

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Ohio's recent past (1940-1970) encompassed a period of tremendous transformation in every aspect of Ohioans' lives. Industrialization, mechanization, and standardization, while all trends that had begun more than a century earlier, achieved unprecedented momentum after World War II. Emerging professions, such as urban and regional planning, as well as expanding responsibilities at all levels of government, played a greater role in shaping economic and community development. Ohioans witnessed a flood of technological innovations, new inventions, and revolutionary ideas in the decades that followed the war. With vastly improved transportation networks and ample job opportunities, Ohioans also enjoyed greater social mobility than in previous decades. Traditional ways of life, of thought, and of social custom eroded before this onslaught, sometimes for better and sometimes for ill. By the late 1960s, Ohio's racial and ethnic minorities had achieved levels of legal and social equality that would have been deemed impossible during the 1930s. The period saw women begin to reach beyond the roles traditionally assigned to them, with growing numbers of female college students, working professionals, and political leaders. At the same time, countless jobs were made obsolete by technological advances, leaving many workers unprepared and ill equipped to find new ways to earn a living for themselves. In the building trades, the craftsmanship and skills possessed by traditional tradesmen and craftsmen no longer meshed well with the needs of many architectural design, commercial construction, and land development firms. Yet, with Ohio's industries and universities unveiling new materials and design and construction methods on a regular basis, Ohio continued to be a wellspring of creativity and innovation.

Numerous avenues of inquiry regarding Ohio's recent past and its legacy in the built environment remain to be explored. As explicated in this historic context, the historic themes with which these resources may be associated include Industrialization/Deindustrialization; Changing Demographics; Social History; Land Use Planning; Conservation/Environmental Regulation; Technological Innovations; City vs. Suburb; Transportation; Design Trends; and Major Architects, Builders, and Planners. The National Park Service has published numerous guidelines to provide both professionals and lay people with the tools needed to identify, research, and protect historic properties, including those associated with the recent past (1940-1970). Full-text electronic publications are available at the NRHP website, <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/index.htm>.

Parts of Ohio have not yet been subjected to extensive study of recent past events, patterns, and trends of development. While a wide variety of studies have been undertaken of Ohio's major metropolitan areas, such as Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, Toledo, and Dayton, very few such studies were identified during the course of this project that focused on rural areas or on the Appalachian/Southeast region of the state. Addressing these deficits is recommended as an important area for future preservation planning efforts.

Future research efforts are likely to result in identification of many more resource types and historic properties that are significant in Ohio's history. The following sections feature themes and topics recommended for future studies; this discussion is not intended to be

comprehensive, but rather to promote and encourage future endeavors to document Ohio's remarkable and diverse recent past.

6.1 Commerce, Industry, Education, and Government

The contributions of Ohio-based corporations and industries to everyday American life are not necessarily well known, and a catalog or inventory of associated properties could provide a basis for a local, regional, or statewide thematic study of these resources. Additionally, the current impacts of deindustrialization on the built environment, and the resultant loss of significant historic properties, warrants consideration.

Ohioans working in numerous aspects of research and development made significant contributions to Ohio and to the nation and world. For example, during the 1950s, Dr. Albert Sabin developed an oral polio vaccine that has since been used nationally and internationally. The incidence of polio in the United States is now minuscule, and is rare in the rest of the world. Although the historic significance of Sabin's accomplishment is undisputed, information about the facilities wherein Sabin conducted his research is not widely available. It is not currently known if his office, lab, and/or other workspaces remain extant, and retain sufficient integrity, to meet NRHP eligibility criteria.

Although technological innovation has brought countless benefits to Ohio since the 1940s, the very nature of such innovations make it difficult to identify, evaluate, and preserve architectural resources associated with these events. Laboratory and research facilities must be upgraded and updated regularly in order to retain their usefulness. Buildings that are considered to be functionally obsolete are often removed to make way for larger, more efficient facilities.

Further research and identification efforts are recommended to document the research and development programs at Ohio's industries, corporations, and universities during the recent past. Where feasible, preservation plans for significant resources are recommended to be developed. Gray & Pape also recommends that, for instances in which retention of a particular building or workspace is not feasible, plans for documenting such resources prior to their removal be prepared.

Ohio's schools, from kindergarten through graduate school, witnessed major transformations from the 1940s through the early 1970s. Changing pedagogical theories, mushrooming student enrollments, extension of financial assistance to wide populations, and the crumbling of race- and gender-based barriers in education all had profound effects on Ohioans. Architectural and landscape designs for school campuses evolved to meet these changing needs. Many also represented the first major modernist architectural projects in their communities.

Educational needs, however, have continued to change over the subsequent decades. Many recent past educational buildings are considered to be functionally obsolete for a variety of reasons and are being demolished, often without full consideration to their significance and preservation potential. Communities also often lack resources to maintain and preserve architecturally or historically significant school buildings. Continued growth in enrollments

sometimes have required unsympathetic or incompatible additions to school campuses that erode the integrity of modernist designs. Gray & Pape recommends that a thematic study of Ohio's educational facilities from 1940 to 1970 be conducted, perhaps modeled on the *Cincinnati Public Schools Historic Architecture Inventory* that was recently undertaken by the Cincinnati Preservation Association.

From the 1940s through the early 1970s, Ohio's municipal, county, and state governments assumed increasing responsibilities, from building major highway systems to enforcing civil rights legislation, and from developing comprehensive land use policies to protecting natural resources. Flush with revenues made possible by a period of unprecedented economic prosperity, government agencies had the means to meet these new challenges. The government buildings and complexes erected during this period often embody the optimism and forward-looking attitude of the time. With its clean lines, emphasis on efficiency and functionality, and embrace of new methods and materials, modernism provided the ideal vehicle for government agencies to express their missions by way of the buildings they occupied.

As is true with school buildings from the recent past, however, many modernist complexes are now perceived to be functionally obsolete. For some resource types, such as fire houses, the dictates of new equipment have necessitated major alterations to, or demolition of, architecturally significant buildings. In some instances, the construction methods and/or materials of modernist buildings did not perform as expected, leading to substantial maintenance and repair costs. As budgets have contracted in recent years, deferred maintenance has become increasingly difficult to overcome. Gray & Pape recommends that a thematic study of Ohio's modernist government buildings be conducted to identify outstanding examples of recent past buildings that warrant preservation and rehabilitation for future needs.

6.2 Social History in Ohio's Recent Past

Historic sites associated with numerous facets of Ohio's social history remain to be identified. Rich areas of study may include properties associated with Ohioans' struggle to achieve racial equality in the 1950s and 1960s; with the home improvement movement of the 1960s; and with the women's rights movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The place of sports, recreations, and physical fitness in Ohio's history, and their impacts on the state's recent past built environment, have received scant attention. Ohio has been home to numerous pro and semi-pro sports teams, but many of the properties associated with them have not been identified or recognized for their potential significance. Furthermore, the latter half of the twentieth century saw women and girls begin participating in organized sports in unprecedented numbers. Identifying properties associated with groundbreaking female athletes, as well as those that are representative of sports activities in general, would highlight facets of Ohio's history that are not fully understood.

The conservation and environmental movements wrought major changes on Ohio landscapes that have affected land use decisions since the 1930s. The association of state parks and forests with the broader environmental movement warrants further study. Moreover, parks

and forests are worthy of study as designed and managed landscapes, and as embodiments of evolving forestry practices. Another type of managed landscape, wildlife management areas, also is associated with environmental protection regulations, furthermore, with the sportsmen's movement of the twentieth century. Ohio's agricultural landscapes, too, have witnessed significant changes in the recent past. The evolution of the traditional family farm and emergence of large factory farms are particularly important to Ohio's agricultural history. The building types, layouts, and spatial organizations of 1940-1970 agricultural landscapes warrant further documentation as well.

6.3 Design Trends in Ohio's Recent Past

As Advakov, Griffin, Kane and Wright (2010) noted, the influence of merchant builders during the recent past was pervasive. By the 1950s, residential builders had taken over from real estate developers as the entrepreneurial force behind suburban development. Local builders established in-house expertise for every aspect of development, from selecting the undeveloped acreage, to designing and building the houses, to marketing and selling them. Consequently, builders, more so than architects determined the appearance, style, and character of new houses and new neighborhoods, and they based their work on sophisticated market analysis based on sales figures, buyer feedback, and information gathered from other builders through trade associations (Advakov et al. 2010:102). Archival materials associated with merchant builders, however, do not appear to have been systematically collected or evaluated. Trade associations have focused more on lobbying and professional development than on maintaining historic records. The contributions of Ohio's merchant builders are poorly understood and their activities remain largely undocumented by historic preservationists. This dearth of information directly affects preservationists' ability to evaluate effectively the architectural and historical significant of recent past subdivisions and residential development.

Generally speaking, the contributions of mid-century landscape architects and landscape design companies to Ohio's built environment do not appear to be widely known. Despite extensive efforts to identify landscape architects practicing in Ohio between 1950 and 1970, Gray & Pape found references to only a few. Mid-century modern designed landscapes, such as civic plazas, public parks, planned communities, corporate and industrial parks, are not yet well understood, especially among the general public. Ohio's residential landscape design from the recent past also has not yet been thoroughly documented.

Similarly, a variety of recent past resource types have not yet been thoroughly documented. For example, readily available information about Ohio's shopping malls is largely anecdotal. Architectural historians, such as Richard Longstreth, have attempted to develop typologies for resources such as these, but no studies pertaining exclusively to Ohio's recent past malls and shopping centers have yet been completed. Along the same lines, Ohio's Google architecture, especially as represented by commercial resources such as restaurants and gas stations, is still poorly documented.

A thorough understanding of these resource types does more than enrich the historic record; identification, documentation, and evaluation of recent past resource types also can be used

to inform preservation and land use planning decisions on the part of local and state government agencies as well as private property owners.

The Ohio Modern historic context has been prepared as a launching pad for future investigations into the state's recent past. This period is unparalleled in both state and national history in terms of the sheer scale and volume of changes to the built environment. The enormity of the number of recent past resources, combined with an incomplete understanding of their significance, represent a major challenge to Ohioans interested in identifying, understanding, and preserving Ohio's irreplaceable recent past cultural heritage. As this report demonstrates, however, ample resources and tools are available to assist preservationists as they meet the challenge, and the opportunities, of recent past preservation.

