

8. Historic Ownership

original owner: Allen Building Company
significant later owner(s): T. K. Irwin and T. F. Keasler

9. Construction Dates

original: 1926
alterations/additions: 1940s (penthouse) and 1980s (windows & interior)

10. Architect

original construction: James N. McCammon
alterations/additions: unknown

11. Site Features

natural:
urban design: covers all of two city lots at the corner of Commerce and Ervay (downtown Dallas)

12. Physical Description

Condition, check one:

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

unaltered
 altered

Check one:

original site
 moved (date _____)

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). Elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

The Allen Building is an early twentieth-century three part vertical block Commercial Style building that was originally constructed in 1925. The building is 18 stories above grade and one story below grade. The below grade basement level extends out beneath the city sidewalk on Commerce and Ervay streets. The building footprint at the first floor is square and occupies the entire lot, but from the second floor through the 18th floor the building is designed in an “L” configuration (Figure 1). Mechanical equipment is located on the southeast corner of the first floor roof, which is blocked from street view by a tall screen wall on the south side of the roof.

The Allen Building has two primary facades, the west elevation facing Ervay Street and north elevation facing Commerce Street. For these facades, terra-cotta is used from the first floor through the third floor and again on the 18th floor, while brick is used from the fourth floor through the 17th floor. The use of these contrasting materials visually divides the building into three parts, the base (floors 1 thru 4), shaft (floors 5 thru 17), and capital (18th floor), which is typical of the Commercial Style of architecture (Figure 2). The south elevation, facing Jackson Street, is clad with cementitious plaster up to the fourth floor and brick on the remaining floors (Figure 3). The east elevation, facing Prather Street, is blocked from view by the abutting building at 1712 Commerce Street, which was constructed in 1955.

The windows throughout the Allen Building have all been replaced. At the first floor, the original windows were replaced with three-part storefront windows, while the remaining upper floors exhibit replacement aluminum paired fixed windows. The primary entrance for this building is centrally located at the west façade facing Ervay Street, and consists of two round arches that extend to the second floor. Flanking the top of the arches are three decorative shields (Figure 4). At the capital of the two primary facades is a decorative course of festoons laid on blue tile backgrounds (Figure 5).

Additions to the Allen Building include a 2,600-square-foot penthouse constructed in ca. 1940, which is located adjacent to the original elevator mechanical penthouse. Major renovation of the building was undertaken in the late 1970s, at which time the building was under ownership of United Property Resources (*Dallas Morning News*, 31 January 1978:21). It is believed that during this renovation the original operable windows on the second thru 18th floors were removed and replaced with the modern fixed windows (Figure 6).

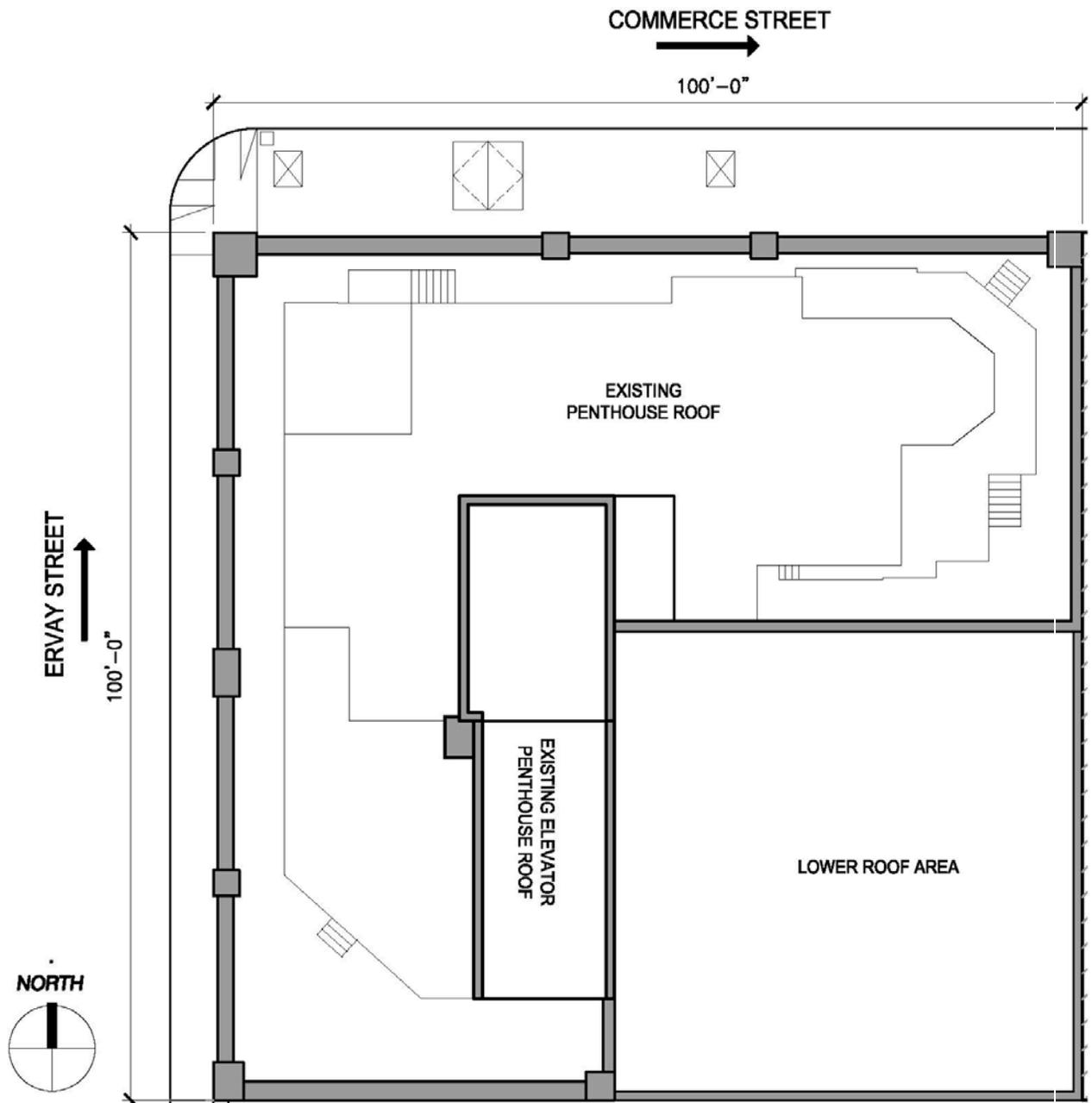


Figure 1. Site Plan showing upper roof with existing penthouse and lower roof (Merriman Associates, 2014).



Figure 2. Exterior view of building from the intersection of Commerce and Ervay street looking south, May 2014.



Figure 3. Exterior view of the building from the south looking north, May 2014.



Figure 4. Ervay Street two-story arched entrance, May 2014.



Figure 5. View of capital showing decorative festoons, May 2014.



Figure 6. Photograph of the south façade of the building in 1975 showing original windows still in place (*Dallas Public Library Photographic Archives, Doug Tomlinson Collection*).

13. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

This early twentieth-century brick and limestone commercial building was developed by Dallas County Judge Archibald C. Allen and the Allen Investment Company and was originally planned as a hotel. The design included an eighteen-story hotel with 320 rooms, with bachelor apartments on the top floor (*Dallas Morning News*, November 23, 1924:1). Initial plans estimated a building cost of \$1,300,000 (*Dallas Morning News*, 4 January 1925:1) (Figure 7). During the initial planning as a hotel, the Allen Hotel would have been one of four large downtown hotel projects. These projects included the Baker Hotel, Hilton Hotel, and the two-story addition to the Adolphus Hotel (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 January 1925:1) (Figure 8).



Figure 7. Conceptual design of the Allen Hotel (*Dallas Morning News*, 4 January 1925:1).

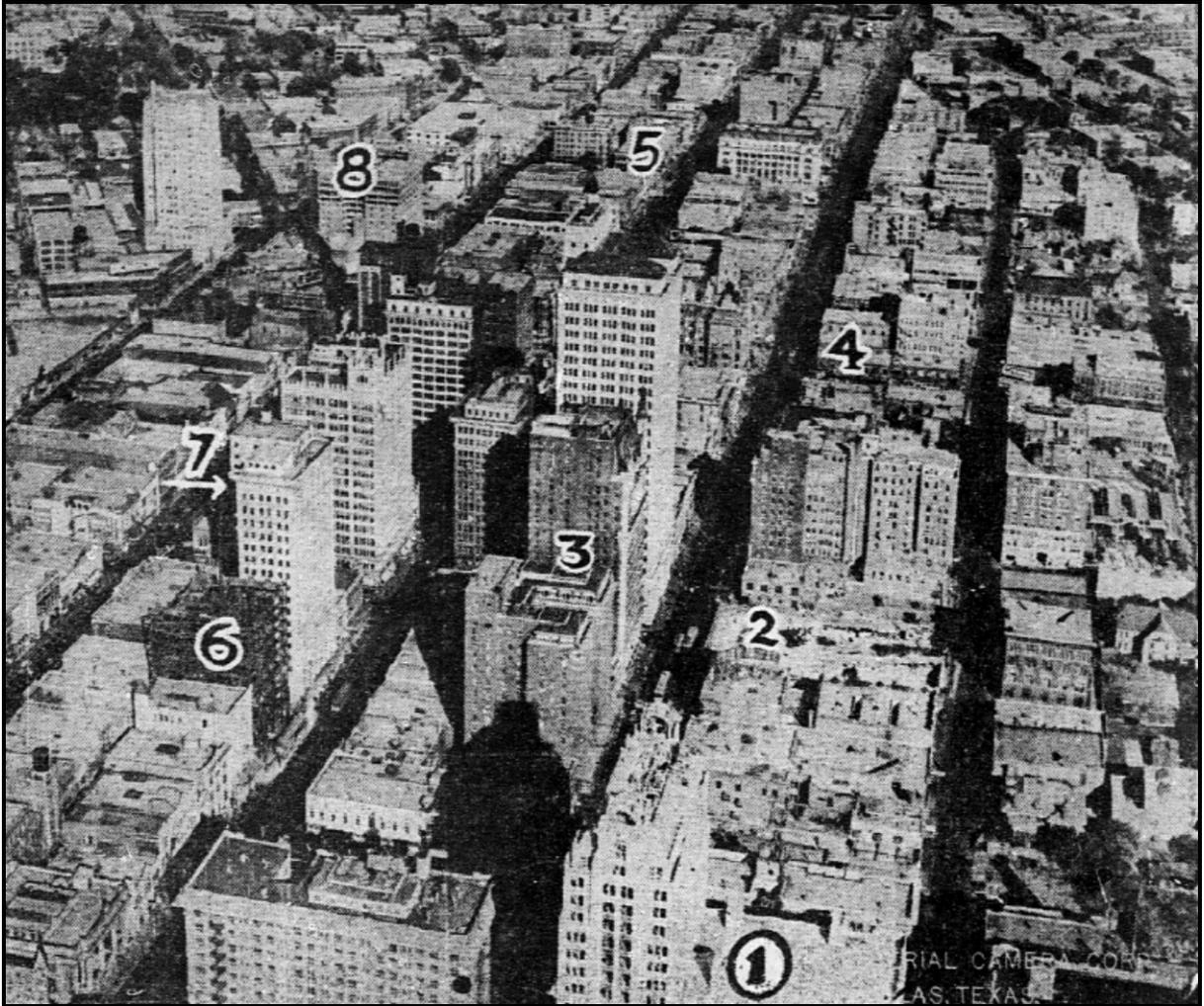


Figure 8. Fairchild aerial photograph from early 1925. “The buildings numbers are (1) Santa Fe Terminal Office Building, (2) site of the Baker Hotel, now being built; (3) Adolphus Hotel Annex under construction; (4) site of the Allen Hotel, eighteen-story building to be started this month; (5) fourteen-story Hilton Hotel, under construction; (6) twenty-two-story Republic Bank Building, now under way. No. 7 shows the American Exchange Bank Building, one of the newer skyscrapers” (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 January 1925:1).

The change in plans from a hotel to an office building (the Allen Building) of 357 offices was announced March 1, 1925, just weeks before construction was scheduled to begin. In addition to a change of function, the structure was changed from reinforced concrete to steel construction. “The new plans are said to call for a more elaborate exterior and interior finish than was proposed for the hotel building” (*Dallas Morning News*, 1 March 1925:Part 6, 12 May 1925:13). The building was designed by The Midwest Company, and the construction contract was awarded to Rice Construction Company (*Dallas Morning News*, 1 March 1925:Part 6). During the change of plans from hotel to office building, J. N. McCammon Company became the building architects (*Dallas Morning News*, 7 June 1925:4) (Figure 9).

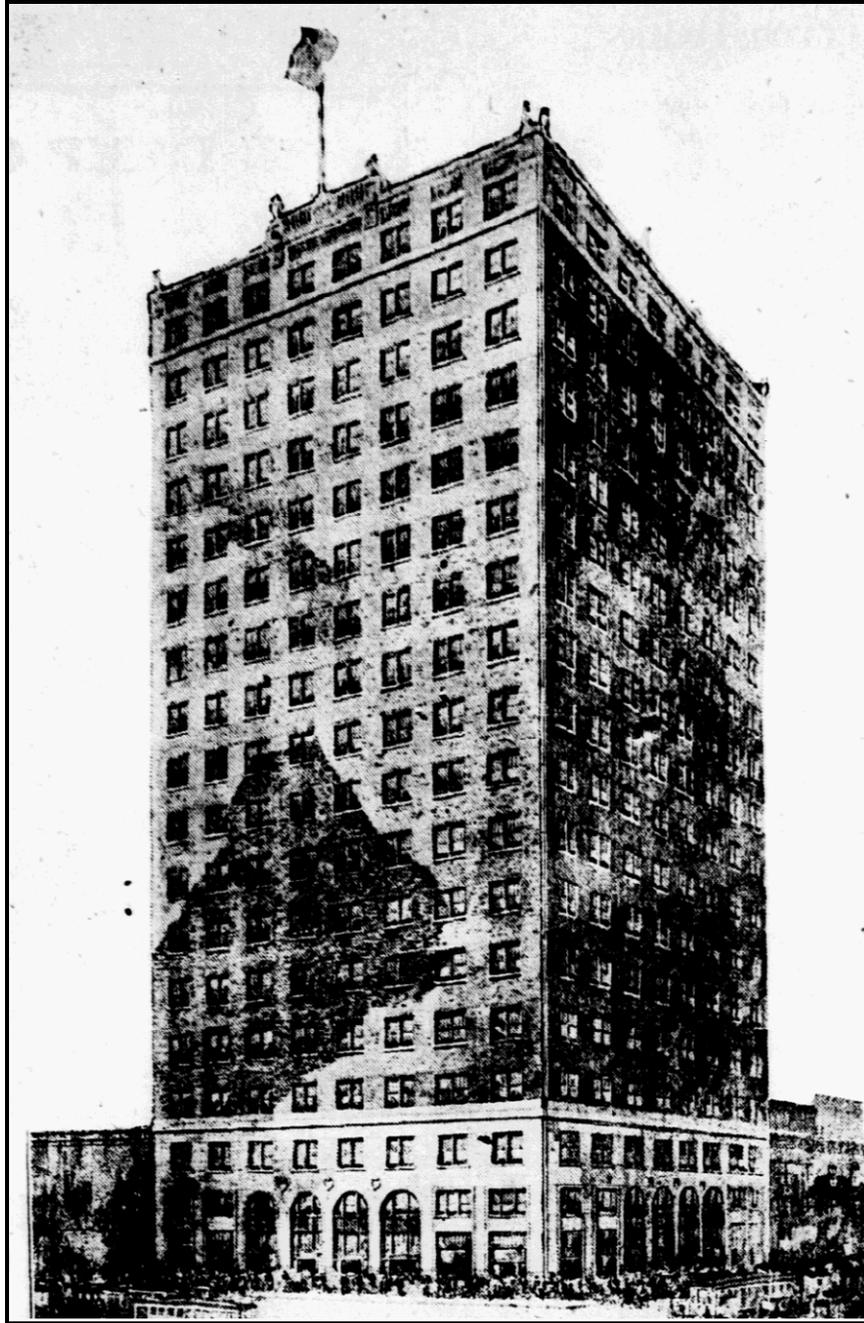


Figure 9. Conceptual design of the Allen Building (*Dallas Morning News*, 7 June 1925:4).

In November 1924, tenants occupying the land of the proposed Allen Building began vacating (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 November 1924:1). The Henry Nuss Bookbindery, established on April 22, 1913, by Henry Nuss once occupied a 12-by-20-foot area that is the present location of the Allen Building. The bookbindery moved to 416 South Ervay Street (*Dallas Morning News*, 12 January 1931:11).

Prior to the construction of the Allen Building, the site on the corner of Commerce and Ervay streets was occupied by two two-story brick buildings (Figure 10) that were razed in May 1925 (*Dallas Morning News*, 17 May 1925:9). J. Lee Vilbig served as the contractor for demolition.

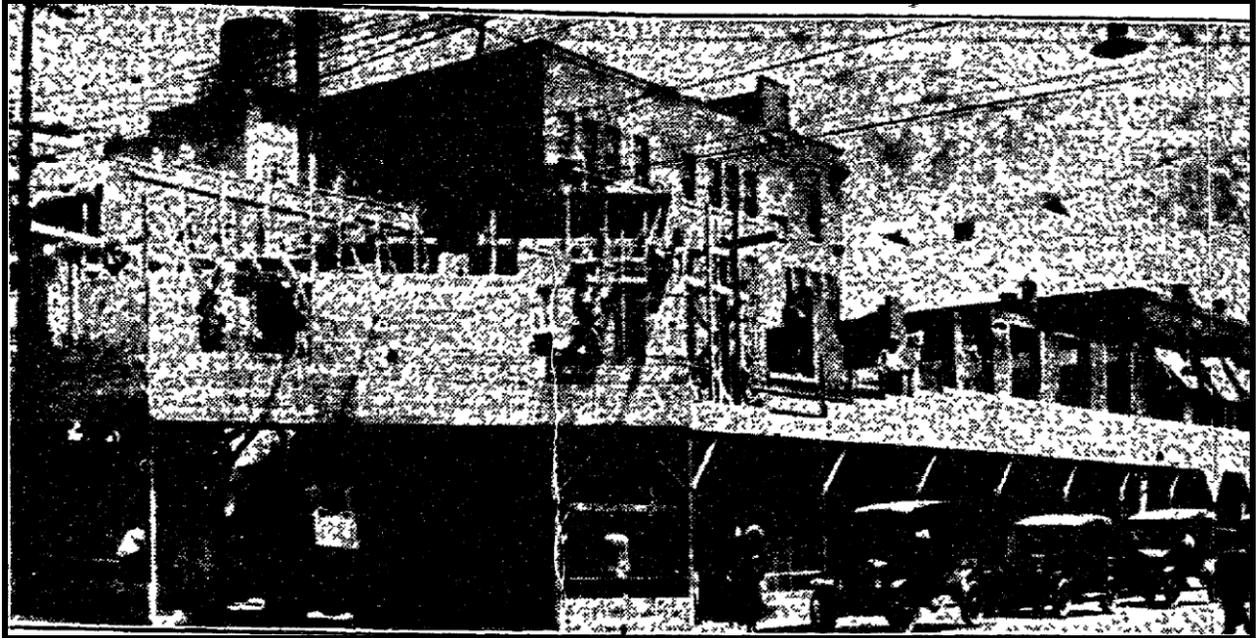


Figure 10. Two-story brick buildings that were demolished for construction of the Allen Building (*Dallas Morning News*, 17 May 1925:9).

The Allen Building utilized a steel construction that used narrower columns than most buildings. The steel work was conducted by Austin Brothers (In 2015, known as Austin Commercial). By October 11, 1925, steel work was in place up to the second floor (*Dallas Morning News*, 11 October 1925:4). By October 25, 1925, steel work had been erected to the third floor (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 October 1925:1), by November 8, 1925, up to the seventh floor (*Dallas Morning News*, 8 November 1925:1), and by November 25, 1925, up to the tenth floor (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 November 1925:4). The building was designed so that each office was on an outer wall and had no less than two windows. The upper ten floors of the building were designated for the medical and dental professions. These floors were to include special facilities to accommodate these professions (*Dallas Morning News*, 8 November 1925:1). Brickwork was finished up to the fourteenth floor by March 7, 1926 (Figure 11) (*Dallas Morning News*, 7 March 1926:1). By March 26, 1926, “ornamental terra cotta is now being set to surmount Dallas’ [*sic*] newest skyscraper, the eighteen-story Allen office building at Commerce and Ervay streets. Exterior work on the building is nearly completed, with glazing finished to the fifteenth floor. Interior finishing work is proceeding rapidly” (*Dallas Morning News*, 22 March 1926:4) (Figure 12). The ornamental ironwork was supplied by Southern Ornamental Ironworks, which also supplied ornamental ironwork to the Baker Hotel.



Figure 11. The Allen Building with brickwork completed to the fourteenth floor (*Dallas Morning News*, 7 March 1926:1).



Figure 12. The Allen Building with exterior work nearly complete (*Dallas Morning News*, 22 March 1926:4).

One known injury occurred during the construction of the Allen Building. On March 9, 1926, a brick falling from the sixteenth floor struck pedestrian T. A. Baggett. The 50-year-old suffered a fractured left collarbone (*Dallas Morning News*, 10 March 1926:17).

During the months of April and May leading up to the opening of the Allen Building, advertisements regularly ran in the *Dallas Morning News*. These advertisements (Figures 13–15) were designed to attract future tenants to the building. Lawrence Miller served as the leasing manager of the building, and H. H. Hoff, former secretary of the Dallas Real Estate Board, was in charge of leasing reservations. The first formally announced Allen Building tenant was Z. E. Marvin, leasing space for a period of 10 years in the amount of \$148,000. The lease was for a 30-x-35-foot space on the ground floor for a drug store (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 November 1925:4).

Start the New Year right by re-
serving office space in the
ALLEN BUILDING
which will be completed April 1.
LAWRENCE MILLER
Leasing Agent
818 Kirby Bldg. X 7675

Figure 13. January advertisement for lease space (*Dallas Morning News*, 1 January 1926).

Our personal service

means:

"Never ending determination to build wisely and well so that the lapse of years will find our customers with a deep abiding sense of value received."

We are grateful for the confidence our friends place in us.

XXXXXXXXXX

DALLAS' NEWEST SKYSCRAPER

THE ALLEN BUILDING

IS BUILT WITH
STRUCTURAL STEEL
FURNISHED, FABRICATED AND
ERECTED BY

AUSTIN BROTHERS

DALLAS

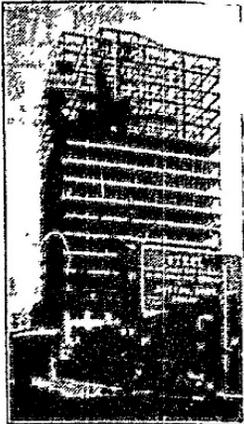


Figure 14. Advertisement for lease space in the Allen Building (*Dallas Morning News*, 4 April 1926:4).

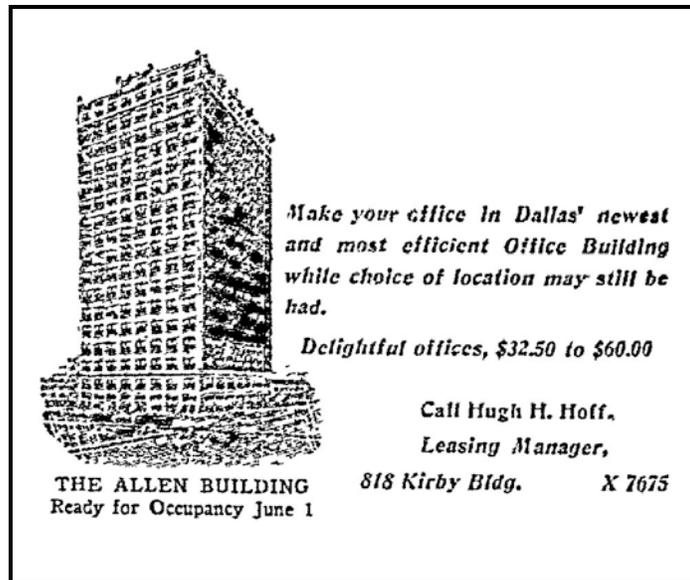


Figure 15. April advertisement for lease space in the Allen Building (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 April 1926:15).

The Allen Building formally opened on August 2, 1926, during a period of tremendous growth in Dallas (Figure 15). Growth along six blocks of Commerce Street, from Lamar to Ervay, included more than \$11,000,000 of investments (*Dallas Morning News*, 19 April 1926:9) (Figure 16). For the Allen Building, the cost of construction was \$1,200,000, with a total investment of \$1,750,000 that included construction and land. At the time, the building was already largely occupied (*Dallas Morning News*, 11 July 1926:5). In July 1926, businesses began running notices of removal to the Allen Building, informing the public of their new office locations. A sample of the early tenants of the Allen Building is shown in Table 1.



Figure 16. Photograph of the growth along Commerce Street. The Allen Building shown in the right background (*Dallas Morning News*, 19 April 1926:9).

Table 1: Early Tenants of the Allen Building			
Building Tenant Name	Suite	Date of Appearance in Newspaper	Note/Comment
Atkinson & Garvin	1228	24 July 1926 ¹	Dallas income tax service, previously located in the Western Indemnity Building.
Dr. William E. Hubbert	1017, 1018, 1019	31 July 1926 ¹	Specialized in disease of women and children. A naval surgeon during World War I. On July 31, 1935, was shot by Thota Bruch in his office. The shooting was ruled a murder-suicide.
Central and Southwest Utilities Company		October 1926 ¹	Central and Southwest Utilities Company moved headquarters from San Antonio to Dallas. The firm was the holding company for public utilities operation in sections of three states (Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana).
E. M. Baker	1601	November 1926 ¹	Referee in Bankruptcy.
Nagle, Witt, Rollins, & Gilchrist	1203–6	27 April 1927 ²	General and consulting engineers, previously located in the American Exchange National Bank Building (1919).
Atlantic Oil Producing Company	Unknown	12 May 1927 ²	Office of Edgar Kraus, also chairman of the committee on excursions for the West Texas Geological society of San Angelo and the Bureau of Economic Geology of the University of Texas.
Unity Society of Practical Christianity	635 (Unity Center) 624–626 (Unity Center) 428–30	July–August 1927 ¹ 21 April 1928 ¹ 30 September 1928	Evening services were held at the Unity Center.
Morgan Investment Company	1201	13 August 1927 ¹	Made term and monthly payment loans.
Girl Scout Council headquarters	310 308	20 November 1927 ¹ 4 December 1927 10 June 1928 ¹ 14 July 1928 ¹	
Allen & Allen General Practice		1 December 1927 ¹	Arch C. Allen and Gabe P. Allen
Jack A. Schley	904–5–6	1 January 1928 ¹	Patent & trademark attorney.
Dr. George E. Hurt	415–424	20 April 1928 ¹	State chairman of the profession development committee of the American Osteopathic Association and a member of the city health board of Dallas.
Ruby Young	Unknown	1 April 1928 ¹	Campaign manager for the Better School Government Association.

Table 1: Early Tenants of the Allen Building			
Building Tenant Name	Suite	Date of Appearance in Newspaper	Note/Comment
Dallas Hive No. 208, Maccabees	Unknown	17 May 1928 ¹	Meeting in the Allen Building.
Crime Suppression League of Dallas	Unknown	18 May 1928 ¹	Crime commission organized in 1927. No record on file on file after 1928.
Dallas County Hoover Club headquarters	Unknown	26 August 1928 ¹	Moved from the Allen Building to a location on Main Street.
Nature Lore Club	230	16 September 1928 ¹	Meetings held for Camp Fire girls interested in nature work.
Connell's Allen Bldg. Drug Store		4 October 1928 ¹	
W. N. Burgess	1224	26 October 1928 ¹	
Harry Gowins, Jr.	1203	28 October 1928 ² 4 November 1928 ¹	
Pacific Finance Co.	214	16 October 1928 ¹	Provides quick confidential loans.
Guardian's Association	216	4 December 1928 ¹	Meeting
The Southwest Press	Unknown	16 December 1928 ¹	Publishers in and of the southwest.
C. R. Jackson Co.	Unknown	16 June 1929 ²	
North American Building and Loan Association	1631-32-33	30 June 1929 ¹	Moved to the Allen Building in June 1929. Offices refinished and equipped for the organization's needs.
Corporation Finance Service	Unknown	15 September 1929 ²	
Lowery Drugs		17 April 1931 ¹	
WPA regional office headquarters	17 th floor	22 July 1935 ¹	The office served 12 counties and was the largest district in the state. In April 1937, the procurement office was closed.
Social Security Board field office	Unknown	13 April 1937 ¹	Jesse C. Carter, field officer in charge.
Milt Saul	1418	18 February 1937 ¹	
Imperial Life Insurance Company		16 May 1937 ¹	
C. C. Walsh	401	1 January 1938 ¹	Served as Class C director, chairman of the board and Federal Reserve agent of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas for 12 ½ years. Opened private office in Allen Building upon retiring from the bank.
LeGett's Wave Shop	624	20 March 1938 ¹ 17 September 1939 ¹	
Lieut. H. P. McBride	1530	28 July 1942 ²	
Acme Co	222	29 July 1942 ¹	Moved from 420 Wilson Building.
Navy Officer	15 th floor	12 November 1942 ¹	

Table 1: Early Tenants of the Allen Building			
Building Tenant Name	Suite	Date of Appearance in Newspaper	Note/Comment
Procurement Office			
Navy Officer Procurement Office	16 th floor	12 November 1942 ¹	Enlargement of the office necessary due to the large number of applicants. On November 16, 1944, it was announced that on December 1 the office would transfer to Houston in an effort to streamline procurement.
U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserves	735	25 June 1943 ¹	
Dallas Aviation Cadet Selection Board	524	5 July 1943 ¹	Oversight of war training and flight preparatory schools in four states.
Rogers & Smith Advertising Agency		9 January 1944 ¹	The Chicago agency announced plans to open a Dallas office.
Jean McBride Monogramming	335	30 January 1944 ¹	
Percy H. Harris Insurance Company		9 July 1955 ¹	Life, fire, health and accident, casualty and hospital insurance
WAVES		30 July 1944 ¹	
Leon Rudberg Jewelry Company		30 March 1945 ¹	
Ford Motor Company's Dallas Office		27 May 1945 ¹	Served branches and dealers in the southwest region. Clyde E. Rapp appointed manager of the Dallas office.
Dallas campaign offices for Lt. Gov. John Lee Smith's bid for governor	610	6 July 1946 ¹	C. J. Wilmon, campaign manager.
Fred E. Newman	12 th floor	15 September 1946 ¹	Opened barbershop upon completing five years in the army where he served as a supervisor of barbers.
Downtown Box Office	Ground floor	21 September 1947 ¹	
J. L. Allison Realty Co.		16 March 1947 ¹	
C. N. Smith Loans	523	6 October 1948 ¹	Quick personal loans.
Salter	501-3	3 July 1949 ¹	Employment service.
Great National Fire and Casualty Company		15 November 1953 ¹	Branch office located in the ICT Group Building. James T. Valentine managed the office. T. K. Irwin appointed vice-president and director.
Frank Babb	Ground floor	5 April 1953 ¹	Jeweler
American Savings		11 August 1957 ¹	

¹ Dallas Morning News

² Fort Worth Star-Telegram

In 1932, the original builders of the Allen Building, the Allen Investment Company, defaulted on their loan for the building. A tenant on the ground floor petitioned to keep its rental space and to be paid in arrears after being evicted at the time of the foreclosure. The tenant also claimed to have assisted the Allen Investment Company in financing the building. The building was ultimately foreclosed and sold to the newly-formed trustee group Allen Building Company, under leadership of William E. Easterwood (*Dallas Morning News*, 10 December 1933:1).

In 1944, the Allen Building was purchased by T. K. Irwin and T. F. Keasler for \$1,500,000 from the Allen Building Company. The Saturday following the transaction, the building became known as the Irwin-Keasler Building. In the transaction, Majors & Majors represented the Allen Building Company, and Crofford & Crofford represented the buyers. T. K. Irwin was a local Dallas attorney and real estate man, and T. F. Keasler was a lumberman and theater owner (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 January 1944:1).

In 1947, Chrysler AirTemp was contracted to install air conditioning throughout the Irwin-Keasler Building (Figure 17) (*Dallas Morning News*, 14 September 1947:13). Installation of air conditioning throughout the 18-story building took less than 30 days (Figure 18). Upfront coordination between the contractors and building management allowed for one of the nation's quickest installations. "Into the job went seventy-seven 5-ton air-conditioning units, 20,000 pounds of sheet aluminum fashioned into ducts, 11,647 pounds of conduit and 5,362 pounds of copper wire serving 159 different electric motors, 2,250 running feet of pipe and 1,330 different fittings. The cooling tower is said to be one of the largest in Dallas" (*Dallas Morning News*, 9 May 1948:1).

**IRWIN-KEASLER BUILDING INSTALLS
CHRYSLER AIRTEMP!**

We are happy to announce that
Mr. T. K. Irwin and Mr. T. F. Keasler,
owners of the Irwin-Keasler
Building have chosen

CHRYSLER

Year-Round Packaged Air Conditioners

To cool the entire eighteen floors of
their building located at Commerce
and Ervay Streets in downtown
Dallas.

Another prominent Dallas firm
joins the ranks of SATISFIED
USERS of CHRYSLER AIRTEMP
EQUIPMENT.

Mathews Engineering Company

CHRYSLER AIRTEMP
DIVISION OF
CHRYSLER CORPORATION

2122 OLIVE ST. CHRYSLER AIRTEMP DISTRIBUTORS RIVERSIDE-5166

The advertisement features a large, detailed illustration of the Irwin-Keasler Building, a tall, multi-story structure with many windows. The text is arranged in a clean, professional layout, with the headline in large, bold letters at the top. The Chrysler AirTemp logo is prominently displayed in the bottom right corner, featuring the word 'CHRYSLER' in a stylized font above 'AIRTEMP' in a rectangular box, with 'DIVISION OF CHRYSLER CORPORATION' written in smaller text below it. The distributor's name, 'Mathews Engineering Company', is written in a cursive font, and their address, '2122 OLIVE ST.', is at the bottom left. The phone number 'RIVERSIDE-5166' is at the bottom right.

Figure 17. Notification of air conditioning to be installed in the Irwin-Keasler Building (*Dallas Morning News*, 14 September 1947:13).

TO YOU WHO HAVE DONE THE IMPOSSIBLE

CHRYSLER AIRTEMP SALES CORPORATION—DIVISION OF CHRYSLER CORPORATION

Matthews Engineering Company
Mustang Sheet Metal & Manufacturing Co.
Superior Electric Company
Teter Brothers Plumbing Company
Buell & Company
The Marley Company
Peerless Pump Division of Food Machinery Corporation
J. R. Dowdell & Company
H. B. Meyer & Son, Representing
S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc.
Moncrief-Lenoir Company
Maurice Peterman, Architect

Dallas Power & Light Company
Standard Electric Manufacturing Company
Meletio Electric Company
White Rock Lumber Company
Baker Lumber Company
Weston Hardware Company
W. E. Lewis & Company
Southland Supply Company
Asbestos Workers Local Union No. 21
Building and Construction Laborers Local Union No. 518
Carpenters Local Union No. 198
Cement Finishers Local Union No. 549

Electricians Local Union No. 59
Elevator Constructors Local Union No. 21
Glaziers Local Union No. 53
Hoisting and Portable Engineers Local Union No. 714
Iron Workers Local Union No. 481
Lathers Local Union No. 140
Painters Local Union No. 53
Plasterers Local Union No. 61
Plumbers Local Union No. 100
Sheet Metal Workers Local Union No. 25
Tile Setters Local Union No. 29
Tile Setters Helpers Local Union No. 127



T. K. IRWIN



T. F. KEASLER

YOU have completely air-conditioned our 18-story office building in 30 days. This sets all national records. You have done this through all-out co-operation among Labor, Management, and Capital. This should provide a shining example for the future of Labor, Management and Capital relations in all America. You have done the job speedily, harmoniously, adhering to the highest standards of workmanship, while Capital, Management and all of the 16 Unions have found it unnecessary to sacrifice or make any concessions. We salute you!

● Charles Steinmetz said, "Co-operation is not a sentiment. It is an economic necessity." Labor, Management, and Capital proved exactly that last month in Dallas.

What was the assignment? TO COMPLETELY AIR-CONDITION IN A SINGLE MONTH AN 18-STORY OFFICE BUILDING WITH MINIMUM INTERRUPTION TO THE TENANTS. On the basis of similar experiences, most people said the job would require from nine months to two years. But you had other ideas about that.

You went about the job wisely. You sat down together around the table and scanned your blueprints . . . labor foremen, superintendents, suppliers of material . . . and charted your course. You made your agreements, and you lived up to them in spirit and in fact.

You worked day and night in harmony, and on every hand there was evidence that you were spurred on by two compelling facts:

1. You liked the idea of full co-operation as between Labor and Management.
2. You were taking pride in the speed and efficiency with which the task was being accomplished.

T. K. IRWIN

T. F. KEASLER

IRWIN-KEASLER BUILDING MANAGEMENT

You fabricated 20,000 pounds of aluminum into air ducts, you installed pipes to carry 1,155 gallons of water per minute, you manufactured and installed a gigantic electric panel to supply the power, you erected one of the largest water-cooling towers in Dallas, you boxed and plastered and painted the air ducts into more than 200 offices, you installed 77 Chrysler Airtemp "packaged" air-conditioning machines to furnish perfect year-round "weather by order."

This project was protected to the extent of over \$1,000,000.00 liability insurance. It is gratifying to note that no single accident occurred.

We are happy to tell both LABOR and CAPITAL everywhere that what has been done in Dallas by co-operation can be done all over America. Yes, you did the impossible! You broke all records and we are proud to tell you so.



Figure 18. Acknowledgement of the record breaking installation (*Dallas Morning News*, 9 May 1948:12).

In October of 1947, the Nelson Pharmacy, located in the Irwin-Keasler Building, was sold to M. M. Bloodworth and Leslie Haley. Remodel of the interior and front will be conducted at the cost of \$50,000. The drugstore will be managed by Leslie Haley and will be operating under the name of Irwin-Keasler Drugs (*Dallas Morning News*, 12 October 1947:1).

In June 1952, an “E” was added to the “IK” neon sign on the Irwin-Keasler Building by the Eisenhower Club of Dallas County (*Dallas Morning News*, 20 June 1952:1). The light was turned on by Mayor J. B. Adoue, Jr. (*Dallas Morning News*, 21 June 1952:5) (Figure 19).



Figure 19. IKE sign on the Irwin-Keasler Building in 1952 (*Dallas Morning News*, 21 June 1952:5).

For seven years, T. K. Irwin, his dog Joe, and 45 cats resided in the penthouse at the top of the Irwin-Keasler Building. T. K. Irwin’s dog Joe was referred to as “the penthouse dog” and “cliff-dweller.” Upon leaving the Irwin-Keasler Building penthouse, T. K. Irwin moved to 14-room brick house in the Redbird Addition, which he was developing (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 July 1955:7) (Figure 20).



Figure 20. Photo of T.K. Irwin and his companions in their penthouse residence (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 June 1955:7).

T. K. Irwin and T. F. Keasler sold the Irwin-Keasler Building to Insurance Company of Texas Group in October 1953. The sale price was not disclosed and the building changed its name to the ICT Group Building. The purchase of the Irwin-Keasler Building allowed the insurance company to cancel plans for constructing a new building along Central Expressway. The company headquarters occupied nine floors of the newly purchased building (*Dallas Morning News*, 18 October 1953:9) (Figure 21). A sample of the building owners is shown in Table 2.

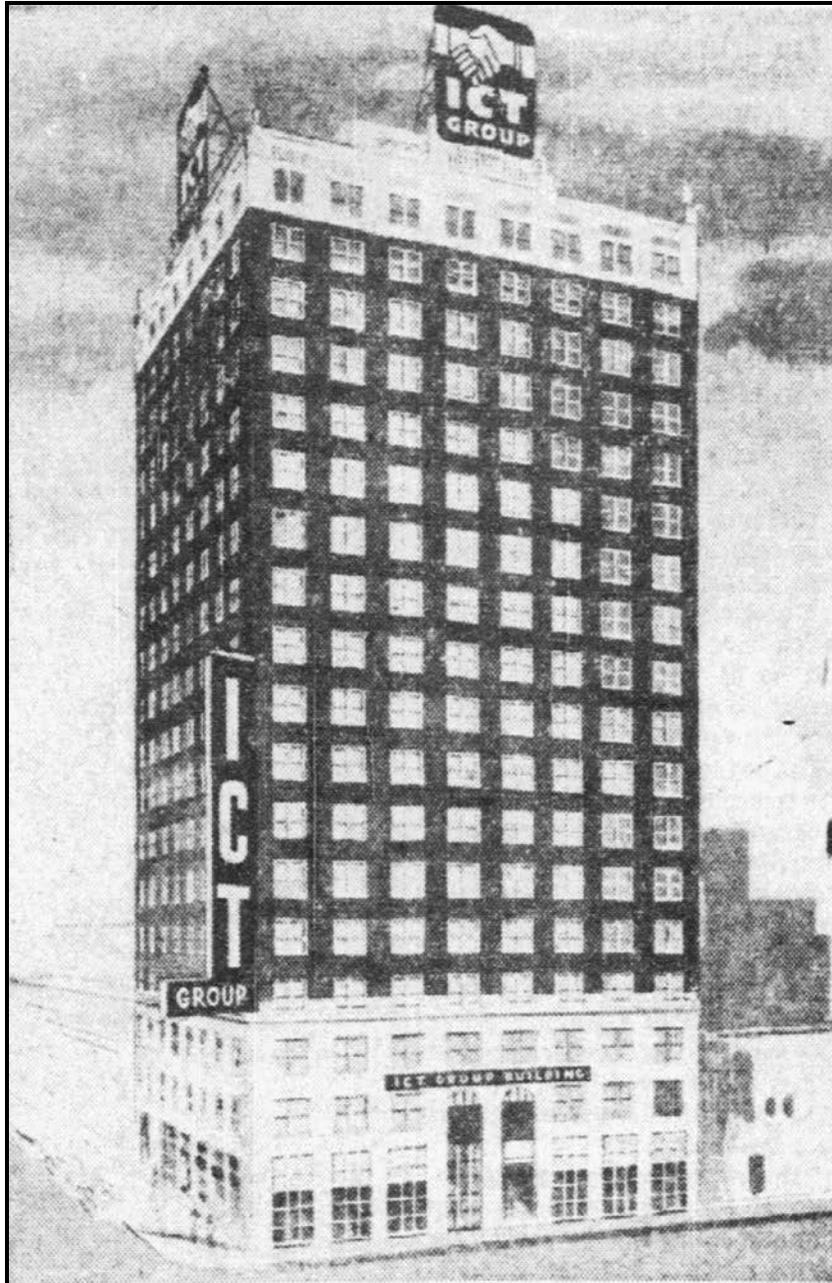


Figure 21. Image appearing in the newspaper announcing the sale of the Irwin-Keasler Building to the Insurance Company of Texas Group (*Dallas Morning News*, 18 October 1953:9).

The Midwest Company – Architect

The Midwest Company was the Dallas architecture and engineering firm that designed the original plans for the Allen Hotel (*Dallas Morning News*, 13 November 1924:1). The firm designed several other residential projects around Dallas – a complex of (3) two-story apartment buildings at Douglas Avenue and Rawlins Street of Spanish renaissance style, each utilizing steel construction and completely fireproof (*Dallas Morning News*, 13 July 1924:1) (Figure 25); a three-story masonry, steel and concrete garage and office building constructed on Bryan Street. (*Dallas Morning News*, 21 December 1924:1) and a seven-story plus basement apartment building built on Maple Avenue, influenced by Dutch architecture. This apartment building was considered very modern for its time. It was completely fireproof and constructed with a steel frame, brick on the first two floors and stucco on the upper floors. Two high-speed elevators served all floors. Each of the 84 apartments was designed to have whole or partial southern exposure and a refrigeration system (*Dallas Morning News*, 28 September 1924:1) (Figure 22).

In addition to office and apartment work in Dallas, The Midwest Company also designed a four-story hotel that was built in Wortham, TX (*Dallas Morning News*, 21 December 1924:1). Also in Wortham, the firm designed a two-story plus basement Methodist church. The church was constructed of brick and provided facilities for a modern-day church with separate Sunday school rooms, a kitchen in the basement, and a main auditorium which sat 400 people (*Dallas Morning News*, 22 March 1925:2) (Figure 23). Ground breaking for the Wortham church began in March 1925 (*Dallas Morning News*, 03 March, 1925:26). The Midwest Company also designed a single family brick veneer English cottage that was built in a new subdivision called Bluff View Estates in 1925. Modern features included a cathedral ceiling in the living room and a built-in telephone niche and radio receiving set (*Dallas Morning News*, 18 January 1925:1) (Figure 24). A note-worthy associate of The Midwest Company was Edward J. O'Brien, Jr. who served as president of the Dallas Architectural Club (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 September 1924:4) (Figure 26).

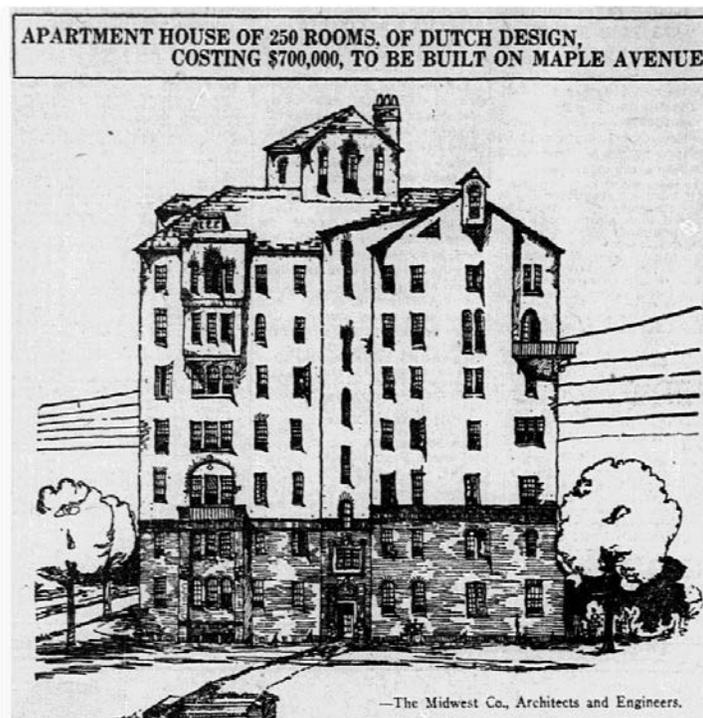


Figure 22. Rendering of seven-story apartment building on Maple Avenue designed by The Midwest Company (*Dallas Morning News*, 28 October 1924:1).

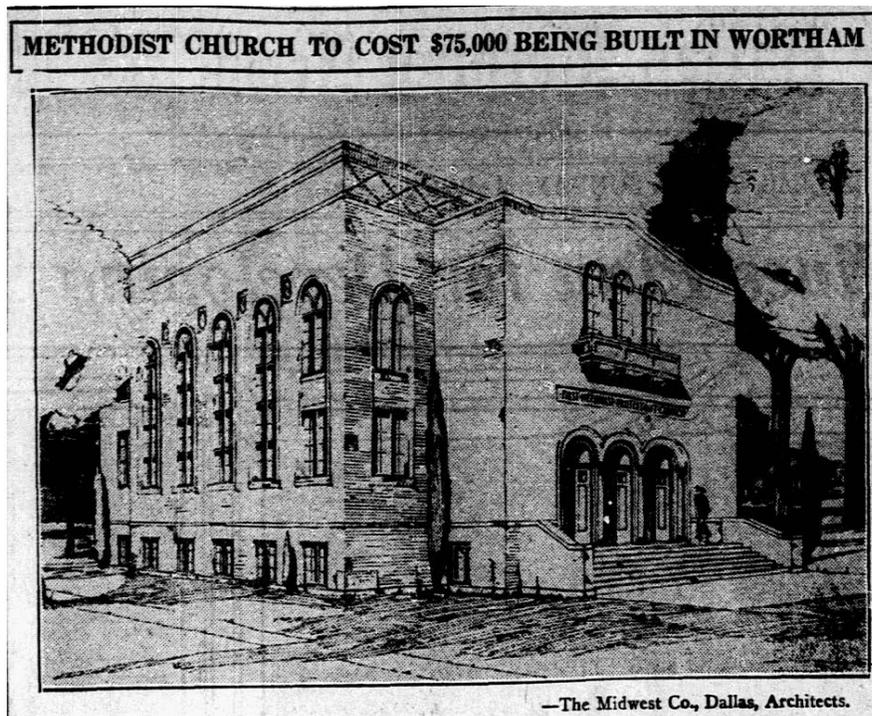


Figure 23. Rendering of Methodist church in Wortham, TX designed by The Midwest Company (*Dallas Morning News*, 22 March 1925:2).

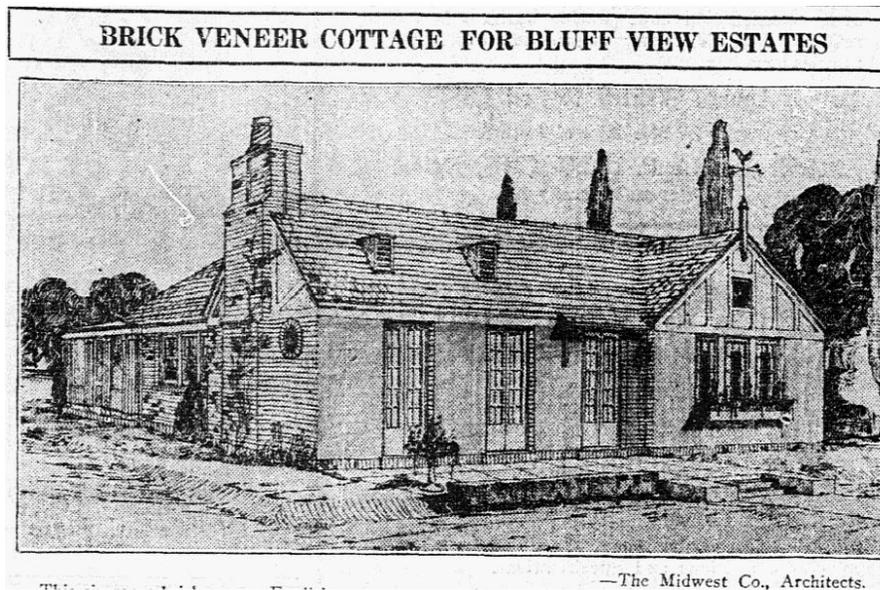


Figure 24. Rendering of single-family residence constructed in Bluff View Estates designed by The Midwest Company (*Dallas Morning News*, 18 January 1925:1).



Figure 25. View of the apartment complex at Douglas Avenue and Rawlins Street designed by The Midwest Company (*Google Maps*, Feb. 2014).

*Architectural Club
Elects Officers*



EDWARD F. O'BRIEN JR.

Edward F. O'Brien Jr. was elected president of the Dallas Architectural Club at a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce Building Monday night. Mr. O'Brien is associated with the Midwest Company.

Other officers of the club elected are Charles L. Kribs Jr., first vice president; H. H. Haaker, second vice president; Walter Anderson, secretary; H. A. Magnusson and M. O. Carder, executive board members, and Bertram C. Hill, advisory board member.

Figure 26. Newspaper announcement of election of Edward F. O'Brien Jr. as Dallas Architectural Club president (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 September 1924:4).

J.N. McCammon - Architect

James N. McCammon became the architect after the decision was made to change the building's use from hotel as designed by The Midwest Company to office just weeks before construction began in 1925. (*Dallas Morning News*, 1 March 1925:1). McCammon, an early 20th century Dallas architect and engineer, was formally trained in architecture at George Washington University. He led his own firm for 20 years (1922-1942) before he partnered with Walter W. Ahlschlager, a prominent Chicago architect who relocated to Dallas in the 1940's. Ahlschlager was well known for his high-end hotel design, such as Chicago's Sheridan-Plaza ("The Work of Walter W. Ahlschlager").

McCammon designed other notable buildings in Dallas - the Gulf States Building (originally called the Marvin Building) located at 109 N. Akard Street in 1927 ("Gulf States Building"); the Reserve Loan Life Building (originally called the Monroe Building) at 505 N. Ervay in 1949 (*Dallas Morning News*, 19 September 1945:1); and a private residence on Westway Avenue in Highland Park in 1939 (Douglas Newby & Associates) (Figure 27).

The 1950's were busy years for McCammon. Plans for a new 100,000 square foot electrical plant for Beard & Stone were announced. The steel and masonry structure was equipped with air conditioning and heating, and special facilities for employees such as a lunchroom and auditorium were provided. (*Dallas Morning News*, 9 July 1950:8) (Figure 28). The horizontality and clean, simple lines are evocative of mid-century modern architecture. In 1951, the large Piedmont Shopping Center was designed on a 6-acre tract off Scyene Road. In addition to multiple stores, two gas stations were also included in the plans. This new center would "provide shopping facilities for people living in more than 2,500 new homes" nearby (*Dallas Morning News*, 14 January 1951:8) (Figure 29). Also in 1951, McCammon designed a 75,000 square foot shopping center just east of Southern Methodist University at Mockingbird Lane and Airline Road. A 650 foot-long park was also planned to separate the shopping center from Potomac Avenue just to the north (*Dallas Morning News*, 8 July 1951:6.) Later that year, McCammon designed a new store for the Wyatt Food Store chain (later bought by the Kroger Co.). This store was part of the Preston Square development, and was planned to be the most advanced design the chain had seen with "all metal shelves, electric-eye doors and the most modern lighting fixtures" (*Dallas Morning News*, 4 November 1951:9) (Figure 30).

McCammon designed the six-story Fredonia Hotel in Nacogdoches in 1953 in the International Style, which is a rarity in the area. The monolithic base is clad in red brick with a five-story tower comprised of horizontal ribbon windows. The building was held in high regard both by its investors and the general public. Not only did it appear "as modern as an atomic submarine," but it was viewed as being able to add prestige to any city in the world. For over a decade, the Hotel Fredonia was considered "the most successful community-owned hotel in the nation" ("200 N. Fredonia (Fredonia Hotel)") (Figure 31). Along with the various Dallas shopping centers, the Fredonia Hotel is a prime example of McCammon's ability to move skillfully through the transitioning trends of architecture – from the Classic Revival of the early twentieth century to the mid-century modern of the 1950's.

In 1958, McCammon designed the Nacogdoches County Courthouse, which was not designed like most courthouses. The low-slung ranch style building has a residential feel, with its expansive front porch facing a lawn. This informal courthouse fits well into the suburban look of 1950's America, and even features a chimney to further emphasize its residential appeal (Lane) (Figure 32).



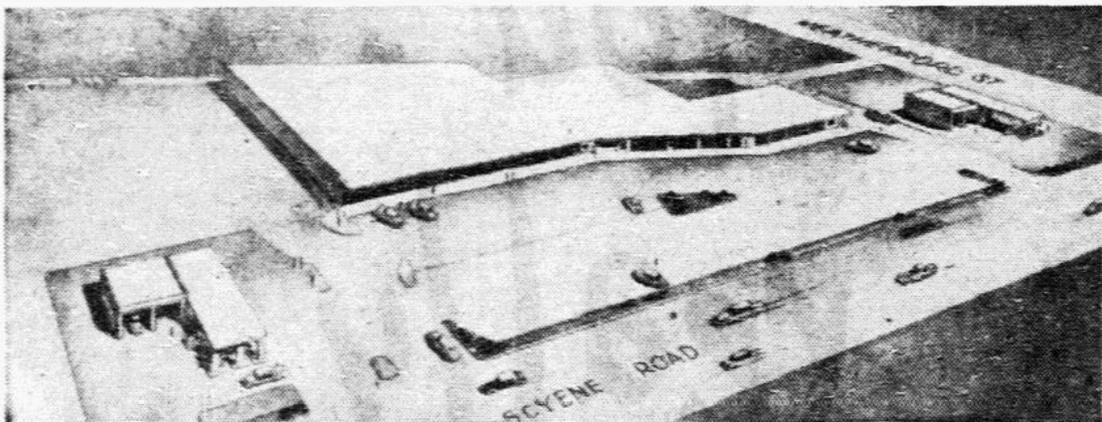
Figure 27. Image of Highland Park private residence designed by McCammon (Douglas Newby & Associates).



This is the architect's concept of the handsome, modern, office, service shop and warehouse building to be erected by Beard & Stone Electric Company, Inc. The tract,

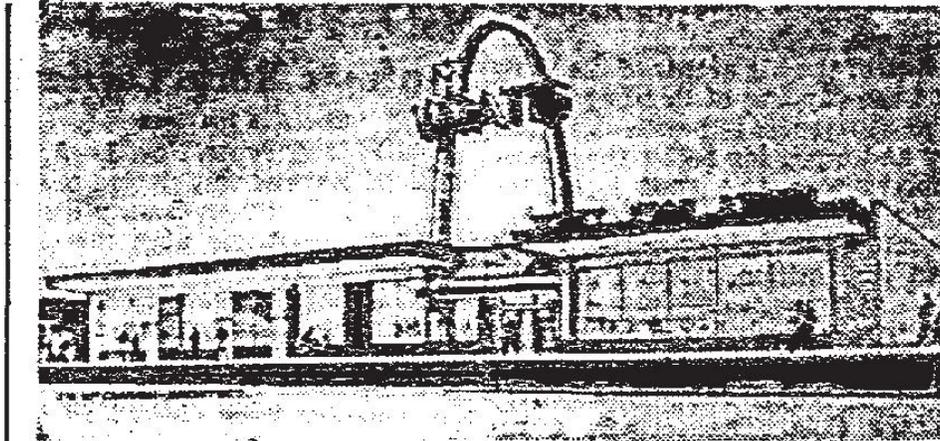
on Live Oak between St. Joseph and Haskell, will include a large parking area.

Figure 28. Conceptual design of the new Beard & Stone Electric Company building by McCammon (*Dallas Morning News*, 9 July 1950:8).



Architect J. N. McCammon drew this conception of how the Piedmont Shopping Center, now under construction, will look when completed.

Figure 29. Rendering of the Piedmont Shopping Center by McCammon (*Dallas Morning News*, 14 January 1951: 8).



Architect J. N. McCammon's drawing of the new Wyatt Food Store now under construction at Preston Square, new development at Luther Lane, Colgate and Preston Road. The new building, the chain's finest, will measure 120x200 feet. Cowdin Brothers are contractors. The building is expected to be completed by May.

Figure 30. Rendering of the new Wyatt Food Store by McCammon (*Dallas Morning News*, 4 November 1951:9).



Figure 31. Picture of the Fredonia Hotel by McCammon in 2011 ("200 N. Fredonia (Fredonia Hotel)").



Figure 32. Picture of the Nacogdoches County Courthouse by McCammon in 2009 (Lane).

Archibald C. Allen - Developer

In 1916, Archibald C. Allen served as the First Assistant County Attorney (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 February 1916:6). In January 1917, Arch C. Allen was installed as prelate in the Coeur de Leon Lodge No. 8, Knights of Pythias (*Dallas Morning News*, 5 January 1917:13). When the United States entered World War I, Arch C. Allen began his military career. He served as a recruiting officer captain of the Dallas Artillery Battalion and was an artillery instructor at the officers' training school. In April 1918, Captain Arch C. Allen was promoted to major (*Dallas Morning News*, 24 April 1918:3). In July 1918, Major Arch C. Allen left for France with the One Hundred and Thirty-First and returned in March 1919 (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 14 March 1919:3). In 1919, he also served as chairman of the Dallas District World War Veterans Association, and in December 1921 was made colonel of field artillery (*Dallas Morning News*, 4 December 1921:3).

“Major Arch C. Allen was engaged as Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Dallas County by district Attorney J. Willis Pierson yesterday. Major Allen served as prosecutor during the administration of M. T. Lively, but resigned in 1917 to accept a commission in the 133d Field Artillery” (*Dallas Morning News*, 26 April 1919:9). In July 1920, Arch C. Allen was a candidate for County and Probate Judge (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 July 1920:10), and in December 1920, he succeeded Cecil L. Simpson as presiding Judge (*Dallas Morning News*, 1 December 1920:10).

On the morning of January 1, 1933, Arch C. Allen was injured as his car overturned in a ditch south of Plano, Texas. He suffered severe injuries to the head and died later that day:

The flag on the State Capitol at Austin will fly at half-mast in tribute. An artillery carriage will meet the funeral cortege from Dallas at the entrance to the cemetery and bear the body to the grave where Dallas

Masonic Lodge will hold a service. Three airplanes from Hensley Field will hover overhead while the ceremony is held at the cemetery. From Corsicana a section of Battery D of the 132d Field Artillery, Texas National Guard, consisting of a color guard, caisson and horses under the command of Capt. John J. Garner will go to Terrell early Wednesday to form a part of the military escort in funeral procession [*Dallas Morning News*, 4 January 1933:1].

Owner Name	Approximate date of purchase	Note/ Comment
Allen Investment Company	11 October 1925	
Allen Investment Company, later called Allen Building Company, under new ownership of Col. William E. Easterwood Jr.	10 January 1933	Building operations continued by Allen Building Company, which was formed when the property was foreclosed (<i>Dallas Morning News</i> , 10 December 1933:1)
T.K. Irwin & T.F. Keasler	23 January 1944	
Insurance Company of Texas Group	18 October 1953	
National Bankers Life Insurance Company	28 July 1957	Longest known owner
United Property Resources, Inc.	31 January 1978	
unknown investor group	15 January 1980	Buyers represented by Bunny Klein, president of Irving Klein & Co.
Boxer Property	1992	
NewcrestImage LLC	2014	

Col. William E. Easterwood Jr. – Owner

Col. William E. Easterwood Jr. as a Dallas businessman, philanthropist, and aviation enthusiast who wanted to increase aviation development within Dallas, which he considered his adopted hometown. He was born on November 5, 1883 in Wills Point, TX. He served as a private in the US Marine Corps during World War I, and was a captain by the time he was discharged. Easterwood made a name for himself in the chewing gum industry in the 1920’s, and even saw multi-million dollar annual profits during the depression years.

Upon moving to Dallas, Easterwood served as the official greeter of the city and used his position as “goodwill ambassador” to bring attention to Dallas (Perez). He created the Easterwood Prize in 1927, in which competitors vied for the \$25,000 award for making the first one-stop flight from Paris to New York to Dallas (Bleakley) (Figure 33). As well as helping develop airports in various cities across the Southwest and holding memberships in numerous aviation associations, Easterwood served as the national vice commander of the American Legion in 1933. He was also the vice president of the US Marine Corps League for a time (Perez).

Easterwood was close friends with Arch Allen and the two had conducted several business deals together prior to the sale of the Allen Building in 1933 (*Dallas Morning News*, 10 January 1933: 1). Along with a few other business associates, Easterwood formed the Allen Building Company in late 1933, and the entity acquired ownership after the building was foreclosed on (*Dallas Morning News*, 10 December 1933: 1).

Easterwood was married to Mae Coker and the couple never had children. The two relocated to California in 1938 due to Easterwood's health complications. He passed away on August 26, 1940 from a heart attack. Easterwood was ultimately returned to his home town Dallas for burial (Perez).



Figure 33: Newspaper article announcing the Easterwood Prize for the first one-stop flight from Paris to Dallas (Bleakley).

T. K. Irwin- Owner

T. K. Irwin and wife Lucy M. Irwin had four sons: Ivan Irwin, T. K. Irwin, Jr., George W. Irwin, and Lee J. Irwin. T. K. Irwin was a Dallas attorney with an office at 611 Southwestern Life Building, who at the age of 35 announced his candidacy for Place No. 4 in the legislature (*Dallas Morning News*, 6 June 1922:9, 17 June 1922:3). T. K. Irwin defeated John McGinnis and assumed the Place No 4 seat, and the following year launched his campaign for Speaker of the House (*Dallas Morning News*, 5 August 1924:11). Supporters included former state senator T. H. McGregor, former United States Senator Joseph W. Bailey, and former legislator Dwight Lewelling (*Dallas Morning News*, 8 January 1925:2). In January 1925, the race for Speaker of the House between T. K. Irwin, Lee Satterwhite, and J. W. Hall was won by Lee Satterwhite of Amarillo (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 14 January 1915:14).

In 1926, T. K. Irwin began a campaign for Attorney General of Texas. G. W. Barrington served as his campaign manager (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 March 1926:16). T. K. Irwin was not successful in his bid for Attorney General. In addition to political and law professions, T. K. Irwin was a banker, Vice President of the Oak Cliff-Dallas Commercial Association (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 26 August 1930:4), and president of the Farm & City Mortgage Company that constructed 100 homes covering 20 blocks in Lakeland Terrace, near White Rock Lake (*Dallas Morning News*, 16 January 1938:5). Additional building developments by T. K. Irwin included the Redbird Addition (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 July 1955).

T. K. Irwin and all four of his sons practiced law and all were admitted to practice at the United States Supreme Court at the same time (*Dallas Morning News*, 20 May 1952:1) (Figure 34). Lucy M. Irwin passed away at the age of 58, the evening of December 21, 1946 (*Dallas Morning News*, 23 December 1946:3). T. K. Irwin died at the age of 79 on September 21, 1966. Funeral services were held at Dudley M. Hughes Funeral Chapel with burial at Restland Memorial Park (*Dallas Morning News*, 22 September 1966:4).



Figure 34. Photograph of T. K Irwin and his sons after being admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court (*Dallas Morning News*, 20 May 1952:1).

Insurance Company of Texas Group (ICT) – Owner

The president of the Insurance Company of Texas Group, Ben Jack Cage, announced the purchase of the then Irwin-Keasler building in 1953. The insurance group would use the building as its headquarters, occupying nine floors, and change the name of the building to the ICT Group Building. The acquisition of the building allowed the ICT Group to cancel plans for construction of a new office building. The building was appealing to the ICT Group for its modern conveniences such as air-conditioning, rewiring of electrical circuits, and a recently remodeled ground floor lobby (*Dallas Morning News*, 18 October 1953:9). In 1957, Mr. Cage was convicted of embezzling \$100,000 from the ICT Group but fled to Brazil to escape serving out his punishment. Texas Governor Connally signed extradition papers to have Cage brought back, and he received a 10-year prison sentence (“Texas Seeks to Extradite Ben Jack Cage From Brazil”).

National Bankers Life Insurance – Owner

Pierce Brooks launched the Pierce Brooks Insurance Service in 1938 in the Allen Building. After years of studying insurance trends and observing areas of deficiencies, Brooks dreamed of forming a new company. In only a matter of hours, Brooks raised enough money to start National Bankers Life Insurance in 1945, and the company leased the top floor of the ICT Building. After out-growing its office in the ICT Building, the insurance company relocated to a much larger building, which was also eventually out-grown. The next step was the purchase of the building in which Brooks began his successful career, and in January 1957, National Bankers Life Insurance bought the building at Commerce and Ervay and renamed it the National Bankers Life Building (*Dallas Morning News*, 28 July 1957:3) (Figure 35). National Bankers Life Insurance is the longest known owner of the 1700 Commerce building.

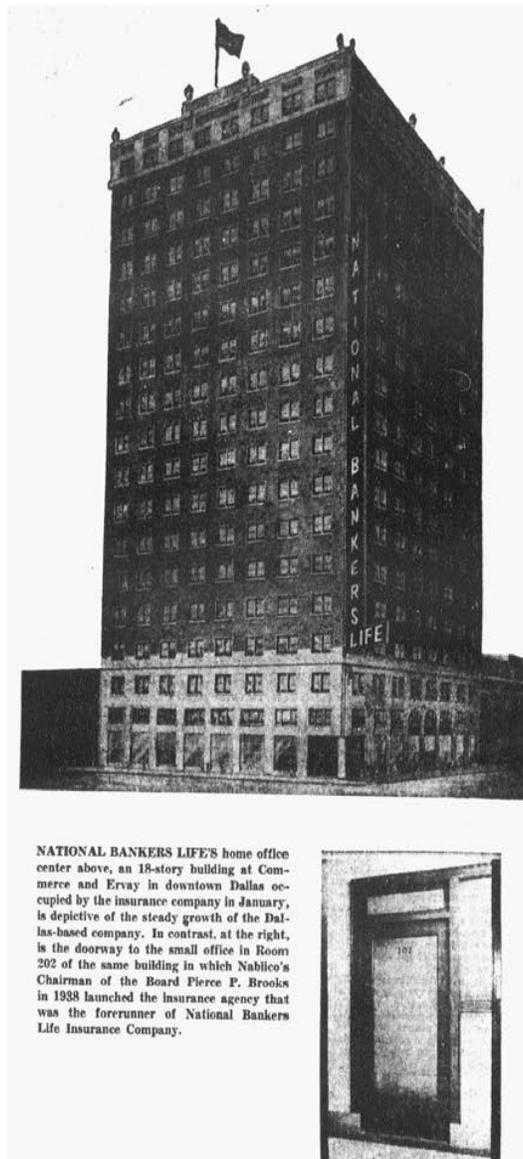


Figure 35. Photograph of the National Bankers Life Building from the 1957 newspaper article featuring Pierce Brooks' rise from humble entrepreneur to insurance magnate (*Dallas Morning News*, 28 July 1957:3).

United Property Resources – Owner

United Property Resources acquired the building at Commerce and Ervay, under the leadership of Harold Collum. Collum was a veteran Dallas realtor in commercial development, specializing in rehabilitating money-losing older buildings. United Property Resources used a unique marketing strategy for leasing the available space. The first tenant to lease a minimum of 20,000 square feet of space would have the building renamed in its behalf. The building was an attractive purchase due to the convenient location - offering quick and easy downtown access via the city's bus route. United Property Resources was able to make the building the most affordable when compared to other downtown Dallas lease spaces (*Dallas Morning News*, 28 January 1979:5N). Upon the purchase, United Property Resources had plans to completely renovate the building into "first-class space." Each floor was to be "gutted" and remodeled, including the penthouse space once used as an apartment by former owner T. K. Irwin (*Dallas Morning News*, 15 January 1980:24). The remodeling plans by United Property Resources were to be more extensive than just cosmetic. A new elevator system and an electronic security system were to be installed (*Dallas Morning News*, 31 January 1978:21). Harold Collum later turned his interest to the Asian markets. He founded Dallas-based Collum International, Inc. which focused on Hong Kong and other Southeast Asian countries ("Collum International, Inc.").

NewcrestImage LLC – Owner

NewcrestImage was formed in 1993 as a hotel-development, construction, and management firm in Irving, TX. It has received multiple awards for excellence in hospitality for projects across the state. NewcrestImage owns and operates more than a dozen hotels, with five properties currently under construction. The company just opened two hotels in Grapevine, and is converting a historic downtown New Orleans hotel into an urban-style AC Hotel for Marriott (Brown). NewcrestImage purchased the 1700 Commerce building in late 2014, with plans to renovate it into a hotel in 2015.

Statement of Significance

This building represents the move of the commercial high-rise district from west and central downtown eastward (*Dallas Morning News*, 25 January 1925:1) (Figure 8). As seen in the attached photos it was the easternmost high-rise commercial building when built and was primarily surrounded by one and two story commercial and residential structures. This building is representative of its era in architectural style and materials and remains mostly intact. It is listed as a contributing building to the Dallas Downtown National Register District. As is typical in the historic downtown district, the building has had some alterations to the façade, particularly new storefront windows. The original brick and limestone cladding and decorative elements remain intact and in good condition. The 1926 building sits at one of the most prominent intersections in downtown – across the street from Neiman Marcus' flagship store and down the street from the Main Street Garden. Its location lends itself to promoting more activity downtown, especially once it is converted to a hotel as was the original intention almost 100 years ago.

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15. Attachments

<i>District or Site Map</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Additional descriptive material</i>
<i>Site Plan</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Footnotes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Photos (historic & current)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other: _____</i>

16. Designation Criteria

History, heritage and culture: Represents the historical development, ethnic heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or country.

Historic event: Location of or association with the site of a significant historic event.

Significant persons: Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state, or country.

Architecture: Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, landscape design, method of construction, exceptional craftsmanship, architectural innovation, or contains details which represent folk or ethnic art.

Architect or master builder: Represents the work of an architect, designer or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state or country.

Historic context: Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation based on historic, cultural, or architectural characteristics.

Unique visual feature: Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city that is a source of pride or cultural significance.

Archeological: Archeological or paleontological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest.

National and state recognition: Eligible of or designated as a National Historic Landmark, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, State Archeological Landmark, American Civil Engineering Landmark, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic education: Represents as era of architectural, social, or economic history that allows an understanding of how the place or area was used by past generations.

Recommendation

The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date:

***Daron Tapscott – Chair
Designation Committee***

***Mark Doty
Historic Preservation Planner***

EXHIBIT B

ALLEN BUILDING
1700 COMMERCE STREET
DALLAS, TX 75201



LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|  | PROTECTED FACADE |
|  | LIMITS OF DESIGNATION |
|  | PROTECTED BUILDING |
|  | NEW CONSTRUCTION
1 STORY ABOVE EXISTING LOWER ROOF |

