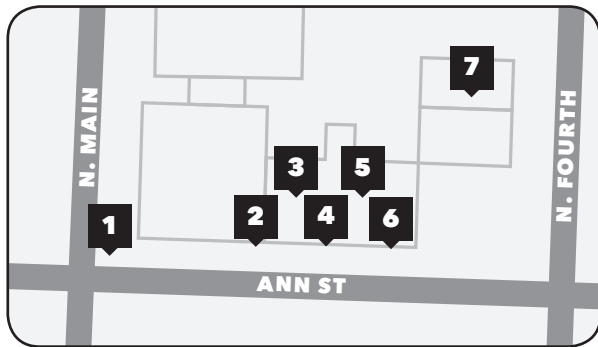
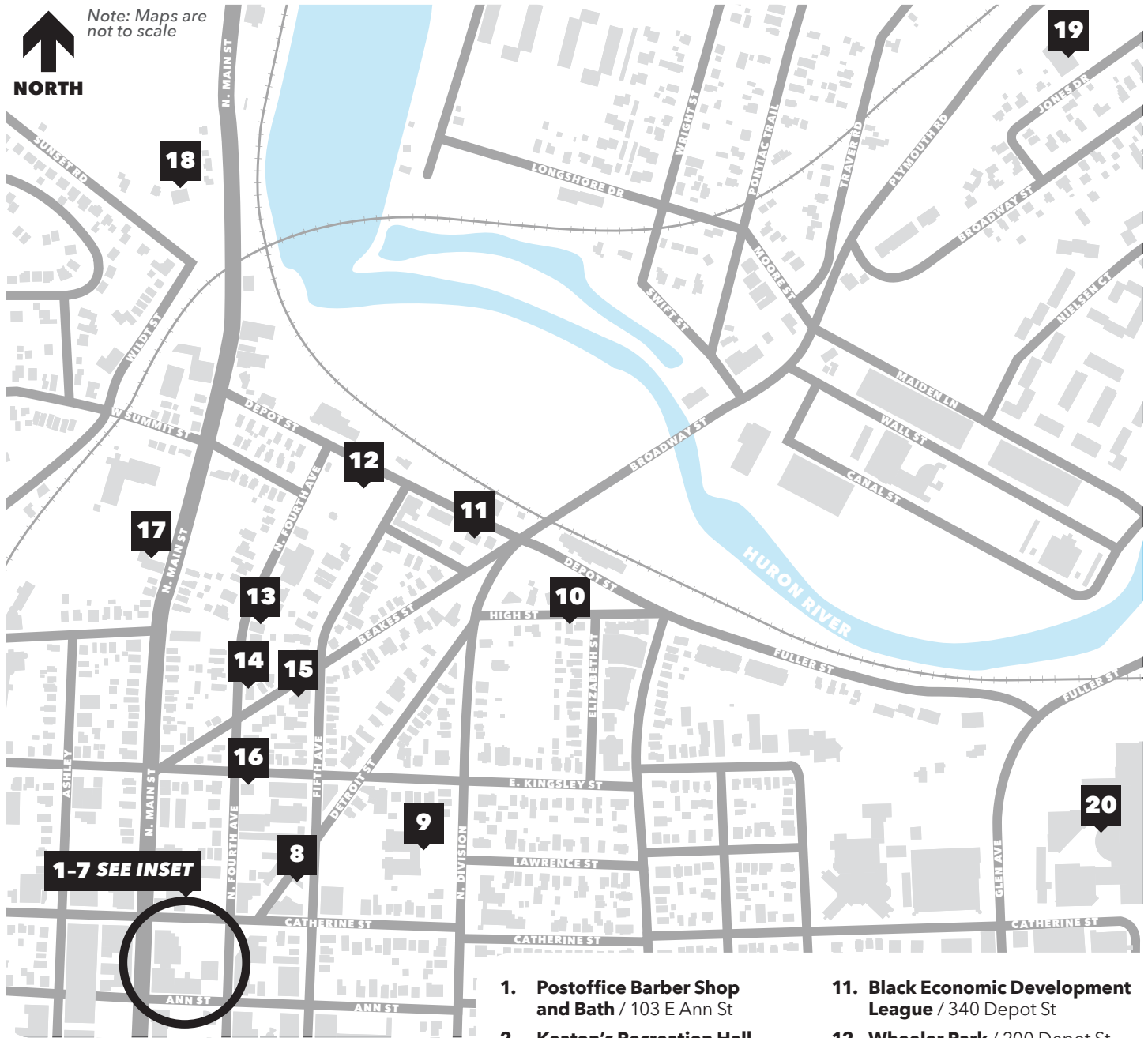


# ANN ARBOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL SITES | MAP



Note: Maps are not to scale



1. **Postoffice Barber Shop and Bath** / 103 E Ann St
2. **Keaton's Recreation Hall**  
109 E Ann St
3. **Midway Lunch** / 111 E Ann St
4. **Easley's Barber Shop**  
115 E Ann St
5. **Sanford's Shoe Repair**  
117 E Ann St
6. **Whitman's Pool Hall and Myrtle's Beauty Shop**  
119 E Ann
7. **Colored Welfare League**  
209-211 N. Fourth Ave
8. **DeLong's Bar-B-Q Pit**  
314 Detroit St
9. **Jones Elementary School**  
401 N. Division
10. **Union Church** / 504 High St
11. **Black Economic Development League** / 340 Depot St
12. **Wheeler Park** / 200 Depot St
13. **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church** (Bethel AME Church) / 632 N. Fourth Ave.
14. **Johnnie Mae Seeley's House**  
203 Beakes St
15. **Second Baptist Church of Ann Arbor** / 214 Beakes St
16. **Dunbar Community Center**  
420 N. Fourth Ave
17. **Ann Arbor Community Center**  
625 N. Main St
18. **Elks Pratt Lodge 322**  
220 Sunset Rd
19. **Ann Arbor Foundry**  
1327 Jones Dr
20. **Britt House** / 1136 Catherine St

# ANN ARBOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL SITES | LOCATIONS

## 1 POSTOFFICE BARBER SHOP AND BATH

103 E Ann St

From 1888 until the mid 1890s, Civil War veteran Jerome A. Freeman was proprietor of Postoffice Barber Shop and Bath. Freeman served in Company E of the First Colored Infantry. His barber shop was located on the second floor of the ornate Beal Block, on the corner of Main and E Ann. In the late 19th century, the Beal Block (now demolished) housed the Post Office and operated as the informal social center of the city.

## 2 KEATON'S RECREATION HALL

109 E Ann St

From 1952 to 1974, David and Mozelle Keaton ran a pool hall next door to their successful tavern Midway Lunch. The Keatons' establishments were fixtures of the mid-20th-century black business district on Ann Street. Previous owners John Riggs and Samuel Elliot operated Wolverine Barber Shop and Pool Room in the 1930s.

## 3 MIDWAY LUNCH

111 E Ann St

In the 1940s and 1950s, Midway Lunch offered African American workers and businessmen good food, drink, and company right in the center of the thriving Ann Street black business district. Owners David and Mozelle Keaton first opened the tavern in 1941, and it closed in 1962.

## 4 EASLEY'S BARBER SHOP

115 E Ann St

Nicknamed "Papa John," barber John B. Easley was a longtime proprietor on Ann Street. In operation from 1934 until the late 50s, Easley's Barber Shop was a hub for good conversation and, according to some, illegal gambling. Easley mentored many young men, including Johnnie Rush, who apprenticed under him before opening Johnnie Rush Barber Shop in the same location. Rush has been barbering in Ann Arbor for over 55 years.

## 5 SANFORD'S SHOE REPAIR

117 E Ann St

A native of North Carolina and a respected Masonic leader, Sanford McKinney ran his shoe shine and repair shop from 1928 until his death in 1970. Early on, he shared space with Hing Lee Laundry, a

Chinese-owned business in operation since 1896. In 1940, he opened his own shop at 117 E Ann. This was the same location that one of Ann Arbor's early African American barbers, Henry Wade Robbins, purchased in 1915.

## 6 WHITMAN'S POOL HALL AND MYRTLE'S BEAUTY SHOP

119 E Ann St

Often seen with a cigar in his mouth, George Whitman ran his pool hall on Ann Street from 1934 until 1953. His wife Myrtle had a beauty shop on the second floor, which employed several other African American women as hairdressers.

## 7 COLORED WELFARE LEAGUE

209-211 N. Fourth Ave

Another hub of black-owned businesses in Ann Arbor was the Kayser Block, which was built in 1899. At one time a hotel owned by African American heavyweight champion Hank Griffin, in 1921 the Colored Welfare League purchased the building to provide boarding for black workers in the area. Storefronts were rented to black businesses such as John L. Ragland's law offices, Sadie's Beauty Shop, and Julia's Tea Room, and upper floors were opened to social organizations such as the Dunbar Community Center.

In 1966 the space was purchased by J. D. Hall, a young black barber who rented to community organizations such as the Women's Crisis Center and the Community Leaning Post, a nonprofit established by his sister Lucille Hall Porter in 1983. Ms. Porter also founded the African American Downtown Festival in order to remember the contribution of the many black business people and residents who were active in the Ann Street area in the 1930s through the 1970s.

## 8 DELONG'S BAR-B-Q PIT

314 Detroit St

Several years after moving from Jackson, Mississippi with his mother and her secret barbecue sauce recipe, Robert Thompson and his wife Adeline remodeled a former gas station to open DeLong's Bar-B-Q Pit. This longstanding black-owned business, which quickly became a local favorite, operated from 1964 to 2001 across from the Ann Arbor Farmers Market.

**9 JONES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL***401 N. Division*

Established in 1922, Jones Elementary School taught the majority of black students in Ann Arbor. After *Brown v. The Board of Education*, the Ann Arbor Board of Education conducted a racial imbalance study, which found that 3 out of 4 students at Jones School were African American. In 1964, the Board voted to close Jones Elementary School and bus the children to five area elementary schools. Community High School was established at the same site in 1972.

**10 UNION CHURCH***504 High St*

High Street was the site of Ann Arbor's first black church, the Union Church. The building appears on a map of Ann Arbor from 1854, and it was regularly used until the 1870s, when the congregation split to form two separate churches, which are now known as Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and Second Baptist Church.

**11 BLACK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE***340 Depot St.*

Here at the headquarters of the Washtenaw County Black Economic Development League, young African Americans had the opportunity to learn about computer technology, computer and television repair, photography, journalism, and other media skills. Washtenaw County BEDL was founded by Charles Thomas Jr., who led a reparations effort supported by many local churches and synagogues in the early 1970s.

**12 WHEELER PARK***200 Depot St*

Until the late 1960s, the site of Wheeler Park in this historically African American neighborhood featured Lankys's Junk Yard and Peters Sausage Company. Concerned residents asked the city to buy the lots, which were eventually demolished and converted into Summit Park. In 1987, the Ann Arbor City Council voted to rename it Wheeler Park to honor Ann Arbor's first African American mayor, Albert H. Wheeler, who served 1974-78. Wheeler helped establish Ann Arbor's Fair Housing Ordinance, the Human Relations Commission, and the Ann Arbor chapter of the NAACP.

**13 BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH****(BETHEL AME CHURCH)***632 N. Fourth Ave*

Established in 1896, Bethel AME Church was an offshoot of the Union Church, Ann Arbor's first black church. The parishioners, who had among them many skilled laborers, built much of this building. Located in one of the few neighborhoods in Ann Arbor where African Americans were permitted to purchase property, the church was a community anchor. In 1972, the congregation dedicated a new building at 900 Plum Street (now John A. Woods Drive).

**14 JOHNNIE MAE SEELEY'S HOUSE***203 Beakes St.*

Johnnie Mae Seeley moved to Ann Arbor from Sarepta, Louisiana with her husband Howard M. Seeley in 1954. Establishing herself as a fixture of Ann Arbor's African American community, she became Deaconess of Bethel AME Church and an excellent gardener and cook. From her home at Beakes and 4th Ave, she hosted regular Sunday communal dinners as well as a large Fourth of July party.

**15 SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR***214 Beakes St*

Located here since the early 20th century, this baptist church served one of the few neighborhoods in Ann Arbor where African Americans were permitted to purchase property. In the early 1950s, the congregation razed the previous building to build a new structure which doubled the church's space. Rev. Charles W. Carpenter, who started his decades-long term as pastor in 1929, led the expansion. In 1980, the church moved to 850 Red Oak Rd.

**16 DUNBAR COMMUNITY CENTER***420 N. Fourth Ave*

First established in 1923, this community center was a major hub of social life for Ann Arbor's African American community during the era of segregation. Early on, the Dunbar Center rented space from the Colored Welfare League. In 1937, the Center purchased this 4th Avenue site. Here, director Douglas E. H. Williams and program director Virginia Ellis were able to increase the services and the activities that were offered to the African American community.

**17 ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY CENTER**  
*625 N. Main St*

In 1958, the Dunbar Community Center voted to change its name to the Ann Arbor Community Center, with the goal of expanding services to the entire populace. The Main St. building was completed in 1959 and dedicated in 1960, and the center was led by director Walter W. Hill, Sr. Although no longer located on Main St., the organization now, according to its website, "provides high quality programs, information and services to citizens in need."

**18 ELKS PRATT LODGE 322**  
*220 Sunset Rd*

First chartered in 1922, the Elks Pratt Lodge 322 (now the James L. Crawford Lodge) was a place for Ann Arbor's African American men to meet, socialize, and organize charitable events. A related women's auxiliary, the Daisy Chain Temple 212, was established in 1923. Early meetings were held at the Colored Welfare League until the Elks purchased a permanent home in 1944. In the 1960s, the group sponsored the award-winning French Dukes Precision Drill Team.

**19 ANN ARBOR FOUNDRY**  
*1327 Jones Dr*

In 1920, Charles Baker, a black man, partnered with Tom Cook, a Russian Jew, to form the Ann Arbor Foundry. Their long partnership lasted through 1972 when new regulations forced them to close.

**20 BRITT HOUSE**  
*1136 Catherine St*

Roberta Ellis Britt ran one of the private homes that housed black University of Michigan students, especially members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. In the 1940s and 1950s, she provided support and advice to the young women who stayed there.

# AADL LOCATIONS

**Downtown Library**

343 S. Fifth Avenue  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

**Malletts Creek Branch**

3090 E. Eisenhower Parkway  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

**Pittsfield Branch**

2359 Oak Valley Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

**Traverwood Branch**

3333 Traverwood Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

**Westgate Branch**

2503 Jackson Avenue  
Westgate Shopping Center  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

*Extended weekend hours at Westgate*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**[aadl.org](http://aadl.org) or 734.327.4200**

