

= M @-@ 1 ( Michigan highway ) =

M @-@ 1 , commonly known as Woodward Avenue , is a north ? south state trunkline highway in the Metro Detroit area of the US state of Michigan . The highway , called " Detroit 's Main Street " , runs from Detroit north @-@ northwesterly to Pontiac . The street is one of the five principal avenues of Detroit , which also include Michigan , Grand River , Gratiot and Jefferson avenues . These streets were platted in 1805 by Judge Augustus B. Woodward , namesake to Woodward Avenue . The US Department of Transportation has listed the highway as the Automotive Heritage Trail , an All @-@ American Road in the National Scenic Byways Program . It has also been designated a Pure Michigan Byway by the Michigan Department of Transportation ( MDOT ) . The roadway was also included in the MotorCities National Heritage Area designated by the US Congress in 1998 .

The trunkline is the dividing line between Detroit 's East and West sides , and it connects to some of the city 's major freeways like Interstate 94 ( I @-@ 94 , Edsel Ford Freeway ) and M @-@ 8 ( Davison Freeway ) . Woodward Avenue exits Detroit at M @-@ 102 ( 8 Mile Road ) and runs through the city 's northern suburbs in Oakland County on its way to Pontiac . In between , Woodward Avenue passes through several historic districts in Detroit and provides access to many businesses in the area . The name Woodward Avenue has become synonymous with Detroit , cruising culture and the automotive industry .

Woodward Avenue was created after the Detroit Fire in 1805 . It followed the route of the Saginaw Trail , an Indian trail that linked Detroit with Pontiac , Flint , and Saginaw . The Saginaw Trail also connected to the Mackinaw Trail , which ran north to the Straits of Mackinac at the tip of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan . In the age of the auto trails , Woodward Avenue was also part of the Theodore Roosevelt International Highway that connected Portland , Maine , with Portland , Oregon through Ontario in Canada . It was also a part of the Dixie Highway , which connected Michigan with Florida . Woodward Avenue was the location of the first mile ( 1 @.@ 6 km ) of concrete roadway in the country . When Michigan created the State Trunkline Highway System in 1913 , the roadway was included , numbered as part of M @-@ 10 in 1919 . Later , it was part of US Highway 10 ( US 10 ) following the creation of the United States Numbered Highway System . Since 1970 , it has borne the M @-@ 1 designation . The roadway carried streetcar lines from the 1860s until the 1950s ; a new light rail line will be added in the future .

= = Route description = =

Like other state highways in Michigan , the section of Woodward Avenue designated M @-@ 1 is maintained by MDOT . In 2011 , the department 's traffic surveys showed that on average , 64 @,@ 176 vehicles used the highway daily north of 11 Mile Road and 14 @,@ 592 vehicles did so each day near Grand Boulevard , the highest and lowest counts along the highway , respectively . All of M @-@ 1 north of I @-@ 75 is listed on the National Highway System , a network of roads important to the country 's economy , defense , and mobility . In addition to the sections of Woodward Avenue in Pontiac that are part of Business Loop I @-@ 75 ( BL I @-@ 75 ) and Business US 24 ( Bus . US 24 ) , all of M @-@ 1 is a Pure Michigan Byway and an All @-@ American Road . Woodward Avenue is also considered to be the divider between the East and West sides of the city of Detroit .

= = = Detroit and Highland Park = = =

Woodward Avenue starts at an intersection with Jefferson Avenue next to Hart Plaza about 750 feet ( 230 m ) from the Detroit River . The plaza is regarded as the birthplace of the Ford Motor Company , and it is located near Cobo Center and the Renaissance Center , headquarters for General Motors ( GM ) . Woodward Avenue runs north @-@ northwesterly away from the river through the heart of downtown Detroit and the Financial District . Along the way , it passes several important and historic sites , including notable buildings like One Woodward Avenue , the Guardian Building and The Qube . Woodward also passes The Spirit of Detroit , a statue used to symbolize the city . Further

north , Woodward Avenue runs around Campus Martius Park and enters the Lower Woodward Avenue Historic District , a retail , commercial , and residential district listed on the National Register of Historic Places ( NRHP ) . After that historic district , the avenue travels through the middle of Grand Circus Park ; the northern edge of the park is bounded by Adams Avenue , where state maintenance begins .

North of Adams Avenue , Woodward Avenue is a state trunkline designated M @-@ 1 . The highway crosses to the west of Comerica Park and Ford Field , home of Major League Baseball 's Detroit Tigers and the National Football League 's Detroit Lions , respectively . Woodward also passes the historic Fox Theatre before it crosses over I @-@ 75 ( Fisher Freeway ) without an interchange ; access between the two highways is through the service drives that connect to adjacent interchanges . A six @-@ lane street , the highway travels through mixed residential and commercial areas of Midtown including the Midtown Woodward Historic District , another district listed on the NRHP . South of I @-@ 94 , Woodward heads through the Cultural Center Historic District , which includes the campus of Wayne State University , the Detroit Public Library , and the Detroit Institute of Arts ( DIA ) . The DIA and the nearby Detroit Historical Museum both feature exhibits showcasing the city 's automotive history .

North of I @-@ 94 , Woodward passes through New Center ; this district is home to Cadillac Place , the former headquarters of GM . The neighborhoods on either side of the highway transition in composition north of New Center ; this area is mostly residential in nature . Between the intersections with Webb Street / Woodland Street and Tuxedo Street / Tennyson Street , Woodward Avenue leaves the city of Detroit for the first time and crosses into Highland Park , an enclave within Detroit . It is within Highland Park that M @-@ 1 intersects M @-@ 8 , the Davison Freeway . Woodward passes over the Davison , which is the first urban , depressed freeway in the US , at an interchange south of Highland Park 's downtown business district . M @-@ 1 crosses that district and runs next to the historic Highland Park Ford Plant , home of the original moving assembly line used to produce Model Ts ; opened in 1910 , the plant 's assembly line dropped the time needed to build a car from 12 hours to 93 minutes and allowed Ford to meet demand for the car .

M @-@ 1 crosses back into Detroit at the intersection with McNichols Road ; the latter street occupies the 6 Mile location in Detroit 's Mile Road System . North of this intersection , Woodward Avenue widens into a boulevard , a divided street with a median ; left turns along this section of roadway are made by performing a Michigan left maneuver using the U @-@ turn crossovers in the median . Between McNichols and 7 Mile Road , Woodward Avenue travels to the east of the Detroit Golf Club in the Palmer Park area . North of 7 Mile , the highway runs to the west of the Michigan State Fairgrounds and to the east of the Palmer Woods Historic District . The northern edge of the fairgrounds is at M @-@ 102 ( 8 Mile Road ) , which is also where Woodward Avenue exits Detroit for the second time ; the two boulevards cross in a large interchange .

= = = Oakland County = = =

Crossing the border into the suburb of Ferndale in Oakland County , the highway runs through residential neighborhoods but is lined with adjacent businesses . The intersection with 9 Mile Road marks the suburb 's downtown area . Further north in Pleasant Ridge , the north @-@ northwesterly path of Woodward Avenue changes as the road turns to the northwest . After the curve , M @-@ 1 meets I @-@ 696 ( Reuther Freeway ) ; immediately north of this interchange in Huntington Woods is the Detroit Zoo . North of 11 Mile Road , Woodward Avenue forms the border between Berkley to the west and Royal Oak to the east . The highway passes the Roseland Park Cemetery north of 12 Mile Road before crossing fully into Royal Oak . Near 13 Mile Road , the trunkline passes through a commercial district anchored by a shopping center and the Beaumont Hospital . North of 14 Mile Road in Birmingham , M @-@ 1 and Woodward Avenue leaves its original route , which is named Old Woodward Avenue , and runs to the east of it to bypass that suburb 's downtown area . The highway crosses the River Rouge and returns to its original routing north of Maple ( 15 Mile ) Road .

North of Birmingham , Woodward crosses through part of Bloomfield Township for the first time before entering Bloomfield Hills . That suburb 's downtown is centered on the intersection with Long

Lake Road ; Woodward passes between a pair of golf courses north of there . The highway enters the south side of Pontiac 's residential neighborhoods after crossing back into Bloomfield Township . At the intersection with Square Lake Road , M @-@ 1 terminates . Woodward Avenue continues northwesterly into Pontiac carrying the BL I @-@ 75 and Bus . US 24 designations ; it terminates after the two directions of the boulevard diverge and form a one @-@ way loop around the city 's business district .

= = Cultural significance = =

= = = Scenic and historic designations = = =

Many historical sites are located along Woodward Avenue , which was included in the MotorCities National Heritage Area when it was created on November 6 , 1998 . The road was designated what is now called a Pure Michigan Byway by MDOT in 1999 , and a National Scenic Byway by the Federal Highway Administration ( FHWA ) National Scenic Byways Program on June 13 , 2002 , the only urban road at the time with that classification . It was later upgraded to All @-@ American Road status on October 16 , 2009 ; such roads have highly unique features and are significant enough to be tourist destinations unto themselves . In announcing the byway status in 2002 , Norman Mineta , then United States Secretary of Transportation , said that " Woodward Avenue put the world on wheels , and America 's automobile heritage is represented along this corridor . " Other sources have called it the " Father Road " , in contrast to U.S. Route 66 's title as the " Mother Road " .

The Woodward Avenue Action Association ( WA3 ) , the local agency that acts as the stewards and advocates for the All @-@ American Road and Pure Michigan Byway designations as well as adjacent historical sites , obtained a grant for \$ 45 @,@ 000 from the FHWA in 2011 to install a set of 50 custom road signs along M @-@ 1 between Detroit and Pontiac . The signs took 18 months to design and fabricate in consultation with the local communities , MDOT and DTE Energy . The signs proved to be popular , enough so that two of them were stolen in the first months after installation . WA3 is offering replicas of these unique signs to discourage theft , and the proceeds raise funds for future sign maintenance . Profits are also being used along with money from clothing and other merchandise to support the Woodward Avenue Beautification Fund , a special endowment created in 2010 to aid the 11 communities along the highway with maintenance and to defray costs associated with special events on the avenue .

In addition to the custom signage , WA3 has received FHWA grant funding to erect a series of lighted " tributes " : solar @-@ powered , lighted pillars that contain artwork related to the roadway . The \$ 150 @,@ 000 glass and concrete sculptures are being placed in the median along Woodward Avenue to serve as landmarks along the route of the roadway and to brand it for tourists . A total of 10 ? 12 installations are planned for the length of the highway in Wayne and Oakland counties . The art project received a 2011 National Scenic Byway Award for the Byways interpretation category .

= = = Religion , entertainment , and cars = = =

The area around Woodward was once nicknamed " Piety Hill " . There are 22 churches on the NRHP along the street in Detroit and Highland Park . According to The Detroit News , the sounds of church bells and horse hooves were some of the most distinctive sounds on Sundays along Woodward Avenue in the early 20th century . Later , the street was home to the jazz clubs of the 1910s and 1920s . During the 1940s , ministers lobbied for a law to prevent the issuance of additional liquor licenses in their neighborhood ; the law was overturned in 1950 . Nightclubs hosted a burgeoning music scene in the early days of rock ' n roll , and the area also had plenty of bars and even burlesque shows as late as the 1970s . One local journalist called the mix of churches , clubs , and bars along Woodward Avenue " a precarious balance between the sacred and the profane . "

In addition to music clubs , many of Detroit 's other important entertainment fixtures are located on or near Woodward in downtown Detroit , including the Fox Theatre , Majestic Theater and the rest of

the theater district . During World War II , the area was also home to 24 @-@ hour movie theaters and bowling alleys . Curfews across the river in Windsor , Ontario , meant that many patrons during the war years were Canadian . They frequented the establishments in addition to the Americans , many of whom worked in the factories of the Detroit area . Since the 1990s , the theater district has undergone a renaissance after renovations and improvements during the 1980s .

Woodward Avenue 's connection to Detroit 's automobile culture dates back to the early 20th century . Around 100 automobile companies were founded along the roadway . Henry Ford developed and first produced the Model T in 1907 ? 08 at his Piquette Avenue Plant to the east of Woodward Avenue . The first 12 @,@ 000 Model Ts were built there , before Ford moved production of his cars to the Highland Park plant adjacent to Woodward Avenue in 1910 . Employees at the plant used the streetcar system along Woodward to get to work ; these lines also provided transportation options to assembly plant workers affected by gas rationing during World War II . During the 1950s and 1960s , automobile engineers street tested their cars along Woodward Avenue between 8 Mile and Square Lake roads ; the roadway was the only such location where this activity was practiced .

= = = Woodward Dream Cruise = = =

Young carriage drivers raced one another along Woodward Avenue after the roadway was converted from logs to planks in 1848 . They placed bets on each other 's carriages while racing from tavern to tavern . By 1958 , the roadway was used for unofficial street racing with cars . The wide width , median and sections lacking a large commercial presence attracted a reputation for the competition . The numerous drive @-@ ins , each with its dedicated local teenaged clientele , were also popular . Woodward also had numerous car dealerships and automobile accessory shops in the age of the muscle car which completed the formula for young adults to cruise , race and hang out along the road .

The Woodward Dream Cruise takes place on Woodward Avenue between Pontiac and Ferndale during August of each year , evoking nostalgia of the 1950s and 1960s , when it was common for young drivers to " cruise " with their cars on Woodward Avenue . The event attracts huge crowds of classic car owners and admirers from around the world to the Metro Detroit area in celebration of Detroit 's automotive history . The cruise was founded in 1995 as a fundraiser for a soccer field in Ferndale . Neighboring cities joined in , and by 1997 , auto manufacturers and other vendors had begun sponsoring the event . An estimated one million spectators attended the 2009 event .

= = History = =

= = = Indian trails and plank roads = = =

In 1701 , the first transportation routes through what became the state of Michigan were the lakes , rivers and Indian trails . One of these , the Saginaw Trail , followed what is now Woodward Avenue from the Detroit area north to Saginaw , where it connected with the Mackinaw Trail north to the Straits of Mackinac . The Town of Detroit created 120 @-@ foot @-@ wide ( 37 m ) rights @-@ of @-@ way for the principal streets of the city in 1805 . This street plan was devised by Augustus Woodward and others following a devastating fire in Detroit , with a mandate from the territorial governor to improve on the previous plan . The wide width of the avenues was an emulation of the street plan for Washington , DC , and intended to make Detroit the " Paris of the West " .

Augustus Woodward was a judge in the Michigan Territory appointed by his friend , President Thomas Jefferson . He was also a colonel in the territorial militia and a president of one of Detroit 's first banks . Woodward named the street for himself , responding whimsically to the resulting criticism : " Not so . The avenue is named Woodward because it runs wood @-@ ward , toward the woods . " Other proposals for names included Court House Street or Market Street . For a time , one section was named Congress Street , Witherell Street , Saginaw Road or Saginaw Turnpike , with

another section dubbed Pontiac Road . Unlike these other monikers , the avenue retained the judge 's name .

Detroit was incorporated in 1815 , and the initial roadway to connect Detroit north to Pontiac along the Saginaw Trail was started in 1817 ; this was a corduroy road built by laying down logs and filling in the gaps with clay or sand . The territorial legislature authorized a survey of the roadway to Pontiac on December 7 , 1818 , and the route was approved by Governor Lewis Cass on December 15 , 1819 , the first to be done in the future state . The Michigan Legislature authorized the construction of a private plank road with tolls to connect Detroit with Pontiac in 1848 . By the next year , 16 @-@ foot @-@ wide ( 4 @.@ 9 m ) and 3 @-@ inch @-@ thick ( 7 @.@ 6 cm ) oak planks were laid along the road between the two communities . Tolls were one cent per mile ( 0 @.@ 62 ¢ / km ) for vehicles and two cents per mile ( 1 @.@ 2 ¢ / km ) for a herd of cattle . Tolls along some segments of Woodward Avenue remained in place as late as 1908 .

The first automobile in Detroit was driven by Charles Brady King along Woodward Avenue on March 3 , 1896 , a few weeks before Henry Ford drove his first car in the city . In 1909 , the first mile ( 1 @.@ 6 km ) of concrete roadway in the country was paved between 6 and 7 Mile roads at a cost of \$ 14 @,@ 000 ( equivalent to \$ 2 @.@ 17 million in 2015 ) .

= = = State Trunkline era = = =

On May 13 , 1913 , the Legislature created the state 's highway system ; Woodward Avenue was included as part of " Division 2 " . The full length was paved in 1916 . The first crows nest traffic tower in the US was installed at the intersection of Woodward and Michigan avenues on October 9 , 1917 ; the tower elevated a police officer above the center of the intersection to direct traffic before the structure was replaced in October 1920 with the world 's first four @-@ way traffic light . The state signposted its highways in 1919 , and Woodward Avenue was assigned the M @-@ 10 designation . The same year , two auto trail designations were applied to the avenue . The Theodore Roosevelt International Highway was created in February 1919 , running from Detroit northward along Woodward Avenue . Later that year , the Dixie Highway was extended through Detroit to the Straits of Mackinac , following the route of the old Saginaw Trail northward along Woodward Avenue .

Since 1924 , Woodward Avenue has hosted America 's Thanksgiving Parade , the second oldest Thanksgiving Day parade in the United States . In 1925 , the intersection between Woodward Avenue and State Street was busier than Times Square . On November 11 , 1926 , the United States Numbered Highway System was approved by the American Association of State Highway Officials ( AASHO ) ; the M @-@ 10 designation along Woodward was replaced with US 10 , a moniker that ran from Detroit to Seattle , Washington .

Legal disputes over a plan to widen Woodward Avenue dating back to 1874 were resolved in 1932 . Permission was needed from a majority of the landowners along Woodward Avenue to finalize the deal . John W. Chandler , general manager of the Woodward Avenue Improvement Association , pledged not to shave his face until he had the necessary permissions in hand . This resolution allowed Woodward to be widened from 66 to 120 feet ( 20 to 37 m ) . Several buildings were removed to clear the wider street path , and St. John 's Episcopal Church was moved 60 feet ( 18 m ) to avoid demolition . Work started in 1933 and cost \$ 7 @.@ 5 million ( equivalent to \$ 919 million in 2015 ) to complete .

A bypass of downtown Birmingham opened between late 1939 and early 1940 , drawing through traffic away from the busy Woodward Avenue ? Maple Road intersection . The bypass was originally named Hunter Boulevard . In 1996 , though , Birmingham renamed the bypass to Woodward Avenue , with the previous alignment of Woodward signed as Old Woodward Avenue .

In October 1969 , AASHO approved the realignment of US 10 in the Detroit area ; the next year the designation was rerouted to follow the Lodge Freeway ( what is now M @-@ 10 ) and the portion of Jefferson Avenue between the Lodge and Randolph Street ( then US 25 , now M @-@ 3 ) . The M @-@ 1 designation was applied to the section of Woodward Avenue , from Jefferson Avenue in downtown Detroit , to Square Lake Road along the southern border of Pontiac . Woodward north of

Square Lake Road was designated as business routes of US 10 and I @-@ 75 . When US 10 was truncated to Bay City in 1986 , the Bus . US 10 portion of Woodward became Bus . US 24 .

In the early 1980s , M @-@ 1 was truncated in downtown Detroit , as the Woodward Mall was designated in the area around Cadillac Square . At the end of 2000 , MDOT proposed several highway transfers in Detroit . Some of these involved transferring city streets in the Campus Martius Park area under the department 's jurisdiction to city control ; another part of the proposal involved MDOT assuming control over a section of Woodward Avenue from Adams Avenue south to Grand River Avenue . These transfers were completed the following year . In 2004 , however , the southern terminus was moved north three blocks to Adams Avenue .

= = = Streetcars and subways = = =

On August 27 , 1863 , the Detroit City Railway Company ( DCRC ) established streetcar service along Woodward from Jefferson to Adams avenues . The company was formed by investors from Syracuse , New York , earlier that year . Later , on September 18 , 1886 , a separate electrified line , the Highland Park Railway , was added that ran along Woodward Avenue through Highland Park . In mid @-@ December 1893 , the main streetcar line was electrified by the DCRC . In 1901 , the various lines throughout the city were consolidated as the Detroit United Railway .

Detroit took control of the Detroit Unified Railway on May 15 , 1922 ; afterwards , the streetcar system became the city 's Department of Street Railways . Following the change in control , the city also formed the Detroit Rapid Transit Commission to build a subway system . Early proposals included a station under Woodward Avenue next to Detroit City Hall . In 1926 , a four @-@ line system encompassing 47 miles ( 76 km ) of lines was proposed at a cost of \$ 280 million ( equivalent to \$ 18 @.@ 7 billion in 2015 ) . By 1929 , plans were scaled back further in the face of tough local economic conditions ; the plan submitted to voters included one line of 13 @.@ 3 miles ( 21 @.@ 4 km ) that interconnected with the city 's streetcar system with two 2 @.@ 5 @-@ mile @-@ long ( 4 @.@ 0 km ) streetcar tunnels . The bond proposal failed by a 2 @.@ 5 : 1 margin that year , killing any proposal for a city subway system in Detroit .

The street car system , like those in other cities across the US , fell into decline after World War II . Unlike the Great American streetcar conspiracy alleged in other cities , the decline of Detroit 's publicly owned system was related to a multitude of different factors . Increased spending on roads benefitted competing bus lines , and zoning changes coupled with freeway construction shifted the city 's population to areas away from the older street car lines . During the early 1950s , several lines were converted to buses after labor strikes , and other lines were eliminated completely . Later on April 8 , 1956 , a parade was held when the last streetcars stopped running along Woodward Avenue and in Detroit ; the remaining cars were sent to Mexico City .

= = Future = =

Local business and government officials have proposed two projects to add modern streetcars to M @-@ 1 . The Woodward Avenue Light Rail line was a proposed light rail line that would have run for approximately nine miles ( 14 km ) along Woodward Avenue from the transit center at Michigan Avenue north to the state fairgrounds . Another proposed venture , the M @-@ 1 Rail Line , would run for 3 @.@ 4 miles ( 5 @.@ 5 km ) in the downtown area only . Suggestions to unify the two plans were made in late 2008 , and the Detroit City Council approved the sale of \$ 125 million in bonds on April 11 , 2011 , for the longer system . The line was approved by the Federal Transit Administration on August 31 , 2011 , with service expected at the time to start in 2015 . However , just months later , the federal government withdrew its support for the longer proposed line , in favor of a bus rapid transit system which would serve the city and its suburbs ; Woodward Avenue would have a dedicated bus lane under this system . This decision was made after talks between Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood , Detroit Mayor Dave Bing and Governor Rick Snyder .

Private investors who supported the shorter three @-@ mile line to New Center stated that they would continue developing that project . In January 2013 , LaHood announced \$ 15 million in federal

funding for the M @-@ 1 Rail Line . The final environmental clearance was granted in April 2013 to allow the project to start right @-@ of @-@ way purchases and construction . Construction started on July 28 , 2014 . The streetcar line will stretch from downtown Detroit to Grand Boulevard in New Center . There will be 20 different stations serving 12 stops , with most of the stations being curbside on either side of Woodward Avenue going uptown or downtown , but changing to center road stations at the north and south ends of the system . The streetcar line is expected to be operational in late 2016 .

= = Major intersections = =