United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property
   Historic name: __Ford Motor Company Building_____________________
   Other names/site number: __State Office Building Annex____________________
   Name of related multiple property listing:
   N/A
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location
   Street & number: __117 University Avenue_______________________
   City or town: __St. Paul___ State: __Minnesota_____ County: __Ramsey___
   Vicinity: __N/A_____________________

3. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
   I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets
   the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
   Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I
   recommend that this property be considered significant at the following
   level(s) of significance:
   ___national                  ___statewide           _X_local
   Applicable National Register Criteria:
   _X_A             ___B           ___C           ___D

________________________
Signature of certifying official/Title: Amy Spong, MN Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Admin.   Date

________________________
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

________________________
Signature of commenting official:   Date

________________________
Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) ________________

Signature of the Keeper ___________________________ Date of Action ________________

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: 

Public – Local

Public – State  X

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

Building(s)  X

District

Site

Structure

Object
**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- INDUSTRY
- COMMERCE

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- VACANT
7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; TERRA COTTA; CONCRETE

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

Summary Paragraph

The Ford Motor Company (Ford) Building is a three-story, reinforced-concrete building built with minimal setback from the street (Photo 1). The Ford building was designed by John Graham, Supervising Architect for Ford Motor Company, and constructed in 1914. Originally flanked by the two-story North Central Commercial Club building (demolished) on the east and an open area for automobile parking on the west, the building has setback light courts on the east and west walls of the upper floors (Photos 3 and 4). The side and rear walls are cream-colored brick covered by concrete stucco, in contrast to the Commercial style façade with neo-classical detail.

The building is located on the north side of University Avenue east of Rice Street, and diagonally (northwest) across the street from the Minnesota State Capitol, to which it is connected by an underground tunnel. The Capitol/ Rice Street Station of the Green Line LRT is immediately south of the primary façade of the building. The entire block around the Ford Building, with the exception of the buildings and parking lots of Christ Lutheran Church to the east, is owned by the State of Minnesota, which has cleared the land for future government office buildings and is currently used for parking. The area immediately to the west of the building has been landscaped as a small park.
Ford Motor Company Building
Name of Property
Ramsey, MN
County and State

Narrative Description

Exterior

South Façade
The Ford Building’s University Avenue façade (Photos 5) is a symmetrical arrangement of dark red pressed brick above a granite base and is highlighted with glazed green and white terra-cotta details. The three middle bays are of equal widths and the central bay projects slightly forward. The two end bays are narrower, and also of equal widths. The ground floor entablature is formed by a pair of white terra-cotta moldings which extend across the entire façade. The five bays are articulated vertically by paneled brick piers resting on granite bases. Historically the piers stretched from grade to roofline and were topped with brick panels and vertical decorative terra-cotta that extended to the building’s entablature (Figures 4 and 7). Due to damage above the second-floor windows, the decorative terra cotta and brick has been removed and is being stored inside the building (Photo 9). The original entablature and roof parapet, including the stepped center section that contained the Ford name, has also been removed.

The middle bay of the first floor contains an elaborate entranceway raised on two granite steps above the sidewalk and slightly recessed (Photo 14). The entranceway is framed by two Doric limestone fluted columns set on granite bases. Double doors with glass panels are topped with a single glass transom and a frieze signage panel reading “Ford Building.” The wood-framed entrance opening is capped with a projecting triangular pediment supported by elongated brackets. Decorative acanthus leaves sit at the peak of the pediment and two corners.

Framing the entryway is a second, decorative surround, which is integrated into the remaining façade. Brick pilasters, capped with terra-cotta blocks, support a stepped parapet resting on a brick entablature. The parapet features a central panel framed by scrolls placed on edge.

The two end bays of the first floor were designed as vehicular entrances with paneled garage doors capped by brick segmental arches and brick friezes decorated with inset white rectangular tiles (Photos 1 and 5). The doorways opened to what are labeled internal “driveways” on the Sanborn Fire insurance maps (Figure 13). The bays flanking the central bay contain two large display windows, above granite sills, that reach to the base of the entablature. The entire enframement is highlighted with white terra-cotta trim. The plate glass windows are divided with slender muntins and rails. Both the garage door openings and the display window openings have replacement windows. Additionally, the bottom of the driveway entrances in the end bays have been filled in with low concrete walls bulkhead.

The verticality of the first floor pilasters is extended upward with two-story pilasters that rise to the top of the third-floor windows. The middle bays contain replacement windows, originally double-hung, surmounted by segmental arches. The windows are divided by two-story brick Mullions which interrupt brick panels with recessed spandrels and terminate at the segmental
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arches. The end bays, topped with flat lintels, originally contained pairs of double-hung windows.

East and west elevations
The east and west side walls were historically faced with cream-colored brick over concrete framing. Concrete stucco has been applied over the brick on these walls. The stucco coating has deteriorated, and chain link covering has been applied over the walls to help anchor the stucco. (Photos 1 through 4). These walls of this midblock building were not designed with decorative features. The east wall was originally concealed by the adjacent Commercial Club building (Figure 8). The west wall faced an automobile parking area. Historic photos show that signs were painted on the brick wall (Figure 7). The central portions of the second and third stories are set back on the east and west sides, creating light courts. Fenestration in the west light court consists of three, rectangular windows on the first and second floor facing west. Windows, one on each floor, face north into the light court as well. The eastern light court is similar to the one opposite. At the east, fenestration consists of two rectangular windows on each floor facing east and two smaller windows facing south. The first-floor roof, visible within the light court, suggests that the historic skylights are extant, although this has not been verified. Window openings in the light courts have replacement sash. East elevation first-floor fenestration consists of four, square window openings in the rear third of the building and a secondary entrance closer to the primary (south) façade. A covered loading dock platform has been added to the west side of the building at the far southern end of the light court. There are two additional windows at the first floor under the light court. The central brick chimney and the elevator penthouse are most visible from the west side of the building.

North elevation
The north elevation is generally plain. Covered in the concrete stucco and fencing described earlier. Fenestration on this elevation is irregular and consists of punched window openings.

Interior

Basement
The basement is generally open. Partition walls are concrete block and it is unclear if they are original to the building. The ceiling and floor are both concrete, as are the outside walls. Numerous columns with mushroom capitals, part of a flat-slab floor system, interrupt the largely open space.

First Floor
The first floor has been subdivided along the column grid throughout the space. The original columns can still be seen although they are incorporated into full and partial height gypsum walls. Decorative capitals have an “F” set in shield. (Photos 6 and 8) Floor covering include non-historic carpet in the historic office spaces, tile in the entry vestibule, and concrete in the spaces dedicated to production. (Photo 10) Ceilings have been covered in applied acoustical batting. (Photo 6)
Second and Third Floors

The second and third floors are accessed by a passenger elevator or by one of two stairways. The second floor has also been heavily subdivided. However, unlike the first floor, the division walls are not full height. An acoustical tile drop ceiling meets the walls roughly two feet below the historic concrete ceiling height. The drop ceiling obscures the extant mushroom column capitals. Capitals have been incorporated into the partial height walls but are still easily discernible. (Photo 11) Floor coverings consist of carpet. The third floor retains most of the historic open floorplate. The floor is concrete, walls are covered in plaster or gypsum board, and the ceiling has applied acoustical batting.

Integrity

The Ford Motor Company Building retains sufficient levels of all seven aspects of integrity to convey its historic significance from its period of significance, 1914-1935. Individual aspects of integrity are discussed below.

Location
The Ford Building remains where it was originally constructed and, therefore, retains integrity of location.

Design
The Ford Motor Company Building retains integrity of design. While the original parapet and entablature were removed, much of the decorative architectural details remain, especially around the entry. The design of the building is still readily identified as part of the distinct group of plants designed by John Graham from 1913 to 1915. The function of the interior use of space is still understood as well. The arched openings on the outside bays, which historically held garage doors, are clearly distinguishable from the large display windows that flank the entrance. Aerial photographs show that the location of the three skylights in the first floor ceiling of the light court are extant – albeit covered. At the interior, the open floor plan of the assembly and repair spaces on the second and third floors generally retain their open floor plans and exposed column grids. The flat-slab floor system is still extant and most of the mushroom capital remain exposed. Although the first floor has been largely subdivided, the showroom is still distinctly separate, and recognizable by the decorative column capitals, than the maintenance garage. Vertical circulation, both stair and freight elevator shaft are still in place.

Setting
The Ford Motor Company Building retains integrity of setting. The building is still located at the eastern edge of the Midway District, a thriving commercial and manufacturing area of St. Paul. Many of the buildings on the block historically have been demolished but Christ Lutheran Church and the Capitol remain. The addition of the light rail station near the building is reminiscent of the streetcar stops that once lined University Avenue.
Materials
The Ford Motor Company Building retains integrity of materials. At the exterior, the building retains its brick and terra cotta cladding at the primary exterior. At the interior, the building generally retains notable materials in retail space including decorative column capitals at the first floor. Additionally, the building’s character defining column grid and mushroom capitals remains present throughout.

Workmanship
The Ford Motor Company Building retains integrity of workmanship. The level of workmanship expressed in the building varies along with the function of the space. In general, spaces exhibit fairly utilitarian workmanship, which is in keeping with the functional program of the building. Higher levels of workmanship are seen in the decorative exterior elements as well as the decorative capitals in the historic sales floor.

Feeling and Association
The Ford Motor Company Building retains integrity of both feeling and association through the retention of historic setting, design, materials and workmanship. Although these aspects have been diminished in the interior of the building due to its use as offices, the exterior still conveys the building’s automotive industry association, particularly at the street level where the drive-through entries in the end bays and the large showroom windows are easily recognizable.
Ford Motor Company Building
Name of Property

Ramsey, MN
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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

A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

B. Removed from its original location

C. A birthplace or grave

D. A cemetery

E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

F. A commemorative property

G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years
Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

___________________
COMMERCE

___________________

___________________

___________________

___________________

___________________

Period of Significance
1914-1935

___________________

___________________

Significant Dates
1914

___________________

___________________

___________________

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

___________________
N/A

___________________

___________________

Cultural Affiliation
___________________
N/A

___________________

___________________

Architect/Builder
___________________
Graham, John

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

The Ford Motor Company Building (Ford Building) in St. Paul is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the early growth and expansion of the automobile industry along University Avenue in St. Paul. It would be difficult to overstate the impact of the automobile on American society during the twentieth century, and Ford Motor Company, more than any other automaker, made the automobile accessible to a majority of Americans. The Ford Building’s location on University Avenue reflects the importance of the thoroughfare as a transportation corridor.

The building is associated with the Minnesota Statewide Historic Context of “Urban Centers, 1870-1940” and the Saint Paul Historic Context of “Transportation Corridors, 1857-1950.” The period of significance begins in 1914 when the building was completed and ends in 1935, which marks the end of its association with automobile use.

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

Ford Motor Company and Its Regional Expansion

Henry Ford (1863-1947) established the Ford Motor Company in 1903; within the next ten years, it would become the largest automobile manufacturer in the world, largely because of the low-cost Model T, which was introduced in 1908. Ford’s commercial success was attributable to the superior design and durability of the Model T, the efficiencies brought about by mass production, and the vast network of distribution and sales. The savings resulting from mass production of the Model T were passed on to consumers in the form of lower prices, winning Ford a base of loyal car buyers.¹

As the popularity of the Model T grew after its introduction in 1908, Ford was hard pressed to keep up with demand. The company was one of the first auto manufacturers to institute year-round production and to go to two and even three work shifts, and yet Ford could not fill the backlog of orders.² Ford responded in 1909 by expanding manufacturing capacity in Detroit and developing a network of branch assembly plants around the country. The 60-acre Highland Park plant in Detroit opened in early 1910 and, over the next several years, was the location at which Ford developed the assembly-line method for manufacturing automobiles. The Highland Park plant, however, could not keep up with demand, as the booming auto industry had brought Detroit to the limits of its labor pool and transportation infrastructure.

² Henry Ford in collaboration with Samuel Crowther, My Life and Work (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1923), 166; Allan Nevins with the collaboration of Frank Ernest Hill, Ford: The Times, the Man, the Company [Ford: TMC] (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1954), 375.
Even as he was building the Highland Park plant, Ford also opened branch assembly plants, first in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1909, followed by Long Island City, Queens, in New York City. In 1911, James Couzens, treasurer and secretary of the Ford Motor Company, toured the West Coast to line up sites for branch assembly plants, and shortly thereafter, additional sites throughout the country. By 1914, Ford had 15 branch assembly plants, including the plant in St. Paul. The combination of centralized manufacturing and branch assembly was successful in boosting production: the company’s output increased from a little over 32,000 Model T’s in 1910 to over 200,000 cars (primarily Model T’s) in 1914, and about one-quarter of those cars were produced at the branch plants.3 Through the 1910s, Ford continued expanding its system of branch plants, and continued increasing production to meet a seemingly insatiable demand. In 1916, U.S. automobile production exceeded 1 million units, over half of which were Ford Model T’s, and four years later in 1920, U.S. production was 2.3 million units, over 60 percent Model T’s. By that time, the company had 35 assembly plants around the country.4 To help increase production, the branch plants had gotten more efficient since their inception; between 1914 and 1917, production at the average branch plant increased from 10 to 70 cars per day. Ford’s competitors began to emulate the branch model almost immediately. Chevrolet, for example, established four branch assembly plants during 1915-1916.5

In addition to increased production and therefore availability, Ford kept the cost of the Model T low during the 1910s through its distribution network. Before setting up its branch assembly plants, Ford had depended on local dealers for sales and service, and in fact, the first dealer agreement was reached in 1903 several months before Ford Motor Company had incorporated. To better serve the growing network of sales dealerships, in 1905 Ford took direct control of agencies in the large markets of New York and Philadelphia. In the following year, Ford established branch agencies in six additional cities that would deliver automobiles to dealerships as well as sell them directly. Although the company-owned branch sales agencies were expensive to set up, by eliminating franchised regional distributors, Ford saved the dealer’s share of sales, which could amount to 25 percent for large volume purchases. For sizable markets, such as New York, with sales already exceeding a million dollars per year by 1907, this was a significant savings. In addition, the branch assembly plants helped to reduce shipping costs, thereby further cutting the cost to produce and deliver Model T’s. Car parts could be manufactured in Detroit, and then shipped in containers to the branch assembly plants at much lower cost than fully assembled automobiles. A regular railroad boxcar could hold only three or four fully assembled cars, but enough parts for 12 Model Ts, a three- to four-fold increase in efficiency.6 In addition, it was cheaper to ship industrial parts than finished products, because the parts had a lower freight rate. These factors provided Ford with considerable savings in transportation. In addition to lower

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4 Nevins and Hill, Ford: TMC, 503; Bryant University.
5 Bryant University.
6 Bryant University.
costs, the branch assembly plants generated goodwill locally because of the jobs created, and because they carried a plentiful supply of parts for repairs and service.\(^7\)

Ford’s success, in addition to the low cost of the Model T, depended on the company’s marketing and distribution efforts. The decentralized assembly plants provided increased production capacity and were part of Ford’s distribution system, which included the assembly plants, branch sales agencies within regional districts, dealers, sub-dealers, and authorized service outlets. To meet the company’s sales goals, by 1914 Ford had established 30 “branch sales agencies and service stations” across the country including St. Paul and Minneapolis, half of which had both assembly and sales operations, generally in the same building.\(^8\)

During the early years, the branch agencies had a major role in sales. In 1909, branch agencies sold 61 percent of all cars, and by 1913, as more of them included assembly, the branches sold nearly 80 percent.\(^9\) Each of the branch agencies provided support for sales and service throughout its district, including all the local dealerships. Although the local dealerships would play a much larger role in sales later in the 1910s and into the 1920s, the branch agencies were critical to the early expansion of Ford from 1905 through the 1910s.

After 1920, Ford eliminated dealer’s defined territories and increased the number of dealerships to the network.\(^10\) From 1923 to 1926, Ford added 1,300 dealers, some located just blocks away from older established dealers who had made major financial investments. To add to their problems, Ford also reduced commission rates paid to dealers. As a result, profits for dealers plummeted, and the turnover rate for dealerships tripled by 1926. To make matters worse for Ford, some of the best dealers switched to the Chevrolet brand.\(^11\)

The increase in interest and accessibility to automobiles was evident along University Avenue. The systems that supported the streetcar lines along the thoroughfare continued to support the population’s interest in personalized transportation. Originally scaled to act as a grand boulevard between Minneapolis and St. Paul, University Avenue was able to support the increased traffic of tracks and passenger vehicles. Even while streetcar stops persisted in the median of the road there was ample room to navigate. University Avenue quickly became a central location for automobile dealerships and related service businesses. The Ford Motor Building was opened in 1917, as did a second Ford dealership the Owens Motor Company further west, and by 1926 there were 18 passenger car dealers along the Avenue.\(^12\)

\(^8\) Nevins and Hill, *Ford: TMC*, 509-510.
Ford in Minneapolis-St. Paul: Assembly Plants and Dealerships

Ford had an active dealership presence in Minnesota from the beginning of the company. On March 21, 1903, three months before the Ford Motor Company was incorporated, Stephen Tenvoorde from St. Cloud signed an agreement with Ford and opened the second dealership in the country. Initially, Tenvoorde sold automobiles from a variety of manufacturers, but after 1912, he sold Fords exclusively. Tenvoorde Ford continues operating to this day and is the “Oldest Family-Owned Ford Dealership in the World.”¹³ A regional distributorship was also established in Minneapolis in 1903, six weeks after the company was founded in Detroit. The Northwestern Automobile Company received the thirteenth car that Ford produced and handled sales in the district for the next nine years.¹⁴

Minnesota was an important market for Ford, as highlighted in a 1909 Detroit newspaper ad:

What is proclaimed as the largest shipment of motor cars in one consignment in the history of the trade went forth from the Ford Motor Works early Friday afternoon. A lake shore train of 41 cars, each loaded with three motor cars in all, pulled away for Minneapolis soon after noon. The motor cars go to the Minneapolis selling agency for distribution throughout the northwestern territory supplied by the agency, and it is said that all the motor cars are already sold to the prosperous farmers and business and professional men of this northwestern section.¹⁵

A newspaper ad in 1910 by Northwestern Automobile Company boasted that “Ford cars are the most popular in Minneapolis, St. Paul and the entire Northwest.” It listed cars registered in Minnesota in the first five months of that year showing Ford leading nine other manufacturers, including Buick, Maxwell, Cadillac, Reo, Overland, E.M.F., Regal, Hudson, and Hupp.¹⁶

In the Minnesota market, as throughout the country, the popularity of the Model T car outstripped Ford’s ability to meet demand during the early 1910s, and the company embarked on a national expansion program of branch sales and assembly plants. Branch plants in this wave of expansion were located in prominent settings in or near downtowns, and because they offered sales and service, the buildings had to be attractive as well as functional. Although one building would have sufficed for Minneapolis and St. Paul, Henry Ford planned assembly plants in both cities to avoid stepping into the bitter municipal rivalry. He had faced a similar situation on the west coast, as Ford historians Nevins and Hill noted, “Portland would perhaps have sufficed for Northwestern distribution, but the rivalry between that city and Seattle made it expedient to give

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¹⁵ Ford Motor Works [advertisement], Detroit Journal, August 20, 1909.
The latter its own plant.” A 1913 Ford Company newsletter made the case for branch plants in the Twin Cities:

From the very first the Northwest was a very good market for Ford cars... As the years passed, the Ford cars rolled out of Minneapolis in numbers increasingly large. Year by year the business of the Ford dealers in that territory grew. Year by year the demand for cars became greater. This increasing demand made it absolutely necessary to establish a Ford branch in Minneapolis this year, with a sub-branch in St. Paul.

In 1912, sales of cars in Minnesota were up 33 percent from the prior year. In 1913, Minneapolis and St. Paul had a combined population of 516,000 and both cities were booming with record levels of construction activity. Minneapolis could boast of the highest industrial output per capita of any city in the country, and the Twin Cities were the principal economic hub of the Northwest region, which included a rich farm belt with an income level of over $1 billion. It was estimated that farmers would spend over $50 million on automobiles in 1913.

In anticipation of building new branch plants in the Twin Cities, in 1912 Ford leased the lower four floors of the Great Northern Implement loft building at 616 South Third Street in Minneapolis. The company typically leased space in a community in advance of building a new plant. On June 18, 1912, the Ford Motor Company announced it had purchased a one-acre site in north Minneapolis at Fifth Street and Fifth Avenue, adjacent to the tracks of three railroads, and planned to build an assembly plant. Ford also announced that it would build a smaller branch assembly plant in St. Paul at 117 University Avenue near the State Capitol. The company sent a letter to all Ford dealers giving notice that upon completion of the new assembly plants, it would end its long relationship with the Northwestern Automobile Company:

We expect the business in Minnesota and the territory in Wisconsin controlled from Minneapolis will be about as productive for the sale of Ford cars during the coming season as any territory in the United States and we expect also, that by handling our own business and coming in direct contact with all of our Dealers that much closer relations will exist than heretofore and consequently a much larger business will be developed.

The Midway District

The current boundaries of the Midway District are defined by BNSF Railway right of way to the north, University Avenue to the south, the city limits to the west, and Lexington Parkway on the east. Historically, the northern and southern boundaries have shifted their locations through time.

However, until the late 1880s, this approximately 10 mile wide region between St. Paul and Minneapolis was predominately farm land. The route of University Ave., located at the northern edge of the Midway District, has long been considered the shortest distance to traverse between the two population centers. As the city of St. Paul began to expand westward to its current boundary, real-estate developers realized the profitability of the Midway area. Billed as suburban living, land speculators began to develop neighborhoods for the burgeoning upper-middle class. Platted along curving streets, these parklike neighborhoods were serviced by one of the two short line railroad spurs operated by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway, commonly known as the Milwaukee Road, and Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway. These spurs, intended to help facilitate passenger movement between the cities, were located at the far northern and southern edges of the Midway District. The 1874 atlas map of Ramsey County shows the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad corridor running west out of downtown Saint Paul, north of the Midway area, and into Minneapolis. Some of the cart and foot path names, such as Territorial Road and St. Anthony Avenue, continue to be seen on contemporary maps.

In 1883, James J. Hill became intent on creating a more efficient rail transportation system for goods. The result of his labor, the Minnesota Transfer Railway (MTR), was incorporated to facilitate freight transfer functions for the various rail lines that served both St. Paul and Minneapolis. Beginning in 1910, MTR also provided direct shipping from businesses located within the Midway District. This development of the MTR was centered at Prior and University Avenues, in the northwest area of the Midway District, and became the epicenter for rail in the Midwest. At its height, roughly a dozen different rail companies all transferred goods from one line to another here. This transportation infrastructure company eventually became one of the largest landholders in the area. “By 1912, it was the second largest freight interchange facility in the nation, covering 200 acres with 160 miles of track.” By 1925, the MTR boasted a payroll of more than 1,200 people.

Proximity to the transportation infrastructure made the Midway District attractive to a vast array of manufacturing and industrial enterprises seeking to take advantage of the easy access to rail, as well as large areas of developable land. “By 1925 these businesses employed approximately 18,500 people with an annual payroll of over $25 million.” The introduction of manufacturing,

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26 Ibid.
industrial, and retail jobs led to further residential development, although ultimately smaller in scale and without the planned amenities of the earlier planned suburban development. With the introduction of the electric streetcar in the 1890s, there was finally an easy and reliable way for workers to commute into the District. With stops roughly one mile apart, the University Avenue area began to host a wide variety of commercial and retail opportunities. Companies such as Montgomery Ward, Willys-Overland Motor Company, and Brown and Bigelow were also building infrastructure along University Avenue, and from there, distributed their products nationwide. After World War I, the use of the truck gradually increased as the primary method for the transportation of goods, especially across short distances. And while rail rallied in the interwar period, the trucking industry continued to take shape and began to thrive. Trucking companies took advantage of the District’s proximity to rail in addition to the wide boulevard of University Avenue, and established fleet and mechanic headquarters throughout the Midway. Many local, stable jobs were created as a result of the manufacturing and transportation industries in the Midway. This led to additional residential development. While not as intentionally designed as the suburban park-like neighborhoods of a few years earlier, this newer, working class housing brought a substantial increase in population to the area.

In the late 1800s the electric streetcar became a more reliable mode of passenger transportation between the two cities than the previously popular short lines. The Interurban streetcar line, which ran the length of University Avenue, was completed on December 9, 1890. Despite only being the second streetcar line constructed in the city, it quickly became the busiest route. Streetcars were scheduled every three minutes with greater frequency as peak times.27 The Midway reached the height of its development in the 1920s, as a result land value in the District doubled between 1915 and 1925.28

As was true in all parts of the country, the crossing of streetcar lines spurred commercial development. The major cross streets in the District, roughly one mile apart along University Avenues at Rice, Lexington, Hamline, Snelling, and Prior began to see multi-story commercial development. As area industry expanded and the local population grew, University Avenue began to be a destination rather than simply a transit-way. The Interurban became a much needed, rapid link between the cities’ commercial downtowns, and as the “spine of the system” helped make University Avenue a destination for shopping, dining, and entertainment.29 “The prominence of University Avenue made it a primary artery between the two communities and it continued to support a variety of activities, including neighborhood and regional commercial, industrial and highway-oriented land uses later in its history.”30 The Midway became the fastest growing part of St. Paul in the early twentieth century. Truck and automobile use along the Avenue continued to intensify despite the increasing frequency of streetcars along the Interurban route. In 1929 “annual passenger car traffic was estimated at 30 million, while truck traffic was estimated at 5 million along the corridor.”31

27 “University Ave: One Street, 1000 Dreams,” Twin Cities PBS, April 9, 2016.
28 Zellie and Peterson, Transportation Corridors, 11.
29 “University Ave: One Street, 1000 Dreams,” Twin Cities PBS, April 9, 2016
30 Zellie and Peterson, Transportation Corridors, 15.
31 Ibid, 11.
University Avenue as an Automobile Center

As the local population’s appetite for the personal automobile increased, national companies, such as Ford and Willys-Overland, began to compete for customers. Like many manufacturing facilities before, automobile facilities not only saw the benefit of locating near established transportations lines but also recognized the opportunity to be near a reliable work force and customer base. “The first automobile sales agency on University Avenue was the Ford branch assembly and sales plant at 117 University Avenue, which opened in 1914 as a company-owned operation.”\textsuperscript{32}\footnote{Brian McMahon, Marjorie Pearson and Andrew Schmidt, “Owens Motor Sales Building,” Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, (St. Paul, May 2015), 8-12.} Manufacturing at the Ford facility on University Avenue, however, was relatively short lived. In 1917, the Ford assembly plant (Ford Building) at this location transitioned into a dealership. While Ford was the earliest, other automobile dealerships began setting up shop by the late 1910s and continued through the 1920s, until by 1930, approximately one-third of the dealerships in St. Paul were located on University Avenue.”\textsuperscript{33}\footnote{Ibid, 8-11.}

Throughout the twentieth century, the number of automobile related businesses on University Avenue increased. By the mid-1920s, there was at least one automobile related enterprise on every block of University Avenue between the Capitol and St. Paul’s western city limit.\textsuperscript{34}\footnote{Anne M. Ketz, \textit{University Avenue Car Culture: the enduring legacy of Porky’s drive-in restaurant}, (St. Paul: Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, Summer 2013), 8.} Many of these businesses were dedicated to the manufacturing and sale of accessories for the automobile, especially the enormously popular Ford Model-T.\textsuperscript{35}\footnote{Ibid.} However, the sales of personal vehicles in Minnesota flagged during the Great Depression and WWII. After 1946, the combination of pent up demand and the post-war economic boom helped to reestablish the automobile as the primary transportation choice after the war. University Avenue was not only a place to buy and service a car, it also became the central place in the 1950s social car culture to see and be seen. University Avenue boasted four separate drive-in restaurants during the decade. In 1953, the streetcar lines were dismantled along University Avenue as public transportation shifted to the use of busses (Figure 10).

While an early version of automobile suburbs had been developing since the advent of the automobile, the growth in that era paled in comparison to the rapid development of large swaths of land in the decades after the war. The post-war network of high-speed, limited access highways pulled commuters off of previously heavily traveled roads like University Avenue. As the customer moved from the city to the suburbs, where commerce and retail centered on the use of the automobile, manufactures and dealers quickly followed. “In 1956 there were 15 dealerships on University Avenue, but only 10 remained in 1974.”\textsuperscript{36}\footnote{Peter B. Myers, “The Center of the Universe for Car Buyers: University Avenue Dominated the Local Automotive Scene for Fifty Years,” \textit{Ramsey County History} 47, no. 3 (Fall, 2012): 16; Pearson, Nelson and McMahon, \textit{Hamline-Midway Survey}, 31-34.} The last new-car dealership on University Avenue closed in 2007.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, 8-11.
\textsuperscript{34} Anne M. Ketz, \textit{University Avenue Car Culture: the enduring legacy of Porky’s drive-in restaurant}, (St. Paul: Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, Summer 2013), 8.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Peter B. Myers, “The Center of the Universe for Car Buyers: University Avenue Dominated the Local Automotive Scene for Fifty Years,” \textit{Ramsey County History} 47, no. 3 (Fall, 2012): 16; Pearson, Nelson and McMahon, \textit{Hamline-Midway Survey}, 31-34.
The Midway District developed into the Twin Cities’ transportation center. Each major mode of transportation, in its turn, has thrived within this area. Henry Ford, as an experienced businessman, likely understood the benefits of both the Midway District and its growing population when he chose to build his assembly plant at the eastern end of University Avenue. Its early location clearly influenced Ford’s automotive competitors but directly led to the construction of automobile-related service buildings, many of which would have services specializing in accessorizing and repairing Model-Ts.

Development of the St. Paul Ford Motor Company Building

The architects for St. Paul Ford Motor Company Building, according to building department records, were John Graham of Seattle and Kees and Colburn of Minneapolis (Figure 12). A newspaper account written before a formal announcement of the St. Paul project reported that Kees and Colburn “are drawing the plans for the factory,” adding, “It was said at their office that Mr. Graham, factory architect of the Ford Motor Company, will be here Monday.” Graham was the principal designer of all or most of Ford’s branch plants during the expansion period in the 1910s. Local architectural firms were brought in to help with site conditions, to oversee the permitting processes, and to manage construction. In both Minneapolis and St. Paul, Graham partnered with the prominent local architectural firm Kees and Colburn.

The noted Detroit architect Albert Kahn played an important role in the design of many Ford facilities during the 1910s, including the Highland Park plant (first phase designed in 1908 and opened in 1910) and River Rouge plant (construction started in 1917), both located in Detroit, and the 1911 Kansas City, Missouri, plant. However, a distinct group of plants designed from 1913 to 1915 was primarily the responsibility of Graham.

John Graham (1873-1955) was born in Liverpool, England. He moved to Seattle in 1901 where he quickly made his mark designing a number of commercial buildings, including Frederick & Nelson (now the Nordstrom store), Bon Marche, the Exchange Building, and the Dexter Horton Building. He was also the architect for several buildings at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition. According to a newspaper obituary about Graham, “Following the design of the

37 City of Saint Paul, Department of Public Works, Building Inspector’s Office, Building Permit No. 61028, issued May 26, 1913.
Seattle plant for Ford, Graham was selected as the company's architect. He moved his family to Detroit and during 1913 through 1915 designed more than 30 assembly plants in the U.S. and Canada.\(^41\) Graham’s Ford buildings were designed specifically for the assembly of Model T cars, and for sales and service operations.

The local architectural firm of Kees and Colburn was one of the most prominent and successful firms in Minneapolis. Frederick Kees first partnered with Franklin Long in 1885, and the firm designed a number of major buildings including the Minneapolis City Hall/Hennepin County Courthouse and the Flour Exchange Building. Kees then formed a new partnership with Serenus Colburn in 1899, and the firm designed a number of important commercial and institutional buildings in the Twin Cities, including the Northern Implement Building which was leased to Ford in 1912.\(^42\)

Because Ford needed to move quickly and on a massive scale to meet the pent up demand for the Model T, the new branch plants, including the St. Paul plant, took on a uniform design. Graham’s distinctive red brick plants had many similarities, including red pressed-brick walls, terra-cotta trim, vertical brick piers separating large horizontal window bays, and ornamental friezes and parapets with the distinctive Ford logo.

Most of the plants from 1913-1915, including the St. Paul plant, were multi-story and accommodated both assembly and sales operations in a single building. To facilitate assembly work, the plants had freight elevators, and gravity slides and chutes further assisted in moving parts and materials throughout the building. The buildings included garage entry doors, internal driveways with easy-to-clean white ceramic wall tiles, and areas for cars to be hosed down and washed (Figure 6). Several of the Graham plants, including the St. Paul plant, were designed with roof tops that could be used for work space. Attractive showrooms with large plate glass windows displaying the new cars were located in front of the service areas. Innovations in manufacturing techniques would later require a single story sprawling plant, but for this transitional phase of manufacturing, the Graham plants were an innovative and important bridge between the early undefined industrial space and the later specialized, purpose-built buildings.

Based on the standard plans of Graham and the local work by Kees and Colburn, the St. Paul Ford Motor Company Building was built in 1913. The minutes of the Ford Motor Company Board of Directors, April 15, 1913, report that the company spent $10,199 to purchase the St. Paul site at 117 University Avenue and projected a construction cost of $56,000 for the new building.\(^43\) The building permit for the St. Paul plant was issued May 26, 1913, and included a

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\(^{42}\) “Ford Company May Build Autos Here.” For background on Kees and Colburn, see Alan K. Lathrop, Minnesota Architects: A Biographical Dictionary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 46, 124.

\(^{43}\) Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Ford Motor Company, April 15, 1913, Accession #85, Corporate Papers Box 1, 1903-1919, Ford Motor Company Archives, Dearborn, Michigan.
notation for the “Condron Company - Reinforced Concrete Systems,” which indicates a
concrete-slab floor system (See Figure 3).  

Shortly before the St. Paul Ford building was completed, it was described in a St. Paul
newspaper:

It is of reinforced concrete construction, 100 by 150 feet, with three stories and
basement, and contains a total of 60,000 square feet of floor space, being the
largest of its kind in the city. A unique feature of this newest of automobile
branches is a tile roof constructed in such a way that cars can be tested, and
worked out on top of the building, the walls extending nine feet above the tiling…
The output of this company in St. Paul alone for 1914 is estimated at 500 cars.  

Notably the building is constructed using a mushroom flat-slab framing system. These systems,
first patented by Minnesota structural engineer, Claude Allen Porter (C.A.P.) Turner, use
reinforcement that runs “perpendicular to and diagonally between the column heads” integrating
the columns into the floor below and the ceiling above. The advantages of the mushroom system,
“greater floor-to-ceiling height, easier formwork, economical use of reinforcement, and high
floor capacity values,” made it a popular construction method for manufacturing and industrial
buildings.

History of Occupancy

The first manager of the St. Paul branch was Alexander H. Sarjeant, the former manager of the
Northwestern Automobile Company, the franchise regional distributor replaced by the
Minneapolis and St. Paul branches. His appointment was greeted favorably in the Pioneer Press:
“Mr. Sarjeant is one of the most popular men in the automobile game in the Twin City [sic]. He
is liked both by users of machines and by dealers.” Sarjeant managed the Ford sales and
assembly plant through 1916, and then moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1917. Beginning
in 1917, the Ford Building was converted from both the assembly and sales function directly
operated by Ford Motor Company to a variety of sales and service operations for franchised Ford
dealerships. The building would continue in this capacity into the 1930s.

44 City of Saint Paul, Building Permit No. 61028. Graham used similar floor systems in the Seattle and Montreal
30, 1998; DLR Group archives, Seattle.
46 There is no historical documentation to suggest that C.A.P. Turner designed the system specifically used in the
Ford Building. However, it is generally recognized that his structural engineering systems were highly influential,
especially in Minnesota.
Construction History Society of America, Issue No. 13 (October 2010): 5-6.
49 R. L Polk & Company, St. Paul, Minnesota, City Directory (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Company of Minnesota, 1916-
1917).
William H. Schmelzel, the original branch manager at the Fargo Ford plant, moved to St. Paul in 1917, where he established a dealership for Ford automobiles known as the W. H. Schmelzel Company. Schmelzel is listed in the 1917 city directory as an agent for the Ford Motor Company, located at 117 W. University Avenue, and as such, was the first tenant of the St. Paul Ford Building after Ford ceased production there. In addition to selling Ford automobiles from the Ford Building, by 1920 Schmelzel was selling Ford trucks, Fordson tractors, and even ambulances. Up until 1920, “Fordson” tractors were manufactured by Henry Ford & Son, an affiliated company to the Ford Motor Company, which distributed them through independent dealerships, like Schmelzel’s. A news account reported:

Since April 15, 1917, at which time the [W.H. Schmelzel] company was organized, it has sold 2,600 Ford cars in St. Paul; also in the past 14 months it has distributed in Minnesota 3,200 “Fordson” tractors and 7,000 implements, and at the present time has on file orders for over 1,000 tractors to be shipped during the remaining 10 months of the fiscal year.
The article added, “At the time the company [W.H. Schmelzel] leased its present building and purchased the equipment and fixtures of the Ford Motor company, its entire organization consisted of 10 employees.” 50

In 1921, Schmelzel branched out by operating a mechanics’ school at the Ford Building:

A course of instruction for mechanics in charge of Ford cars and trucks for commercial houses has been started by the W. H. Schmelzel company, and the first session of school was held Friday at 7:30 P.M. at the Ford building, 117 University Avenue. 51

Shortly after opening the mechanic’s school, Schmelzel sold his company in 1921 to J. W. Hutchins, who had been Schmelzel’s first vice president and who then established the J. W. Hutchins Co. Hutchins’s business apparently did not fare well, because in less than a year, the J. W. Hutchins Co. was succeeded by the M. J. Osborn Co. as authorized Ford sales and service provider at 117 W. University Avenue. 52

When Merritt J. Osborn opened a Ford dealership in the Ford Building, the Ford Motor Company was selling one of every three cars in America, and Ford dealerships were perceived as safe and lucrative investments. 53 Osborn had moved from Indianapolis to St. Paul as a young man, and in 1910 he began working in the expanding automotive industry. Osborn took a job in a truck manufacturing venture, and although the truck venture failed, Osborn stayed in the field. Over the next several years, he opened a dealership for the White Steamer Touring Car, and at

50 “Fordson Business Is Moved to New Home,” Minneapolis Morning Tribune, February 1, 1920. This suggests that Schmelzel took over operations at the Ford Building just three years after the building opened.
various times was a dealer for White Motor Trucks, the Willys-Overland car, and the Willys-Knight car.54

Hutchins and Osborn were likely both among the Ford dealers unable, or unwilling, to make payments to Ford on unwanted inventory, which had, by that time, become the Ford Motor Company’s business model. Hutchins’ tenure lasted less than a year, and in 1923 he brought a lawsuit against the Ford Motor Company and Henry Ford and Son, Inc. for $627,817.55 In 1922, Osborn sold his dealership. He later used his last $5,000 to found Economics Laboratory, Inc., the forerunner of Ecolab, Inc.

The M. J. Osborn Co. was purchased in 1922 by A. C. Hall and H. F. Herschbach, who established the Hall-Herschbach Motor Company in the Ford Building and sold Ford and Lincoln cars as well as Fordson tractors. Described as “Old Auto Men,” Hall and Herschbach moved from Springfield, Illinois, where they operated dealerships, selecting St. Paul as their headquarters “because of the unique advantage in being the gateway to a great and growing Northwest.”56 One of their early newspaper ads touted “Good Used Fords, all models, at prices $35 and up.” Another ad offered cars with the “Ford Weekly Purchase Plan” with a five dollar down payment.57 This was the unsuccessful installment sales program that Ford had created as an alternative to the financing plans offered by his competitors.

In addition to the Hall-Hershbach Motor Company, by 1923 there were at least two other Ford dealerships located along University Avenue in St. Paul, Owens Motor Company and Muessel Motor Company, as well as several others throughout the city. By this time, Ford had eliminated protected sales districts, and added dealerships, so competition was intense. As the new Twin Cities Assembly Plant in the Highland Park area of St. Paul was preparing to open in 1925, all of the dealers were advertising their close proximity to the new plant.

By 1926, another Ford dealer, the Peterson-Greenman Co. had replaced Hall-Herschbach and occupied the Ford Building through at least 1932.58 Operated by Arthur E. Peterson and Allan E. Greenman, the new dealership took out construction permits for electrical work for improvements to the Ford Building in 1926, 1927, and 1930. By 1933, Greenman was selling cars on Rice Street, and the Ford Motor Sales Company, managed by John Hoek, occupied the Ford Building. This company was listed as taking out a series of permits during 1932 through 1934, and was listed in city directories at 117 University Avenue through 1934. During the late 1930s, 117 University Avenue is listed as “vacant.”59 Although the Owens Motor Company took

59 R. L. Polk & Company, St. Paul City Directory, 1926-1935; City of St. Paul, Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings, Division of Building Inspection, Permit 50521, March 26, 1929; Permit 50925, April 19,
out a permit for electrical work at 117 University Avenue in 1935, city directories list the building as “vacant.” Owens was a Ford dealer located at 713 University Avenue, about two miles to the west, which suggests that Owens had plans for the building or simply used it as storage. A photograph from approximately 1935 shows the building with a “For Sale” sign on the front window, and city directories continue to list the building as “vacant.”

With the Depression and the build-up to World War II, the Ford Building’s association with the automobile industry ended as it was converted to warehouse use. During the 1940s, the Kedney Warehouse Co. utilized the Ford Building as a storage facility. This company was founded in South Dakota in 1922 and had several warehouses in Minneapolis and St. Paul. By 1951 the Ford Building had been converted to federal offices and housed the Division of Conciliation and the Division of Social Welfare. The building was next acquired by the State of Minnesota, which used it for office space, printing operations, and the state book store (Figure 9). The Ford Building has been vacant since 2004.

**Conclusion**

The Ford Motor Company Building in St. Paul is significant for its association with University Avenue and its importance as a transportation thoroughfare. The Ford Company took advantage of all the Midway District had to offer in the early twentieth century and, in turn encouraged the continued use of University Avenue as the popularity of the automobile increased. The location of the Ford Building not only proved to be a sound business decision it served to anchor and encourage expansion of the automobile industry along University Avenue in St. Paul.

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1929; Permit 55782, January 7, 1930; Permit 43647, Permit 20579, March 1, 1933; Permit 22558, April 2, 1933; Permit 22797, May 12, 1933; Permit 36102, July 27, 1934.

60 Minnesota Historical Society, Collections Online, Ford Motor Company Building, 117 University, St. Paul, MR2.9 SP3.1F p42; R. L. Polk & Company 1935-1937.

61 R. L. Polk & Company, 1944, 1948; Permit 110439, March 20, 1944; Permit 112515, June 27, 1944; Permit 123203, Sept. 8, 1945; Permit 126148, Nov. 12, 1945.
9. Major Bibliographical References

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


“As Center of Great Northwest District the Influence of Minneapolis Is World Wide.”
Minneapolis Morning Tribune, July 27, 1913.


City of Saint Paul, Department of Public Works, Building Inspectors Office. Building Permit No. 61028, issued May 26, 1913.

City of St. Paul, Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings, Division of Building Inspection.
Permit 50521, March 26, 1929
Permit 50925, April 19, 1929
Permit 55782, January 7, 1930
Permit 46218, June 5, 1935
Permit 110439, March 20, 1944
Permit 112515, June 27, 1944
Permit 123203, September 8, 1945
Permit 126148, November 12, 1945


“For the Branch Happenings.” Ford Times, March, 1913.


Ford Motor Company. Minutes of the Board of Directors. April 15, 1913. Accession #85, Corporate Papers, Box 1, 1903-1919, Ford Motor Company Archives, Dearborn, Michigan.


Minnesota Historical Society. Collections Online.
Ford Motor Company Building, 117 University, St. Paul, ca. 1935. MR2.9 SP3.1F p42.
Ford Motor Company Building
Name of Property

Ramsey, MN
County and State


Myers, Peter B. “The Center of the Universe for Car Buyers: University Avenue Dominated the Local Automotive Scene for Fifty Years.” *Ramsey County History* 47, no. 3 (Fall, 2012): 13-16.

Nevins, Allan, with the collaboration of Frank Ernest Hill. *Ford: The Times, the Man, the Company.* New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1954.


*Plain Dealer (Cleveland)*, July 16, 1914.


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Ford Motor Company Building
Name of Property
Ramsey, MN
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other

Name of repository: _____________________________________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RA-SPC-3868

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  __0.5________

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: __________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude:    Longitude:
2. Latitude:    Longitude:
3. Latitude:    Longitude:
4. Latitude:    Longitude:
Or

**UTM References**
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

- [ ] NAD 1927 or [x] NAD 1983

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2. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
3. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
4. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The property occupies Lots 18, 19, and 20 of Block 1 of Whitney’s Subdivision of Brewster’s Addition, St. Paul, Ramsey County, and includes the building and the former auto parking area to the west. It has the property identification number of 31.29.22.23.0067.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The property boundary has always been associated with the historic building and its site.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Brian McMahon and Andrew Schmidt w/ contributions by Ginny Way, SHPO staff
organization: Summit Envirosolutions, Inc
street & number: 1217 Bandana Blvd. N
city or town: St. Paul  state: MN  zip code: 55108
e-mail aschmidt@summite.com
telephone: 651-842-4202
date: May 2015 & June 2019

Sections 9-end page 30
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Ford Motor Company Building

City or Vicinity: St. Paul
County: Ramsey
State: Minnesota
Photographer: Sara Nelson and Brian McMahon
Location of Original Digital Files: 1217 Bandana Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55108
Date Photographed: February 28, 2014, unless noted

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

1 of 14. Ford Motor Company Building, south façade (left), east elevation (right), camera facing west-northwest.
2 of 14. Ford Motor Company Building, north elevation (right) and east elevation (left), camera facing south-southwest. (August 26, 2013)

3 of 14. Ford Motor Company Building, east elevation, camera facing southwest. (August 26, 2013)

4 of 14. Ford Motor Company Building, west elevation (left) and south façade (right), camera facing east.


12 of 14. Interior, Ford Motor Company Building, facing east on third floor (University Avenue façade on right).


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USGS Map

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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Ford Motor Company Building  
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County and State: N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable):

Journal Tribune, FM6.22 p6, Minnesota Historical Society)
Figure 10. Looking west on University Avenue near Lexington Avenue, St. Paul, 1954 (Norton & Peel photograph collection, Minnesota Historical Society).
Figure 11. Looking west on University Avenue from Pascal Street, St. Paul, 1967 (Norton & Peel photograph collection, Minnesota Historical Society).
Figure 12. Service Building for Ford Motor Company, Revised First Floor Plans, St. Paul, Minn. June 11, 1913. (Plan: DLR Group)
**Figure 13.** Ford Motor Company Building, on University Avenue between Rice and Park, c1925. *(Insurance Maps of St. Paul, Minnesota* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1909, revised 1925), vol. 4, sheet 461)*

**Figure 14.** Ford Motor Company Building, on University Avenue between Rice and Park, 1926-1951
Figure 15. Large scale map, depicting entire nominated property within the full extent of the USGS map (Basemap adapted from ArcGIS Esri aerial photography and USGS topographic map).