

## Mid-Century Modern Survey Final Report

The Mid-Century Modern Survey of non-residential properties was completed July 31, 2013. The survey project, which encompassed the entire city, was our means to gather considerable information. The project also indicates that there is additional work to be done to identify the most architecturally and historically significant properties from the 1940-1975 period, those that “Define the Era.”

The survey report and survey forms identify primarily architecturally significant buildings and begin to identify patterns and trends in building, the use of materials, and the architectural expression that is generally referred to as style. This tentative use of the term “style” is appropriate for this period of building, as many other factors are significant as well. The survey report provides historic contexts and information on some of the architects who designed these buildings. It also relates how changes in society, the economy, transportation and suburbanization, and urban renewal shaped the City of St. Louis during this era. As the construction of the Gateway Arch was the ultimate symbol of that progress that residents and leaders of St. Louis sought during the period, we have named this period as “The Gateway Years.”

Some cautions are in order. The presence or absence of a property in the survey or survey report is not a conclusive evaluation of architectural or historical significance. The survey is an initial step in ongoing studies of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century architecture in St. Louis.

These points more thoroughly explain the intent, limitations of and results of the survey project:

- The survey was designed to study some buildings in more depth rather than leave all documentation and evaluation at the least developed level.
- The selection of properties into a more select group for the survey was based on the qualities of the properties and was inclusive in intent, not exclusive. In other words, the selection process took place with the acknowledgement that many more properties deserved further study. The omission of a property from the survey tier of more intensive documentation and evaluation should not be considered as the survey’s dismissal of it as a property with necessarily little architectural or historic significance. In other words, suggesting that a property is not significant based only on its presence or lack thereof in this survey is not credible.
- This survey addressed architectural interest and likely significance. More documentation and evaluation of properties is needed to understand if some of the buildings meet the criteria to be architecturally significant in terms of National Register Criteria.
- This survey addressed in a secondary manner historic significance in community planning and development and black history although more work is needed in these topic areas. All of the other areas of possible historic significance of a property remain unexamined at the end of the survey.

- The recommendations for further work and projects in the survey were offered by the consultants for the city to consider. They should be interpreted as possible actions for the City or another entity might undertake.

### **What Might Happen Next**

The Cultural Resources Office fully intends to continue the analysis of the information gathered in this survey. Some property types that are important to this era may also receive additional research and analysis. Any new material will be added to this section of the Cultural Resources Office website.

Of course, property owners may propose the nomination of buildings erected during this Mid-Century period to the National Register. The nomination of properties would proceed as usual; the survey contexts may help nomination preparers with information and context for the properties being studied.