



### Front - Title/Description

#### **Ottawa Beach**

Ottawa Beach is a well-preserved example of the summer cottage resorts that developed along the Lake Michigan shore during the late nineteenth century. In 1885 the West Michigan Park Association purchased eighty acres of land here. In May 1886 Ottawa County Surveyor Albert Peck platted the resort with 150 cottage lots, streets, and a lot for a hotel. He designated the majority of the land as park area owned in common by cottagers, with each residential lot abutting one of the parks. The Hotel Ottawa, built immediately for the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad (later the Pere Marquette Railway), was one of the largest resort hotels on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. Some guests arrived by train, many by steamship from Chicago. The hotel burned in 1923.

#### **Significant Date:**

Industry and Invention (1875-1915)

**Registry Year:** 2002     **Erected Date:** 2002

### Marker Location

**Address:** Ottawa Beach Road

**City:** Holland

**State:** MI     **ZipCode:**

**County:** Ottawa

**Township:** Park

**Lat:** 42.77533700 / **Long:** -86.20114300

**Web URL:**

### Back - Title/Description

#### **Ottawa Beach**

Construction of cottages in the Ottawa Beach resort began in June 1886. Most cottage owners, shareholders in the West Michigan Park Association, hailed from Grand Rapids. Among the earliest cottagers were prominent business people, furniture makers, railroad officers, and politicians. For more than a century, the same families returned each summer, often occupying the same houses for decades. From the 1930s through the mid 1960s future U.S. President Gerald Ford spent many summer vacations at Ottawa Beach, first at his parents' cottage and then at one he owned with his brothers. In 2001 Ford recalled: "I loved Ottawa Beach—both cottages. There is no finer sand beach worldwide." Ottawa Beach is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.