

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

other name/site number N/A

2. Location

street & town 925 Grand Boulevard N/A not for publication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, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles FEBRUARY 27, 2007  
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
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 the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2 Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**3 Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

ECONOMICS  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

ECONOMICS  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7 Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Limestone  
roof Asphalt  
other \_\_\_\_\_

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO  
County and State

**8 Description**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- 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.
- 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 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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

ECONOMICS \_\_\_\_\_

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1921 -1957 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1921 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Graham, Anderson, Probst and White \_\_\_\_\_

Kivett & Myers \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

**9 Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository:

Kansas City, Missouri Public Library; FRBKC Archives

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO  
County and State

**10 Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 363340 4329350  
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Please see continuation sheet for Verbal Boundary Description

Property Tax No. N/A

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Please see continuation sheet for Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

**11 Form Prepared By**

name/title Elizabeth Rosin & Kristen Ottesen

organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date 14 November 2006

street & number 215 West 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 215 telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

**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**

name/title Jason Townsend, Townsend Incorporated

street & number 12651 Hemlock telephone 913-814-7577

city or town Overland Park state KS zip code 66213

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Number 7 Page 1

Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
Jackson County, Missouri

**SUMMARY**

The twenty-one story Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City (FRBKC) is a Classical Revival bank and office building located at 925 Grand Boulevard in downtown Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. Construction of the U-shaped building was completed in 1921. The FRBKC has a steel structure clad with dressed Bedford limestone and a flat, tar and gravel roof. The main (west) façade, facing Grand Avenue, is nine bays wide, and the secondary (south) façade, facing 10<sup>th</sup> Street, is seven bays wide. Designed by the Chicago architectural firm Graham Anderson Probst and White, the building's three-part form (base, shaft, and cap) illustrates the common approach to high-rise office building design during this era. Above the three-story base is a thirteen-story shaft. A tall, five-story cap crowns the building. The smooth, unadorned walls of the shaft contrast with the stylized treatment of the base and cap, which convey the building's style. In 1965, the Kansas City architectural firm Kivett & Myers designed a four-story addition east of the original building at the northwest corner of 10<sup>th</sup> and McGee Streets. The blank-walled addition houses a parking garage as well as an expansion of the basement vault. Over time, much of the building's interior finishes and configurations have been modified to address evolving needs for space, technological changes, and safety requirements, as well as to update the appearance of both public and private spaces. Although little fabric remains to document the historic appearance of the office floors, the main lobby, the mezzanine and the lower story elevator lobbies continue to convey the grandeur of the original interior design. During the 1970s, fixed single-light windows replaced the original multi-light double-hung windows. The most significant architectural elements of the FRBKC remain intact, including the formal three-part form and the Classical Revival detailing of the building's exterior, the distribution of functions within the building, and the massive basement cash vault. These elements allow the building to clearly convey its historic function and significance as one of the nation's twelve Federal Reserve district banks.

**ELABORATION**

**SETTING**

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City occupies the south end of the block facing 10<sup>th</sup> Street between Grand Boulevard and McGee Street in the heart of Kansas City's Central Business District. Office towers constructed during the early twentieth century, including several of the city's earliest high rise structures, distinguish the built environment near the FRBKC. Just to the north of the historic building, a small, four story brick office building



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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
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(915 Grand Boulevard) now houses additional offices for the FRBKC. A small passageway faced with stucco houses the FRBKC security station and connects the two buildings. An early twentieth century church, the Grand Avenue Temple, anchors the north end of the block facing 9<sup>th</sup> Street. North of the Grand Avenue Temple, the 1939 Federal Courthouse sits at the center of the block bounded by Grand Boulevard, McGee Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. South of the FRBKC across 10<sup>th</sup> Street is a surface parking lot. With the exception of the old Federal Courthouse, the surrounding buildings sit uniformly tight to the concrete sidewalks that line the streets, giving this area of downtown Kansas City a dense, urban feeling.

**EXTERIOR**

Sharing similar architectural features and ornamental treatment, the west and south elevations of the FRBKC present a uniform design vocabulary facing Grand Boulevard and 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The architectural treatment of these elevations clearly conveys the three-part building form (base, shaft, and cap) and the formal architectural elements that are hallmarks of the Classical Revival style.

The building's first five stories comprise the base. On the front (west) elevation three-story fluted columns with Doric capitals articulate the seven bays recessed at the center of the façade. Articulated pilasters define the bays on the south elevation. At the fourth story, an entablature wraps the building above the columns and pilasters. Within the entablature, the smooth architrave is inscribed with the words "FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF KANSAS CITY" on the south elevation. Above the architrave, the entablature features an alternating pattern of round copper window grilles and triglyphs topped by a projecting cornice. At the fifth story, Ionic pilasters adorn the vertical spandrels between bays of paired windows. A plain entablature with a projecting cornice tops the pilasters and marks the top of the base.

Stories six through seventeen form the building shaft. Typical of early-twentieth century commercial design, the shaft is devoid of ornament. The vertical and horizontal spandrels are smooth with only simple bases and caps articulated at the terminal ends of the vertical spandrels.



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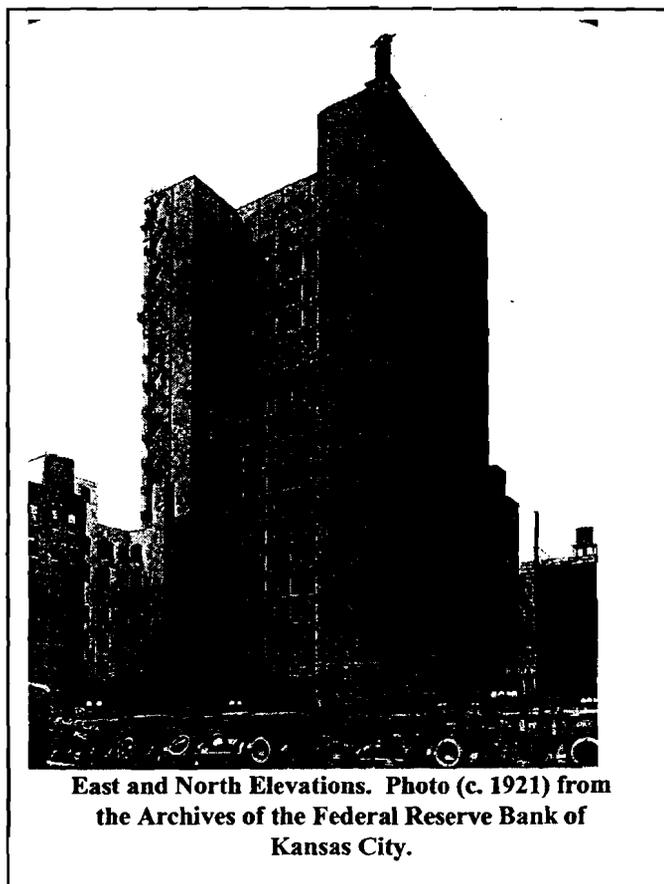
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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
Jackson County, Missouri

Above the shaft, the four-story cap complements the restrained Classical styling of the base. A narrow cornice separates the cap from the shaft at the base of the eighteenth story and a second stone beltcourse marks the top of the eighteenth story. Fluted pilasters separate the bays of windows at the nineteenth story. These window openings are slightly recessed from the face of the building and are also much taller than the window openings of the shaft. Above the pilasters is an entablature with an alternating pattern of round medallions and triglyphs that mimics the entablature at the fourth story. Above this entablature is another smooth frieze panel. Carved stone swags decorate the parapet wall at the top of the building.

The most prominent ornament on the FRBKC is two two-story carved stone panels that adorn the end bays of the base on the primary (west) elevation. New York sculptor Henry Hering, a pupil of famed American artist Augustus Saint Gaudens, created the panels portraying Industry and Commerce. Each panel measures seven feet, nine inches wide by twenty-two feet tall. The figure Spirit of Industry holds a sheaf of wheat and a distaff to represent the industries of agriculture and manufacturing. Above her head is a bee hive, while behind her the sun casts its rays over the universe. The figure Spirit of Commerce wears a coat of mail to signify security. She holds the torch of progress and the symbol of Mercury, the god of Commerce. Above her head floats the ship of Transportation, and the stars and moon appear in the background.<sup>1</sup> Each figure stands above an eagle holding a shield emblazoned with "10-J," the symbol of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. The birds look toward each other, the Industry eagle facing south and the Commerce eagle facing north.

The simple treatment of the north and east elevations contrasts with the formal design of the south and west elevations. The brick walls of these tertiary elevations have been painted and otherwise lack ornament. The north elevation also lacks fenestration, reflecting the



<sup>1</sup> Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, "Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City: A Description Given Federal Reserve Bank Officials at the Time the Building Was Under Construction," (Kansas City, Missouri: Federal Reserve Bank, January 1921), Archives, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
Jackson County, Missouri

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location of the elevator bank along this wall. A single vertical bay of small rectangular louvered vents punctuates the center of the north wall at each floor.

On the south, west and east elevations, non-historic fixed single-light aluminum windows are arranged singly and in pairs. A few exceptions include the three-part windows on the first story and compound two-story windows at the main lobby. Smaller than the original double-hung sashes, the installation of the current windows in the 1970s included wide mullions and a section of aluminum panning at the top of each window to fit them into the larger openings. Historic decorative metal grilles screen openings in the base on the south and west elevations. Fourth story windows originally sat deep in the stone wall behind the round grilles. While the grilles remain, many of the windows have been replaced or covered with non-historic material.

The main building entrance is centered on the west elevation. Between the Doric columns, an ornate stone-framed surround contains a non-historic revolving door and a single, non-historic pedestrian door.

Addition

In 1965, a stark, imposing four-story addition was constructed to the east of the original building. Housing a parking garage and an expanded subterranean bank vault, the structure has a monolithic block that rests on top of stocky stone-clad posts. Metal grilles cover the spaces between the posts. Narrow, vertical slits divide the block into three bays on the north and south elevations and into seven bays on the east elevation. The slits and a fluted, flared base provide the only relief to the solid, dressed stone block. At the west end of the south elevation and at the north end of the east elevation are vehicular entrances to the garage. The only additional ornament is two gold Federal Reserve Bank seals applied to the south and east walls above the vehicular entrances.

**INTERIOR**

The ground floor lobby remains the building's most significant interior space. Entered directly from the main entrance on the west elevation, two rows of three-story columns frame the lobby. Marble covers the lobby floor and column bases and creates a tall wainscot around the room. The coffered ceiling and ornamental plaster cornice are painted to highlight the architectural details. A medallion bearing the FRBKC logo is centered in the marble lobby floor. Teller stations and offices originally ringed the perimeter of the lobby below the mezzanine. When these were removed, the wall openings were filled with drywall above the counters. The space below the mezzanine at the northwest corner of the lobby now houses a museum about the history of the American monetary system. A series of historic chandeliers augments the two-story windows on the east, west and south walls to illuminate the lobby and mezzanine.

A staircase that replicates historic design elements was added to the southeast corner of the lobby in the 1990s to provide direct access to the second story mezzanine that encircles the perimeter of the lobby. Historically, the

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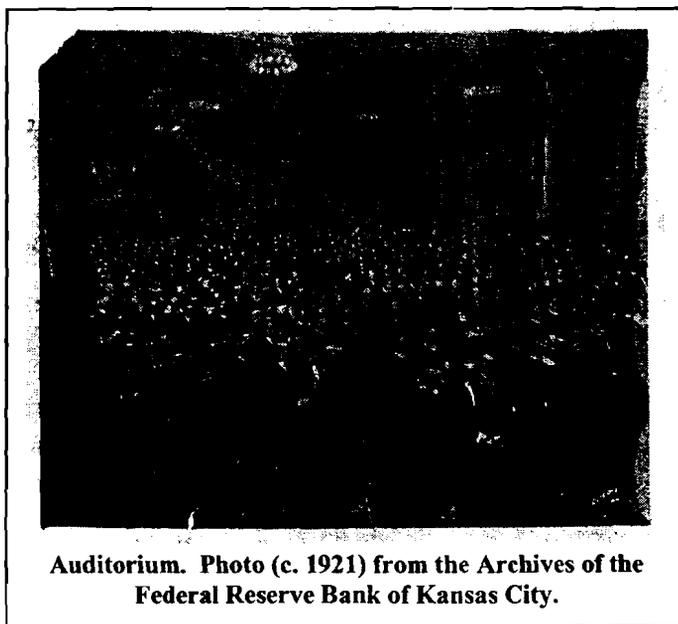
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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
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mezzanine held executive offices and the board room, as well as a gun turret in the northeast corner. When the executive offices and the board room moved to the 19<sup>th</sup> Floor in the late twentieth century, the FRBKC converted the mezzanine into an educational museum about the Federal Reserve. The mezzanine has a metal railing, which features starburst balusters and a lion's foot detail on the posts. Installed during the 1970s, the railing matches the design of the original but was raised to meet modern safety codes.

A narrow elevator lobby containing a bank of ten elevators occupies the north end of the building. On the first floor the elevator lobby has the same finishes as the main lobby – marble floor and wainscot, painted plaster upper walls and ceiling. Pendant lights with large globes hang from the ceiling. The brass elevator doors feature etched skins with the logo for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. These were installed during renovations in 1939. On the upper floors the finishes of the elevator lobby reflect the renovated appearance of their floor, including carpeted floors, painted walls and elevator doors, and dropped ceilings with integral fluorescent light fixtures.

There are two other features of note on the interior of the FRBKC. One is the gymnasium on the twentieth floor. Originally designed as an open air recreational "court," before construction was complete the design had been revised and the space enclosed to create an auditorium with large arched windows and skylights. A gymnasium, locker rooms and showers were also found on the twentieth floor. A two-story space, the auditorium had tall windows facing the east light well. Tall plaster arches on the west, north and south walls mimic the rhythm of the windows and reference the building's Classical design motif. After World War II, the FRBKC used the auditorium for storage before it was retrofitted as a gymnasium in the 1970s. At that time new locker rooms were installed and the south wall was removed to create a larger basketball floor. Renovations also included installing a linoleum floor and an acoustical tile drop ceiling. The ceiling hangs below the historic plaster ceiling, obscuring historic moldings and shortening the volume of the space.



**Auditorium. Photo (c. 1921) from the Archives of the  
Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.**

The second notable feature is the 4,000 square foot vault in the basement of the bank. The 50-ton vault door was installed during construction and physically cannot be removed from the building. When the bank opened,

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newspaper articles described the vault as “burglar proof.” Six-and-one-half-foot thick concrete walls reinforced with nine-miles of steel surround the vault and secure the bank’s reserves.

The remainder of the building houses offices for FRBKC employees and service spaces. These areas have been significantly remodeled over the past ninety years and retain no vestiges of their historic appearance or configuration. Typical finishes include carpet and vinyl tile flooring, painted walls and dropped ceilings.

**INTEGRITY**

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City retains a high degree of integrity. The building’s design, as seen in its form, plans, spaces, structure and style, continues to communicate information about the forces that shaped its architecture. The surrounding concentration of high-rise office buildings remains largely unchanged. Designed to house a specific tenant for an extended period of time, the building evolved to meet the needs of its owner over an eighty-year period. Changes, such as the replacement of windows, the construction of an addition, and the renovation of interior office spaces, do not diminish the ability of the building’s elegant exterior and formal lobby from conveying the importance of the Federal Reserve Bank to the local and regional economy. Although no longer the tallest building in skyline, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City remains a dominant element in downtown Kansas City that recalls its development during the early twentieth century.

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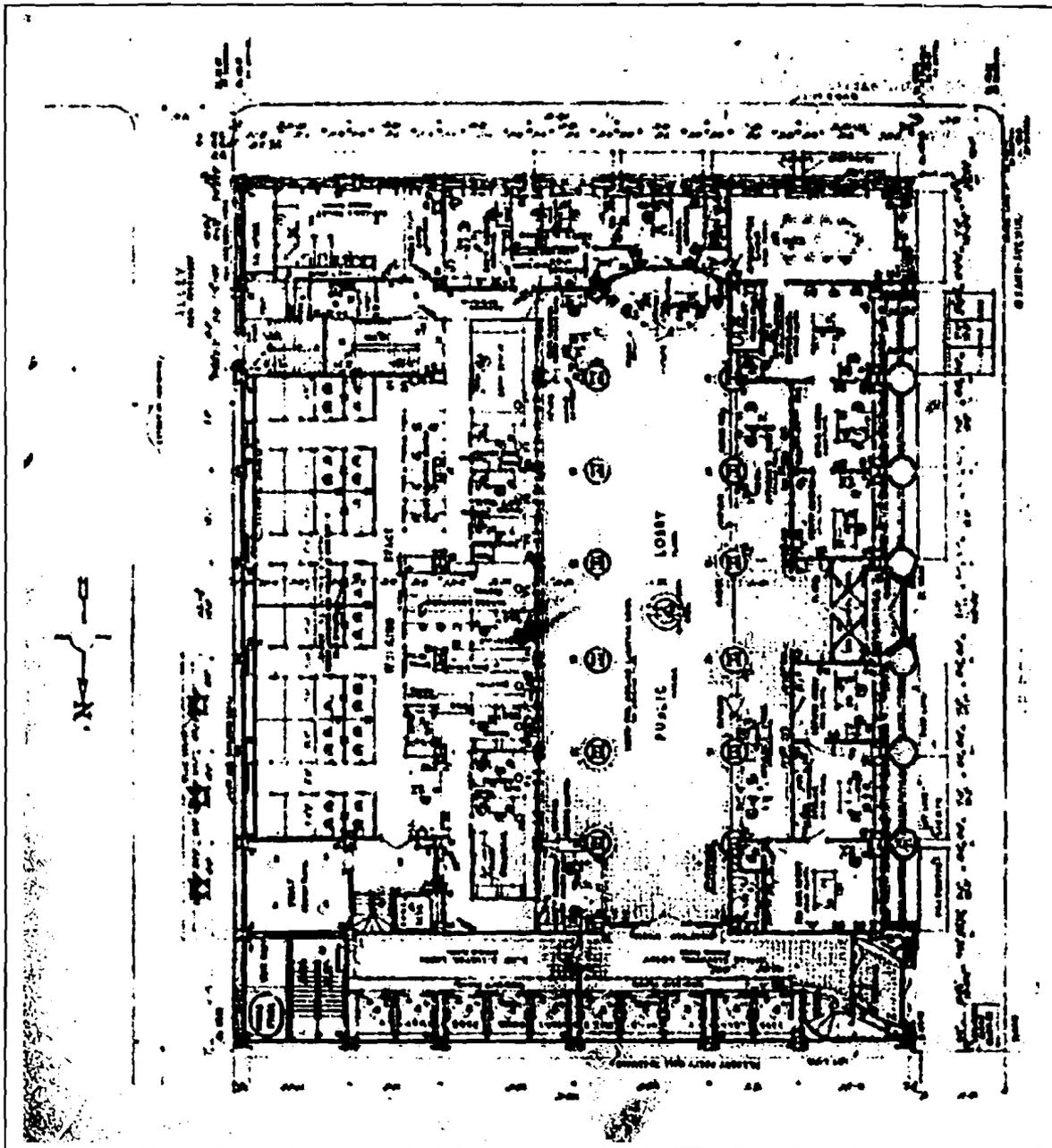
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**SELECTED SHEETS FROM ORIGINAL BUILDING PLANS, 1919**

*(NOTE: there are some discrepancies in the floor numbering system used on the original plans. The plans count the lobby as a single floor rather than as three floors. As a result, the 19<sup>th</sup> Floor is labeled as the 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, the 20<sup>th</sup> Floor as the 17<sup>th</sup> Floor and the 21<sup>st</sup> Floor as the 18<sup>th</sup> Floor. The titles given on the following pages represent the actual floor level in the building as it corresponds to elevator floors and exterior windows.)*

**1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR/LOBBY**



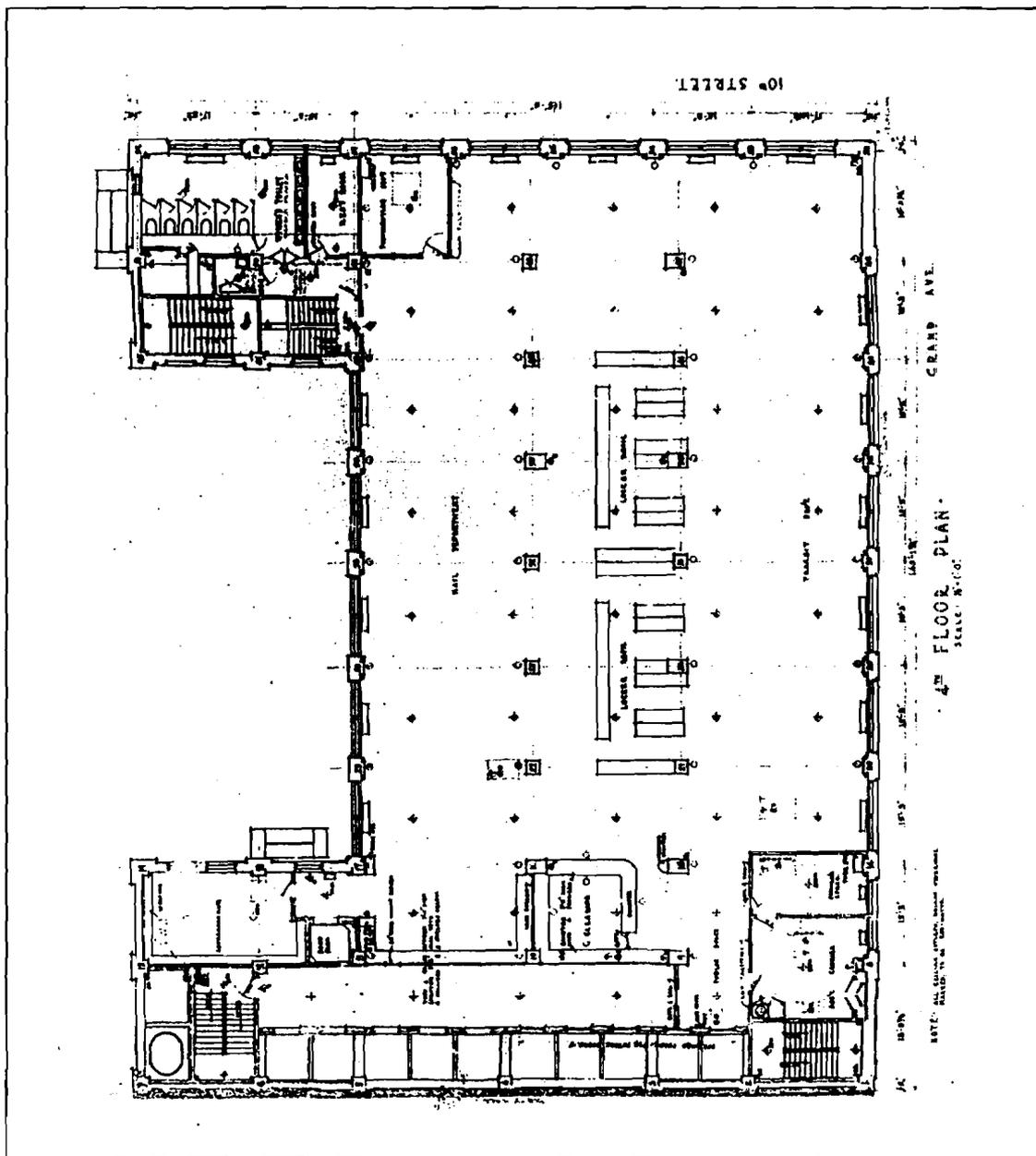
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**7<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR (TYPICAL OFFICE FLOOR)**



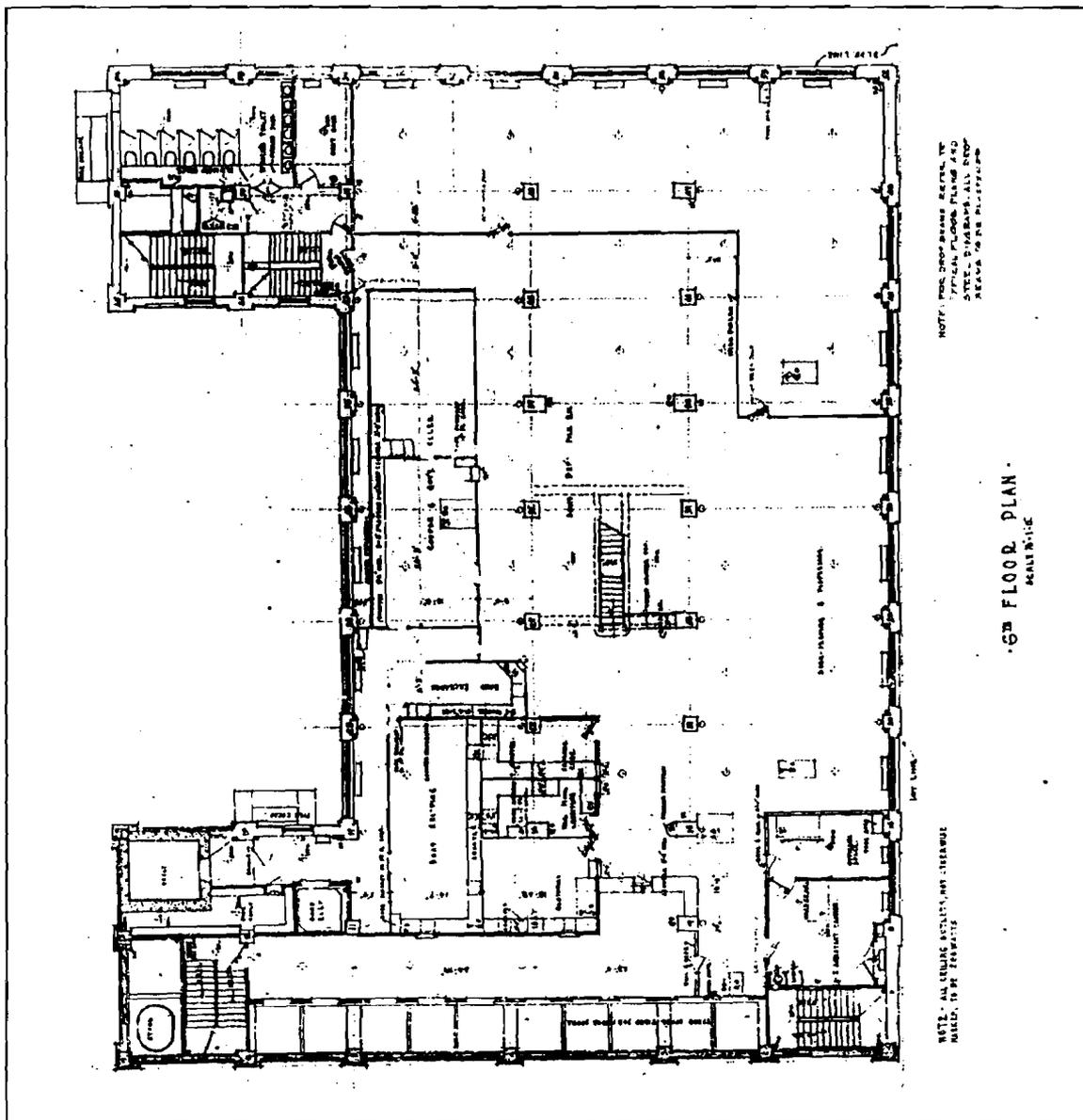
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**9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR**



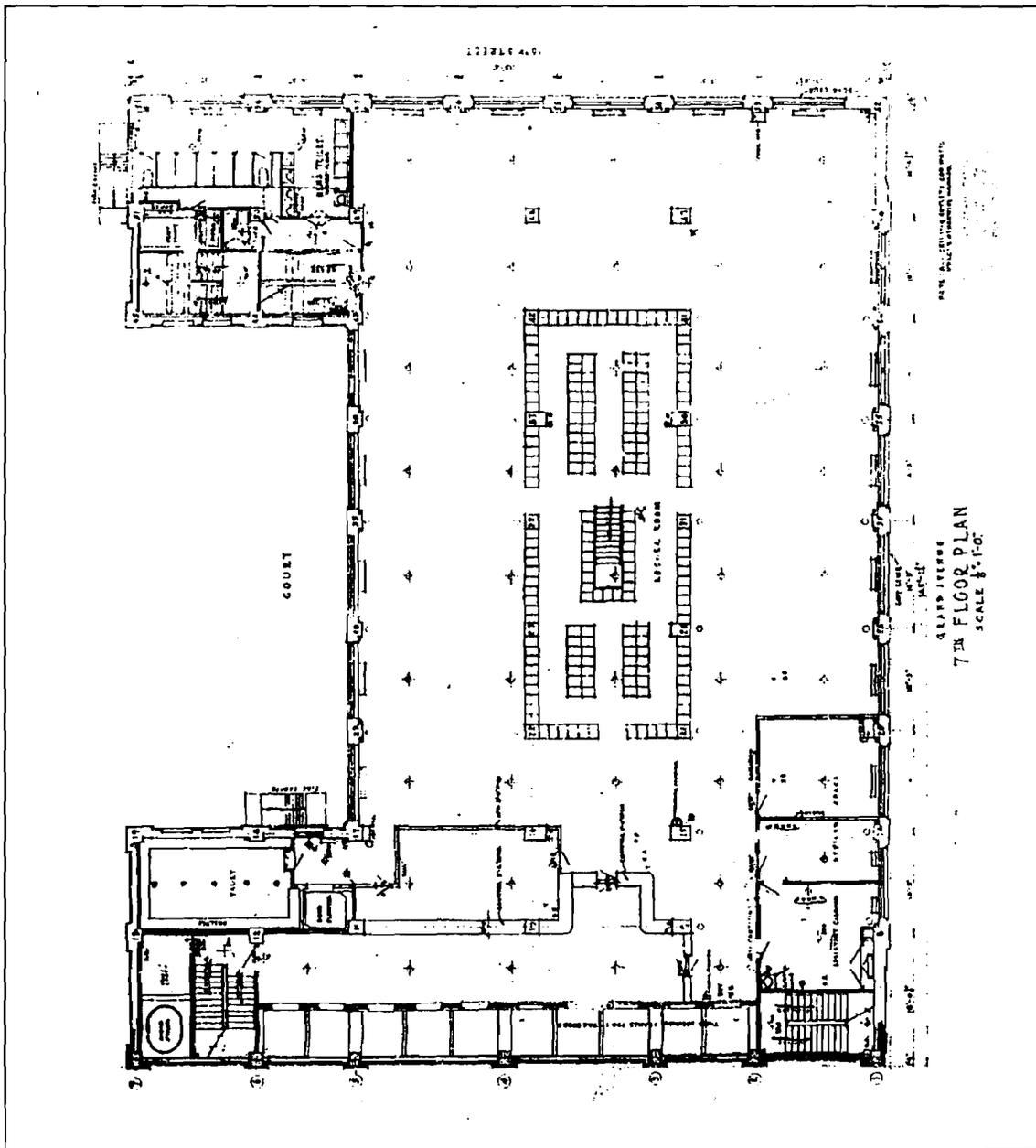
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**10<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR**



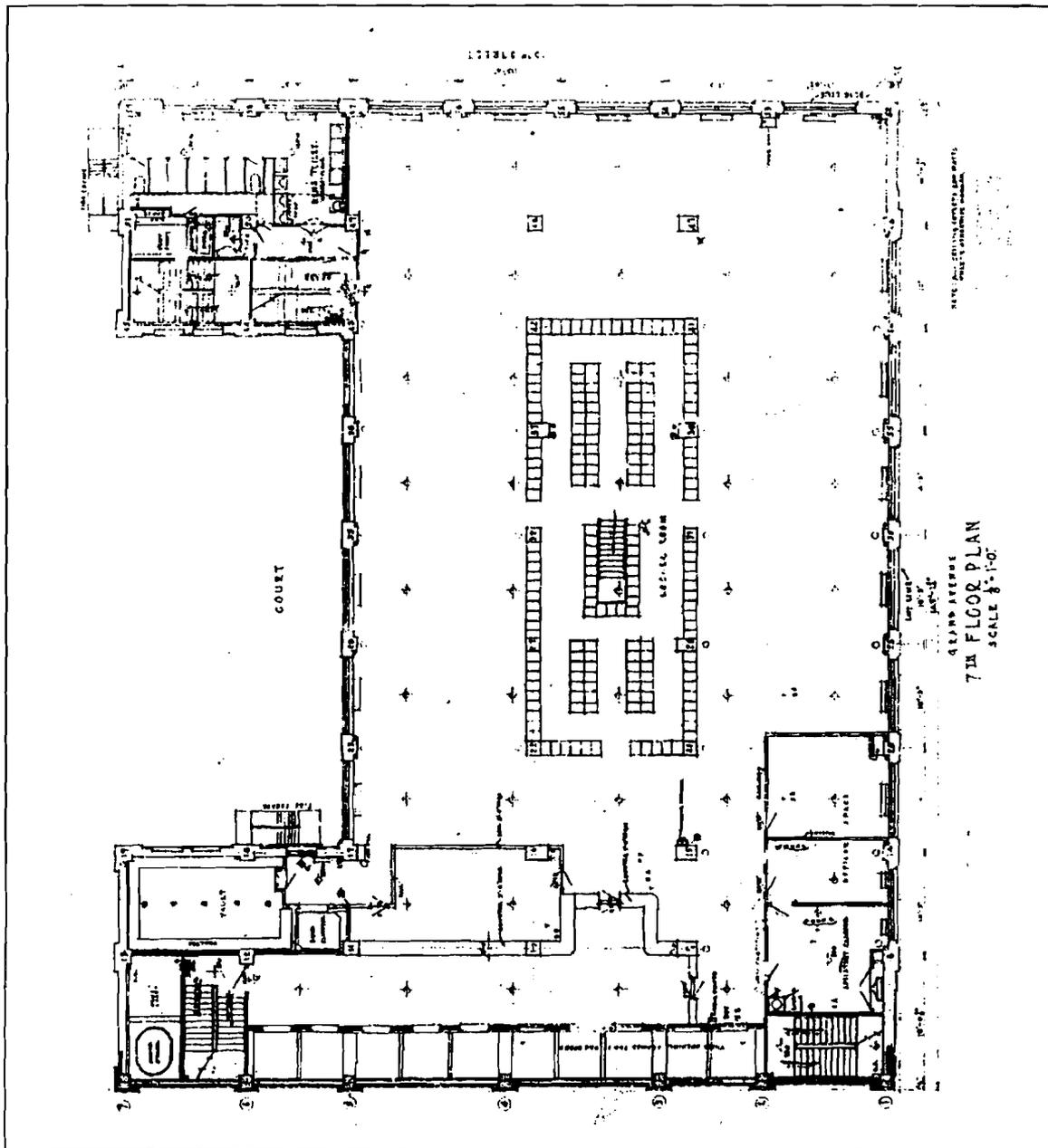
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**11<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR**



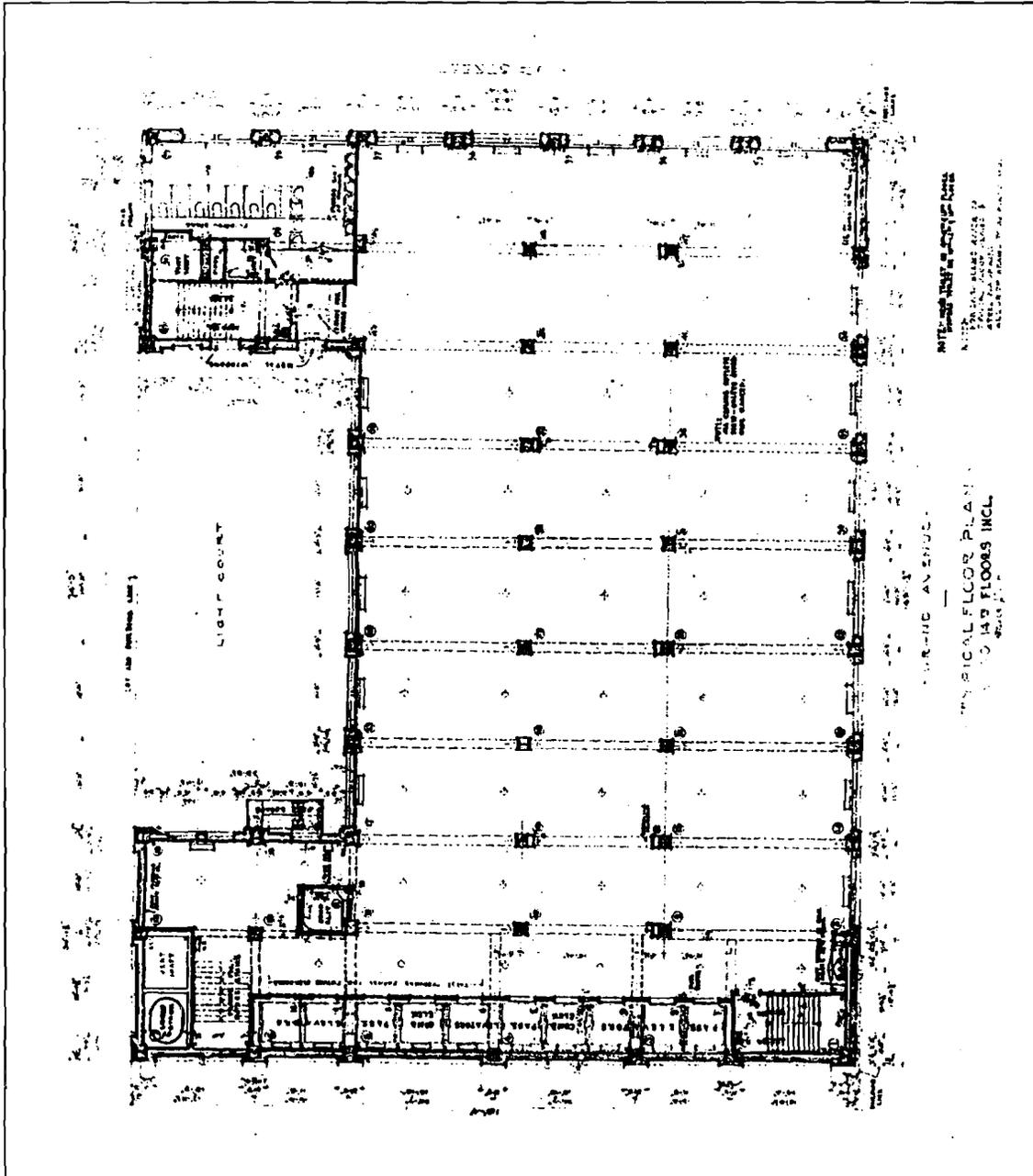
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**TYPICAL PLAN FOR UPPER FLOORS ORIGINALLY USED AS LEASED SPACE**



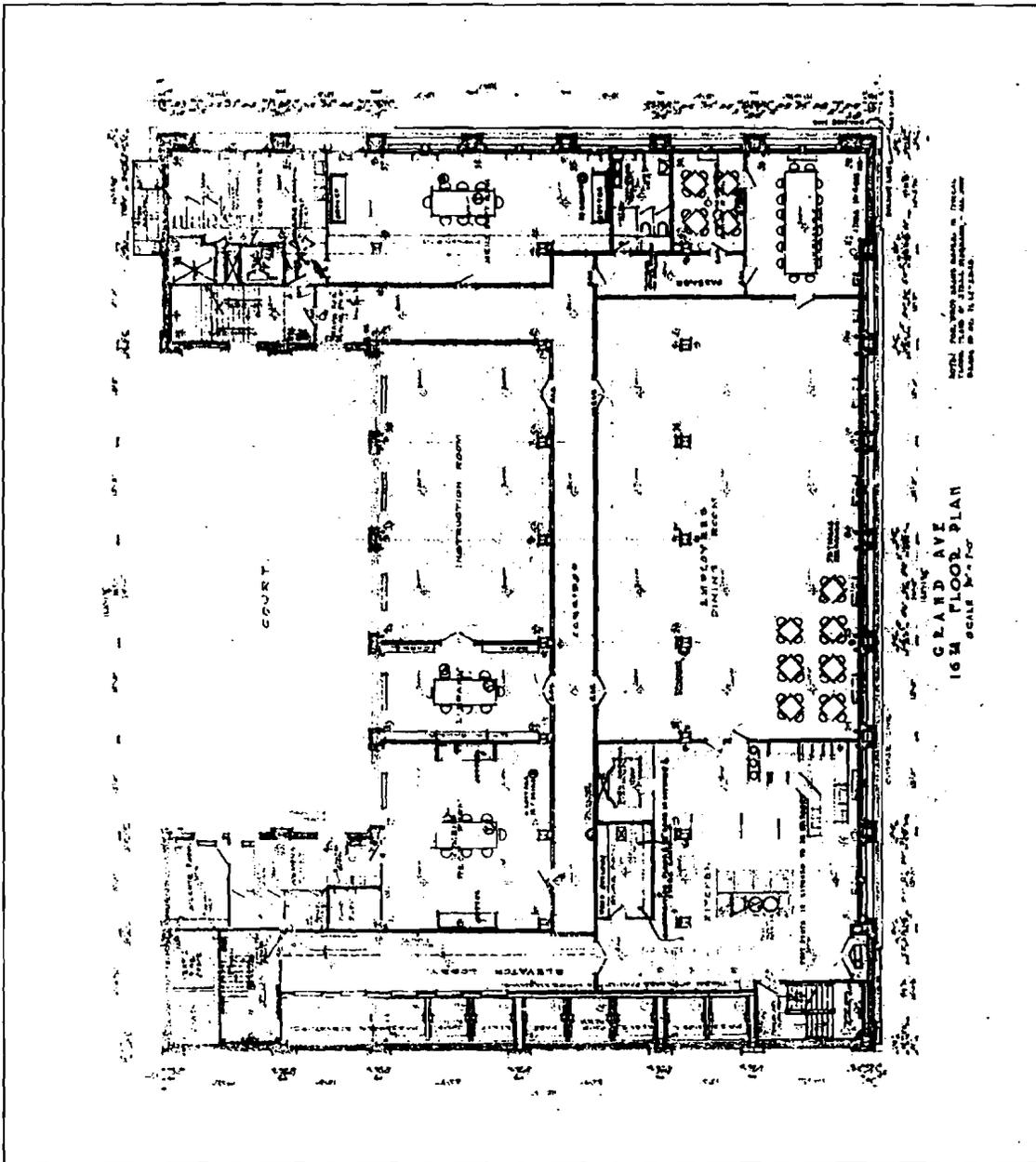
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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
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**19<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR WITH EMPLOYEE AMENITIES**



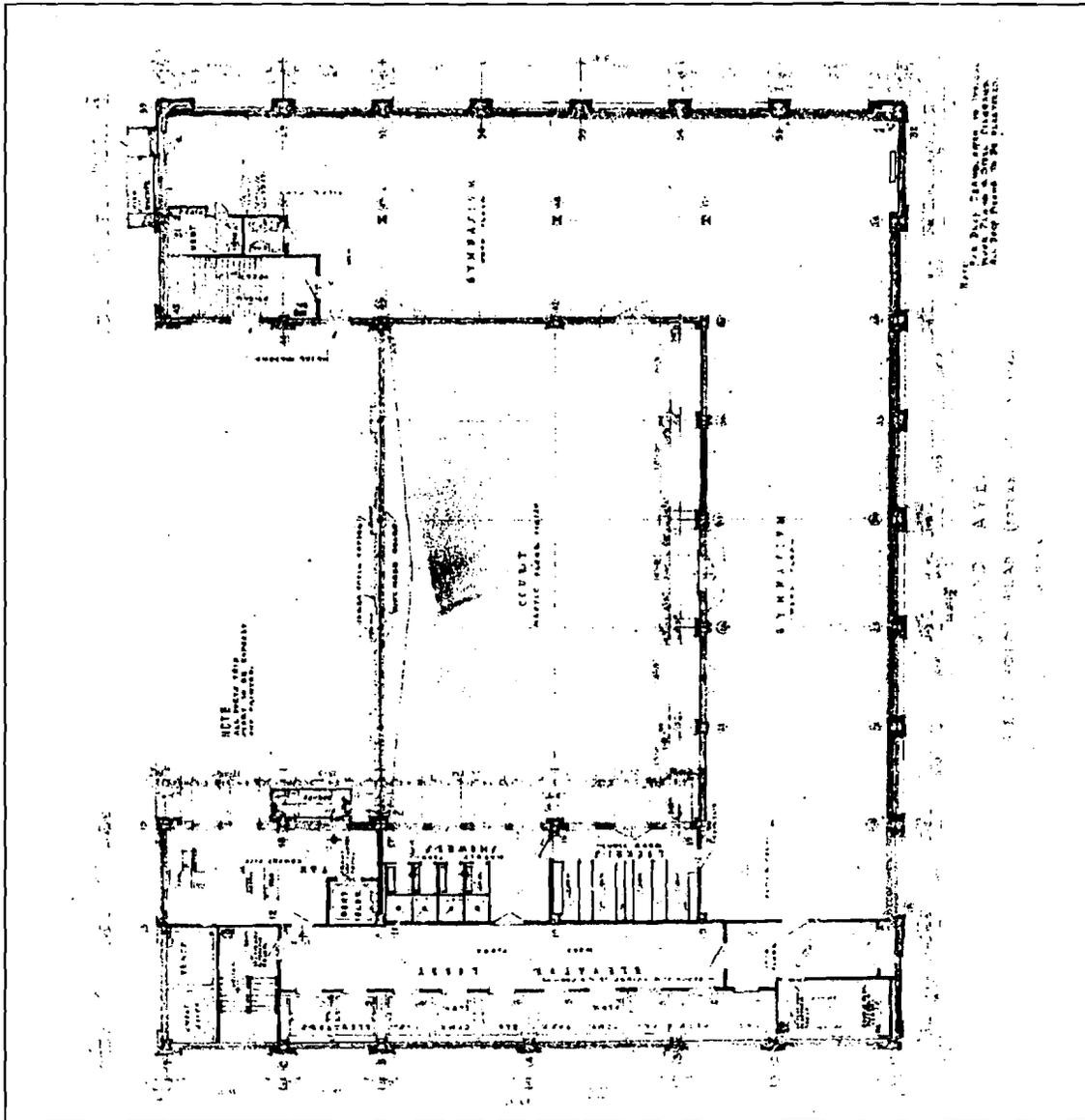
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**20<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR WITH "COURT" AND GYMNASIUM**



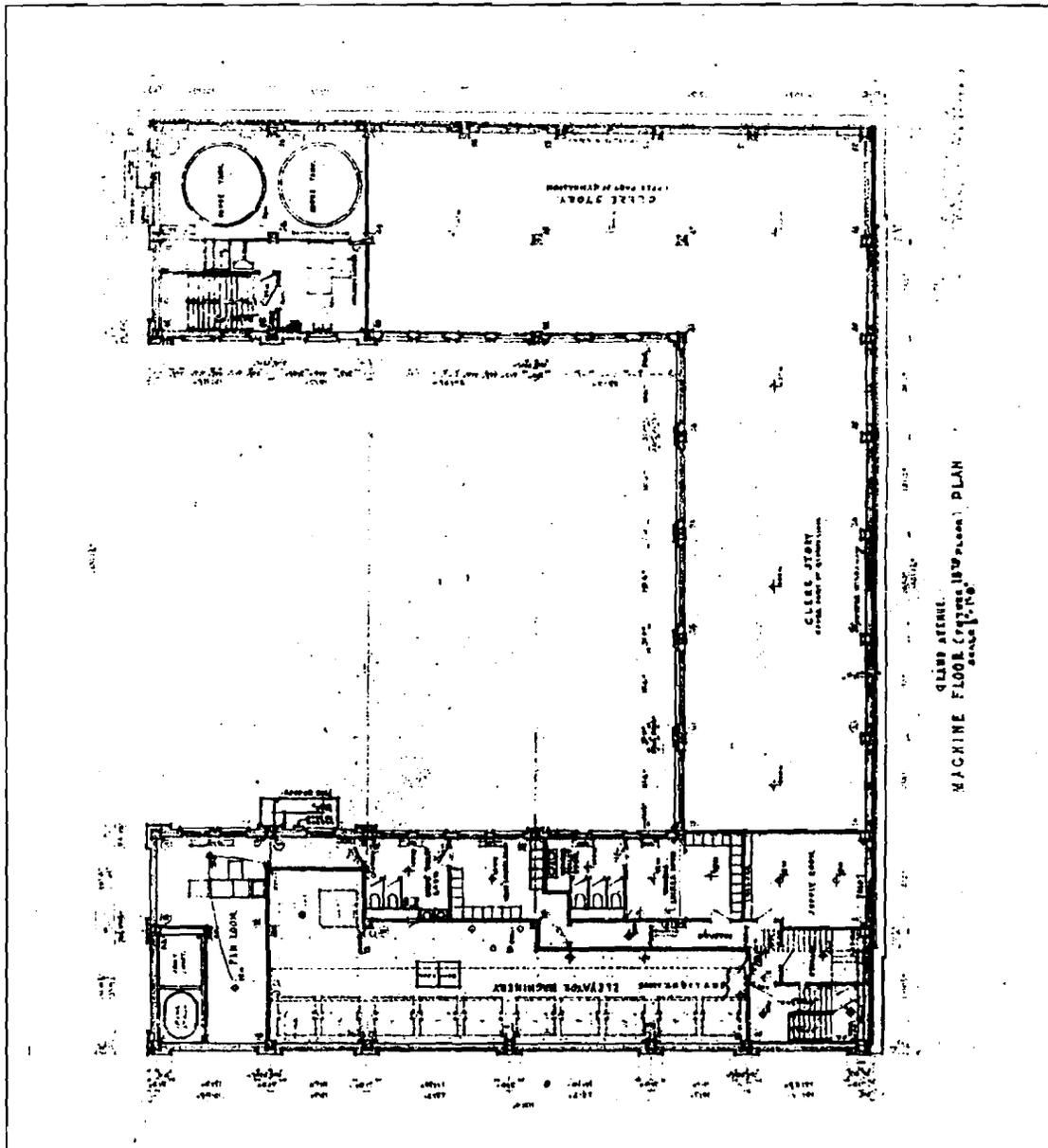
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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
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**21<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR**



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**SUMMARY**

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, 925 Grand Boulevard, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is regionally significant under National Register Criterion A for the area of ECONOMICS and locally significant under National Register Criterion C for the area of ARCHITECTURE. One of twelve buildings constructed nationwide for the Federal Reserve banking system c. 1920, the FRBKC illustrates Kansas City's growing prestige in national financial affairs. Despite objections from Eastern business leaders, the Federal Reserve Bank Organization Committee recognized the pivotal role Kansas City played in the regional economy of the Plains states when it named Kansas City the home of the Federal Reserve's 10<sup>th</sup> District. When Kansas City's Federal Reserve Bank opened in 1914, the 10<sup>th</sup> District's member banks represented over 20 percent of all banks in the nation. As the Federal Reserve System prospered, the staff of the FRBKC expanded from 15 employees to 600 employees, spurring the construction of a new building that would house all Federal Reserve offices and money-handling functions under a single roof. The resulting staid, Classical design and three-part form of the FRBKC befits its role in the banking community and in the regional economy and embodies the conservative design ethos popular for tall business buildings in the years following World War I. The building is also a rare Kansas City design by the esteemed architecture firm Graham Anderson Probst and White. The period of significance, 1921 – 1957, reflects the building's continuous operation as a Federal Reserve Bank, beginning with its construction and ending with the fifty year cut-off for National Register eligibility.

**ELABORATION**

**HISTORY OF BANKING IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE CREATION OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE<sup>2</sup>**

Banking in the Early Nineteenth Century

Prior to the establishment of the Federal Reserve, the United States banking system was inconsistent and sometimes confusing. Congress established the First Bank of the United States in Philadelphia in 1791. Big banking and financial interests dominated this powerful central bank, causing many rural Americans to oppose it. When its charter expired after twenty years, Congress voted not to renew it.

In the early nineteenth century, the War of 1812 and the lack of a central mechanism regulating banking and credit again created chaos within the American banking system. State-chartered private banks were wide-spread.

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<sup>2</sup> Information about the history of the Federal Reserve system comes from two sources, unless noted otherwise: Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, "History of the Federal Reserve," (Kansas City, Missouri: Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, n.d.), [http://www.federalreserveeducation.org/fed101\\_html/history/index.cfm](http://www.federalreserveeducation.org/fed101_html/history/index.cfm); Internet; accessed October 12, 2006; and Roger T. Johnson, "Historical Beginnings... The Federal Reserve," (Boston: Public and Community Affairs Department, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 1999); <http://www.bos.frb.org/about/pubs/begin.pdf>; Internet; accessed October 11, 2006.

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Each bank issued its own currency that varied widely in value. The Federal government also lacked a safe repository for its funds. Reacting to these problems, in 1816 Congress narrowly passed a bill to charter the Second Bank of the United States. Like the First Bank of the United States, the Second Bank of the United States was a powerful institution run by wealthy bankers. Average citizens, businessmen, farmers, state-chartered banks and some politicians distrusted the new national bank, perceiving that its operations favored its managers and not the average American. In 1836, the charter for Second Bank of the United States also expired without renewal.

After the failure of the two central banks, state-chartered banks operating without federal oversight continued to provide financial services to the American people. Demand deposit (checking) accounts became more common during this period, and individual institutions issued bank notes (paper currency) backed by gold or specie. The value of the bank notes varied between banks and fluctuated with the amount of capital reserves the bank maintained. Ultimately, the banking system suffered from inadequate capital, high-risk loans, and insufficient reserves to cover bank notes and demand deposits. The strength and stability of regional economies across the country reflected the fluctuations of the local banking system.

The National Banking Act

In 1863, the National Banking Act created a more-secure banking system. The Act established a network of nationally-chartered banks who issued national bank notes. The United States government backed the notes with cash reserves held in fifty "reserve bank cities" across the country. The Act also imposed a tax on state-bank-issued notes, effectively making the federally-backed notes the national currency. In spite of the tax on their currency, state banks remained locally popular for their demand deposit services.

While the National Banking Act helped to stabilize American currency, bank runs and financial panics continued to disrupt the nation's financial health through the end of the nineteenth century. Banking remained essentially a local function, lacking a mechanism to regulate the flow of money and credit necessary for a stable national economy. While government bonds secured the national bank note, the value of the notes fluctuated in response to the bond market rather than the needs of businesses. The distribution of cash reserves among the reserve bank cities further weakened the system. Even though the total value of the reserves was large, the cumbersome system could not always respond quickly to local demands for currency, affecting periods of economic boom and bust. A banking panic in 1893 triggered a devastating national economic depression. Another panic in 1907, triggered by a failed bout of speculation on Wall Street, spurred a call for reform of the American banking system.

The Federal Reserve System

The Aldrich-Vreeland Act, passed in 1908, provided for emergency currency during times of economic crisis. It also established the National Monetary Commission to research long-term solutions to the nation's banking and financial problems and to develop a plan to help regulate the nation's banks. Under the leadership of Senator

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Nelson Aldrich of Rhode Island, a powerful conservative member of the United States Senate, the Commission proposed a plan that created a National Reserve Association. The National Reserve Association would be a single central institution that fed a network of branches across the country. The branches could issue currency and revalue the paper money held by its member banks. A board of directors, composed largely of prominent bankers, would control the association. Progressives, led by William Jennings Bryan, rejected the plan, fearing that it gave too much governmental power to big business interests.

Following his inauguration as President in January 1912, Woodrow Wilson appointed Virginia Congressman Carter Glass and H. Parker Willis, Professor of Economics at Washington and Lee University, to create an alternate central bank proposal. Before the end of the year, Glass and Willis presented an early version of the Federal Reserve Act. After much debate and refinement by Congress, the new plan created a decentralized central bank that balanced the interests of private banks and populist ideals. Congress passed this plan as the Federal Reserve Act on December 23, 1913.

The goals of the Federal Reserve Act were three-fold: to create an elastic currency that would expand in response to public demand; to provide a means to discount commercial paper money; and to provide a better method of check collection and bank supervision that would balance the competing interests of private banks and populist sentiment. The Federal Reserve Act created a Federal Reserve Board composed of five governors appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate plus two ex-officio members, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Comptroller of the Currency. The Act also established twelve regional Federal Reserve banks throughout the country to diversify the central monetary authority. The district banks would be owned by member banks in their district with each bank buying stock in the Federal Reserve district bank to which they subscribed. Each of the twelve district banks would have a nine-member board of directors, six of whom would be elected by the member banks and three of whom would be appointed by the Federal Reserve board in Washington. An article in *The Kansas Citian* stated, "It is not intended that the banks to be established under the act shall overshadow existing banking institutions but that they will merely give to these institutions additional facilities and safeguards under which to conduct legitimate business."<sup>3</sup> A 1953 article in the *Kansas City Star* described the multiple roles that the Federal Reserve banks perform. They are the "banker's banks" because the services they provide to commercial banks are very similar to the services a commercial bank provides to individual customers. The Federal Reserve banks are also "banks of issue," reflecting their authority to issue currency, and "lenders of last resort," because they create cash reserves available to their member banks. Finally, as the depository for national banks, the Federal Reserve is the "central bank."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Jerome Thralls, "The New Bank's Value: Its Purposes, Procedure and its Relations to the Public and the Banks," *The Kansas Citian* (April 1914): 82-83.

<sup>4</sup> Ben B. Schifman, "The Federal Reserve is 40 Years Old Today," *The Kansas City Star*, 23 December 1953.

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The Federal Reserve Act designated the Secretary of the Treasury (William G. McAdoo), the Secretary of Agriculture (David F. Houston), and the Comptroller of the Currency (John Skelton Williams) to serve as the Reserve Bank Organization Committee. Their task was to designate the Federal Reserve districts and the cities in which the district banks would be located. Potential Federal Reserve district bank cities had to meet six criteria: 1) member banks within the district must be able to provide the necessary capital, an amount established as one-sixth of its capital and surplus; 2) businesses in the district must have sufficient mercantile, industrial and financial connections to warrant the location of a Federal Reserve bank; 3) the anticipated demands on the district bank must not overtax its resources; 4) capital must be fairly and equitably divided among the districts; 5) the districts must reflect an appropriate geographic distribution and the selected cities must have adequate existing networks of transportation and communications; and, 6) the population, area and dominant business activities of the district must be sufficient to support a district bank. The Committee hoped that these criteria would help maintain an equitable distribution of power between the Federal Reserve districts; however, given the financial resources available in New York, it was ultimately impossible for that bank to not dominate the system.

More than forty cities, including most that were reserve bank cities under the National Banking Act, made arguments for their selection as one of the twelve district banks. In January 1914, the Committee held public hearings in Chicago, Illinois; St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; Lincoln, Nebraska; Denver, Colorado; Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; San Francisco and Los Angeles, California; El Paso and Austin, Texas; New Orleans, Louisiana; Atlanta, Georgia; and Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio to gather input for selecting district bank locations.

Bankers and businessmen from Kansas City and throughout the region packed a meeting on January 23, 1914 to support the selection of Kansas City for a district bank. Their arguments documented the city's primacy in commerce and industry. They noted that the vast territory already served by Kansas City banks encompassed the states of Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico and Oklahoma, as well as portions of Arkansas, Texas, Colorado and Iowa and that Kansas City's wholesale distributors served an almost identical territory. They described Kansas City's national standings in agricultural processing (second in meat packing, first as a mule and horse market, and first in the distribution of hay and alfalfa) and shared statistics about the city's population and infrastructure.<sup>5</sup>

The Committee also polled the national banks to determine the Federal Reserve city with which they would prefer to affiliate. The results included Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Kansas City, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia, Richmond, St. Louis and San Francisco. A few minor cities, such as Sioux City, Iowa and Springfield, Massachusetts also received votes. The Committee based its final selection of district bank cities largely on the poll results, eliminating only Cincinnati from the list and replacing it with Cleveland. After

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<sup>5</sup> "Kansas City's Argument for a Reserve Bank," *The Kansas Citian* (January 1914): 12-13.

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selecting the cities, the Committee delineated the Districts around them. The final list of Federal Reserve district banks were: 1-A) Boston; 2-B) New York; 3-C) Philadelphia; 4-D) Cleveland; 5-E) Richmond, Virginia; 6-F) Atlanta; 7-G) Chicago, 8-H) St. Louis; 9-I) Minneapolis; 10-J) Kansas City; 11-K) Dallas; and 12-L) San Francisco. Despite some initial controversies over the selections, the system of Federal Reserve District Banks has not changed since the Reserve Bank Organization Committee announced their decision on April 2, 1914.

**THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF KANSAS CITY**

Designated 10-J within the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City serves an area that includes all of four states (Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming) and portions of three states (Missouri, New Mexico and Oklahoma). The District has sub-branch offices in Denver, Omaha and Oklahoma City. When established in 1914, the FRBKC had 841 member banks with capital assets totaling \$5,594,916. The District included 2,961 banking towns with 1,344 national banks and 3,858 state banks and trust companies. These institutions in the 10<sup>th</sup> District alone represented more than 20 percent of all banks and trust companies in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Election of Kansas City as the headquarters of the 10<sup>th</sup> Federal Reserve District reflected the city's influence in business, banking, transportation and communications within the region. A strong transportation network helped Kansas City boom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In 1888, twenty-two railroad lines served Kansas City, radiating lines in all directions, connecting to rural communities as well as Eastern and Western markets.<sup>7</sup> Kansas City's rail resources grew to forty-three freight lines and thirty-nine railroads in 1901, a number second only to Chicago. That same year, Kansas City ranked nineteenth in the nation for the value of goods manufactured.<sup>8</sup> Over the next decade, the number of manufacturing establishments grew by 75 percent and wages increased 64 percent.<sup>9</sup> As a key distribution center for manufactured goods and raw products serving a vast geographical area, Kansas City also demonstrated great financial stability. The city was seventh in the nation in recorded bank clearings in 1907, a figure that demonstrated over 300 percent growth from the previous decade.<sup>10</sup> Vast numbers of new residents arrived to Kansas City every year, giving the small frontier town the synergy to grow into a major American city. In the decade between 1900 and 1910, Kansas City's population surged by 34

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> W.H. Miller, "The Future of a Great City," *The New West* 4 (July 1888): 65-69. Special Collections, Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library.

<sup>8</sup> Howard L. Conrad, *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri*, (New York: The Southern History Company, 1901), 172.

<sup>9</sup> E.M. Clendening and R.D. Sangster, "Splendid Gains in Our Manufacturing During the Last Ten-Year Period," *The Kansas Citizen*, 22 August 1916, 590-591.

<sup>10</sup> P.W. Morgan, "The Financial Strength of Kansas City," in *Annual Review of Greater Kansas City Illustrated 1908*, ed. D.M. Bone, (Kansas City, Missouri: Business Men's League, 1908), 55.

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percent,<sup>11</sup> so that when it was designated a Federal Reserve District it was the 16<sup>th</sup> largest city in the country.<sup>12</sup> Steady population growth; the establishment of diverse industries, including agriculture, livestock and manufacturing; and continued expansion of the rail network aided Kansas City's bid to become a Federal Reserve District Bank.

In spite of these impressive statistics, Kansas City's selection as a Federal Reserve district was controversial. Eastern politicians and bankers questioned the assignment of Federal Reserve districts banks to two Missouri cities (St. Louis and Kansas City) and also questioned the role political favoritism played in the selection process. Undeniably, the state wielded political influence in the Wilson administration. Prominent Missourians in Washington included Secretary of Agriculture, David F. Houston, a member of the Federal Reserve Bank Organization Committee that chose the district bank cities; Speaker of the House, Champ Clark, a prominent national figure in the Democratic party; and Senator James Reed from Kansas City, a leading member of the Senate. The Committee defended its decisions, noting the influence of the national banks participating in the poll and pointing out that the national banks in the district unanimously chose Kansas City over Denver, Colorado; Omaha, Nebraska; or Lincoln, Nebraska.<sup>13</sup> Eighty-six percent of the banks in the 10<sup>th</sup> District already held accounts with Kansas City banking institutions.<sup>14</sup>

The Federal Reserve Bank Organization Committee stressed to "important Eastern interests" that Kansas City was a natural commercial center within the 10<sup>th</sup> Federal Reserve District. In a district that boasted a population approaching 6,000,000; that offered ample rail service linking rural production centers with major market cities; and that served as the primary shipping point for raw materials, including wheat, silver, sheep, wood, lead, zinc, oil, and other agricultural products, the Committee members found evidence of Kansas City's promising industrial future. To support their assertions, construction projects then underway in Kansas City included a new \$40 million Union Station, a second multi-million dollar freight station to handle packing house interests, and distribution plants erected by several national companies.<sup>15</sup> Two of the largest mail order houses in the world, Montgomery Ward and Company and Sears, Roebuck and Company, had selected Kansas City for new distribution centers due to the superior railroad and mail facilities that serviced the Western and Southwestern United States.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> "Kansas City Forges Ahead: Statistics Indicate a Big Growth in Last Four Years," *The Kansas Citian*, 8 January 1924, 43-44.

<sup>12</sup> "Our Latest Achievement --- The Regional Bank," *The Kansas Citian*, April 1914, 3.

<sup>13</sup> The assignment of District Banks to Richmond and Cleveland was also controversial.

<sup>14</sup> "Kansas City's Argument for a Reserve Bank: Much Valuable and Interesting Information Presented to the Organization Committee." *The Kansas Citian* (January 1914): 12-13.

<sup>15</sup> "Kansas City Through Eastern Eyes: What This City Means to the Student of Civic Progress and Possibilities," *The Kansas Citian* (June 1914): 132.

<sup>16</sup> "Kansas City's Argument for a Reserve Bank," 12-13.

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Kansas City's business community considered the designation a tremendous honor. It provided legitimacy to a city that had been little more than a frontier outpost at the end of the Civil War. Lauding the decision, one Kansas Citian wrote, the Federal Reserve Bank Organization Committee "placed their stamp of approval on Kansas City's application, thereby proclaiming to the world that this city is one of the twelve great commercial and financial centers of America. ...[O]ur community has been given the recognition to which it is justly entitled."<sup>17</sup>

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City officially opened its offices in the R.A. Long Building<sup>18</sup> at 928 Grand Boulevard without ceremony on the morning November 16, 1914. Noting that Kansas City was already a "gateway... for the transportation lines of the West and Southwest," the *Kansas City Star*, reported that "the [Federal Reserve] bank officially establishes [Kansas City] as the center for the business and financial lines." The bank officers greeted visitors, standing among floral displays sent by banks and businesses from throughout the 10<sup>th</sup> District. The member banks had already subscribed for deposits of gold valued at \$10 million, with the Colorado National Bank of Denver acknowledged as making the first deposit of \$350,000 to the new Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.<sup>19</sup>

**THE KANSAS CITY FEDERAL RESERVE BANK BUILDING**

As the Federal Reserve proved to be a viable mechanism to stabilize the American banking system, the district banks across the country outgrew their leased offices. Between 1914 and 1921, the FRBKC leased office space in as many as five different buildings at any given time as the bank's staff grew from 15 employees to over 600 employees. After initial discussions about constructing a building in January 1918, the FRBKC Board of Directors selected a site for the new bank at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue on June 13, 1918.<sup>20</sup> In January 1919, the Federal Reserve Board approved funding for the new building in Kansas City. The FRBKC engaged Graham Anderson Probst and White, a Chicago architecture firm noted for their classical designs and innovative high-rise structures, to design the building.<sup>21</sup>

As planning for the new bank proceeded, J.Z. Miller, a member of the FRBKC Board of Directors and later governor of the bank, reflected on the bank's rapid growth and advocated that the new building be large enough to accommodate "the expansion of this Bank for a period long after most of us present have passed away."<sup>22</sup> The configuration of the lobbies, the elevators, and the upper floors of the new building enabled the FRBKC "to have

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<sup>17</sup> Thralls, 82.

<sup>18</sup> The R.A. Long Building was listed in the National Register on 8 January 2003.

<sup>19</sup> *Kansas City Star*, 16 November 1914, Mounted Clippings, Special Collections, Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library.

<sup>20</sup> Jess Worley, "Unfinished Manuscript on the History of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City," n.d., Special Collections, Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library, Chronology.

<sup>21</sup> The firm also designed Federal Reserve District Banks in Chicago and Dallas in 1922 and 1921, respectively.

<sup>22</sup> Ramsay.

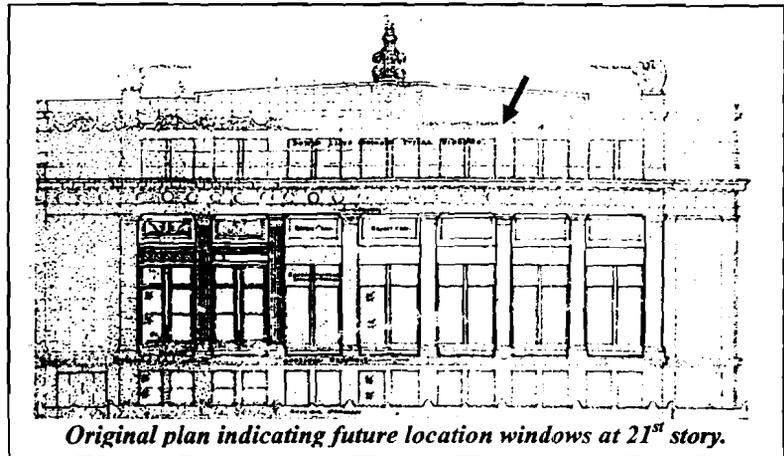
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at their disposal suitable space for the expansion of the various departments as circumstances require[d].”<sup>23</sup> Bank officials noted that the main banking floor could be subdivided into two or even three stories. The architects even anticipated the expansion of offices to the twenty-first floor, indicating the location of “future windows” on building plans. The configuration of the building’s steel structure and the placement of the dressed stone blocks in the smooth architrave below the parapet physically accommodate this future alteration. When the building opened, the FRBKC occupied thirteen of the building’s twenty-one floors. This included the three-story lobby, three floors of employee amenities, and seven floors of offices. The remaining eight floors were leased as commercial space.<sup>24</sup>



The proposed twenty-one story height of the new FRBKC building raised concerns among members of Kansas City’s business community who worried that the great height would tower over the National Bank of Commerce<sup>25</sup> and the R.A. Long Building, both located immediately to the west of the FRBKC site. Erected almost simultaneously in 1907, for many years these two buildings along with the Scarritt Building<sup>26</sup> at the northwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Boulevard had dominated the Kansas City skyline. Their owners worried that the new building would make the city’s skyline appear uneven and would encourage other companies to build even taller buildings in the future. When the two sides met to discuss the issue, developer J.C. Nichols, speaking for the objectors, encouraged the FRBKC to purchase additional lots to accommodate its square footage in a building that was shorter and wider than proposed. The FRBKC made three counter arguments. First, they reminded the objectors that no one opposed the R.A. Long Building when it was built, even though it also was significantly taller than its neighbors and had dramatically altered Kansas City’s skyline. Second, they noted that natural light and fresh air were critical to the operations of the bank and that the present design had been developed to address these particular needs. Finally, noting the steep price of land in downtown Kansas City, the FRBKC explained their desire to fully utilize the parcel they already owned. The objection was subsequently withdrawn and did not impact the design of the building, although it did delay construction as the FRBKC directors were reluctant to

<sup>23</sup> Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, “A New Community Resource.”

<sup>24</sup> “Bank’s Family is Home,” *The Kansas City Star*, 16 November 1921, 2.

<sup>25</sup> The National Bank of Commerce was listed in the National Register on 5 May 1999.

<sup>26</sup> The Scarritt Building was listed on the National Register on 9 March 1971.

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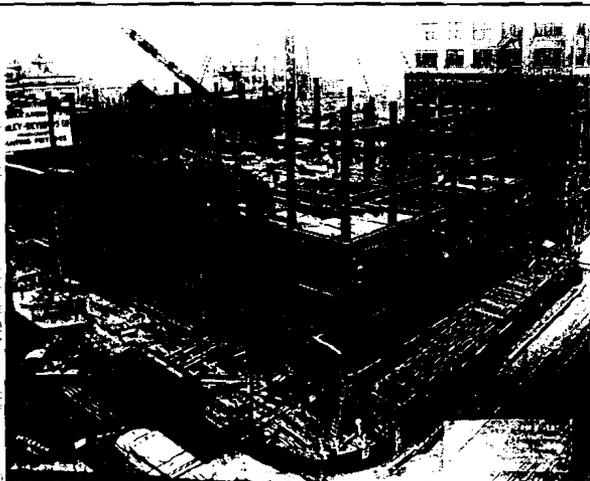
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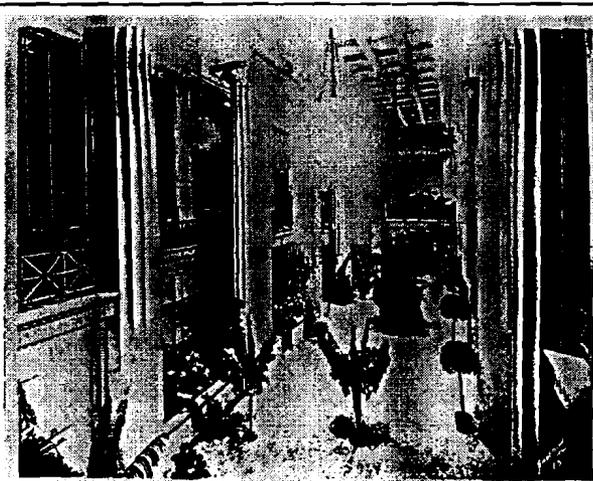
request funding from the Federal Reserve Board while there was a standing objection from the local business community.<sup>27</sup>

Just over a year after hiring the architectural team, the FRBKC placed an advertisement in the *Kansas City Star* soliciting proposals for construction firms. The George A. Fuller Company was selected as the general contractor. Crews quickly completed demolition of the three-story commercial building standing on the site, and excavation for the new foundation began on June 7, 1920.

At a ceremony on April 16, 1921, bank officials interred a copper box in the cornerstone. It contained a variety of items illustrating the "industrious and progressive people" of the 10<sup>th</sup> Federal Reserve District. These items included a block of wood from the axle of a covered wagon built near Kansas City before the Civil War. The wood block held a series of glass tubes each containing a key product representing the industry of the seven 10<sup>th</sup> District states. The tubes held wheat from Kansas, corn from Nebraska, wool from Wyoming, precious metals from Colorado, coal from New Mexico, lead and zinc from Missouri, and oil from Oklahoma. Documents describing the history of the building, coins and other tokens were also sealed in the cornerstone.<sup>28</sup>



**Building Under Construction. Photo (c. 1920) from  
the Archives of the Federal Reserve Bank of  
Kansas City.**



**Lobby on Opening Day. Photo from  
the Archives of the Federal Reserve Bank of  
Kansas City.**

Just seven months later, the FRBKC opened its new building at 925 Grand Boulevard on November 16, 1921. Warren G. Harding, Governor of the Federal Reserve Bank, attended the opening, which featured the Federal

<sup>27</sup> Worley, 141-142.

<sup>28</sup> Ramsay.

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Reserve Choir singing from the mezzanine to greet bank patrons and guests. The Federal Reserve Bank building cost \$4 million to build and at twenty-one stories (305 feet) was the tallest building in Kansas City.

Graham Anderson Probst and White designed the building with formal three-part form with a clearly identifiable base, cap and shaft; a U-shaped plan; and a rectangular volume. These features distinguished tall office buildings constructed before zoning laws required upper stories to be set-back from the street. They clad the steel-frame structure in an austere, dressed stone exterior with Classical Revival detailing at the base and cap that recalled precedents from ancient architectural traditions. The juxtaposition of modern construction technology with traditional architectural ornament was typical during of this era characterized by intense cultural and technological changes. The FRBKC Board of Directors described the design of the new building as “inspired by the best examples of Greek and Roman architecture, sufficiently modified to be thoroughly adapted to modern requirements.” The exterior was “severely formal and plain, depending for its effect upon massiveness of outline and simplicity of surface treatment, with careful avoidance of unnecessary ornament.”<sup>29</sup> The architecture and ornament were chosen to distinguish “a building representing something greater and more important than an ordinary commercial institution.”<sup>30</sup>

During the night before the opening, an armored van had shuttled back and forth across Grand Boulevard to deliver the bank’s holdings – \$14 million in currency; \$20-25 million in bonds, \$80 million in negotiable notes, \$1 million in silver, and “a little gold.” At the new building, a door closed behind the van after it drove into the basement to offload its cargo.<sup>31</sup> Built at a cost of \$600,000, the vault was lauded as “absolutely burglar proof.” It featured a 50-ton, \$32,000 door that sealed a structure with walls six and one-half feet thick. The concrete vault walls reportedly contained enough steel reinforcing bars to build a standard gauge railroad line nine and one-half miles long.<sup>32</sup>

The *Kansas City Star* lauded the amenities the FRBKC provided for employees. In an effort to create optimal working conditions, the architects designed exceptionally high ceilings that maximized natural light and ventilation into large open work areas on the upper floors. On the 19<sup>th</sup> floor was an employee’s café, with a capacity for 260 diners, as well as large lounges for both men and women. In addition to medical and dental offices, there was also a soundproof “silence room,” where “a tired clerk may go for absolute quiet to fight away a headache.”<sup>33</sup> The floor above, the 20<sup>th</sup> floor, featured a gymnasium, four bowling alleys and an 800-seat

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<sup>29</sup> Asa E. Ramsay, Address, Ceremonies of the Laying of the Corner Stone of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Missouri, April 16, 1921, Program. Special Collections, Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> “Bank’s Family is Home.”

<sup>32</sup> “Federal Bank Doors Open,” *The Kansas City Times*, 16 November 1921, 2.

<sup>33</sup> “Bank’s Family is Home.”

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auditorium. The *Star* estimated the rental value of the floors assigned to employee amenities at \$63,000 per year.<sup>34</sup>

Since 1921, FRBKC has renovated the building at 925 Grand Boulevard several times to address evolving needs for space, technology, and safety, as well as to update the appearance of both public and private spaces. As early as 1929 air conditioning was added to the first floor, mezzanine and bank vaults, and a few years later, the FRBKC was the first fully-air conditioned office building in Kansas City. In 1939, the FRBKC constructed a gas-fueled power plant along with elevator upgrades and office renovations as part of a \$400,000 improvement program. It was at this time that the elevators received their distinctive etched door skins.<sup>35</sup> Improvements to the lobby in 1947 included the addition of gold-leaf panels to the ceiling and marble wainscot to the walls. The office floors have been repeatedly modernized and now retain little historic architectural fabric. The work has included adding partition walls and cubicles, dropped ceilings, and carpet. A 1965 addition to the building's east side, designed by local architects Kivett & Myers, houses a four-story parking garage and an expanded bank vault below ground. Renovations in the 1970s moved the executive offices and the Board Room from the mezzanine to the nineteenth floor and replaced the original windows. In the 1980s, the mezzanine was widened at the north and south ends and the railings were rebuilt to meet modern code requirements for height. The work also included restoring the lobby's gold leaf ceiling panels and light fixtures.

**ARCHITECTS**

Graham, Anderson, Probst and White

Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, the Chicago architecture firm that designed the FRBKC, was among the most prominent architecture firms in America during the early twentieth century. The firm was a successor to Burnham & Root, another Chicago architectural firm that was instrumental in the development of high-rise building technology and the Chicago School of architectural design. Principals Daniel Burnham and John Wellborn Root revolutionized the engineering of structural steel framing and glazed curtain walls in Chicago skyscrapers. These innovations had long-lasting effects that continued to influence American architecture into the mid-twentieth century.

In 1912, following the death of both principals, Burnham's two sons, Daniel Jr. and Hubert, joined four of Burnham's apprentices, Ernest Graham, Pierce Anderson, Edward Probst and Howard White, to form Graham, Burnham and Company. The firm continued to design large, notable buildings such as the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> *Kansas City Star*, 7 May 1939, Mounted Clippings, Special Collections, Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library.

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The firm reorganized as Graham, Anderson, Probst and White in 1917, beginning the most prolific period in its history. In addition to designing iconic buildings in Chicago, the firm's reach spread across the United States as it designed a wide variety of buildings, including three Federal Reserve district banks, train stations, post offices and large office blocks, in nearly every major American city.<sup>36</sup> In Chicago, the firm designed such notable buildings as the Wrigley Building, the Museum of Science and Industry, the Civic Opera House and the Merchandise Mart. The firm's designs were primarily Classical Revival, Neoclassical, and Art Deco in style and they were known for developing the "Commercial Classicism" movement.<sup>37</sup>

Kivett & Myers<sup>38</sup>

The architectural firm of Kivett & Myers was prolific in Kansas City. Established in 1940 by Clarence Kivett and Ralph Myers, the firm thrived for thirty years. Following World War II, it was Kansas City's leading architectural design firm and produced a broad spectrum of projects, including some of Kansas City's most notable structures. Growing from less than ten employees to almost one hundred employees at its peak, the firm's popularity grew with the increasing acceptance of Modern Movement architecture. Throughout the firm's history, Kivett & Myers remained committed to Modern Movement design. Their design philosophy, based on purity of form, structural expression and technological innovation, resulted in a high degree of stylistic consistency.

Through the late 1950s, Kivett & Myers' projects included small commissions, such as office remodelings and home additions, as well as larger commissions, such as designs for residential and commercial buildings, hotels, libraries, country clubs and nursing homes. Kivett & Myers did the majority of design work for the local Katz Drug Store chain, which was owned by Clarence's uncles, and the Woolf Brothers department store chain.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Kivett & Myers received larger, more prominent commissions. Along with the addition to the FRBKC, the Kivett & Myers projects during this period included schools, airports, stadiums, banks, and hospitals, although the firm completed interior office renovations, additions and residential designs throughout its history. Although Kivett and Myers worked mostly in the Kansas City area, they also designed projects across the United States, especially in the later years when they received commissions for Boise Cascade projects in Portland, Baltimore, Boston, and Washington D.C.; athletic stadiums in New Jersey, Buffalo and Santa

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<sup>36</sup> Graham Anderson Probst and White, "Firm History," (Chicago: Graham Anderson Probst and White, n.d.), <http://www.gapw.com/page2.htm>, (accessed September 28, 2006).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Information about Kivett & Myers comes from two articles in the "Clarence Kivett" Vertical File, City at the Kansas City (Missouri) Landmarks Commission: "A Foundation of Midwest Architecture: Clarence Kivett is the Mentor of More than 50 Design Firms," *Kansas City Star*, 18 October 1982; and "Incredible Inspiration is Gone: Clarence Kivett, a Leading Force in Kansas City Architecture Dies at 91," *Kansas City Star*, 5 December 1996.

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Clara; hotels in Des Moines, IA and Arlington, VA; and a remodeling project at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. Locally their most notable works include the Missouri Public Service Company Building (1956) in Raytown, MO; and Temple B'nai Jehudah (1959-demolished), the Missouri State Office Building (1960), Kansas City International Airport (1967), the Jackson County Sports Complex (1967), and the Alameda Plaza Hotel (1971), all in Kansas City, Missouri.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Lots 103 thru 108 and 114 thru 118, inclusive, Swope's Addition, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary for the nomination includes the parcel of land associated with the original Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City building and the addition constructed in 1965.

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Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City  
Jackson County, Missouri

**PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Photographer:** Brad Finch  
F-Stop Photography  
Kansas City, Missouri

**Date of Photographs:** October 2006

**Location of Original Photographs:** Townsend Incorporated  
12651 Hemlock  
Overland Park, KS 66213

<b>Photograph Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Camera View</b>
1.	West and north elevations	Southeast
2.	South and west elevations	Northeast
3.	South and east elevations, main building and addition	Northwest
4.	East and north elevations, main building and addition	Southwest
5.	West elevation, detail of building base	East
6.	South elevation, detail of building base	North
7.	South elevation, detail of window and grille	North
8.	South elevation, Spirit of Industry panel	East
9.	South elevation, Spirit of Commerce panel	East
10.	Main lobby	South
11.	Main lobby from mezzanine	North
12.	Elevator lobby, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	Northeast
13.	Staircase, northwest corner of 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	North
14.	Gymnasium, 20 <sup>th</sup> Floor	Northwest
15.	Gymnasium, 20 <sup>th</sup> Floor	Northeast

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FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF KANSAS CITY





FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF KANSAS CITY











FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CHICAGO







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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

## SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 07000327

Date Listed: April 10, 2007

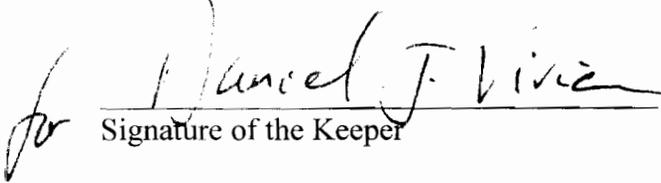
Property Name: Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

County: Jackson

State: Missouri

N/A  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

April 10, 2007  
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 6. Function or Use

The entries for the historic and current function are hereby changed to COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution.

[This change was made in consultation with and approved by the National Register staff of the Missouri SHPO.]

The Missouri State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**