The historic preservation movement has made substantial progress in preserving and commemorating the places that reflect the history of white America. Less focus has been placed on the sites associated with the history of African American communities.
>
> Only two percent of the 95,000 entries in the National Register of Historic Places focus on the experience of Black Americans. Cincinnati has a similar deficit. While there is increasing recognition of places such as Greystone Ballroom at Music Hall, the Manse

[1] "National Register of Historic Places (U.S. National Park Service)," n.d. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm.

> Hotel in Walnut Hills, and King Records studios in Evanston, these important sites are only a small part of a much, much larger untold history.[2]

This study is one step towards correcting this bias. Specifically, this document provides what the National Register calls a "context" that will help establish the eligibility of buildings, landscapes, and other places important to Black history. Defined in the National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, a "context" consists of "information about historic properties and trends … organized by theme, place, and time … that can be used to weigh the historic significance and integrity of a property." Its purpose is to "link historic properties to important historic trends" to argue for National Register eligibility of these places.[3]

The purpose of this context study is *not* to provide an overall history of the African American experience in Greater Cincinnati. This story has been told, from a Black perspective, by nineteenth- and twentieth-century observers such as John Malvin, Benjamin Arnett, Peter H. Clark, and Wendell Dabney; by academic historians such as Henry Taylor and Nikki Taylor; and by numerous twenty-first-century books, newspapers, blogs, and podcasts. Rather, this report builds on these histories, plus the stories of community members who contributed their time and knowledge to this project, and connects these narratives to physical places that remain in existence, so that those places may be identified, recognized, and preserved.

This context study concludes with more in-depth evaluations of twenty-seven places deemed most likely to be eligible for the National Register. These evaluations are included as **Appendix A**. Finally, a table of all places evaluated during this study, whether recommended as National Register-eligible or not, is included as **Appendix B**. Further research, or evaluation within other contexts, may determine that some of these additional properties are likely to be eligible for the National Register as well.

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[2] "Sites of Black History and Underrepresented Communities," August 1, 2025. https://cincinnatipreservation.org/blackhistory/.

[3] National Park Service, 1995, 3.

2.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Property Identification

This context study was based, initially, on the ongoing *Cincinnati Sites and Stories Project* undertaken by Cincinnati Preservation (https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/). This project maintains an online map of important places around the Greater Cincinnati area, including over one hundred places connected to African American history. To this geographical data, we also added all places identified in the following sources:

- The National Register of Historic Places *Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation[4]
- National Register of Historic Places listings in Hamilton County, Ohio; Kenton County, Kentucky; and Campbell County, Kentucky (places associated with Black history only)
- Places recognized by the National Park Service "National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom" project
- The *Hamilton Avenue Road to Freedom* website and map[5]
- *Cincinnati Abolition: Places and People Integral to Abolition and the Underground Railroad*, an ArcGIS StoryMap by the Harriet Beecher Stowe House[6]
- JoAnn Morse's *Green Book Locations in Cincinnati* online map (extant places only)[7]
- The Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission *Covington Black History Tour*[8]
- Joseph M. Walton's *Black History in Covington, Kentucky* (extant places only)[9]

Cincinnati Preservation maintained an interactive map of these places on its website for the duration of this project; the website link was shared with a wide list of interested parties and stakeholders.[10] Additional properties were submitted from interested community members through the Cincinnati Preservation website or by email, and both orally and in writing at a public meeting hosted by Cincinnati Preservation at the Walnut Hills Public Library on July 31, 2025.

[4] National Register of Historic Places, 2019.
[5] https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/.
[6] https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/557bfac101464feeb610d7f25c2ccd0c
[7] https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=14nlKL0bd9Bpw0LmRCTNglRgOtYCntnUe&ll
[8] https://app.urality.com/renaissance_covington/stories/60f06d18fa8ea100042d442c
[9] (Milford, Ohio: Little Miami Publishing Company, 2025).
[10] See *https://cincinnatipreservation.org/blackhistory/*.

2.2 Historic Context Development

As the list of identified properties continued to grow, we categorized each by apparent theme (see **Appendix B**). An initial list of themes was provided by the Black History and Underrepresented Communities Committee at the start of this project; this list was further refined as research continued. A theme is not intended to be restrictive; many of the places identified in this study will be significant under multiple themes, as well as under other contexts beyond those described below. However, for a place to be eligible for the National Register, it must be shown to be significant within at least one theme. Each place evaluated is associated with at least one theme, with secondary themes mentioned when applicable.

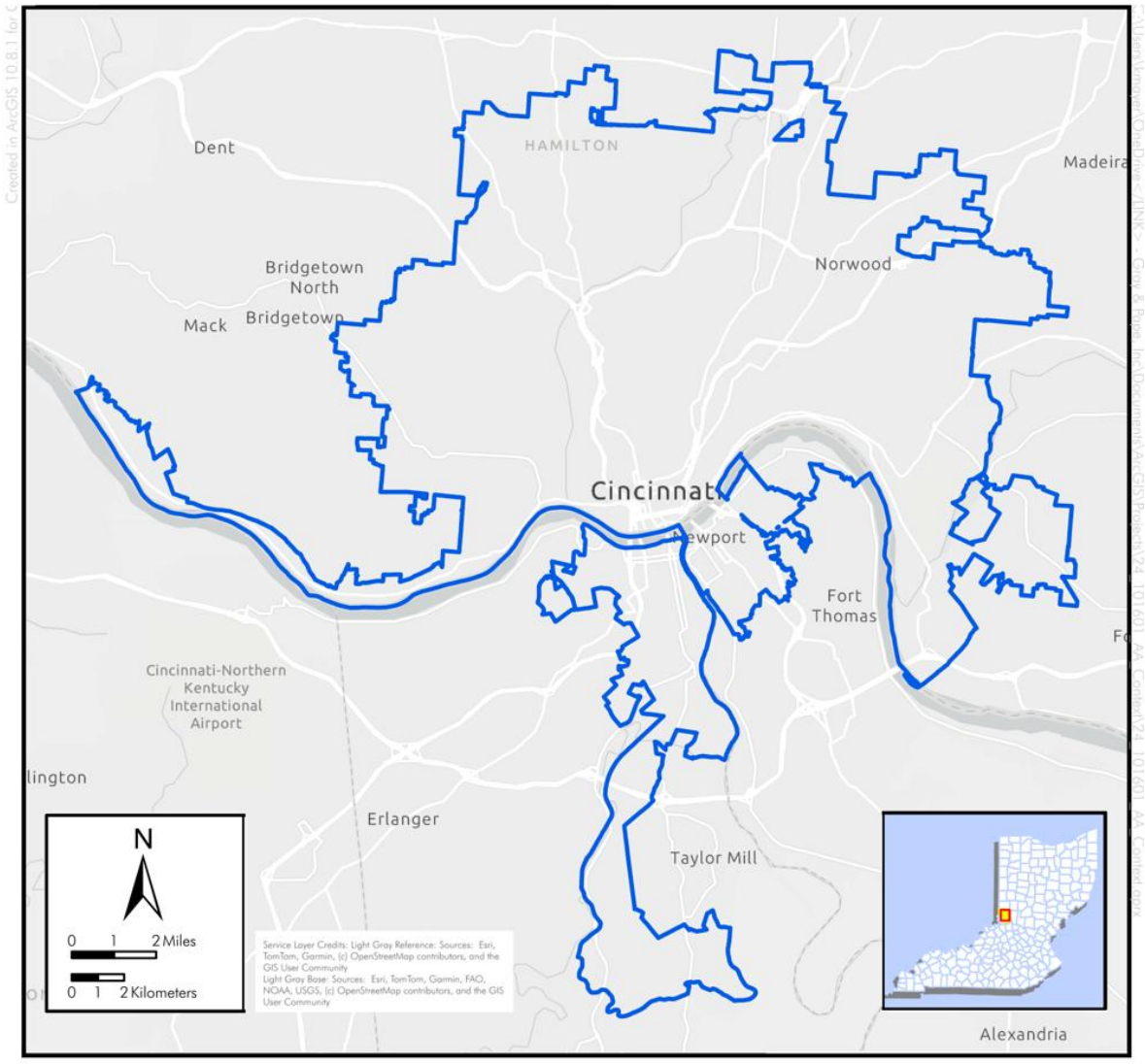
This historic context document was developed following the guidelines of the National Park Service, including *The Components of a Historic Context, a National Register White Paper*.[11] Each thematic section described below begins with an overview of each theme, connecting the history to known important places that express that theme, both those that exist as well as those that have been lost. Each section includes a shorter subsection describing associated property types and their eligibility for the National Register. The ultimate objective is that this thematic information, along with the references cited, can be used in the future as a starting point in writing National Register nominations for the properties identified.

[11] Barbara Wyatt, 2009.

3.0 PROJECT AREA

3.1 Project Area

The project area consists of the city of Cincinnati, the Cincinnati enclaves of Elmwood Place, Ohio; Norwood, Ohio; and St. Bernard, Ohio, and the adjacent Kentucky cities of Bellevue, Bromley, Covington, Dayton, Fort Thomas, Ludlow, Newport, and Villa Hills. Essentially consisting of Cincinnati plus the neighboring cities directly across the Ohio River in Kentucky, this relatively compact geographical area was chosen as a practical matter to limit the list of properties to what could be manageably evaluated within a twelve-month timeframe.



Greater Cincinnati African American and Black History Context project area.

Throughout this project, informants from Greater Cincinnati's Black community have suggested a broader project area is warranted. For instance, Mill Creek Valley communities to the north—such as Lockwood, Glendale, and others—have an importance to both the historical and present-day Black experience in Greater Cincinnati that cannot be overstated. Both east and west along the Ohio River, as well as extending to the south into the northernmost few counties of Kentucky, are many stories, especially of perseverance through and resistance to the system of enslavement, that warrant further attention. The histories of these areas are briefly discussed in this context study, but not included in the individual property evaluations provided in **Appendix A**. We hope that this project can be expanded into these areas in the future.

4.0 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION

To be eligible for the National Register, a place must have two qualities known as "significance" and "integrity."[12]

4.1 Significance

A place is *significant* within a particular historic context if it meets one of four National Register of Historic Places criteria.

Criterion A: Association with "events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." To meet Criterion A, a place must have a strong association with a trend or event that is consequential in a particular historic context. The connection must be verified (not speculative), and the property must be where the event actually happened. National or regional importance is not needed; the associated events may be more local ones that shaped a community or neighborhood.[13]

Criterion B: Association with "the lives of persons significant to our past." This criterion is for places associated with people who are "demonstrably" and "individually" important in a particular historic context. The place must be associated with the person's "productive life" or must be the location where their particular accomplishments were made; this means that childhood homes, a place where a significant individual lived in retirement, or a place where a person visited only briefly will not usually be eligible.[14]

Criterion C: Expression of "distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction", "the work of a master," "high artistic values," or "a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction." This criterion is generally for buildings or sites important in the context of architectural history or landscape architecture—for instance, a building or outdoor space that is an outstanding example of a particular architectural style or that is otherwise groundbreaking in its design.[15] Although this study does not focus on architectural history, a few of the buildings and places identified as important under Criteria A or B may also be important under Criterion C.

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[12] National Park Service, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (1997), https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.
[13] Ibid., 12.
[14] Ibid., 14–15.
[15] Ibid., 17–18.

Criterion D: Potential to yield "information important in history or prehistory." This criterion acknowledges a property's "information potential," that is, its ability to assist researchers answer important questions about human history. Although most often applied to archaeological sites, this criterion can apply to extant buildings and structures as well. [16] Only a few places in this study will likely be eligible under Criterion D.

Criteria Considerations. Generally, properties important for religious reasons, buildings that have been moved, birthplaces and graves, cemeteries, reconstructed buildings, commemorative monuments, or places that achieved importance fewer than fifty years ago will not be eligible for the National Register unless certain additional considerations are met.[17]

4.2 Integrity

Integrity refers to "the ability of a property to convey its significance" through its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.[18] A property that has been heavily altered, moved, or rebuilt since its "period of significance"—that is, the era during which important events occurred or important people were present—will not have integrity. (Integrity is not the same as condition; a building that has experienced deterioration over time will not necessarily be disqualified from the National Register.)

In general, for a property to maintain integrity, it must retain the "essential physical features" that express its importance. This can be a somewhat subjective determination. When evaluating buildings and places that have been altered, the degree of rarity of places associated with that context or theme is an important consideration: "the rarity … of other extant examples of the type may justify accepting a greater degree of alteration." The analysis of "essential physical features" certainly includes exterior features, and may include an interior evaluation as well, especially for buildings where important activities occurred within a building.[19]

For more information on the four National Register criteria, the types of places that are typically excluded, and how to determine integrity, please see the National Register Bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.[20]

Although the National Register requirements for significance and integrity may seem strict, they should not be used as a reason for dismissing a particular property out of hand. Often, a place that

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[16] Ibid., 21.
[17] Ibid., 25.
[18] Ibid., 44–48.
[19] Ibid., 46–47.
[20] https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.

might not appear to be eligible based on cursory research will prove to be eligible after a more in-depth analysis. Further, even if a place is eventually determined not to be eligible for the National Register, other types of commemoration may be appropriate. For instance, a building or site that does not have enough integrity to be listed in the National Register might instead be recognized though state or local historical marker programs.

Final decisions regarding eligibility or listing are made by the National Park Service. For that reason, this report uses language such as "likely eligible" or "appears to be eligible" when referring to places that have significance and integrity.

5.0 HISTORIC CONTEXTS

As directed by the National Register, this study provides several contexts within which a particular place may be shown to be significant. The sections below are arranged by themes, each corresponding with a specific time period and presented in rough chronological order—though certainly there is overlap, and any given place may be significant in more than one context, including in contexts not mentioned in this study.

Section 5.1: Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870, discusses the Underground Railroad, the abolitionist movement, African American participation in the Civil War, and how the shared experience of overcoming slavery helped strengthen African American social ties and institutions in Cincinnati's early decades.

Section 5.2: Education, 1844–1965 covers primary and secondary schools. Though the underlying legal framework differed between the states of Ohio and Kentucky, segregated school systems persisted into the 1960s throughout Greater Cincinnati and played an important role, not only in education, but as anchors of the African American community.

Section 5.3: Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975 highlights the work of African Americans in Greater Cincinnati to build homes and establish neighborhoods, often in the face of immense discriminatory barriers, as well as the efforts of public policymakers and private entities to provide much needed housing. It also discusses the impact of broader trends, such as the Great Migration and the Urban Renewal era, on the city's African American population.

Section 5.4: Journalism, 1844–1975, focuses on the leadership provided by the African American press, in general, as well as the careers of influential Black journalists.

Section 5.5: The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964, describes the ongoing campaigns—within the legal system, but more importantly, in the court of public opinion—to earn full recognition of

the civil rights protections promised after Reconstruction. This section includes both the modern Civil Rights Movement as well as earlier civil rights efforts.

Section 5.6: Religious Institutions, 1867–1975, covers church buildings in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Most commonly, religious buildings will be primarily significant within other contexts, such as for the role Black churches played in the antislavery era, as places of organizing during the Civil Rights Movement, or due to the political activities of their pastors or members.

Section 5.7: Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975, describes the contributions of local businesses that served in building a strong Black economy as well as the role these places of business played in providing spaces for African Americans during segregation.

Section 5.8: Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975, and **Section 5.9: Music and Entertainment, 1914–1975**, describe the accomplishments of individuals in these fields as well as the role of music and recreation in African American social life.

Section 5.10: Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975, highlights important fraternal, cultural, and social-service organizations that served the African American community.

5.1 Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870

Cincinnati began as Columbia, Losantiville, and North Bend—three small communities established in 1788 by white settlers coming from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and eastern Kentucky via the Ohio River. These new arrivals settled in the basin formed where Mill Creek and the Little Miami River meet the Ohio River, providing opportunities for agriculture and commerce. The settlers displaced Shawnee, Miami, Wyandot, and other Native people, who the United States government would formally expel from the area with the Treaty of Greenville in 1795.[21] The three new settlements, together, were renamed Cincinnati in 1790.

The Northwest Territory, in which Cincinnati was located, was established by the Continental Congress in 1787, the year before the settlers arrived. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 banned slavery throughout the territory. Ohio became a state in 1802, its constitution likewise outlawing slavery. On the other side of the Ohio River, however, what is now Kentucky was then part of the Commonwealth of Virginia, a slave state. Kentucky separated from Virginia and became its own state in 1782, continuing Virginia's legacy of legalized enslavement.

5.1.1 African Americans in Antebellum Cincinnati

The Cincinnati area remained sparsely populated for its first two decades. Although Census records show no Black population in 1800, a few African American residents lived there uncounted.[22] By 1810 the African American population within the city had reached eighty people. Some of these residents were enslaved; though this was illegal, enforcement was rare and many enslavers found loopholes, such as forcing enslaved people to sign contracts of indentured servitude prior to setting foot in Ohio.[23]

Cincinnati grew rapidly in the 1820s due to its expanding pork and steamboat industries, now drawing mostly Southern migrants via the Ohio River. By the 1850s, Cincinnati was the nation's sixth largest city, with 115,000 residents, 3,200 of whom were Black. It contained one of the largest

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[21] Beth Johnson, "Native Peoples of the Central Ohio Valley," September 30, 2024, https://cincinnatipreservation.org/native-peoples-of-the-central-ohio-valley/.

[22] Census records frequently undercount African Americans. Nikki Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom: Cincinnati's Black Community 1802*–1868 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004), 7. Almost certainly, a few African American residents lived uncounted in the city in the 1800s. "Gravesite of Samuel Wilcox Clark - Defender of African American Freemasonry," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/103; Joe William Trotter, Jr., *River Jordan: African American Urban Life in the Ohio Valley* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 6.

[23] Christopher Phillips, *The Rivers Ran Backwards: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Border Region* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 32-34.

African American communities in the country.[24] Most individuals consisted of people who had been formerly enslaved—some had escaped while others purchased their freedom, often with the support of family or other members of the free Black community.[25] Covington, Kentucky, across the river from Cincinnati, was platted by investors in 1815 but did not experience major population growth until around 1834, at which point Covington incorporated as a city. Of its 1840 population of 2,026, eleven Black residents were legally free and 89 were enslaved.

5.1.2 Pro-Slavery Attitudes

In the words of the urban historian Henry Louis Taylor, Jr., writing in the 1990s, "Cincinnati was not simply a northern city looking South. The city had a dual personality. A schizophrenic northern and southern personality in the same urban body. . . . [T]his contradiction is central to understanding the history of both Cincinnati and its African American population."[26]

Cincinnati's status as a border city meant that it had a complicated relationship with slavery and role with respect to the African American experience overall. The city's economy was largely based in commerce with the South, and its businesses and industries served Southern clients who owned enslaved people and profited from the system of enslavement. Pro-slavery sentiment and antislavery activism often coexisted in the same spaces.

Enslavement was not legal in Ohio, but this does not mean the African American community was fully free or accepted by the state's white residents. "I found every door closed against the colored man in a free State, excepting jails and penitentiaries," writes John Malvin of his arrival in Cincinnati in 1827. Malvin was the first African American person to leave an autobiographical account of his time in the city, which he found "little better than Virginia," where he had been born.[27]

Another noteworthy early resident was James Bradley, born in Guinea in West Africa in 1803 before being enslaved as a child and brought illegally (importation of enslaved people had been banned by federal law in 1808) to South Carolina, followed by Kentucky, and then Arkansas Territory. After each day of forced labor, he would work at night to make and sell horse collars, earning enough to purchase his freedom in 1833. He moved to Cincinnati and enrolled at preparatory school associated with Lane Seminary to become a Presbyterian minister. Bradley participated in the pivotal 1834 debates on "colonization," the then-popular belief among pro-

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[24] Nikki Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom: Cincinnati's Black Community 1802*–1868 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004), 2.
[25] Henry Taylor, *Race in the City: Work, Community, and Protest in Cincinnati, 1820–1970* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1993), xii.
[26] Ibid., xiv.
[27] Nikki Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 1.

slavery white Americans that free African Americans should be encouraged or forced to resettle in colonies in Africa. Lyman Beecher, head of the seminary, was a supporter of colonization and ordered the institution to remain ostensibly neutral on the topic, while a majority of the student body was opposed to colonization and walked out after the debates, enrolling elsewhere. The Lane Rebels, as the students were called, drew national attention and increased white Americans' support of abolition. Harriet Beecher Stowe, daughter of Lyman, was present at the debates and would later write *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, often credited as the most influential written work in the abolitionist movement. (The Harriet Beecher Stowe House at 2950 Gilbert Avenue is the only building associated with Lane Seminary that remains.)

Malvin and Bradley had moved from slave states to a state that was "free," in the sense that slavery had been outlawed, but in which the freedom of the Black population was limited in almost every other way imaginable. The statewide "Black Laws" of 1804 and 1807 restricted emigration to the state by imposing documentation requirements and mandating a $500 bond for travelers. Black people were also precluded from testifying in court or serving on juries; crimes committed against them often went unreported or unpunished as a result. Dismayed by the conditions he encountered in Ohio, Malvin considered returning to Virginia, but soon decided to remain in the north and organize for freedom: "I became acquainted with many of the colored people there residing, and … began to interest myself in the condition of my race."[28] Malvin played a role in the planning of the Wilberforce Colony, a community established in Ontario, Canada, where African American people could emigrate from the United States and live in freedom. He also organized area Black churches to petition against the Black Laws and helped enslaved people escape from boats on the Ohio River—Malvin was a participant in what would later be known as the "Underground Railroad," before the movement had taken on that name.[29]

To Henry Taylor's duality described above, twenty-first-century historian Nikki Taylor adds "a third personality—a western one." According to Nikki Taylor, the "worst aspects" of all three geographical influences combined in Cincinnati: "a southern racial code, northern segregation and discrimination, and western mob violence."[30] White residents targeted their Black neighbors with intimidation and violence, as exemplified by rioting in 1829, 1836, and 1841; competition for jobs and wages was a contributing factor. All three events destroyed Black institutions, such as newspapers; after the 1829 event, in particular, many Black residents chose to leave the city, often relocating to other states or Canada (Malvin, for one example, would spend the rest of his career as a canal boat captain based in Cleveland). Among Northern cities, Cincinnati was known for the frequency and severity of its racial violence.[31]

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[28] John Malvin, *The Autobiography of John Malvin* (Cleveland, 1879), 11.
[29] Ibid., 13–15.
[30] Nikki Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 5.
[31] Ibid., 2–3.

5.1.3 African American Activism and the Growth of Black Institutions

In this climate of racism, a strong antislavery movement, along with an organized effort to improve the legal status of African American people in the "free" state of Ohio, also flourished, especially from in the 1840s through the 1850s.

Carter G. Woodson, writing in the *Journal of Negro History* in 1916, divides the antebellum Black experience in Cincinnati into three periods: "one of toleration [by white residents] from 1800 to 1826, one of persecution from 1826 to 1841, and one of amelioration from 1841 to 1861."[32] Nikki Taylor, in turn, describes a progression from the "alienation and vulnerability" experienced by a "transient population of former slaves" in the 1820s to an atmosphere of "political self-respect and self-determination in the 1840s. A "self-conscious black community" had developed that was now working in an organized fashion to ameliorate its status.[33]

Taylor describes 1841 as a pivotal year, with the riot of late August, in particular, a "watershed moment." In that year, the Ohio Supreme Court *State v. Farr* decision determined that enslaved people in transit through the state were automatically free; merchants from slaveholding states began to boycott Cincinnati businesses in protest. The boycott, combined with a nationwide economic downturn that began with the Panic of 1837 and continued through 1841, meant that Ohio River commerce was struggling, and the jobs for which African American and Irish immigrant workers typically competed had become increasingly scarce. A fistfight turned into a riot in which white mobs attacked Black homes and businesses.

According to Taylor, the response to that violent event was markedly different from anything that had occurred in previous decades, when displaced African American residents often fled the city. This time, African Americans organized in self-defense. Taylor writes, the decision to fight back "signals that the black community had begun to shed its sense of vulnerability and isolation … this community had come to possess enough confidence to lay claim to Cincinnati as its home."[34] After this turning point, the African American community began to build institutions. Black schools, newspapers, mutual aid and vigilance societies, and lodges all appeared in the years that followed.

Of these institutions, the schools were arguably the most influential. First, there were privately funded schools, often short-lived; in 1849 Ohio established an African American public school system after years of effective lobbying and legal challenges by Black residents. (Significant educational institutions are described separately in **Section 5.2: Education, 1844–1965**, below.)

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[32] Wendell P. Dabney, *Cincinnati's Colored Citizens: Historical, Sociological, and Biographical (Cincinnati: The Dabney Publishing Company, 1926),* 31.
[33] Nikki Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 2.
[34] Ibid, 117.

Education was not the only area in which African American activists achieved legislative and legal victories during this era. The same year the African American public school system was created, the state legislature repealed most of the restrictions of the Black Laws as well. This came after over a decade of fervent organizing and petitioning by Black residents and white anti-slavery societies around the state and made possible a list of legal protections that continued to expand.

One landmark legal battle commenced just east of Cincinnati: the 1856 case of Henry Poindexter. The defendant was an enslaved man from Carthage, Kentucky, who had been making installment payments—on a promissory note co-signed by three of his white employers in New Richmond, Ohio—to purchase his own freedom. In *Anderson v. Poindexter*, the Ohio Supreme Court took a stand, consistent with *State v. Farr* but against the 1850 federal Fugitive Slave Act and upheld that, the moment Poindexter had set foot in Ohio, he became legally free and was no longer responsible for making any further payments.

In contrast to Poindexter's story, however, there are just as many examples of situations where the law alone was inadequate to protect the rights of Black Ohioans. Henrietta Wood, a Free Black resident of Cincinnati, was kidnapped in 1853 by a local deputy sheriff while on an errand in Covington, Kentucky, and illegally sold into enslavement. Such extralegal kidnappings, often aided by law enforcement and local court systems, were not uncommon. Wood remained enslaved until after the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and did not have the means to travel to Cincinnati until 1870. Upon returning home, however, Wood sued her enslavers in a Covington court and won, receiving an award large enough to purchase a house in Chicago and enroll her son at Union Law School (now part of Northwestern University)—though the award was certainly not great enough to compensate for the full extent of the harm she suffered.[35]

In the atmosphere of mutual support of the 1840s and 1850s, community-building also extended to the construction of homes and the development of neighborhoods. One important figure was Robert Gordon, who began his career enslaved, made to work in a coal yard in Virginia. Over the years, Gordon managed to collect and sell enough coal dust from the yard so that he eventually earned enough to purchase his freedom. Gordon moved to Cincinnati in 1847 and used his knowledge of the coal industry to become a successful businessman and, later, real estate developer (see **Section 5.3: Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975**).

5.1.4 The Underground Railroad

Perhaps the most well-known of the efforts of Black Cincinnatians to improve their community, as well as of American antislavery efforts in general, is the Underground Railroad—the system of

[35] "Henrietta Wood," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/178.

largely informal connections that assisted those fleeing enslavement to travel through the South and the North and find freedom, often in Canada, beyond the grasp of the United States government and law enforcement.

Freedom seekers were not automatically safe upon entering Ohio. Throughout the history of slavery, but especially after the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and the Supreme Court *Dred Scot v. Sandford* ruling in 1857, people who had escaped from enslavement into free states were subject to recapture and return, and the Black and white people who assisted them were criminalized.

Among the most prominent white participants in the Underground Railroad were the Quaker abolitionists Levi and Catharine Coffin. They housed freedom seekers and ran a free-labor store in Newport (now Fountain City), Indiana, for over two decades and worked to organize the clandestine transportation network that assisted those fleeing enslavement. The Coffins moved to Cincinnati in 1847 to expand upon their work, operating a free-labor warehouse and housing freedom seekers at their home for the next ten years (neither the home nor warehouse remain). In his autobiography, Levi Coffin estimates that he assisted three thousand people escape from enslavement; he also traveled around the United States, Great Britain, and France to form anti-slavery societies and raise funds.[36]

John Van Zandt, formerly a Kentucky slaveholder who freed those he enslaved and moved to what is now the Evendale neighborhood of Cincinnati, became a participant in the Underground Railroad. Van Zandt assisted at least one freedom seeker who had been employed as a kitchen worker at the home of Harriet Beecher Stowe; Van Zandt became the inspiration for the character of John Van Trompe in Stowe's novel *Uncle Toms's Cabin*. Van Zandt was eventually caught in 1842 while transporting two freedom-seeking people in his wagon; he died in prison in 1847.

A well-known event in Cincinnati's Underground Railroad history was the escape of what Levi Coffin describes as "the Company of Twenty-Eight Fugitives," often shortened to the "Escape of the 28." Successfully concealing and transporting this large group of individuals at the same time required the extensive collaboration of both Black and white participants. John Fairfield, a white merchant in Boone County, Kentucky (though his motives may not have been entirely altruistic; Fairfield charged a fee for his work), helped the group cross the Ohio River in three boats, and then went into the city to summon help while the freedom seekers hid along the riverbank. John Hatfield, a Black barber and the leader of a local vigilance committee, along with the Quaker abolitionist Levi Coffin, hired buggies and coaches and assembled the group into a mock funeral procession headed towards Wesleyan Cemetery in Cumminsville. Once in College Hill, the

[36] Levi Coffin, *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin (Cincinnati, 1876).*

freedom seekers were housed, fed, and clothed by several Black and white households until a group of covered wagons departed on a route that took them through the Underground Railroad hubs of Newport, Indiana; Coldwater, Michigan; Detroit; and finally, to safety in Ontario, Canada.

Importantly, the work of the Underground Railroad had impacts beyond the direct effect of assisting formerly enslaved people to find safety. The movement also helped to create and strengthen social bonds among African Americans who lived in Cincinnati.[37] There are many stories from the 1840s through 1861 of stories of mutual support among prominent individuals who supported the Black community in several roles simultaneously. Individuals who assisted freedom-seeking people were often also church leaders, business owners, advocates for African American educational opportunities, and members of social organizations.

Black abolitionists included Sarah Fossett, who is credited with, among other achievements, integrating Cincinnati's streetcar system. In 1860, she clung to a streetcar as it pulled away from its platform, hanging on for several blocks while a conductor tried to push her off. She sued the City Passenger Railroad Company and won. Sarah Fossett, with her husband Peter Fossett, also organized the First Baptist Church of Cumminsville (no longer extant; the congregation is presently located at 3646 Roll Avenue in Cincinnati) and participated in the Underground Railroad by housing freedom seekers in their home.[38] Others active on the Underground Railroad included Thomas Dorum, a wealthy whitewasher and his wife "Aunt Jane" Dorum; William Casey, a boatman who would row across the Ohio River, at great personal risk, to pick up people who had freed themselves from enslavement; William Watson, a financially successful barber; Henry Boyd, owner of an eponymous furniture factory; Augustus R. Green, pastor of Bethel AME Church;[39] and Eliza Potter, a wealthy hairdresser who had traveled extensively through Europe before settling in Cincinnati.[40] William Beckley, a carpenter and deacon of Union Chapel who was instrumental in obtaining testimony from enslaved people in the 1856 case of Margaret Garner, an enslaved person who killed her two-year-old daughter Mary and attempted to kill her others three children rather than see them forced into enslavement.

Margaret Garner and her family had traveled across the Ohio River in January when it was frozen during an uncommonly cold winter, but were caught and tried under the Fugitive Slave Act. Garner had been enslaved at Maplewood Farm in Boone County, Kentucky, before escaping. With her husband, Robert, and four children, they took refuge in the home of Margaret's uncle, Joe Kite,

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[37] Kendrick, Crystal, "The History of African Americans in Cincinnati," The Voice of Black Cincinnati, February 26, 2025, https://thevoiceofblackcincinnati.com/history-of-african-americans-in-cincinnati/.
[38] "Sarah Mayrant Walker Fossett: a Black Woman Who Built an Empire, Changed Society, and Fostered Community," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/59.
[39] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 48–51.
[40] Ibid., 136

somewhere in the Mill Creek Valley near Cincinnati. While Kite's house was surrounded by United States Marshals, Garner killed one of her children and attempted to do the same with her other children and herself, before being captured. After a lengthy trial involving complicated issues of state versus federal jurisdiction, Garner was returned to enslavement in Kentucky and then sold to Louisiana.[41] The story later inspired the novel *Beloved* by Toni Morrison and a movie by the same name. (Maplewood Farm, in Richwood, Kentucky, and nearby Presbyterian Church, with which the Garner family may have been associated, remain extant, but are outside the project area for evaluation within this context study.)

5.1.5 The Civil War in Ohio

As mentioned above, the period from the 1840s into the Civil War defined an African American community that was increasingly well organized and able to gradually overturn racist laws, foster an atmosphere of mutual aid and support, and generally improve its legal status. The events of the Civil War also showed a community determined to stand up in defense of its home.

Despite the overall trend of improvement during antebellum years, Cincinnati remained a challenging environment for African Americans; and racism towards Black residents only worsened in the years before and during the war. An 1862 riot was a "turning point" when the economic gains by Black residents of the prior decades "almost vanished."[42] Like the 1841 rioting, the 1862 violence was prompted by competition for wages and jobs in the steamboat industry; presently, these had suddenly become scarce as war broke out. Mostly Irish dock workers succeeded in driving Black laborers from their jobs, eliminating a major source of Black wealth in Cincinnati, from which the African American community would not fully recover. Black employment, in general, was cut in half. As Peter H. Clark observes in 1864: "Nowhere has the prejudice against colored people been more cruelly manifested than here."[43]

During the Civil War, Cincinnati played a key role. It was a major port city, critical for moving troops and supplies for the Union Army. It was also the headquarters for the Department of the Ohio, which directed military offensives into Kentucky and Tennessee. Cincinnati's strategic importance meant that it was a prime target for invasion.

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[41] Nikki Taylor, *Driven toward Madness: The Fugitive Slave Margaret Garner and Tragedy on the Ohio*, (Cincinnati: Ohio University Press, 2016). Sarah Haselhorst, "Margaret Garner's Story Has Resonated for the Past 164 Years. It's One She Never Got to Tell," *The Enquirer*, August 3, 2020, https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2020/07/29/margaret-garners-story-has-resonated-decades-its-one-she-never-got-tell/5478537002/.

[42] Kendrick, "The History of African Americans in Cincinnati."

[43] Peter H. Clark, *The Black Brigade of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, 1864), 3–4.

In August of 1862, Confederate forces were advancing through Kentucky, and an invasion of the city seemed imminent. Black Cincinnatians were eager to defend the city and made great contributions to the Union war effort. Wendell Dabney, in *Cincinnati's Colored Citizens*, quotes an unnamed contemporary observer who notes how Cincinnati's Black men were hastily pressed into service by white officials, even as many of those same men had already been turned down when they sought to enlist as volunteers:

> The colored men were roughly handled by the Irish police … at the point of the bayonet, and gathered in vacant yards and guarded. What rendered this act more than ordinarily atrocious was that they, through their head men, had, at first alarm, been the earliest to volunteer their services to our mayor for the defense of our common homes. It was a sad sight to see human beings treated like reptiles.[44]

General Lew Wallace, military commander of Cincinnati, assigned local judge William Martin Dickson to reorganize a haphazardly assembled group of forced laborers into the Black Brigade of Cincinnati, likely the first formalized group of African American participants in the war. On September 4, when Dickson took charge, he immediately released about 400 conscripted workers back to their homes and families. The next morning, 700 African American men showed up as volunteers. The Black Brigade worked on the Kentucky side of the river, clearing forests and building roads and fortifications in preparation for the expected assault. By September 20, the fortifications were complete, and Cincinnati would survive the Civil War unscathed. Many members of the Black Brigade would go on to serve in the United States Army for the remainder of the war. [45]

5.1.6 Kentucky Before and During the Civil War

African Americans were among the earliest non-Native people in what is now Kentucky, accompanying white explorers and pioneers such as Christopher Gist and Daniel Boone in the 1770s.

As the area was settled, enslaved laborers cleared land and built infrastructure. In rural areas, enslaved people worked mostly in tobacco and hemp farming; in urban areas along the Ohio River, they were skilled artisans and house servants. When Kentucky separated from Virginia in 1792, it adopted a similar constitution, including legalized slavery. A series of laws passed by the state legislature from the 1790s through the 1850s severely restricted the rights of both enslaved and free Black Kentuckians to travel around the state or conduct business. Kentucky's African Americans numbered almost a quarter of the total population in the 1830s, a larger share than in

[44] Ibid., 24.
[45] "Black Brigade," n.d. http://library.cincymuseum.org/aag/history/blackbrigade.html.

Ohio. This number would decline slightly over the following decades: many enslaved people in Kentucky were sold to the Cotton Belt states further south, where climate and soil conditions suitable for plantation agriculture made slavery more profitable. About five percent of African Americans in Kentucky were free. As was often the case in the South, slaveholders attempted to prevent those whom they enslaved from learning about the abolitionist movement and, when it came, the start of the Civil War. This was largely futile; many escaped to join the Underground Railroad and, later, the Northern war effort.

Kentucky was one of the four Civil War "border states," slave states that did not secede to join the Confederacy. Neither did Kentucky abolish slavery on its own accord, as Maryland and Missouri did. However, during the war, more than seventy percent of those enslaved in Kentucky became free. Some escaped to join the Union army, with nearly one-third of Union soldiers from Kentucky being African American, a remarkable number (the average nationwide was about ten percent).[46] In other cases, enslavers fled further south, leaving their enslaved people behind. Slaveholding society, in general, was weakened to the point that even in cases where enslavers remained present, enslaved people were often able to demand that they begin being paid for their work.

5.1.7 Reconstruction and Discrimination

In general, the decades following the Civil War were marked by optimism in Ohio. The end of the war brought about the Reconstruction Amendments: The Thirteenth Amendment, in 1865, abolished slavery; the Fourteenth Amendment, in 1868, affirmed the citizenship of African Americans and provided a guarantee of due process and equal protection. All male citizens were guaranteed the right to vote by the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870.

In Ohio, state laws passed in 1884 and 1894 prohibited discrimination in most public places, though they would often go unenforced. Benjamin Arnett, an African American state legislator and national AME church leader who had previously been pastor of Brown Chapel and then Allen Temple in Cincinnati, secured passage of the Arnett Act of 1887, ostensibly ending segregation in the public school system.

With the repeal of racist laws from the 1840s through the 1880s, the citizenship and equal protection guarantees of the Reconstruction Amendments of 1865 through 1870, and the anti-discrimination laws of the 1880s and 1890s, the tools of white supremacy and racism shifted from legally sanctioned oppression to more indirect means. Discrimination in employment and public accommodations combined with other factors such that the African American experience in Cincinnati from the late nineteenth century onwards would be largely defined by a degree of

[46] "Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military During the Civil War," National Archives, October 4, 2023, https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war.

segregation more severe than what existed previously (see **Section 5.5: The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964**).

Patterns of residential segregation, too, emerged in the 1870s and 1880s and solidified in the decades that followed. Contributing factors included streetcar suburbanization, overall population growth, including an increase in the share of Cincinnati's Black population, and racism. (See **Section 5.3: Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975**.

5.1.8 Antislavery and Underground Railroad Resources: National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

According to the National Park Service, "the Underground Railroad refers to the effort—sometimes spontaneous, sometimes highly organized—to assist persons held in bondage in North America to escape from slavery."[47] The term itself arose in the 1830s, though its exact origins are unclear. Regardless, from the 1820s into the 1860s, the public perception grew of a clandestine network assisting those fleeing enslavement; along with this perception, so increased the number of white individuals willing to assist in the underground effort. Despite the growing number of individual participants, the network remained informal and was not centrally organized. Finally, although the work of white allies is perhaps more well documented, throughout the entire Underground Railroad era, it was Black participants—both enslaved and free—in this network who provided the vast majority of logistical and financial support and who bore the largest share of the risk. According to James G. Birney, a former slaveholder from Kentucky and Alabama who became an anti-slavery society organizer and editor of the abolitionist newspaper *The Philanthropist* in Cincinnati in 1836, "such [Underground Railroad] matters are almost uniformly managed by the colored people. I know nothing of them generally till they are past."[48] Harriet Wilson, a College Hill resident whose parents participated in the Underground Railroad when she was a child (see below) recalls in a 1892 letter that African American households in the vicinity of College Hill often served as primary stopping points; Wilson also notes that white women often participated in the Underground Railroad without the cooperation of their husbands.[49] Regrettably, Underground Railroad properties associated with African Americans and women are not as well documented.

In general, known extant historic resources associated with the Underground Railroad are few. Such places, by their nature, were not well documented even in their time; over the past 160 years

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[47] "Exploring a Common Past: Researching and Interpreting the Underground Railroad," n.d. https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/ugrr/exugrr2.htm.
[48] Ibid. The office of *The Philanthropist* was ransacked twice, during riots in 1836 and 1841.
[49] See https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Harriet-Wilson-letter-jan-20-2014-.pdf

since the antislavery era, Cincinnati and the surrounding communities have been remade through demolition and new construction, resulting in a loss of resources over the decades.

Assisting people fleeing enslavement was not only illegal with severe consequences; it could also prompt vigilante, mob violence.[50] Understandably, contemporary records are almost nonexistent.[51] For the most part, written works are based on oral histories collected many years later, such as *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (1898) written by Ohio University professor Wilbur H. Seibert citing hundreds of interviews with former freedom seekers. Most of the routes and safe places that were used will likely never be known, and the stories of individuals who helped freedom seekers, or of freedom seekers themselves, are often lost. Thus, countless places of refuge, such as homes and businesses of activists, almost certainly still exist, and yet never will be known conclusively.

Due to this scarcity of records, combined with the general number of buildings and sites that have been demolished or destroyed over the past century and a half, only a very small fraction of properties associated with the Underground Railroad are known to still exist. For that reason, known Underground Railroad resources are of an extremely high level of importance, and will almost always be eligible for the National Register and warrant additional protection, preservation, and interpretation.

Many, or even most, homes known to have been used as stations on the Underground Railroad, as well as those of prominent abolitionists (these were the same) no longer exist. In Cincinnati, these include the residences of Susan Tinsley, on Seventh Street,[52] and William Beckley, on Third Street,[53] or of Levi and Catharine Coffin. For the Coffin family, buildings associated with their free-labor enterprise also no longer remain. Many other places, associated with perhaps less well-known individuals, also no longer exist. One such example is the United Colored American Association cemetery in Avondale, a frequent stopping place for those on the Underground Railroad. The cemetery, like many other African American burial places, no longer exists.[54] In some instances, entire communities, such as the College Hill neighborhood—named after the no-longer-extant Farmers' College, with which many white abolitionists were affiliated—were known

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[50] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 7.
[51] One very important exception is the work of William Sill, who collected detailed records of over six hundred freedom-seeking people that he assisted in the Philadelphia area in order to help family members reunite after they were resettled. Still later published *The Underground Railroad Records* in 1872 based on the information he recorded.
[52] "Gravesite of Susan Webb Tinsley: African American Socialite and Underground Railroad Agent," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/96.
[53] "Gravesite of William H. Beckley: Underground Railroad Agent," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/106.
[54] "Sexton's House Site, Former 'Colored Cemetery,' Avondale: a Stop on the Underground Railroad," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/200.

to be supportive of the cause.[55] One example of such a person is John T. Crawford, who housed freedom-seeking people on his farm, became a Union solder, and, in his will, endowed a retirement home for Black men who had endured enslavement; neither Crawford's farm nor the retirement home remain.[56] Further research may be able to connect Underground Railroad activities with still-extant places or buildings in these communities.

Due to the scarcity of remaining properties, all places associated with the Underground Railroad are of extreme importance and almost certainly eligible for recognition under National Register Criterion A. Already listed in the National Register is the Samuel and Sally Wilson House (1502 Aster Place), whose white residents housed freedom seekers and were involved in College Hill's community of abolitionists.[57] The Charlton Wallace House (2563 Hackberry Street) is also listed, though its nomination form states only that it contains a room "believed to have been used" for the Underground Railroad.[58] Not listed, however, are two houses at 5434 and 5350 and Hamilton Avenue (both only a short distance from the aforementioned Wilson House; the latter is now Six Acres Bed and Breakfast) associated with Zebulon Strong, a Quaker farmer who met freedom seekers in the nearby Mill Creek ravine and transported them in his wagon.[59]

These significant places are also remarkable for showing only minimal alterations from the period of significance, thus clearly retaining "integrity," as defined by the National Register. However, even if additional Underground Railroad properties were to be identified in the future with more extensive alterations, such alterations would not necessarily reduce the ability of these places to tell the story of the freedom seekers who took refuge there. Integrity of design, association, and setting would likely be most critical.

Landscapes, too, such as overland routes or river crossing sites, are equally important to the extent that their associations with the Underground Railroad can be confirmed. According to the National Park Service, such routes are "virtually impossible" to verify; sites that retain their integrity are even rarer.[60] One example of such a route in Cincinnati is now known as LaBoiteaux Woods

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[55] "Farmers' College: How This Institution Helped Facilitate the Underground Railroad in College Hill," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/66.
[56] "Site of Crawford Old Men's Home: Once a Stop on the Underground Railroad and Elder Care Facility for Black Men," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d. https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/159. The Lincoln Crawford Care Center, in Walnut Hills, is a direct successor to the facility initially established by Crawford.
[57] National Register of Historic Places, "Samuel and Sally Wilson House," 2000.
[58] "Charlton Wallace House: Former Catholic Monastery with an Underground Railroad Connection," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/75.
[59] "History of Six Acres," n.d., https://sixacresbb.com/history-of-six-acres/.
[60] "It is virtually impossible to trace, with any precision, the routes that runaway slaves took overland to reach free states in the Northeast and Midwest. Legend and tradition, while insufficient evidence in themselves, can often be signposts that suggest where digging for further information may be most profitable" notes the National Park Service. "Exploring a Common Past: Researching and Interpreting the Underground Railroad," n.d., https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/ugrr/exugrr2.htm.

Preserve: the portion of the Mill Creek Valley that runs adjacent to the College Hill neighborhood, an important stopping point on the Underground Railroad and the location of the Strong and Wilson houses. Of this ravine, Harriet Wilson, daughter of Sally and Samuel, recalls in a 1892 letter: "the deep shadowed ravines and valleys lying on each side of our beautiful hill, soon seemed to be the popular route chosen by the wayfarers."[61] Beyond just the ravine, the nearby Wilson and Strong houses, along with the western ravine at Bradford-Felter Tanglewood park, together, warrant evaluation and documentation as a cultural landscape and may be eligible for the National Register as a district.

Additional sites with known Underground Railroad associations include the Wesleyan Cemetery at 4003 Colerain Avenue in Cincinnati, the destination of Levi Coffin's "Twenty-Eight Fugitives."[62] (The cemetery, with graves of Black Civil War veterans and notable abolitionists, appears to meet the "persons of transcendent importance" requirement for listing a cemetery under National Register Criteria Consideration D.")[63] Finally, Ohio River crossing sites, to the extent that they can be verifiably documented, would also likely be eligible.

Houses of slaveholders are significant as expressions of the craftsmanship of enslaved people who built and maintained them; at times, components of the buildings themselves were designed by those who were enslaved there—individuals whose work typically remained anonymous and unacknowledged. For this reason, enslaver houses will typically be eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and, sometimes, C. In Greater Cincinnati, this includes Somerset Hall in Ludlow, Kentucky (416 Closson Court), built by enslaved people around 1845; Bellevue, the home of slaveholding James Taylor built in 1945 in Newport, Kentucky (335 East Third Street); and the Carneal House, built in 1815 and possibly Covington's oldest building (405 East Second Street; the slave quarters once present have been demolished). The latter two properties are listed in the National Register—Bellevue individually, and the Carneal House as part of the Riverside Drive Historic District—though documentation does not include the stories of enslaved people that lived and worked there. Though outside of the study area for evaluation under this project, the Dinsmore Homestead in Boone County, Kentucky is significant as an African American agricultural landscape worked by people who were enslaved.[64]

Purpose-built escape tunnels and secret rooms, though common in legends and rumors, do not exist in the historical record. For this reason, the presence of a hidden tunnel or room in a building from the Underground Railroad era should not be interpreted as evidence that the property was

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[61] "Hamilton Avenue Road to Freedom," n.d., https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/.
[62] "Wesleyan Cemetery," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/151.
[63] Ibid., 14–15., 3.
[64] National Register of Historic Places, "Dinsmore Homestead (Additional Documentation)" 2023.

used as a refuge by freedom-seeking people. However, structures or features built for utilitarian purposes, such as root cellars or service entrances, were likely to have been used by enslaved people, whether for work or for refuge and escape. For this reason, such features, when they exist, are important aspects of a building or site's character and should be preserved.[65] The Carneal House is one such example of a building with a below-grade service entrance accessing the Licking River.[66]

Finally, places not directly associated with slavery or the Underground Railroad, but connected with public antislavery efforts and advocacy, will be eligible under Criterion A. The Harriet Beecher Stowe House, the only remaining building of Lane Seminary and the residence of Harriet Beecher Stowe, is listed in the National Register.

With the onset of the Civil War in 1861, the Underground Railroad era ended, and antislavery activities shifted to the war effort itself. The contributions of African Americans to the war to end enslavement tend to be underrecognized: For example, a historical marker along the river in Covington, "Civil War Fortifications," fails to acknowledge the contributions of African American laborers. Partly addressing this disparity, Battery Coombs and Battery Bates, in Devou Park in Covington, Kentucky, were added to the National Register in 2018, with documentation recognizing the Black Brigade of Cincinnati. Overall, few fortifications remain (none, other than Battery Coombs and Battery Bates, are known to exist within the study area for this project); any that do are likely to also be eligible for listing.

Finally, relatively indirect associations with antislavery and the Underground Railroad may exist with respect to properties eligible for the National Register for other reasons. One such example is Spring Grove Cemetery (4521 Spring Grove Avenue in Cincinnati), listed for its significance in the context of landscape architecture. There, the Coffin Memorial was erected by Black leaders in 1902 to honor Levi and Catharine Coffin. Though the memorial is unlikely to be eligible for the National Register on its own basis, the Spring Grove Cemetery documentation should be amended to include information on this important feature.

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[65] Fergus M. Bordewich, "Myths of the Underground Railroad," n.d., https://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/ugrr/thematic-essays/myths-of-the-underground-railroad-bordewich/. Bordewich argues that legends about tunnels and secret rooms overstate the importance of white property owners and downplay the agency of African Americans, who were not "incapable of helping themselves."

[66] Sarah Stephens and Sarah Stephens, "The Carneal House Is a Ghostly Presence on Covington's Riverfront," *Cincinnati CityBeat*, August 9, 2025, https://www.citybeat.com/news/the-carneal-house-is-a-ghostly-presence-on-covington-s-riverfront-12181832/.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Battery Coombs and Battery Bates	Sleepy Hollow Rd., Covington, KY	Listed
Bellevue	335 Third St., Newport, KY	Listed
Carneal House	405 E Second St., Covington, KY	Listed
Charlton Wallace House	2563 Hackberry St., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Colored American Cemetery/United American Cemetery	4732 Duck Creek Rd., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Columbia Baptist Cemetery (Pioneer Memorial Cemetery)	333 Wilmer Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Elon Strong House (Six Acres Bed and Breakfast)	5350 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Frank Duveneck House and Studio	1226 Greenup St., Covington, KY	Listed
Harriet Beecher Stowe House/Edgemont Inn	2950 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati OH	Listed
LaBoiteaux Woods	5400 Lanius Ln., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Samuel and Sally Wilson House	1502 Aster Pl., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Somerset Hall	416 Closson Court, Ludlow, KY	Eligible
Suspected Crossing Site	1 Anderson Ferry Rd., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Suspected Crossing Site	6125 River Rd., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Wesleyan Cemetery	4003 Colerain Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Zebulon and Hannah Strong House	5434 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

Further evaluation of LaBoiteaux Woods, Somerset Hall, and both houses associated with Zebulon Strong are included in **Appendix A**.

5.2 Education, 1844–1965

During the era of community-building in Cincinnati (**Section 5.1: Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building, 1820–1870**), African American schools were key to Black identity and central to Black activism. These schools were privately funded at first; in 1849, Ohio established a segregated, Black-only public school system. Perhaps an unintended (by white lawmakers) consequence of this segregation, African American educators had control of curriculum, faculty hiring, and admissions; consequently, African American schools became an incubator for abolitionist ideas. Arguably even more so than the Black churches that tended to be the focus of social and political life in other Northern cities, schools, in Ohio and in Cincinnati especially, played a central role in protest and activism.[67] In one form or another, this Black educational system, separate and parallel to the white schools, persisted in Cincinnati from 1844, when Cincinnati High School (also known as Gilmore High School) was founded, to 1962, when the all-Black Harriet Beecher Stowe School closed.[68] In Kentucky, though the underlying state and local policies were different, schools were also segregated until 1965, the year Covington's William Grant High School closed, its all-Black student body merging with other institutions.

5.2.1 The Independent Colored School System in Cincinnati

Whether educated as students in African American schools or employed by those schools as teachers or administrators, many prominent Black Cincinnatians began or furthered their careers in the segregated school system, creating and maintaining networks of activism and mutual support. The separate school system had both benefits and drawbacks for the African American community, and debates over the merits of this system persisted for as long as the schools remained segregated.

The first public schools in Cincinnati were established in 1829 but were not open to Black students. African American schools were privately funded; prominent among these early schools was the Cincinnati High School—more commonly known as Gilmore High School, after its founder, Hiram S. Gilmore—founded in 1844.[69] (Gilmore was a white, abolitionist Unitarian minister who studied at Lane Seminary in Walnut Hills, now part of Cincinnati.) Although Gilmore High School lasted only four years, its graduates John Isom Gaines and Peter H. Clark would become some of

[67] Kendrick, "The History of African Americans in Cincinnati;" Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 5.
[68] Significant *de-facto* segregation continued long after, culminating in the *Bronson v. Board of Education of the School District of Cincinnati* consent degree in 1988. Witt, Julianna. "Bronson V. Board of Education: A Settlement Is Reached," October 7, 2025. https://libapps.libraries.uc.edu/liblog/2025/10/bronson-v-board-of-education-a-settlement-is-reached/.
[69] Kendrick, "The History of African Americans in Cincinnati."

the most important Black advocates of the pre-Civil War era. Among other accomplishments, both successfully lobbied and litigated to improve the legal status of African Americans in Ohio.

Gaines was an abolitionist, advocate for Black education, and prominent voice of the temperance movement. Gaines played a key role in successfully petitioning the Ohio legislature to create a public school system for African Americans in 1849.[70] Although Gaines died at the relatively young age of 39 in 1859, Gaines High School, founded after the war in 1866, was named in recognition of his role in making possible its creation.

Clark, son of a barber, enrolled in Gilmore High School during its inaugural year and graduated to become a teacher in the newly formed Cincinnati public school system in 1849. He worked without pay for two years as the city government, despite the state legislation establishing the Black school system, did not provide them with funding. (The city had attempted to work around the state law by decreasing property taxes on Black-owned properties, rather than using the revenue to fund schools.) Clark, Gaines, and William Beckley together successfully sued the city of Cincinnati for the state-mandated financial support, effectively establishing Cincinnati's Black public school system as well as earning Clark two years of back pay. The new Black schools were eventually managed by the Independent Colored School System, a school board established in 1852.[71]

Clark went on to become an abolitionist writer, speaker, and publisher. He was editor of a Free Soil Party publication based in Newport, Kentucky and became principal of the Western District School in Cincinnati (no longer extant) in 1857. He was active in Republican Party, Workingmen's Party, and Socialist Labor Party politics and authored a history of the Black Brigade of Cincinnati. Gaines was a board member of the new African American school system and fought to ensure that the schools continued to be led by African Americans. He also encouraged Black parents to send their children to these schools, publishing *What is the Duty of the American Colored Parent?* in 1858.[72]

Gaines High School was Cincinnati's first and, at the time, only public high school for African Americans. It also served as a regional normal school; a generation of professional teachers was educated and trained for careers throughout Southwest Ohio. The African American school board was eliminated in 1874, over the objections of African American educators, who saw it as a white takeover.[73] The segregated African American school system continued to exist, if somewhat reorganized—William Parham, for example, went from being superintendent under the school

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[70] "John Isom Gaines - a Creator and Defender of Cincinnati's Colored Schools," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/100.
[71] "CPS History - Cincinnati Public Schools," n.d., https://www.cps-k12.org/our-district/about-us/cps-history.
[72] "John Isom Gaines - a Creator and Defender of Cincinnati's Colored Schools," Cincinnati Sites and Stories.
[73] Louis Depugh Easton, letter to the *New National Era*, January 14, 1872.

board to "principal" of all African American schools in the city.[74] Gaines High School remained in operation for a little over twenty years before being closed, in 1890 (see below).[75] In its tenure, Gaines High School graduated over one hundred students and strengthened the city's growing Black middle class.[76] The importance of Gaines extended beyond the region, as many of its students migrated to the South during the Reconstruction-era to teach at newly formed schools there.[77] (Neither the Gaines High School nor Gilmore High School buildings remain extant today.)

The views of Gaines and Clark regarding the importance of an African American school system were not shared by all Black Ohioans; others worked for full integration. One such advocate, Benjamin Arnett, was pastor of the Allen Temple AME Church in Cincinnati and was elected to the Ohio General Assembly in 1885. Arnett successfully worked with Jeremiah A. Brown, a legislator from Cleveland elected that same year, to repeal the Black Laws and other discriminatory policies. As part of this effort, the two successfully passed a law in 1887—sometimes called the Arnett Act or the Brown-Arnett Act—requiring public schools to be integrated. The closing of Gaines High School, mentioned above, was in response to this act. Its students were distributed among formerly white schools; soon, every school in Cincinnati had at least a few Black students, according to a 1919 analysis by the Black sociologist James Hathaway Robinson, who had come to teach in Cincinnati after obtaining degrees at Fisk University and Yale University.[78]

5.2.2 African American Schools in Cincinnati after 1887

Even after the Arnett Act, at least one school remained, de facto, an African American school, in that it employed Black teachers and focused on the needs of Black students. This was the Elm Street School (later, the Frederick Douglass School), located in the African American neighborhood of Walnut Hills. The school board argued that by making segregation voluntary, rather than mandatory (in theory, white students had the option of attending Elm Street School, and Black students often attended majority-white schools), they were complying with the Arnett Act; this policy was never challenged in court.[79]

The institution had originated with Dangerfield Earley, a minister of First Church, who started a school in his home on Willow Street (now Preston Street) in 1856. Earley's school became a Cincinnati public school in 1869 or 1870 when that portion of Walnut Hills was annexed by the city. In 1872 the city replaced it with a purpose-built school building, Elm Street School, part of

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[74] "Colored Leader Taken by Death," *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, July 10, 1904.
[75] According to a historical marker present at the site.
[76] Daniel Hurley and Paul A Tenkotte, *Cincinnati: The Queen City: 225th Anniversary Edition* (San Antonio: HPN Books, 2014), 41–42.
[77] JoAnn Morse, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.
[78] David Sandor, "Black is as Good a Color as White: The Harriet Beecher Stowe School and the Debate Over Separate Schools in Cincinnati," *Ohio Valley History* 9, no. 2 (2009): 29.
[79] Ibid., 34.

the Independent Colored School System. Even after the Arnett Act, Elm Street School persisted as an African American school. Discriminatory hiring kept Black teachers out of schools elsewhere in the city, but they remained employed in Walnut Hills, with its high African American population. Whether because the Elm Street School educators were, overall, more educated and qualified, or because Black parents felt their children's needs would be better understood by Black teachers, many parents sent their children to Elm Street School, even if they lived in other areas of the city.[80] Even after the passage of the Arnett Act, most Black parents preferred that their students attend Black schools.[81]

The school was renamed Frederick Douglass School in 1902, in recognition of its role in the local Black community.[82] The educators of the Frederick Douglass School adhered to a particular philosophy, distinct from that of the broader Cincinnati school system: they sought to create a generation of elite Black leaders, providing students with a Classical, preparatory education, aligned with the philosophies of W. E. B. Du Bois espoused in his 1903 essay, *The Talented Tenth*.[83] This was in contrast to the ideas of Booker T. Washington, who was more accommodating of segregation and believed that the status of African Americans could be improved through industrial education. Frederick Douglass School was a center of the Walnut Hills community and, like Gaines High School before it, central to the Cincinnati Black community as a whole (though Douglass School was a primary school and not a high school; its students would continue their studies elsewhere). Frederick Douglass School produced several generations of influential Black residents and leaders.[84] As the Walnut Hills community and Cincinnati's Black population continued to grow, and after an organized campaign by Walnut Hills residents, the Frederick Douglass School building was replaced with a larger one in 1911. Beginning in 1927, the public school system repurposed some residential buildings north of Gilbert Avenue and built several small, additional buildings; these were known as the Frederick Douglass Colony School and served as an annex to provide additional classroom space.[85] The school continued to grow through the middle of the twentieth century. (None of the original Dangerfield Early, Elm Street School, or Frederick Douglass School buildings remain extant, though a 2008 school building now stands at the Frederick Douglass School site at 2825 Alms Place.)

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[80] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "A Brief History of the Frederick Douglass School Buildings," Walnut Hills Historical Society, April 8, 2021, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/a-brief-history-of-the-frederick-douglass-school-buildings/.
[81] Sandor, "Black is as Good a Color as White," 34
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.
[84] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio,* 234.
[85] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "A Brief History of the Frederick Douglass School Buildings."

The 1911 Frederick Douglass School building. (Undated postcard courtesy of the Walnut Hills Historical Society.)

The Cincinnati school system, overall, was failing to meet the needs of the city's African American population. By 1912 there were only seven African American teachers and fewer than 300 African American students citywide. There had been 87 African American teachers and almost 3,800 African American students in 1870.[86] One African American teacher, Jennie D. Porter, worked to address this disparity.

Porter was born in Cincinnati in 1876 and chose to follow in the footsteps of her mother, Ethlinda Davis Porter, who was one of Cincinnati's first Black teachers.[87] Jennie Porter graduated from the mostly white Hughes High School in 1893 and became a teacher at Frederick Douglass School. While working in the public school system, she collaborated with Annie Laws, a white philanthropist, to establish a private kindergarten for Black students in the West End. The school opened in 1911 to serve 125 students in its first year. Porter also took action when the Great Flood of 1913 displaced African American families, leaving 143 students unable to finish the school

[86] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 2–3.
[87] Lesley Robinson, "Jennie Davis Porter: A Leader of Black Education in Cincinnati," *Alpha Beta Phi Chapter Phi Alpha Theta* 4, no. 1 (1988): 13.

year. She obtained permission from the school board to establish a temporary summer school in a building on West Fifth Street (no longer extant).[88]

Porter again went to the Cincinnati School Board with a proposal, this time to establish a permanent school for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. After campaigning to generate public interest, Porter received approval from the board and would become the principal of the new school. The Harriet Beecher Stowe School opened in 1914 (original building no longer extant), also with funding from Laws, though this would be a public school. Porter's educational philosophy was aligned with Booker T. Washington; Stowe School would teach Black cultural awareness and prepare students for careers in skilled trades and had facilities for science, art, printing, cabinetmaking, and woodworking, and even an agricultural program, with a facility known as the "Colored Farm" on College Hill.[89] The Stowe School joined the Frederick Douglass School in serving Cincinnati's rapidly increasing African American population during the Great Migration. Notable students include Theodore Berry, the first Black mayor of Cincinnati.

Both Stowe School and Douglass School were the subject of controversy in Cincinnati's Black community. Porter, along with Francis Russell, principal of Douglass School, defended their institutions from attacks by Wendell Dabney in *The Union*, the city's leading Black newspaper, and protests from the Cincinnati NAACP at school board meetings (indeed, the local NAACP chapter was founded largely to advocate against segregated schools; see **Section 5.5: The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964**) who saw segregated schools as an obstacle to racial equality. Dabney and the NAACP referred to the Harriet Beecher Stowe School as a "Jim Crow school." Criticism of Frederick Douglass School does not seem to have reached nearly the same level of intensity as that directed at Porter's school. It may be that DuBois-inspired philosophies of Douglass School were more aligned with those of Dabney and the Cincinnati NAACP. Reasons may also have included class (the Walnut Hills community was more affluent and influential, while Great Migration arrivals were poorer and less established) or sexism (attacks on the women-founded Stowe School often employed gender stereotypes). Or, it may simply have been that a newly created institution was an easier target for protest than one that had existed for decades.[90]

In the face of criticism, the Harriet Beecher Stowe School grew to 1300 students in 1922 and prospered, with a new building (635 West Seventh Street, now 19 Broadcast Plaza, extant) built in 1923. Porter waged an ongoing, strategic campaign for public opinion, with Harriet Beecher Stowe School students performing music and catering food at events around the city as a demonstration of their vocational talents; Porter also allied with prominent Black supporters and speakers. Public opinion remained largely in her favor, both among Black parents and among white

[88] Ibid., 14
[89] "CPS History - Cincinnati Public Schools."
[90] Sandor, "Black is as Good a Color as White," 19, 30, 43.

Cincinnatians—many of whom were happy to provide for a well-funded African American school if it meant that Black students would not be at white schools.[91]

African American schools, in addition to serving Black students, were also important pillars of the African American community in that they provided dozens of well-paying jobs to educated Black professionals. This went beyond teachers and administrators: for one example, Phillip B. Ferguson—formerly enslaved and then active on the Underground Railroad—was construction manager and "architect" (the term had a looser meaning in the nineteenth century, before architects were licensed by state governments) for the 1872 Elm Street School.[92] Jennie Porter was keenly aware of the importance of the educational system in providing quality jobs for African Americans; this may have been a motivating factor in her work almost as much as the educational needs of Black children.[93]

Even with the success of Stowe School and Douglass School, at least one private school for African American students continued to exist. The Colored Industrial School of Cincinnati, also known as the McCall School after Sallie J. McCall, who made the school possible by donating a building (1301 John St., no longer extant) and leaving an endowment in her will, was founded in 1909. Another example of a vocational school, it continued to exist until 1962.[94] Interestingly, Wendell Dabney was not opposed to segregated Black-only schools if they were private; Dabney served on the Colored Industrial School's Board of Trustees along with Jennie Porter.[95]

5.2.3 Schools in Kentucky from Reconstruction to *Brown v. Board of Education*

Covington, Kentucky, established a white-only public school system in 1850, and opened the first public high school in 1853. Under slavery, however, no provision was made for public education of African American children. Even after abolition in 1865, local school boards were slow to recognize the rights of Black children to receive an education. Students were educated in small, privately organized schools in homes and Black churches. The Kentucky legislature organized "common schools," segregated for Black and white students, in 1874. Covington established one segregated African American school in 1873 and amended its charter in 1876 to provide for "sufficient educational facilities for the colored children of the city … under the control, rules, and regulations as govern other schools."[96] The smaller, private Black schools declined as a result, though the public school system remained segregated.

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[91] Ibid., 40.
[92] "Elm Street School Site - a Hannaford-designed School with a Black Construction Supervisor: Philip B. Ferguson," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/27.
[93] She was criticized for this, see Sandor.
[94] "49-Year-Old McCall School is Closing: Funds Still to be Used to Educate Young Negroes," *Cincinnati Post*, March 27, 1962.
[95] Sandor, "Black is as Good a Color as White," 43.
[96] National Register of Historic Places, "Lincoln-Grant School," 2013.

In 1880, William Lecher Grant, a white real estate developer and politician who had previously advocated for African American education in the Kentucky legislature, donated land for a new African American school. A building completed in 1888 (25 East Seventh Street, no longer extant) housed both the Seventh Street School, a primary school later renamed for Abraham Lincoln, and the William Grant High School. The building became known by the combined name of Lincoln-Grant School. Although other elementary schools for African American students existed in Northern Kentucky, William Grant High School served Boone, Campbell, and Kenton counties. Some students came from as far away as Walton and Morning View. The present building dates from 1932, a solution to two decades of crowded conditions that began when Covington annexed the former city of Latonia in 1909 and transferred the student body from the discontinued Latonia Colored School (also known as Middle School; no longer extant).

The Lincoln-Grant School in 2020. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

Private schools were not immune to state-mandated segregation; Kentucky state law prohibited integrated facilities even for private schools.[97] Though private schools in homes and churches had declined during Reconstruction, one significant example was founded in the twentieth century. The Church of Our Savior (246 East Tenth Street in Covington, extant) established a segregated school, the School of Our Savior, in 1943 and operated the high school until 1956 and the elementary school until 1963.

The *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling of 1954 transformed the segregated Kentucky school system. Almost immediately, students from outside of Covington began to be integrated into their local, previously white, schools. In some cases, desegregation plans took a few years to implement. William Grant High School continued to be a largely Black school under a ten-year plan, closing in 1965 with its students transferring to nearby Holmes High School (the building continued as an integrated elementary school until 1976).

The transition to a desegregated public school system certainly occurred in a climate of racism. One example of a student who resisted was Jessie Moore, who attempted to transfer from William Grant High School to Holmes High School in 1955, ahead of the schedule specified by the desegregation plan. Initially denied, she successfully appealed to the school board. However, she was then verbally harassed and bullied by white students at Holmes High School and returned to her former school after a few weeks. In 1956, the Lincoln-Grant choir performed at Holmes High School, an early step towards integration.[98] Even after integration, Black students fought for acceptance. One noteworthy story is that of Joyce Moore, who was suspended from Holmes High School in 1969 for having a natural, afro hairstyle. Moore was the subject of a favorable editorial in the *Kentucky Post-Times Star* and, with her mother, Helen Moore, met with the superintendent of the Covington school system, who sided with Moore and overturned the suspension.[99]

5.2.4 Educational Buildings: National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

Very few buildings remain in existence to tell the story of segregated African American education in Greater Cincinnati. Cincinnati High School, Gaines High School, the Frederick Douglass School buildings, the Colored Industrial School of Cincinnati, and the building that housed Porter's 1913 summer school and the original location of Harriet Beecher Stowe School have all since been closed and demolished.

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[97] Bella Young, "Our Savior Parish Celebrates Dedication of Its State Historical Marker That 'Reminds Us and Teaches Us,'" Diocese of Covington, July 23, 2025, https://covdio.org/historicalmarker/.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Cincinnati Sites and Stories. "Joyce Moore and the Power of Black Girl Hair," n.d. https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/110.

In this context, one building, the 1923 Harriet Beecher Stowe School, stands out as particularly important. The Stowe building represents the physical manifestation of Porter's and Laws' efforts to address the disparity in African American education in Cincinnati, highlights African American population growth during the Great Migration, and serves as a reminder of disagreements within the African American community with respect to vocational education and segregation. It is likely eligible under Criterion A. Furthermore, the building appears to be significant for its architecture (Criterion C) and retains integrity, its historic materials and character remaining largely intact.

In Northern Kentucky, the regionally focused Lincoln-Grant School building is arguably the most important expression of the region's segregated school system. The building was individually listed in the National Register in 2003, reflecting its African American history. In general, however, the elementary school building that fed students to William Grant High School, as well as the smaller, more locally oriented high school buildings, did not persist long after integration. These no-longer-extant Northern Kentucky high school buildings include the Latonia or Milldale School, Dunbar School in Erlanger, Wilkens School in Elsmere, and Beaverlick School in the Walton-Verona area. Their closure may have been due to a variety of factors: they were often of poorer quality construction, and racist views may have caused white parents to look down upon buildings historically associated with the African American community.[100]

One notable exception is the Southgate Street School in Newport. This building was erected in 1873 as part of a post-Civil War mandate to provide public education for African American students. Not only did it serve Black students, it was also run by a Black principal, Elizabeth Hudson, and later by Francis Russell, who would subsequently become principal of Frederick Douglass School in Cincinnati. The building was expanded and remodeled in 1893 to its current, brick-clad appearance.[101] The Southgate Street School is presently recognized as a contributing resource in the Mansion Hill National Register district, listed for its architectural significance under Criterion C. The Southgate Street School is likely eligible on an individual basis as an uncommon, still-extant example of Northern Kentucky's segregated elementary school system (unrelated to its use as a school building, its later association with Prince Hall Masonry is also significant). For an important non-public example, The Church of Our Savior in Covington is significant as a rare example of an African American private school building in Northern Kentucky, likely eligible under Criterion A.

With the relative scarcity of school buildings reflecting the segregated, African American educational experience in Greater Cincinnati, the homes of educators rise in prominence as important expressions of this theme. Fortunately, several of these significant places still exist and

[100] National Register of Historic Places, "Lincoln-Grant School," 10, 16.
[101] "Southgate Street School: a School Dedicated to Educating African American Children in Newport, Kentucky," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/149.

appear to retain integrity; some may be eligible under Criterion B. Of particular note is Jennie Porter's home at 1355 Lincoln Avenue in Cincinnati. Though this is not where she lived when she founded Harriet Beecher Stowe School in 1914, Porter lived at this house from 1928, the year she completed her dissertation and earned her PhD, to 1936, when she ended her career as principal of Stowe School; thus, the building meets the National Register requirement for association with Porter's "productive life."[102] The home of Francis Russell, at 833 Beecher Street in Cincinnati, may also be eligible, though its integrity is challenged by recent alterations. Two houses associated with James H. Robinson also exist, though these may be more appropriately evaluated in other contexts.

These significant residential buildings are also often associated with additional accomplishments and events beyond the teaching activities of the educators who lived there. For example, Jennie Porter is noteworthy as the first African American woman (according to some sources, the first African American person of any gender) to receive a PhD from the University of Cincinnati.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Education, 1844–1965, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Alice Easton Leland House	1367 Burdette Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Harriet Beecher Stowe School	635 W 7th St., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Jennie D. Porter House	1355 Lincoln Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Lewis and Katherine Easton House	440 Hopkins St., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Madisonville High School	4837 Ward St., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Peter H. Clark House	1119 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Southgate Street School	215 E Southgate St., Newport, KY	Listed
William Grant High School/Lincoln-Grant School	824 Greenup St., Covington, KY	Listed

The Church of Our Savior, Harriet Beecher Stowe School, Jennie D. Porter House, the Peter H. Clark House, and Southgate Street School are further evaluated in **Appendix A**.

[102] National Park Service, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," 15.

5.3 Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975

The evolution of Cincinnati's residential landscape can be divided (though with some overlap) into three general eras. First, in an initial period from the city's founding until a decade after the Civil War, African Americans lived alongside white residents throughout the city. Second, in the late nineteenth century, and especially during the Great Migration, dramatic population growth was accompanied by a concentration of African American residents in what is now known as the West End; hilltop and suburban communities, such as Walnut Hills, developed during this era as well. Third, and finally, mid-twentieth-century Urban Renewal policies brought about a dispersal of Cincinnati's African American community into the neighborhoods outside of the city's central basin. Over time, systemic racism and economic factors conspired to, at first, concentrate most of the city's African American population in the West End and then, subsequently, to eliminate that housing without providing adequate replacement.

5.3.1 From Mosaic to Segregation

There were no majority-Black neighborhoods in Cincinnati's early decades. Residential segregation "did not exist,"[103] though African Americans generally lived in proximity to Black social institutions in certain areas, such as Bucktown and Little Africa in what was then known as the East End,[104] as well as Little Bucktown to the west. Bucktown was located between what are now Broadway and Eggleston Avenue in what is now known as Downtown Cincinnati; Little Africa comprised the southernmost blocks of downtown; and Little Bucktown was largely where the I-71 and I-75 interchanges are now located, plus the riverfront area south of what is now Sixth Street (the latter area being officially known, since the 1950s, as Queensgate). Proximity to the river was important, as many Black laborers were employed as roustabouts, or unskilled dock workers.[105] African Americans were not confined to these areas, and smaller numbers lived throughout the city as a minority alongside the mostly white population, especially in lower-income areas with Irish and German immigrants. A few lived in suburban communities on the surrounding hills, including Walnut Hills.[106]

During most of the nineteenth century, Cincinnati's population—both Black and white—was concentrated in the compact basin area bounded by the Ohio River on the south and steep slopes to the north, east, and west. Residential properties were intermingled with places of commerce and employment. As the city industrialized following the Civil War, residential and land-use patterns became more distinct. The neighborhood now known as the West End developed into a dense,

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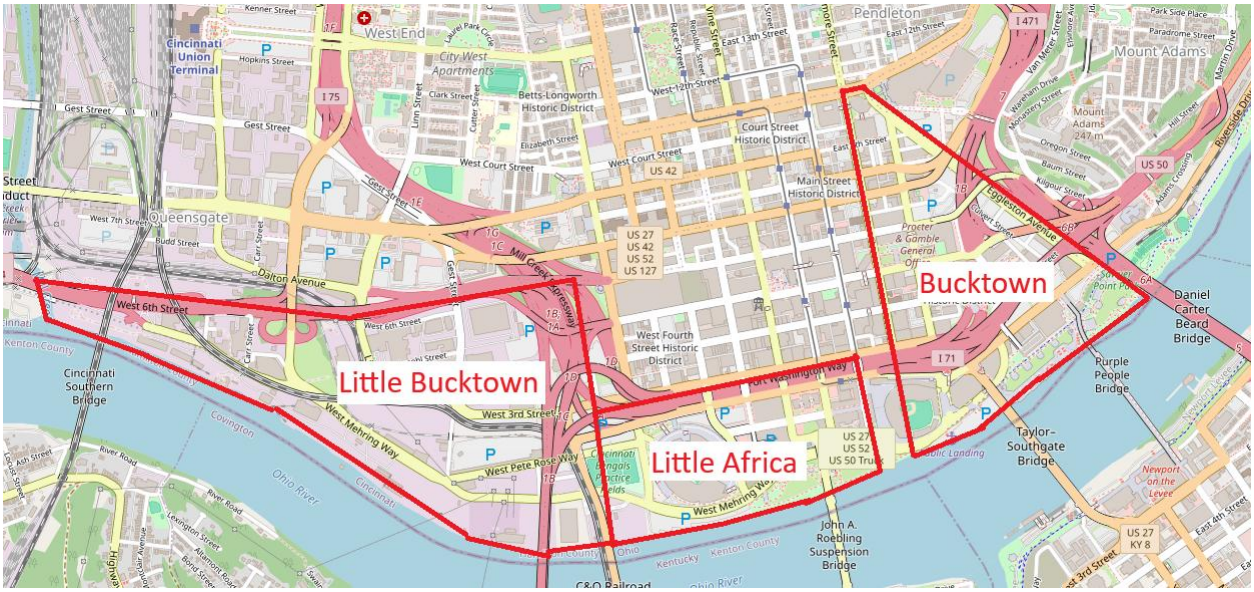
[103] Taylor, *Race in the City*, 3.
[104] Taylor, *Race in the City*, xvi.
[105] "National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Activity Book: Little Africa and the Underground Railroad," n.d., https://freedomcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ActivityBk_2-4_LittleAfricaUGRR_200528_v03.pdf
[106] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 84.

urban community, as its proximity to Mill Creek made the land suitable for slaughterhouses and other heavy industries, as well as the tenement houses that were home to industrial workers. Over time, the urban environment went from being a "mosaic" of class and ethnicity to being largely segregated by housing type, income level, and race.[107]



Approximate locations of circa 1850 African American areas, shown on a present-day map of downtown Cincinnati. (Adapted from National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, "Activity Book: Little Africa and the Underground Railroad," 2020.)

In the 1870s and 1880s, private investors developed steam-powered funicular railways (known locally as "inclines") and electric streetcars, facilitating expansion of the city's population outside of the central basin. Faster and more convenient transportation allowed residents to self-segregate; ethnic and class geography began to change rapidly as a result. Large numbers of middle-class white residents moved to hilltop communities and employed a variety of mechanisms to prevent Black residents from joining them. A few wealthy white enclaves remained in the valley along with populations of poorer white residents.[108]

In this context of streetcar suburbanization, the West End established itself as the predominant African American neighborhood in Cincinnati. As white residents developed the means to move to the newer hilltop communities, they gradually abandoned the mid-nineteenth-century neighborhood of slaughterhouses, soap factories, breweries, and poor-quality tenement houses.

[107] Taylor, *Race in the City*, 3.
[108] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 84.

Those who moved away were replaced by newcomers to Cincinnati's constantly growing African American population.[109]

There were, of course, exceptions to the concentration of Cincinnati's African American population in the West End. An early and prominent example that remains central to the city's African American community today is Walnut Hills, a neighborhood of Black homes and businesses in an elevated area about two miles northeast of downtown. Walnut Hills was first established in the early nineteenth century as one of Cincinnati's earliest suburbs. The neighborhood developed around Lane Seminary, a Presbyterian theological college that was established in 1829 (the 1833 president's house, now known as the Harriet Beecher Stowe House at 2950 Gilbert Avenue, is the only building of the seminary that remains today). In the 1850s Lane Seminary offered long-term ground leases, providing affordable land on which new homes could be built. A few African American residents lived here, mostly servants for Lane Seminary.[110]

It is in Walnut Hills that the first major development by and for African Americans was established. It was the work of Robert Gordon, who began his career enslaved before becoming a highly successful real estate developer. Gordon had been made to work in a coal yard in Virginia. Over the years, Gordon managed to collect and sell enough coal dust from the yard that he eventually was able to purchase his freedom. Gordon moved to Cincinnati in 1847 and used his knowledge of the coal industry to become a successful businessman. Later, Gordon would use the money he made as a coal dealer to invest in war bonds and then, after the war, to develop much of the Lane Seminary grounds into housing. By the 1880s, Gordon had become the wealthiest African American person in Ohio.[111] Gordon's initial phase of development was on what is now Preston Street between Chapel Street and Myrtle Street.[112] Walnut Hills, though initially not part of Cincinnati, was annexed to the city in phases between 1850 and 1873.[113]

5.3.2 The Great Migration

Whether in the West End, Walnut Hills, Covington, or in more distant Cincinnati suburbs, African American communities would be transformed tremendously by population pressure in the first half of the twentieth century. In Northern urban areas, in general, the Great Migration marked an area

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[109] Eric R. Jackson, "Why so Many African Americans Have Roots in the West End of Cincinnati," The Voice of Black Cincinnati, February 26, 2025, https://thevoiceofblackcincinnati.com/west-end-cincinnati/.

[110] JoAnn Sutton, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.

[111] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Robert Gordon, Businessman," March 6, 2022, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/robert-gordon/.

[112] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 351. Houses in this vicinity today appear to date from the 1890s through the late twentieth century, though further research may determine if any Gordon houses continue to exist.

[113] "History: Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation," n.d., https://walnuthillsrf.org/history/.

of rapidly growing African American population as migrants left behind poverty and Jim Crow discrimination in search of economic opportunity in the growing manufacturing economies of the North. In Ohio specifically, the Great Migration began in the early 1910s and was most pronounced from around 1915 through 1920, approximately corresponding with an increase in well-paying factory jobs during the First World War. Despite the many opportunities, cultural clashes between migrants, established African American communities, and white residents contributed to an atmosphere of disillusionment, tension, and increased residential segregation.[114] (Discrimination in employment and public accommodations also markedly increased during this era; see **Section 5.5: The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964.**)

Rising levels of discrimination in both housing and employment forced almost all of the growing African American population into the increasingly crowded West End.[115] J. H. Landis, a city health officer, lamented in 1913, "in Cincinnati it is almost impossible for a colored man to secure decent quarters for his family.… Because of race prejudice [they] are compelled to live in the slum districts." A comprehensive zoning ordinance enacted in 1924 only reinforced economic stratification,[116] and racially restrictive covenants were commonplace from the 1920s, when they began to be mandated in transactions by the Cincinnati Real Estate Board, until they were ruled unenforceable by the Supreme Court in 1948.[117] By the start of World War II, the West End had become mostly African American; it was also the home of the majority of the city's African American population.[118] Over the first few decades of the twentieth century, housing conditions in the West End deteriorated to the point of being unsanitary and unsafe, as landlords exploited a largely captive market. Housing reformers (largely white individuals who did not live in the West End), such as the Better Housing League, and city officials initially attempted to address these conditions by enacting and enforcing new building and fire codes, but these measures had the (perhaps unintended) consequence of further reducing the availability of housing and leading to even more crowding.[119] Despite challenges to the physical environment, Cincinnati's Black community in the West End "thrived wildly" during this time, establishing businesses, founding churches, and establishing social and civic organizations.[120]

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[114] Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio Multiple Property Documentation Form, 13–15.
[115] Taylor, *Race in the City*, xii; Charles Casey-Leininger and Students of the Public History Practicum, "The Struggle for Fair Housing in Cincinnati 1900 to 2007," Winter 2008, https://cincihomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/going-home-2008.pdf.
[116] Henry Louis Taylor Jr., "City Building, Public Policy, the Rise of the Industrial City, and Black Ghetto-Slum Formation in Cincinnati, 1850–1940," in *Race and the City: Work, Community, and Protest in Cincinnati, 1820–1970*, ed. Henry Louis Taylor Jr. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 170–71, 175–78.
[117] "Segregation in Cincinnati's Neighborhoods: A Brief History," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, February 23, 2022.
[118] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 84.
[119] Ibid., 85
[120] Eric R. Jackson, "Why So Many African Americans Have Roots in the West End of Cincinnati."

Walnut Hills also thrived. By the 1920s, it had become a social center of the African American community, especially for its more affluent members. The Chamber of Commerce called it a "higher type of colored settlement." *Cincinnati's Colored Citizens*, the 1926 compendium by Wendell Dabney, owner and editor of *The Union* and a Walnut Hills resident himself, notes 360 African American property owners in the neighborhood at the time. Walnut Hills had a much lower population than the West End, but a much larger share of homeowners, indicating the relative wealth of the community.[121] Walnut Hills also experienced high population density during this time, as homeowners rented rooms; even nonresidential properties housed newly arrived residents (see **Section 5.7: Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975**, and **Section 5.10: Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975**).

In Walnut Hills especially, a network of socially minded African American investors and lenders helped facilitate property ownership, both for homeowners and other investors. One leading individual was Horace Sudduth, born in Covington, Kentucky, in 1888, who worked for the Pullman Company and became wealthy investing in real estate in Oklahoma. He returned to Covington and then Cincinnati, founding the Industrial Building and Loan Company in an office at 516 West Court Street (no longer extant) in the 1910s in Cincinnati. Sudduth advertised himself as "Cincinnati's Colored Real Estate Agent."[122] He opened a second office, at 1012 Lincoln Avenue (no longer extant) in Walnut Hills in 1917. The Industrial Building and Loan Corporation, founded by Sudduth in 1919, provided savings accounts and mortgages to African American homeowners and landlords. Sudduth did not profit from this company, only taking a one-dollar annual salary for his role as president, and allowed members of the community to buy shares interest-free, facilitating the growth of Walnut Hills as a principal African American neighborhood with a large share of homeownership.

Sudduth lived at 2636 Park Avenue and later 1350 William Howard Taft (both extant). He had a close relationship with Wendell Dabney, another Walnut Hills resident, who promoted the Industrial Building and Loan Corporation in his newspaper, *The Union*. The proliferation of Black-owned homes in Walnut Hills welcomed arrivals during the Great Migration, who rented rooms and further contributed to the building of Black wealth in that community. By the time of his death in 1957, Sudduth was one of the wealthiest and most influential people in Cincinnati and invested in community-oriented businesses, including the Manse Hotel and the Lincoln Theater (see **Section 5.7: Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975**).

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[121] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 85.
[122] Geoff Sutton, "Horace Sudduth Real Estate," *Walnut Hills Stories,* Walnut Hills Historical Society, 2025, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/horace-sudduth-real-estate/.

Outside of the Walnut Hills and the West End, other areas of the African American population grew during the 1910s and 1920s, including in hilltop and suburban communities. By 1926, Wendell Dabney's *Cincinnati's Colored Citizens* was noting sizeable African American populations in the Cincinnati neighborhoods of Madisonville and Avondale and the suburban communities of College Hill and Lockland. In many cases, these began as a small nucleus of African American residents that later grew in number as the overall population increased. In Lockland, for instance, Alfred VanVactor Thompson, an African American tailor from Tennessee who had lived in Liberia for several years, invested in several lots in the Greenwood Subdivision in the 1850s and 1860s. This formed the starting point of an African American community that would develop in the twentieth century.[123] Another such community is the Hazelwood neighborhood in Blue Ash, northeast of Cincinnati. Around 1900 several African American residents settled there, mostly employees of the Cincinnati, Lebanon, & Northern Railway that had recently been completed through the area. Over the next few decades it grew into a majority African American enclave in an otherwise white suburban area.[124] Charity Henry and Edward Henry were among the early residents who drew others to the neighborhood.[125] Finally, Madisonville was first home to African American residents in 1886, who settled in an area known as Dunbar or Corsica Hollow. In the twentieth century Madisonville grew into one of Cincinnati's important African American neighborhoods. The portion of Ward Street north of Madison Road seems to have been particularly central, as evidenced by the homes of activists Braxton and Reber Cann (5223 Ward Street) and the home of Phoebe Allen (5316 Ward Street; see **Section 5.5: The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964**).[126] The original Dunbar area, however, was demolished in the 1990s through eminent domain for commercial and industrial development.[127]

West College Hill, also known as the Steele Subdivision, is an unincorporated community bordering Cincinnati to the northwest. Charles M. Steele began to develop a subdivision here for African Americans in 1891. Savings and loan institutions, building companies, and individual residents worked together to develop a community for low-income residents, often on lots only 25 feet wide. The community grew in the 1910s; Cincinnati planners and elected officials disapproved of the small lot sizes and denied petitions for annexation in 1950 and 1956.[128] (Though outside the project area for evaluation under this context study, a unique architecture of homes, churches, and

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[123] Chris Hanlin, "Alfred VanVactor Thompson and the Greenwood Subdivision," unpublished draft.
[124] Feoshia Henderson, "Mostly Black Hazelwood Becoming Multicultural," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, August 2, 2002.
[125] Chris Hanlin, personal communication.
[126] Ibid.
[127] "The Dunbar Community: a Lost African American Community," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/26.
[128] "West College Hill Neighborhood: Springfield Township Community Believed to be Oldest Black Subdivision in Hamilton County," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/112.

social buildings developed to fit these narrow lot sizes that almost certainly warrants consideration as a National Register district.)

Others in the real estate industry also facilitated African American homeownership. Donald A. Spencer graduated from Walnut Hills High School and received a master's degree from the University of Cincinnati in 1940, becoming a teacher at Frederick Douglass School and Harriet Beecher Stowe as well as a junior high school. In 1944, he married Marian Spencer and began selling real estate as a side job, soon becoming the first African American licensed with the Cincinnati Board of Realtors, where he spoke out against discriminatory policies, and operated Donald A. Spencer and Associates.[129] The husband of Marian Spencer, the two lived at 2031 Fairfax Avenue (demolished) before moving to 940 Lexington Avenue (extant) in 1983.

5.3.3 The Model Homes Company and the Rise of Multifamily Housing

The first large-scale, organized attempt to address the demand for new residential construction for African Americans was by Jacob Schmidlapp, a white, philanthropically minded businessman. Arguably the most influential housing developer in twentieth-century Cincinnati, Schmidlapp, founder of the Model Homes Company, began to develop multifamily housing in 1911. Schmidlapp was inspired by the "Five Percent Philanthropy" movement of late-nineteenth-century England that sought to provide quality housing to low-income residents—one week of rent could be paid for with one day's wages—while ensuring a modest five-percent return for socially conscious investors.

In Schmidlapp's vision—which would come into fruition in his later developments—housing complexes would include amenities that were nearly unheard-of in low-income communities, such as large playgrounds with "sand pits" and drinking fountains, along with outdoor pavilions for family and community events. Outdoor, landscaped paths and terraces would be an integrated part of the design of each development, though tenants would be responsible for gardening. To provide a degree of financial support to residents, communities would include cooperative stores that allowed tenants to purchase food and other necessities at wholesale prices. The housing units themselves were ahead of their time; Schmidlapp was determined that each unit would have a private entrance, a dedicated backyard, and both indoor plumbing and gas heat, amenities typically available only to wealthier individuals.

Schmidlapp extended a Progressive-Era, paternalistic outlook towards residents. As a policy, the Model Homes developments did not check references for prospective tenants; legal or financial problems in one's past were not a barrier to securing a lease. However, once a person had moved

[129] Cincinnati Regional Chamber, "Donald a. Spencer Sr. - Cincinnati Regional Chamber," August 4, 2023, https://cincinnatichamber.com/blog/chamber_greatliving/donald-a-spencer-sr/.

in, even minor infractions would result in eviction. Tenants were also required to participate in neighborhood social organizations. Schmidlapp believed these requirements would help residents "better learn the middle-class values of hard work and participatory democracy."[130]

Finally, as part of Schmidlapp's commitment to social issues, he exclusively hired union labor. Schmidlapp found that he could offset the increased cost by "explaining the object of our work to the building trades." When workers saw the philanthropic mission of the Model Homes Company and appreciated that they were providing much-needed, quality housing for low-income households, Schmidlapp found that they worked more efficiently with better results.[131]

Schmidlapp fundraised from friends and members of Cincinnati's philanthropic community as he built housing complexes of several different designs as he continued to refine his business model. First, the "Washington Plan" apartments, for white residents in Norwood and Hyde Park, were too costly for Schmidlapp to meet his goal of a five-percent return. At the southeast corner of Chapel Street and Park Avenue in Walnut Hills, Schmidlapp built his first development for African American residents (no longer extant). Although he was able to reduce construction costs, Schmidlapp did not consider these apartments to be a success either; he later regretted what the African American physician Louis A. Cornish, who practiced in Walnut Hills, described in a letter to Schmidlapp as "prison-like tenements."[132]

In 1914, Schmidlapp established the limited-dividend Cincinnati Model Homes Company and solicited investments from other philanthropic businessmen and women (Mary Emery, who developed the Mariemont community, was on the board of directors of the Model Homes Company). In 1915 the company-built Washington Terrace (now known as Kerper Apartments, partially extant), on Kerper Avenue in the Deer Creek Valley in northern Walnut Hills. Washington Terrace included all the amenities Schmidlapp envisioned and he considered it a successful implementation of his vision.[133] Social workers noted lower crime and mortality rates than in other neighborhoods and more residential stability. W.E.B. DuBois wrote favorably of the Cincinnati Model Homes Company in 1919:

> The site chosen was a plot of seven acres in that beautiful, wooded section of the city called 'Bloody Run.' Beginning at Kerper Avenue on Walnut Hills, the property extends to the

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[130] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 86.
[131] Jacob Godfrey Schmidlapp, *Low-Priced Housing for Wage Earners* (New York: National Housing Association, 1919).
[132] Robert B. Fairbanks, *Making Better Citizens: Housing Reform and the Community Development Strategy in Cincinnati, 1890–1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 35.
[133] Jacob Godfrey Schmidlapp, *Low-Priced Housing for Wage Earners* (New York: National Housing Association, 1919).

> boundary line of Avondale. It would have been difficult to find a more suitable location than this little spot nestling among the hills.
>
> The houses are built in rows. But to avoid monotony in architectural design they are so arranged that each one stands out individually. For instance, in the group known as the annex there are two, four and eight apartment houses of the detached and semi-detached type, so that the cheerless appearance of a straight row of houses is avoided.
>
> With but few exceptions, all apartments have separate entrances, which is a great asset toward the moral side of housing because of the few points of contact it affords the tenants. Each flat has a bath and toilet and a separate water heater. Every room is [no] more than two rooms deep, ensuring plenty of fresh air.[134]

Previously, Schmidlapp had developed ninety-six housing units total; Washington Terrace, by far his largest development yet, now provided an additional 188. It was divided into four groupings: The namesake Washington Terrace, with seventy-eight flats; the Annex, with thirty-eight; thirty more on Taft Lane; and forty-two on Kerper Avenue known as Melbourne Terrace. Washington Terrace also included a noteworthy commercial tenant: the first location of Model Drug Stores, a Black-owned pharmacy that would become a citywide chain by the 1930s. The business operated out of one of the flats (rather than a standalone building or a commercial storefront) at 3068 Kerper Avenue (extant) and also included the office of a Black physician, Edward E. Gray.[135] George Russell, jazz composer and theorist, also lived there, at 3066 ½ Melbourne Terrace (extant). (Of the Washington Terrace development, however, only eight buildings remain of the Melbourne Terrace section; the rest were destroyed by the construction of I-71 through the Deer Creek Valley.)

The Model Homes Company followed Washington Terrace with the Gordon Hotel, later known as Gordon Terrace (extant), an apartment hotel marketed towards single Black men. This was built in 1916, at the corner of Chapel Street and Ashland Street. Like Washington Terrace, it provided not only residences but employment opportunities for African Americans. A smaller development,

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[134] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Washington Terrace," September 9, 2018, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/washington-terrace/.
[135] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Model Drug Store Walnut Hills Branch: What Professional Success Looked Like," September 13, 2022, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/model-drug-store-walnut-hills-branch-what-professional-success-looked-like/.

it lacked the extensive landscaped areas, but made up for it with a prominent and desirable location fronting on Walnut Hills Park (now Ashland Park).[136]

With respect to racial issues, Schmidlapp clearly understood that Black residents had the greater need, and yet he declined to build housing units for African Americans in neighborhoods where white neighbors objected, such as a proposed project in Avondale. He also never attempted to create a racially integrated housing development. As the cost of building materials increased during and after World War I, and Schmidlapp himself died in 1919, the Model Homes Company produced no major new developments. However, the overall success of the Model Homes and Schmidlapp's philosophy would influence the public housing that would be created in the decades that followed.

5.3.4 Public Housing and the Beginnings of Urban Renewal

Early municipal efforts to eliminate substandard housing through code enforcement and zoning made no provision for building new homes for low-income or African American residents. The assumption was that new homes built for wealthier residents would eventually become available to those with lower incomes, a concept later termed "filtering theory."[137] This, however, did not occur.[138] By the 1930s, municipal, state, and federal policy instead turned towards the creation of new, public housing.

The Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority was established in 1933 under a state enabling act,[139] and the Wagner-Steagall Housing Act of 1937 provided federal funding. In the 1930s and early 1940s, the authority used federal funding to develop public housing with a philosophy emphasizing shared amenities and civic participation.[140] Its first development, Laurel Homes, began that same year. The impetus for the work of Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority may have been urban renewal or "slum clearance" more so than a mandate to increase the supply of affordable housing, as Laurel Homes and many of its later developments were built on cleared urban sites, resulting in no net gain in housing units. Laurel Homes was a segregated facility, and Theodore Berry, NAACP president who later become Cincinnati's first Black mayor, successfully advocated for a guarantee that a portion of the new development would be available to African

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[136] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Low-Cost Housing: Gordon Hotel," July 21, 2020, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/low-cost-housing-gordon-hotel/. Some sources suggest the Gordon Hotel was Schmidlapp's first development for African Americans. However, Schmidlapp, in *Low Priced Housing for Wage Earners*, states that Gordon Terrace was started in 1916 and finished in 1917, while Washington Terrace was started in 1911 and "up to the present time [1919] we have built 102 houses." This suggests that Washington terrace was started before Gordon Terrace but completed after Gordon Terrace.

[137] Richard Radcliff, *Urban Land Economics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949).

[138] Charles Casey-Leininger and Students of the Public History Practicum, "The Struggle for Fair Housing in Cincinnati 1900 to 2007."

[139] "About," n.d. https://cintimha.com/about/.

[140] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 86.

American residents.[141] 1039 units were completed in 1937 and 1938 with 264 added by 1942, in a large block bounded by Liberty Street, Lincoln Park (now Ezzard Charles) Drive, Linn Street, and John Street (only three of the buildings remain extant). The housing authority had considered making Laurel Homes a white-only development, but a section of 304 apartments were set aside for African Americans. In 1943, under the extreme population pressure of the Second Great Migration, the African American section was increased to 636 units.[142]

One of the remaining buildings of Laurel Homes in 2012. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons.)

Migration to Cincinnati dwindled during the Great Depression, but defense industry jobs during World War II prompted a Second Great Migration that lasted through the 1950s and 1960s. Crowded conditions in the West End worsened and African American leadership lobbied for new public housing. In 1941 the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority began construction of Lincoln Court, a 1015-unit, Black-only, housing complex bounded by Lincoln Park Drive, Central Avenue, Court Street, and Linn Street (no longer extant). Once again, there was no net gain as Lincoln Court was built on cleared residential land, but the housing authority urged landlords in adjacent areas to consider renting to Black tenants, pointing out that they could be charged higher rates due to the extreme lack of options.[143] In 1943, however, the authority provided some degree of relief with more, if still segregated, public housing: Valley Homes[144] (350 units for African Americans in the suburban area that would become Lincoln Heights), Winton Terrace (750 units for white residents in the Mill Creek Valley within the city limits), and (750 units for white

[141] Charles Casey-Leininger and Students of the Public History Practicum, "The Struggle for Fair Housing in Cincinnati 1900 to 2007."
[142] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 92.
[143] Ibid.
[144] DeHart Hubbard, perhaps better known for his career as an athlete, also was manager of Valley Homes as well a supervisor of workers in the Cincinnati Recreation Commission.

occupants) just west of Mill Creek. All of these developments were prompted by the wartime in-migration of defense industry workers, but this was particularly true for Valley Homes. A Wright Aeronautical plant was set to open nearby and would hire 15,000 workers, some of whom would be Black.[145] These three housing developments, on formerly vacant land, actually increased the total number of available homes for low-income households, but only barely, considering the vast amount that was needed. Only one percent of the dwelling units in all of Hamilton County that did not discriminate against African Americans was vacant and available.[146]

5.3.5 Postwar Urban Renewal

The instances of prewar and wartime urban clearance and public housing development, described above, were only a prelude to the large-scale Urban Renewal era campaign that would transform Cincinnati, and especially the West End, in the years after World War II.

The *Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan* of 1948 (officially, the *Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan and Official City Plan of the City of Cincinnati*) was a joint effort between the City Planning Commission of Cincinnati and representatives from surrounding communities, including those in Northern Kentucky, and state governments of both states. It was a plan to reshape the city, and, while it was comprehensive in nature, urban renewal was a major focus.

Citywide and regionally, the 1948 plan called for the expressways and automobile-oriented development typical of planning documents from the Urban Renewal era. However, with the West End specifically, the motivation for land clearance was to create space for the large, horizontally oriented factory complexes typical of mid-twentieth-century mass production. The Wright Aeronautical facility in what is now the city of Evendale was an example of this new type of industrial development, usually built in suburban areas, that Cincinnati's industries would now be competing with.[147]

A not-unintended consequence of the 1948 plan would be the razing of most of the West End—the center of the region's African American population and a hub of Black businesses, churches, and social institutions. It would take a decade, however, for the plan to be funded, during which time the physical environment continued to degrade, as white landlords had no incentive to maintain or upgrade property that was soon to be condemned; neither were they concerned with retaining or attracting tenants, as their Black tenants had no place else to go. A May 19, 1956,

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[145] A variety of political maneuvers at the local and state levels conspired to redraw municipal boundaries to exclude the Wright Aeronautical facility from Lincoln Heights, depriving the majority-Black community of what would have been a major source of property tax revenue, while benefitting the surrounding, mostly white, communities. See Henry Louis Taylor, *The Building of a Black Industrial Suburb: The Lincoln Heights, Ohio Story* (PhD Dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1980).

[146] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio,* 92.

[147] Anne Steinert, presentation, Office of Council Member Meeka Owens, Cincinnati, June 20, 2025

editorial in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* called the neighborhood a "boil" that needed to be eliminated.[148] The *Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan* called for the neighborhood to be replaced with a zone of lower-density industrial development that would be known as Queensgate, along with a concentration of segregated housing for African Americans, to be named Lincolnia. Land cleared would also make room for the proposed Mill Creek Expressway (now I-75). In 1956 the project was finally funded, one-third of the cost coming from the municipal budget, one-third from federal urban renewal funding, and one-third from a special tax levy that was approved by ballot initiative. Language in the tax proposal, added at the request of Black political leaders, promised that demolitions of residential buildings would not occur until new homes were provided for the people that lived there.[149] Theodore Berry, now a member of the Cincinnati city council, succeeded in passing an ordinance that racial discrimination would be prohibited on all properties subject to the urban renewal effort.[150]

The execution of the plan went much differently than promised. The development of much of Lincolnia and efforts to provide homes for African American residents elsewhere in the city and region was stalled by racist, "not-in-my-backyard" opposition, while the demolition of the West End proceeded largely on schedule. This created a dire situation. African American political organizations, such as the NAACP, called for demolition to stop until the need for new residential construction was met; the West End residents, themselves, remained unheard.[151] In the end, over 10,000 families were displaced with new housing unavailable; it was the greatest such displacement in the nation's history by percentage of population.[152] John Harshaw, a West End resident who had been displaced, recalls "every structure that housed friends, neighbors, and relatives was crushed along with the history that each structure possessed."[153] Even judged on its own terms, the Kenyon-Barr project, as it was called, was not successful. Much of the Queensgate land was unable to be sold and remained vacant or underdeveloped. Plans for a similar urban renewal effort in Over-the-Rhine were not pursued.[154]

5.3.6 Public Housing after the *Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan*

Although they were far from adequate, the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority managed to complete a handful of public housing developments for African American residents in the West

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[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 99.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Digital Scholarship Lab, "Renewing Inequality," *American Panorama*, ed. Robert K. Nelson and Edward L. Ayers, accessed September 22, 2025, https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/renewal/#view=0/0/1&viz=cartogram.
[153] Keisha N. Blain and Christian McCord, "Organizing in the Housing Projects of Cincinnati's West End," African American Intellectual History Society, November 4, 2024, https://www.aaihs.org/organizing-in-the-housing-projects-of-cincinnatis-west-end/.
[154] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 99.

End and elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s. The Stanley Rowe Towers and Townhomes (extant) were completed in the West End in 1952. Millvale (extant) was built in 1953, further north along Mill Creek; still further north was Findlater Gardens, completed in the mid-1950s (extant). King Towers, in Cincinnati's Madisonville neighborhood, is noteworthy as the first high-rise public housing development. Though these four developments were nominally integrated; in practice, they were all Black.

One noteworthy, and groundbreaking, development was Park Town, centered on several blocks around Wade Walk in the West End (extant). Though a public project, Park Town used a cooperative ownership model and was intended to be a model of racial integration. The development's community center served residents from the entire West End and beyond; it was even used as a meeting space for the West End Community Council, an organization formed in 1963 to oppose further urban renewal in the West End. Park Town's residents established a "Committee to Promote Integration" and established a preschool, in an era when early childhood education was not yet commonplace. The history of Park Town illustrates that, even in the face of adversity and urban renewal, residents were organizing an evolving community.[155] In one sense, however, Park Town did not succeed: the community's multi-racial vision never came to fruition. White residents, unhindered by discriminatory housing practices, simply found lower-cost, higher-quality housing elsewhere. However, the experience of Park Town did make a lasting impression in that it demonstrated the challenges of achieving residential integration by community organizing alone; legal solutions and new fair housing laws would be required.[156]

5.3.7 Beyond Public Housing

In the 1950s and 1960s, private entities increasingly began to provide multifamily housing developments. Fay Apartments (now the Villages of Roll Hill, extant) was began as a private, whites-only development around 1960; within a few years, however, it was acquired by the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority and became largely African American.[157] Richmond Village (845 Ezzard Charles Drive in Cincinnati, extant), was built in 1962 as a segregated private development for African Americans.[158] The Malone Apartments, built by George Malone in the 1950s or 1960s, (3800 Block of Washington Avenue in Cincinnati's North Avondale, extant) are a large-scale apartment complex by an African American developer.[159]

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[155] Keisha N. Blain and Christian McCord, "Organizing in the Housing Projects of Cincinnati's West End."
[156] Charles F. Casey-Leininger, "Park Town Cooperative Homes, Urban Redevelopment, and the Search for Residential Integration in Cincinnati, 1955-1965," Queen City Heritage 52, no. 3 (1994).
[157] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio,* 100.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Michael Burson, personal communication

Churches also played a major role in addressing the housing needs of the communities they served. Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, for example, joined with three other churches to develop Madisonville Homes for the Elderly (now Madison Villa at 5615 Madison Road in Cincinnati in 1971.[160] Page Tower (619 Central Avenue in Cincinnati), built in 1972, is a high-rise tower for low-and moderate-income housing. It was developed by Union Baptist Church in response to the forced displacement of urban renewal.

5.3.8 Walnut Hills, Avondale, North Avondale, and Evanston

Despite the developments described above, there was a true housing crisis in the 1950s and 1960s, largely prompted by displacement from the West End, that went beyond the shortages of the Great Migration. In Cincinnati, the neighborhoods of Avondale, North Avondale, and Evanston rapidly came majority African American, a process hastened by the blockbusting practices of white realtors.[161] Avondale became the center of Cincinnati's African American population by 1960.[162]

In 1960, Cincinnati's African American population was 108,750 or 22 percent of the city's total; by 1970 it was 125,070 or 28 percent. Walnut Hills, Avondale, North Avondale, and Evanston were majority African American by 1960. The West End now had only 29,308 residents, almost exclusively African American. Black and white residents and elected officials began to push increasingly for state and federal fair housing laws as a result.[163]

In some cases, Black and white residents worked together to encourage and maintain integrated neighborhoods.

The Cincinnati neighborhoods of North Avondale and Paddock Hills began to attract African Americans in 1959 and 1966, respectively. During the 1960s, residents of the
created the North Avondale Neighborhood Association and Paddock Hills Assembly with the aim of encouraging an integrated neighborhood. The Kennedy Heights Community Council, founded in the early 1960s, also resisted blockbusting and promoted integration.[164]

In some cases, African Americans established suburban communities several miles outside of Cincinnati. (Though outside of the project area for this context study, they will be mentioned briefly here due to their importance.) In the Mill Creek Valley north of the city, white investors

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[160] "Trinity Missionary Baptist Church - Earliest-known Public Building by Architect Edward E. Birch," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/10.
[161] "Skyline Acres: The Most Spectacular Case of Blockbusting," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/8.
[162] Taylor, *Race in the City*, xvi.
[163] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio,* 393.
[164] Ibid., 104–108.

platted lots in Lincoln Heights starting in 1923 and sold them for African American residents, largely migrants from the rural south, with unpaved streets and no utilities. The new arrivals built their own homes and gardens and gradually developed municipal services, incorporating in 1946 as the largest, self-governing, majority Black municipality in the North.[165]

Hollydale, a subdivision in Springfield Township, was developed starting in 1948. An organization of twenty African American veterans from Cincinnati's West End, joined by 150 African American cooperative investors, successfully overcame racist opposition to develop the community. They used a white intermediary for the initial land purchase and then worked for over ten years to secure financing, as banks refused to provide loans. In 1959, the first house was completed of what would become a suburban neighborhood of over 200 ranch-style homes.[166]

5.3.9 Residential Developments: National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

Efforts, whether individual, public, or philanthropic, to provide needed homes for African Americans in Cincinnati may be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for their association with broad patterns of history and events of nationwide consequence, such as the Great Migration, or of more local importance such as such as the Black-led development of Walnut Hills or the Urban Renewal-era displacement of households from the West End.

Robert Gordon's real estate work in Walnut Hills is largely responsible for developing Walnut Hills as one of Cincinnati's most noteworthy African communities; Gordon himself is an important figure. Any remaining concentrations of houses built by Robert Gordon may be eligible under Criteria A and possibly B, though much more intensive research into individual property records would be required to determine if any still exist.

Horace Sudduth, on the other hand, is clearly connected with two remaining extant properties. His home at 2636 Park Avenue, where he moved in 1926, is likely eligible under Criterion B as the property most directly associated with his career and influence. His later residence, at 1350 William Howard Taft Avenue, is less clearly connected with his career as it dates from later in his life. Further research, however, may argue for the significance of this building. The Manse Hotel, also connected with Sudduth, is recommended under another context (see **Section 5.7: Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975**).

Both developments of the Model Homes Company in Walnut Hills are significant under Criterion A as expressions of the philanthropic housing movement as applied to the affordable housing shortage of Cincinnati in the 1910s. In both cases, integrity is somewhat challenged: Washington

[165] Ibid., 96.
[166] Ibid., 101.

Terrace has lost a majority of its buildings, and the Gordon Hotel shows some exterior alterations. Guidance from the *Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation is helpful here: to establish eligibility, "The housing site should retain enough buildings to convey the original plan, configuration, scale, and relationship between buildings and landscape"[167] In neither Washington Terrace nor the Gordon Hotel are the changes enough that integrity is entirely lost; however, the alterations would likely preclude listing under Criterion C. Another private development, the Malone Apartments, is potentially eligible under Criterion A as an example of a large-scale African American-led effort to provide much-needed homes in North Avondale.

Laurel Homes, added to the National Register in 1987, contained twenty-nine buildings at the time, but only a few remain. Its continued eligibility would likely require a formal determination. Additional public housing complexes may be eligible under Criterion A to the extent that they were groundbreaking or influential; integrity, too, will be a determining factor, as most public housing complexes have seen extensive renovations in recent years.

Park Town, for its innovative cooperative ownership model and for the role it played in organizing an evolving, post-urban-renewal sense of community spirit in the West End, is also potentially eligible under Criterion A. Page Tower is also likely to be eligible under Criterion A as a tangible expression of the efforts of African American churches, in this case Union Baptist Church, to provide for the needs of a West End community displaced by Urban Renewal.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Findlater Gardens	5354 Winneste Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Gordon Hotel/Gordon Terrace	2817-2837 Ashland Ave., Cincinnati OH	Eligible
King Towers	6020 Dahlgren Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Laurel Homes	577 W Liberty St., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Lincoln Center	1027 Linn St., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Madisonville Homes for the Elderly	5615 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Malone Apartments	3806-3840 Washington Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Page Tower	619 Central Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

[167] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio,* 139.

Richmond Village	845 Ezzard Charles Dr., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Washington Terrace Apartments	3066 Kerper Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Winton Terrace	4848 Winneste Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

Individual evaluations of Gordon Hotel/Gordon Terrace, the Horace Sudduth House, Page Tower, Park Town, and Washington Terrace are included in **Appendix A**.

5.4 Journalism, 1844–1975

The history of African American journalism in Cincinnati begins with the white-run abolitionist press. Newspapers by African Americans in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, though important, tended to be short-lived; by the twentieth century, however, Black-owned newspapers were ascendant: they mobilized, organized, and shaped public opinion on issues pertinent to African American residents.

5.4.1 Nineteenth-Century Journalists

The *Philanthropist* was an antislavery journal published by the white former enslaver James G. Birney. In 1835, Birney moved the operation from Danville, Kentucky, to New Richmond, Ohio. Simultaneously, the *Philanthropist* published editorials, perhaps intended for a white audience, attacking slavery and debunking white supremacy; it also provided a venue for Black writers to express themselves freely. Despite Birney's history, the African American community in Cincinnati held him in high regard for this work. Birney moved his publication from a slave state to a "free" one out of fear of violence; even once in Ohio, he made enemies among powerful business interests and received threats from other white-owned papers. Birney moved the paper to Cincinnati in 1836, prompting a riot three days later. The white rioters at first victimized Black residents and Black-owned property but did not harm Birney or his paper. The *Philanthropist* continued to publish, and in the months that followed, rioters attacked the paper's printer, damaging equipment, and finally, the paper's office and headquarters. White individuals who participated in the violence were a cross-section of class interests, including Kentucky slaveholders, Ohio businesspeople who profited from commerce with the South, and working-class laborers.[168] Widespread mob violence in 1841 also targeted the *Philanthropist*, among many other targets. That newspapers were attacked during this era underscores the importance they had in organizing the African American community.

While Black voices were initially expressed in white-run publications, a rich tradition of African American newspapers gradually emerged. The first may have been the *Disenfranchised American*, founded in 1844 by Alphonso Sumner and O.T.B. Nickens,[169] two Cincinnati teachers, and only the third Black-run newspaper not on the East Coast. Peter H. Clark founded the Cincinnati-based *Herald of Freedom* in 1855 and then worked for a Free Soil Party publication based in Newport, Kentucky.[170] William H. Yancy, a barber, and Thomas Woodson, a minister, founded the *Colored*

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[168] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 109–110.
[169] Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *The Underground Railroad: An Encyclopedia of People, Places, and Operations* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2008), 7.
[170] Ana Pietrewicz, "Discovery: Herald of Freedom and Peter H. Clark." Past Is Present, October 5, 2022, https://pastispresent.org/2022/acquisitions/discovery-herald-of-freedom-and-peter-h-clark/.

Citizen in 1863.[171] The *Rostrum*, published briefly in the 1890s, focused on African American civil rights. Its founder, William L. Anderson, had a career as a printer that continued long after the paper ceased to operate.[172] Other, relatively short-lived publications included the *Cincinnati News Recorder* (1894–1895) and *Voice of the People* (1896). The National Convention of Colored Newspaper Men was also held in Cincinnati in 1875.[173]

None of these publications lasted long, usually for financial reasons, though the *Colored Citizen* managed to stay in regular publication for a few years, reporting on Civil War news from a Black perspective (it may have continued into 1876, though specific dates are not known, as very few extant copies remain).[174] The *Colored Citizen* is also noteworthy for its columns by Sarah Gibson Jones, the first known female African American journalist.[175]

In these decades, regional or nationwide African American papers were more influential, such as the *Colored American*, based in New York City, that brought national attention to the fight of those such as John Isom Gaines for Black public schools in the 1840s.[176] Out-of-town newspapers often carried Cincinnati columns by Cincinnati authors. Lewis Depugh Easton, the first African American to attend the University of Cincinnati and a teacher and administrator at Gaines High School, wrote for the *New National Era*, a publication owned and edited by Frederick Douglass, along with the local *Colored Citizen* and other national publications. Sarah Gibson Jones also contributed to the *Indianapolis Leader*.[177] From the 1870s into the 1920s, the *Chicago Defender*, *Cleveland Gazette, Indianapolis Leader*, *New York Age*, and *St. Paul Appeal* all carried weekly columns about Cincinnati news.[178]

In the 1870s there was also a nationwide rise in self-identified "amateur" journalism, typically written by and for youth and younger adults. This era was brought about by the 1867 invention, by Benjamin O. Woods, of the "novelty press," an affordable, small-scale printing press originally designed to print pharmacy labels.[179] In the African American community, they also played an important Reconstruction-era role in facilitating the discussion of political issues. In Cincinnati's African American community, a prominent example is *Le Bijou*, published and edited by the

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[171] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 132.
[172] "Rostrum (1897-1899, Cincinnati)," n.d., https://ohioblackpress.org/s/ohioblackpress/item/262.
[173] "1890s: Beyond Ohio," n.d., https://ohioblackpress.org/s/ohioblackpress/page/1890s.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Sarah Gibson Jones," September 30, 2018, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/sarah-gibson-jones/.
[176] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 163.
[177] Geoff Sutton, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.
[178] JoAnn Morse, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.
[179] American Antiquitarian Society, "Amateur Newspapers," n.d., https://www.americanantiquarian.org/amateur-newspapers.

siblings Herbert Clark and Consuelo Clark, children of Peter H. Clark, from 1878 to 1880, while the two were in their late teens or early twenties. Their sister, Ernestine, also contributed to the paper.[180] (By this time, the Clark family had moved from their house at 1119 Yale Street, extant, to 54 Sherman Avenue, which no longer exists.) Later in life, Herbert published the *Afro American* with his father from 1882 to 1890,[181] and Consuelo graduated from Gaines High School in 1879, studied at Boston University School of Medicine, and became the first African American woman to practice medicine in Ohio.

The first publication based in Cincinnati that was both Black-run and long-lasting had a niche focus: The *American Catholic Tribune*, established by formerly enslaved Daniel Rudd in 1886, targeted a nationwide audience and aimed to introduce the Roman Catholic faith to African Americans. It was founded in 1886 and relocated to Detroit in 1894.[182] However, the news wasn't entirely religious in nature; a weekly "City and Vicinity" column focused on news in Cincinnati.[183]

Two particularly important journalists associated with Cincinnati spent the majority of their careers elsewhere. Irvine Garland Penn was a journalist and publisher in Virginia and author of the 1891 volume *The Afro-American Press and its Editors*, a comprehensive study of African American journalism in the nineteenth century. Penn moved to Cincinnati in 1912 and spent the rest of his life working in the Methodist Episcopal Church and as a fundraiser for antislavery causes. Delilah Beasley, born in Cincinnati, was the first African American woman to be published in a major paper; she wrote for the Cleveland Gazette and Cincinnati Enquirer before moving to Oakland, California, in 1910, where she published several works on California African American history.

5.4.2 Twentieth-Century Publications

In the twentieth century, the author, biographer, and historian Wendell Dabney founded what was certainly the most influential Black newspaper in Cincinnati's history and among the city's most important, regardless of ethnicity. (Dabney, of many accomplishments, began his career as a music teacher and later served a long tenure as president of the Cincinnati NAACP.)

Dabney founded the *Ohio Enterprise* in 1902, which became the *Union* in 1907. In 1905, Dabney had attended the first conference of the Niagara Movement. This began a long career for Dabney

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[180] "Herbert Clark and Le Bijou · the Ohio Black Press in the 19th Century · the 19C Ohio Black Press," n.d., https://ohioblackpress.org/s/ohioblackpress/page/le_bijou.

[181] "Afro American (1882-1890, Cincinnati)," n.d., https://ohioblackpress.org/s/ohioblackpress/item/150.

[182] Peter Garcia, "Daniel Rudd Establishes the American Catholic Tribune," Archdiocese of Cincinnati Bicentennial, March 2, 2021, https://200.catholicaoc.org/2021/02/19/daniel-rudd-establishes-the-american-catholic-tribune.

[183] Geoff Sutton, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.

of opposition to segregation in all its forms—a viewpoint that, at times, put him at odds with other members of Cincinnati's African American community.

Dabney published the *Union* until 1952 and did not shy away from using the paper as a platform to express his views, including opposition to segregated vocational education that others in the community worked to provide (See **Section 5.3: Education, 1844–1965**). Although the *Union* was certainly the leading voice of African American journalism in Cincinnati, out-of-town papers such the *Chicago Defender*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, and *Indianapolis Recorder* also continued to cover Cincinnati news, especially major civil rights actions. Distributed in the South, these papers spread the word about opportunities in Northern cities and contributed to the Great Migration.[184] The *Union* ceased publication upon Dabney's death in 1952.[185]

Gerald Porter, who was editor of the *Dayton Tribune*, moved to Cincinnati in 1955 to fill the void created by the loss of the *Union*. He founded the *Cincinnati Herald* in 1955, operating out of an office at 863 Lincoln Avenue (no longer extant). When Porter died from injuries sustained in a car crash in 1963, his wife, Marjorie Parham, took over as editor, with assistance from her son, Bill Spillers. The role of the paper, which still exists in 2025, has always been to advocate for the African American community while also providing a space for dialogue within that community. The *Herald* was firebombed by unknown perpetrators in 1994 but continued publishing on schedule.[186] Parham retired in 1996 and sold the paper to its current editors.

5.4.3 Broadcast Media

One noteworthy radio station, WCIN, commenced in 1953. It was the area's only Black-interest radio station and the second-oldest Black-run radio station in the country. Lincoln Ware, who was its most well-known host, began his career in 1973. WCIN continued into the early 2000s until it changed format and eventually went out of business. The former studio, at the intersection of Glenwood Avenue and Vine Street, no longer exists.[187]

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[184] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 15.
[185] Smaller papers, such as the Cincinnati Independent, continued with more limited circulation, though the office of that publication at 653 West Court Street no longer exists; see Section 5.7: Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975.
[186] Briana Rice, "A Reliable Advocate: The History of the Cincinnati Herald and Why It Still Matters," *The Enquirer*, November 5, 2021, https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2021/11/05/long-history-citys-only-black-newspaper-and-why-still-matters/8448716002/.
[187] John Kiesewetter, "WCIN-AM Veterans Recall City's First Radio Station for African-Americans," *WVXU*, February 25, 2016, https://www.wvxu.org/media/2016-02-25/wcin-am-veterans-recall-citys-first-radio-station-for-african-americans.

5.4.4 Places Associated with Journalism: National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

Property types associated with journalism will generally consist of the homes of important writers and editors. Offices or places of publication typically no longer exist.

Remaining homes of prominent journalists, such as those who accomplished important firsts in their fields or who published influential papers, will likely be eligible under for the National Register under Criterion B for their associations with the careers of these important individuals. These include those of Peter H. Clark, at 1119 Yale Avenue; Sarah Gibson Jones, at 1537 Blair Avenue; Wendell Dabney, at 825 Beecher Street; and Marjorie Parham, at 4503 Sunnyslope Terrace, all in Cincinnati.

Irvine Penn's residence, at 2823 Park Avenue, and the Lewis and Katherine Easton House, at 440 Hopkins Street, may potentially be eligible, pending further research. Both these places reflect where these important individuals lived later in life, mostly after their careers in journalism had concluded.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Journalism, 1844–1975, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Henry Ferguson House	919 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Irvine Garland Penn House	2823 Park Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Marjorie Parham House	4503 Sunnyslope Terrace, Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Sarah Gibson Jones and Joseph L. Jones House	1537 Blair Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Wendell Dabney House	825 Beecher St., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

Additional evaluation of the Wendell Dabney House and the Marjorie Parham House are included in **Appendix** A.

5.5 The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964

The Civil Rights Movement, as a historical period, generally refers to a wave of nonviolent protests and civil disobedience, accompanied by a series of legislative and legal victories, prompted by the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision ending racial segregation in public schools and culminating with the Fair Housing Act of 1968. In a more general sense, the modern quest for civil rights in Ohio and Kentucky has its origins in post-Reconstruction-era efforts, on the part of African Americans, to combat discrimination and achieve legal recognition of the civil rights of African Americans.

5.5.1 Civil Rights in the Nineteenth Century

In Cincinnati, an early chapter of the movement for civil rights begins with A. J. DeHart, who organized the Civil Rights League in 1886. According to an announcement, the purpose of the league was to advocate for "enforcing the laws of the State of Ohio, which guarantee equal civil rights to all of its citizens without preference to race or previous condition." Tactics to be used would include "bringing suit against all restaurants, hotels, &c., that refuse to serve colored people."[188] (The announcement does not state where meetings would be held; however, the residence of DeHart, along with his wife Jennie Jackson, of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, at 1128 Chapel St., no longer exists.) In its mission and its means, the Civil Rights League foreshadowed the activism of organizations such as the NAACP and others in the twentieth century.

The enforcement and lawsuits alluded to in the league's announcement would be based on a series of recent legislative victories. The Ohio Public Accommodations Law of 1884 prohibited discrimination in places such as inns, theaters, and transportation; it was one of the earliest state-level civil rights laws in the country. Although penalties for violating the law were light, it was an important step for civil rights in Ohio, coming just after the Supreme Court, in the Civil Rights Cases of 1883, had declared the federal Civil Rights Act of 1875 to be unconstitutional. Still on the books were the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, that extended federal civil rights protections to state and local governments, and the Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, that recognized the right to vote of all men regardless of race.

Activities of the Civil Rights League included successfully lobbying the Hamilton County Auditor to hire at least one Black official. The league sued two restaurants that refused to serve John Hargo, a visitor from Indiana, to the Centennial Exposition in Cincinnati in 1888, but lost at the state

[188] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "A. J. DeHart: The Cincinnati Civil Rights League, 1886-1890," March 19, 2024, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/a-j-dehart-the-cincinnati-civil-rights-league-1886-1890/.

supreme court level. The league also employed the tactic of publicizing the names of discriminatory businesses, again foreshadowing the activities of the NAACP in the 1940s.[189]

Another victory (though it was not seen as such by all African Americans; see **Section 5.2: Education, 1844–1965**) was the Arnett Act of 1887, banning segregated schools; additional state-level antidiscrimination legislation was passed in 1894. Enforcement remained mixed.[190]

5.5.2 Civil Rights Advocacy during the Great Migration

Battles around the issue of civil rights intensified with waves of both racism and antiracist activism that accompanied the Great Migration in the 1910s. Coinciding with a rapid increase in the African American population, segregation and white discrimination worsened. Wendell Dabney lamented the new situation. In *Colored Citizens*, he recalls, before the 1910s "All the beer gardens were open to [African Americans] … theaters, Over-the-Rhine resorts, the Zoo cafe, dining room, and most ordinary restaurants." Dabney, who often emphasized class distinctions, saw the discrimination as based in issues of class more than race; in his view, middle- and upper-class African Americans were being swept up, by association, in a wave of discrimination that was directed at lower-income, less educated migrants from the rural South. These newcomers "cannot conceive that obnoxious personal characteristics form the basis of prejudice far more than differences of race, color and religion," according to Dabney. "The difference in class neither concerns nor affects him, the color being the same is all he considers."[191] Dabney's remarks reflect an underlying tension that often occurred between more established African American communities and newer arrivals in Northern cities in the 1910s.

Regardless of the underlying factors, discrimination and racism worsened. While Cincinnati's places of employment and public facilities, by this time, were not segregated legally, customs, blatant segregation, and outright intimidation and violence kept African Americans from many white spaces, including hotels, restaurants, and amusement parks.

In this increasingly racist climate, organizations such as the anti-Black, anti-Catholic, and anti-immigrant Ku Klux Klan began to act increasingly in the open. The Hamilton County branch of the organization was founded in 1920 and began to organize rallies, including in such public places as the Cincinnati Zoo and the Emery Auditorium. A menswear store downtown (402 Main Street, no longer extant) adopted a blatantly racist marketing strategy, taking on the name "Ku-Klux Klothes" and depicting Klan activities in its promotional materials (the store only lasted one year). One night in 1924, the Klan arranged for hundreds of cross burnings to occur simultaneously around the Cincinnati region. Cincinnati mayor George Carrel had attempted to prohibit such

[189] Ibid.
[190] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 10.
[191] Ibid., 14–15.

demonstrations, sending the police to shut down rallies, but the mayor of nearby Newtown, Ohio, announced that he was "one hundred percent with the Klan." Opponents of the Klan fought back with lawsuits; in a few instances, participants leaving the demonstrations were kidnapped, harassed, and publicly outed, though the perpetrators of these acts were never determined. [192] After the mid-1920s, Klan activity subsided.

5.5.3 Organizations and Actions

Several local African American-led civil rights organizations were founded in this highly segregated environment. The Cincinnati branch of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) began in 1915, only six years after the national organization was founded in Baltimore. The initial focus of the local organization was to campaign against school segregation (see **Section 5.3: Education, 1886–1964**). Wendell Dabney was its first president. At first, the organization met in the homes of its members. The NAACP opposed, with mixed success, segregated public schools such as the Harriet Beecher Stowe School in Cincinnati, founded in 1914. Although integration for students was a primary goal for the NAACP, the organization also saw this as an issue of employment discrimination. In the 1910s and 1920s, public education seemed to be one of the few career fields where the push for integration seemed to hold the promise of success, and Black schools, by drawing Black teachers and administrators who could otherwise work towards integrating the faculty of non-segregated schools, stood in the way.[193] The NAACP played a major role in advances in civil rights in Cincinnati over the coming decades, leading boycotts and growing its membership. Theodore Berry was its president from 1932 to 1946 and would later be Cincinnati's first African American mayor.

Protests, boycotts, and lawsuits of discrimination in theaters were a focus of the NAACP in the 1930s and 40s. Although such discrimination was illegal, white employees would often find excuses or concoct delays to avoid serving Black clients. Between protests and lawsuits, the NAACP was successful in ending such discriminatory practices at Cincinnati's RKO theater chain (multiple locations, no longer extant) in 1941.[194]

In addition to discrimination in public accommodations and acts of outright intimidation, employment discrimination was almost universal. Black men and women were often relegated to unskilled, low-paying, and undesirable jobs. Even those with previous experience in the trades or professional positions now had trouble finding skilled work. In a 1930 survey of Cincinnati

[192] Cincinnati Sites and Stories. "The Kidnapping of Klan Leader Theodore Heck: Resistance to Widespread Klan Presence in the 1920s," n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/235.
[193] Sandor, "Black is as Good a Color as White," 32.
[194] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 10.

employers, only ten percent stated that they would hire an African American employee (the rest answered in the negative or refused to answer).[195]

Increased demand for workers in the manufacturing industry during both world wars ameliorated conditions, but only somewhat. During World War I, a relatively small number of skilled positions became open to African Americans, and during World War II, some workplaces were integrated as a matter of necessity. In general, though, employers resisted. In Evendale, Ohio, white workers at the Wright Aeronautical facility went on strike in June 1944 to protest integration. Similar strikes occurred in Delco-operated Fisher Body plant in Norwood, Ohio, and at the Lunkenheimer Valve Company facility (1500 Waverly Ave., extant) in Cincinnati.[196]

One governmental organization also worked to address issues of segregation and discrimination. Mayor James G. Stewart convened the Mayor's Friendly Relations Committee in 1943, after rioting in Detroit prompted fears that such violence would spread to other cities. The committee, as might be expected from a white, elected official, adopted a gradualist approach to civil rights and often worked behind the scenes to de-escalate contentious issues.[197] The Mayor's committee did nothing in 1944 when a white mob attacked a Black family that attempted to move into the all-white Mt. Adams neighborhood, causing extensive damage to the house (996 Hill Street, no longer extant; see below).[198] It also did not take sides in issues of police brutality, such as when Nathan Wright was or when Haney Bradley was severely beaten in two separate 1946 events.

Immediately after World War II, battles raged around segregated restaurants in Cincinnati and continued concurrently with the annual, national convention of the NAACP, held at the Manse Hotel (1004 Chapel Street, extant) in Walnut Hills in 1946. Some restaurants, knowing they could not legally discriminate, used the convention dates to close for repairs. One local organization that challenged such discrimination before and during the convention was the multi-racial Citizens Committee for Human Rights, founded in 1945, which later became a chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality. Some restaurants quickly complied with the law when pressed, but others resisted. The manager of Mills Restaurant (31–39 East Fourth Street, no longer extant) intimidated African American patrons who attempted to dine there, and in one case, a white customer threw a table. In this instance, the Mayor's Friendly Relations Committee convinced the business to fire the manager and welcome Black guests in 1946, but not until after the convention.[199]

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[195] Joe William Trotter, Jr., *River Jordan: African American Urban Life in the Ohio Valley* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 134.
[196] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 79.
[197] Ibid., 27, 113.
[198] Ibid., 27.
[199] Ibid., 10.

The Greater Cincinnati Urban League was founded in 1948 and worked to develop employment opportunities for African Americans. In that year, of all Cincinnati companies with more than 1,500 employees, not a single employee was Black. Soon, under pressure from the Urban League, department stores such as John Shillito & Company (151 West Seventh Street, extant) and Ben's House of Bargains (several locations, no longer extant) hired African American workers. [200] The National Negro Labor Council, formed in Cincinnati in 1951, was another organization that combatted discriminatory hiring. Finally, NAACP branches in Northern states, including Cincinnati, pioneered the practice of boycotting and protesting local branches of Southern businesses that discriminated (often legally, under Southern Jim Crow laws) in hiring or segregated their customers.[201]

Other battles around this time focused on residential integration, supporting Black families who moved into white neighborhoods despite intimidation and threats of violence, or in some cases, actual violence. In 1944, Bertie Hudson and her family moved to 996 Hill Street in Cincinnati's Mt. Adams neighborhood (no longer extant). A white mob caused extensive damage, destroying most or all doors and windows and crashing a large rock through the roof of the house (the building was built into a steep incline). The house was demolished at some point in the mid-twentieth century, but Hamilton County Auditor records are incomplete and further research would be required to determine when it was demolished or if there is a connection between the demolition and the damage sustained. A white ally, Patsy Bennett of nearby 983 Paradrome Street (extant), was hanged in effigy.[202]

5.5.4 Amusement Parks and the Birth of the Modern Civil Rights Movement in Cincinnati

Civil rights actions around the public Owl's Nest Park and the privately operated Coney Island were foundational due to their scale, success, and the fact that they launched the careers of a generation of Civil Rights Movement activists, many of whom also went on to find success in politics.

Marian
Spencer and Johnnie May Berry (wife of future mayor Ted Berry, who had just been elected to Cincinnati's city council in 1949), and their children, were responsible for integrating the swimming pool at Cincinnati's Owl's Nest Park (1984 Madison Road; the park still exists, but the

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[200] Nina Mjagkij, *Light in the Darkness: African Americans and the YMCA, 1852*–1946 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 280–283.
[201] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 79–80.
[202] Charles Casey-Leininger and Students of the Public History Practicum, "The Struggle for Fair Housing in Cincinnati 1900 to 2007;" "996 Hill Street," Hamilton County Auditor Property Report, generated September 20, 2025, wedge3.hcauditor.org.

pool no longer remains) in 1950. The swimming pool enforced separate days for Black and white guests, and the more desirable weekends and holidays were white days. Both women overcame this policy by "taking their children there every day and simply walking in," facing abuse and harassment, until the segregated policy eventually ended.[203]

Before her work at Owl's Nest Park, Spencer already had a history of anti-discrimination activism: from Gallipolis, Ohio, and a member of the NAACP since the age of thirteen, Spencer attended the University of Cincinnati in 1938, where she campaigned for greater inclusion in campus activities, and continued to live in Cincinnati after graduating. Marian Spencer was involved in local politics as well, having been a member of the Cincinnati Charter Committee in 1940. Later, she would go on to participate in additional civil rights actions (see below), become president of the Cincinnati NAACP, be elected to the city council in 1983, and serve as vice mayor in 1984. Ted Berry, the husband of Johnnie May Berry, was elected as the city's first African American city council member in 1949.

One of the most consequential twentieth-century civil rights campaigns in Cincinnati was the years-long effort to desegregate the Coney Island amusement park. Marian Spencer would again take a leading role. Spencer began the Coney Island campaign in 1952, upon calling the park management about a planned event for children and learning that African Americans were not welcome.[204] With the NAACP, Spencer sued. While the legal process took three years to unfold, Spencer and others organized protests at the gates. Theodore Berry, then serving on the city council, applied political pressure, threatening the facility's license. A compromise reached in 1955 allowed admittance to much of the park, but the dance floor and Sunlite Pool remained white-only.[205]

The NAACP continued sit-ins and picketing in 1961, with 27 people arrested and more threatened by the police. One individual who participated in this campaign was Virginia Coffey, Virginia Coffey, a sociologist, former teacher at the Harriet Beecher Stowe School, and former director of the local YWCA. Coffey used her position on the Mayor's Friendly Relations Committee to apply pressure on Coney Island's ownership.[206] Other noteworthy participants included William L. Mallory, Sr.; Wilber A. Page, a minister and member of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission; Marjorie Parham; and Fred L. Shuttlesworth, co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who moved to Cincinnati in 1961 to serve as pastor of Revelation Baptist Church.

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[203] "Opinion: Civil Rights Icon Marian Spencer Stood Tall and Stood up for Everyone," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, July 17, 2019. It is not clear if segregation was an official city policy or a de-facto custom.
[204] "Dr. Marian Spencer Was Cincinnati's Iconic Civil Rights Leader," *The Cincinnati Herald*, July 15, 2019.
[205] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 54.
[206] "Virginia Coffey," Cincinnati History Library and Archives, n.d., https://web.archive.org/web/20190207001414/http://library.cincymuseum.org/aag/bio/coffey.html.

Every one of these individuals would play a major role in other civil rights actions over the next few years,[207] with Mallory becoming a state representative in 1966. This time, the campaign was a success, and the park became fully integrated that year.[208] The victory was short-lived, however, as Coney Island closed entirely ten years later, in 1971. According to Ernie Watts, one individual who participated in the actions at the park, "Just as soon as we won it, they closed it down and moved to King's Island."[209]

After the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling, the NAACP renewed its campaign against school segregation, with many of the same individuals described above participating in this work.[210] One school successfully opposed by the organization was the Eckstein School, an African American public elementary school in Glendale, Ohio (44 Washington Avenue, extant); this facility closed in 1958 after a lawsuit by the NAACP; its students integrated with other nearby institutions.

Organizers in Cincinnati, like in other cities around the nation, played a role in the events leading up to the passage of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. While Martin Luther King, Jr., was leading the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, Otis Moss, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Lockland, Ohio, organized a local event in which 16,000 people marched downtown on October 27.[211]

Membership in civil rights organizations declined sharply once the Civil Rights Act was passed. Though many individual activists and advocates remained active, they shifted their energies towards other causes. Into the 1970s and 1980s, those who had been involved in the local civil rights movement focused on developing and empowering small businesses and improving the quality of education for African Americans. Virginia Coffey, for example, led several community groups that worked to create more integrated neighborhoods in the 1970s.[212]

In July 1965, the local Congress of Racial Equality organized a strike and sit-in at a federal building in Cincinnati to protest a lack of representation in public employment. [213] The NAACP

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[207] Kendrick, Crystal, "The History of African Americans in Cincinnati."
[208] Ibid., 54–55.
[209] Ibid., 215.
[210] Ibid.
[211] "'We Must Not Just Revisit, but Reclaim Non-Violence': Cincinnati civil rights march recognized 60 years later," *WCPO Cincinnati*, October 26, 2023.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid.

organized a similar event, marching to City Hall, the following month.[214] The city began a job training program for African Americans as a result.

5.5.5 Civil Rights Movement Resources: National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

For buildings and places associated with the Civil Rights Movement, existing guidance is available to assist with National Register eligibility recommendations. The *Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation (2019) provides registration requirements, organized by property type, to identify places likely to be eligible.[215] (Although that document does not cover Kentucky, the overall analysis is likely similar.)

The Multiple Property Documentation suggests that places of Civil Rights Movement actions, such as sit-ins and the starting points or ending parts of marches, often are eligible, particularly when those events are "directly associated with a significant turning point" [216] or had "pivotal outcomes."[217] Once again, many important places associated with this context no longer exist, and those that remain are particularly important.

The Coney Island amusement park, certainly outstanding in terms of its importance to the Civil Rights Movement in Cincinnati, was demolished in 2024. A somewhat similar resource, Owl's Nest Park, has lost the swimming pool that was the focus of Marian Spencer's and her children's efforts. The park may have thus lost the integrity required for National Register eligibility in terms of its Civil Rights Movement significance, but should be evaluated for eligibility with respect to its history in the context of the Works Progress Administration, under Criterion A, and landscape architecture, under Criterion C. (This work would be particularly timely, as Cincinnati Parks is currently undergoing a design and planning process for the future of the park.)[218] Several theaters, including the RKO chain, that were the subject of integration battles, are also now lost.

In some cases, actions that, by themselves, may not result in National Register eligibility should nonetheless be incorporated into existing National Register histories or commemorated through other mechanisms, such as historical markers. One such property is the Cincinnati-Covington Bridge (now the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge), the starting point of a 1983 NAACP march

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[214] "NAACP Pickets City Hall in Cincinnati, Ohio," n.d., https://ohiomemory.org/digital/collection/p267401coll32/id/28911/.
[215] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation Form, 120–150.
[216] Ibid., 132.
[217] Ibid., 138.
[218] "Cincinnati Parks Is Looking for Your Feedback on Rehabilitation and Stabilization of Owl's Nest Park Pavilion," Cincinnati Parks, n.d., https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cincyparks/news/cincinnati-parks-is-looking-for-your-feedback-on-rehabilitation-and-stabilization-of-owls-nest-park-pavilion/.

to Detroit that recalled the route of the Underground Railroad and drew attention to the cause of African American voter turnout, facing racist threats and intimidation along the way.[219]

The Multiple Property Documentation also indicates that meeting places of civil rights groups will often be eligible under Criterion A, while homes of civil rights leaders will be eligible under Criterion B.[220] Often, these are one and the same. Here, several important places remain. These include the Cincinnati homes of suffrage and temperance movement advocate Phoebe Boots Allen, at 5316 Ward Street; Virginia Coffey, at 3020 Gilbert Avenue; Wendell Dabney, at 825 Beecher Street; and Braxton and Reber Cann at 5223 Ward Street, all likely eligible under Criterion B. The home of Fred Shuttlesworth, at 965 Dana Avenue, remains extant and may be eligible (as Shuttlesworth moved to Cincinnati from Alabama in 1961 in a later phase of his career, evaluation should focus on his post-1961 leadership activities). When important civil rights organizations were founded or had early meetings in individual members' homes or in churches, these buildings may be eligible under Criterion A.

Single-family homes are also likely to be eligible if they mark instances of families crossing a color line in the face of racist violence and intimidation. While the Bertie Hudson House has been demolished, the *African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation suggests that such sites may retain information potential under National Register Criterion D.[221] With the Patsy Bennett House, these two properties may be eligible for the National Register.

Church buildings may also be eligible to the extent they held important meetings or if their pastors or members were influential in the Civil Rights Movement. As with many places important to African American history, that so many places have been lost in recent decades to urban renewal and other causes only underscores the importance of places that do remain. The First Baptist Church of Walnut Hills held important NAACP meetings in the 1920s.[222]

Revelation Baptist Church (1556 John Street), associated with the career of Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth from 1961 to 1966, was demolished in 2020. The 1966 location of the church may be significant for post-1966 events, subject to further research, but it is most likely significant

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[219] "1983 NAACP March Across Roebling Bridge - Grassroots Campaign to 'Bury [Black] Voter Apathy' Traces Path of the Underground Railroad," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/87.
[220] Ibid., 139.
[221] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation Form, 140.
[222] JoAnn Morse, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.

under Criterion C for its Postmodern architecture.[223] A church does not need to be significant in a nationwide or regional context to be eligible for its local significance. For instance, although the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., visited many places around the country during his lifetime, further research may establish National Register eligibility for Zion Baptist Church, at 620 Glenwood Avenue in Cincinnati, based on the impact of King's 1961 visit upon the local community.[224]

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Cincinnati-Covington Bridge (John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge)	25 Roebling Way, Covington, KY	Listed (National Historic Landmark)
Fred Shuttlesworth House	965 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Marian and Donald Spencer House	940 Lexington Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Patsy Bennett House	983-995 Paradrome St., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Phoebe Boots Allen House	5316 Ward St., Cincinnati OH	Eligible
Sherman and Mattie Bell Kinney House	409 Clinton Springs Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Virginia Coffey House	3020 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Zion Baptist Church	620 Glenwood Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Cincinnati-Covington Bridge (John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge)	25 Roebling Way, Covington, KY	Listed (National Historic Landmark)
Fred Shuttlesworth House	965 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Marian and Donald Spencer House	940 Lexington Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed

Additional evaluation of the Bertie Hudson House and Patsy Bennett House, Braxton and Reber Cann House, and Phoebe Boots Allen House is provided in **Appendix A**.

[223] "Revelation Baptist Church - House of Worship With Ties to Civil Rights Movement," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/70.
[224] Alexis Rogers, "Cincinnati Remembers the Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.," *WLWT*, April 5, 2018, https://www.wlwt.com/article/cincinnati-remembers-the-legacy-of-dr-martin-luther-king-jr/19684209.

5.6 Religious Institutions, 1867–1975

Churches have historically been central to African American communities, satisfying not only religious needs but also serving many other critical social functions. They provided schools in an era before public education was available to African Americans, provided a venue to develop the leadership and public speaking skills of politicians and business leaders, nurtured musical talent through church choirs, and served as a base for activism from the antislavery era through the Civil Rights Movement.[225]

The buildings themselves often tangibly express the histories of communities in which they are located. Additions and rebuilt buildings are indicative of population growth, with churches often built in phases as funding allows. Entirely new buildings often tell stories of perseverance through the displacement of urban renewal. Sometimes, churches purchased existing buildings, while in other instances, they provided employment opportunities to African American architects and builders.

5.6.1 Religious Buildings and National Register *Criteria Consideration A*

The National Register of Historic Places requires that religious buildings typically be recognized only for secular reasons, that is, "for architectural or artistic values or for important historic or cultural forces that the property represents." Although significance "under a theme in the history of religion having secular scholarly recognition" is possible, most African American church buildings in Cincinnati will be significant within another context theme. [226]

According to the *Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation:

> Church buildings are a major category of civil rights-related resources. Churches can be significant under Criterion A for civil rights meetings and as centers of social and black-empowerment programs. Churches also provided services that helped a community grow and prosper. Church buildings may also be significant under Criterion B for associations with influential leaders (whether ministers or laypersons) in the Civil Rights Movement or in politics. (If a property owned or used by a religious institution is significant for reasons other than religion, it is deemed to satisfy National Register *Criteria Consideration A*.) [227]

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[225] Joseph M. Walton, *Black History in Covington, Kentucky, 1815–1925* (Milford, Ohio: Little Miami Publishing Company, 2025), 173–175.
[226] National Park Service, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," 15.
[227] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation Form, 130.

Churches may be significant in a local context for lasting impacts on the surrounding community. Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, for example, joined with three other churches to develop Madisonville Homes for the Elderly in 1971.[228] Zion Baptist Church (620 Glenwood Avenue in Cincinnati, extant) is potentially eligible for the local impact of the 1963 visit by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Church of Our Savior in Covington, Kentucky (240 East Tenth Street, extant), provided for African American education during an era of segregation.

Churches may also be significant for the opportunities they provided for African American architects or builders. Antioch Baptist Church (956 West Ninth Street in Cincinnati, demolished) was designed by Wallace Rayfield, the second formally trained (and possibly most famous, at the time) African American architect in the United States.[229] Edward and Ernest Birch, who practiced from a Cincinnati home office as the Birch Brothers, received a major commission in Trinity Missionary Baptist Church (6230 Chandler Street in Cincinnati, extant), which Edward E. Birch completed in 1941, the brothers' first major commission.[230] The Birth Brothers went on as architects for Cincinnati's Immanuel Lutheran Church (544 Rockdale Street, extant) and Brown Chapel AME Church (2804 Alms Place, extant). Greater New Light Baptist Church (710 Fred Shuttlesworth Drive in Cincinnati, extant), completed in 1966, was designed by Wilson & Associates.

Greater New Light Baptist Church also exemplifies significance under Criterion B for its association with the Civil Rights Movement leader, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth. It is also likely to be significant under Criterion C for its innovative, Postmodern architecture. Fifth Christian Church (3203 Wold Avenue in Cincinnati, extant) is another architecturally significant church building, for its International Style architecture by W. L. Manggrum.

Finally, buildings built by religious institutions for purposes other than worship should not be overlooked. Page Tower (619 Central Avenue in Cincinnati, extant) is likely to be significant under Criterion A as a noteworthy, church-led residential development project.

Further evaluation of Fifth Christian Church and Greater New Light Baptist Church is provided in **Appendix A**.

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[228] "Trinity Missionary Baptist Church: Earliest-known Public Building by Architect Edward E. Birch," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/10.
[229] "Antioch Baptist Church, West End Site - the Now-vanished Sanctuary of a Still-vibrant Congregation," Cincinnati Sites and Stories," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/188.
[230] "Trinity Missionary Baptist Church - Earliest-known Public Building by Architect Edward E. Birch," Cincinnati Sites and Stories.

As religious institutions are often primarily significant under other themes, please see **Appendix B** for religious buildings recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

5.7 Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975

In Cincinnati's early decades, African American men in Cincinnati most often worked as laborers in river-related industries. Skilled trades and building trades, often a path to financial success in other areas of the United States, provided few opportunities for African Americans in Cincinnati. In 1836, for example, there were only four African American carpenters and three blacksmiths in the city, according to a city directory from that year; white artisans conspired to keep Black workers from entering the trades. Most women who worked outside of the home were launderers, though one woman worked as a tailor in 1836.[231] Although the specific circumstances and barriers faced varied throughout the decades, self-employment was the most feasible path towards financial stability and success for African Americans in the Cincinnati area from the nineteenth century into the twentieth.

In the mid-nineteenth century, barbering, hairdressing, and teaching were occupations by which their practitioners attained a middle-class lifestyle, a degree of social prestige, and, sometimes, even significant wealth. The same 1936 directory cited above lists twenty heads of households as barbers (possibly more, as African American residents were sometimes undercounted), or twelve percent of the African population of the city. Barbering, in particular, was viewed by white people as a Black occupation, enabling Black male barbers to work with minimal competition. Barbers were able to use their income to improve the status of their families and the African American community. In 1850, 83 percent of the school-age children of barbers were attending school, a much higher rate than the children of other professions. White clients often invited their barbers to social and professional events, allowing a degree of access to white society and business opportunities.[232] With income, education, and professional connections, barbers successfully invested the money they earned, most often into real estate.[233]

Jonathan Singer, one of the earliest free African American residents of Northern Kentucky, moved to Covington in 1836 and worked as a barber; his sons took up the trade as well. Jonathan Singer earned enough to invest in real estate in Ohio.[234] William Pilsoul was another barber who profited from real estate. A third example was William Watson, with whom future United States Representative John Mercer Langston lived as a teenager while attending Gilmore High School.

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[231] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 103.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 133–134.
[234] Walton, *Black History in Covington, Kentucky*, 76.

Langston described Watson as the "leading colored barber" in Cincinnati.[235] (Watson's house, on the north side of Green Street between Elm Street and Race Street, likely still exists, though city directories do not provide an exact location). Finally, Fountain Lewis was born enslaved in Kentucky in 1820 and purchased his freedom, moving to Cincinnati in 1841. Lewis worked at 4 West Fourth Street (no longer extant), and eventually owned and managed several barber shops, earning enough to donate extensively to causes and organizations, including Union Baptist Church at Mound Street and Richmond Street (no longer extant) and Cincinnati Music Hall.[236]

In this same era, some Black women found success as hairdressers. Eliza Potter, who moved from New York to Cincinnati to work as a hairdresser for wealthy white women, became financially well-off herself. She lived on Home Street (now Home Alley, residence no longer extant) and, as many barbers did, made additional income from real estate. She later wrote an autobiography, *A Hairdresser's Experience in High Life* (1859). Potter considered marriage to be a "weakness" that rendered women its "victims;" she had left a husband in Pennsylvania earlier in life and her financial independence allowed her to remain unmarried. Potter traveled widely throughout Europe, Canada, and the United States; in the South, she socialized mostly among white people but used her influence to advocate for people who were enslaved, and was once arrested for participating in the Underground Railroad. In the 1860 census, there were four African American women hairdressers. Most worked in less well-paying jobs: 46 percent worked as washerwomen, 17 percent as domestic servants, and 13 percent as seamstresses. A handful of Black women attained a remarkable degree of wealth, such as nine in the 1850 census who owned more property than all the city's Black male barbers combined. Overall, as census records and city directories often overlooked the contributions of women, how these nine individuals attained their wealth is not mentioned.[237]

Other successful entrepreneurs ran factories and shops. Henry Boyd, born into enslavement in Kentucky in 1802, learned carpentry while enslaved. He purchased his freedom and moved to Cincinnati, where he had difficulty finding work, despite his skill, due to employment discrimination. In 1833, he patented a type of bedstead and sold it widely enough to open a factory at Eighth Street and Broadway (no longer extant), where he employed both Black and white workers through the 1860s. James Pressley Ball was a daguerreotype artist who learned the trade from a free African American man in Boston. Ball opened a studio on Fourth Street (no longer extant) in 1849. Ball employed his brother, Thomas Ball, and his brother-in-law, Alexander

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[235] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 104.

[236] For an extensive list of business locations and residences associated with Fountain Lewis, see Thea Tjepkema, "Fountain Lewis: The Venerable Barber Who Helped Build Cincinnati Music Hall," Friends of Music Hall, March 17, 2022, https://friendsofmusichall.org/2020/05/21/fountain-lewis-the-venerable-barber-who-helped-build-cincinnati-music-hall/. Other than Cincinnati Music Hall, none of these places remain.

[237] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 135–136.

Thomas; together, the group produced prints depicting slavery and the slave trade, among other topics, and received nationwide acclaim.[238]

The Dumas House in Cincinnati's East End (no longer extant) started as a boarding house in the 1830s and became a hotel in the 1850s. It was owned by Samuel T. Wilcox and later managed by Sandy Shumate. A center of the African American community, it was a target during the rioting of 1841; both free and enslaved guests stayed there while in Cincinnati for commerce; freedom-seeking people on the Underground Railroad also found refuge there.[239] Wendell Dabney inherited the Dumas House in 1894, bringing him to Cincinnati.

The funeral industry was another area where African Americans achieved prominence and success. Wallace A. Gaines founded one of the first African American funeral homes in Covington, sometime around the 1890s, on 633 Scott Street (demolished). Gaines owned other funeral homes in Kentucky and Indiana and was a founding member of the African American Progressive Building and Loan Association.[240]

5.7.1 Post-Civil-War and Twentieth-Century Professions

From the Civil War into the early decades of the twentieth century was an era of economic challenges for African Americans in Cincinnati. Although the situation had been far from perfect in the 1840s and 1850s—as mentioned above, African Americans faced racist barriers to entering most professions and, once within them, often found a lack of upward mobility—success stories like those described above were commonplace.

The late-nineteenth century, however, marks a period of what historian Nancy Bertaux terms "occupational decline" among Cincinnati's African American population, who found increasing discriminatory barriers and an overall worsening economic status as the city transformed to an industrial economy. Not unique to Cincinnati, these changes occurred, to some extent, across all Northern cities. Overall factors contributing to job segregation included a lack of access to educational opportunities, and discrimination in hiring. In Cincinnati, a decline in the steamboat industry, along with an industrial-era shift away from skilled artisanship in small-scale workshops and towards large-scale factories where more work was performed by unskilled workers, displaced many African American workers. An increase in the power of labor unions often meant that the same unions kept Black workers from new industrial jobs, such as machinists, clerical workers,

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[238] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 82.
[239] Ibid., 150.
[240] Joseph M. Walton, *Black History in Covington, Kentucky, 1815–1925* (Milford, Ohio: Little Miami Publishing Company, 2025), 150.

and salespeople.[241] Municipal employment, another mainstay of the African American population, came to be dominated by white workers, including recent European immigrants.[242]

Bertaux describes a "paradox" that ensued: even as legal forms of racism were eliminated, prestigious occupations, such as barbering and teaching, became less frequent among the Black population. White residents became much less likely to patronize Black doctors, lawyers, and bankers, and white men began to move into the barbering profession. In the 1910s, as the Great Migration increased Cincinnati's African American population, and again after World War II, white discrimination became more severe. One outcome of this economic transition, however, was that the African American community increasingly began to spend their money at Black-owned businesses, supporting a class of African American professionals and business owners that persisted throughout the twentieth century.[243]

Self-employment became an increasingly important path to financial success, and one that allowed the Black middle class to continue to grow. Traditionally African American business categories, such as barber shops and funeral homes, continued to prosper. Medical professionals overcame barriers to establish private practices in the mid-twentieth century.

One particularly accomplished doctor was Lucy Oxley. Oxley's mother, Esther, was an African American teacher, and her father was an Episcopal minister and immigrant from Trinidad. Lucy Oxley studied medicine at the University of Cincinnati, becoming the first African American and possibly the first woman to graduate from that program, and qualified for an internship at Cincinnati General Hospital (now the University of Cincinnati Medical Center). However, that hospital refused her due to her race; she took an internship at Freedman's Hospital in the District of Columbia instead. Upon completing the internship, Cincinnati hospitals still would not accept her; she overcame this barrier by starting a private practice in 1940. From 1956 through the 1980s, she practiced at a medical office building she owned on Dexter Avenue (demolished in the 2010s) in Cincinnati's Walnut Hills.

5.7.2 Public Accommodations and Venues

Black-owned hotels, restaurants, bars, theaters, music venues, and similar accommodations played an increasingly important role as the African American population grew during the Great Migration. The above-mentioned Dumas House played an important role into the mid-twentieth century, but went out of business soon after Wendell Dabney died in 1952. The Manse Hotel,

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[241] Nancy Bertaux, Structural Economic Change and Occupational Decline among Black Workers in Nineteenth-Century Cincinnati," in Taylor, *Race in the City*, 142–145.
[242] Taylor, *Race in the City*, 6.
[243] Nancy Bertaux, Structural Economic Change and Occupational Decline among Black Workers in Nineteenth-Century Cincinnati," in Taylor, *Race in the City*, 143–145.

however, arguably among the most important historic African American businesses in Cincinnati (now Manse Apartments, 1004 Chapel Street), began in 1937 when Horace Sudduth adapted an older residential building to serve as a hotel. By the 1940s the business had grown and Sudduth expanded into the next-door building, now connected as an annex. It provided a venue for social events, weddings, professional conferences, and a 1946 NAACP meeting, and was the top destination for African American travelers to Cincinnati, including Thurgood Marshall, Joe Louis, Duke Ellington, and James Brown (the hotel served white guests as well). Despite its importance, the business closed in the late 1960s, as demand for smaller, African American-focused hotels declined in the wake of federal civil rights legislation.

The Manse Hotel and Annex (now Manse Apartments) in 2019. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

After what is now known as the Harriet Beecher Stowe House (2950 Gilbert Avenue) ceased being used by the Lane Seminary in 1865, it was sold to private owners and used as a residence and, later, a hotel. In 1935 it became the Edgemont Inn, a tavern marketed to African American travelers (listed in the *Negro Motorist Green Book*, see below). As was very often the case with such businesses, the Edgemont Inn served a broader social purpose, hosting family events as well as larger conferences of influential African American professional and civic organizations.

Theaters were another category of businesses that also facilitated community events. The Lincoln and Lyceum theaters (500 Fifth Street and 427 Central Avenue, respectively), managed by T. Spencer Finley starting in 1919, provided movies and vaudeville performances for African American audiences. Importantly, however, these theaters performed a civic function as well, holding community meetings. Horace Suddith leased Lincoln Theater and hosted lectures on cultural topics. (Neither building remains; the Lyceum was torn down in the 1920s due to structural problems and the Lincoln was lost to the Urban Renewal of the 1960s.)

5.7.3 The *Negro Motorist Green Book*

The 1930s marked an increase in automobile ownership and travel among a growing, Black middle class. At the same time, Jim Crow laws and extralegal violence and discrimination, combined with a decentralized and poorly marked highway system, posed particular challenges for Black travelers. To address this issue, Victor Hugo Green, a postal worker in New York City, devised the *Negro Motorist Green Book*, first published in 1936. The *Green Book*[244] provided a nationwide directory of Black-owned businesses as well as other accommodations that were generally seen as friendly towards Black customers. It also contained general, automobile-related travel advice.

The *Green Book* was published annually (except during World War II) and evolved over its thirty-year tenure. The 1936 edition focused on New York and New Jersey; eventually, the book expanded to cover much of North America. Alma Green, Victor's wife, began to be listed as an editor starting in the 1959 edition. As the geographic area that was covered broadened, the *Green Book* narrowed its scope—by 1956 it was restricted to restaurants and lodging, dropping categories of services less directly related to travel, such as banks and universities. Special editions, however, provided more in-depth coverage of major urban areas and tourist destinations, as well as air travel.

The last edition of the *Green Book* was published in 1966, as the nature of African American travel changed, especially after federal enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Nonetheless, the Green Book remains an important resource for scholars and travel enthusiasts today, chronicling the development of America's Black business districts over the decades of the mid-twentieth century.

In Cincinnati, 151 business locations are shown in the various editions of the *Green Book*. By category, these are: forty-four restaurants; twenty-eight beauty shops; eighteen nightclubs, taverns, and roadhouses; thirteen garages and service stations; seventeen barber shops; seventeen hotels; six drug stores, four tailors, four taxicab companies, and four tourist homes. Almost all of these properties no longer exist. The few that do include the Manse Hotel, Edgemont Inn, Gordon Hotel, and a tourist home operated by O. Steele located within Washington Terrace at 3065 Kerper Avenue.[245]

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[244] The "Green Book" refers collectively to the *Negro Motorist Green Book* (1937–1951), the *Negro Travelers' Green Book* (1952–1959), and *The Travelers' Green Book* (1960–1967), all published by Green.

[245] JoAnn Morse, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication with authors. Morse's map of all 151 locations is published at https://walnuthillsstories.org/projects/black-business-district-information-from-green-books/green-book/.

5.7.4 Important Architects and Builders

African American architects and buildings stand out among professionals in that their works have left a tangible imprint on the landscape. One particularly prolific architecture practice was that of Edward E. Birch and Ernest O. Birch, often known as the Birch Bros. They designed buildings both individually and as a partnership. From Winchester, Kentucky, their father, Samuel Birch, was a barber (a profession noted, in the nineteenth century, for providing a high level of educational attainment to their children). Edward studied architectural engineering at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (now Hampton University) in Virginia, while Ernest studied carpentry at the Kentucky Normal and Industrial Institute (now Kentucky State University). Edward does not seem to have been formally trained as an architect, though there was no state-level licensing requirement in Ohio at that time. The two moved to Cincinnati sometime between 1908 and 1910 and were among the earliest African American architects in the area.

Edward Birch lived with his wife, Suzie, at 1123 Yale Avenue (extant); Ernest lived with Corenna Birch at 3146 Gaff Avenue (extant). Both worked out of their homes and did not have a professional office; they also had other jobs outside of architecture, suggesting they did not engage in the profession full-time. Nonetheless, they produced a large body of work and many of their buildings are still standing, including Trinity Missionary Baptist Church (6320 Chandler Street in Cincinnati) and Immanuel Lutheran Church (544 Rockdale Ave in Cincinnati) as well as several smaller-scale commercial buildings around the city.

Another important architect is William L. Manggrum, Jr, who in 1956 became the first African American licensed architect in Cincinnati. His parents were William Manggrum, Sr., who operated a pharmacy in Walnut Hills, and Loretta Cessor Manggrum, who broke the color barrier at Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in 1951. Manggrum's works include Fifth Christian Church at 3203 Wold Avenue (see **Section 5.6: Education, Religious Institutions 1867–1975**) and the Marian and Donald Spencer House at 940 Lexington Avenue (extant).[246]

5.7.5 Black-Owned Businesses: National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

In a general sense, Black-Owned businesses will be significant under National Register Criterion A for the role they played in enabling the African American community in Greater Cincinnati to build wealth, success, and financial independence, or for the events or trends they facilitated in their use as social gathering spaces.

Property types will usually comprise the commercial buildings themselves, but may include the residence of a business owner, under Criterion B, especially when that person's contributions extend beyond one particular business endeavor or commercial building and the residence would

[246] Michael Burson, personal communication.

therefore better exemplify the person's whole career (some businesses, of course, operated out of homes). Finally, entire business districts may be eligible under Criterion A, though establishing district boundaries will require additional intensive survey work beyond this context study.

Customer-oriented businesses, such as retail shops, restaurants, and tavern, are somewhat unique among property types in this context study: first, they were historically somewhat common (sixty-two restaurants, bars and similar establishments were listed in the *Green Book*, for example); and second, businesses often occupy spaces within larger commercial buildings that are reconfigured from one tenant or owner to the next. For this reason, comparative evaluation and interior integrity will be important concerns in determining eligibility (See **Section 4.2: Integrity**), and recommendations under this theme should be confirmed with visits to the interior.[247]

This thematic section begins in 1910, when the Great Migration increased Cincinnati's African American population, marked by a concurrent increase in discrimination and segregation. Together, these two factors prompted a wave of new businesses, some of which remain in existence today. Regarding the nineteenth century, places from that era have generally been lost to urban renewal and other causes: these include places associated with important figures such as Fountain Lewis, Henry Boyd, James Pressley Ball, and Robert Gordon, all of which no longer exist. (One exception is the house of William Watson, which likely remains, but is not confirmed. This would already be listed as a component of the Over-the-Rhine Historic District, but would likely merit individual eligibility under Criterion B.)

Funeral homes, theaters, restaurants or taverns, and other public accommodations are likely to be eligible, especially to the extent that they hosted influential events or served a broader social function. These include the Regal Theater at 1201 Linn Street, listed in the National Register for its social and community importance in addition to its use as an entertainment venue and for its architecture. The *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation suggests that places, such as funeral homes, that were a "jumping-off point" for broader actions will be eligible[248] This would likely include the funeral home operated by Mary Norris Andrews at 3602 Reading Road; Andrews published the weekly *Cincinnati Independent* in the 1940s and 1950s (653 West Court Street, the location of the main office of the paper, no longer exists).[249]

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[247] For more guidance on interior evaluations, see National Register of Historic Places, Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio, 127–130.

[248] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 234.

[249] "Mary Norris Andrews: Founder of a Newspaper and a Funeral Home," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/92.

Hotels will be inherently significant when they exemplify "parallel institutions" created during an era of segregation; they are also likely to be eligible as sites of important meetings or conferences.[250] The Manse Hotel is listed reflecting both elements. Restaurants, clubs, and similar environments are also important as "parallel institutions." The Hut Cafe is an example: It is significant for its association with Mildred Orr, an influential community organizer in Madisonville.[251] It also clearly expresses its integrity, with much of its interior remaining intact from Orr's tenure at the business. (Though unrelated to this context study, The Hut Cafe also may be eligible under Criterion C for its architecture and Criterion A for its role as a local police station, pending further research into these contexts.)

For a barber shop or beauty parlor to be eligible, a well-preserved interior configuration as well as exterior storefront treatment would be important (the exterior requirement would be less important in cases where such a business operated from a private home).[252] This context study identified no properties meeting these requirements.

Another category of important property is a larger commercial building, owned by a member of the African American community, that makes a positive impact on that community through supporting smaller businesses by providing tenant space within. One such example is commonly known as Devote's Corner or the Devote Flats Building, a 1860 commercial building at 2904 Alms Place, purchased in 1920 by Lizzie Branch. Branch was a leading member of the Universal Negro Improvement Association; its mission, among other topics, included African American business development. Branch owned the building only briefly before selling it to Horace Sudduth; under both owners, it hosted a variety of Black-owned businesses, including a grocery store, Major Lee Ziegler's East End Investment and Loan Company, a hairdresser named P. F. Townsend, and the Peerless Pharmacy, owned by Anna Beckwith. This building is highly significant for the role it played as an incubator for smaller businesses, for its African American-owned financial institution, and for hosting rare examples of woman-owned hairdressing and pharmacy businesses.[253] (Any one of these attributes would potentially indicate National Register eligibility; that all of these aspects are combined in the same building only increases its significance).

Professional offices associated with the efforts of African American doctors and other professionals who overcame discriminatory barriers would potentially be eligible under Criteria A and B. These may consist of purpose-built buildings such as Lucy Oxley's office, which likely

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[250] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 236–237.
[251] "The Hut Cafe: Onetime Madisonville Business Run by Mildred H. Orr," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/150.
[252] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*, 127.
[253] "Devote's Corner: a Prominent Building Once Owned by Entrepreneur Lizzie D. Branch," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/7.

would have been eligible, had it not been demolished in the 2010s. However, just as important are older buildings that have been modified to accommodate their practices. One example is the office of James E. Randolph (1000 Greenup Street in Covington, Kentucky). This Italianate Commercial building was modified in the 1940s or 1950s by enclosing the traditional storefront with glazed tile and glass block. The modifications, an expression of the activities that occurred within, are significant. Under Criterion B, in cases where a trailblazing medical professional's office no longer exists, that person's residence would likely be eligible. For Lucy Oxley, her house at 5226 Stewart Avenue in Cincinnati remains.

Only a small fraction of Green Book businesses remain today. About half were destroyed during various urban renewal programs of the later twentieth century; still more have simply closed down over the years for other reasons. Remaining extant Green Book properties—especially if businesses remain in operation, but even if the buildings have been repurposed for other uses—are highly significant reminders of Black culture during the mid-twentieth century.

Properties associated with important architects and builders are also important. For the case of the Birch Bros., the home office of Edward Birch would likely be eligible under Criterion B. The buildings designed by important architects would require eligibility under Criterion C for their architectural merits. Buildings that appear to be so eligible include Fifth Christian Church as well as Greater New Light Baptist Church (see **Section 5.6: Education, Religious Institutions 1867–1975**). More vernacular buildings may also be eligible under Criterion C as well. Though outside the project area for this context study, one particularly noteworthy example is the home office of the Elliot Brothers Cement Company (50 Chestnut Avenue in Wyoming, Ohio). The entire building is built from a complex arrangement of formed, decorative concrete blocks, expressing the trade of its owner.[254]

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Boone Block	422 Scott St., Covington, KY	More Research Needed
Devote's Corner	2904 Alms Pl., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Edward and Susie Birch House	1123 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Ernest and Corenna Birch House	3146 Gaff Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Horace Sudduth House	1350 William Howard Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Horace Sudduth House	2636 Park Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
House of Adam Men's Wear	622 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed

[254] Chris Hanlin, "Elliot Brothers Cement Company," unpublished draft.

James E. Randolph Office	1000 Greenup St., Covington, KY	Eligible
Manse Hotel and Apartments	1004 Chapel St., Cincinnati OH	Listed
Mary Andrews Funeral Home	3602 Reading Rd., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
The Hut Cafe	5110 Whetsel Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Thompson Funeral Home	820 Lincoln Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Trotter's Cafe	2025 Colerain Ave., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Lucy Oxley House	5226 Stewart Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

More detailed evaluations of Devote's Corner, the Hut Cafe, and the Lucy Oxley House are provided in **Appendix A**.

5.7.6 Districts

Finally, concentrations of buildings and places associated with important businesses are likely to be eligible for the National Register as districts. In Covington, a section of Ninth Street, Tenth Street, and Eleventh Street between Greenup Street and the Licking River included many important local businesses, including the medical office of James E. Randolph (mentioned above), as well as non-commercial buildings such as Our Savior Catholic Church and the Lincoln-Grant School. This was the "center of African American life" for the area in the early twentieth century.[255]

Walnut Hills in Cincinnati also has an important African American business district. Between 1918 and 1940, 139 businesses in the area advertised in The *Union*; many of these were also in the *Green Book*. These were generally an area west of Victory Parkway, north of Myrtle Avenue, east of Melrose Avenue and Kerper Avenue, and south of Altoona Street and the Walnut Hills Cemetery. Some businesses were also located in Washington Terrace. The 1943 WPA *Guide to Cincinnati* identifies an African American business district extending "a few short blocks north of Lincoln Avenue."[256]

Most likely, the entire areas described above will not be eligible as districts. Instead, smaller concentrations within those areas will be eligible as National Register districts under Criteria A or A, based on further, intensive-level research into use, important dates, and integrity. Related, non-

[255] Joseph M. Walton, *Black History in Covington, Kentucky, 1815–1925* (Milford, Ohio: Little Miami Publishing Company, 2025), 173–175.

[256] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio,* 45.

commercial buildings should be included in these districts as well. For guidance, see the National Register Bulletin *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*.[257]

[257] National Park Service, 1997.

5.8 Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975

Places associated with sports and recreation will generally fall into two categories. First, much like in business, education, and other contexts, African Americans often established parallel institutions separate from white society—whether out of necessity (such as due to discrimination) or by choice. Second, though related, are properties associated with the significant accomplishments of individual amateur or professional athletes who excelled in their careers.

One early example of a Black-owned recreational facility was Frey's Park, established around 1902. Thomas Frey and his nephew, William T. Frey, began purchasing land in what was then California, Ohio (now part of Cincinnati), near the whites-only Coney Island park, and established a picnic area for African Americans, called Frey's Park. However, Thomas Frey encountered legal obstacles when attempting to build a pavilion for the park. At first, white municipal officials refused a permit, suspecting the pavilion would function as a dance hall, contrary to local land-use laws. Frey fought the decision and was eventually approved to erect the pavilion. However, patrons engaged in both dancing and roller skating, causing additional legal challenges; Frey was even arrested in 1911 for "conducting a public ballroom for Negroes at California without a license." Due to these challenges, and as Frey himself died of pneumonia in 1912, the park did not last much more than a decade. One amateur Black baseball team, the Avon Oaks, used the park as their home field, but Frey's Park fell into disuse around 1914, and none of the facility remains in existence today.[258]

In baseball history, Peter H. Clark—already mentioned in previous sections for his work as a historian and newspaper editor and for his role as principal of Gaines High School, among other accomplishments—is known as the "Father of Black Baseball" in Cincinnati. Clark, a Walnut Hills resident, played with the amateur Cincinnati Creoles, founded the Western Unions in 1869, and also introduced baseball to his students at Gaines High School in the 1860s. Clark was instrumental in promoting a sport that, at the time, was still in its early stages of spreading outside of New York City. Many of his students later played with the Cincinnati Vigilants in 1875 and 1876.[259] Early baseball fields in Cincinnati include one at what is now Deer Creek Commons, opened for baseball in 1906, and Walnut Hills Park (now Ashland Park) in 1911. Of these facilities, the former was the larger, with several fields and outdoor lighting,[260] but it has been destroyed by the construction of I-71 (some peripheral wooded areas remain). Ashland Park remains in use as a city park, including a still-extant baseball field.

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[258] "Site of Frey's Park: A Short-lived, African American Resort Park Near Coney Island," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/189.
[259] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Peter Clark: The Father of Black Baseball in Cincinnati," September 27, 2020, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/peter-clark-the-father-of-black-baseball-in-cincinnati/.
[260] JoAnn Morse, Walnut Hills Historical Society, personal communication.

African American professional baseball began with the Negro league (a term broadly used to refer to multiple professional leagues that operated from the 1880s until 1951) Cincinnati Tigers in 1934. The Tigers were managed by DeHart Hubbard (see below) and played at Crossley Field (no longer extant), the same stadium used by the Cincinnati Reds and, for a few years, the American Football League's Cincinnati Bengals.[261] The Cincinnati Reds were integrated in 1954 with the addition of Chick Harmon and Nino Escalera,[262] and later, Frank Robinson. No places closely associated with Robinson remain (he was unable to buy a house in Cincinnati due to redlining), but he did live at the Manse Hotel for one season.[263]

Among the most well-known Cincinnati athletes is Ezzard Charles, nicknamed the "Cincinnati Cobra." The world heavyweight champion boxer was born in Georgia but moved to Cincinnati when he was nine years old, where he began training and boxing while attending Woodward High School in 1942. He continued to train in a boxing gym in the Cincinnati Color Building at 1400 Vine Street. Still standing, that building has been home to saloons, operas, and even vaudeville. Charles served in the military during World War II but returned to his career in boxing, which led to him winning the title in 1950. Charles retired from his boxing career in 1959 but remained a community leader in the West End. After he died in 1975, Cincinnati honored him by changing the name of Lincoln Park Drive, the West End street where he grew up (house no longer extant) to Ezzard Charles Drive. There are also multiple murals of him around Over-The-Rhine as well as a statue in Laurel Park.

Another prominent sports figure in Cincinnati history is DeHart Hubbard, born in 1903 in Walnut Hills. He was the first African American to win an individual gold medal when he competed in the long jump at the Paris Olympics in 1924. Having grown up in Walnut Hills, where he attended the Frederick Douglass School and Walnut Hills High School, he practiced at Walnut Hills Park, located just across the street from what was the Frederick Douglass School.

Hubbard's influence also extends beyond sports. After graduating from the University of Michigan, he returned to Cincinnati and became the Supervisor of the Department of Colored Work in 1927 for the Cincinnati Public Recreation Commission, where he advocated for the creation of the Lincoln Recreation Center and Schwartz Recreation Area. Hubbard's career as a public employee included management of Valley Homes, a public housing development in what

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[261] Sophie Barsan, "Cincinnati Tigers Negro League Baseball Team and Chuck Harmon, First African American to Play for the Cincinnati Reds," *The Voice of Black Cincinnati*, June 26, 2024, https://thevoiceofblackcincinnati.com/cincinnati-tigers-negro-league-baseball-team/.

[262] Eric Jackson, personal communication with authors.

[263] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Frank Robinson, the Color Line in Baseball, and the Manse Hotel," October 5, 2020, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/stories-frank-robinson-the-color-line-in-baseball-and-the-manse-hotel/.

is now Lincoln Heights, Ohio, and working in public relations for the Federal Housing Authority in Cleveland in the 1940s. He helped organize adult league sports in the Cincinnati area including track, baseball, basketball, and volleyball and founded the Cincinnati Tigers. He also had a large role in the cultivation of Black choral music in Cincinnati, organizing choirs, orchestras, and concerts and helping communities create recreational music programs.[264]

5.8.1 Places Associated with Sports and Recreation: National Register Eligibility

Very few facilities historically associated with African American recreation in Cincinnati remain in existence. The Peter Clark House (1113 Yale Street in Cincinnati) is likely eligible under Criterion B for its association with the many accomplishments of Clark, including his role in promoting baseball. The Ezzard Charles House (303 Forest Avenue in Cincinnati) is likely to be eligible as the residence of Charles during the peak of his career. (Although several monuments or works of public art honoring Ezzard Charles exist around Cincinnati, these are unlikely to be National Register-eligible as commemorative properties, as well as properties less than fifty years old, are not usually eligible.)

As a remaining example of an early Cincinnati ballfield, as well as its role in the development of the Walnut Hills community as a whole, Walnut Hills Park is also likely to be eligible under Criterion A.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Cincinnati Color Building	1400 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Ezzard Charles House	303 Forest Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible
Walnut Hills Park (Ashland Park)	2810 Ashland Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

Evaluations of Walnut Hills Park (Ashland Park) and the Ezzard Charles House are provided in **Appendix A**.

[264] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "DeHart Hubbard," February 5, 2018, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/dehart-hubbard/.

5.9 Music and Entertainment, 1914–1975

The earliest extant properties associated with African American music and entertainment in Cincinnati are theaters. The Lincoln and Lyceum theaters (500 Fifth Street and 427 Central Avenue, respectively) were a mainstay for African American entertainment in Cincinnati. In 1919, T. Spencer Finley, a vaudeville actor and comedian, bought the theaters, taking them from struggling to successful, with Wendell Dabney, in *The Union*, referring to the Lyceum as "one of the greatest theaters of our race in this country." Finley died of a heart attack in 1921, and the Lyceum did not long survive him. Due to structural deficiencies with the roof, the theater was torn down in 1922 and replaced by the Roosevelt Theater, also Black-owned. Both the Roosevelt and Lincoln theaters were demolished when most of the West End was razed in the 1960s.

One remaining West End theater is the Casino Theater (1204 Linn Street), opened in 1914 and renamed the Regal Theater in 1941. It began as a vaudeville and live stage show space before switching to films. Though not Black-owned, it was an important African American social center. The theater closed in 1996 and is presently being rehabilitated for use as the Robert O'Neal Multicultural Arts Center (ROMAC), an initiative led by his daughter Toilynn O'Neal Turner.

Cosmopolitan School of Music (823 West Ninth Street in Cincinnati, no longer extant) may have been the first Black-owned music conservatory in the United States. It was established in 1921 by ragtime musicians Artie and Anna Matthews. Black students studied music there when other schools in the region were still segregated.[265]

Segregation also left its mark on the landscape of jazz venues in the city. In 1920, Daisy Simms Merchant opened a restaurant and dance hall, the Toadstool Inn, at 3152 Reading Road (no longer extant). Merchant's venue went out of business after white neighbors took legal action over noise complaints; however, a subsequent white owner operated a similar business and received no such complaints.[266] Duke Ellington, the Harlem composer and pianist who toured from the 1920s through the 1960s, performed in venues such as the Gibson Hotel and the Hotel Sinton, but he was not welcome to stay in the. Cincinnati's Cotton Club in the Hotel Sterling (Sixth Street and Mound Street, no longer extant) was an early integrated venue.[267]

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[265] Cedric Rose, "Leaning Into a Common Love of Jazz," *Cincinnati Magazine*, July 22, 2024, https://www.cincinnatimagazine.com/culture/leaning-into-a-common-love-of-jazz/.
[266] "The Toadstool Inn - Early Jazz Club Once Managed by Daisy Simms Merchant | Cincinnati Sites and Stories," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/169.
[267] Cedric Rose, "Leaning Into a Common Love of Jazz."

Babe Baker's Jazz Corner (3128 Reading Road, no longer extant) operated from the late 1950s into the mid-1960s. Other venues included The Surf Club at Western Bowl, a bowling alley 6383 Glenway Avenue (extant) in the Western Hills neighborhood of Cincinnati, that hosted many jazz acts during 1961 and 1962; the Living Room, located in a larger hotel building (extant, though the club no longer remains) at 609 Walnut Street, hosted jazz musicians on a regular basis between 1965 and 1969.[268]

Two important remaining venues are Greenwich Tavern in Walnut Hills (2442 Gilbert Avenue) and Herbie's Lounge, located at 2600 Hackberry (extant). The building itself was built in 1880 in the Italianate style; however, in the 1960s is when it made its mark as Herbie's Lounge. Owned and operated by Herb Engle, it was also known as "The Home of Jazz" and "The Hippest Little Room on the Hill". They had jazz on Monday through Saturday and continued to host jazz shows into the 1970s but switched names to Roberts Neoteric Lounge. Today, the building still stands but has been converted to residential use.

5.9.1 Places Associated with Music and Entertainment: National Register Eligibility

One significant property type will be music venues. Of these, Herbie's Lounge, later named Robert's Neoteric Lounge, is likely eligible under Criterion A, as potentially the only remaining African American-owned jazz club building from the heyday of jazz in Cincinnati in the 1950s and 1960s.

Another important property type comprises the homes or venues, such as churches, in which influential musicians developed their talent. Such places are potentially eligible under Criterion B if they are the only remaining property, or the best example of a property, associated with an individual musician who influenced music history.

Louise Shropshire, raised in Cincinnati, began composing hymns at a young age and later worked as the music minister at Revelation Baptist Church at 1189 Simmons Avenue in Lincoln Heights, Ohio (extant). Her hymn "If My Jesus Will" was published in 1942 and was used by Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement. Shropshire was inducted into the Cincinnati Black Music Walk of Fame in 2023. The First Baptist Church of Walnut Hills is potentially significant in connection with Estella Rowe, a choral soloist who sang there frequently and was secretary of the church for most of her career, and Clinton Gibbs, and organist and pianist.

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[268] "Cincinnati Jazz Hall of History: Historical Newspaper Clips," n.d., https://www.patkellymusic.com/CincinnatiJazzHallofHistory1960s.html.

In some cases, important musicians were connected to Cincinnati for only a portion of their careers. George Allen Russell was a Cincinnati native who is considered one of the first jazz musicians to contribute to general music theory on behalf of jazz harmony rather than European harmony. He lived in the Washington Terrace apartments (3006 Kerper Avenue, extant), though most of his career success was achieved elsewhere. Artie Matthews gained fame as a ragtime pianist in St. Louis and began writing songs professionally in 1913. In 1916, Artie and his wife Anna, also a musician, moved to Cincinnati, where they founded the Cosmopolitan School of Music. The school no longer exists; however, the house where they lived in Avondale (515 Hickory Street, Cincinnati) is still there. In this case, an assessment of eligibility would require a comparison between the Matthews' Cincinnati residence, where they only lived a few years in the 1950s, with other properties (such as in St. Louis) that might bear a stronger association. Mamie Smith, the "Queen of the Blues," was born at 14 Perry Street in a building that no longer exists, before spending most of her career in New York, where she is credited with making the first traditional Blues recording in 1920. Smith returned to Cincinnati while touring, performing at Cincinnati Music Hall, being only the second African American singer to perform in the Springer Auditorium, as well as the Lyceum Theater and Roosevelt Theater.

Three places important to Cincinnati's African American music history are already listed in the National Register. Cincinnati Music Hall hosted Mamie Smith, Nadine Roberts Waters, and others in performances that were, at the time, groundbreaking for African American performers. It also hosted big band acts in its Greystone Ballroom in the 1920s and 1930s. The Manse Hotel is important to Cincinnati music history as a popular spot for weddings and social events. Many African American celebrities stayed here, some including Duke Ellington, James Brown, and Hank Ballard, who wrote "The Twist" in his hotel room at the Manse. Many musicians would come back to the Manse and continue their concerts from Music Hall downtown, in what they would call "Dawn Dances", into the early hours of the morning. Finally, the King Records and Studio Buildings were home of King Records, active from 1943 to 1968. It was a racially integrated workplace that included Queen Records, a label owned by Syd Nathan, and Federal Records, that helped launch the career of James Brown.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Music and Entertainment, 1914–1975, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Artie and Anna Mathews House	515 Hickory St, Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Cincinnati Music Hall	1241 Elm St., Cincinnati, OH	Listed (National Historic Landmark)
George Russell Residence	3066 1/2 Melborne Terrace Cincinnati, OH	More Research Needed
Herbie's Lounge/Roberts Neoteric Lounge	2600 Hackberry St., Cincinnati, OH	Eligible

King Records Studio Buildings	1540 Brewster Ave., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Regal Theatre	1201 Linn St., Cincinnati, OH	Listed

5.10 Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975

In the earliest decades of Cincinnati's history, the African American and white populations were—in terms of land use and residential patterns—largely integrated. Socially, however, Black Cincinnatians occupied their own spaces. "African Americans lived in a social universe apart from whites. . . . In the intimate atmosphere of home, church, and the backroom bar, blacks loved, told stories, joked, laughed, sang, danced, and enjoyed friendships."[269]

The earliest African American social organizations pragmatically focused on mutual aid, largely because African Americans did not have access to the social services provided by government and philanthropy to white residents. The Sons of Enterprise, founded in 1851, was a mutual-aid organization that also encouraged the establishment of "public halls." The Sons of Liberty encouraged and facilitated Black property ownership. The Union Associated of Colored Men, in New Richmond, Ohio, pooled resources to provide health services and burial. In 1844, the Colored Orphan Asylum was established in a building on Ninth Street (no longer extant) to provide services that had previously been only available to white children.[270] Benjamin Arnett's 1874 history of churches and social organizations notes over thirty charitable organizations and lodges in Cincinnati at that time.[271]

There was certainly an overlap in mission between charitable and fraternal organizations, such as lodges. In 1847, a group of Black Freemasons in Cincinnati, denied admission into the all-white Columbia Masonic Lodge, traveled to Pittsburgh and were initiated into the St. Cyprian Lodge, a Black lodge. They opened the Corinthian Lodge, the first Black Masonic lodge in Cincinnati, in 1848.[272] Several other Black lodges were established over the next few years; members of these groups cared for sick members and provided death benefits. The Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World, now a nationwide organization, was formed in Cincinnati in 1897 by B.F Howard and Arthur J. Riggs. The *Notable Kentucky African Americans Database* notes twenty-three African American fraternal lodges that once existed in Covington, and one in Newport.

One important individual associated with fraternal organizations was William Parham. Bornin Virginia in 1841, Parham moved to Cincinnati at the age of sixteen. He was a member of both the

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[269] Taylor, Race in the City, 3.
[270] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 128.
[271] B. W. Arnett, *Proceedings of the Semi-Centenary Celebration of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Cincinnati, held in Allen Temple, February 8th, 9th, and 10th, 1874: with an Account of the Rise and Progress of the Colored Schools, also a List of the Charitable and Benevolent Societies of the City* (Cincinnati: 1874), 117–132.
[272] Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 129.

Odd Fellows and Masons and wrote an official Masonic history, published in 1906.[273] He was also a lawyer, trustee of the First Baptist Church of Walnut Hills, and served in the state legislature in 1896 and 1897.

In the early twentieth century, several organizations were founded that focused on civil improvements. The Negro Civic Welfare Association (headquartered at 667 W. 4th St, demolished) provided social activities and worked towards civic improvements. The Cincinnati Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, headquartered at 1010 Chapel Street (extant) in the Walnut Hills neighborhood, provided social programs, services, and played a role in providing housing for women during the Great Migration. A YMCA facility (636 West Ninth Street, demolished) opened in 1916 after a fundraising campaign led by Horace Sudduth, with donations from the white philanthropists Julius Rosenwald of Chicago and Mary Emery of Walnut Hills. The YMCA provided athletic facilities, social programs, and temporary housing, especially for those arriving during the Great Migration.[274]

Often, social organizations would meet in the homes of members, in churches, or in other facilities not specifically dedicated to the organization. One noteworthy example is the Edgemont Inn (commonly known as the Harriet Beecher Stowe House at 2950 Gilbert Avenue, extant). A tavern and boarding house from the 1930s and 1940s, the Edgemont Inn hosted meetings of organizations including the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the National Association of College Women, African American professional associations, and political events.[275]

5.10.1 Social Clubs and Organizations: National Register Eligibility

Despite the dozens of fraternal lodges and charitable organizations that once existed in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, few buildings associated with these activities remain. Two buildings stand out as particularly important. In Covington, Kentucky, an African American Odd Fellows Lodge (13 Tobacco Alley) remains and is likely eligible under Criterion A. This Odd Fellows building is particularly noteworthy for being located on the same block as the white-run Odd Fellows lodge from which its members were excluded, a spatial reminder of the history of segregation among fraternal organizations. The Prince Hall Masonic Lodge 120 in Newport (215 East Southgate Street), likely individually eligible for its prior history as the Southgate Street School, is potentially eligible for its Masonic history as well. (That building is already listed as part of the Mansion Hill Historic District.) The house of William Parham, at 1240 Chapel Street, has been demolished.

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[273] William Parham, *An Official History of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons for the State of Ohio* (Cincinnati: 1906).

[274] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Horace Sudduth's Charitable Work During the 1910s," April 25, 2021, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/horace-sudduth-charitable-1910s/.

[275] "The Edgemont Inn: Tavern and Boarding House Listed in the 'Negro Motorist Green Book'," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/160.

Many buildings associated with community and social service organizations have been lost, including the notable Ninth Street YMCA. The few that remain are significant: the Edgemont Inn (as the Harriet Beecher Stowe House) and the Cincinnati Federation of Colored Women's Clubs building (As the C. G. Burroughs House, part of the Samuel Hannaford and Sons Thematic Resource) are presently listed in the National Register. In the latter case, however, the National Register documentation reflects the history of the building before it was purchased by the African American organization in 1925, thus warranting an update to reflect the history of the Cincinnati Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.

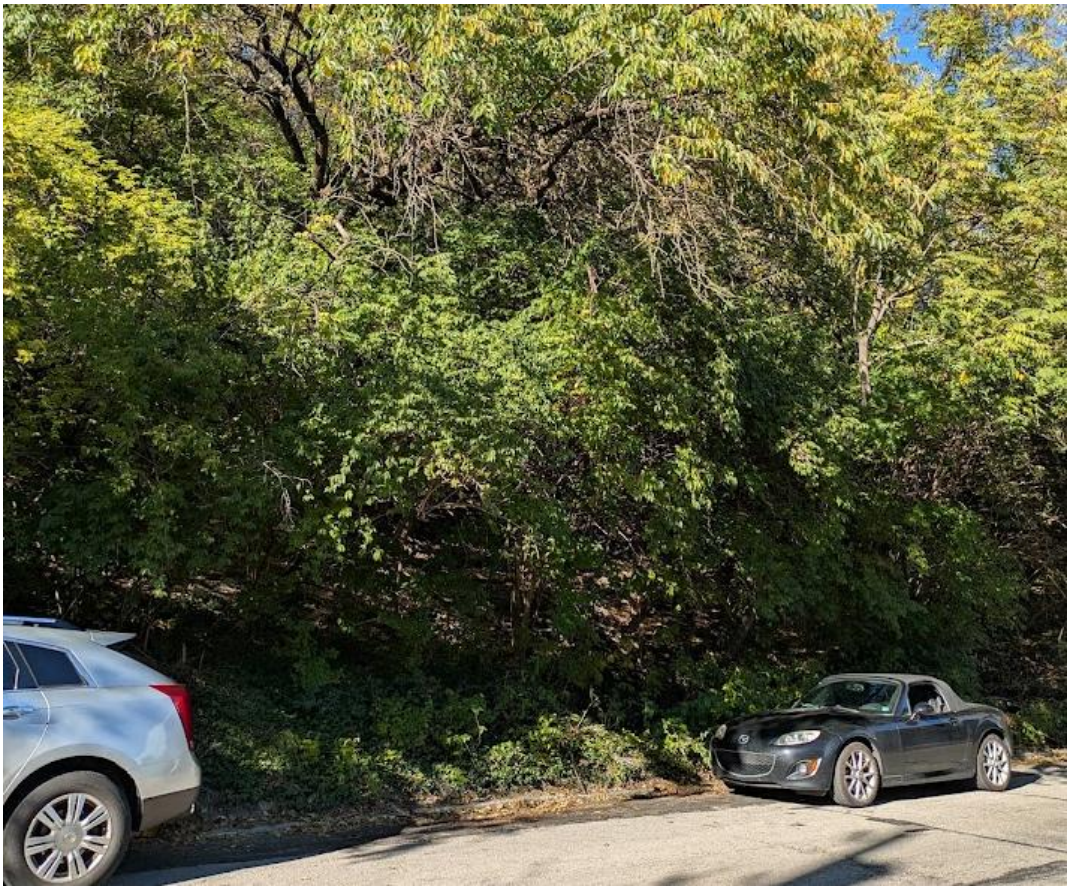
In general, buildings associated with social clubs and organizations will be eligible to the extent that they represent the efforts of African Americans to create parallel institutions to those white-run groups for which they had been excluded. They will also be eligible for the role they played in supporting the African American community in civil rights causes.

Resources recommended as eligible or potentially eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places, primarily under the theme of Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975, are as follows:

Historic Name	Address	Recommendation
Federation of Colored Women's Clubs	1010 Chapel St., Cincinnati, OH	Listed
Odd Fellows Hall [African American]	13 Tobacco Alley, Covington, KY	Eligible

More information on the Odd Fellows Lodge is included in **Appendix A**.

Bertie Hudson House Site and Patsy Bennett House
996 Hill Street and 983–985 Paradrome Street; Cincinnati
1896 (Patsy Bennet House)



The Bertie Hudson House Site at 996 Hill Street, viewed looking north.

Associated historic contexts
The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964

Significance
The Bertie Hudson House Site and Patsy Bennet House are significant as the site of an act of racist violence that occurred in 1944.

In 1944 Bertie Hudson and her family moved to 996 Hill Street in Cincinnati's Mt. Adams neighborhood on 1944, the first African American household in the area. The building was one apartment in a two-family house owned by Moses Levinson, who lived in the Avondale neighborhood at 3438 Knott Street. As was often the case with African American families during this area of housing discrimination, Levins required six months' rent in advance.

At night on June 5, a mob of "between 50 and 75 men and boys" or up to "100 people," according to varying newspaper accounts, stormed the house, destroying all windows, doors, and furniture, and burning the building. They also crashed a large rock through the roof of the house (possible as the building was built into the steep incline of Mt. Adams). According to one newspaper, "the picture of a Negro soldier who is serving with the armed forces overseas was all that remained untouched." The Negro Friendly Relations Committee lamented, "The American boys fighting on the beaches of France can only be chagrined by these incidents" (this remark, likely made the following morning, was published on D-Day, the beginning of the Allied invasion of France).[1]

The violence also targeted the home of Patsy Bennett of nearby 983 Paradrome Street, several blocks away. Bennett was a White supporter of the Hudson family and was hanged in effigy.[2]

Original 1943 church building and 1948 school addition viewed looking north from East Tenth Street.

[1] Charles Casey-Leininger and Students of the Public History Practicum, "The Struggle for Fair Housing in Cincinnati 1900 to 2007;" "996 Hill Street," Hamilton County Auditor Property Report, generated September 20, 2025, wedge3.hcauditor.org.
[2] National Register of Historic Places, *Twentieth Century African Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation Form, 140.

Bertie Hudson and her family were rendered homeless as a result, along with the unrelated family that also lived in the building. The house itself continued to exist for some time and was presumably repaired, but Hamilton County Auditor records are incomplete and suggest the building remained on the property, but do not show the date the house was demolished. Levins sold the property in 1950. Further research would be required to determine if there is a connection between the demolition and the damage sustained.

Integrity

The Bertie Hudson house has been demolished, but may have integrity as an archaeological site (see below). If there is a relationship between the demolition and the damage sustained in the 1944 attack, the site will have integrity under Criterion A as well.

The Patsy Bennett house appears to be mostly unaltered, though one windows have been replaced and one front door opening has been bricked in. A wood retaining wall in front of the property also appears to be relatively recent. However, these alterations are minor and do not detract from the seven aspects of integrity.

Eligibility

The *African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* Multiple Property Documentation provides guidance in evaluating the eligibility of Civil Rights Movement properties in Ohio. The document suggests "single-family homes are … likely to be eligible if they mark instances of families crossing a color line in the face of racist violence and intimidation" or if they were "sites of racist violence or intimidation directed against black families and individuals who moved into homes in all-white areas." While the Bertie Hudson House has been demolished, the Multiple Property Documentation suggests that sites of former single-family homes connected to the civil rights movement may retain information potential under National Register Criterion D.[3] The Bertie Hudson House and Patsy Bennett House appear to eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, together as a discontinuous resource or district, in the context of The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964, with a period of significance of 1944. Eligibility under Criterion A is possible, pending further research.

[3] Ibid.

Braxton and Reber Cann House
5223 Ward Street; Cincinnati
c. 1898–1915

Braxton and Reber Cann House viewed looking west from Ward Street.

Associated historic contexts
The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964
Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975

Significance
The Cann House is significant as the home of two important civil rights leaders in Cincinnati, Braxton and Reber Simpkins Cann, between 1935 and 1985. The Canns, especially Reber, were intimately involved in a multitude of community-led activist programs, both leading and founding for almost the entirety of her life in Cincinnati between 1924 and her death in 1985. Dr.

Braxton Cann was the director of Shoemaker Clinic in the Madisonville area of Cincinnati for thirty years before his death in 1978 on top of his involvement in civil rights groups. He was the first African American to be appointed to the Cincinnati General Hospital (today's University of Cincinnati Medical Center) in 1933. He later became the director of Shoemaker Clinic in the Madisonville area of Cincinnati. Cann remained director of the clinic for thirty years.

Braxton Cann was born in Bermuda on November 4, 1900, before immigrating to the United States. He attended the University of Cincinnati to obtain his medical degree. While there he met his future wife Reber Simpkins. After graduating, Dr. Cann was appointed to the Cincinnati General Hospital (now known as University of Cincinnati Medical Center) in 1933.[1] He was the first African American doctor at the hospital. He became a naturalized citizen of the United States of America in 1935.[2]

Reber Simpkins was born in Woodsworth, Louisiana in 1902. She attended primary school in Shreveport and got her Bachelor of Arts degree at the Wilberforce University in Ohio.[3] She continued her studies at the University of Cincinnati where she met her future husband Braxton Cann. After graduating, she spent one year teaching in Shreveport before moving to Cincinnati to work at Cann's clinic. She later worked for the Transient Service Bureau in the Welfare Department for many years, becoming a supervisor after almost 15 years.

Braxton and Reber Simpkins Cann got married in Ohio in 1924. Just ten years later they moved into their house in the Madisonville neighborhood, where they lived for several decades.

Both of the Canns were actively involved in various community and civil rights organizations. They were lifelong members of the NAACP, Dr. Cann served on the board of trustees for many years, and Reber spent many years volunteering for the organization as well. They both sought to improve access and quality of life for Black communities around Cincinnati, looking at healthcare and recreational services as well as community planning.[4]

Reber Simpkins Cann was especially active in social and civil rights organizations around Cincinnati. Her papers from her advocacy are kept by the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University in Louisiana. Reber was the first Black woman elected to the Cincinnati Woman's City Club along with Theodore Berry. In 1944, she was the co-chair and co-host along with Mrs. Fred Lazarus III for an interracial fellowship dinner at the Central Cincinnati YWCA.[5] She was an active member of the Cincinnati Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women and served

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[1] "Dr. Braxton Fancourt Cann," FindAGrave Memorial, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/225537820/braxton-fancourt-cann
[2] Ancestry.com. Ohio, U.S., *Southern District Naturalization Index, 1852-1991*, Ancestry.com 1935.
[3] "Reber Simpkins Carr Papers Collection," *Amistad Research Center*, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisana.
[4] Ibid.
[5] "Reber Cann," FindAGrave Memorial, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/78904592/reber-cann

as president, She was involved in several other societies such as the National Urban League, the Cincinnati Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Cincinnati Urban League, and her church, the Allen Temple Church. Reber Simpkins was also a founding member and later president of the Links Incorporated Chapter which left notable impacts on communities of Cincinnati through educational conferences and fundraising for programs such as the "Card Party" in the 1950s which funded Camp Joy, the first integrated children's camp in Cincinnati.

Braxton Cann died in 1974 and Reber Simpkins Cann died in 1985. After their death, their children remained living at the Cann House. City directories indicate that the eldest son, Braxton Cann Jr. was the resident of the property through the early 1990s. Deed records suggest that the youngest daughter Ruth Simpkins Hicks nee Cann sold the property in 1989 to Johnnie Mae Durant.[6] The current owner is listed as S7 Holdings LLC and it does not appear that anyone lives in the house.

Cann House as viewed from Chandler Street, viewed looking south via Google Maps.

Integrity

Overall, the Cann House remains remarkably intact. The windows have been covered with plywood sheets but appear to remain intact but do not diminish from the overall form and design of the buildings. The house seems to have very little modification from its period of significance

[6] Deed Book 5089 page 604 in Hamilton County Property Records, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1989.

other than replacement roofing materials and the brick building does not appear to have any signs of damage.

The vernacular, brick house is reflective of a late nineteenth-century two-family residential building that may have been expanded at least once in its history (Hamilton County Auditor records provide an 1898 construction date; however, the form of the house suggests the American foursquare house type common in the early 1910s, suggesting the possibility of an early addition or expansion of the building). One visible change change is the front porch: its asymmetrical, gable-front massing appears to date from the 1910s–1940s Tudor Revival era, suggesting it was most likely added some time after the house was build; the porch appears to have been further modified in the mid-to-late twentieth century with brick infill and glass-block windows. The alterations, however, most likely reflect the work of the Cann family during the period of significance thus and do not detract from integrity. A two-car, gable-front garage also remains unaltered. The intactness of setting expressed by the relationship of the buildings to the street also contributes to integrity.

Eligibility

The Braxton and Reber Cann House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of Civil Rights Movement 1886–1964, with a period of significance of 1935–1985. It is also possible this house is eligible in the context of Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975, with Reber Simpkins Cann's involvement as leader of various social clubs in Cincinnati throughout her life, but this requires further research. This property satisfies Criterion B as a "property … having the best association" with the Cann's "productive life."[7]

[7] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 15.

Church of Our Savior
246 East Tenth Street; Covington, Kentucky
Original construction date not known; converted to a church in 1943 and expanded with school facilities in 1948

Original 1943 church building and 1948 school addition viewed looking north from East Tenth Street.

Associated historic contexts
Education, 1844–1965

Significance
The Church of Our Savior is significant as a rare example of a Northern Kentucky segregated private school, meeting the educational needs of African American students from its founding in 1943; the school dwindled in size after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling allowed for integrated public and private schools in Kentucky and closed in 1963.

Although segregated churches were discouraged by Vatican leadership, deference to local bishops permitted many Roman Catholic churches to segregate, especially in the Southern

United States.[1] The Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, completed the Saint Mary Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in 1901, but its membership was segregated.[2] The Church of Our Savior, a Catholic church for Black parishioners, was affiliated with the cathedral but created in repurposed residential buildings on East Tenth Street.

A 1953 official history of the Diocese of Covington describes the origin of the church and its school. According to this history, The Church of Our Savior was intended to "serve as a Mission church for the Negro people of Northern Kentucky." In 1943, the Diocese, led by Bishop Francis Howard, purchased a single-family house and adjacent two-family building. The single-family building, at 242 East Tenth Street, was remodeled into a gable-front, hall-plan church building, and the two-family home, at 244 East Tenth Street, became a school as well as a convent for the Sisters of Divine Providence, who ran the school.[3]

The school opened in September 1943, ahead of the church, with sixty students. The 1953 history notes that only fourteen of these students were Catholic, underscoring the important role the institution filled, beyond just the Catholic community, in fulfilling the educational needs of African American students in an era of segregated education.

The church opened in February 1944 and a building "opposite the church" served as the Patrician Hall, a social building.[4] (The 1953 history does not provide an address or description; presently, across the street from the church are a gable-front house at 241 East Tenth Street and a vacant lot at 243 East Tenth Street; either may have been the location of the Patrician Hall.)

The Church of Our Savior continued to grow. A high school was established in 1946 and the increased church membership and student body required larger facilities. In 1947, the church was expanded to the rear (north) with increased worship space and in 1948, a dedicated educational wing with four classrooms and other educational facilities was built to the west.[5]

The school was short lived, closing after the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision. The Diocese of Covington in general, became more integrated. The high school closed in 1956 and the elementary school in 1963.[6] However, Our Savior Catholic Church remains in existence. It became its own parish in 1981 and presently serves a relatively small population of mostly Black

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[1] Mark Newman, "Racial Discrimination Can in No Way be Justified: The Vatican and Desegregation in the South, 1946–1968," *Journal of American Studies* 56, no. 5 (2022): 665–698.
[2] Joseph M. Walton, *Black History in Covington, Kentucky, 1815–2025*, (Milford, Ohio: Little Miami Publishing, 2025), 193.
[3] Paul E. Ryan, *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky*, (The Diocese of Kentucky, 1953), 484–486.
[4] Ryan, *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky,* 485.
[5] Ibid., 486.
[6] Bella Young, "Our Savior Parish Celebrates Dedication of Its State Historical Marker That 'Reminds Us and Teaches Us,'" Diocese of Covington, July 23, 2025, https://covdio.org/historicalmarker/.

and Latino members.[7] The church and school were honored with a Commonwealth of Kentucky historical marker in 2024.

Original school and convent building, now a church office, viewed from East Tenth Street.

Integrity

Overall, the church buildings remain remarkably intact. Vinyl siding and windows have been added but do not diminish from the overall form and design of the buildings. The church itself clearly expresses its historic character as a hall-church style building, and the 1948 school addition largely retains its form and character. A vernacular, concrete-block building, its projecting, flat roof and its rows of windows display a subtle Moderne-style influence. The original school and convent building, now offices, displays the form, massing, and fenestration pattern of a nineteenth-century two-family residential building (its construction date is not known). The intactness of setting expressed by the relationship of the buildings to the street also contributes to integrity. Finally, although it is not clear if the Patrician Hall building remains, it

[7] Walton, *Black History in Covington, Kentucky, 1815–2025*, 199.

would also contribute to integrity if it exists (that information was not available in Kenton County records but could be determined through consultation with the church).

Location of the Patrician Hall on the south side of East Tenth Street. It is not clear if the hall was located in the still-extant house at 241 East Tenth Street or on the site of the vacant lot in the foreground. (Image: Google Maps 2025)

Eligibility

The Church of Our Savior appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Education, 1844–1965, with a period of significance of 1943–1963. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration A as a "religious property … significant under another historical theme."[8]

[8] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 26.

Devote's Corner
2904 Alms Place, Cincinnati
Circa 1860

Devote's Corner building looking northeast from Alms Place and Chapel Street

Associated historic contexts
Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975
Other: Architecture

Significance

Constructed circa 1860, the building at 2904 Alms Place was commissioned by John and Augustina Devote (Devoto), Italian immigrants who became part of Cincinnati's growing mid-19th-century European working-class population. The Devotes established the property as a corner commercial and residential hub during a period of rapid neighborhood and industrial expansion. The building's original design likely contained street-level retail space with upper-floor apartment**s**, catering to both the Italian and broader working-class residents of the area. The building's corner placement made it a social and economic focal point for the local community, contributing to neighborhood identity and commerce.

In July 1920, the Devote Flats Building entered a new chapter of its history when Lizzie Darneal Branch, a Black entrepreneur, purchased the property. This marked a significant transition in both ownership and cultural representation, as Branch's acquisition reflected the increasing economic freedoms of African Americans in the early 20th century, particularly for women who began entering real estate and local business ownership as paths to independence and community advancement.

Branch's ownership symbolizes a period when Cincinnati's Black residents began to establish footholds in property ownership amid segregation and restricted access to loans. This makes the Devote Flats Building not only architecturally notable, but also socially and culturally significant as a physical testament to racial and gender progress during the early 20th century.

Branch sold the building to the Walnut Hills Enterprise Corporation, a group of Black investors led by Horace Sudduth. The building was a focal point of African American life in Walnut Hills with several black owned businesses occupying the space, including the Major Lee Zeigler's East End Investment & Loan Company, and Black women-owned businesses by P.F. Townsend, and Peerless Pharmacy run by pharmacist Anna Beckwith.

Architecturally, Devote's Corner represents a distinctive example of a mid-nineteenth-century, urban mixed-use building. The corner tower, masonry detailing, and vertical massing represent the craftsmanship and stylistic preferences of the Victorian and Italianate periods. The building is largely intact, and it represents one of the few remaining examples of this architectural style in the neighborhood.

Integrity

Prominently located at the intersection of Chapel Street and Alms Place, Devote Flats is a three-story, brick mixed-use corner building constructed around 1860. Built for Italian immigrants John and Augustina Devote (or Devoto), the building served both commercial and residential functions, a common urban typology for 19th-century immigrant entrepreneurs in Cincinnati.

The building features a prominent three-and-a-half-story, corner tower, capped with a steep pyramidal roof and accented by louvered gable dormers and oculus windows framed by heavy classical trim. The tower has historically served as a corner landmark within the Walnut Hills and East End neighborhoods.

The building's exterior features painted brick, currently blue gray with white trim, regularly spaced double-hung sash windows, and a decorative brick cornice with corbelling along the roofline. The ground floor that originally housed commercial storefronts has since been altered and now features replacement, partially infilled windows and updated glazing. The building's upper floors contained residential space, accessed by side stairwells. Secondary elevations retain iron fire escapes that appear to date to the 20th century.

Though the building has undergone repainting and storefront modification, the overall massing, tower, fenestration pattern, and form remain intact. The building's design blends elements of the Victorian and Italianate styles, particularly evident in its corner tower, arched window heads, and decorative brickwork. These features make it a rare surviving example of a mid-19th-century mixed-use Italianate building with a corner turret in Cincinnati.

Eligibility

Devote's Corner appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with patterns of urban immigrant settlement and later African American entrepreneurship in early 20th-century Cincinnati. It is also significant under Criterion B, for its association with Lizzie Darneal Branch, a pioneering Black businesswoman, and Criterion C, as a rare surviving example of a brick, Victorian/Italianate mixed-use corner building with a tower. The period of significance is 1860–c. 1930.

Bibliography

Cincinnati Sites and Stories. "Devote's Corner: a Prominent Building Once Owned by Cincinnati Sites and Stories." n.d. https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/7.

Elon Strong House (Six Acres Bed and Breakfast)
5350 Hamilton Avenue; Cincinnati
c. 1850–1860

The Strong House at 3530 Hamilton Avenue is not visible from the street due to vegetation. Photos of the house, not reproduced here for copyright reasons, are available at the Six Acres Bed and Breakfast website, https://sixacresbb.com/, and from the Hamilton County Auditor, https://wedge3.hcauditor.org/.

Associated historic contexts
Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870

Significance
The Elon Strong House is significant for its association with the Strong family of abolitionists: Elon Strong (1820–1902), his parents, Zebulon and Hannah Strong, and his son, Freeland Strong.

The construction date of the house is not certain. Hamilton County Auditor records provide a date of 1870; however, the asymmetrical Greek Revival or Italianate-era facade suggests an earlier construction date in the 1850s or 1860s is possible. The property is not shown as owned by the Strong family in 1n 1857 plat map of College Hill; it passed from Zebulon Strong to Elon Strong upon Zebulon's death in 1875.[1]

Elon Strong and Freeland Strong were among those who assisted freedom-seeking people who entered College Hill through the adjacent ravine (now LaBoiteaux Woods).[2] According to one source, Underground Railroad activity dwindled by the 1850s, around the time this house seems to have been built.[3]

Integrity
The Elon Strong house appears to have been altered in the late nineteenth century; grouped columns and dentiled pediments suggest a late Queen or Free Classic influence, likely from the 1890s. Although materials and workmanship have been altered, the overall form and massing of the building remains; integrity of design remains to convey the significance of the house. The proximity of the house to LeBoiteaux Woods, a documented Underground Railroad route, greatly contributed to integrity of setting, feeling, and association.

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[1] Betty Ann Smiddy, *A Little Piece of Paradise: College Hill, Ohio*, (College Hill Historical Society: 1999), 112.; see also the Hamilton County Wills Index at https://libraries.uc.edu/content/dam/refresh/libraries-62/arb/docs/hamilton-county-wills-s.pdf.
[2] Kathy Dahl, "LaBoiteaux Woods Ravine to Freedom," April 22, 2014, https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/?page_id=1082.
[3] H. N. Wilson, letter to William Seibert, April 14, 1892, https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Harriet-Wilson-letter-jan-20-2014-.pdf

Eligibility

While the Zebulon and Hannah Strong House (see previous evaluation) is more well documented, more research will be required to determine the extent to which this house connects to the abolitionist efforts of Elon Strong. This property is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870, as a property showing known association with the Underground Railroad and retaining integrity. If this connection cannot be established, it is most likely eligible in conjunction with the adjacent LaBoiteaux Woods and nearby Zebulon and Hannah Strong House as a district. Together, these three properties represent a "significant and distinguishable entity" eligible for the National Register.[4]

The exact dates when freedom seekers received assistance from the Strong family is not known; the period of significance for the Zebulon Strong House would likely extend from 1846, when the abolitionist community around College Hill was established, to shortly after 1850, when the route became "too well known" for continued use by freedom-seeking people.

Due to later alterations to the building, it is unlikely that the Strong House will be eligible under Criterion C. Further, though the Strong Family and the unnamed freedom seekers they assisted are certainly important historical individuals, their contributions to not appear to rise to the level of being "individually important" to the extent required to establish significance under Criterion B.[5]

[4] National Park Service, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (1997), https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf, 5.

[5] National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons," (n.d.), 5–8.

Ezzard Charles House
303 Forest Avenue, Cncinnati
c. 1903

Ezzard Charles House viewed looking south from Forest Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975

Significance
The Ezzard Charles House is significant as one of the few facilities remaining in Cincinnati directly associated with African American sports and recreation. This building was the home of Ezzard Charles, a heavyweight boxing champion, during the peak of his career between 1949 and 1951.

Ezzard Charles, though born in Georgia, spent most of his childhood in Cincinnati's West End neighborhood after moving to the city when he was nine years old. Perhaps among the most well-known Cincinnati athletes, nicknamed the "Cincinnati Cobra," Charles won back-to-back

world heavyweight championships from 1949 to 1951. His interest in boxing began in 1942 when he trained and boxed while attending Woodward High School. He won the National Amateur Athletic Union (AUU) title in 1939 when he was just eighteen years old.[1] To help with the family's household income, Charles decided to pursue a professional career in boxing. He had several wins over the next couple years in the light-heavyweight events. The outbreak of World War II put Charles boxing career on hold while he served in the US Army for the North African and Italian campaigns.[2]

Returning to boxing after the war ended, Ezzard Charles began to fight in the heavyweight championships. He won his first world championship in 1949 and successfully defended the title against eight challenges until he was dethroned in 1951. Charles had several more years of competitive boxing before he retired in 1959. He had not managed to win another title and underwent several years of grueling losses.

Ezzard Charles spent most of his life out of the ring serving his community in the West End neighborhood of Cincinnati and supporting young athletes in Chicago when he moved to the city in the 1960s. Charles had financial troubles and when he was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease in 1968 at the age of 47 his boxing friends, including Rock Marciano and Muhammad Ali, held a fundraiser. Charles died in Chicago in 1975. He was posthumously inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in the 1990 inaugural class. The city of Cincinnati honored Ezzard Charles for his athletic career and community service by changing the name of the street he grew up on to Ezzard Charles Drive and erecting a statue in Laurel Park.

Integrity

Overall, the Ezzard Charles House retains its integrity, with few alterations from the period of significance. Vinyl replacement windows have been added but do not diminish from the overall form and design of the building. Some water damage is visible, especially along the porch and eaves, but important character-defining features remain present. The building displays both Free Classic and Prairie influences. There do not appear to be any additions to the house, but a small garage to the rear appears to date from a later period with asphalt shingles and different materials from the house. The setting remains intact with historically appropriate tree canopy and foundation plantings.

[1] "On This Day: Ezzard Charles, one of the greatest fighters of all-time, was born," Boxing https://boxingnewsonline.net/on-this-day-ezzard-charles-one-of-the-greatest-fighters-of-all-time-was-born/
[2] Ibid.

Rear of the Ezzard Charles House and yard, viewed from Wilson Avenue.

Eligibility

The Ezzard Charles House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of Recreation, 1844–1965, with a period of significance of 1949–1959, being the house Charles lived in during the peak of his career. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration B as the property "having the best association" with Charles.[3]

[3] National Park Service, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons*, 5.

Fifth Christian Church
3203 Wold Avenue; Cincinnati
1962

View of church building looking west from Wold Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Other: Architecture
The Legacy of Urban Renewal, 1956–1975

Significance
The Fifth Christian Church is significant as a locally noteworthy example of International Style religious architecture, constructed following the destruction of the congregation's previous church due to urban renewal efforts. Designed by William L. Manggrum Jr., Cincinnati's first registered Black architect, the church offers a significant story of the intersection between the Urban Renewal era, the role of religious institutions in community-building, and the growth of Black-owned architecture practices in the 1960s.

The Fifth Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, was founded in 1870 after a group of Cincinnati community members began to meet regularly under Rev. Joseph Emery in local homes. The church went through several places of worship in the West End in the first half of the twentieth century.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, urban renewal projects destroyed much of a vibrant downtown and West End African American community in Cincinnati. This included almost the entirety of Kenyon Avenue for the Mill Creek Expressway and what is now the interchange between I-75

and I-71. During this time, the Fifth Christian Church was forced to relocate, and the congregation purchased property in Walnut Hills and hired William L. Manggrum Jr. to design a new church.

Manggrum was the son of William L. Manggrum Sr., a local pharmacist, and Lorretta Manggrum, a prolific composer and music teacher whose works are stored in the Library of Congress. The Manggrums lived in Walnut Hills and William Jr. attended Withrow High school. He attended Howard University and became Cincinnati's first registered African American architect around 1945; he was only the second registered African American architect in Ohio.

Manggrum had previously designed several other large projects including a major low-income housing development in the District of Columbia and several buildings around Cincinnati, including places of worship in Lockland and Evanston neighborhoods as well as buildings in Avondale.

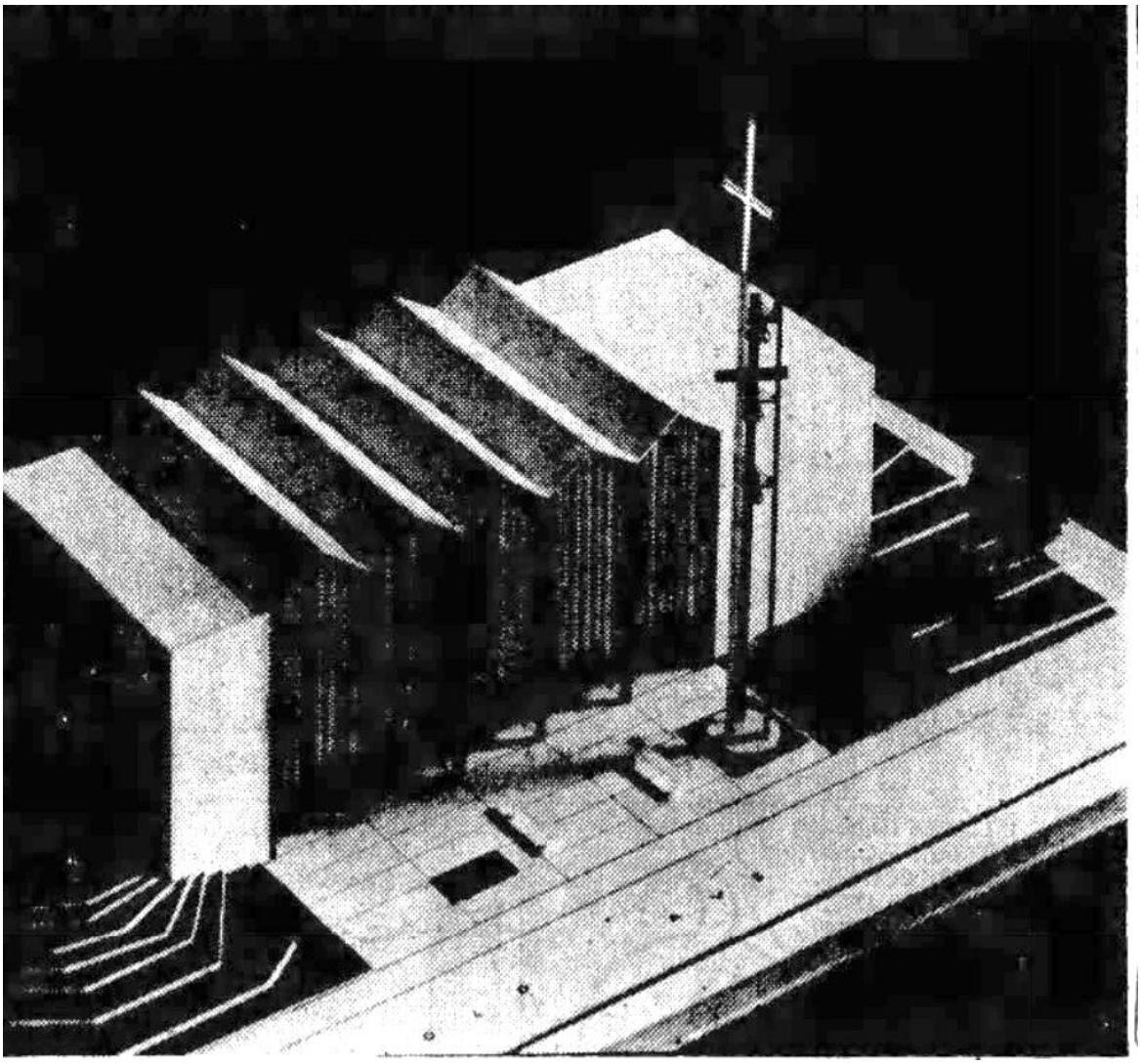
Manggrum was hired by the Fifth Christian Church in the early 1960s and designed this International Style building on the corner of Wold and Fairfax Avenues. Centrally located to the Walnut Hills neighborhood, the building was entirely financed and built by the local African American community. Groundbreaking took place on July 15, 1962 and the construction was finished within a year.

Fifth Christian Church viewed looking north from Fairfax Avenue.

Integrity

Overall, the church building appears to be almost entirely unaltered, and clearly expresses its historic character as an International Style building. A brick building, its minimalast, rectangular

form and design, and its rows of large windows along the street to provide light, with subtle references to gothic stained glass church windows in the shape of the front windows. The relationship of the building to its site shows American International influences: the sloping topography allows for at-grade entrances on both the first and second floors, and an outdoor seating area between the building and the street; these are also important, character-defining features of the property.



Photograph of model of Fifth Christian Church in The *Cincinnati Post* in 1962.

Eligibility

Fifth Christian Church appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, in the context of Architecture, and under Criterion A, in the context of the Legacy of

Urban Renewal, 1956–1975, with a period of significance of 1962–1975. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration A as a "religious property significant for themes other than religion."[1]

Bibliography

"New Christian Church," *Cincinnati Post*, June 27, 1962.

[1] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 26.

Gordon Hotel/Gordon Terrace
2817–2837 Ashland Avenue, Cincinnati
1916

The Gordon Hotel viewed from Ashland Avenue facing northwest.

Associated historic contexts
Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975

Significance
Gordon Hotel is significant as an example of Jacob Schmidlapp's philanthropic approach to housing development and the Cincinnati Model Homes Company, founded by Schmidlapp in 1914. It is one of the two remaining developments built by Schmidlapp in the Walnut Hills neighborhood, with all original buildings remaining.

Jacob Schmidlapp (J. G. Schmidlapp) was inspired by the Five Percent Philanthropy movement in England during the late-nineteenth century, which sought to provide quality housing for low-income residents while ensuring a modest five-percent return for investors. Schmidlapp believed that improved housing for low-income families would in turn create a better labor force. He began to develop housing in Cincinnati for White families in 1911 and founded the Cincinnati Model Homes Company in 1914.

Schmidlapp constructed the first of his housing developments for African American families with Washington Terrace in the Walnut Hills neighborhood in 1914. A second development was

constructed on the corner of Fredonia and Whittier in the Walnut Hills neighborhood in 1915. The Gordon Hotel was built in1916 at the intersection of Ashland and Chapel.

Gordon Hotel was named after Robert Gordon, a formerly enslaved person who settled in Walnut Hills in the 1840s. Gordon had attained wealth in the coal industry and was a major developer of the surrounding neighborhood, supporting the settling of African American families in Walnut Hills as his real estate business helped the community to purchase property and homes. The "Gordon" name connects this history to Schmidlapp's work to provide an alternative to the common rooming houses that lower-income residents had used in the area.

Gordon Hotel featured square room units, private indoor bathrooms, electrical lighting, central heating and air conditioning, and private entrances, uncommon amenities for lower-income households in the 1910s. Schmidlapp created housing to attainable for African Americans at an income level of three dollars a day. Although there were no private backyards, the Gordon Hotel had landscaped gardens and playgrounds for the residents. There was a cooperative grocery store on the bottom floor of the building (no longer existing).

Jacob Schmidlapp died in 1919, but the Gordon Hotel continued to be a mainstay of African American residents in Walnut Hills. Its central location just next to the street line in one of the main Black cultural hubs of Cincinnati led to its use as a meeting space for the community. In 1935, during the the Great Depression, Gordon Hotel was converted into apartment blocks. It was listed in the 1939 *Green Book* as a place to stay while traveling through Cincinnati.

The Gordon Hotel, now called Gordon Terrace, remained as low-income housing throughout the next several decades, although the co-operative grocery store was closed at one point. The apartment building was somewhat challenged by construction of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in the 1970s, cutting directly through the intersection of Ashland and Chapel. This hurt Gordon Hotel's connection to the Walnut Hills neighborhood, although all the buildings remained standing. Schmidlapp's two other developments in the Walnut Hills neighborhood did not fare as well during this era of urban renewal. Washington Terrace lost over half of its housing units and the development at the intersection of Fredonia and Whittier was completely demolished.

Gordon Hotel was acquired by a new owner in 2018 who made some exterior alterations but sought to maintain the "distinguished charm from a bygone era." The new ownership also sought to keep rental costs low and affordable as prices in the surrounding Walnut Hills area increase.

Gordon Hotel (Gordan Terrace) apartment blocks, viewed from Ashland Avenue.

Integrity

Overall, the apartment buildings remain intact. Some changes to the building's character took place during the period of significance, such as the conversion into apartments, when the cooperative grocery store on the ground floor was closed. Several changes were made after the period of significance, in the past decade, such as removing several front gable porch roofs over entries along the Ashland Avenue side, adding simulated masonry cladding at the basement level, and painting the building; windows have been replaced as well. Integrity of materials is somewhat diminished by these alterations, but most important features and overall integrity of design remain intact. These include the terraced landscape with stone retaining walls, entry canopies and balconies on other sides of the building, and decorative brickwork around the top of the building.

Gordon Hotel as viewed looking southwest from across the intersection of Ashland and Chapel. Note the streetcar line in the foreground. (Image: Walnut Hills Historical Society 2025.)

Eligibility

Gordon Hotel/Gordon Terrace appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975, with a period of significance of 1916–1970. The period of significance spans the building's construction to when the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard expansion brought about some changes to the overall setting. This property satisfies Criterion A as a property significant under a "historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community."[1] Gordon Hotel/Gordon Terrace is likely to be ineligible under Criterion C due to exterior alterations.

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[1] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 12.

Greater New Light Baptist Church
710 North Fred Shuttlesworth Circle; Cincinnati
1966

View of church building looking north from Fred Shuttlesworth Circle.

Associated historic contexts
Other: Architecture

Significance
The Greater Light Baptist Church is a significant early example of Modernism and Postmodern architecture in Cincinnati. Designed by a Black-owned architecture firm, Wilson & Associates, Inc., the company was Cincinnati's only minority architecture firm when this church building was constructed. The founder and long-term pastor of the Greater Light Baptist Church, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, was an important Civil Rights Movement activist, a co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) alongside Martin Luther King Jr., and an important Cincinnati community leader.

Originally from Alabama, Rev. Shuttlesworth was a Baptist minister, and important Civil Rights Movement leader participating in the SCLC, Freedom Rides, and initiating the Birmingham Campaign in 1963. He moved to Cincinnati in 1961, where he became the pastor of the Revelation Baptist Church and later formed his own church, in 1966, the Greater New Light

Baptist Church.[1] The congregation started with around 250 members but grew to between 400 and 500 members by the middle of the 1970s.

While articles from 1966 discuss the march undertaken by the church's congregation to the new place of worship on North Crescent Street (the previous name of Fred Shuttlesworth Circle), the church was not dedicated until 1977. Rev. Shuttlesworth wanted a minority-owned architectural firm to design the modern church and identified Wilson & Associates, the only Black-owned architecture firm in the Cincinnati area in the 1960s and 1970s. The firm's principal, Henry Wilson, was an engineer from the University of Cincinnati and sought to create a company with a diverse background, and he overcame racial prejudice to grow his firm to fifteen staff members in less than ten years. An article in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* states this project for the Greater New Light Baptist Church was the firm's fist large project and their first project not done in collaboration with other firms.[2] They went on to work on two other Baptist churches in the Cincinnati area.

Designed by Judith Capen and Robert Mellott, the church was influenced by Eastern Orthodox Church central plan baptistries and Eero Saarinen's North Christian Church in Columbus, Indiana.[3] The star-shaped church was designed so that the entire congregation was never more than fifty feet from Rev. Shuttlesworth's pulpit. Since the most important ritual of Baptist churches is the rite of baptism, a deep baptismal pool is at the center of the church, serving as a focal point for the congregation.

Rev. Shuttlesworth served at the church until his retirement in 2006. The Greater New Light Baptist Church still functions in the same capacity today.

Integrity

Overall, the church building remains remarkably intact. The church itself clearly expresses its historic character as a star-shaped building with a centralized plan and largely retains its form and character. Its architecture shows the influence of both Modernism and the then-new Postmodern movement. As one of the few Postmodern churches in Cincinnati, the building is representative of a unique place and moment in Cincinnati's architectural history. Integrity extends to the building's surrounding landscape, which also appears largely unaltered.

Eligibility

The Greater New Light Baptist Church appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, in the context of Architecture, as a "property … representing a

[1] "March of the Saints," *The Cincinnati Post*, December 17, 1966, page 9, accessed www.newspapers.com.
[2] "Minority Firm Designs Greater New Life Baptist," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 16, 1978, E-2.
[3] Ibid.

significant style of architecture."[4] The period of significance is 1966. It also is an important representation of African American-designed churches in Cincinnati. Potential eligibility under Criterion B for association with Fred Shuttlesworth would require additional research into Shuttlesworth's post-1966 activities in Cincinnati.

[4] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 18.

Harriet Beecher Stowe School (19 Broadcast Plaza)
635 West Seventh Street; Cincinnati
1923

Harriet Beecher Stowe School viewed looking north from parking lot (approximate location of former Seventh Street).

Associated historic contexts
Education, 1844–1965
Other: Architecture

Significance
The Harriet Beecher Stowe School is significant as Cincinnati's public African American vocational school. Started by Dr. Jennie D. Porter, the first African American woman principal in the Cincinnati school system, in 1914, before moving to the current building in 1923, it was a focal point of segregation and remains the only remaining building of Cincinnati's segregated African American school system. The building is also a noteworthy example of Second Renaissance Revival school building architecture and may contain a 1936, WPA-era mural by John C. Lutz.

Jennie Porter was already an experienced educator and principal in Cincinnati when she enrolled as a graduate student and became the first African American woman to receive a PhD from the University of Cincinnati. She believed that education was the best route for African Americans to better their lives in the United States in the early twentieth century and set about establishing a school for Black students. Porter was Cincinnati's first African American female principal.

Porter first founded the Harriet Beecher Stowe School in a smaller building in the West End neighborhood of Cincinnati in 1914. The segregated public school was open to all African

American children across the city who wished to enroll. The enrollment grew so large that by 1920, Porter and the African American community petitioned the Cincinnati School Board to erect a new school in the West End on Seventh Street, costing approximately $600,000. The new Harriet Beecher Stowe School began construction the following year and the school officially opened in 1923 for approximately 1,400 students.

Undated (pre-1945) postcard image of the Harriet Beecher Stowe School. (Image: Boston Public Library Tichnor Brothers Collection.)

In her arguments to the school board, Dr. Porter stated that the new school building "will be more than a schoolhouse, but a social center, a health center, an educational center for old and young." The school served as a community center especially for the West End neighborhood. During the construction of the Stowe School a portion of the building was used as a tuberculosis treatment center and general health center. This was especially important during the tuberculosis outbreak as African American communities had very limited access to hospitals.

The 1923 building is an important work of Second Renaissance Revival public architecture. The large windows likely take influence from Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee-Rosenwald school design that allowed maximum natural lighting and ventilation for classrooms.

The school was set up as a vocational school with rooms set up to teach trades like bricklaying, carpentry, music and typing, as well as rooms for community support like a public library, showers, a swimming pool, and a childcare center.

Within four years of its opening the school had over 3,000 students and almost 200 African American teachers. The Stowe School was first opened as an all-grades vocational school but eventually transitioned to an elementary school as other Black schools opened across the city. It

was the largest elementary school through the 1950s. In 1953 it was officially districted for the West End neighborhood.

In 1936 the Works Progress Administration employed John C. Lutz to paint a mural inside the building, which he completed in 1937.. The mural depicted "the development of the Negro race." Lutz received other public commissions, placed his work in at least one national exhibition, and received favorable reviews from critics.[1] As the building is not open to the public, it is not known if the mural remains.

Photo of the mural. (*Cincinnati Enquirer*, January 17, 1937).

Urban renewal projects and the construction of the Mill Creek Expressway destroyed the West End neighborhood in the 1950s and 1960s and many students' homes were razed. The school building remained and by the 1960s became "an island amid the highways." It was converted to an elementary school for the early 1960s and converted again in 1963 to an Adult Center.

The Stowe Adult Center continued for just over 15 years, offering many different community programs like childcare, adult education programs, and vocational training. In many ways, the ideologies of Jennie Porter continued despite the Stowe School no longer serving as a public school. However, the school board closed the school in 1980 as part of a larger school closure initiative to minimize spending.

Hannah H. Thomas founded the Harriet Beecher Stowe Historical Cultural Association Inc. 1980 to save the school and turn it into a museum of African American history. The Stowe School was the only remaining physical reminder of Cincinnati's segregated school system as the Frederick Douglass school was demolished to construct a new building around the same time. The group was ultimately unsuccessful in purchasing the building and the city converted the school to the Citi Center in 1984, a series of private offices.

In 1995, the Stowe School was converted yet again to a news broadcast center by WXIX-TV. The building is now known as 19 Broadcast Plaza and hosts several news stations and related businesses.

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[1] "John C. Lutz Mural at Harriet Beecher Stowe School," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/15.

Integrity

The Harriet Beecher Stowe School building has not been substantially altered, and retains its carved stone or tile Second Renaissance Revival details, expressing integrity of materials and workmanship. Also significant, the original red, clay-tile roof with copper flashing remains intact, an important feature of the building's character. The presence of a single-story, aluminum and glass enclosure, running the length of the façade, conceals much of the front (south) face of the building and obscures its primary entrance pavilions, compromising integrity of design. This alteration is most likely reversible, though it is not certain (as the building is not open to the public) that the original façade remains intact beneath the enclosure. The presence of a parking garage where an open playfield once existed also compromises integrity of design and setting. A less drastic alteration is the replacement of original wood sash windows with late-twentieth-century anodized aluminum units of a different configuration. Overall, the building expresses importance as Cincinnati's only remaining African American school building as well as its Second Renaissance Revival architecture, retaining integrity under both Criterion A and Criterion C. It is not certain if the John C. Lutz mural remains; if so, this would also contribute to integrity.

Architectural detail at the Harriet Beecher Stowe School in 2019. (Photo by Warren LeMay.)

Eligibility

The Harriet Beecher Stowe School appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Education, 1844–1965, with a period of significance

of 1923–1963. It also appears to be eligible under Criterion C for its architecture. More research may establish eligibility within other contexts, such as its WPA-era murals by John C. Lutz.

Present-day façade treatment viewed facing northeast from approach to building.

References

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Horace Sudduth House
2636 Park Avenue; Cincinnati
c. 1850–1870

Horace Sudduth House viewed looking east from Park Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975
Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975

Significance
The Horace Sudduth House is significant as the home of Horace Sudduth, a prolific real estate agent, investor, and lender who, among other accomplishments, made possible African American homeownership in what are now known as Cincinnati's West End and Walnut Hills neighborhoods. Sudduth founded the Industrial Building and Loan company in 1919 to help African Americans in those two neighborhoods open savings accounts and take out mortgages. On top of helping hundreds of African Americans purchase their own homes or invest in

tenements, he developed and owned the Manse Hotel, an important business and social center in Walnut Hills.[1]

Horace Sudduth was known at the time of his death as one of the wealthiest and most influential businessmen in Cincinnati.[2] Sudduth was born in Covington, Kentucky in 1888. He attended the segregated Seventh Street Colored School, graduating in 1906, where he went on to work for the Pullman Railroad Company. Sudduth used his steady paycheck from the Pullman Company to begin to launch a career in real estate in Oklahoma. He was successful enough that he was able leave the Pullman Company, return to Covington to marry Melvina Jones in 1910, and start his own real estate company in Cincinnati. The Sudduth family moved into the West End neighborhood of Cincinnati and Horace Sudduth opened his real estate office on 516 W. Court.[3]

Horace Sudduth began to advertise in the Cincinnati City Directory in 1913, labeling himself as "Cincinnati's Colored Real Estate Agent." In his early career, Horace Sudduth positioned himself as a go-between among White property owners and investors and Black communities.[4] He managed leases, collected rent, screened prospective renters and arranged buying and selling of property for real estate investors. In 1913 he also leased the Lincoln Theater in West End and provided a multitude of services for the West End Arican American community such as silent films, lunchtime lectures on race, culture, and religion among other programs.

The 1910s were a busy time for Horace Sudduth. He became involved with several elite circles of both Black and White businesspeople, was close friends with Wendall Dabney, founder and editor of *The Union*, led the fundraising for the Ninth Street YMCA in 1916 and served on its board for many years, and expanded his practice into the Walnut Hills neighborhood in 1917, opening a second office at 1012 Lincoln Avenue. In 1919 he founded the Industrial Building and Loan Corporation to help African Americans in the West End and Walnut Hills neighborhoods to open savings accounts and get mortgage loans for single-family housing.[5] Set up more like a mutual aid organization, Horace Sutton did not profit from this company, only taking one dollar annual salary for his role as president, and allowed members of the community to buy shares interest free, with typical interest rates on loans and savings accounts. Within six months the Industrial Building and Loan Corporation had over 200 depositors and $4000 mortgage loans. Wendall Dabney's paper had regular column updates on the success of the company and the listings available through Sudduth's real estate company.

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[1] https://www.nps.gov/places/manse-hotel-and-annex.htm and https://www.cincinnatimagazine.com/article/a-piece-of-cincinnatis-black-history-at-manse-hotel-annex/.
[2] "Horace Suddath," *Walnut Hills Stories*, Walnut Hills Historical Society, https://walnuthillsstories.org/horace-sudduth/.
[3] Geoff Sutton, "Horace Sudduth Real Estate," *Walnut Hills Stories,* Walnut Hills Historical Society, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/horace-sudduth-real-estate/ and Cincinnati city directories.
[4] Geoff Sutton, "Horace Sudduth's Real Estate Services in the West End during the 1910s."
[5] Ibid.

This was hugely significant in boosting Black ownership, for both single-family homeowners and for landlords, during a time where obstacles were placed before Black homeowners through racial covenants blocking sales in White neighborhoods, violence from White communities towards prospective buyers or new African American families, and a lack of financial assistance, such as FHA loans, from the government. During the Great Depression, the Industrial Building and Loan Corporation survived through the years with high percentage of payments made.[6]

Horace Sudduth moved to this house, on Park Avenue in Walnut Hills neighborhood, in 1926 just a few blocks from his Walnut Hills office. (The date of construction for this house is not shown in Hamilton County Auditor records, but it appears to be an Italianate-style house from the 1850s or 1860s.) In 1931, Sudduth purchased the Manse Hotel on Chapel Street. This, like the Lincoln Theater in the West End neighborhood, served as a cultural center for the Walnut Hills neighborhood. It hosted wedding ceremonies, social club events and gatherings, civil rights groups like the NAACP and Women's League, and musical entertainers such as Duke Ellington. In the 1950s, Sudduth made major renovations to the hotel and revitalized the Booker T. Washington National Negro Business League which held meetings in the new spaces.[7]

Horace Sudduth's real estate company and the Industrial Building and Loan Corporation opened Opportunities for African American homeownership in the West End and Walnut Hills neighborhoods of Cincinnati. The *Union* states that by the time Sudduth moved into Walnut Hills there were close to 400 African American property owners. The neighborhood thrived from the wealth that landownership brought, allowing community members to operate small businesses near their homes, and opening rental income in tenements and through room leases for the many people, often young and single, moving to the North during the Great Migration.

The Sudduth family moved to 1350 William Howard Taft Road in 1942; this was a larger and more ornate, Queen Anne-style house, also in Walnut Hills. Horace Sudduth died in 1957, and the Industrial Building and Loan Corporation merged with Major Zeigler's East End Investment and Loan Company. This lasted through the 1980s before eventually closing as the end of segregation opened new avenues of home financing for the neighborhoods.

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[6] Geoff Sutton, "Black Homeowners and their Mortgages in the 1920s through the 1950s," *Walnut Hills Stories,* Walnut Hill Historical Society, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/redlining/.

[7] "Manse Hotel and Annex, 101-31," *Ohio Historical Marker,* and "Manse Hotel and Annex, 100004232," *National Register of Historic Places*, National Park Service, 2019, https://www.nps.gov/places/manse-hotel-and-annex.htm

The post-1942 1350 William Howard Taft Road.

Integrity

The building has been altered with replacement windows and vinyl siding, compromising integrity of materials. However, the overall form and massing of the house remains, expressing integrity from the period of significance. Italianate porch details remain, though their bases have been altered. A stone retaining wall may date from the period of significance.

Eligibility

The Horace Sudduth House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B in the context of Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975 and Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975, with a period of significance of 1926–1942. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration B as the property best associated with Sudduth's "productive life."[8] Horace Sudduth's two real estate offices have both been demolished and his home in the West End neighborhood was demolished during urban renewal programs. The house at 1350 William Howard Taft is less closely associated with Sudduth's career, as he lived there later in life and during retirement.

[8] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 15.

Jennie Porter House
1355 Lincoln Ave., Cincinnati
1928

The Jennie Porter House viewed facing southeast from Lincoln Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Education, 1844–1965

Significance
This building is significant as the home of Dr. Jennie D. Porter, Cincinnati's leading promoter of a philosophy of Black empowerment through vocational education. Porter's views sometimes placed her at odds with other influential members of the local African American community, but she largely retained the support of parents and the city's Black population as a whole, as well as White philanthropic supporters; Porter successfully established three public schools in Cincinnati including the Harriet Beecher Stowe School. Outside of her career as a school administrator, other accomplishments include becoming the first African American woman (according to some sources, the first African American person regardless of gender) to obtain a PhD from the University of Cincinnati.

In her PhD dissertation, Porter sums up her educational philosophy—as well as her vision for the liberation and prosperity of the African American community as a whole—in a few sentences: "In the face of social and economic barriers, the Negro seeks freedom where he may satisfy his aspirations. So we find Negroes themselves organizing separate schools." Porter aligned herself with the philosophies of Booker T. Washington, emphasizing practical and vocational education in a Black-centered environment. According to Porter, "If it should turn out that race prejudice cannot be overcome by direct attack and opposition, it may be circumvented by building independently where independence is necessary." [1]

Porter was born in Cincinnati and chose to follow in the footsteps of her mother, who was one of Cincinnati's first Black teachers.[2] Born in 1876, Jennie Porter graduated from the mostly White Hughes High School in 1893 and became a teacher at Frederick Douglass School. While working in the public school system, she collaborated with Annie Laws, a White philanthropist, to establish a private kindergarten for Black students in the West End. The school opened in 1911 to serve 125 students in its first year. Porter also took action when the Great Flood of 1913 displaced African American families, leaving 143 students unable to finish the school year. She obtained permission from the school board to establish a temporary summer school in a building on West Fifth Street.[3]

Soon, Porter again went to the Cincinnati School Board with a proposal, this time to establish a permanent school for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. After campaigning to generate public interest, Porter received approval from the board and would become principal of the new school. The Harriet Beecher Stowe School opened in 1914.

Stowe's efforts were the subject of controversy in Cincinnati's Black community. Porter, along with Francis Russell, principal of Douglass School, defended their institutions from attacks by Wendell Dabney in *The Union*, the city's leading Black newspaper, and protests from the Cincinnati NAACP at school board meetings.

Porter lived at 733 West Court Street, in the West End, for much of her career; however, that building no longer exists. She purchased and moved to 1355 Lincoln Avenue in 1928, a new house at the time.[4] City directories do not indicate a spouse. Porter remained at this residence until her death in 1936.

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[1] Jennie D. Porter, "The Problem of Negro Education in Northern and Border Cities," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1928), 122, 126.
[2] Lesley Robinson, "Jennie Davis Porter: A Leader of Black Education in Cincinnati," *Alpha Beta Phi Chapter Phi Alpha Theta* 4, no. 1 (1988): 13.
[3] Ibid., 14
[4] According to Hamilton County Auditor records.

Jennie Porter is also noteworthy as the first African American woman (according to some sources, the first African American person of any gender) to receive a PhD from the University of Cincinnati. Porter was in her mid-forties during most of her time as a university student; her dissertation reflects twenty years of experience meeting the educational needs of Cincinnati's African American community.

The Jennie Porter House viewed facing southwest from Lincoln Avenue.

Integrity

This side-gable, Tudor Revival bungalow is a remarkably well-preserved building expressing all seven aspects of integrity and displaying no noticeable alterations. Windows appear to be original, including wood casement windows on the front (north) facade, a noteworthy and relatively uncommon feature. A basement-level, sectional garage door, flanked by poured-concrete retaining walls, also appears to be original. On the attic level, historic stucco and decorative half timbering remains. Overall, the building retains the historic character and appearance reflecting the period when Jennie Porter owned the property and resided there.

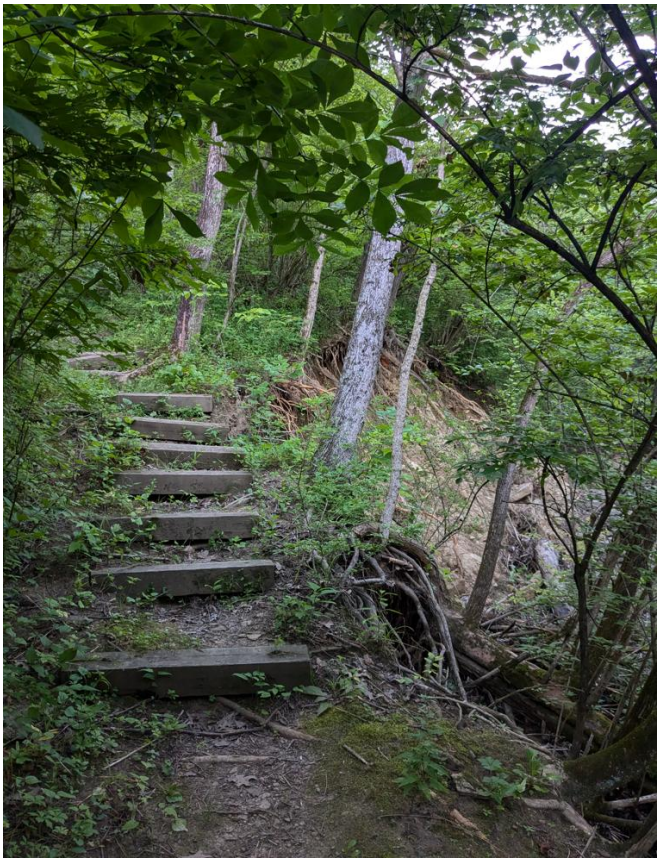
Eligibility

The Jennie D. Porter House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of Education, 1844–1965. The period of significance is 1928–1936, extending from the year Porter purchased the house to her retirement.

Although Porter certainly lived elsewhere prior to moving to this house in 1928, this property satisfies the Criterion B requirement of having the best association with Porter's "productive life."[5] This house covers the year Porter attained her PhD (1928) and part of her tenure as principal of the Harriet Beecher Stowe School (she retired from that position in 1936). Her residence prior to 1928 is not known to remain extant. Although the Harriet Beecher Stowe School also reflects Porter's "productive life," her residence reflects Porter's accomplishments beyond serving as that institution's founder and principal, including becoming the first African American woman to attain a PhD from the University of Cincinnati, as well has her public defense of separate African American public education to Cincinnati residents.

[5] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 15.

LaBoiteaux Woods
5400 Lanius Lane, Cincinnati



The western slope of the LaBoiteaux Woods ravine, located within the LaBoiteaux Woods Preserve.

Associated historic contexts
Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building

Significance
The unnamed ravine within LaBoiteaux Woods is significant as the only "documented, undeveloped local escape route" used by freedom-seeking people in the Cincinnati area, according to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.[1]

After crossing the Ohio river, people traveling north via the Underground Railroad would often use Mill Creek and Hamilton Avenue to access the College Hill community, home to many abolitionists. According to College Hill resident Harriet Wilson, in an 1892 letter to the Underground Railroad historian William Siebert, those escaping enslavement would "choose the least travelled ways and the deep shadowed ravines and valleys lying on each side of our

[1] Hamilton Avenue Road to Freedom, "LaBoiteaux Woods Ravine to Freedom," April 22, 2014, https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/?page_id=1082.

beautiful hill." According to Wilson, although College Hill was a key destination, a challenge lie in that the only access was via Hamilton Pike, a steep dirt road up a hill, from which one "could be seen from a long distance" and would have also been required to pass through a toll gate.[2]

The easternmost ravine, passing through what is now known as LaBoiteaux Woods, avoided these hazards and provided convenient access to the homes of the Strong family of abolitionists. Anna Bennison, daughter of Elon Strong and granddaughter of Zebulon Strong, stated in a 1966 interview that Zebulon Strong and his children would leave food and supplies on their property to be picked up by those traversing the Underground Railroad. Though the activities of white abolitionists such as the Strong and Wilson families are better documented, Wilson states that African American households participated as well.[3]

Wilson does not specify the locations of the other "ravines and valleys" mentioned; additional unnamed ravines in the vicinity include one lying approximately between Hamilton Avenue and Glenview Avenue, and one further to the west in what is now known as the Bradford-Felter Tanglewood Preserve.

LaBoiteaux Woods is named after Gilbert Lowe LaBoiteaux, an abolitionist who was one of the founders of Mt. Healthy, a city a few miles north of College Hill.[4] The historic name for the creek and ravine, if any existed, is not known.

Integrity

LaBoiteaux Woods is stands out for its lack of development; most routes known to be used by freedom seekers, such as Hamilton Avenue, Kirby Avenue, and Mill Creek have been greatly transformed since the Underground Railroad era. By contrast, LaBoiteaux retains its rural, wooded character from the period of significance. Park amenities, including walking paths, steps, and signs, are minimal. A culvert and retaining wall associated with Underground Railroad use were removed in the early 1900s.[5]

Eligibility

LaBoiteaux Woods appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building, as an ethnographic landscape and historic site associated with the Underground Railroad. The exact dates when freedom seekers traveled through the ravine is not known; the period of significance for LaBoiteaux Woods likely extend from 1846, when the abolitionist

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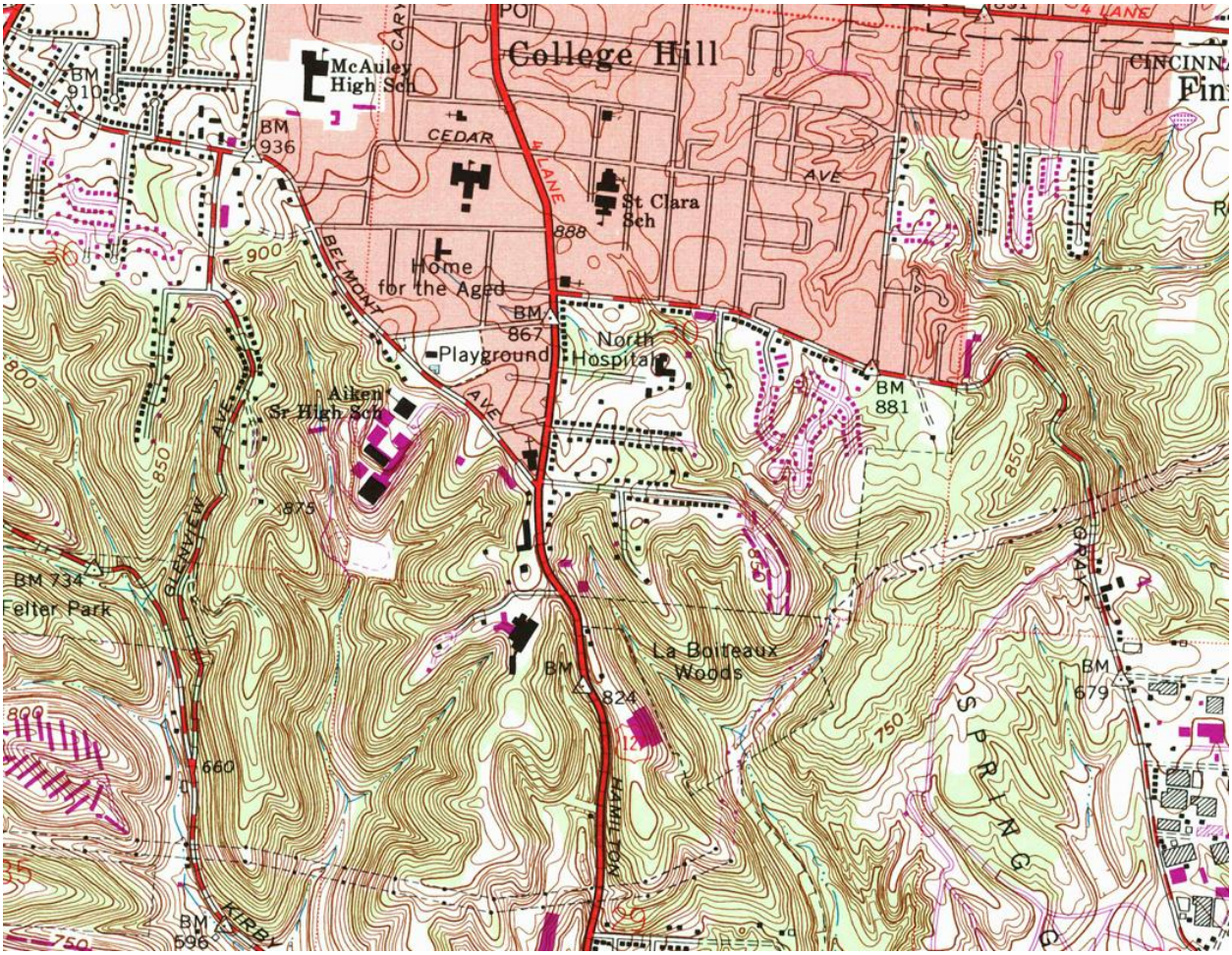
[2] Betty Ann Smiddy, *A Little Piece of Paradise: College Hill, Ohio* (College Hill Historical Society, 1999), 107.
[3] Hamilton Avenue Road to Freedom, "LaBoiteaux Woods Ravine to Freedom."
[4] Harriet Beecher Stowe House, "Cincinnati Abolition: Places and People Integral to Abolition and the Underground Railroad," August 16, 2022, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/557bfac101464feeb610d7f25c2ccd0c.
[5] Ibid.

community around College Hill was established, into the early 1950s, when freedom-seeking people began to favor other routes.



1986 United States Geological Survey map depicting LaBoiteaux Woods, College Hill, and adjacent ravines.

Lucy Oxley House
5226 Stewart Avenue; Cincinnati
1932

Lucy Oxley House viewed looking east from Stewart Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975

Significance
The Lucy Oxley House is significant for its association with Dr. Lucy Oxley (1912–1991), an important figure in the history of medicine and education in Cincinnati and the United States.

The oldest of three children, Lucky Orintha Oxley was born in 1912 to Howard University alumni parents. Oxley's mother, Esther, was an African American teacher, and her father was an Episcopal minister and immigrant from Trinidad. In 1935, Dr. Oxley was the first African American woman to graduate from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and became a respected physician, educator, and civil rights advocate in Ohio. Oxley started her private

practice in 1940, and from 1956 through the 1980s, she practiced at a medical office building she owned on Dexter Avenue (demolished in the 2010s) in Cincinnati's Walnut Hills. Oxley broke barriers in both medical practice and academic mentorship, contributing to the integration of African American professionals within mainstream institutions during the mid-20th century.

Dr. Oxley resided in this home during a formative period of her medical career. The property served not only as her residence but also as a symbol of professional and social advancement, representing her role in challenging racial and gender barriers in a heavily segregated era. Because it is the only surviving building linked with her medical career, it is directly associated with her life and contributions to medicine and community empowerment in Cincinnati and the broader Midwest.

The Lucy Oxley house viewed looking northeast from Stewart Avenue.

Integrity

The house retains a high degree of integrity in location, design, and setting, and is the only remaining building associated with Dr. Oxley's medical career. Its well-preserved condition enables it to illustrate the domestic environment of a pioneering African American physician and educator, adding depth to the understanding of minority professional experiences during the early-to-mid twentieth century.

Eligibility

The Lucy Oxley House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B for its association with Dr. Lucy Oxley, whose professional achievements and civic influence make her a person of outstanding local and regional significance. Its combination of architectural integrity and strong biographical association establishes the property as a valuable cultural resource within both architectural and social-historical contexts. The period of significance corresponds with the years Oxley lived at the building, 1952–1991.

Marjorie Parham House
4503 Sunnyslope Terrace; Cincinnati
1940

The Marjorie Parham House in 2025.

Associated historic contexts
Journalism, 1844–1975
The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964

Significance
The Marjorie Parham is significant as the home of Marjorie Parham, editor and owner of the newspaper, *Cincinnati Herald* from 1963 to 1996. This was the only major local African American news source for several decades and remains a significant publication today.

Marjorie Parham was born in 1918 in Batavia, Ohio. She attended the University of Cincinnati and the Chase School of Business to get a degree in business despite urging towards teaching or nursing careers. She left school and married William Spillers in 1937 and the two had their son William Jr. (Bill). They were divorced soon after and Marjorie began to work in a machine shop in Lockland, Ohio.

Marjorie Parham returned to Cincinnati in 1946 with her son and began working for the Veterans Administration in the city. She met and married Gerald Porter, a newspaper journalist, in 1954.

Gerald Porter died suddenly in 1963. He was in a car accident; Parham recalls that he was refused treatment at the first hospital he was taken to due to his race. Marjorie was left in charge of both papers with many challenges ahead of her. She mentioned later in life, "[I] found myself in a position of being broke, black, and female – not a great combination in the early 1960s." She decided to close the *Dayton Tribune* to focus solely on the *Cincinnati Herald*. She also enlisted the help of her son Bill Spillers who remained as editor for the next several decades.

In the early years of the *Cincinnati Herald,* the paper's operations were out of small residential buildings. During much of Porter's tenure the paper was at 406 Elm Street in Delhi Township (extant). When Marjorie Parham took over, the business was located on the ground floor of a three-story apartment building at 3488 Reading Road (no longer extant). That building caught fire after a child accidentally started a fire on the second story. Some damage was noted to the building, but the paper continued to publish weekly.

Shortly after the incident, the *Cincinnati Herald* moved its offices to 863 Lincoln Avenue (no longer extant) where it remained until Parham's retirement in 1996. The newspaper had a large audience and covered a vast range of topics from national and local politics, education, social events, and day-to-day happenings of the African American community in Cincinnati. For over thirty years under Parham's stewardship, the paper was a weekly source of information for communities left out of larger Cincinnati newspapers.

Still, the paper was not without its challenges, tackling tense topics on race and anti-war protesting in the 1970s, among others. In the early 1990s this culminated in a firebombing of the Lincoln Avenue office. The firebombing culprit was never caught, and the newspaper office suffered some damage, although no one was hurt. However, the paper was not delayed. The staff, working in short hourly shifts, could get enough done to get it out on time despite the remaining smoke.

Outside of running the *Cincinnati Herald*, Marjorie Parham served on several boards of national and local organizations including chairwoman of the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, treasurer of National Newspaper Publishers Association, Better Business Bureau, Cincinnati Chapter of NAACP, YMCA, and the Urban League. She married Hartwell Parham and the two lived in North Avondale.

Marjorie Parham retired from the *Cincinnati Herald* in 1993 and then sold the business to Sesh Communications in 1996. She continued to be an active member of community organizations until her death in 2021.

Integrity

The Marjorie Parham House appears to be almost unaltered from its construction in 1940 and including the decades when Parham lived there. A carport in the rear also appears to be a historic feature.

Eligibility

The Marjorie Parham House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of Journalism, 1844–1975, with a period of significance of 1963–1993. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration B as a property best associated with Parham's productive life.[1] Her house is the property best associated with her work as the editor and owner of the *Cincinnati Herald*. One other building historically associated with the Herald remains, at 406 Elm Street in Delhi Township, though this is more closely associated with Gerald Porter (it may be eligible for the National Register as well, though it is outside the study area for evaluation under this project) and was only the headquarters of the paper for a few years. In more recent decades the paper has been based at 3680 Reading Road and 3440 Burnet Avenue, but these are not historic locations.

[1] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 17.

Odd Fellows Hall [African American]
13 Tobacco Alley; Covington, Kentucky
c. 1870

The Odd Fellows Hall viewed from Electric Alley facing south.

Associated historic contexts
Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975

Significance
The Odd Fellows Hall

This African American Odd Fellows Lodge is significant as a parallel institution created by African American excluded from the White-run lodge, built in 1856 on the same block, at the northeast corner of Fifth Street and Madison Street.

The building was built around 1870 as the Covington Bottling Works, owned by Henry Wenzel. By the 1880s it was a pickle factory with the African American Odd Fellows organization located on the third floor. The Odd Fellows remained into the early twentieth century.[1]

This Odd Fellows building is significant as a rare remaining example of the dozens of African American fraternal lodges that once existed in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Also of note, its location on the same block as the White-run Odd Fellows lodge, from which its members were excluded, serves as a spatial reminder of the history of segregation among fraternal organizations.

Integrity

Pickle Factory retains the general form an appearance of an industrial building from the 1870s. Recent redevelopment has replaced windows and altered the primary (west) entrance, but these features remain largely compatible with the building's historic character. A few openings have been filled with brick; it is not certain when this occurred or if it was during the period of significance. The location, on the same block as the White Odd Fellows building, contributes to integrity of setting.

Eligibility

The Odd Fellows Hall appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Social Clubs and Organizations, 1844–1965, with a period of significance of c. 1870–c. 1920.

[1] Warren Lemay, https://www.flickr.com/photos/59081381@N03/49682892271/.

Page Tower
619 Central Ave; Cincinnati
1972

Page Tower viewed looking west from Central Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975
Religious Institutions, 1867–1975
The Legacy of Urban Renewal, 1956–1975

Significance
The Page Tower is significant as an example of a church led, high-rise tower for low-and moderate-income housing. The tower apartments were built after a major urban renewal campaign prompted by the *Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan* displaced both Union Baptist Church, who built the development, as well as many of its members.

The Union Baptist Church was first organized in 1831. The church had several locations prior to their home at the southwest corner of Richmond and Mound Streets in downtown Cincinnati in 1864. The church continued to grow and expand for the next century.

In 1960 Cincinnati's urban renewal efforts impacted the Union Baptist Church. The church was deemed "a serious handicap for future redevelopers" and the congregation was made to vacate, despite community objections. It would take another eight years before the city finally purchased the building to demolish it.

Union Baptist Church raised one million dollars for the construction of a new church building. It was the only church displaced by urban renewal that was able to rebuild in the downtown area. Union Baptist purchased property on Seventh and Central Avenue which had been cleared by a different urban renewal project, Queensgate II. They hired architects Glaser & Myers & Associates to design not only a new church building, but after approval for zoning changes, to design a new high-rise apartment building right next door. Construction on the church began in 1970 and construction on the tower began in 1972.

The new high-rise, Page Tower, would be a 14-story apartment building for "mature workers" or senior members of the community. The towers had modern appliances, utilities, and furnishings as well as stores in the ground level such as a drug store and the grocery store.

The Page Tower was named after long-time pastor Wilbur Allen Page. He ministered at the church for 66 years and was an advocate for the church and its community for civil rights and against urban renewal in Cincinnati. Union Baptist Church and Glaser & Myers & Associates were given an Award of Merit for the design of the church building for "serving as an anchor to redeveloping neighborhoods." The church considered itself as a kind of entrance gate for the Queensgate II redevelopment project, keeping their important history while meeting the demands of Cincinnati's push for redevelopment.

Page Tower serves as a continued statement for the legacy of the church's and community's resilience during urban renewal. It still provides low- and moderate-income housing. Union Baptist Church continues to run the building as a non-profit corporation supported by the Federal Housing Act.

Page Tower as viewed from the corner of Sixth Street West and Central Avenue, looking towards the northwest.

Integrity

Overall, Page Tower remains remarkably intact. There has been very little modification to the exterior form and shape of the building. The ground level no longer contains the grocery and drug stores, but new stores still conduct business out of the ground level so there is no major impact to integrity. The 1972 building shows its character with the Modern brick-clad structure, large windows, flat roof, and minimally decorated exterior. The intactness of setting expressed by the relationship of the building to the street, the church building to the north, and landscaped outdoor spaces also contributes to integrity.

View of the relationship between Page Tower (left) and Union Baptist Church (right) as viewed looking west from Central Avenue.

Eligibility

Page Tower appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of The Legacy of Urban Renewal, 1956–1975, with a period of significance of 1972. This property is significant under a "historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community."[1]

[1] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 12.

Park Town
890 Wade Walk; Cincinnati
1961

Park Town as viewed looking northeast from Winchell Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975
The Legacy of Urban Renewal, 1956–1975

Significance
Park Town is significant as an example of a co-operative residential development in the West End neighborhood that prospered in the face of urban renewal. It served as a model for racial integration in the 1960s and left a lasting impact on the city, exemplifying community-led organization and the challenges of achieving integration goals.

The West End neighborhood of Cincinnati was a target for urban renewal in the mid-twentieth century. The 1948 *Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan* called for the destruction of most of the West End for "a more efficient and inviting Cincinnati." West End, a predominantly Black neighborhood, was deemed beyond "hope of restoration" and described in newspaper articles as the "most notorious slum area in the cities of America." The destruction of the neighborhood to

clear the way for the Mill Creek Expressway (I-75) was the largest displacement of African American households in history.

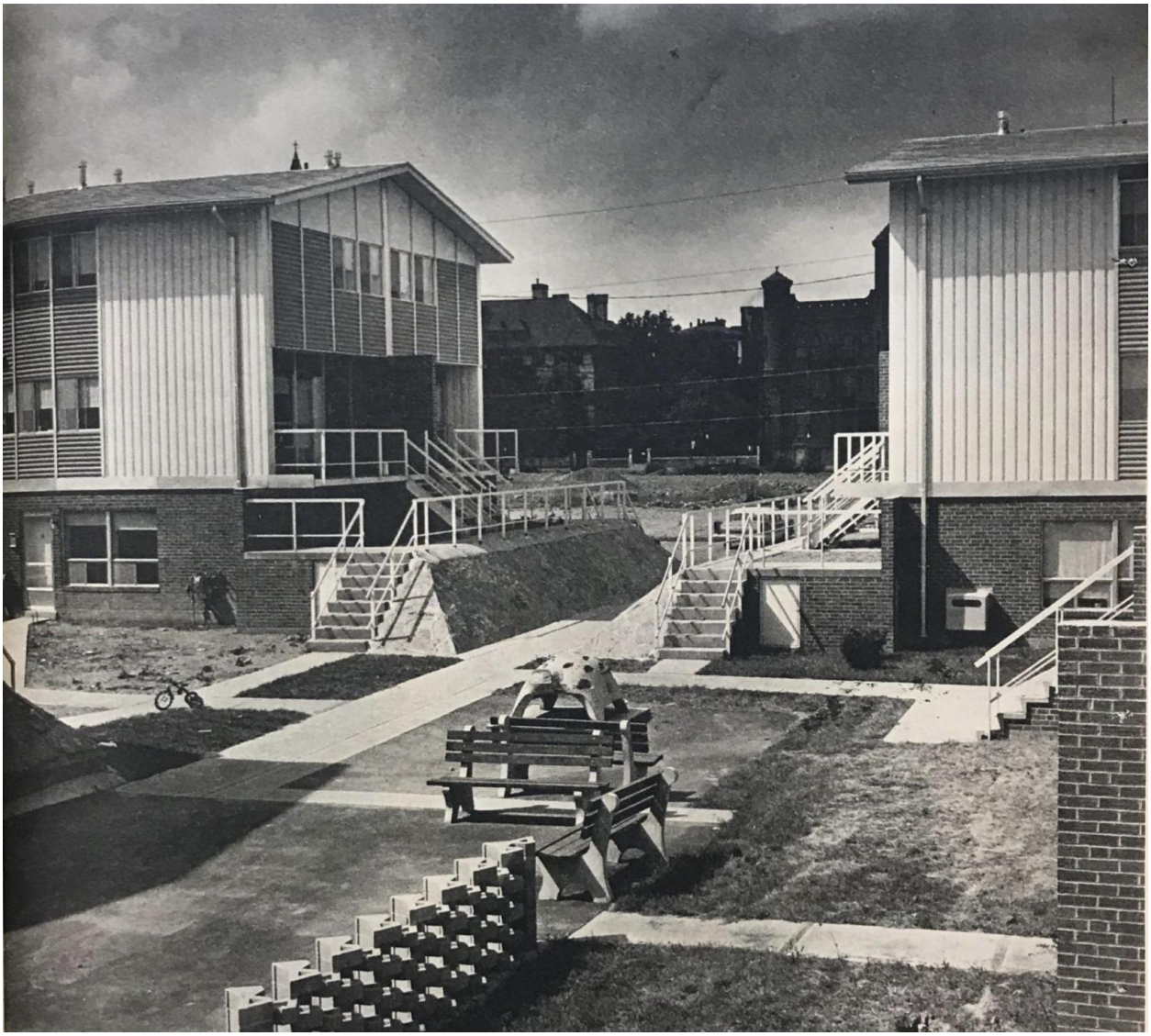
City authorities, partly with federal funding, demolished almost all homes in the West End, without adequate replacement, creating a housing shortage. One of only of a handful of housing developments in the West End was Park Town, a 300-unit development between Liberty Street and Lincoln Park just east of I-75.

Park Town was the first co-operative housing development in the neighborhood (others were public housing, and, later, for-profit and nonprofit private developments). Park Town was constructed starting in 1960 and opened to residents in 1961. The manager, Dr. Reid Ross, was previously the director of the Better Housing League. He and the rest of the cooperative wanted to make an integrated neighborhood for middle-income families. This was a response to the continued segregation of public and private housing in the city, as well as resilience against the destruction caused by urban renewal. In just a few short years the development housed 300 families.

Just as importantly, Park Town served as a community hub and organizational center for West End residents. The cooperative setting encouraged residents to become involved in the decision-making of the entire property and members continued that effort with broader organizations. Park Town hosted social events, dances, and political events, and started many committees aimed towards traffic safety, childcare, and city planning, among others. Its newsletter, *Park Town Crier*, became a source of political, social, and cultural knowledge distribution for the West End.

Despite efforts for integration, Park Town continued to house predominately Black residents as white residents were not hindered by discriminatory housing practices and found lower-cost housing elsewhere.

Park Town illustrates the evolving resilience of the West End community despite adversity from urban renewal and discriminatory housing practices.



Historic newspaper image of Park Town in 1961 article in the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Integrity

Overall, Park Town Homes remain remarkably intact. All buildings remain extant to this day with minimal exterior changes to form or material. A school and commercial building on Linn Street also remains mostly unaltered. The historic setting remains intact, with the relationship between the housing units and interior circulation, landscaping and retaining walls, and playgrounds.

Park Town as viewed from Winchell Avenue looking to the northeast. (Image: Google Maps 2025)

Eligibility

Park Town appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975 and The Legacy of Urban Renewal, 1956–1975, with a period of significance of 1961–1975. This property represents a "historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community."[1]

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Casey-Leininger, Charles F. "Park Town Cooperative Homes, Urban Redevelopment, and the Search for Residential Integration in Cincinnati, 1955-1965," in Queen City Heritage 52, no. 3 (1994).

[1] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 12.

Peter H. Clark House
1119 Yale Avenue; Cincinnati
c. 1847–1869


The Peter H. Clark House viewed from Yale Avenue, facing south.

Associated historic contexts
Education, 1844–1965
Journalism, 1844–1975
Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975
Other: Religion

Significance
The Peter H. Clark House is significant as Clark's residence from around 1861 until the mid-1870s. Clark was among the most influential figures in nineteenth-century African American Cincinnati and is important in multiple contexts: He published the *Herald of Freedom*, the leading African American newspaper in Cincinnati, beginning in 1855; he also worked as an editorial assistant for Frederick Douglass. Clark was the first teacher in the African American school system in Cincinnati and later became the first principal of Gaines High School, which trained Black teachers who taught around Cincinnati and in other areas including the South during Reconstruction. In sports, he was considered the "Father of Black Baseball" in Cincinnati,

promoting the sport and helping his students at Gaines High School to become professional players.

Peter H. Clark was born in Cincinnati in 1929. He attended a private African American high school in the city, commonly known as Gilmore High School. Clark was one of relatively few graduates, alongside John Isom Gaines; the school only lasted from 1844–1848.[1]

Peter H. Clark became the first teacher of Cincinnati's African American public school system in the early 1850s.[2] On top of his teaching career, Clark was active in various activist and political circles. He attended anti-slavery conventions and served as the secretary for the 1853 Rochester National Convention, a precursor to the founding of the NAACP. In 1855, Clark started his own abolitionist paper the *Herald of Freedom,* which ran for just a few months in Cincinnati. Even though the paper was short lived, Clark got the attention of Frederick Douglass who hired him to work as assistant editor for his newspaper *Frederick Douglass Paper*.[3] In 1862 Clark wrote the earliest history of Cincinnati's Black Brigade, a group of more than 800 men who built fortifications to defend the city during the Civil War.[4]

Clark was also a founding member of Cincinnati's second AME church, Brown Temple. The first church of the Walnut Hills neighborhood was organized in 1856 by Dangerfield Earley with a mixed congregation of Baptist and Methodist-Episcopalian members.[5] In 1862 the church split and an AME congregation was organized in Peter H. Clark's home on what was then Kemper Street (now known as Yale Avenue).[6]

Peter H. Clark believed strongly in education and following the end of the Civil War he helped to start the Gaines High School in 1866 in the West End neighborhood. Clark served as the first principal and a teacher for the high school for the next twenty years.[7] The school primarily trained Black teachers and Clark helped to place forty students as teachers in Cincinnati. Graduating classes by 1885 had more than a dozen students, though Clark and other teachers noted that students were hired before graduation since just one year of secondary education was enough to teach in Southern elementary schools.[8] While the school primarily trained Black teachers, Clark helped to expand the school with instruction in music, drawing, handwriting, and

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[1] Kendrick, "The History of African Americans in Cincinnati."
[2] "Peter H. Clark," *Colored Conventions Project*, University of Delaware, 2020, https://coloredconventions.org/women-higher-education/biographies/peter-h-clark/
[3] Ibid.
[4] "Cincinnati Black Brigade," *Walnut Hills Stories*, Walnut Hills Historical Society, 2025, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/black-history-facts-cincinnati-black-brigade/
[5] "Early Black Churches," *Walnut Hills Stories*, Walnut Hills Historical Society, 2025, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/early-black-churches/.
[6] Ibid.
[7] "Reconstructing the Destruction of Gaines High School," *Walnut Hills Stories*, Walnut Hills Historical Society, 2025, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/reconstructing-the-destruction-of-gaines-high-school/#_ftn1.
[8] "Reconstructing the Destruction of Gaines High School," *Walnut Hills Stories*.

other skills that opened doors for middle-class occupations such as clerical work. He also was a staunch supporter of baseball in Cincinnati and requested a calisthenics teacher within a few years of Gaines' opening. Several of his students went on to play for several Black baseball teams in Cincinnati such as the Cincinnati Vigilants.[9] Clark himself founded the Western Union baseball team in 1868 and served as its president.

Peter H. Clark continued his political activism throughout his time at Gaines High School and eventually became disillusioned with Cincinnati's Republican Party for the lack of progress in voting rights for African Americans. He began to support other parties in the early 1880s such as the Worker's Party and the Democratic Party. The Republican School Board fired him from Gaines High School in 1886 over his political activism. Gaines High School continued for several more years but was forced to close in 1890 when the outgoing superintendent, E. E. White, prevented Gaines from issuing diplomas.

Peter H. Clark moved to St. Louis to continue teaching for another 20 years. He passed away in 1925.

The Peter H. Clark House viewed from Yale Avenue, facing south.

[9] "Peter Clark: the Father of Black Baseball in Cincinnati," *Walnut Hills Stories*, Walnut Hills Historical Society, 2025, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/peter-clark-the-father-of-black-baseball-in-cincinnati/.

History of 1119 Yale Avenue

Determining the age and ownership history of this building is challenging due to a scarcity of public records and city directories prior to the annexation of Walnut Hills by Cincinnati.

Geoff Sutton, of the Walnut Hills Historical Society, has cross-referenced historical records with plat and fire insurance maps to determine that the house was most likely built between 1847 and 1869 and that Clark lived there from the 1860s into the mid-1870s, when Clark moved to 54 Sherman Avenue (no longer extant) and the house was subsequently rented to other Colored Public Schools teachers. A Colored Public Schools annual report shows Clark living in Walnut Hills in 1861; Benjamin Arnett's 1874 church history states that Brown's Chapel (later Brown Chapel) AME Church was organized in Clark's home on Kemper Avenue (now Yale Avenue) in 1874. Beginning around 1876, the Haskins family (Emma Haskins was an African American teacher) resided at the house; they remained through 1895.[10]

The Peter H. Clark House viewed from Yale Avenue, facing southeast.

Integrity

Integrity of design for this building is somewhat challenged by an enclosed front porch; this feature does not appear in 1930 Sanborn maps, indicating it was added after Clark lived at the house. Interior investigation would be required to determine if the original front façade exists

[10] Geoff Sutton, "Peter Clark Residence," undated Microsoft PowerPoint slideshow.

within the porch. Vinyl siding and windows have also been added. Similarly, original features may exist beneath the siding. A prominent concrete-parged stone retaining wall and steps may date from the Period of Significance. As this is the only remaining building associated with Clark, and due to the rarity of extant resources associated with nineteenth-century African American education, journalism, and sports in Cincinnati, these alterations likely will not preclude National Register eligibility.

Eligibility

The Peter H. Clark house appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of Education, 1844–1965, with a period of significance of c. 1860–c. 1875. As the residence of Clark while he authored *The Black Brigade of Cincinnati*, while he was principal of Gaines High School, and while he advanced the popularity of baseball in African American Cincinnati, this property satisfies Criteria Consideration B as the property best associated with Clark's productive life.[11] The period of significance is set after his time in New York with Frederick Douglass and ending with his dismissal as the principal of Gaines High School in 1886. Although there is an addition on the rear of the house, this was likely done either before or during the period of significance. Census records indicate that the Peter H. Clark House had a series of boarders between 1860 and 1880, at one time up to four boarders. Several of these boarders were listed as teachers, likely ones that taught at Gaines alongside Peter H. Clark.

[11] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 17.

Phoebe Boots Allen House
5316 Ward Street
1911

Phoebe Boots Allen House viewed looking east from Ward Street.

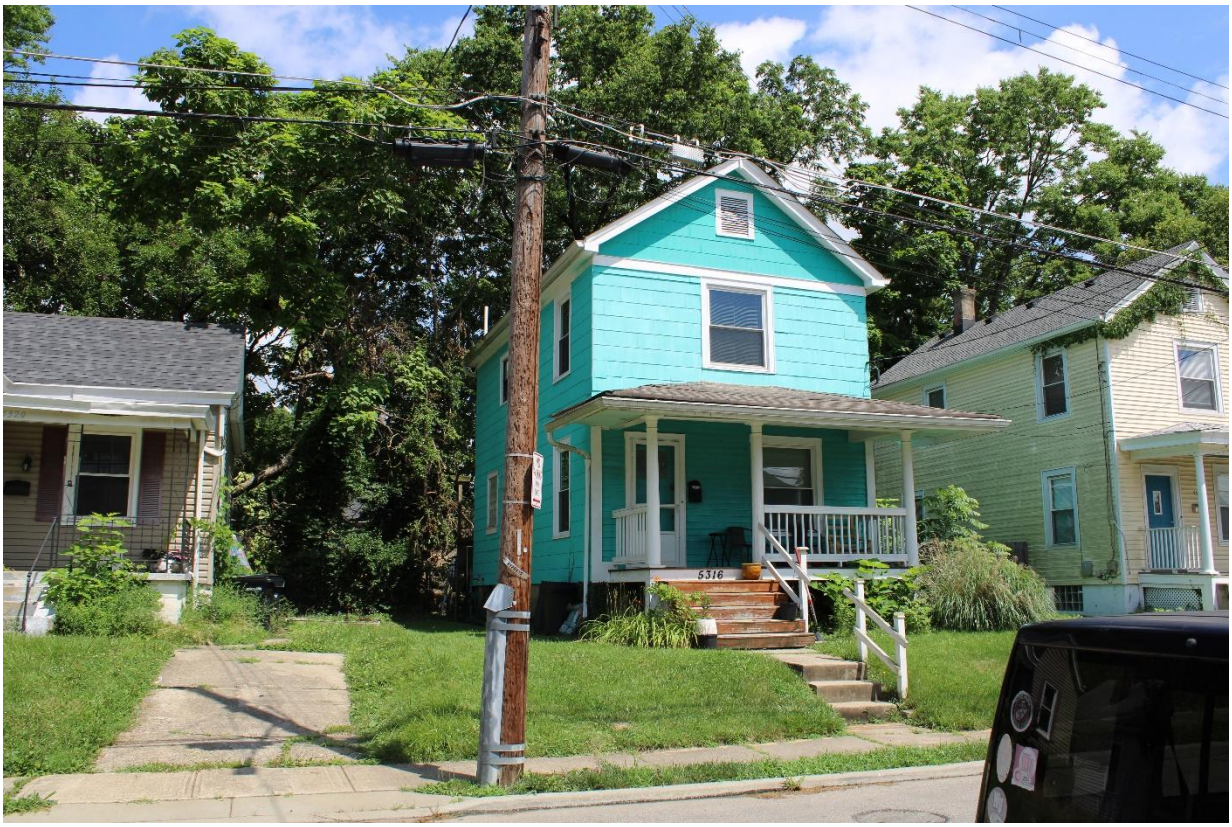
Associated historic contexts
The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964

Significance
The Phoebe Boots Allen House is significant as the home of Phoebe Boots Allen, a suffragist and important social worker in the city of Cincinnati around the turn of the century. Allen lived in at the house between 1915 and 1926, during what was arguably the peak of her career (though she lived in other places previously and afterwards).

Phoebe Boots Allen was born into slavery in Kentucky in 1856. Some local sources suggest that she was the daughter of plantation owner John S. Boots, but this is not confirmed. She was still a child when slavery was abolished after the Civil War. Phoebe later married Thomas M. Lewis

and the two moved to Covington, Kentucky. After the death of her first husband, Phoebe married Jeremiah Allen in 1897 and the two moved to Cincinnati,[1] where they lived at 735 Reading Road (no longer extant), according to city directories.

Phoebe B. Allen was a member of the AME Church and Allen became one of the first of twelve deaconesses consecrated at Cincinnati Allen Temple in 1900. Several years later, after the death of her husband, she went into social work for the county and became a juvenile probation officer, in 1914.[2]



Phoebe Boots Allen House viewed from Ward Street.

Allen also received national acclaim for her work for women's suffrage. One newspaper describes Allen as leading the largest "all-Negro" Women's Christian Temperance Union in the United States in 1913.[3] Allen sought to lead for equal rights through compassion and missionary work. She regularly gave speeches in support of women's suffrage and temperance; she also spoke out against corruption in local government.

[1] "Social Worker Dies," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, November 24, 1926, www.newspapers.com
[2] "Home of Phoebe Boots Allen: Pioneering Evangelist, Suffragist, and Social Worker| Cincinnati Sites and Stories," n.d. https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/173.
[3] Ibid.

Phoebe Boots Allen moved from Reading Road to this house in the Madisonville neighborhood in 1915 and retired from her work in the juvenile court but continued her activist and missionary work throughout the city. She died in 1926.

Integrity

Overall, the Phoebe Boots Allen House remains intact. Replacement vinyl windows and asphalt roof shingles have been added but do not diminish from the overall form and design of the building. The house expresses its historic character as a side-hall, early twentieth century, vernacular house. The wood-framed house has horizontal siding, gabled roof, and front porch to provide shade and privacy. The intactness of the setting expressed by the relationship of building to the street which is set back to provide privacy also contributes to integrity.

Eligibility

The Phoebe Boots Allen appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964, with a period of significance of 1915–1926. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration B as the home "of a person significant in our past" as the only known remaining property associated with Allen.[4]

[4] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 14.

Somerset Hall (Kenner-Closson House)
416 Closson Ct., Ludlow, Kentucky
c. 1845

Somerset Hall viewed looking south from Somerset Street.

Associated historic contexts
Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870
Other: Architecture

Significance
The Somerset Hall is significant as a rare example of a Greek Revival Northern Kentucky private residence, built by enslaved laborers in the 1840s for a Louisiana plantation owner William Butler Kenner, possibly used as a station on the Underground Railroad; then used as a Masonic Unity Lodge.

In the 1840s, Louisiana plantation owner William Butler Kenner obtained this property in Northern Kentucky to build a summer home. Kenner wanted to escape the hot Louisiana and

Mississippi summers but still remain connected to trading networks with a property on the Ohio River. It is likely that Kenner bought the land from his brother-in-law and brought a group of enslaved laborers from his plantations in Louisiana to construct this large, Greek Revival summer residence.[1]

This building is constructed of brick masonry with a 14-foot tall first floor and large windows to keep the house cool in the summer. The porch spans the length of the house, 120 feet long, and one source claims it is largest porch in Kentucky.[2] Kenner drew on classical architecture as his inspiration for the house, as was common at the time to showcase wealth and power in the American South. Many Greek Revival elements were included in the initial design, including a symmetrical layout, a colonnaded gallery and porch, and large grassy lawns.

William Kenner died in New Orleans in 1852, and the house remained in the family until 1875. It is not clear how often it was used by Kenner's widow, but local history suggests that the residence may have been an Underground Railroad stop due to its proximity to Ohio, just several hundred feet from Ohio River, and due to its vacancy for most if not all of the year.

The Kenners sold the house to the Closson family who used the property as a residence and furniture store for over 50 years.[3] Somerset Hall is locally known as the Kenner-Closson House in reference to the first two owners of the property. The Closson family sold the house to the Masons of Kentucky in 1926 who used it as a Unity Lodge until 1997.

The Masons sold the property to Stephen and Paula Chapman in 1997 who returned the property to a residence and restored some of its original features while also making modifications. A recent news article on Somerset Hall's listing in 2020 states that the Chapman's daughter updated the house to "blend old and new."[4]

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[1] "Somerset Hall," *Kentucky Historical Society Historical Marker*, The Kentucky Historical Society, 2014, https://history.ky.gov/markers/somerset-hall.
[2] Sarah M. Mullins, "If you love a good porch, this historic Ludlow home is for you," *Cincinnati Magazine*, April 13, 2020, https://www.cincinnatimagazine.com/article/if-you-love-a-good-porch-this-historic-ludlow-home-is-for-you/.
[3] "Somerset Hall," *Kentucky Historical Society Historical Marker*.
[4] Sarah M. Mullins, "If you love a good porch, this historic Ludlow home is for you."

Rear of Somerset Hall in 1943 as it was used by the Masons as a Unity Lodge viewed looking west. (Image via Northern Kentucky Views.)

Integrity

Overall, Somerset Hall remains remarkably intact. Vinyl replacement windows have been added but do not diminish from the overall form and design of the buildings Effort appears to have been made to returning altered features to their historic appearance. Significant features such as the distinctive colonnaded porch remain untouched. The Greek Revival elements of the brick residence remain including symmetrical design and layout, Doric columns, large double-hung windows, a decorative entry with a portico and grand staircase, and large lawns with strategically placed shade trees. Possible changes to the interior would need to be verified to see if there are other contributing elements to its integrity. The setting helps to distinguish the residence as a historic, center-hall style building with influences of Southern plantation style including its placement to overlook the Ohio River from a high spot in the landscape.

Rear of Somerset Hall, viewed looking north from Ringgold Street.

Eligibility

The Somerset Hall appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870, with a period of significance of 1845–1997.[5] The building is an important expression of the skilled work of enslaved people who lived and worked there. More research should be conducted to uncover information about those individuals who were enslaved at the property and its potential contributions to the Underground Railroad. The building is also likely to be eligible under Criterion C for its architecture.

[5] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 17.

Southgate Street School/Prince Hall Masonic Lodge 120
215 East Southgate Street; Newport, Kentucky
1873 or 1893

Southgate Street School looking south from East Southgate Street.

Associated historic contexts
Education, 1844–1965
Social Clubs and Organizations, 1925–1975

Significance
The Southgate Street School is significant as a rare, extant example of an early Northern Kentucky segregated public school, meeting the educational needs of African American students from its founding in 1873; the school was closed after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling allowed for integrated schools in Kentucky. It was later the home of a Prince Hall Masonic Lodge and is presently used as a museum of early twentieth century local history.

Following the end of the American Civil War, Congress mandated that schools would be created to provide public education for African American students. The first African American school in Newport was opened in 1866 by the Freedman's Bureau. It was only open for a few years and was forced to close by 1870 when Congress cut funding for the Freedman's Bureau.[1] The City of Newport purchased the Southgate property in 1869 to construct a separate public education building for African American children. The Southgate Street School was opened just three years later, in a single-story, wood building, completed in 1873.[2] Sources conflict as to whether the current building was built as a replacement for the original building in 1893, or if the original building was modified and expanded into its current form.

The one African American teacher, Elizabeth Hudson, taught all grade levels for the next six years on her own. In the early years, Hudson was only able to educate the children through the eighth grade level. There were 50 students enrolled at Southgate Street School in 1880, but that number increased to 125 by 1900.[3] The growth in enrollment meant that the school could hire other teachers, including Dennis Anderson and Francis Russell, and teach beyond an eighth-grade education. In 1901, the school was able to have a three-year high school curriculum. Previously, high school students were required to attend the Lincoln-Grant High School in Covington, Kentucky.

With the larger student body, the Southgate Street School was able to expand to a two-story building in 1893.[4] This expansion also added heating and electric lights to the building as noted in the 1910 Sanborn Map Company fire insurance map.[5] At present, the building has the same configuration as that 1910 map; it appears to have been mostly unaltered since the 1893 expansion.

Despite the growth in enrollment at the school between 1880 and 1910, the enrollment began to dwindle and in 1921 the school was forced to end its high school program. The Southgate Street School focused only on elementary education for the next thirty years. With the 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the Southgate School was closed in 1955 as integration of schools began.[6] Its smaller size was likely unable to host larger, integrated class sizes.

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[1] https://explorekyhistory.ky.gov/items/show/538 Historical Marker
[2] "Southgate Street School: a School Dedicated to Educating African American Children in Newport, Kentucky," Cincinnati Sites and Stories, n.d., https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/149.
[3] Historical Marker.
[4] "Southgate Street School," Cincinnati Sites and Stories.
[5] "Image 10 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Newport, Campbell County, Kentucky," *Sanborn Map Company*, Library of Congress, September 1910, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3954nm.g032191950/?sp=10&st=image&r=0.091,0.799,0.32,0.2,0
[6] "Southgate Street School," Cincinnati Sites and Stories.

The school property was bought shortly after by Frank "Screw" Andrews, a gangster, who used it as a warehouse. He later sold it to the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge 120, who still owns the building to this day. This Masonic lodge is part of a Kentucky chapter begun at around the turn of the nineteenth century with the Grand Lodge of Kentucky.[7] The Prince Hall Masonic Lodge began in Louisville, Kentucky by Black men who worked on steamers that traveled between Louisville, Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio.[8] The fraternal order worked to support their communities, creating programs for housing, meals, and healthcare.

Today the Southgate Street School building serves both as a meeting and event space for the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, and as the Newport History Museum, a museum of Newport in the twentieth century. It is a contributing resource for the Mansion Hill (National Register of Historic Places) Historic District, listed in 1980, for its architectural significance. However, the building also appears to be individually eligible for the National Register.[9] The Southgate Street School was recognized by the of the African American Civil Rights Network, a collection of public and private places that help tell the story of the Civil Rights Movement, in 2022, by the National Park Service.[10]

[7] https://glky.org/home-basic/about/history-of-masonry/
[8] "History of Prince Hall Masonry in Kentucky," *Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Kentucky, Inc.*, 2010, https://www.phglky.com/History/
[9] "Kentucky SP Mansion Hill Historic District," National Register of Historic Places, National Archives and Administration Record, Washington D.C., July 17, 1980, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/123849576
[10] "Southgate Street School (Newport, Kentucky)," *National Park Service African American Civil Rights Network*, Washington D.C., https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/southgate-street-school-newport-kentucky.htm.

The building viewed from east side parking lot along Washington Avenue.

Integrity

Overall, the Southgate Street School remains remarkably intact. There are what appear to be original wood windows and doors. The only observable integrity issue is the east side door which has wood boarding up the windows that surround the paneled door and some of the basement level windows are boarded with wood. The school itself largely retains its form and character from its expansion in 1893. A vernacular, brick building, its V-shaped roof and its rows of windows display a Tuskegee-Rosenwald influence with large windows to provide natural light. The original school building displays the form, massing, and fenestration pattern of a nineteenth-century school building and matches the general architectural character of the Mansion Hill neighborhood, with minimal exterior decoration. Finally, the intactness of setting expressed by the stone retaining wall for the raised grass lot provides separation from the street which also contributes to integrity.

View of the Southgate Street School building from the parking lot, viewed looking to the southwest.

Eligibility

The Southgate Street School appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Education, 1844–1965, with a period of significance of 1873–1955. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration A as a "building … associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history."[11] It is possible that this building is eligible under Criterion A for its association with African American Freemasonry, but more research would be required to place this building within that context.

[11] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 18.

The Hut Cafe
5110 Whetsel Avenue; Cincinnati
1930

View of Hut Cafe looking east from Whetsel Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975
Other: Architecture

Significance
The Hut Cafe is significant as an example of a Black-owned Cafe and restaurant in the Madisonville neighborhood of Cincinnati. First opened by William Hutchinson in 1953, his daughter Mildred Orr took over ownership a few years later and expanded the business, hosting community events in the various spaces of the building. Mildred Orr was an important figure for the Madisonville African American community, organizing advisory and community councils, as well as hosting political and social events in her cafe.

The Hut Cafe building served several other functions before the Hutchinson and Orr business. It first started as a Cincinnati police substation in 1930 and was later converted into an American Legion clubhouse and church, with boarding rooms and a meeting hall on the upper level.

The building was purchased by Early Bailey in 1947 with plans to open a restaurant, Bailey Recreation Center. Bailey was a resident of Madisonville and a World War I army veteran. He expanded the business, opening a beauty shop on the lower level in 1951. Newspaper ads for workers state that jobs included room and board. The 1950 Census lists Bailey with three boarders, a worker and two shoe shiners.

In 1953 Bailey sold the building to William Hutchinson, who opened his business, The Hut, a bar and pool room. The beauty shop became a separate business, the Thomas and Benaugh Barbershop, and operated for decades out of the lower-level room. Hutchinson ran The Hut with his wife, Rose, until their daughter Mildren Orr took over management a few years later. Orr slightly rebranded the business to The Hut Cafe, expanding to include a restaurant, similar to Bailey's previous business.

Mildred Orr was born and raised in Madisonville. She attended Hughes High School and worked at the Wright Aeronautical Plant foundry during WWII. Following the war, she worked as a pawn shop bookkeeper while her husband Lindsay worked for a railroad company. The two worked together to run The Hut Cafe until Lindsay's death in 1977.

Mildred Orr was an active member of the Madisonville community. She was one of the original members of the Madisonville Community Council in the 1960s, a non-profit organization to support local businesses, education, and community groups. She was also the founder and president of the Madisonville Advisory Council in 1967 which planned community events for the neighborhood.

Mildred Orr used space in The Hut Cafe to host her community outreach initiatives. She held political events and speeches in the meeting hall on the upper level and other social events throughout the building. In 1969, she helped convince the City of Cincinnati to build a swimming pool in Stewart Park. That year she used The Hut Cafe to sponsor a Baseball League, the Buckeyes, holding meetings in the Cafe and celebrations after games.

Mildred Orr sold her business in 1996 and died a few years later in 2007. The Hut Cafe building appears to remain vacant with pool tables still set up inside the lower level.

View of the Hut Cafe viewed from Whetsel Avenue.

Integrity

Overall, The Hut Cafe remains remarkably intact. Vinyl replacement windows have been added to the upper level but do not diminish from the overall form and design of the buildings. The Cafe retains its historic character as a multi-use building. The masonry brick building has decorative brick detailing, including different brick colors, inset brick arches with keystones, stretcher rows, and design along the roof. The engraved name stone is still visible within the brick of the front of the building, denoting it as "Police Sub-Station No. 7." The interior appears relatively intact with pool tables, equipment, and seating still extant, contributing to integrity.

Eligibility

The Hut Cafe appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975, and Criterion C, for its architecture, with a period of significance from 1953–1996. This property satisfies Criteria Consideration A as a property associated with "a pattern of events or a historic trend that made a significant

contribution to the development of a community,"[1] It satisfies Criteria Consideration C for its embodiment of a "distinctive characteristic of a type, period, or method of construction."[2]

References

Cincinnati Sites and Stories. "The Hut Café: Onetime Madisonville business run by Mildred H. Orr." Cincinnati Sites and Stories." n.d. https://stories.cincinnatipreservation.org/items/show/150.

[1] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 12.
[2] National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 17.

Walnut Hills Park (Ashland Park)
2810 Ashland Avenue; Cincinnati
1912

View of baseball diamond at Walnut Hills Park, facing northwest.

Associated historic contexts
Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975

Significance
Ashland Park is significant as an example of an early baseball diamond from an era when the sport was beginning to achieve popularity among African Americans in Cincinnati. Important figures who played and practiced at the part include DeHart Hubbard, 1924 Olympic Games track-and-field gold medalist, and potentially, Peter H. Clark, the "Father of Black Baseball in Cincinnati." It is also significant as the center of outdoor recreation in Walnut Hills; it supported the nearby Frederick Douglass School, which lacked outdoor facilities of its own, in providing programs that left a lasting impact on sports and culture in Cincinnati's African American community, and served as a draw for new arrivals at Gordon Hotel during the Great Migration as well as upper-middle-class guests and celebrities who stayed as guests at the nearby Manse Hotel.

In 1911, Cincinnati's Park Board spent more than $10,000 for a one-acre plot at Ashland Avenue and Chapel Street. In 1912 the Park Board laid out another $617.07 for an additional tenth of an acre and graded the parcel, building both a playground and a ballfield.

In its first year the Park Board provided an adult supervisor at Walnut Park and hosted children's baseball leagues. Adult leagues at the larger Deer Creek Commons (no longer extant) between Gilbert Avenue and Reading Road west of Walnut Hills where I-71 is not located. The park also served children at nearby Frederick Douglass School (on Alms Place between Myrtle and Chapel), newly built in 1911 and one of Cincinnati's few segregated African American schools. Influential African American residents of Walnut Hills played or practiced at the park, including A. J. DeHart, principal of the school and baseball enthusiast, and DeHart Hubbard, who later became an Olympic track and field gold medalist in 1924. The Gordon Hotel (later Gordon Terrace), built across the street a few years later, also utilized the park as an amenity for single men who arrived at the hotel during the Great Migration.[1]

The Negro Civic Welfare Association, led by James Robinson, an African American sociologist and Frederick Douglass School teacher, established tennis courts at Walnut Hills Park in 1921. According to the Walnut Hills Historical Society, tennis courts in this era served as "socially prestigious venues" for wealthy individuals and provided an "aspirational space" for upper-income Walnut Hills residents. Dr. Charles Dillard and Valorie Brown-Johnson, Walnut Hills residents, recall that tennis courts open to African Americans were rare in the early-to-mid twentieth century, and celebrities who stayed at the nearby Manse Hotel played there.[2]

Integrity

At a glance, Walnut Hills Park may not appear to be a historic park, as original fixtures such as fences and playground equipment no longer remain. Nonetheless, the park retains its overall form and character from its period of significance: Aerial photos[3] show that the baseball diamond remains in its original location, and mature trees of various species including locust and London plane appear to date from the original park plan. One challenge to integrity is the loss of the tennis courts, which appear to have formerly occupied a rectangular space at the northern end of the park, now used for playground equipment.

Eligibility

Walnut Hills Park (Ashland Park) appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a cultural landscape under Criterion A, in the context of Sports and Recreation, 1911–1975, with

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[1] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Baseball Venues: Walnut Hills Ashland Park," October 3, 2020, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/baseball-venues-walnut-hills-ashland-park/.

[2] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Walnut Hills Ashland Park: An Aspirational Place for African Americans, April 26, 2021, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/walnut-hills-ashland-park-an-aspirational-place-for-african-americans/.

[3] Available at historicaerials.com, not reproduced here due to copyright.

a period of significance beginning with its opening in 1912 and ending in the 1950s or 1960s, when the tennis courts were removed.[4] Although other parks associated with African American baseball once existed, including Deer Creek Commons, Walnut Hills Park is likely the remaining park in Cincinnati most closely associated with African American history and recreation.

Mature trees on the western edge of Walnut Hills Park.

[4] Walnut Hills Historical Society, "Peter Clark: The Father of Black Baseball in Cincinnati," September 27, 2020, https://walnuthillsstories.org/stories/peter-clark-the-father-of-black-baseball-in-cincinnati/.

Washington Terrace (Kerper Apartments)
3066–3092 Kerper Avenue, Cincinnati
1914

Washington Terrace (now Kerper Apartments) viewed from Kerper Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975
Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975

Significance
Washington Terrace is significant as the fullest expression of Jacob Schmidlapp's philanthropic approach to housing development and the philosophy of the Cincinnati Model Homes Company, founded by Schmidlapp in 1914.

Schmidlapp was inspired by the Five Percent Philanthropy movement of late-nineteenth-century England that sought to provide quality housing to low-income residents while ensuring a modest five-percent return for socially conscious investors. He began developing Cincinnati real estate in 1911 and founded the Cincinnati Model Homes Company in 1914. In earlier endeavors, Schmidlapp had not yet fully refined his vision; Washington Terrace marks the largest and most successful housing development of his career.

Washington Terrace provided amenities that were still uncommon in low-income housing, such as indoor bathrooms, central gas heat, abundant ventilation, and private front and back entrances. Outdoors, the Model Homes Company built playgrounds, drinking fountains, pathways, and landscaped terraces and gardens. The development also provided services, such as a cooperative store (no longer extant) that shared profits with residents. Washington Terrace received favorable reviews, for the quality of life it provided as well as on aesthetic grounds, from social reformers including W.E.B. DuBois.

Interior of Washington Terrace, showing rear entrances and landscaped green space.

One resident, George Russell (at 3066 Kerper Avenue, extant), achieved prominence as a jazz musician and theorist. Washington Terrace also included a noteworthy commercial tenant: the first location of Model Drug Stores, a Black-owned pharmacy that would become a citywide chain by the 1930s. The business operated out of one of the flats at 3068 Kerper Avenue (extant) and also served as the office of a Black physician, Edward E. Gray.

Rising costs of building materials during and after World War I rendered Schmidlapp's philanthropic business model no longer viable; Schmidlapp himself died in 1919. Nonetheless, Washington Terrace, along with Gordon Terrace (see below) were a key influence on the public housing developments of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority of the 1930s and 1940s.

3066 Kerper Avenue, the location of the first Model Drug Stores location and the office of Edward E. Gray.

Integrity

The construction of I-71 through the Deer Creek Valley in the early 1960s destroyed a majority of the Washington Terrace buildings, compromising integrity of setting. Of 188 housing units, only forty-two flats presently remain—two rows of townhouses near the top of the slope and furthest from the expressway. However, these remaining units are adequate to convey a general sense of the character of the development, the spatial relationships between the buildings, and the overall topography of the landscape. (It is not known why the Model Homes Company chose this site, but cost may have been a factor, as the steeply sloped land would have been less expensive).[1] Importantly, the residence of George Russell and the Model Drug Stores location remain.

The buildings remain mostly unaltered. Relatively recent, anodized-aluminum sash windows are the only clearly visible change, and they are a close visual approximation of the one-over-one

[1] Geoff Sutton (Walnut Hills Historical Society), personal communication.

wood sash windows that existed historically. Notably, the original glazed wood-panel doors remain. Urns, pathways, and shrubbery visible in historic photos no longer exist, but the general, terraced character of the landscape remains.

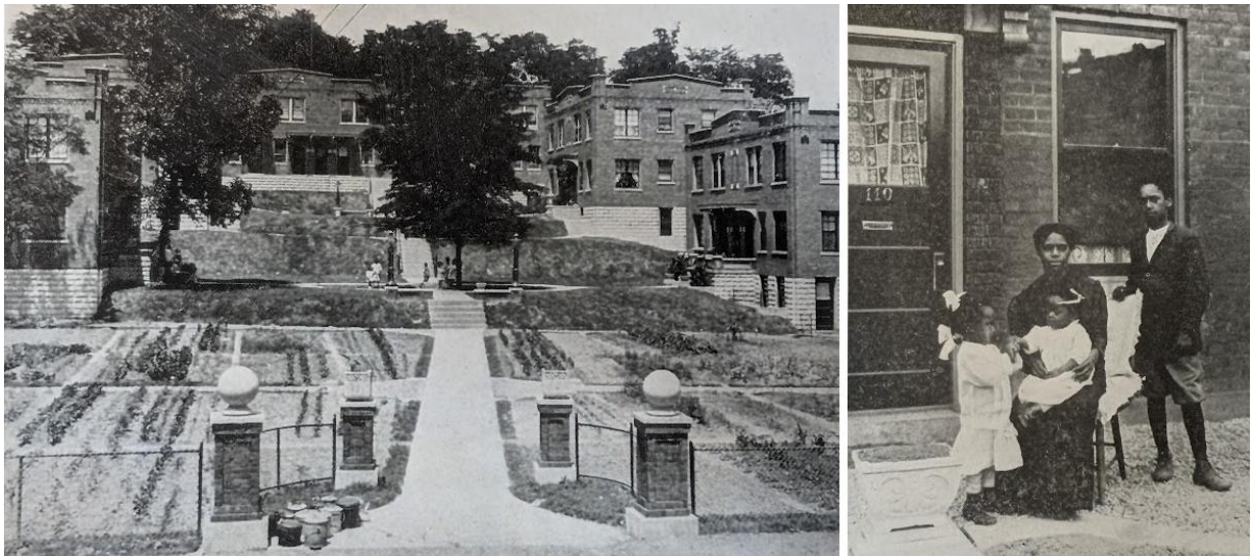
Interior layout of Washington Terrace, depicting urns and vegetation that no longer remain. Photo: Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection (Library of Congress), 1935.

A somewhat comparable Model Homes development, Gordon Terrace (2815–2833 Ashland Avenue), is also significant but appears to have reduced integrity due to more extensive alterations to window and door openings, plus a prominent, non-historic, stone-veneer foundation cladding. Other developments by Schmidlapp and the Cincinnati Model Homes Company have been demolished or have experienced more comprehensive alterations. This leaves Washington Terrace as the most intact remaining property associated with Schmidlapp and the Cincinnati Model Homes Company.

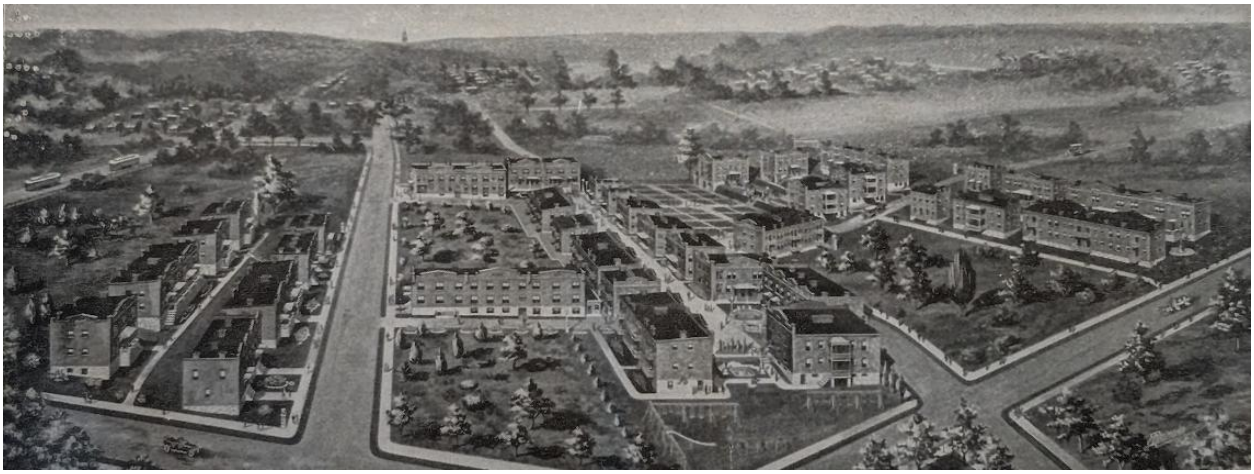
Eligibility

Washington Terrace is recommended to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places primarily under Criterion A, Neighborhoods and Residential Development, 1870–1975, with a period of significance of 1914. It also appears to be eligible the context of Black-Owned Businesses, 1910–1975, as the home of the first Model Drug Stores location, though additional

research would be required to confirm a period of significance. Though Washington Terrace also includes the former residence of George Russell, that noteworthy composer spent most of his career in other American cities and in Europe. Washington Terrace may also be eligible under Criterion C for architecture and landscape architecture, pending further comparative research.



Left: Gardens at Washington Terrace. Right: Front entrance to a typical flat. Images from Jacob Godfrey Schmidlapp, *Low Priced Housing for Wage Earners*, National Housing Association, 1919.



Artist depiction of Washington Terrace. Of the units depicted, only the easternmost block (two rows at left of image) remain. Image from Jacob Godfrey Schmidlapp, *Low Priced Housing for Wage Earners*, National Housing Association, 1919.

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Wendell Dabney House
825 Beecher Street; Cincinnati
c. 1890

Wendall Dabney House viewed from Beecher Street looking south.

Associated historic contexts
Journalism, 1844–1975
The Civil Rights Movement, 1886–1964

Significance
The Wendell Dabney House is significant as the home of Wendall Dabney, an author and historian, founder of *The Union*, one of Cincinnati's most influential Black newspapers, in 1907,

and first president of the Cincinnati branch of the NAACP in 1915. His voice, while sometimes at odds with other members of Cincinnati's African American community, was one of the most important in the city on issues such as education, segregation, and civil rights activity. His paper, the *Union*, had broad reach across the country and is credited with attracting African Americans to Cincinnati during the Great Migration.

Wendell P. Dabney was born in 1865, just four months after the end of the American Civil War, in Richmond, Virginia to John and Elizabeth Foster Dabney. His father had purchased his and Elizabeth's freedom from their enslavers before the war and John Dabney started a catering company that gained international fame and allowed the family to live a comfortable life in Richmond. Wendell Dabney excelled in school and spent his youth selling newspapers and learning to play guitar. He graduated from Armstong High School in 1883 and participated in a student protest alongside Maggie L. Walker and Mary Burrell against segregated graduation ceremonies leading to the first integrated high school graduation ceremony held in Richmond.[1]

Dabney then spent one year at Oberlin College where he was a member of the Cademian Literary Society and was first chair violinist for the Oberlin Opera. He left college after a year to begin teaching at an elementary school where he also taught students guitar along with academics. After a few years, Dabney moved to Boston, Massachusetts to open a music school for children.[2]

In 1894, Dabney's mother inherited the Dumas Hotel and Wendell Danbey went to Cincinnati to oversee the hotel and expanded several rooms. The Dumas Hotel was Ohio's only African American owned hotel. It was built in the 1840s and used as a station for the Underground Railroad. While in Cincinnati Dabney met Nellie Foster Jackson and married her a few years later, permanently moving to the city and adopting her two young sons.

Wendell Dabney became the first African American license clerk in Cincinnati in 1897. He worked for the next few decades as paymaster in the Department of Treasury in the city. He used his income to start his first newspaper business in 1902, the *Ohio Enterprise*. This turned into *The Union* in 1907; Dabney was the only editor of the paper for several years. It was supported by donations and political advertisement from the Republican Party of Ohio. Dabney remained critical of the party's treatment of African Americans in the state and in 1925 broke with the Republican Party.

Dabney was actively involved in the Civil Rights Movement, with accounts stating that he was involved in helping put together Fredrick Douglass' 1893 World's Fair Exhibition. Dabney also remained close friends with several important civil rights activists, such as Maggie L. Walker, who later asked him to write her biography.

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[1] https://www.encyclopedia.com/african-american-focus/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/dabney-wendell-p
[2] Ibid.

Wendell Dabney was one of the founding members of the Cincinnati branch of the NAACP in 1915 and served as its first president for several years. His newspaper, *The Union*, rose in popularity and he often wrote about education of African Americans and the vibrant culture of Cincinnati's Black communities. The paper was far-reaching across the country and Dabney's articles describing the opportunity and social centers of the North played a role in drawing African Americans during the Great Migration.

Dabney not only wrote and edited his newspaper, but he also wrote books and pamphlets for various topics. One was *Cincinnati's Colored Citizens*, a 1926 compendium of, among other topics, prominent African American property owners in the Cincinnati neighborhood of Walnut Hills. This affluent neighborhood was a social center of African American community and by 1926 had 360 African American property owners, including Dabney himself.

Wendell Dabney retired from the Department of Treasury in 1923 and worked at his newspaper company until his death in 1952. His stepson, Leo, joined the staff as early as 1930. Dabney was honored by the National Convention of Negro Publishers in 1950 for his leadership as a pioneer African American journalist.

Integrity

Overall, the Wendell Dabney House remains intact, though some non-historic features and materials are visible. Vinyl siding and windows have been added but do not diminish from the overall form and integrity of design. The window openings and the porch may have been altered, and second-story balconets appear to be a non-historic addition. A relatively larger, nineteenth-century residential building, the Wendell Dabney House appears to have several distinctive decorative features including large window openings, a hipped porch roof, and cross-gambrel mass to one side. The relationship to the setting has somewhat changed due in part to demolition of some Walnut Hills properties to the north and east. Mature trees and historic walkways remain.

Location of the Patrician Hall on the south side of East Tenth Street. It is not clear if the hall was located in the still-extant house at 241 East Tenth Street or on the site of the vacant lot in the foreground. (Image: Google Maps 2025)

Eligibility

The Wendell Dabney House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, in the context of Journalism 1844–1975, with a period of significance of 1923–1952, being the time that Dabney lived in the house and including many of his greatest accomplishments, including *Cincinnati's Colored Citizens*. This property is the only standing house lived in by Dabney during his life in Cincinnati, as his previous address, 420 McAllister Street, has been demolished.

Zebulon and Hannah Strong House
5434 Hamilton Avenue, Cincinnati
1832

The Zebulon Strong House viewed from Hamilton Avenue.

Associated historic contexts
Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870

Significance
The Zebulon Strong House is significant as a documented stopping point on the Underground Railroad and one of number of remaining buildings associated with the College Hill community, a center of abolitionist activity.

An obituary describes Zebulon Strong as "one of the old pioneers of Hamilton county."[1] Strong, born in Thetford, Vermont, in 1788, was among the earliest settlers of Cincinnati and lived on

[1] According to an undated and unsourced newspaper clipping posted to the College Hill Historical Society Facebook page, August 11, 2021. Zebulon's wife Hanna; sons Elon, Joel, and Henry; and a daughter (unnamed in the obituary) outlived him.

College Hill from 1806 until he died there in 1875. The house at 5434 Hamilton Avenue was built in 1832.[2]

Freedom-seeking people were known to travel north through the unnamed ravine (a tributary of Mill Creek) that passed through Strong's property around the 1840s on their way to friendly places of refuge within the College Hill community. The Zebulon Strong House was one such stopping point. According to Anna Benison, a descendant interviewed in 1966, her father, Freeland Strong, and grandfather, Elon Strong, would leave food and supplies behind the house for people traversing the ravine until they could be taken by wagon further north.[3]

College Hill, so named because of Farmer's College and the Ohio Female College (1846 and 1852, respectively; both are no longer extant), was home to many abolitionist Puritan educators. The households in the vicinity often collaborated to provide refuge, supplies, and transportation to freedom-seeking people traveling north from Cincinnati. By the 1850s, the way through College Hill became "too well known" and the College Hill community shifted to providing financial support for freedom seekers traveling other routes.[4]

Integrity

The Strong House displays the overall form, massing, and materials of a two-story, cubical, pyramidal-roof, Greek Revival or Italianate house. Noteworthy original features include its brick construction and Classical door surround. Some late-nineteenth or early-twentieth-century alterations appear to exist: Windows are not fully visible due to being partly hidden behind non-historic storm windows; they appear to be wood casement windows unlikely to date from the period of significance. Craftsman-like rafter ends project from the eaves. A gable dormer also appears to date from the early twentieth century.

Despite these alterations, the building clearly retains integrity. The building's placement where Hamilton Turnpike (now Hamilton Avenue) is met by the unnamed ravine known to have been used by freedom-seeking people contributes strongly to integrity of setting, feeling, and association. Integrity of materials, workmanship, and design may be somewhat challenged by later alterations, but the alterations are relatively minor, and these aspects of integrity are less important to conveying the significance of the Strong House.

Eligibility

The Zebulon and Hannah Strong House appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the context of Antislavery Activism, the Underground

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[2] Hamilton County Auditor Property Report.

[3] Kathy Dahl, "LaBoiteaux Woods Ravine to Freedom," April 22, 2014, https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/?page_id=1082.

[4] H. N. Wilson, letter to William Seibert, April 14, 1892, https://hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Harriet-Wilson-letter-jan-20-2014-.pdf

Railroad, and Community Building, 1820–1870, as a property showing known association with the Underground Railroad and retaining integrity. Further, in conjunction with the adjacent, unnamed ravine (now LaBoiteaux Woods) and a subsequent Zebulon Strong House (now Six Acres Bed and Breakfast), it is likely that a National Register eligible district exists. (These other two properties are described in separate evaluations.) The exact dates when freedom seekers received assistance from the Strong family is not known; the period of significance for the Zebulon Strong House would likely extend from 1846, when the abolitionist community around College Hill was established, to shortly after 1850, when the route became "too well known" for continued use by freedom-seeking people.

Due to later alterations to the building, it is unlikely that the Strong House will be eligible under Criterion C. Further, though the Strong Family and the unnamed freedom seekers they assisted are certainly important historical individuals, their contributions to not appear to rise to the level of being "individually important" to the extent required to establish significance under Criterion B.[5]

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[5] National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons," (n.d.), 5–8.

An 1857 parcel map provided by the College Hill Historical Society. The Zebulon and Hannah Strong House is located at the southwest corner of the “Z. Strong” property shown at the bottom of the map. https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10165513954985607&set=pcb.10165513969160607

APPENDIX B: LIST OF PROPERTIES

The list below shows all extant properties evaluated for this study. A spreadsheet, in Microsoft Excel format, showing all properties, extant or not, including those identified but outside the project area, is provided separately to Cincinnati Preservation along with a GIS shapefile depicting their locations.

The below recommendations are made by Gray & Pape, Inc., applying the National Register Criteria for Evaluation based on known information available during this study. Please note that some places that appear ineligible based on initial review may prove to be eligible after more in-depth research.

Listed as National Historic Landmark, Documentation Reflecting Black History

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Martin Baum House	316 Pike St., Cincinnati, OH 45202	Other (Fine Art)

Listed as National Historic Landmark, Documentation Does Not Reflect Black History

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Cincinnati Music Hall	1241 Elm St., Cincinnati, OH 45202	Music and Entertainment
Cincinnati-Covington Bridge (John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge)	25 Roebling Way, Covington, KY 41011	The Civil Rights Movement
Spring Grove Cemetery/Coffin Memorial	4521 Spring Grove Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45232	Other (Landscape Architecture)

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Documentation Reflecting Black History

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Battery Coombs and Battery Bates	Sleepy Hollow Rd., Covington, KY 41011	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Charlton Wallace House	2563 Hackberry St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Harriet Beecher Stowe House/Edgemont Inn	2950 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati OH 45206	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
King Records Studio Buildings	1540 Brewster Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45207	Music and Entertainment
Laurel Homes	577 W Liberty St., Cincinnati, OH 45214	Neighborhoods and Residential Development

Manse Hotel and Apartments	1004 Chapel St., Cincinnati OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
Regal Theatre	1201 Linn St., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Music and Entertainment
Samuel and Sally Wilson House	1502 Aster Pl., Cincinnati, OH 45224	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Union Baptist Cemetery	4933 Cleves Warsaw Pike, Cincinnati, OH 45238	Other
William Grant High School/Lincoln-Grant School	824 Greenup St., Covington, KY 41011	Education

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Documentation Does Not Reflect Black History

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Bellevue	335 Third St., Newport, KY 41071	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Carneal House	405 E Second St., Covington, KY 41011	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Columbia Baptist Cemetery (Pioneer Memorial Cemetery)	333 Wilmer Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45226	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Federation of Colored Women's Clubs	1010 Chapel St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Social Clubs and Organizations
Frank Duveneck House and Studio	1226 Greenup St., Covington, KY 41011	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
John Hauck House	812 Dayton St., Cincinnati, OH	Religious Institutions
Lewis and Katherine Easton House	440 Hopkins St., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Education
Southgate Street School	215 E Southgate St., Newport, KY 41071	Education

Likely Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, Recommend Further Documentation

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Benna's Barbershop	5900 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Black-Owned Businesses
Bertie Hudson House Site	996 Hill St., Cincinnati, OH 45202	The Civil Rights Movement
Braxton and Reber Cann House	5223 Ward St., Cincinnati, OH 45227	The Civil Rights Movement

Brown Chapel AME Church	2804 Alms Pl., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Religious Institutions
Childrens' Hospital	1022 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Other
Church of Our Savior	246 East 10th St., Covington, KY 41011	The Civil Rights Movement
Devote's Corner	2904 Alms Pl., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
Edward and Susie Birch House	1123 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
Elon Strong House (Six Acres Bed and Breakfast)	5350 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Ezzard Charles House	303 Forest Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	Sports and Recreation
Fifth Christian Church	3203 Wold Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45207	Religious Institutions
First Baptist Church of Walnut Hills	2926 Park Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Religious Institutions
Gordon Hotel/Gordon Terrace	2817-2837 Ashland Ave., Cincinnati OH 45206	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Greater New Light Baptist Church	710 N Fred Shuttlesworth Cir., Cincinnati, OH 45229	Other (Architecture)
Harriet Beecher Stowe School	635 W 7th St., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Education
Herbie's Lounge/Roberts Neoteric Lounge	2600 Hackberry St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Music and Entertainment
Horace Sudduth House	1350 William Howard Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
Horace Sudduth House	2636 Park Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
James E. Randolph Office	1000 Greenup St., Covington, KY 41011	Black-Owned Businesses
Jennie D. Porter House	1355 Lincoln Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Education
King Towers	6020 Dahlgren Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
LaBoiteaux Woods	5400 Lanius Ln., Cincinnati, OH 45224	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Lucy Oxley House	5226 Stewart Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Black-Owned Businesses (Subtheme: Medicine)
Malone Apartments	3806-3840 Washington Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Marjorie Parham House	4503 Sunnyslope Terrace, Cincinnati, OH 45229	Journalism
Mt. Airy Forest	5083 Colerain Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45223	Other (The Civilian Conservation Corps)
Odd Fellows Hall [African American]	13 Tobacco Alley, Covington, KY 41011	Social Clubs and Organizations
Page Tower	619 Central Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45202	Neighborhoods and Residential Development

Patsy Bennett House	983-995 Paradrome St., Cincinnati, OH 45202	The Civil Rights Movement
Peter H. Clark House	1119 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Education
Phoebe Boots Allen House	5316 Ward St., Cincinnati OH 45227	The Civil Rights Movement
Somerset Hall	416 Closson Court, Ludlow, KY 41016	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
The Hut Cafe	5110 Whetsel Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Black-Owned Businesses
Virginia Coffey House	3020 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	The Civil Rights Movement
Walnut Hills Park (Ashland Park)	2810 Ashland Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Sports and Recreation
Washington Terrace Apartments	3066 Kerper Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Wendell Dabney House	825 Beecher St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Journalism
Wesleyan Cemetery	4003 Colerain Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45223	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Winton Terrace	4848 Winneste Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45232	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Zebulon and Hannah Strong House	5434 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building

Possibly Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, More Research Needed

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Alice Easton Leland House	1367 Burdette Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Education
Artie and Anna Mathews House	515 Hickory St, Cincinnati, OH, 45229	Music and Entertainment
Boone Block	422 Scott St., Covington, KY 41011	Black-Owned Businesses
Cincinnati Color Building	1400 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH 45202	Sports and Recreation
Cleota P. and Harvey Earl Wilbekin House	6142 Hedge Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45213	Other
Colored American Cemetery/United American Cemetery	4732 Duck Creek Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Ernest and Corenna Birch House	3146 Gaff Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
Findlater Gardens	5354 Winneste Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45232	Neighborhoods and Residential Development

Frank A. B. and Elizabeth Hall House	2713 Alms Pl., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Politics
Fred Shuttlesworth House	965 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	The Civil Rights Movement
George Russell Residence	3066 1/2 Melborne Terrace Cincinnati, OH 45206	Music and Entertainment
Grace L. Hammond House	5326 Ward St., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Other
Henry Ferguson House	919 Yale Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Journalism
House of Adam Men's Wear	622 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH 45202	Black-Owned Businesses
Irvine Garland Penn House	2823 Park Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Journalism
James H. and Neola Woodson Robinson House	3275 Gaff Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Other (Sociology)
Lincoln Center	1027 Linn St., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Madisonville High School	4837 Ward St., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Education
Madisonville Homes for the Elderly	5615 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45227	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Marian and Donald Spencer House	940 Lexington Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	The Civil Rights Movement
Mary Andrews Funeral Home	3602 Reading Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45229	Black-Owned Businesses
Richmond Village	845 Ezzard Charles Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Sarah Gibson Jones and Joseph L. Jones House	1537 Blair Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45207	Journalism
Sherman and Mattie Bell Kinney House	409 Clinton Springs Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	The Civil Rights Movement
Suspected Crossing Site	1 Anderson Ferry Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45204	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Suspected Crossing Site	6125 River Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45233	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Thompson Funeral Home	820 Lincoln Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Black-Owned Businesses
Trotter's Cafe	2025 Colerain Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45214	Black-Owned Businesses
Wilbur Page House	3193 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45207	Religious Institutions
Zion Baptist Church	620 Glenwood Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	The Civil Rights Movement

Likely Ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places due to Lack of Integrity

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme

Avondale (neighborhood)	Avondale, Cincinnati, OH 45229	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Douglass Park/Amy Avenue	6835 East Fork Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45227	The Legacy of Urban Renewal
Duck Creek Camp Meeting (site)	3925 Rosslyn Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45209	Religious Institutions
Fay Apartments	Villages at Roll Hill, Cincinnati, OH 45231	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Francis Russell House	833 Beecher St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Education
Kirby Avenue Corridor	Kirby Ave. and Colerain Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45223	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Marsh Avenue Park	2644 Marsh Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45212	The Legacy of Urban Renewal
Millvale Apartments	3357 Beekman St., Cincinnati, Ohio 45225	Neighborhoods and Residential Development
Owl's Nest Park	1984 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio	The Civil Rights Movement
Schwarz Recreation Area	2222 Boone St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Sports and Recreation
West End (neighborhood)	West End, Cincinnati, OH 45214	Neighborhoods and Residential Development

Potentially Ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places due to Criteria Consideration

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
Bethel Baptist Church	2712 Alms Pl., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Religious Institutions
Carmel Presbyterian Church (Avondale/Current Location)	3549 Reading Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45229	Religious Institutions
First Antioch Baptist Church	1511 Gilpin Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Religious Institutions
First Baptist Church of Covington	120 E 9th St., Covington, KY 41011	Religious Institutions
First Baptist Church of Cumminsville	3646 Roll Ave., Cincinnati OH 45223	Religious Institutions
First Baptist Church of West College Hill	6210 Betts Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224	Religious Institutions
Immanuel Lutheran Church	544 Rockdale Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45229	Religious Institutions
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center	50 E Freedom Way, Cincinnati, OH 45202	Antislavery Activism, the Underground Railroad, and Community-Building
Ninth Street AME Church	18 E 9th St., Covington, KY 41011	Religious Institutions
Ninth Street Baptist Church	231 E 9th St., Covington, KY 41011	Religious Institutions
Revelation Baptist Church (second location)	7717 Harrison Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45231	Religious Institutions

Second Baptist Church	713 Brighton St., Newport, KY 41071	Religious Institutions
St. James AME Church	124 Lynn St., Covington, KY 41011	Religious Institutions
St. Mark's Catholic Church	3500 Montgomery Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45207	Religious Institutions
St. Paul AME Zion Church	252 E Robbins St., Covington, KY 41011	Religious Institutions
Trinity Missionary Baptist Church	6320 Chandler St., Cincinnati OH 45227	Black-Owned Businesses
True Holiness Assemblies of Truth	865 Altoona St., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Religious Institutions
West End World War Two Monument	Ezzard Charles Dr. and Cutter St., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Other (Military)

Does not Appear to Meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation

Historic Name	Address	Primary Theme
"Russell Street Cluster" [of homes of Lincoln-Grant teachers]	1100 block of Russell St., Covington, KY 41011	Education
1989 Madison Road	1989 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45208	Black-Owned Businesses (Subtheme: Birch Brothers Architecture)
Charles Davis House	3046 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Other
Fort Thomas Post Office	24 South Fort Thomas Ave., Fort Thomas, KY 41075	Black-Owned Businesses
Holmes High School	2500 Madison Ave. #1, Covington, KY 41014	The Civil Rights Movement
James H. Robinson House	2808 Preston St., Cincinnati OH	Other (Sociology)
L. L. Hubbard House	2819 Park Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206	Other
Laura Clarice Knight and Darwin Romanes Turner House	716 Mount Hope Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45204	Education
Lucy Case Mitchell and Edward Earle Mitchell House	5404 Ward St., Cincinnati, OH	Education
Lyons Clinic Hospital	727 N Fort Thomas Ave., Fort Thomas, KY 41075	Black-Owned Businesses (Subtheme: Birch Brothers Architecture)
Sylvester Gordon House	5219 Ward St., Cincinnati, OH	Sports and Recreation
Union Baptist Church	405 W 7th St., Cincinnati, OH 45203	Religious Institutions
Whatley House	211 E Eleventh St., Covington, KY 41011	Other