

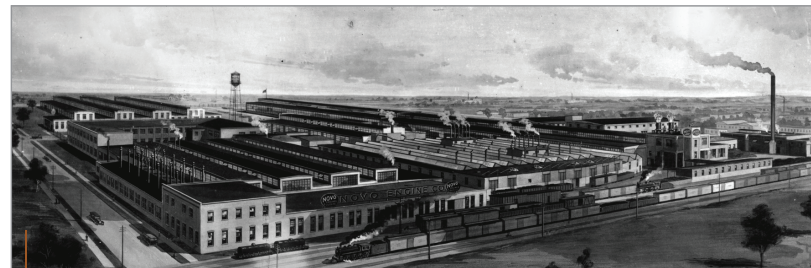
LANSING'S OLD TOWN Industry by the River



Until 1933, people who did not live in the neighborhood could take the Lansing Street Railway to work. This photo of Franklin Street, now Grand River Avenue, was taken around 1910. Photo courtesy of Archives of Michigan.

This neighborhood specialized in making tools.

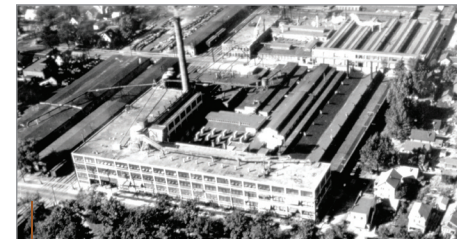
The neighborhood began as a commercial crossroads by the Grand River with a mill, a brewery, butchers and shops. By 1900, it was a center for making plows and other agricultural tools. The arrival of the Olds and Reo motor car companies changed the face of the neighborhood. New factories made auto bodies, wheels and parts. Forges dotted the landscape, and Lansing grew as thousands of workers found jobs, bought homes and shopped at neighborhood commercial centers.



Good rail service drew companies like Nova Engine Works, which arrived in Old Town in 1912. Photo courtesy of R.C. Leavenworth Photo Collection, Archives of Michigan.



W. K. Prudden provided wheels for wagons, carriages and cars. His firm eventually occupied several buildings in Old Town, including this one at 701 May Street. Photo courtesy of Archives of Michigan.



Prudden joined Auto Wheel and Gier Pressed Steel to form Motor Wheel in 1920. This 1929 photo shows the neighborhood literally next door to Motor Wheel, which was then the world's largest producer of both wooden and steel wheels. Photo courtesy of Archives of Michigan.

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Lansing was once known as the "drop forge capital of the world."