OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal

other names/site number Royal Towers Apartments, Sam's Parking

2. Location

street & number 901-937 McGee St. 301-311 E. 9th St., 300-310 E. Tenth St., 906-912 Oak St. [N/A] not for publication

city or town Kansas City [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Jackson code 095 zip code 64106

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles 02/10/05

Signature of certifying official Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.
([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date

[ ] entered in the National Register
[ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other (explain):
[ ] See continuation sheet.

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
[x] private
[ ] public-Local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)
[x] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
4	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category:		Sub:
	DOMESTIC	Hotel
	COMMERCE	Business
	TRANSPORTATION	Road-related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category:		Sub:
	DOMESTIC	Multiple dwelling
	COMMERCE	Business
	TRANSPORTATION	Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)
Category: Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements **Sub:** Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation CONCRETE
Walls BRICK
STONE
Roof ASPHALT
Other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheets, Pages 5-9

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[x] **A.** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] **B.** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[x] **C.** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] **D.** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

[ ] **A.** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B.** removed from its original location.

[ ] **C.** a birthplace or a grave.

[ ] **D.** a cemetery.

[ ] **E.** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

[ ] **F.** a commemorative property.

[ ] **G.** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE
ARCHITECTURE
TRANSPORTATION

Periods of Significance

1930-1955

Significant Dates 1930

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Architect/Builder Wight and Wight/Architect
Thompson Starrett Co./Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheets, Pages 10-13

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
See attached Continuation Sheet, page 14

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:
[x] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal agency
[x] Local government
[ ] University
[x] Other :
Name of repository:
Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM-KC

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 1.5 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	363460	4329380	3			
2				4			

[N/A] See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See Page 15

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See Page 15

11. Form Prepared By

name/title W. Anthony Eeds, Principal; Claudia Alexander, Project Manager
organization White Rock Studio, LLC date January 10, 2001
street & number 1407 San Saba Drive telephone 214-321-2441
city or town Dallas state Texas zip code 75218

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
Continuation Sheets
Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.
Additional items: Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name See attached Continuation Sheet
organization _____
street & number _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____ telephone _____

Summary

Designed and constructed with a reinforced concrete and steel frame and clad in brick veneer with cut stone piers, caps and parapets, the Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal (collectively, Pickwick Complex, 901-937 McGee St, 301-311 E. 9th St., 300-310 E. Tenth St., 906-912 Oak St.) cuts a distinctive profile on the skyline of Kansas City. Constructed in 1929-30 in the Commercial style common in the early 20th century, the traditional base, shaft and cap configuration of the Pickwick Complex is somewhat conservative. Designed by Wight and Wight Architects of Kansas City, the evocative floral detailing and vertical emphasis of the cut stone work allude to Art Deco themes prominent in their later work. Based upon review of original design documentation, a primary intent of the design was to create a cohesive and consistent, yet interesting, image which spans the varying functions of the buildings.

Facing west along McGee Street, the primary façade comprises the entire block, beginning on the north with the Office Building with a Parking Garage access, then the Bus Terminal and the Pickwick Hotel. The 6-story office tower at the southeast corner of Ninth and McGee could also be entered from the Parking Garage entrance on Ninth. The 3-story Parking Garage has segmental arched entrances and exits on both McGee and Ninth Streets, as well as a drive exiting onto Oak. An arresting departure from the solid brick and stone structure, the open cut stone façade of the Bus Terminal soars to 6 stories above a two story concourse building. Buses could enter and exit from both McGee and Oak Streets. At the south end of the block, the 11-story Pickwick Hotel continues around the corner with an entrance on 10th Street. Fifteen retail storefront spaces were provided on the ground floors of the Office Building and Hotel. A basement provides service and mechanical areas for the complex.

Located in the heart of the central business district of Kansas City, the Pickwick Complex is surrounded by both historic and modern structures, including Siegrest Engraving, City Hall, the Federal Reserve Bank and the United Missouri Bank Data Center, as well as parking lots and other enterprises.

Elaboration

Common Elements

The extended parapet is the dominant common decorative element among the buildings of the Pickwick Complex. Also present throughout are a roof cap and piers of cut limestone. The cap is a solid wall with incised ogee arches connecting the piers which have risen the face of each building. In some areas, a decorated frieze supports the roof cap. It bears repeated deep relief motifs of the furled shoot of a young plant, barely contained within its square aperture. The piers have concave bevelled edges along their length with rounded caps. The exquisitely worked stone of the piers is adorned at the caps and at both the mezzanine and third story with sinuous vertical

reliefs of stalks or branches filled with leaves and acorns or berries. Many of these rich embellishments seem to jump out of the stone, while others are setback into the thick heart of the piers. The sensuous lines of these carvings evoke the fluid floral paintings of the then-emerging Georgia O'Keefe.

The extended parapets rise above the roof cap, continuing the stone another eight feet skyward. Incised semi-circular arches march across their faces as the ornamented pier caps break the plane of the stone wall. Distinct open colonnades are found on the Bus Terminal and the Hotel, described below. A continuous lintel above the third floor windows marks the upper limit of the base of the Complex. It provides an uninterrupted horizontal line around the Ninth, McGee and Tenth Street façades. The fenestration above this level of the Office Building and Hotel is consistent. with one or two windows piercing each bay on each floor, except on the recessed face of the Hotel which has three windows per bay. Granite panels form the base of the window sills for the storefronts along ground level. A blend of red face brick is used throughout, ensuring that viewers recognize the collection of buildings as one contiguous development.

Pickwick Office Building

Rectangular in plan, the Pickwick Office Building consists of approximately 38,000 square feet on six stories plus a mezzanine. There are nine brick veneer bays separated by cut stone piers along the McGee Street façade with three storefront bays fronting on Ninth. The main entrance is located near the building's midpoint on McGee Street, where grade level doors open onto the elevator lobby. A stone panel above the entry identifies the "Pickwick Building." The mezzanine-level fenestration above and to the north of this entrance bay are marked by segmental arched windows with functional casement sections. There are cut stone keystones at the arched windows. Four bays to the south of the McGee entrance are capped by rectangular windows. For the second floor and above, windows are metal-framed, double-hung with plain lug sills of cast stone. Detailing is found on the cut stone piers which rise the full height of the building to join with the stone roof cap. A decorative extended, cut stone parapet rises several feet above the north-central section of the Office Building face.

The Ninth Street façade features three bays topped by segmental arched windows with bevelled keystones at the mezzanine level. Detailing is similar to the McGee façade with tall piers connecting to the roof cap and an extended parapet rich with Art Deco stylized floral details.

Panelled terrazzo floors and marble wainscoting enliven the vestibule and elevator lobby of the Office Building, as well as the corridors of the upper floors. Walls and ceilings were plastered and wood bases were standard. The first floor was consumed by the retail spaces and the lobby. On the mezzanine level, space was allocated for a locker room and waiting area for the bus drivers with direct access to the adjacent Bus Terminal. Offices also began on the mezzanine level, each having a reception area and a private office, some with private washrooms and coat

closets.

Parking Garage

The Pickwick Parking Garage is a three story structure which can house about 400 vehicles. Its main entrance is on Ninth Street, just east of the Office Building. This elevation is composed of six bays of varying widths, separated by full-height stone piers and capped by arch-decorated cut stone. Fenestration is factory sash style with functional hinged or pivoting sections. The only arched opening on this section of façade is the driveway into the Garage. The Parking Garage was a full-service enterprise with an office, attendant booth, gas pumps, a car wash rack, a waiting room, elevator and restrooms. Interior ramps are located on the north and south sides of the building, centered just west of the midpoint of the block. Additional entrances and exits are located on McGee and Oak Streets. Each driveway could be closed using wood panelled overhead doors.

Bus Terminal

The Bus Terminal is the visual centerpiece of the Pickwick Complex. Seven bays of alternating widths comprise the façade which culminates in a four-story, free standing, stone arcade. A broad entrance drive of cut stone with a semi-elliptical archway forms the base of this section of the McGee Street elevation. A central, elongated keystone is emblazoned with the stalk and leaf motif also found on the piers. The three central bays bear wrought iron grillwork at the mezzanine level and a bronze sign inscribed "Union Bus Terminal." These bays are filled with the red brick used throughout the Complex. At the center is found a grand, recessed clockface, supported by floral cut stone detailing and covered by a semi-circular arch with keystone. An extended parapet caps this section with the same high relief details seen elsewhere in the Complex. Open bays on either side of the clock are formed by the same stone piers and parapet cap found on the buildings. This is no fragile fancy, but a grand opening which allows a clear view of sky, nurturing a sense of lightness, grace and movement within the density of the urban core.

Passengers were served on both the ground floor and mezzanine levels. The Terminal itself is mostly just a concourse and driveway for the buses. Service areas were located in the adjacent Pickwick Hotel and Office buildings. The waiting room, ticket booth, baggage handling and check rooms were all located on the first floor of the Hotel. Buses servicing passengers on the ground floor concourse entered on Oak and exited to McGee Street. Those servicing the 2nd floor entered & exited from Oak Street. A baggage area as well as restrooms were located on the mezzanine level of the Hotel, while dressing and waiting rooms for bus drivers were positioned on the mezzanine level of the Office Building. The roof of Bus Terminal features large skylights to brighten an otherwise simple, functional space.

Both the Bus Terminal and Parking Garage span the width of the block from McGee to Oak Street. On their Oak Street facades, they bear the familiar full-height stone piers and roof cap, but lack the detailed floral motifs found on the primary façades. This section of the complex is four double-bays wide with one single bay adjacent to the former Gladstone Hotel (since demolished). Fenestration for the Garage and the rear of the Terminal is primarily multi-light, factory sash windows with hinged sections that open for ventilation.

Hotel

The Hotel is organized around a modified U-shaped plan with two wings and a central one story lobby with open mezzanine above. The exterior of the Pickwick Hotel is very similar to that of the Pickwick Office Building, with ground floor storefront, brick veneer broken by regular cut stone piers rising to join an ornamented roof cap and parapet. Moving from north to south along McGee, the façade of the north wing is comprised of three bays at ground level, each terminating with segmented arches at the mezzanine level. The center bay serves as the entrance to the transportation lobby of the Bus Terminal. Four cut stone piers rise to the ornamented roof cap and extended parapet. These elements are decorated identically to those on the Office Building, providing a visual tie between the two towers.

The façade of the central lobby section of the Hotel rises to the level of the third floor, where it is capped by an open, cut stone colonnade bearing the stylized leaf and stalk icon seen throughout the Complex. This colonnade obscures the roof of the lobby section and encloses a light court formed by the "U" in the building plan. The recessed west face of the central section is of brick, relieved by the typical cut stone pier and culminating in the ornamented roof cap. This central section of the Hotel encompasses four bays which were distinct retail storefronts at the time of design. A small light court at the rear of the building cuts into the base of the "U", but does not enjoy the decorative elements.

The south wing of the Hotel is very similar to the north wing, except that the main entrance to the Hotel is located in the northernmost of its three bays. The southern façade of the Hotel (along Tenth) has eight bays demarcated by full-height, cut stone piers. A second entrance to the Hotel was located in the fifth bay from the corner of McGee and Tenth Streets. The extended parapet found on the front façade is repeated over the first three bays. Bays 5,6 and 7 feature the same rectangular openings which appeared at the mezzanine level on the Office Building, while bays 1-4 and 8 have the typical arched opening. A similarly detailed window bay is found on the rear of the building, providing an attractive display space adjacent to the alley. The remainder of the rear of the Hotel faces an alley and is straightforward with no decorative elements. Fire escapes were provided at each of the hotel towers as well as at the rear of the Bus Terminal.

Designed to attract working people, the Pickwick Hotel offered a modern and tailored décor rather than ornate decoration. Terrazzo flooring on the ground floor was installed in a geometric block pattern which remains clearly visible today. A paneled ceiling and marble wainscoting add

richness to the lobby and registration areas. Also on the first floor, guests and visitors could enjoy a meal in the dining room, or make their way to the adjacent Bus Terminal. Marble railing and wainscot accent the staircase which carried guests from the lobby to the writing lounges and guest rooms on the mezzanine level. Sample rooms were also located on the mezzanine level so that traveling salesmen could display wares. Balconies overlooked the hotel lobby and the transportation lobby. A rear stairwell provided access to the mezzanine level bus concourse and to the Hotel administrative and service offices.

Hotel, continued

Guest rooms comprised the second through ninth floors. Standard finishes include plaster walls with wood or cement base and picture molding. Bathrooms were tiled. Floors were carpeted except at elevator vestibules, where terrazzo was installed.

A penthouse office was added to the Hotel for the use by radio stations KMBC and WHB, which broadcast from the site until 1968. Since elevator penthouses were already found on the roofs of the Office Building, Parking Garage and Hotel, this additional feature blended in readily. Flagpoles soaring more than 40' above the Hotel and the Office Building remain today. Each building in the complex has a basement which provides mechanical and service areas. The entire complex was served by steam heat and natural ventilation at the time of construction.

Integrity

In 1972, the Pickwick Hotel was converted to subsidized housing. In the renovations, the much of the storefront configuration originally constructed at the corner of 10th and McGee Street was removed. The walls were recessed and in-filled with brick veneer, resulting in an open arcade of the original stone piers. The original steel windows of the hotel were replaced with dark anodized aluminum windows. Whereas the upper floor originals were three-over-one double hung windows, the replacements (which fit the original openings) are one-over-one single hung. Those at the mezzanine level mimic the original casements, maintaining a very similar appearance to the original windows still found on the Office Building. A fire in the hotel building in 1996 resulted in the loss of most of the period details which remained following conversion of the space from a hotel to housing. The open areas on the mezzanine level of both the transportation lobby and the hotel were closed to create gathering spaces for the residents. Despite these changes, the exterior façade of the Hotel building above the first floor level, as well as the entire structure and general configuration of the building retain their original design.

For the most part, the facades of the remainder of the Pickwick Complex retain their original finishes. None of the structural elements have been changed, although various storefronts have been modernized, boarded up or in-filled. On the Office Building, the granite bases remain, while the plate glass and framing has been removed or covered in all but four of the storefront

bays. Throughout the complex the windows remain mostly as originally installed, except as noted in the Hotel. Broken and missing glazing is particularly common on the Parking Garage, although the window frames are mostly intact. Small areas of spalling and missing stone edges are visible on the facade, primarily on the exposed parapets of the buildings. Instances of water infiltration are also apparent. Overall, the structure remains in very good condition, and the original design and detail has not been obscured by modernization.

Summary

The Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal (collectively, Pickwick Complex) are locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Transportation, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Under Criterion A, in the area of Commerce, it is representative of the urban commercial buildings which sustained Kansas City as a regional business and government center throughout the mid-twentieth century. The Office Building offered functional, simple leased space for businesses needing access to the seats of finance and government. The Pickwick Hotel provided guest rooms, dining and meeting or sample display spaces for traveling businessmen. In the area of Transportation, the Parking Garage aided central business district development by establishing convenient and secure parking off the street. The Bus Terminal permitted both area workers and visitors from throughout the region to travel efficiently to the city center. Under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, the Pickwick Complex is significant as an early example of a multi-use facility, where many services could be provided within the context of the structure. It comprises almost three-quarters of the downtown block bounded by 9th, 10th, McGee and Oak Streets. It is also locally significant as an example of the work of the prestigious Kansas City firm of Wight and Wight. Designed in 1929, it is traditional in overall design with a familiar early skyscraper scheme of base, shaft and cap, while the entire complex bears ornamentation associated with the then-emerging Art Deco style. It is also locally significant as one of several structures from a Depression era building boom that established the dominant architectural theme of the central business district of Kansas City for most of the 20th century. The period of significance for the Pickwick Complex is from 1930-55, the construction date to the 50 year arbitrary cut off date and the height of central business district activity in Kansas City.

Elaboration

The firm owned by Thomas and Edward Wight was responsible for numerous buildings in the early 20th century in Kansas City. Wight and Wight became a leading firm in the city through its work in the Neo-Classical tradition. The Wight brothers had received training in Europe and were thus exposed to the magnificent, classical architecture of the Victorian period. Opening practice in 1904 in Kansas City, they established themselves as successful conveyors of the commerce-oriented, conservative, yet striving personality of the city. Examples of this work included the First National Bank and the Kansas City Life Insurance Company buildings.

By the late 1920's, Kansas City was a well-established, growing regional center for trade and transportation with a population over 350,000 . A booming economy and explosive growth gave rise to significant new construction up until the Great Depression struck in 1929. Even then, major commercial projects already being discussed were completed. Among these were the Professional Building, Kansas City Power and Light Building and the Bryant Building. All three

were high-rises which incorporated Art Deco ornamentation with set-backs and vertically-oriented facades to establish an updated design trend for the urban core of the city.

The Pickwick Complex is contemporaneous to these towers, yet reflects the more restrained style of its local designers, Wight and Wight. The Pickwick is a prime example of the subtle shifts and slow accommodations which architects must incorporate into their work to please both patrons and the incessant movement of design and taste. Clean, simple floral and geometric ornamentation is applied to a traditional late 19th century style skyscraper composed of a base, shaft and cap. There is a certain restraint in the ornamentation, but the extensive use of cut stone piers (which continue the full height of the building) creates a vertical emphasis common in Art Deco skyscrapers. While the signature setbacks, radius edges and highly stylized geometric and curvilinear detailing which signify the Art Deco movement are not present, it is clear that Wight and Wight were embracing a new movement with their design of the Pickwick Complex.

The Pickwick Complex foreshadows a style which Wight and Wight would develop more highly in the large public buildings they would go on to design later in the 1930's: City Hall, the County Courthouse and the Municipal Courts Building. For instance, the vertical line established by the recessed spandrels and ornamented piers on the Pickwick Hotel is strongly re-established by similar elements in the Courthouse and City Hall. The piers extends to the sky and culminates at the parapet in what is almost a celebration of stylized, geometric cast stone relief, foreshadowing the decorative caps to be applied to many buildings during the coming decade. Even in its celebration, the detailing of the parapet remains restrained in its execution and appearance. This restraint is readily apparent in buildings by Wight & Wight, and was in keeping with the nature of the community in which it appeared.

The diversity of uses exhibited by the Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal anticipates a much later trend toward multi-use buildings offering their tenants and neighbors a diversity of services and spaces, while creating a unified and monumental streetscape. Opened in 1930, the Complex could be thought of as a downtown "destination" meeting the diverse needs of visitor and worker alike. Retail shops facing onto 9th, 10th and McGee Streets provided services and attractions for tenants, travelers and passersby. The contiguous Parking Garage provided much-needed off-street parking for the users of the complex. The Bus Terminal brought shoppers and business people in from outlying communities. The Office Building was conveniently situated near the Post Office and the new City Hall and Courthouse as well as the Federal Reserve Bank. With its varied uses and central location, the Pickwick Complex performed a vital role in the mid-century expansion and maturation of the central business district.

Situated near the seat of government, the Pickwick Hotel could bill itself as being the place to stay when conducting official business in Kansas City. The Pickwick Office Building served as overflow space for county and federal government offices over the years. The Immigration and Naturalization Service, FCC, ICC, FDA and Navy all called the Pickwick home while the new

federal building was constructed across the street in the late 1930's.[1] As development continued in the surrounding downtown area, the bustle shifted southwest, away from the river towards the developing residential and service zones, leaving the Pickwick Complex on the edge of the core.

This shift of the limelight to other sections of downtown provided the quiet solitude for a famous Missourian to collect his thoughts. Throughout his early political career, Harry Truman retreated to the Pickwick Hotel in order to compose his often hectic and overwhelming life and put pen to paper in what came to be known as the "Pickwick Papers." Truman believed in recording one's thoughts and life experiences, and found the comfortable hotel, not far from the site of his former haberdashery, to be a convenient place. "One of the most introspective entries in the Truman's "Pickwick Papers" was written on May 15, 1934, during the early morning hours before the announcement of his candidacy for the U.S. Senate. In its pages, he reveals his struggle to attain a resolution between his personal code of ethics and the realities of political expediency."[2]

Operating throughout World War II and early postwar years, the Pickwick Complex participated in the growth of Kansas City, housing both workers and travelers; while the bus station operated by Greyhound served the transportation needs of the urban population. The Bus Terminal, billed as one of, if not the, largest terminal west of the Mississippi River, accommodated 4,433 scheduled departures monthly in the early 1950's.[3] In addition to the original buildings, an 11th floor penthouse was constructed atop the hotel. It was used by radio stations KMBC and WHB, which broadcast from that location until late 1968.

By the 1960's, the flight of the population to the suburbs and the ongoing shift from public to private transportation ensured that downtown Kansas City would suffer from the same decline as other inner cities. Many downtown buildings were demolished or substantially renovated throughout the 1950-70's, leaving relatively few pre-war buildings to represent what had been a dominant commercial architectural theme for the city: classical proportion and bulk blended with subtle Art Deco detailing. Luckily, the Pickwick Complex maintained its façade and much of its interior finishing throughout this period.

The Pickwick Complex, however, rotated through many ownership groups. In 1972, following the slow decline of both the surrounding area and the property, the Pickwick Hotel was converted into 233 units of subsidized housing and the name changed to Royal Towers — a use that continues to this day. Shops were removed and the ground floor turned inward by recessing and in-filling the storefront areas of the shops. These changes, in addition to the lock down of the entry doors, created a fortress-like appearance and feel to the Hotel building. The remainder of the Complex did not experience any real changes to its structure or features, yet entered a long period of stagnation and vacancy which continues today.

Perhaps the most dramatic event in the life of the building was a fire on the morning of December 1, 1996. Subsequently, City development code officials required a reconfiguration of the Hotel mezzanine. The large, atrium-like openings at the mezzanine level of both the transportation lobby of the Bus Terminal and the Hotel were closed to create gathering spaces for the residents. The destruction of the interior ornamentation by the fire, coupled with life safety

and gathering space needs, resulted in the loss of most original finishes on the mezzanine level. The result is typical late 20th century commercial: open interior with blank drywall, carpet and acoustic ceiling tiles. The stress and changes induced by the fire ultimately resulted in HUD taking over the Hotel building and placing it in receivership early in 2000. The portion of the complex once owned by HUD was purchased and is currently in private ownership.

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Unpublished Works

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
The city block bounded by 9th, 10th, McGee and Oak streets in downtown Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, exclusive of the southeast quadrant and a portion approximately 65' x 77' at the northeast corner of the block.

Boundary Justification
The entirety of the Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal complex are located within this block. The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Pickwick Complex.

Property Owners

1. Jorge Newberry, Pickwick Arms, 3312 Columbus Court, Colubus, OH 43209
2. Robert Row, c/o Ritz Asset Group, Pickwick LLC, 1201 Rid Bridge Road, Kansas City, MO 64114
3. Dale L. Schulte, DLS Real Estate, Inc. 4510 Bellview, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64111

Photo Log

The following is true for all photographs:

Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal
Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri
Photographer: Michael Griffin
Date: Fall 2004
Location of Negatives: Michael Griffin,

1. West façade looking northeast.
2. West and south elevations, Pickwick Hotel section, looking northeast.
3. South elevation, Pickwick Hotel Section, looking north.
4. South elevation, Pickwick Hotel Section, looking northwest.
5. East elevation, looking west.
6. North elevation, Pickwick garage section, looking southwest.
7. West façade, Pickwick office building, looking east.
8. West façade, looking southeast.
9. North elevation, Pickwick office building, looking south.
10. West façade, Pickwick office building, looking northeast.
11. West façade, Pickwick bus terminal, looking east.
12. West façade, Pickwick hotel, looking southeast.
13. West façade, Pickwick hotel, looking east.
14. Interior, Pickwick hotel lobby, looking northwest.
15. Interior Pickwick hotel lobby, looking east.
16. Historic sign, Pickwick garage, looking south.
17. Detail of entrance, Pickwick office building, looking northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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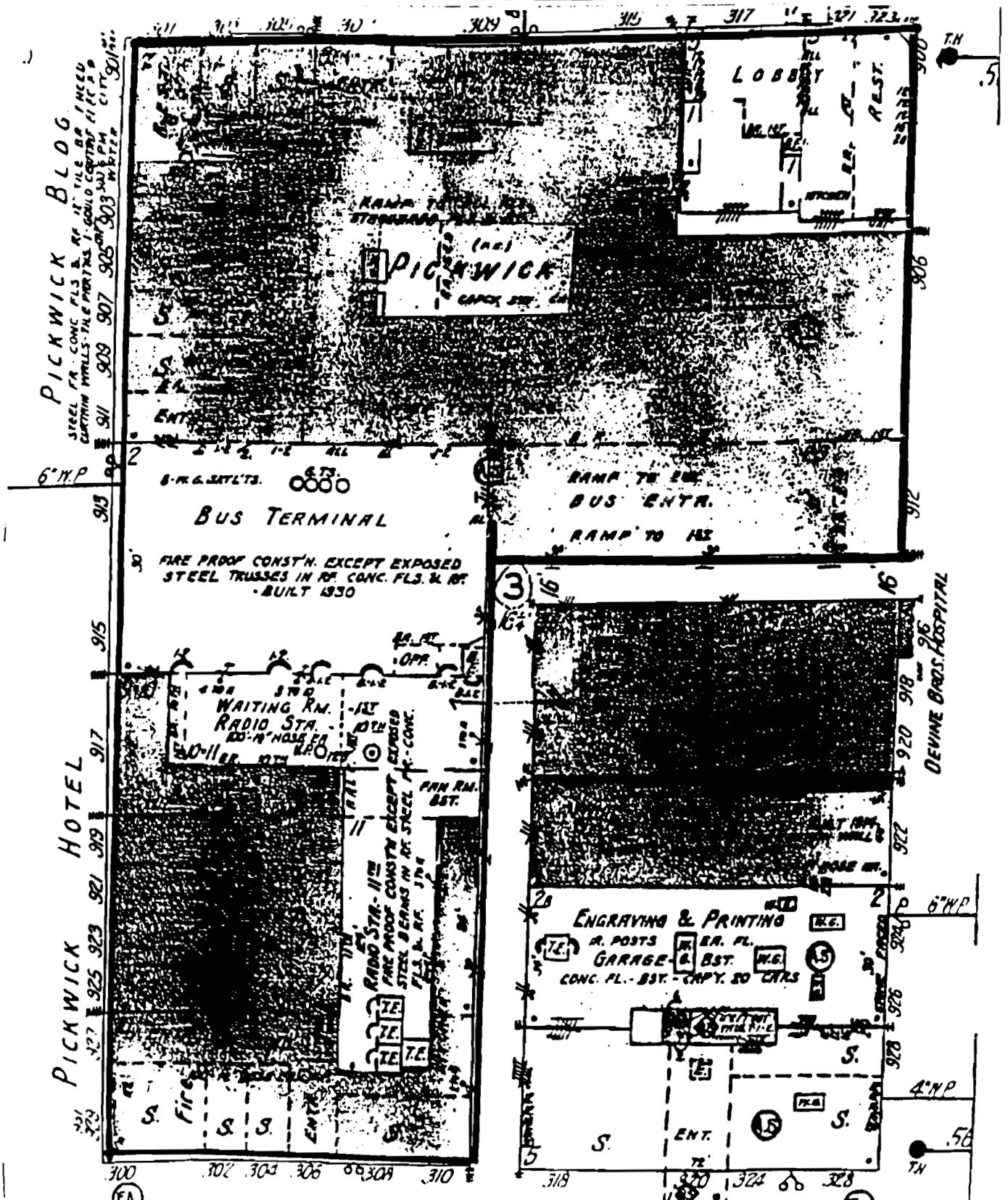
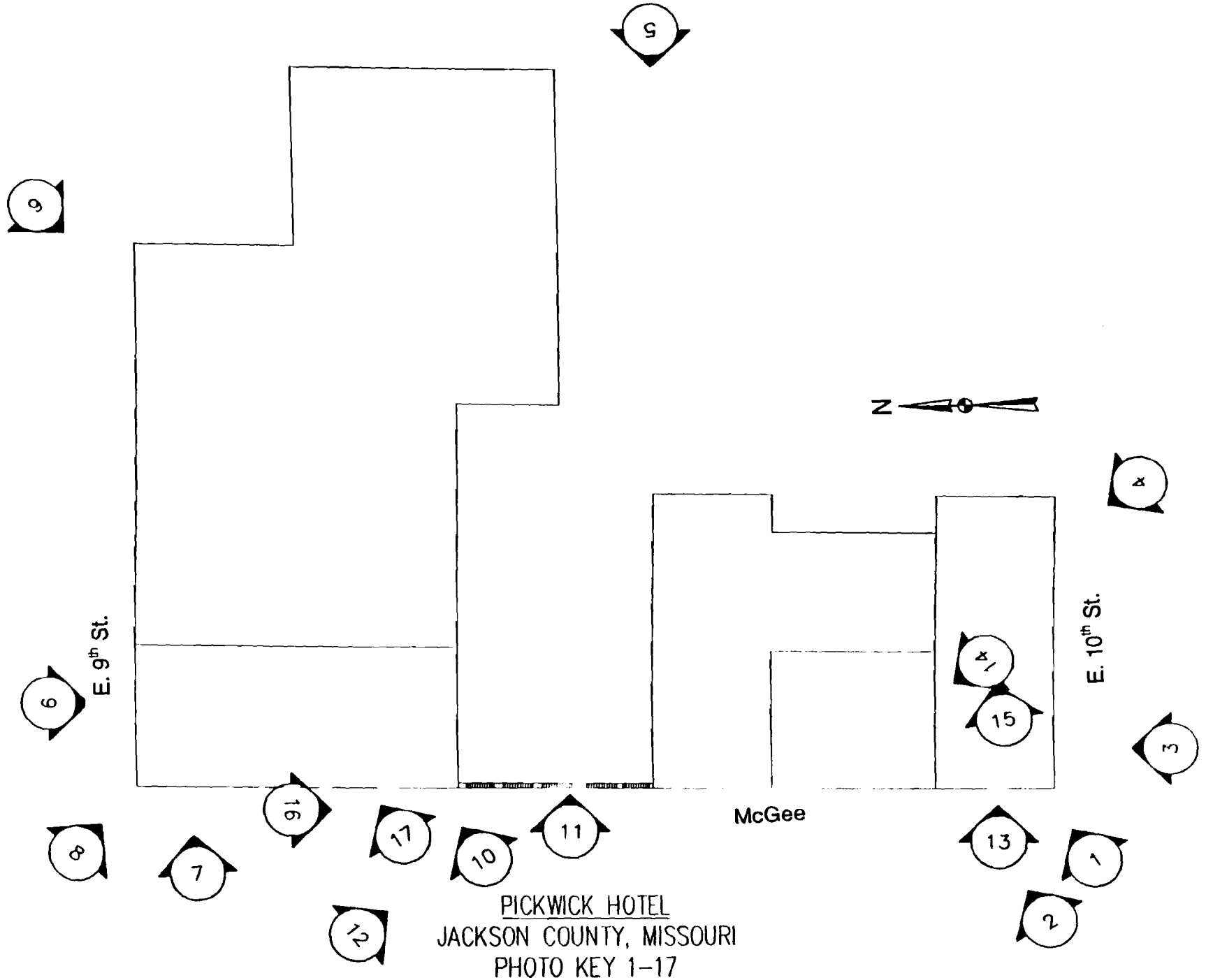
Pickwick Hotel, Office Building, Parking Garage and Bus Terminal
Jackson County, Missouri

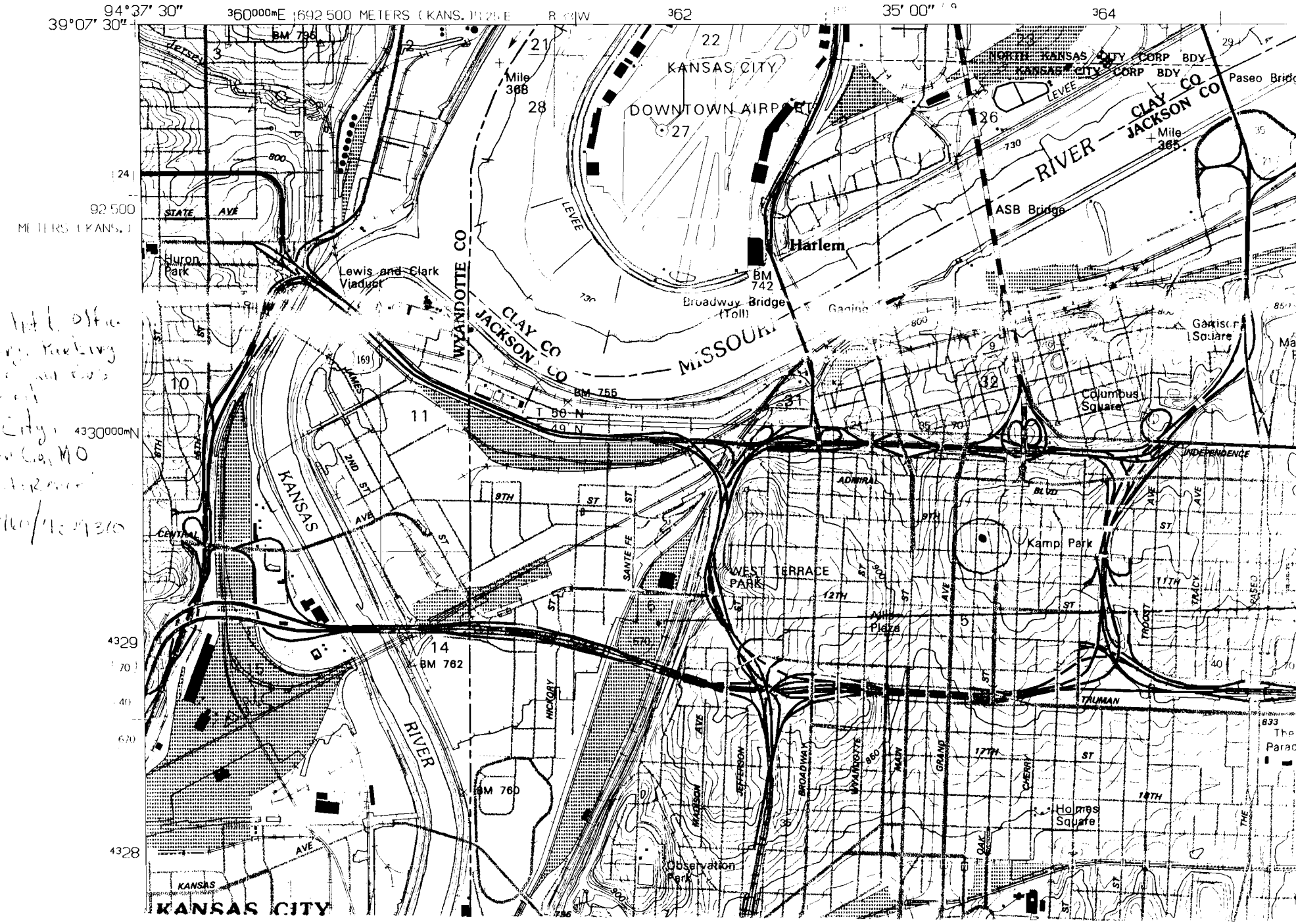
Site Plan





PICKWICK HOTEL
JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI
PHOTO KEY 1-17

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



Pickwick Hotel Office
Building Parking
Garage and Bus
Terminal
Kansas City,
Jackson Co, MO
UTM Reference
15/363460/4329360

ONE WAY

COURTHOUSE
PARKING
PARK-LOCK

PICKWICK
BUILDING

U.S. ENGINEERI

UNION BUS TERMINAL

No Loitering
NO
SMOKING

BARBERSHOP

PARKING
Pickwick
GARAGE
2 HOURS 15c

917
917