

FIG. II-5

III. BUFFALO'S RETAIL CORE

A. SUMMARY

In terms of population and disposable income, the Buffalo trade area offers a rich and expanding potential for retail business. However, because of such factors as the Core area's geography, the economic and demographic characteristics of its population, the growth of a highly developed market district in the nearby Broadway-Fillmore area, and a lack of adequate planning in the past, Buffalo's CBD has failed to attract its full share of the metropolitan market. During the critical postwar period, when decentralization of population and markets became a national trend, Downtown Buffalo exhibited a decline in both relative and absolute terms (measured by sales and the number of establishments), and in general failed to do as well as Core areas of other large cities in the region.

This decline has accelerated in recent years, primarily because of the rapid growth of suburban and regional market centers and the absence of any major readjustments within the Core area. Interviews with merchants and the buying public indicate contraction will continue unless definite corrective steps are taken.

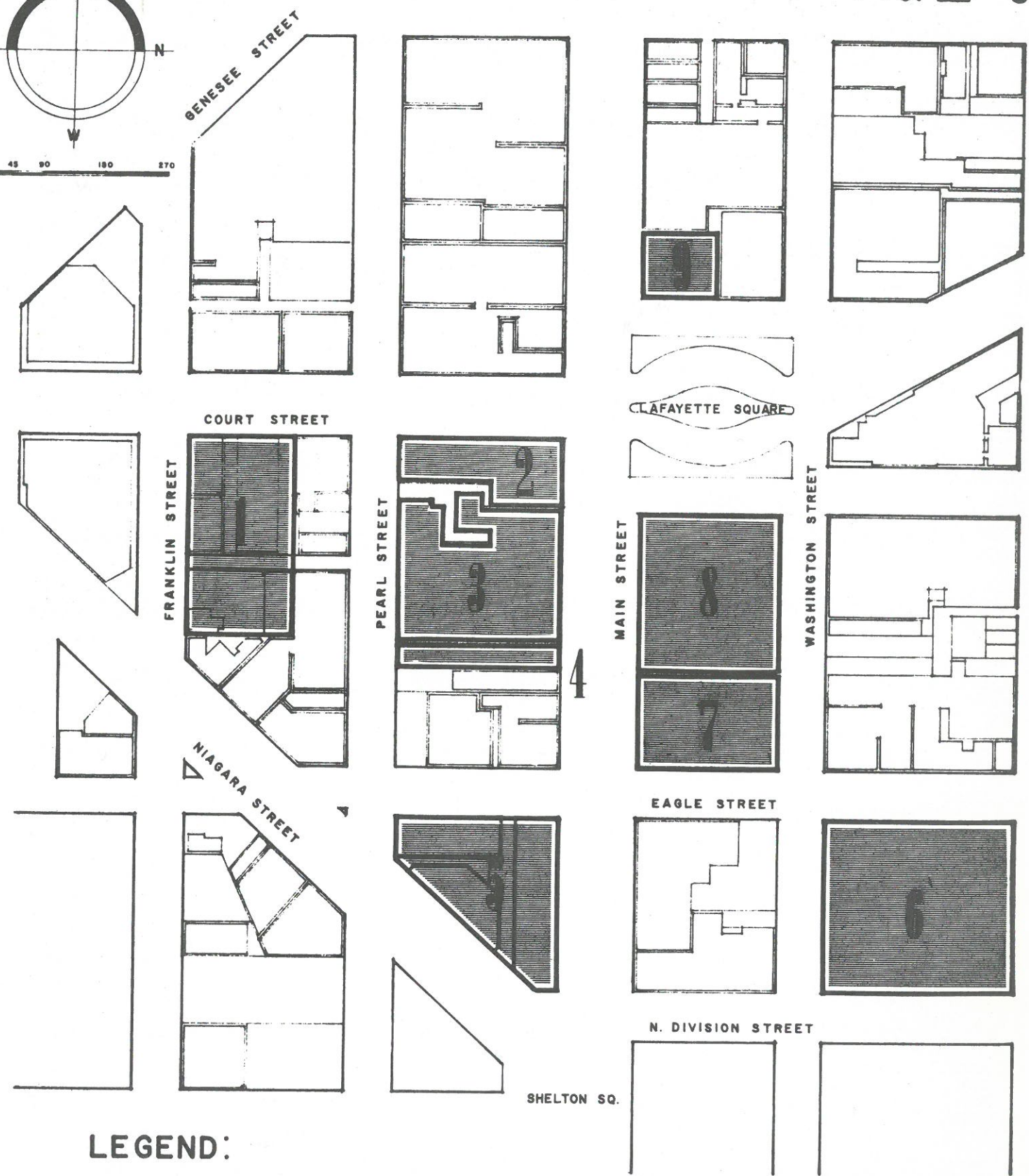
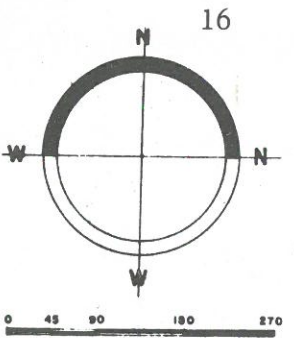
Barring any dramatic and pronounced change in current trends or in the existing environment, the foreseeable future holds, at best, limited opportunities for arresting the present downward trend.

An examination of the physical plant presently housing Buffalo's retail activities shows that adequate, if not excessive, space now exists. Any plan for revitalizing the city's commercial Core should take into account the high percentage of vacant commercial space immediately off Main Street. Such a plan should be designed to "tighten up" the retail area by making more effective use of existing space, while at the same time contracting, in a physical sense, retail activities.

B. BUFFALO RETAIL MARKET

1. Geographic Trade Area

An analysis of retail purchases made in Buffalo and entailing the plotting and examination of charge-account customer addresses, 39,000 retail-store deliveries, and frequency of purchases determined by an interview sample, indicates that the U. S. portion of the Buffalo urban trade area is made up of the eight counties of western New York: Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany. Estimates developed by Sales Management



LEGEND:

- 1. PROPOSED RAMP
- 2. LIBERTY BANK
- 3. VACANT A.M. & A. PROPERTIES
- 4. KOBACKERS
- 5. KREMLIN BLOCK
- 6. EAGLE STREET RAMP
- 7. NEW A.M. & A. LOCATION.
- 8. KLEINHANS CO.
- 9. TISHMAN BUILDING

REFERENCE MAP (CBD)