NPS Form 10-900

OMB No. 1024-0018

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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 National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: ODECO Building
Other Names/Site Number: Ocean Drilling & Exploration Co. Building
Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

2. Location

Street & Number: 1600 Canal Street
City or town: New Orleans State: LA County: Orleans
Not for Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

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, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:
☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Phil Boggan 4-8-16

Signature of certifying official/Title: Phil Boggan, State Historic Preservation Officer **Date**

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title: **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Memo to File:

This property has been automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This was due to the fact that our "Notice of Pending Nominations" did not print in the Federal Register in time for the full public comment period to take place before we must act on the nomination.

36CFR 60.6 (r) Nominations will be included in the National Register within 45 days of receipt by the Keeper or designee unless the Keeper disapproves a nomination, an appeal is filed, or the owner of private property (or the majority of such owners for a district or single property with multiple owners) objects by notarized statements received by the Keeper prior to listing. Nominations which are technically or professionally inadequate will be returned for correction and resubmission.

Thus, this property is automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

4. National Park Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___other, explain: _____

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

x	Private
	Public – Local
	Public – State
	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box.)

x	Building(s)
	District
	Site
	Structure
	object

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

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1	0	Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): COMMERCE/TRADE / Business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): VACANT / NOT IN USE

7. Description

ODECO Building
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

4. National Park Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

x	Private
	Public – Local
	Public – State
	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box.)

x	Building(s)
	District
	Site
	Structure
	object

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

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1	0	Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): COMMERCE/TRADE / Business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): VACANT / NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.):
MODERN MOVEMENT / International Style
OTHER/New Formalism

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
foundation: CONCRETE
walls: METAL / Aluminum
roof: OTHER / Built-up
other: STUCCO (for the canopies)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The fourteen-story office building located on the corner of Canal and South Robertson streets in downtown New Orleans was constructed between 1966 and 1969 for local developer William P. Bosworth, Jr. The structure was named the ODECO Building for its lead tenant, the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company, which leased office space on the upper floors of the building until 1993. The building was designed by New Orleans architect Paul Mouton; his brother, William J. Mouton, Jr., served as the structural engineer. The building's structural system consisted of a steel frame with hollow-core precast concrete floors, while the foundation system incorporated an innovative type of precast concrete piling known as "Brunspiles". Despite minor alterations to the ground floor, the building's original façade remains largely intact. It features an aluminum and glass curtain wall, set within white metal-clad columns that clearly articulate the building's 3- by 5-bay organization and rectangular massing. The building's appearance is generally representative of the late International Style, although the three stucco-clad arches projecting from the base and penthouse levels on the Canal Street elevation suggest a New Formalism influence.

Narrative Description

Context and Setting

The ODECO Building is located on the corner of Canal and South Robertson streets, on the block bounded by Canal Street, South Robertson Street, Cleveland Avenue, and Claiborne Avenue. It is situated one block from the elevated Claiborne Expressway, and approximately four blocks (or a quarter-mile) outside of the boundaries of the Lower Central Business District National Register Historic District.

At the time of the ODECO Building's construction, there was a significant demand for office space to accommodate the expanding oil and gas industry. Several buildings had already been erected in and around the central business district in the early years of the oil and gas boom, including:

- The Shell Building, 925 Common Street, 14-stories, c. 1952
- The Texaco Building, 1501 Canal Street, 17 stories, c.1954
- The Maryland Casualty Life Insurance Building, 210 O'Keefe, 9-stories, c. 1956
- The Saratoga Building, 212 Loyola, 15-stories, c.1957
- The 821 Gravier Building, 17-stories, c. 1957
- The Oil and Gas Building, Tulane and Rampart streets, 14-stories, c. 1959

- 225 Baronne, 28-stories, c. 1962

Prior to 1965, few buildings in New Orleans exceeded 30 stories, as the load-bearing capacity of the most commonly employed foundation systems was limited by the city's weak deltaic soils. This changed with the invention of the "Brunspile," a new piling system that made tall modern skyscrapers—similar to those being built in the competing southern cities of Houston, Dallas, Atlanta—finally possible in New Orleans. The 45-story Plaza Tower at Loyola and Howard streets, for which William Mouton served as the structural engineer, was the first structure in New Orleans to use the new Brunspiles. Construction began on the Plaza Tower in 1964 and the building was completed in 1969. Brunspiles were also used in the 33-story International Trade Mart at the foot of Canal Street, which began construction later in 1964 and was completed in 1967. In 1965, at the same time that technological advances were enabling the construction of tall modern skyscrapers, the city widened Poydras Street between the Mississippi River and the Superdome as part of a plan to concentrate new high-rise commercial development in that area. Much of the building boom of the 1970s and 1980s clustered along the Poydras corridor, which today is considered to be the primary spine of the Central Business District.

The ODECO Building is located approximately 10 blocks northwest of the Poydras corridor along a stretch of upper Canal Street with markedly less commercial activity. In the mid-1960s when the ODECO site was selected, upper Canal Street, between Saratoga and Claiborne, had three strong anchors: the 17-story Texaco Building at 1501 Canal Street (c.1954), the monumental Jung Hotel at 1500 Canal Street (c.1925, 1928, 1950), and a 15-story hotel at 1300 Canal Street (c. 1927). Several auto-related businesses, including used-car dealerships, parking lots, and service stations, were also present on the blocks lining upper Canal Street, mixed among a scattering of low-rise commercial buildings. It was expected that the corridor would continue to develop. In fact, when the ODECO Building was announced in 1966, mention was made of a proposed 25-story hospital and medical complex to be located directly across Canal Street.[1]

Many of the anticipated projects along upper Canal Street, however, were never realized. Plans for the proposed 25-story hospital were abandoned by 1969, and future medical buildings tended to locate closer to Charity Hospital and Tulane Avenue. With the exception of the 1973 24-story office building at 1440 Canal Street, subsequent office towers tended to locate closer to Poydras Avenue and the core of the Central Business District.

Today, the stretch of upper Canal Street where the ODECO Building is located is the focus of renewed interest within the development community. The nearby medical district, historically anchored by Charity Hospital and the Tulane University School of Medicine, is expanding. New campuses for the University Medical Center and Veterans Administration hospital are currently under construction on the opposite side of the expressway, bounded by Canal Street, Tulane Avenue, Claiborne Avenue, and Galvez Street. The 65,000 square foot, 4-story BioInnovation Center opened at 1441 Canal Street in 2011. The Texaco Building at 1501 Canal Street was recently renovated to provide senior housing in conjunction with the nearby Iberville housing project redevelopment, and extensive renovation plans have been announced for the Jung Hotel. While surface parking continues to occupy numerous vacant lots along Canal Street in the vicinity of the ODECO Building, the area is currently being revitalized.

Building Description – Exterior

The ODECO Building has approximately 70 feet of frontage along Canal Street and 130 feet of frontage along South Robertson Street. With no side or rear yard setbacks, the building directly abuts the adjacent 5-story Canal Street Inn and its associated 2-level parking garage. The ODECO Building's primary entrance is centered on the Canal Street elevation.

[1] "New Building Going Up Soon," *Times-Picayune*, October 28, 1966.

The building's form and massing are rectangular, accented only by two sets of triple arches—one at the base and the other at the penthouse level—that project over Canal Street. The vertical components of the building's structural system, which extend from grade to the roofline, are expressed on the façade. This both emphasizes the building's verticality and allows for the clear articulation of the structural bays (three along Canal Street and five along South Robertson Street). There is no applied ornament.

The base of the building (first floor) was designed to have tall storefront windows set within each structural bay. As the building has been vacant for ten years, all openings have been protected with plywood and the glass concealed. A horizontal band of white metal panels terminates the storefront system and separates the building's base from the body. The original projecting canopy formed by the three stucco arches is intact and in fair condition. However, small box-like intrusions most likely installed to conceal mechanical equipment have been placed atop each arch, disrupting the intended geometry of the original design and concealing the location of the original building signage. The recessed building entrance is currently boarded up.

The body of the building (second to twelfth floors) is composed of a tinted glass curtain wall system set within the structural bays. Bronze anodized aluminum window mullions run vertically along the entire body of the building in a rhythmic pattern. There are five mullions per bay, and the center mullion is significantly wider, again emphasizing the building's verticality. The structural columns are clad with metal panels. Early photographs of the building indicate that the columns on the Canal Street side were originally detailed with a channel profile that has since been concealed.

The body of the building culminates with a metal-clad horizontal band, similar to the horizontal band above the building base. The thirteenth floor penthouse sits just above this band, where the presidential offices and conference rooms for the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company were originally located. Three arched plaster canopies extend from the building's roof on the Canal Street side. The fourteenth floor, which is set back from the street sides, houses mechanical equipment.

Building Description – Interior

The interior of the building was originally designed to have a lobby and retail spaces on the ground floor, large open plan offices on floors two through twelve, and presidential suites on the thirteenth floor penthouse level. The building's core, with two elevators, stairs, mechanical rooms, and restrooms, is located along a perimeter wall away from the street-facing sides of the building. When the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company donated the building to the University of New Orleans in 1994, the interior of the building was renovated to house a business incubator, offices, research functions, and conference rooms.

Building Description – Structure

The ODECO Building sits on 96 concrete piles, each 150' long. These octagonally-shaped prestressed concrete piles were manufactured by Belden Concrete Products, Inc. using the patented "Brunspile" technology that had just recently been developed. This significance of this piling system, and its impact on high-rise development in New Orleans, will be further explained in Section 8 of this nomination. Reinforced concrete grade beams and a reinforced concrete slab complete the building's foundation. Above ground, the building uses a hybrid structural system that combines steel framing with precast hollow-core concrete floor planks.

Non-contributing Resources

A six-level (plus roof) parking garage was included in the original design drawings for the ODECO Building (available at the New Orleans Public Library and also provided by the building owner). While the parking garage was indeed built at the corner of Claiborne and Cleveland avenues, it appears to vary from the minimally annotated elevations, both in interior ramp organization and exterior appearance. Today the parking garage is owned by Tulane University. The precast panels that now clad the exterior façade were not

indicated on the original drawings, and may be the result of a later alteration.

Given the garage's location on a non-contiguous parcel on the opposite side of the block, and the extent of the exterior alterations, no clear historical relationship is evident linking the garage to the ODECO Building.

Assessment of Integrity

While the ODECO Building has experienced some minor alterations since its initial construction, and the condition has deteriorated from sitting vacant for ten years, the changes are mostly superficial and do not impact the overall integrity of the building. The building retains a sufficient degree of integrity to support the property's nomination to the National Register on the basis of Criterion C.

- *Location* is intact. The building is in its original location.

- *Setting* is largely intact. The portion of the Claiborne Expressway (I-10) that passes one block from the property was constructed between 1968 and 1969, and was therefore present when the building was completed. The new LSU/VA medical center on the opposite side of Claiborne Avenue feels sufficiently disconnected from the ODECO Building, due to the expressway, that it does not greatly impact the setting. While some additional lots in the vicinity of the ODECO have been cleared and/or redeveloped in recent years, the lack of commercial density that characterizes the immediate neighborhood today was generally similar at the time of the building's construction.

- *Design, Materials, and Workmanship*: Alterations have been primarily limited to the addition of concealed mechanical equipment above the ground floor arches, and changes to the exterior detailing of the columns on the Canal Street side of the building. While the building's interior was reconfigured when the property was donated to the University of New Orleans in 1994, those modifications were largely related to tenant build out and did not affect the overall organization of the building. The structure's overall form and massing have not changed since the building's construction, and most original materials are still intact.

- *Feeling* is intact. The building still conveys the impression of a mid-century commercial office building, designed for public accessibility on the ground floor, leasable tenant space on floors 2 through 12, and corporate suites at the prominent penthouse level.

- *Association*: The building is no longer associated with the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company, nor does it retain any direct association with the oil and gas industry. The building has, however, maintained its primary function as commercial office space.

8. Statement of Significance

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

	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
x	**C**	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

Criteria Considerations:

	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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.): ENGINEERING

Period of Significance: 1966-1969

Significant Dates: 1966-1969

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above):

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion D is marked above):

Architect/Builder (last name, first name):
Paul J. Mouton, Architect of Record
William J. Mouton, Structural Engineer
Bosworth Construction Co., Contractor

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance begins in 1966 when plans for the building were announced and ends in 1969 when the building was completed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary):

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The ODECO Building is locally significant under Criterion C, in the area of engineering, because it is considered to be an important work by the structural engineer William J. Mouton, Jr. (1931-2001). Mouton, who was based in New Orleans, was nationally recognized for his achievements in the areas of tall building foundation design; precast concrete building systems and components; and the design of steel truss systems, spaceframes, and domes. The ODECO Building is significant in that it embodies three key themes that characterized Mouton's work. First, it is an excellent example of the efficient and economical construction for which Mouton was well known; second, it is an important example of Mouton's early experimentation with precast concrete building components; and third, it represents an early use of Brunspile foundations, which Mouton pioneered in his work on the Plaza Tower. Additionally, while Mouton worked on a range of building types, from domed arenas to parking garages, he only designed two high-rise office towers: the ODECO Building, and the previously mentioned 45-story Plaza Tower. The ODECO Building's period of significance extends from 1966, when the building was announced, to 1969, when construction was completed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

In reference to National Register nominations, a "master" is defined as "a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field, a known craftsman of consummate skill, or an anonymous craftsman whose work is distinguishable from others by its characteristic style and quality." A work of a master must "express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft."[2]

The first section of this narrative statement of significance provides an overview of William J. Mouton, Jr.'s career in order to firmly establish him as a "master" within his field, while the second section addresses the ODECO Building's importance within Mouton's body of work.

I. William J. Mouton, Jr., C.E., Structural Engineer

William J. Mouton, Jr. was a New Orleans-based structural engineer who completed over 500 structures—from single-family residences to high-rise office towers—over the course of his career. While the majority of his work was located in Louisiana, he also had noteworthy commissions in Massachusetts, Baltimore, Washington, DC, and Virginia. His work was published in local newspapers, national newspapers including the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York Times*, magazines, and industry publications such as *Engineering News-Record, Progressive Architecture, Architectural Forum, and Architectural Record.* Mouton's most significant structural engineering achievements were made between 1958 and 1975 in the areas of tall building foundation design; precast concrete building systems and components; and the design of steel truss systems, spaceframes, and domes. These research interests were evident early in Mouton's career, and they continued to inform his work throughout his lifetime.

In addition to his private consulting practice, Mouton taught structural engineering at the Tulane University School of Architecture from 1959 to 1998; he was named a full professor in 1969. He was also an inventor who held over 20 patents for designs as diverse as a wetland erosion control systems, monorails, drilling derricks, and combustion engines. His patented design for the "Coriolis" ocean turbine was the cover story for the September 1980 issue of *Popular Science*. He also developed concrete barges and platforms for the oil industry, including a prototype that was replicated over 200 times.

Engineering Context

In order to frame the importance of William Mouton's professional contributions, a brief description of the structural engineering field in the 1960s is provided. This is not intended to be an exhaustive overview, but rather an introduction to some of the structural topics and themes that influenced Mouton's career.

High-Rise Building Design

In her 1984 work *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered*, architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable identified four distinct phases of skyscraper design. The first period (1875-1915) was characterized by an emphasis on function, and the early expression of skeletal framing on the exterior of a building. It encompassed the work of the "First Chicago School," including William LeBaron Jenney's Home Insurance Building of 1885, widely considered to be the first skyscraper. The second period (1916-1940) sought aesthetic solutions to tall building design through the application of ornament and historicist ideals. Examples include the 1930 Chrysler Building and the 1931 Empire State Building. The third period (1950-1979) was decidedly "modern," and largely

[2] National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), 20.

influenced by the work of Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier. These architects and engineers rejected historical references, and turned instead to technology and structure as a rational expression of building form. The final period (1980-1989) was marked by an interest in post-modernism.

In terms of engineering design, the period encompassing the 1950s, 60s and 70s was defined by a spirit of great innovation and technological advancement. Whereas early skyscrapers relied almost exclusively on moment-resisting steel structural frames (essentially stiff 3-dimensional grids), architects and engineers in the post-WWII years began to experiment with alternative systems. One engineer in particular, Fazlur Khan of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in Chicago, gained international fame for his inventions which included the "framed tube" system (DeWitt Chestnut Apartments, 1965); the "shear wall-frame" system (Brunswick Building, the tallest reinforced concrete building when it was completed in 1965); the "braced tube" (John Hancock Building, 1970); and the "bundled tube" (Sears Tower, 1974). These tube structures concentrated structural elements at the core and perimeter of the building, thus eliminating the need for interior columns. Newly available computer modeling programs facilitated these developments.

As buildings grew taller, engineers worked to develop new materials (e.g., high-strength steel) and more efficient framing methods (e.g., tube systems, staggered truss systems, etc.), since lighter-weight structures could provide significant savings in both foundation design and material costs.

Innovations in Concrete and Steel Construction

While steel was still the most commonly used material for high rise construction in the 1960s, reinforced concrete was gaining ground. It was already a popular material for low- to mid-rise office buildings, apartment buildings, and hotels. First developed between 1890 and 1910, reinforced concrete incorporated embedded steel rods or reinforcing mesh to create a durable material, strong in compression and suitable for many building applications. In addition to conventional walls, slabs, and frames, engineers were testing the limits of reinforced concrete as a truly expressive material in thin-shelled domes, folded plates, and arches (e.g., Eero Saarinen's Gateway Arch in St. Louis, 1965).

Concurrently, there was a growing interest in prefabrication techniques and prestressed concrete. With prefabrication, building components such as columns, beams, floor slabs, and roofs, could be formed off-site in factory conditions and then transported and assembled at the job site. Benefits of precast concrete included cost-efficiency, durability, fire and corrosion resistance, low maintenance, and rapid construction. Cost savings resulted from the reduced construction time required to erect precast buildings, coupled with a reduced demand for on-site skilled labor (relative to cast-in-place concrete). The Portland Cement Association (PCA) and other industry organizations frequently ran advertisements for precast concrete components in *Engineering News-Record*, *Architectural Record*, and other professional journals in the 1960s.

Prestressed concrete involved either the pre-tensioning or post-tensioning of steel reinforcement bars in order to transfer compressive stresses directly to the concrete. The result was a material typically two to three times stronger than conventional reinforced concrete.[3] Prestressing could be done in-situ, as with poured in place concrete, or could be applied to precast components in a factory setting. The Prestressed Concrete Institute (PCI) was formed in 1954 to support this segment of the industry, which grew steadily through the 1960s and 1970s.

Steel construction, too, evolved through the 1960s, as engineers searched for ways to make structures more efficient. There was tremendous experimentation in truss systems, whether to span longer distances, carry greater loads, or stiffen building frames. For both high-rise and low-rise construction, new steel framing systems were developed that could reduce the amount of material required on a job, speed field erection, and minimize costs.[4]

[3] Caleb Hornbostel and William J. Hornung, *Materials and Methods for Contemporary Construction*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1982), 90.
[4] William Baker, *"Building Systems and Concepts – Structural Innovation,"* Conference proceeding for the 6th World Congress, Council

Efficiency, Economy, and Elegance

In 1965, a feature article on "Modern Structural Design" in the journal *International Science and Technology,* which included mention of Mouton's work with spaceframe domes, began with the assertion that "It is fundamental to their nature that engineers should continually seek some way to make a four-piece structure out of three pieces." The article focused on the link between efficiency, economy and various kinds of structural innovation:

> To say that engineers have recently begun to strive for greater economy of material in structures is to fail to understand what engineering has always been about. Yet one cannot help but notice that modern structures are significantly lighter and more efficient than those of only a few years ago. You see it in the thin shells of concrete, cantilevered boldly out over a court of an enclosed area. You see it when you sit in the back of a Caravelle jet and watch the overhead luggage racks twist and bend as the pilot maneuvers for a landing. You see it when you stand beneath the spidery lattice work of a space-frame dome spanning hundreds of feet.
>
> In the case of an aircraft structure, the drive for greater efficiency is understandable; high efficiency means low weight, and minimum weight is always the first criterion by which aircraft structures are judged. But high efficiency is also important in buildings and ships and automobiles and bridges, for high efficiency means less material, which in turn means lower material cost, and probably lower erection and maintenance costs. High efficiency also means that the usual size limitations—the maximum length of a bridge, the maximum height of a building, the maximum span of a roof—can be extended since the structure doesn't have to do so much work supporting its own dead weight.[5]

In 1983, Princeton University professor David Billington coined the term "structural art" to describe structures embodying efficiency, economy, and elegance. The new term formalized a "long existing tradition"[6] within the field, and generated a fresh wave of discourse on the nature of engineering design. These notions of efficiency, economy, and elegance, as defined below, fueled many of Mouton's innovations and experiments.

Efficiency meant capitalizing on a material's most desirable attributes (e.g., the tensile strength of steel or the compressive strength of concrete) and minimizing the quantity of materials necessary to do a particular job. The authors of the *Architecture of Tall Buildings* noted, "as engineers are being called on to build larger structures—longer bridges, taller buildings, and longer spanning roofs—using less material more efficiently has become a priority."[7]

Economy meant providing more utility for less cost, a driving concern of most building owners and developers. Reduced material costs, reduced labor costs, and faster construction times could all result in significant savings on a project. Headlines from *Engineering News-Record* and other industry publications in the 1960s (e.g., "Beam-Pierced Trusses Cut Costs 30%", "Three Solutions in Steel Framing for Lightweight, Economical Construction", along with other articles listed in the bibliography in Section 9) reveal just how critical efficiency and economy were to evaluating a building's success.

Elegance, a somewhat more subjective quality, elevated a structure to the realm of "art." This attribute generally referred to work that clearly and honestly expressed its structural system.

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on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, Melbourne, 2001; "Less Steel Per Square Foot: The Weight is Going Down," *Southern Building* (March 1971).

[5] Charles J. Lynch, "Modern Structural Design," *International Science and Technology*, November 1965.

[6] Mir M. Ali and Paul J. Armstrong, eds., *Architecture of Tall Buildings*, Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat Committee (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1995), 188; Nan Hu et al, "Structural Art: Past, Present and Future," *Engineering Structures* 79 (2014): 409.

[7] Ibid*,* 188.

William J. Mouton, Jr.'s Major Structural Engineering Accomplishments

William J. Mouton, Jr. was born in Lafayette, Louisiana in 1931. He attended Tulane University under the "Holloway Plan" (i.e., the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps, or NROTC), a program that offered free undergraduate tuition in exchange for a 3-year service commitment. Mouton graduated in 1953 with a B.S. degree in civil engineering, then served in the United States Navy as a pilot from 1953 until 1956. He returned to Tulane University to attend graduate school under the G.I. bill, and received a M.S. degree in civil engineering in 1958.[8]

While a graduate student, Mouton worked as a consultant to local steel and precast concrete fabricators in the New Orleans area. In partnership with Milan Engineering Company, Mouton designed a 200' diameter aluminum clad steel framed dome to serve as a raw sugar storage shed for the American Sugar Refining Company. The building was fabricated in New Orleans and erected at the company's Charlestown, Massachusetts's sugar factory. The project, conceived while Mouton was a student and completed in 1960, was featured in the 1964 exhibit "Twentieth Century Engineering" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, alongside domes by R. Buckminster Fuller and Pier Luigi Nervi.[9] The dome was one of two projects designed by Mouton included in the exhibition; the other was the vaulted space frame courtyard enclosure for the Studio Arms VI apartment building in Baton Rouge, completed in 1963.

William J. Mouton, Jr. established his engineering consulting practice in 1958. He quickly became known as a bright and pioneering young engineer, and architecture and engineering journals began to take note. *Architectural Forum* included a profile of Mouton's Charlestown, Massachusetts sugar dome under the under the heading "New Talent – Engineers" in August 1960.

The 1960s and early 1970s represented an especially productive and innovative period in Mouton's career, and several of the commissions that established Mouton's local and national structural engineering reputation were completed during this time, including: the Studio Arms apartment buildings (1961-63), the 45-story Plaza Tower (1964-69), the ODECO Building (1966-69), the National Association of Home Builder's Research VII Townhouses (1967), Mouton's own Metairie office building (1967), the Domino Raw Sugar Storage Shed (1968), the One Shell Square parking garage (1971), the International American Hotel (1973) and the New Orleans East Medical Center (1975).

After 1975, Mouton devoted increasing attention to his civil and marine engineering work, including the development of the patented Coriolis ocean turbine designed to general electrical power from Gulf currents. While his structural engineering commissions may have been fewer in number, one of his best-known projects was completed during this later career phase: the 1985 Lafayette, Louisiana Civic Center, now known as the Cajundome.

These projects are described in detail below. They are grouped according to the dominant themes of Mouton's primary research and design interests. All appear as well in Table 1, which contains a list of 18 building projects excerpted from Mouton's professional resume. Of the more than 500 structures completed during his career, Mouton considered these projects to be among his most important works.[10]

Tall Building Foundation Design
William J. Mouton, Jr. is credited with designing the first foundation system capable of supporting modern skyscrapers in New Orleans. The achievement was considered to be so significant that the *New York Times*, in

[8] Mouton's master's thesis examined the structural action of steel framed folded roof trusses, reinforced concrete folded plates, cylindrical long barrel shells, arch shells, and hyperbolic parabaloidical structures. It is interesting to note that the chairman of Mouton's thesis committee was Walter E. Blessey, a respected consulting engineer and professor who shared Mouton's interest in foundation and piling design. Blessey was the author of *The Case for High Capacity Long Steel Piles*, published by the American Iron and Steel Institute in 1969.
[9] *Twentieth-Century Engineering* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1964).
[10] William J. Mouton, Biographical Files, Southeastern Architectural Archive, Special Collections Division, Tulane University Libraries.

Mouton's obituary, wrote that he "provided the physical underpinnings for the growth of the New Orleans skyline."[11] The first application of Mouton's design was the 45-story Plaza Tower in 1964. It was followed in 1965 by load tests for an even taller structure, the proposed 72-story Place Vendome.

- *The Plaza Tower* (New Orleans, LA, 1964-69, extant, listed on the National Register in 2013) is Mouton's most significant work in terms of the impact that it had on the development of high-rise construction in New Orleans. Mouton succinctly described the project in his resume:

  > Developed first deep piling in New Orleans area for the support of tall buildings which were not deemed feasible at that time. Developed boring and driving techniques to install piling 168 feet below ground. Conducted pile test to 460 tons. This pile test made all of the new buildings in New Orleans over 30 stories possible. Steel frame of original design. Widely published. ($15,000,000)

  The Plaza Tower's foundation design was the first to use the new "Brunspile" piling system invented by T.C. Bruns, a New Orleans bridge builder who patented the connector that allowed individual precast concrete piles to be spliced together to achieve the 150' to 250' depths required for local high-rise construction. The project was indeed widely published, and received national coverage from newspapers and industry journals for both its foundation and steel frame design.[12]

- *760 Ton Load Test for the Place Vendome* (New Orleans, LA, 1965, unbuilt). In 1965, Mouton conducted a load test of a 225' long pile (again, using precast concrete sectional Brunspiles) intended for the design of a 72-story hotel. While the hotel was not built, the pile test was, according to Mouton, "a milestone that made the heavy One Shell Square 50-story building possible."[13] The load test was published in *Engineering News-Record* in 1965.[14]

Precast Concrete Building Systems and Components

A large proportion of Mouton's work incorporated precast concrete, whether in combination with other materials (as in the ODECO Building's hybrid steel and concrete structure) or as fully realized modular building systems. Mouton also invented new precast concrete components and construction methods, such as the pile/column design of his Metairie office building, and the ladder column design used in the One Shell Square Parking Garage and the East New Orleans Medical Center. Some of his notable precast concrete projects include:

- *Studio Arms VI- Residential Apartment Building* (Baton Rouge, LA 1963, demolished): Studio Arms VI was a 4-story apartment complex located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The courtyard-style buildings were constructed entirely of precast concrete slab components, making this the first of Mouton's major projects to employ precast concrete on a large scale.

- *Metairie Office Building with Pile/Column System* (Metairie, LA, 1967, demolished): This was a 3-story office building in Metairie, Louisiana that used precast channel planks in conjunction with a unique pile/column system designed by Mouton. In the system, precast concrete piles were driven to the proper depth, but the piles' upper portions were left exposed above grade to serve as building columns. This pile/column was also used in the Southern Bell Telephone building by local architect Albert Ledner in 1969. The system was profiled in an *Architectural Forum* feature-length article, "27 Pieces Make an Office Building."[15] It was also profiled in the August 27, 1967 *Times-Picayune* article "In Five Weeks – a Three-Story Concrete Building Completed. Four Elements Lead to Fast Construction."

[11] "William J. Mouton, 70, Engineer and Professor," *New York Time*s, July 8, 2001.
[12] "45 Story Tower Sits on 180 Ton Piles," *Engineering News-Record*, August 6, 1964; "Feasibility of Tall Buildings Here Clarified by Engineer," *New Orleans States*, December 12, 1964.
[13] William J. Mouton, Biographical Files.
[14] "Concrete Pile Takes 760 Ton Test Load," *Engineering News-Record*, December 23, 1965.
[15] "27 Pieces Make an Office Building. *"Architectural Forum* (April 1969): 62-65. The project was also featured in "Tulane Professor

- *The National Association of Home Builders' Research VII Townhouses* (Washington, DC, 1967, extant): Mouton designed a prototype townhouse complex in Washington, DC for the National Association of Home Builders Research VII program using precast components and a new type of lightweight structural insulating concrete. Once the footings and slabs were laid, precast roof, wall, and floor panels were hoisted into place and welded together, allowing the frame to be completed in 10 working days. As described in the *Times-Picayune*, "the houses are a prototype of what may soon be developed into a program for economical, swift housing construction." The project was widely published both locally and nationally.[16]

- *ODECO Building* (New Orleans, LA, 1966-69, extant). Mouton' next major project using precast concrete was the 14-story ODECO Building, in which locally manufactured precast hollow-core floor planks were paired with structural steel framing. It was his first noted use of precast concrete in a high-rise structure, and was an important step in Mouton's ongoing research and experimentation with precast concrete building components. The project was published in the May 8, 1968 *Times Picayune* under the heading, "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here. Erect Steel, Concrete Together."

- *The Ladder-Column System used in the One Shell Square Parking Garage* (New Orleans, LA, 1971, extant) *and the East New Orleans Medical Center* (New Orleans, LA, 1975, extant): In 1971, Mouton engineered the 14-story double-helix parking structure for the 50-story SOM-designed One Shell Square skyscraper in New Orleans. It was the largest precast parking garage in the United States at the time of its construction. It also was the first high-rise structure constructed using "ladder-columns," which incorporated structure and spandrels in one unit. Mouton's "ladder-column" design was later used in the design of the 9-story Medical Center of New Orleans East in 1975.

- *The International American Hotel* (Metairie, LA, 1973, extant): This 17-story 200-room circular hotel was fabricated completely with precast concrete. The 1974 *Guide to New Orleans Architecture* described the building as "another in a long series of precast, prestressed concrete buildings by this firm (referencing Paul Mouton as architect and William Mouton as structural engineer) that specializes in that medium. All walls except one in each room for plumbing stacks are of structural precast, prestressed concrete."[17] The project was published on the cover of *Construction News*, with the story "Giant Cranes Speed Construction of 16-Story Precast Circular Motel."[18]

- *The Cajundome – Seating and Support Structure* (Lafayette, LA, 1985, extant). The seating and support structure for this 380' diameter building was constructed entirely of precast, prestressed concrete. The precast fabricator was Louisiana Concrete Products of Baton Rouge.

Steel Truss Systems, Spaceframes, and Domes

In addition to the American Sugar Refining Company dome featured in the Museum of Modern Art exhibit, Mouton was also responsible for a number of high-profile projects incorporating innovative steel structural design. These included:

- *Studio Arms IV* (Jefferson Parish, LA, 1961, extant): Among Mouton's early commissions was a series of apartment buildings known as the Studio Arms Apartments. The first two complexes, referred to as Studio Arms IV and V, were built in the New Orleans suburb of Jefferson Parish in 1961 and 1962.

Designs Piling as Columnar Members," *Construction News*, December 20, 1967.

[16] *Research House VII Concrete Panel System: Final Report* (Rockville, MD: NAHB Research Foundation, Inc.: 1969); "New System for House Building," *Times-Picayune*, June 30, 1968; "Prestressed Concrete Serves the Public," *Portland Cement Industry* (September 1968).

[17] Albert C. Ledner et al, *Guide to New Orleans Architecture* (New Orleans, LA: American Institute of Architects, New Orleans Chapter), 1974.

[18] "Giant Cranes Speed Construction of 16-Story Precast Circular Motel," *Construction News*, September 12, 1973.

Studio Arms IV comprised two 3-story buildings constructed with a new and economical method of steel framing method developed by Mouton. Utilizing "beam-pierced trusses," the system involved cantilevered floor beams placed *within* continuous steel trusses. The design minimized the amount of steel required for the job compared to conventional framing methods, resulting in a 30% savings on the $2.1 million 144-unit project. A detailed explanation of the system and accompanying diagrams were published in *Engineering News-Record* in 1962.[19]

- *Studio Arms VI- Vaulted Glass Dome* (Baton Rouge, LA 1963, demolished): Studio Arms VI was a 4-story precast concrete apartment complex built in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1963. The building incorporated a steel truss and glass dome over the 100' x 200' central courtyard. The dome was featured in the 1964 Museum of Modern Art exhibit mentioned above, and was highlighted in the March 1965 *Architectural Record* article "Three Solutions in Steel Framing for Lightweight, Economical Construction."

- *The Plaza Tower's lattice box frame* (New Orleans, LA, 1964-69, extant). Mouton designed an original steel frame, incorporating 6' deep spandrel trusses at each floor level, to stiffen the Plaza Tower and increase the structure's resistance to wind loads. Mouton described the innovation as a "latticed steel box frame" similar to the framing of the Eiffel Tower. According to Mouton, 30-40% less steel was required for the system compared to conventional beam and column construction.[20] This system was sometimes referred to as a "tubular frame". The Plaza Tower, at 531', was the tallest tower in New Orleans at the time of its construction.

- *The Domino Raw Sugar Storage Shed* (Baltimore, MD, 1968, extant). Measuring 351' long, 180' wide, and 85' high, this vaulted spaceframe structure required no interior supports. It used prefabricated steel truss units assembled on site to form a series of parabolic arches.[21] The project was published in *Steel Pipe News* under the headline "Trussed Steel Pipe to Lower Costs," and was also featured in *Architectural Forum* and *Progressive Architecture*.[22]

- *The Cajundome – roof* (Lafayette, LA, 1985, extant). This 13,500-seat structure incorporated a 380' diameter clear span roof. The project was included in the *Engineers of the Century* exhibit at the Georges Pompidou Center in Paris in 1997, along with a profile of Mouton and other examples of his work.

Evaluation of Mouton's body of work

William J. Mouton, Jr. made significant contributions to the field of structural engineering in the areas of tall building foundation design; precast concrete building systems and components; and the design of steel truss systems, spaceframes, and domes. The majority of his notable structural engineering projects were constructed between 1958 and 1975. After 1975, he devoted greater attention to other civil engineering and marine engineering pursuits. Within those fields, as well, Mouton established a national reputation as an innovator and inventor.

Mouton received significant recognition for his achievements during his lifetime. He was an invited speaker at numerous conventions including the American Institute of Steel Construction's Annual Conference in 1965; the American Institute of Architects, Florida Chapter, Annual Convention in 1968; and the National Association of

[19] "Beam-Pierced Trusses Cut Costs by 30%," *Engineering News-Record*, May 24, 1962.
[20] "Skyscraper Borrows Idea of Eiffel Tower," *Chicago Tribune*, January 29, 1965. Other articles regarding the innovating framing system included "Three Solutions in Steel Framing for Lightweight, Economical Construction," *Architectural Record* (March 1965): 188-190; "Truss Cuts Cost of Steel Frame," *New York Times*, January 10, 1965;"Eiffel Tower American Style," *Building Construction (November 1965): 62-65; and "He Frames New Orleans' Skyscrapers," Engineering News-Record (April 8, 1965).*
[21] "Trussed Steel Pipe to Lower Costs," *Steel Pipe News* (June 1970): 8-9.
[22] "Domino Sugar-Raw Sugar Shed," *Architectural Forum* (March 1969); "American Sugar Storage Shed," *Progressive Architecture* (April, 1969); "Trussed Steel Pipe to Lower Costs," *Steel Pipe News* (June 1970): 8-9.

Home Builders' Convention in 1970. Also in 1965, he was recognized by *Engineering News-Record* as one of a select group of engineers, including Fazlur Khan, "serving the best interests of the construction industry."[23] Mouton's work was featured in two major exhibitions: "Twentieth Century Engineering" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1964, and "Engineers of the Century" at the Georges Pompidou Center in Paris in 1997. He was also one of five architecture and engineering professionals, including noted architects Robert Venturi and Bruce Graham, asked to serve on the prestigious *Progressive Architecture* National Design Awards Jury in 1969.

Mouton retired from teaching at Tulane University in 1998, but maintained his engineering consulting practice until his death in 2001. In his obituary, the *New York Times* described Mouton as "an innovator known for his cost-effective yet aesthetically pleasing structures."[24] This description was truly apt, as Mouton was indeed driven by the desire to create efficient, economical, and elegant structures. Efficiency and economy were dominant themes through Mouton's entire body of work. This was true across multiple materials (e.g., steel and precast concrete) and building types (e.g., high-rise, low-rise, commercial, institutional, and residential.)

Mouton was quoted as saying that "every structure is something special… a unique problem with its own solution."[25] Every project represented an opportunity to test an idea or innovation, or respond to a particular challenge. There were no one-size-fits-all solutions. Among his peers, who fondly referred to him as "Wild Bill," Mouton had a reputation for inventiveness and "pushing the envelope."[26]

There has been a renewed interest in Mouton's work in recent years, particularly as some of his notable projects are coming of age. In 2013, *Structure Magazine* published a lengthy profile of him under the heading "Great Achievements | Notable Structural Engineers."[27]

Thus, in consideration of his many accomplishments and the international recognition he received for his contributions, William J. Mouton, Jr. meets the National Register's definition of a "master" as "a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field" for the purposes of this nomination.

II. The ODECO Building

General Background and Development History

According to an article that appeared in the October 28, 1966 *Times-Picayune*, the 14-story ODECO Building at 1600 Canal Street was scheduled to break ground in November 1966.[28] Plans for the aluminum and glass tower called for "a lobby, retail spaces on the ground level, a penthouse and 110,000 square feet of office space." The development cost for the project, which included a six-level parking garage to be erected on the opposite side of the block, was anticipated to be $4 million. Paul Mouton was identified as the architect, William J. Mouton, Jr. as the structural engineer, and Bosworth Construction Co. as the general contractor. Preliminary designs called for a cast-in-place concrete structure, and the expected completion date was announced as February 1968.

The lead tenant was identified as the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company, for whom the building was named. ODECO was a New Orleans-based company that invented the first mobile offshore drilling rig in 1953.[29] Other expected tenants of the ODECO Building included the Murphy Oil Company and the Burman Oil

[23] Fazlur Khan, of Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill was awarded the same honor by *Engineering News-Record* that year in recognition of his structural design for the 100-story John Hancock Building.
[24] "William J. Mouton, 70, Engineer and Professor," *New York Times*, July 8, 2001.
[25] "Three Solutions in Steel Framing for Lightweight, Economical Construction," *Architectural Record* (March 1965): 188.
[26] Interviews with Donald Makofsky, Ed Gleason, Sal Caserta, John Klingman.
[27] Weingardt, Richard, "William J. Mouton: Tube Structure Pioneer and Foundation Innovator," *Structure Magazine* (May 2013): 44-47.
[28] "New Building Going Up Soon," *Times-Picayune*, October 28, 1966.
[29] "Alden 'Doc' Laborde, Founder of Three Companies Serving the Offshore-Oil Industry, Dies at 98," *Times-Picayune*, June 6, 2014. Interestingly, the original 1953 rig, named Mr. Charlie, is now housed at the International Petroleum Museum and Exposition in Morgan

Western Company. William P. Bosworth Jr., who also owned the adjacent Governor's House Motor Hotel (now the Canal Street Hotel) was the project's developer.

Test pilings were driven on October 31, 1966[30], indicating that construction activity did indeed begin on the site that fall.

The ODECO Building's project schedule was delayed for approximately one year, however, because the adjacent Governor's House Motor Hotel suffered a partial structural collapse on December 2, 1966.[31] Bosworth, the developer and contractor behind both buildings, was required to demolish and rebuild a large portion of the collapsed hotel fronting on Canal Street before work on the ODECO Building could continue.

Work on the ODECO Building resumed on November 29, 1967.[32] On January 28, 1968, a rendering of the ODECO Building appeared in the *Times-Picayune*, with a caption indicating that the structure was under construction.

In order to speed erection time and reduce costs following the delay, the building's structural system was changed from conventional cast-in-place concrete to a hybrid system using steel framing and precast hollow-core concrete floor planks. Erection of the building's steel and concrete structural frame began in March 1968 and was completed within six weeks. In May, the *Times-Picayune* published the article "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here" alongside photographs of the building under construction, stating "for the first time here a high-rise structure has had its steel skeleton and fireproof concrete flooring erected simultaneously.[33]

The article also provided a thorough description of the construction sequencing. Once the foundation was prepared, 48 foot long vertical steel columns (four stories high), were delivered to the jobsite and lifted into place by crane. Steel beams (either 23 feet or 26 feet long depending on their position within the floorplan) were bolted to the columns. Then, concrete planks were delivered to the site, unloaded from trucks using specially designed rigging, and placed into position (five planks per structural bay). Once the planks were in place, steel connections were welded together, and the process would begin again with another 4-story tier. According to a case study pamphlet titled "Unique System Sends Building Skyward in Six Weeks," this erection sequence required "perfect logistical control of all material delivered to the site."[34] The final step involved pouring a concrete topping over all of the floor decks to bind them into a unified slab. The building's regularized grid and organization around modular components also facilitated the subsequent installation of plumbing, wiring, HVAC, and interior finishes.

The *Times-Picayune* announced the building's completion on February 9, 1969, and cited its "swift and economical construction" as one of the building's interesting features.[35] According to the architect, "the 115,000 square foot building cost $1.8 million to construct and required 12 months from foundation work to completion." Other features noted in the article included the building's innovative air conditioning system, which used interstitial ceiling spaces for air circulation and required a minimum of ductwork, and the use of concrete plank flooring whose high insulating value was expected to lower heating and cooling costs.

The building continued to serve as the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company's headquarters until 1993. In 1994 the building was donated by the Murphy Oil Company, which had acquired the building shortly after its construction, to the University of New Orleans for use as a Technology Enterprise Center. According to an

City, Louisiana. It was named an engineering landmark by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in 2012.

[30] An October 31, 1966 memo from Latter and Blum, the exclusive leasing agent for the property, stated that "test pilings are being put down today".

[31] "258 Guests of Motel Scurry into Streets," *Times-Picayune*, December 3, 1966.

[32] "Office Building Work to Start," *Times-Picayune*, November 28, 1967.

[33] "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here," *Times-Picayune*, May 8, 1968.

[34] "Unique Building Sends Building Skyward in Six Weeks," 2-page case study page pamphlet likely published May or June of 1968, publisher unidentified.

[35] "New Structure on Canal Street," *Times-Picayune*, February 9, 1969.

article that appeared in the February 8, 1994 *Times-Picayune*:

> Renovations are under way with $638,000 provided by the city of New Orleans' Economic Development Trust Fund. Occupancy is set for April 1. Space has been evenly divided between university high-tech training and research, and facilities for new and growing businesses, said Gordon H. Muller, a UNO vice chancellor. Functions will include: an incubator for start-up businesses, occupying three floors; small- to medium-sized businesses on other floors; business and research offices of the LSU Medical Center; executive development and conference activities; UNO research, such as the Urban Waste Management and Research Center; and classrooms.[36]

According to a Latter & Blum real estate executive quoted in the 1994 article, the donation of the ODECO Building made more economic sense than renovation and leasing. The estimated market value of the building at the time was in the range of $500,000, far short of the project's initial investment. In accepting the donation, the University of New Orleans expressed hope that "putting the vacant, fourteen-story building into service as the UNO Technology Enterprise Center could revitalize the end of Canal Street near the Interstate 10 overpass on Claiborne Avenue."

Damaged by Hurricane Katrina, the building has been vacant since 2005. The University of New Orleans sold the building to a New York-based developer in 2013, and the property again changed hands in 2015.

Note Regarding Criteria Consideration G

According to the *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, a resource whose construction began over fifty years ago, but whose completion overlaps the fifty year period by a few years or less, *does not* need to meet Criteria Consideration G's standard of "exceptional" significance.

The ODECO Building falls within this category. Plans for the ODECO Building were approved by the city's Department of Safety and Permits on August 10, 1966 (Permit No. 66298)[37] and the construction start was scheduled for November 1966. A memo from Latter and Blum, the exclusive leasing agent for the property, indicated that test pilings were placed on October 31, 1966. Work on the building was paused for approximately one year, however, due to the partial structural collapse of the adjacent hotel on December 2, 1966. Work resumed on November 29, 1967, and the building was completed in February 1969.

Analysis of the ODECO Building's Structural Engineering Design

Foundation System

The ODECO Building was one of the earliest high-rise buildings in New Orleans to incorporate "Brunspiles," the innovative piling system first used in William Mouton's design for Plaza Tower in 1964. The octagonally-shaped prestressed and precast concrete piles, manufactured in standard lengths ranging from 20'to 80', were designed to be spliced together in the field. This permitted standardized fabrication in a controlled concrete plant, easy transportation to the construction site, as well as the ability to combine various lengths of piles to achieve driving depths of 150 feet or more. Brunspiles were able to support the heavy loads demanded of tall building foundations, but they were also well-suited to other building types including low- and mid-rise construction which also used pile foundations. A Brunspile brochure produced by Belden Concrete Products, Inc. described the versatility of the product, and featured renderings of it two earliest and most prominent high rise applications—the 45-story Plaza Tower and the 33-story International Trade Mart (1964-1967).[38] The third high-rise tower to use Brunspile foundations was the 17-story Continental Center Building (renamed the Rault Center, constructed 1965-1967); the ODECO Building was the fourth. Subsequent notable buildings

[36] "Murphy Oil Gives Canal Street Building to UNO," *Times-Picayune*, February 8, 1994.
[37] Index of Building Plans from the Louisiana Collection, City Archives, New Orleans Public Library.
[38] Brunspile brochure produced by Belden Concrete Products, Inc. Undated, but likely c. 1965.

constructed using Brunspiles included the 50-story One Shell Square (c.1969-1972), the 42-story Marriott hotel on Canal Street (c.1969-1972), and the Superdome (c.1971-1975).[39]

Hybrid Structural System

The structural system used in the ODECO Building was a hybrid system that combined a structural steel frame with hollow core plank flooring. This was a departure from the more conventional methods of high-rise construction used both locally and nationally at the time. High-rise buildings were typically constructed using steel framing for the columns and beams, with composite decking for the floors (i.e., steel deck fastened to the building frame and later topped with concrete); or, they were constructed entirely of reinforced cast-in-place concrete, as initially proposed for the ODECO Building. Post-tensioned concrete, which today is commonly found in high-rise construction, was at the time still relatively new and not widely used.

With conventional steel or concrete systems, a building's entire frame could be erected using only one subcontractor, thus simplifying scheduling and limiting the number of trades on the jobsite at one time. The choice of which system to select—steel or concrete—was typically based on several factors including the local availability and price of materials, labor availability, desired construction schedules and erection speeds; preferences of the building team (developer, contractor, architect, engineer); and design aesthetics.

Hybrid systems that *combined* elements of steel and concrete were less common in the mid-20th century, but they did exist in various forms. Steel beam and reinforced concrete slab systems had been tested in the early 1900s and used for bridge and roadway construction. As slab technology evolved with the evolution of channel planks, double T planks, and hollow-core planks, options for combining concrete and steel multiplied.[40] Hybrid construction, which ideally combines the most desirable attributes of each material, appears to be growing in popularity today. It was called an "emergent trend" in multi-story construction, and praised for its rapid erection, cost savings, minimal floor depths, sustainability, and finish options at a 2004 Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat conference.[41]

Hollow-core concrete planks—essentially prestressed, precast units, produced in specific widths, with internal voids to reduce the overall weight of the concrete—formed a critical component of the ODECO Building's structural system. The technology for extruding concrete in this manner was developed in Germany, and introduced to the United States in the 1940s and 50s. A small number of companies, including Span-Deck, Spancrete, and Flexicore, developed proprietary systems to produce uniquely identifiable planks, each with its own size, shape, and pattern of voids. Marketing materials published by these companies often promoted their product's high quality, ready availability, quick erection, low cost, and design versatility.[42] A Spancrete advertisement in *Engineering News-Record* in 1968 showed photos of a 3-story building at various point during construction, with the heading "Spancrete Cuts Construction Time From 9 to 5 Months."[43]

So, while Mouton did not necessarily *invent* the hybrid system used in the ODECO Building, which combined steel framing with precast hollow-core concrete floor planks, he did *select* it, and it was the first time that such a hybrid system had been employed for a high-rise building in New Orleans. This implied a certain degree of experimentation. While steel framing and concrete planks might function predictably in a 2-story building, they are subject to entirely different conditions in a 14-story high-rise. The planks, acting as floor diaphragms, must resist increased lateral loads from wind (a typical consideration in the design of tall buildings, and an especially crucial design factor in hurricane-prone New Orleans). Also, the structural steel specified for the ODECO

[39] Advertisement for Belden Concrete Products, *Times-Picayune*, August 24, 1975.
[40] Current engineering design manuals also mention a variety of other hybrid systems (sometimes called composite systems) that creatively marry the benefits of concrete and steel. For high-rises, these include concrete cores with exterior steel skeletons, steel-framed cores with concrete perimeter framing, and precast concrete frames with standardized steel joists.
[41] Jan Vambersky, "High-Rise Buildings in the Netherlands: Hybrid Structures and Precast Concrete," Conference proceeding for the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, Seoul, South Korea, October 10 - 13, 2004.
[42] Span-Deck pamphlet from Belden Concrete Products, undated but published sometime after 1974.
[43] "Spancrete Cuts Construction Time From 9 to 5 Months," *Engineering News-Record*, September 19, 1968.

building was high-strength 50 ksi steel, rather than the 36 ksi steel more commonly used at the time. This suggests, possibly, a degree of experimentation in proposing a structural system that had not previously been tested on tall buildings in New Orleans. In explaining the system in the *Times-Picayune*, Mouton said that "it required a minimum of cost and time and that the method allows easy handling of materials, swift erection, and ultimately a monolithic quality for greater strength."[44]

For the hybrid structural system to work as intended, as a cost-effective way to speed the construction of the building, several factors were required. First, a rigging system had to be specially designed to lift the planks into place, a task made more difficult by the building's height. Second, construction required highly coordinated sequencing since multiple trades would be on site during the erection of the building frame. This necessitated close coordination between the general contractor, Bosworth Construction Company, and the various subcontractors: Orleans Materials and Equipment Co., Inc. (steel fabrication); Sun Erection (steel erection); and Belden Concrete Products, Inc. (concrete plank and fabrication). Third, the system required readily available materials that could be quickly supplied and transported to the jobsite. Both the steel and the concrete were fabricated locally, and the *Times-Picayune* noted that the concrete planks were "manufactured here for the first time."[45]

The engineering firm Morphy Makofsky, Inc. of New Orleans recently reviewed the ODECO Building's plans and provided an evaluation of the hybrid structural system relative to cast-in-place concrete construction:

> We understand that there was an initial proposal to use cast-in-place concrete construction for the building. It has been documented that the ODECO Building's fourteen story structure was erected in just six weeks, an uncommon achievement for the 1960s time period. A typical cast-in-place concrete structure of this size would take at the very least one week per level. This would have resulted in an erection time of fourteen to fifteen weeks, well over double the actual time it took to erect the current structure. The reduction in construction time results in considerable savings due to the shorter construction period.
>
> The dead load of the floor construction is approximately 60 psf. A cast-in-place concrete structure would weigh approximately 85 to 90 psf. This is an approximately fifty percent savings on the dead load of the floors for the building.
>
> The use of high strength steel is another noteworthy structural feature for a building constructed during this time period. The typical steel strength for buildings used in the 1960s and up to the mid-1990s was 36 ksi yield strength. The steel specified for this project was 50 ksi. This allowed for the steel beams to be a smaller weight and depth. The foundation utilized high capacity piles concrete Brunspiles. This type of system allowed the piles to be driven in sections and the specially designed connector between the sections would allow for longer and deeper piles to be driven that would provide the higher capacities required in order to support the high rise building such as this one.[46]

Considering factors such as reduced construction time, lower construction costs, and economy of materials, the structural engineering approach employed in the ODECO Building was largely considered to be a success. The project was well publicized locally in the *Times-Picayune*, both during and after construction. A building case study pamphlet likely published by the steel fabricator circa 1968 (see Exhibit 8), said:

[44] "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here," *Times-Picayune*, May 8, 1968.
[45] Ibid.
[46] March 4, 2016 letter from Jamie Saxon, President of the New Orleans-based structural engineering firm Morphy Makofsky, Inc., in support of the National Register nomination of the ODECO Building.

> The system utilized in the construction of the ODECO Building spawns a method for framing high-rise buildings that can substantially reduce construction costs to owners and effectively reduce the time of project completion. Faster occupancy and income is the inevitable result.[47]

Mouton, himself, considered the ODECO Building to be one of his more important commissions. Mouton designed more than 500 structures over the course of his lifetime. On his professional resume, he listed 18, including ODECO, under the heading of "Notable Projects" (see Table 1). The ODECO Building's entry read as follows:

> ODECO Building: used steel frame combined with composite hollow core prestressed planks for great speed and economy. 15 stories. Erected in six weeks. $2,500,000. 1968.

As the description makes clear, the ODECO Building's exceptional efficiency and economy were key elements of the building's success. Despite the praise and interest generated within the construction industry, however, no evidence has been found that the ODECO Building's hybrid structural system was replicated in the city. None of the engineers or architects interviewed during the preparation of this nomination, including two who worked closely with William Mouton in the 1960s, could identify any other high-rise tower in the city that used the same approach. While it is difficult to identify precisely why this technique did not catch on, the interviewees suggested the following possible reasons: the high level of coordination required to have multiple trades on a jobsite at the same time; logistical challenges involved with scheduling material deliveries; the need for specialized rigging and erection equipment; or a growing interest in other new engineering technologies, including post-tensioned concrete.[48]

It appears that the ODECO Building represented a particular engineering challenge and a particular engineering response that was unique to the time period, the local real estate market, the availability of specific materials, and the interests and capacity of the design and construction team.

The ODECO Building's Significance

The ODECO Building is significant, as a "work of a master" in that it embodies three key themes that characterized William J. Mouton, Jr.'s work. First, it is an excellent example of the efficient and economical construction for which Mouton was highly regarded. Using a hybrid structural system comprised of a steel frame and hollow-core precast concrete planks, the ODECO Building's frame was erected in the remarkably short span of six weeks. By designing a structural system that used the best attributes of both steel (e.g., strong, lightweight, and quickly erected) and prefabricated concrete (e.g., modular, locally-produced, and easily assembled in the field), Mouton was able to achieve an overall reduction in both construction time and project cost.

The desire to maximize a material or system's efficiency, thereby reducing costs, certainly motivated developers; equally importantly, it also motivated architects to engineers to experiment and innovate. Indeed, efficiency and economy were dominant themes throughout Mouton's entire body of work. Many of Mouton's structural innovations in both steel and concrete—from the beam pierced trusses of the Studio Arms IV apartment building that "reduced costs by 30%"[49] to the unique pile/column system that allowed his own Metairie office to be constructed in 5 weeks[50]—were celebrated in large part for their efficiency and cost-

[47] The 2-page case study pamphlet, which contains no footer or identifying publisher, appears similar in content to the May 8, 1968 *Times-Picayune* article, "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here; Erect Steel, Concrete Together." The pamphlet contains language that suggests it might have been published by the steel manufacturer, Orleans Materials and Equipment Co., Inc.
[48] Interview with Jamie Saxon, PE, President of Morphy Makofsky Inc., Consulting Engineers. November 10, 2015; Interview with Ed Gleason, Architect. Former employee of William Mouton. November 13, 2015 and November 18, 2015.
[49] "Beam-Pierced Trusses Cut Costs by 30%," *Engineering News-Record*, May 24, 1962.
[50] "In Five Weeks—a Three-Story Concrete Building Constructed," *Times-Picayune*, August 27, 1967.

effectiveness. Therefore, the swiftness and economy of the ODECO Building's construction, made possible by Mouton's choice of structural system, was a critical factor in evaluating the building's overall success.

Second, the ODECO Building is an important example of Mouton's early experimentation with precast concrete building components. Mouton designed several notable projects using precast concrete, from the Studio Arms VI apartment complex in 1963, to the NAHB townhome prototypes in 1967, to the Cajundome in 1985. Innovation and experimentation in precast concrete remained a strong theme throughout Mouton's career. For the ODECO Building, Mouton used hollow-core precast concrete planks in combination with a steel frame, marking the first time that such a hybrid structural system had been used for a high-rise building in New Orleans. It was also the first among Mouton's notable works to combine precast concrete components with traditional steel framing.

Third, the ODECO Building is significant for its foundation design, as it was the one of the earliest high-rise buildings in New Orleans constructed using Brunspiles, the innovative piling system first tested by William Mouton in his design for the 45-story Plaza Tower in 1964. Constructed of precast concrete sections intended to be spliced together on-site, Brunspiles were capable of reaching the 150' to 250' depths required to support tall buildings in New Orleans. The development of Brunspiles dramatically altered the city's skyline.

Additionally, while Mouton worked on a range of building types, from domed arenas to parking garages, he only designed two high-rise office towers: the ODECO Building, and the Plaza Tower. Both are extant and located in New Orleans.

William J. Mouton, Jr. was an internationally known structural engineer recognized for his achievements in the areas of tall building foundation design; precast concrete building systems and components; and the design of steel truss systems, spaceframes, and domes. As an important example of William J. Mouton, Jr.'s work, the ODECO Building is considered to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C in the area of engineering.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

TABLE 1: Partial list of William J. Mouton, Jr.'s notable buildings and structures (adapted from his resume)

Table 1 provides a list and description of the eighteen building projects that Mouton listed on his resume under the heading "notable projects." These were selected from the more than 500 structures that Mouton worked on over the course of his career. His resume also included over sixty citations for published works from sources as diverse as *Architectural Record*, *Engineering News-Record*, the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Times-Picayune*.

Name and Location	Description	Year Built
American Sugar Dome (Domino Sugar) Boston, MA	Structure featured in the Museum of Modern Art 1964 Exhibit it "Twentieth Century Engineering."	1958
Tulane Univ. Gantry Crane New Orleans, LA	15 ton rigid spaceframe crane built for only $17,000 using new techniques in steel construction and mechanical components.	1960
Bowling Alleys Various locations, LA	120' span with trussed rigid frames. Several built in local area due to lower cost than conventional structures, 1960.	1960
Studio Arms IV and VI Jefferson Parish, LA	Two apartment complexes built using new types of framing systems. Published by Engineering News-Record.	1961-62
Studio Arms VII	Utilized all precast flat slab components.	1963

Baton Rouge, LA	100'x200' glass roof over patio. featured in the Museum of Modern Art 1964 Exhibit it "Twentieth Century Engineering."	
Plaza Tower New Orleans, LA	Developed first deep piling in the New Orleans area for the support of tall buildings. Pile test made all of the new buildings in New Orleans over 30 stories possible. Steel frame of original design. Widely published.	1964-1969
760 Ton Load Test New Orleans, LA	Used 225 ft. long pile driven in sections for the proposed 72-story Place Vendome. Hotel was not built, but test was a milestone that made 50-story One Shell Square building possible. Published in Engineering News-Record.	1965
Hammond High School Hammond, LA	First folded plat truss built in the United States.	1963
3-story office building Metairie, LA	Unique pile/column system used in this concrete precast building (which also served as Mouton's own office until the 1980s).	1967
NAHB Research VII Townhouse Washington, D.C.	Designed a new type of townhouse using a new type of structural insulating concrete. Widely published.	1967
ODECO Building New Orleans, LA	14 stories. Used steel frame combined with hollow core precast planks for great speed and economy.	1968-1969
Domino Raw Sugar Storage Shed, Baltimore, MD	Lightest steel structure with strength/weight ratio ever constructed in 200' spans.	c.1968
Sheraton Hotel Norfolk, VA	14-story slip formed cruciform hotel. Forms slipped in 4 weeks.	1970
One Shell Square Commercial Annex New Orleans, LA	14-story double-helix parking structure. Largest precast garage in the United States. First high-rise "ladder-column" building ever constructed. Only four major parts. Erected in less than 8 weeks.	1971
International American Hotel Metairie, LA	17-story circular fully precast hotel. First completely dry-panel process building. No forming or wet concrete required.	1973
Medical Center New Orleans East New Orleans, LA	9-story office building and medical center. First "all-precast" office building in the United States to use the "ladder-column" design incorporating structure, spandrel, and window glass in one large unit. Column-free structure erected in 40 days.	c.1975
James Office Buildings St. James Parish, LA	All precast office buildings. Erected in 28 days by a five man crew. Significant cost savings compared to steel and cast-in-place concrete.	1981-1985
Cajundome Lafayette, LA	Dome with 380 diameter clear span roof. Support structure fabricated of all precast concrete.	1985

(Source: Mouton, William J., Biographical Files, Southeastern Architectural Archive, Special Collections Division, Tulane University Libraries.)

TABLE 2: Development Timeline for the ODECO Building

August 10, 1966 Plans for the ODECO Building are approved by the city's Department of Safety and Permits on August 10, 1966 (Permit No. 66298).

October 28, 1966 Article appears in the *Times-Picayune* announcing construction of the ODECO Building. The article includes a rendering of the building and a projected construction start the following month (November 1966), indicating that the building's design is essentially complete by this time.

October 31, 1966 Test pilings are placed on-site on October 31, 1966, according to a Latter and Blum memo.

December 2, 1966 The immediately adjacent 5-story Governor House Motor Hotel suffers a partial structural collapse. The recently opened hotel had been developed by William P. Bosworth, Jr. and erected by his firm, the Bosworth Construction Company (the same team behind the ODECO Building). A large portion of the hotel fronting Canal Street requires complete demolition and rebuilding, a process estimated to take one year. This is the cause of the ODECO Building's delay.

November 28, 1967 Article appears in the *Times-Picayune* indicating that construction of the delayed ODECO Building will recommence on November 29, 1967.

January 28, 1968 Rendering of the ODECO Building appears in the *Times-Picayune*, with a caption indicating that the structure is under construction.

March-May 1968 The building's structural frame is erected in a remarkably short 6-week period. The innovative engineering approach, involving the use of a steel frame and precast hollow-core concrete floor planks produced locally for the first time, is covered in the *Times-Picayune*. The building's structural system, originally intended to be cast-in-place concrete, is changed to this unusual hybrid system in order to save time and expense.

February 9, 1969 The ODECO Building's completion is announced in the *Times-Picayune*.

9. Major Bibliographical Resources

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Selected Period Articles and Publications Relating Specifically to Buildings within Mouton's Body of Work

"15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here. Erect Steel, Concrete Together." *Times-Picayune*, May 8, 1968.

"27 Pieces Make an Office Building." *Architectural Forum* (April 1969): 62-65.

"45 Story Tower Sits on 180 Ton Piles." *Engineering News-Record*, August 6, 1964.

"American Sugar Storage Shed." *Progressive Architecture* (April, 1969).

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"Feasibility of Tall Buildings Here Clarified by Engineer." *New Orleans States*, December 12, 1964.

"Giant Cranes Speed Construction of 16-Story Precast Circular Motel," *Construction News*, September 12, 1973.

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"New Building Going Up Soon." *Times-Picayune*, October 28, 1966.

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"Office Building Work to Start." *Times-Picayune*, November 28, 1967.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

__x__ 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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency

____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
_x__ Other:
Name of repository: New Orleans Public Library; Southeastern Architectural Archive at Tulane University; Louisiana State Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____n/a_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 29.958313° Longitude: -90.077100°
2. Latitude: 29.958028° Longitude: -90.077357°
3. Latitude: 29.958147° Longitude: -90.077537°
4. Latitude: 29.958435° Longitude: -90.077278°

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
From Surveyor: "That certain portion of ground, situated in the first municipal district, city of New Orleans, Parish of Orleans, state of Louisiana, in Square 404, which Square is bounded by Canal Street, So. Robertson Street, Cleveland Avenue, and So. Claiborne Avenue. Said lot is designated as Lot B-1 in accordance with the survey by J. J. Krebs & Sons, Inc., dated November 1, 1993, attached to an act of donation registered at CIN 80508, Orleans Parish, Louisiana and forms the corner of Canal and So. Robertson Streets and measure 71 feet, 4 inches, 4 lines, front on Canal Street; same width in the rear by a depth and front on So. Robertson Street of 131 feet, 5 inches, 3 lines and a depth on its opposite sideline nearest to So. Claiborne Avenue of 131 feet, 5 inches, 3 lines, all in accordance with (a) survey made by J. J. Krebs & Sons, Inc., dated February 8, 1974 annexed to an act before Edward M. Heller, notary public, dated February 22, 1974, registered COB 722, Folio 505, (b) survey and plan of resubdivision made by J. J. Krebs & Sons, Inc., dated November 25, 1981, approved by the City Planning Commission on April 30, 1982, registered COB 778, Folio 613, n.a., 451214, and (c) survey by J. J. Krebs & Sons, Inc. dated November 1, 1993 attached to an act of donation registered at CIN 80508, Orleans Parish, Louisiana."

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.) The boundary is based on the property's legal lot lines. The 6-story garage shown on the project's original design drawings was not included in the boundary because it is on a non-contiguous parcel, the exterior has been significantly altered, and it is no longer under the same ownership as the ODECO Building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Beth Jacob
organization: Clio Associates LLC
street & number: 1139 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard
city or town: New Orleans state: LA zip code: 70113
e-mail: beth@clioassociates.com

telephone: (773) 329-3995
date: February 18, 2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: ODECO Building
City or Vicinity: New Orleans
County: Orleans Parish
State: Louisiana
Name of Photographer: John T. Campo & Associates, Inc.
Date of Photographs: June 15, 2015

1 of 42: Canal Street elevation, camera facing southwest
2 of 42: Canal Street (right) and S. Robertson Street (left) elevations, camera facing west
3 of 42: Cleveland Avenue side (left) and S. Robertson Street (right) elevations, camera facing north
4 of 42: Claiborne Avenue side (right) and Canal Street (left) elevations, with adjacent hotel at lower right, camera facing south
5 of 42: Canal Street entrance, camera facing west
6 of 42: Canal Street entrance, looking towards S. Robertson Street, camera facing southeast
7 of 42: Underside of Canal Street entrance canopy, camera facing northwest
8 of 42: Concealed column at the corner of Canal and S. Robertson streets, camera facing west
9 of 42: Concealed column at the corner of Canal and S. Robertson streets (detail), camera facing west
10 of 42: Detail where curtain wall meets the first floor, camera facing west
11 of 42: Penthouse level canopies projecting over Canal Street, camera facing southwest
12 of 42: Building cap detail at Cleveland Avenue (side) elevation, camera facing north
13 of 42: Mechanical Penthouse on Roof, camera facing west
14 of 42: Roof, camera facing southeast
15 of 42: Mechanical equipment at roof, camera facing southwest
16 of 42: Mechanical equipment at roof, camera facing south
17 of 42: Roof detail at building cap canopies, camera facing northeast

18 of 42: Interior at first floor entrance, looking toward Canal Street, camera facing northeast
19 of 42: Entry corridor at first floor, camera facing southwest
20 of 42: Elevator Lobby at first floor, camera facing west
21 of 42: First floor concealed arch windows, camera facing north
22 of 42: First floor concealed arch windows, camera facing east
23 of 42: Typical first floor restroom, camera facing southwest
24 of 42: First floor interior, camera facing northeast
25 of 42: First floor interior, camera facing east
26 of 42: First floor mechanical equipment, camera facing southeast
27 of 42: First floor fire pump, camera facing northwest
28 of 42: First floor electrical equipment, camera facing southeast
29 of 42: Typical floor interior, camera facing southwest
30 of 42: Typical floor interior, camera facing northeast
31 of 42: Typical floor interior, camera facing west
32 of 42: Curtain wall detail at typical floor, camera facing west
33 of 42: Curtain wall detail at typical floor, camera facing southwest
34 of 42: Penthouse level interior, camera facing southeast
35 of 42: Penthouse level interior, camera facing southeast
36 of 42: Penthouse level restrooms, camera facing east
37 of 42: Penthouse level restrooms, camera facing west
38 of 42: Typical stair, camera facing west
39 of 42: Typical stair handrail, camera facing southwest
40 of 42: Typical stair risers and treads, camera facing south
41 of 42: Typical elevator cab finishes, camera facing northwest
42 of 42: Typical elevator cab ceiling, camera facing northwest

List of Exhibits

1. Rendering of the ODECO Building, c.1966-67
2. Photograph of the ODECO Building, 1972
3. “New Building Going Up Soon,” *Times-Picayune*, October 28, 1966
4. “Office Building Work to Start,” *Times-Picayune*, November 28, 1967
5. Rendering in the *Times-Picayune*, January 28, 1968
6. “15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here,” *Times-Picayune*, May 8, 1968
7. “New Structure on Canal Street,” *Times-Picayune*, February 9, 1969
8. ODECO Building Case Study, (undated, but likely c. 1968)
9. Latter & Blum Letter dated October 31, 1966 concerning test pilings done in 1966.

EXHIBIT 1: Rendering of the ODECO Building, c.1966-67
Rendering of the ODECO Building that appeared on the first page of the ODECO Building drawing set (Credit: New Orleans Public Library, Louisiana Collection, City Archives, ODECO Building plans.)

EXHIBIT 2: Photograph of the ODECO Building shortly after completion
Photograph of the ODECO Building that appeared on the Paul Mouton page of the *Louisiana Architects Association Anniversary Publication*, L.A.A. Convention, New Orleans, LA, 1972.

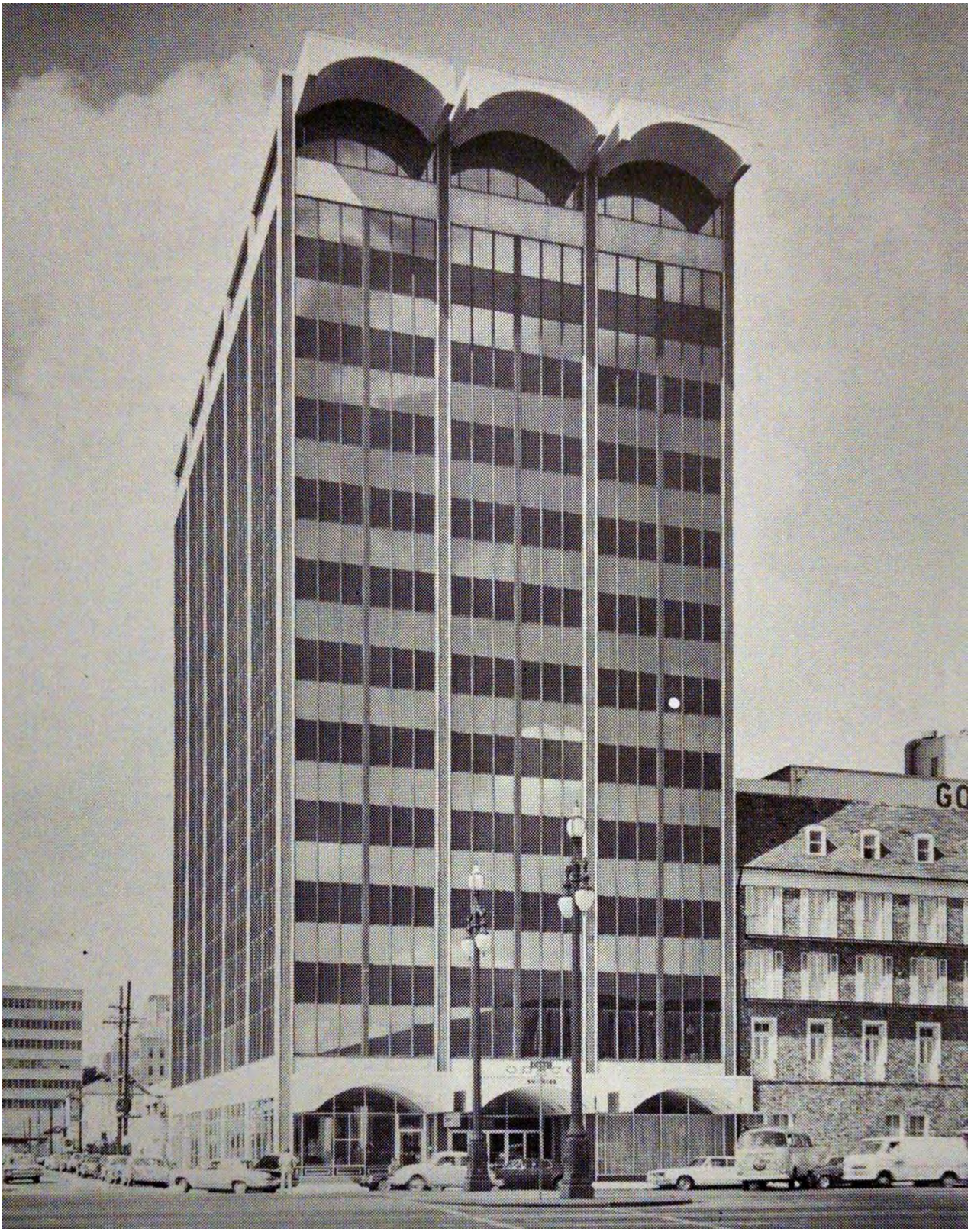


EXHIBIT 3: Article "New Building Going Up Soon"
Times-Picayune, October 28, 1966

NEW BUILDING GOING UP SOON

Construction Will Begin in November

By FRANK SCHNEIDER
(Times-Picayune Real Estate Editor)

Construction will begin next month on a 14-story office building at 1600 Canal, at the corner of S. Robertson. The developer, William P. Bosworth Jr., will also erect a six-level parking garage in the rear of the building on Cleveland.

The tower of aluminum and glass will have a lobby, retail spaces on the ground level, a penthouse and 110,000 square feet of office space. The investment for the two buildings, exclusive of land, will represent an expenditure exceeding $4 million.

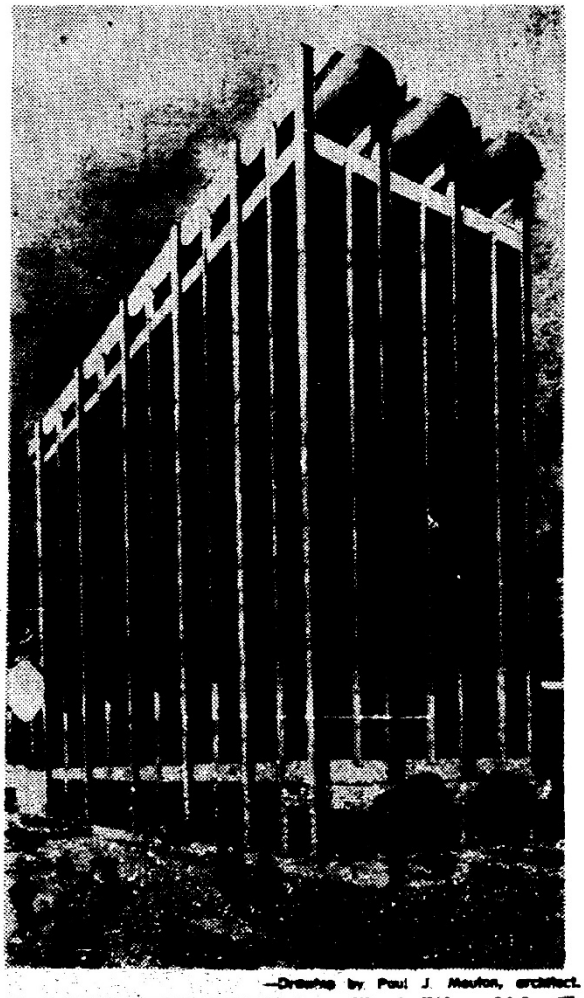
Charles A. Prechter, executive vice-president of Latter and Blum Inc., exclusive rental agent, announced that Ocean Drilling and Exploration Co. will be the major tenant with six floors of space. The building will be known as ODECO Office Building.

Designed by Paul J. Mouton, the structure will be of cast-in-place concrete with a trio of concrete canopies at the entrance and a set of matching canopies at the rooftop.

Expected to be completed in February, 1968, the building is adjacent to Bosworth's Governor House Motor Hotel and will be directly across Canal from a proposed 25-story hospital and medical complex.

Prechter said other tenants will include Murphy Oil Co. and Burman Oil Western Co. When other national leases currently under negotiation are completed the building will be 70 per cent leased, said Prechter.

Prechter said completed leases represent a figure exceeding $3 million. Contractor will be Bosworth Construction Co. and William J. Mouton is structural engineer.



—Drawing by Paul J. Mouton, architect.

THIS IS DRAWING of the 14-story office building which will be constructed at 1600 Canal at the corner of S. Robertson. Completion is scheduled in February, 1968.

EXHIBIT 4: Article "Office Building Work to Start"
Times-Picayune, November 28, 1967

OFFICE BUILDING WORK TO START

14 Stories, with Garage of 6 Levels

Construction will start Tuesday on a 14-level office building and a six-level parking garage on a Canal st. site adjacent to the Governor House Motor Hotel at S. Robertson.

The building, by William P. Bosworth Jr., will have 110,000 square feet of office space, a lobby with retail outlets and a penthouse. A six-level garage for 250 cars will be constructed on Cleveland in the rear of the building in the 1600-block Canal.

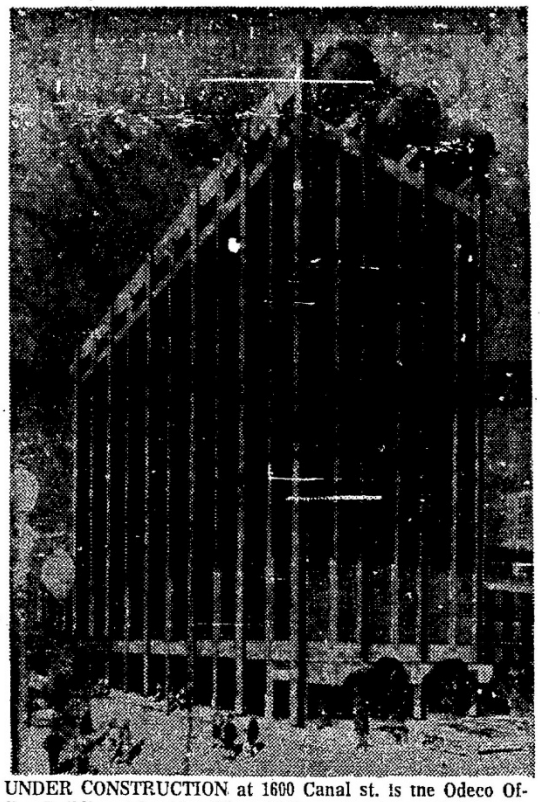
Charles A. Prechter, president of Latter and Blum, Inc., said the $4 million investment (exclusive of land cost) will be called the Odeco building. The major tenant, occupying six floors of the building, will be Ocean Drilling and Exploration Co. Latter and Blum is leasing agent.

The structure will be topped by concrete canopies and will be of cast-in-place concrete. The building was designed by Paul J. Mouton. William J. Mouton is structural engineer.

Laurance Eustis Mortgage Corp. secured $2½ million of permanent financing through New England Mutual Life Insurance Co. Interim financing is by the Bank of New Orleans.

The building plans were first announced more than one year ago but construction was delayed. The building is expected to be completed in January, 1969.

EXHIBIT 5: Rendering in the *Times-Picayune*
Times-Picayune, January 28, 1968



UNDER CONSTRUCTION at 1600 Canal st. is the Odeco Office Building. The $4 million, 14-floor structure will have an adjacent six-story parking garage.

EXHIBIT 6: Article "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here"
Times-Picayune, May 8, 1968

15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here

The 15-story Odeco building under construction on Canal will have all of its steel superstructure and concrete deck flooring in place on Monday. Workers took just six weeks to erect the steel columns and beams and prestressed concrete sections from ground to top level.

For the first time here a high rise structure has had its steel skeleton and fireproof concrete flooring erected simultaneously. The job began from foundation on March 19.

The building is in the 1600 block Canal, off S. Claiborne, inches away from the Governor House.

William J. Mouton Jr., structural engineer, said the system of building called for a minimum of cost and time and that the method allows easy handling of materials, swift erection, and ultimately a monolithic quality for greater strength.

Vertical steel sections, 48 feet long (four stories high) were delivered to the site, as required, and were lifted into place by crane. Bolted to these columns were 23- and 26-foot steel beams. The structural areas, rectangular bays, were erected in four-story heights. The pre-stressed extruded concrete planks, manufactured here for the first time, were lifted from trucks by special rigging, lowered through the bay areas, and placed on the beams.

Five of these concrete planks, each 26 feet by four feet, formed the floor section of one bay level.

It required about six minutes to install each of these deck sections, producing about 1,000 square feet of floor area in the building every hour.

After the decks were in place on each level of the four-story bays, steel members were welded to each other. The deck served also as an added safety measure, serving as a platform for the welders, said Mouton.

Next, workers are to pour concrete over all the deck areas, binding them into a unified slab. Additionally, steel anchor studs, rising upright from the beams, will also be enveloped in the concrete to further stabilize the entire structure.

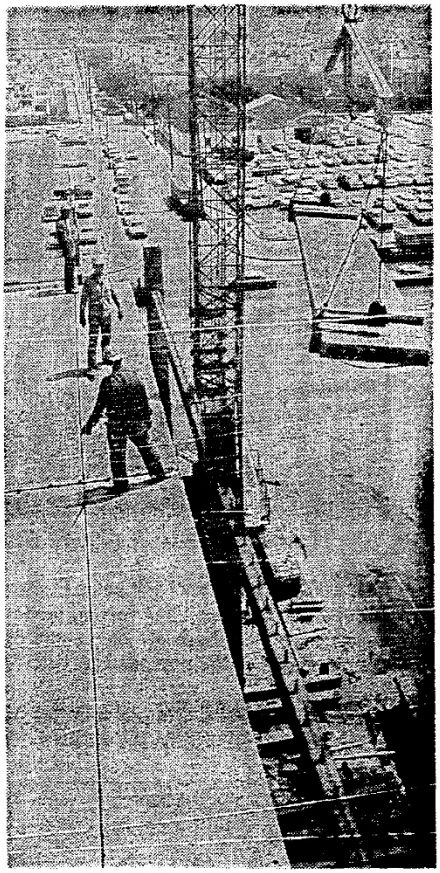
The process has eliminated the need and time required for any conventional framing members.

The $3,500,000 investment, which includes also a seven-level parking garage in the rear of the site, is expected to be completed in February, 1969, according to William Bosworth Jr., the owner.

The building rests on 96 pre-stressed concrete piles, each 150 feet long, that were inserted into predrilled 90-foot holes before driving operations. In all 600 tons of steel went into the structure, which will have 129,000 square feet of space when finished.

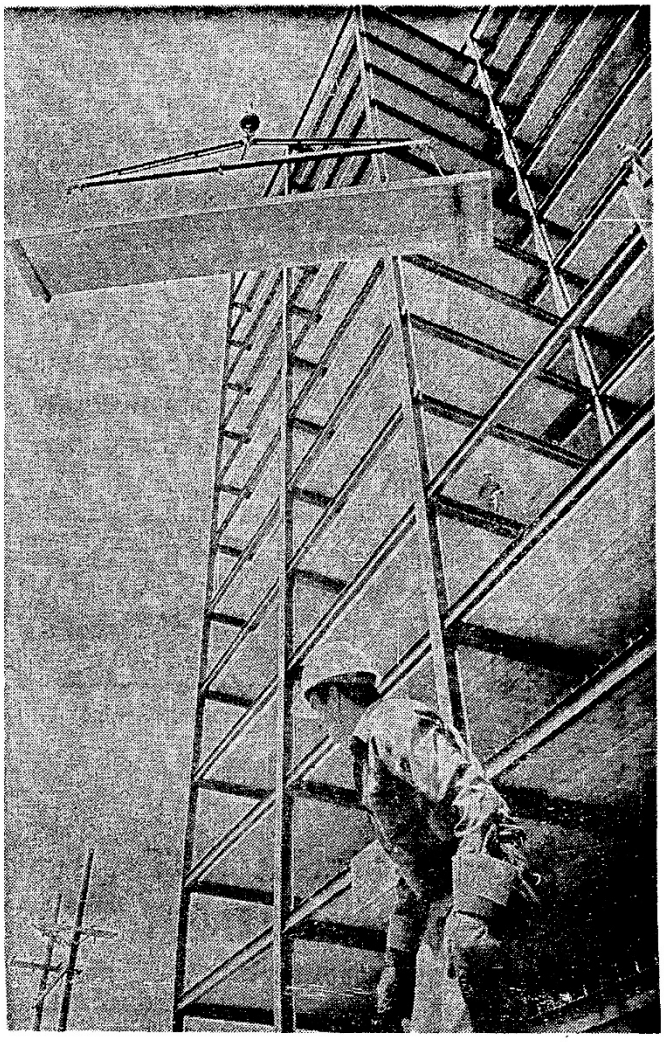
The method of construction, using steel and concrete at the same time, followed a grid pattern of design which also facilitates finish work, installation of plumbing, wiring, etc.

The building was designed by Paul Mouton. Steel fabrication was by Orleans Materials and Equipment Co. Inc. and the hollow-core concrete planks were fabricated here by Belden Concrete Products. Steel erection was by Sun Erection.



MEN WAIT ATOP concrete decks to guide floor plank into position on steel beams in Odeco building.

Erect Steel, Concrete Together

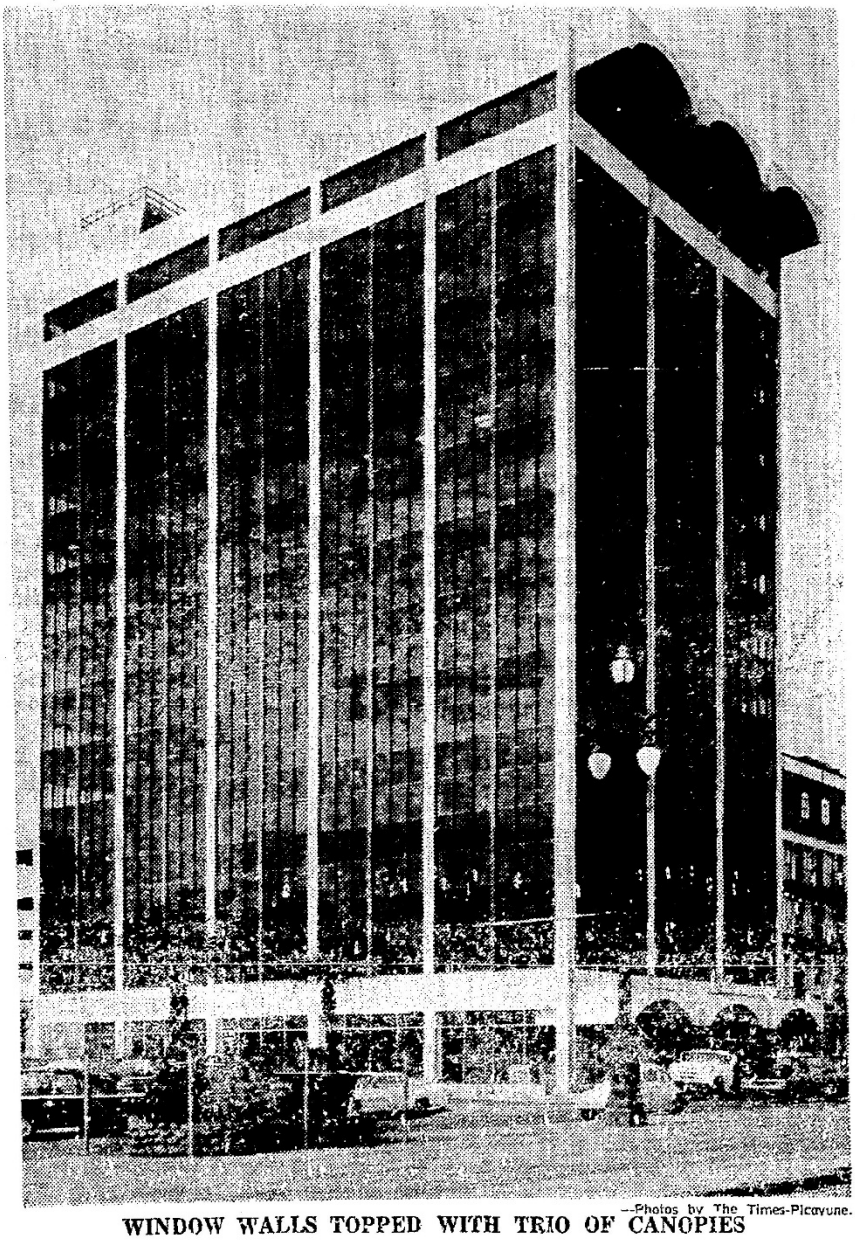


—Photos by James N. Pitts, The Times-Picayune.

CONCRETE FLOOR PLANK REACHING FOR DESTINATION

EXHIBIT 7: Article "New Structure on Canal Street"
Times-Picayune, February 9, 1969

New Structure on Canal St.



WINDOW WALLS TOPPED WITH TRIO OF CANOPIES

—Photos by The Times-Picayune.

Ready New Addition to Skyline

First big addition to the skyline in 1969 is the ODECO building.

A modern office tower wrapped in tinted glass the structure is 14-stories tall (190 feet), topped with a series of plaster-coated steel canopies.

The building fronts 70 feet on Canal and 130 feet on S. Dorgenois.

Among its interesting features are swift and economical construction. Architect Paul Mouton said the 115,000 square foot building cost $1.8 million to construct and required 12 month from foundation work to completion.

The building's exterior is an all window wall of bronze glass with bronze anodized aluminum mullions.

The canopies at the top roof a penthouse for the company's presidential offices and conference room. Smaller similar canopies arch the entrance on Canal.

An innovation in air conditioning treatment presents an interior with a minium of ductwork. Engineering and design allows for cool and warm air to merely float in ceiling spaces between floors. Pressure will force the air through perforations in ceilng tiles to offices below

Building levels were constructed of steel and pre-cast concrete planks (lifted-in place) topped with light weight concrete as a finish. These have insulation value which allows a departure from usual air conditioning installation, said Mouton.

The building is owned by William P. Bosworth Jr. and is part of a development which includes also a 6½ level parking garage on Claiborne and Cleveland in the same square. It will accommodate 220 cars.

EXHIBIT 8: ODECO Building Case Study [page 1 of 2]

Unique System Sends Building Skyward In Six Weeks

Men wait atop concrete decks to guide floor plank into position on steel beams.

The 15 story Odeco office building was recently framed out in six weeks, using a unique system of structural steel and pre-stressed concrete floor planks.

The building was originally designed as a poured in place concrete frame but due to construction time and costs a redesign was made by William J. Mouton, Structural Engineer. The new plans resulted in a minimum of cost and time but the time element centered around Orleans' commitment to fabricate and erect the frame within two months.

Vertical steel sections, 48 feet long (four stories high) were delivered to the site, as required, and were lifted into place by crane. Bolted to these columns were 23 and 26 foot steel beams. The structural areas, rectangular bays, were erected in four-story sequences. The pre-stressed extruded concrete planks were lifted from trucks by special rigging, lowered through the bay areas, and placed on the beams.

This system, taking the best features of two competitive materials, proved that structural steel and pre-stressed concrete components can work together to the building industry's advantage. For the first time in New Orleans a high-rise frame has had its structural steel skeleton and fireproof concrete flooring erected simultaneously. The job began from foundation on March 19.

The new design called for composite action and was obtained by applying shear connectors to structural steel beams and a topping poured over planks and pour strips along main girders. Once the foundation was completed, the site was

A section of concrete floor planking reaches for destination.

* The 2-page case study pamphlet, which contains no footer or identifying publisher, appears similar in content to the May 8, 1968 *Times-Picayune* article, "15 Stories Up in Six Weeks Here; Erect Steel, Concrete Together." The pamphlet contains language that suggests it might have been published by the steel manufacturer, Orleans Materials and Equipment Co., Inc. It is also similar in format to articles and case studies published by the American Iron and Steel Institute.

EXHIBIT 8: ODECO Building Case Study - Continued [page 2 of 2]

turned over to Orleans for a period of time not to exceed two months. To make this a reality it was decided that Orleans should erect steel for three days, set planks on the fourth day and plumb and weld-up on the fifth day. This sequence of erection was based upon four floor tiers requiring perfect logistical control of all material delivered to the site. Most of the material delivered was erected directly from the trucks. Special rigging was designed and built to handle the concrete planks at an average of 1500 square feet per hour.

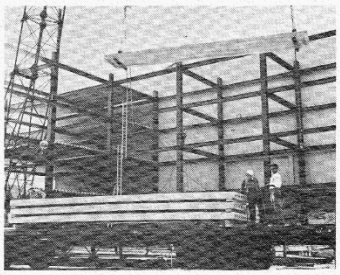
Considerable savings await the general contractor who can plan his other work to take advantage of rapid completion of the building frame. The hollow cores in the planks also offer interesting possibilities to mechanical and electrical engineers and contractors.

The system utilized in the construction of the Odeco building spawns a method for framing high-rise buildings that can substantially reduce construction costs to owners and effectively reduce the time of project completion. Faster occupancy and income is the inevitable result.

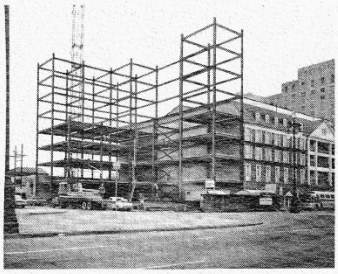
As a result of this new technique, studies are presently being made to affect other savings in building procedure. These new areas relate to the reduction of fireproofing on steel beams, the near elimination of forming of pour strips, the development of special planks for chases and fresh air intakes and the erection of stairs and window-wall supports with the main frame.

The Odeco building rests on 96 pre-stressed concrete piles, each 150 feet long. They were inserted into pre-drilled 90 foot holes before pile driving operations. In all 600 tons of fabricated structural steel was furnished by Orleans.

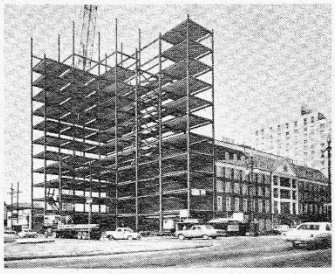
Paul J. Mouton is the architect for the project. Bosworth Construction Co. Inc. is the general contractor. Belden Concrete Products furnished the hollow-core concrete planks and erection was by Sun Erection Co., Inc.



MARCH 27, 1968

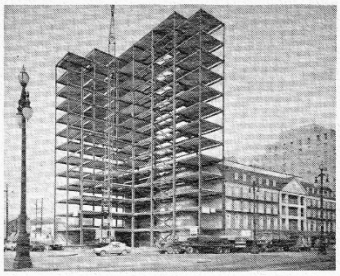


APRIL 2, 1968

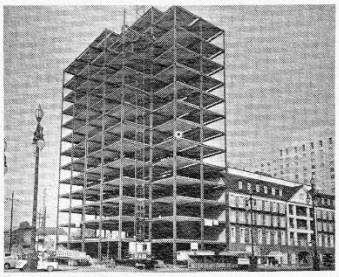


APRIL 15, 1968

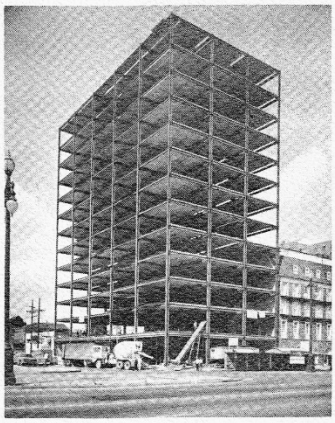
WEEK BY WEEK...



APRIL 22, 1968



MAY 1, 1968



MAY 13, 1968

EXHIBIT 9: Latter & Blum Letter dated October 31, 1966 concerning test pilings done in 1966.

1/15

TO ALL SALESMEN: October 31,1966

IN RE: ODECO BUILDING
1600 Canal Street

This memorandum will bring you up-to-date relative to our exclusive contract that we have with Wm. P. Bosworth, Jr., relative to the leasing of the Odeco Building.

The building will contain 12 floors plus a lobby, or a total of 13 floors, each floor having approximately 8500 sq.ft. of net rental area. In the event that this area is subdivided for leasing to smaller tenants, the net rental area will be reduced by that portion lost to hallway space.

We have already leased complete floors 7 through 12. Also all of the 4th floor and one-half of the third floor. The 5th and 6th floors are available under 5 year leases only. The 2nd and 3rd floors are for long term leases.

The rate per sq.ft. is $5.~~00~~ 50 per annum with the tenant paying electricity for office machines and lighting. With the leasing of the space, the tenant is allowed one parking place for each 500 sq.ft. of leased office space.

The ground floor is available for commercial tenant at the rate of $6.00 per sq.ft. unfinished, with tenant providing its own air-conditioning, janitorial services, and electricity.

Test pilings are being put down today and construction should start in latter part of this month with completion by February, 1968. Commitment on rentals should be for possession on or about March 1, 1968 with the further understanding that the building and leased space shall be reasonably completed.

Users of small space will be considered but no commitment can be made until further determination of larger space users. In other words, the small spaces should be fill-ins.

The building will be completed,including partitioning for the tenant,where such partitioning is considered reasonable to the sq.ft. area leased, as well as the strength of the tenant and the length of the lease.

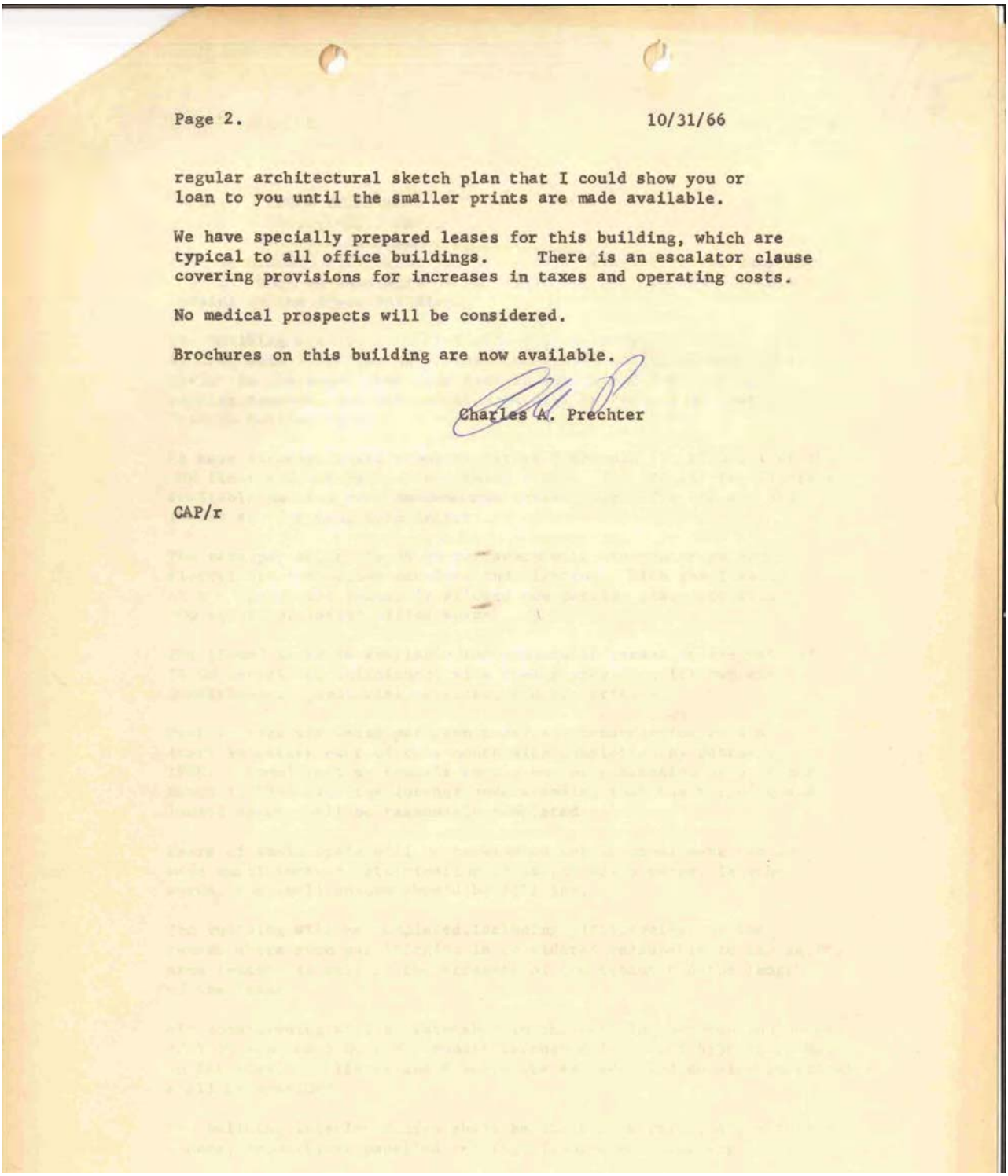
Air-conditioning will be furnished in the building between the hours of 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, and 8:30 to 12 Noon on Saturday. Holidays and Sundays are excluded and no air-conditioning shall be provided.

The building interior finish shall be sheet rock walls, asphalt tile floors, accoustical panelled ceiling, fluorescent lighting.

Sketch of typical floor plan area is being prepared and will be available for your use in the very near future. I do have, however, a

[page 1 of 2]

EXHIBIT 9: Latter & Blum Letter dated October 31, 1966 concerning test pilings done in 1966 - Continued [page 2 of 2]



Page 2. 10/31/66

regular architectural sketch plan that I could show you or loan to you until the smaller prints are made available.

We have specially prepared leases for this building, which are typical to all office buildings. There is an escalator clause covering provisions for increases in taxes and operating costs.

No medical prospects will be considered.

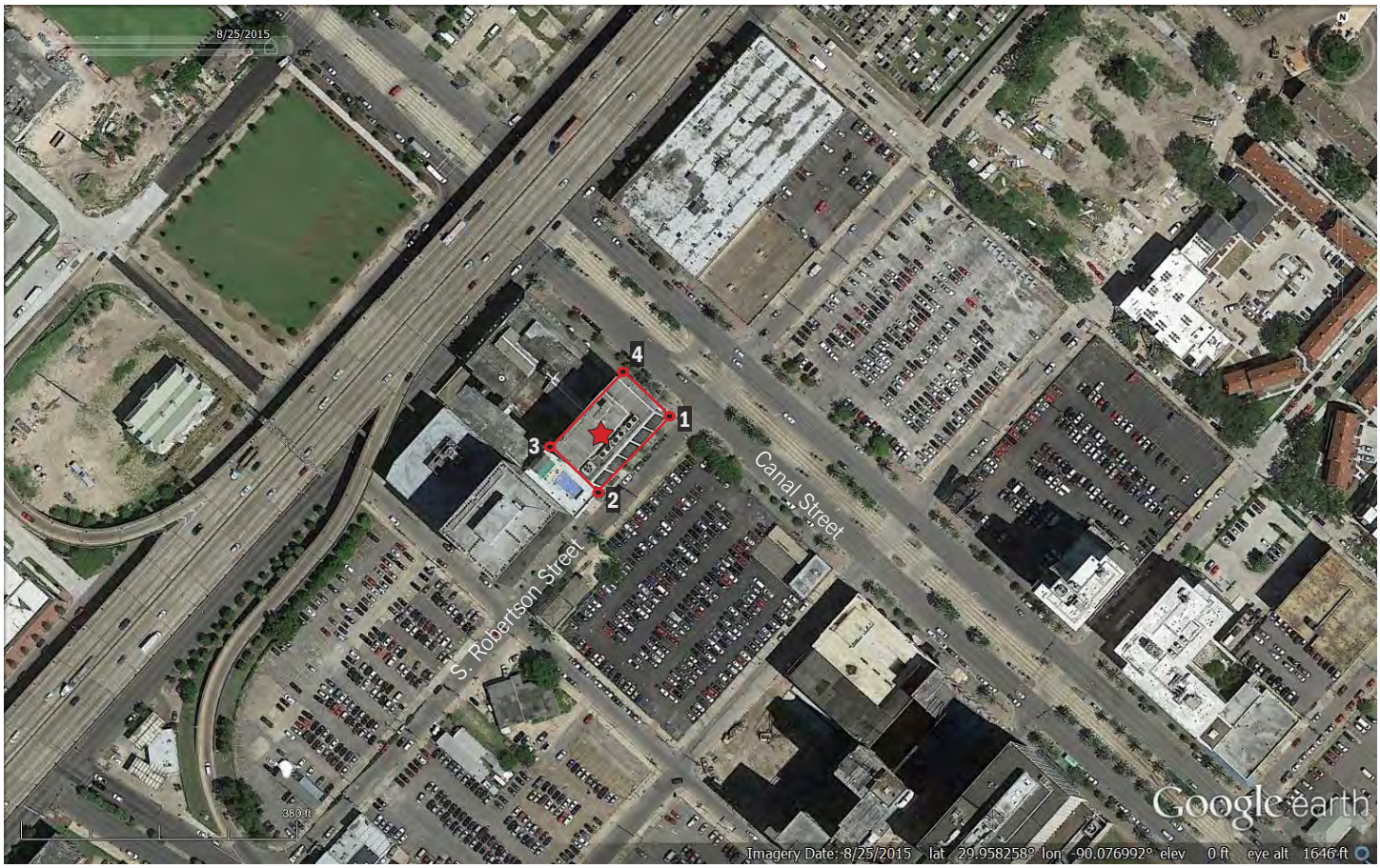
Brochures on this building are now available.

Charles A. Prechter

CAP/r

BOUNDARY MAP - ODECO Building, 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, LA

★ = 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana (Latitude= 29.958227°, Longitude = -90.077382°)



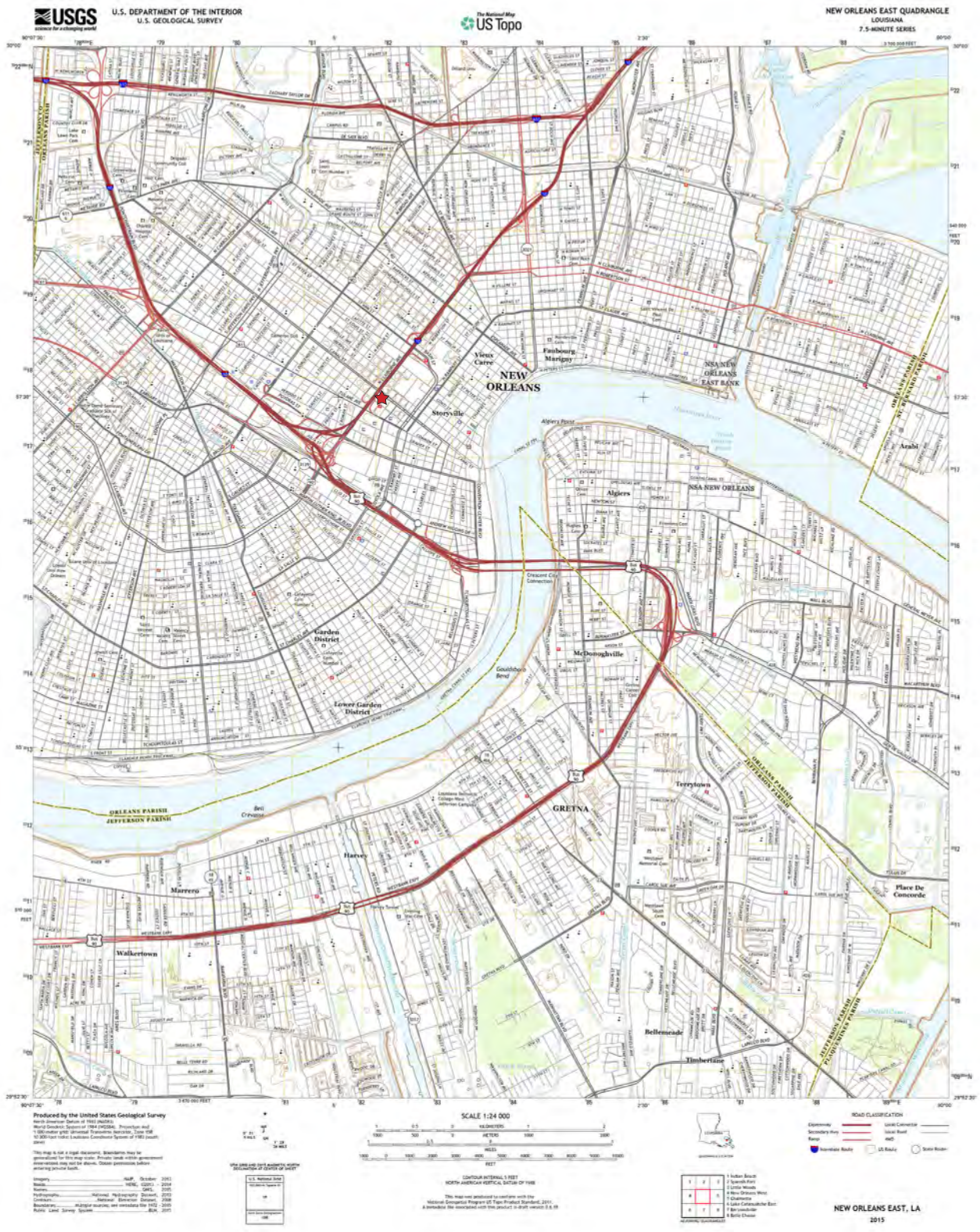
North

Coordinates:

1: Latitude: 29.958313°	Longitude: -90.077100°
2. Latitude: 29.958028°	Longitude: -90.077357°
3. Latitude: 29.958147°	Longitude: -90.077537°
4. Latitude: 29.958435°	Longitude: -90.077278°

USGS MAP - ODECO Building, 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, LA

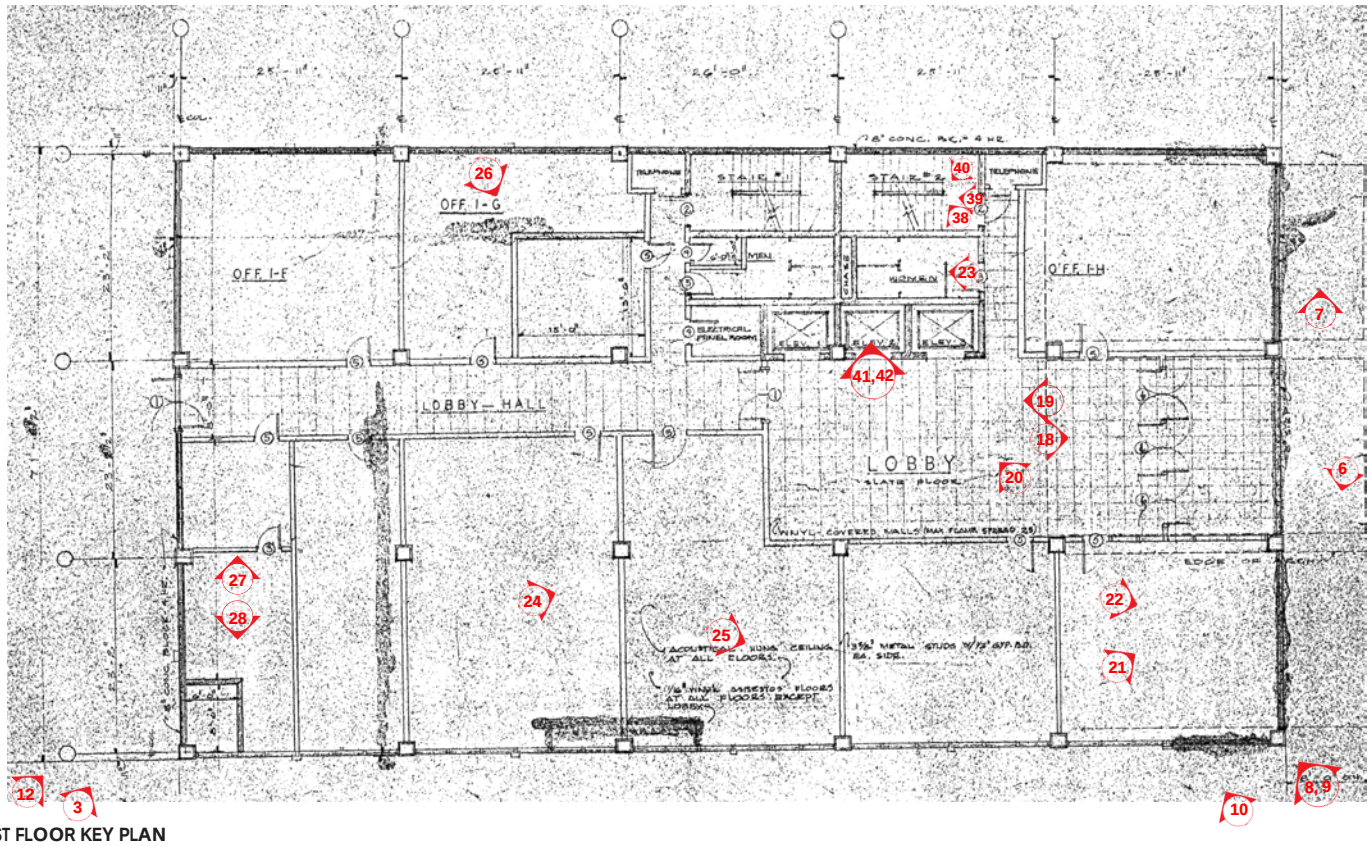
★ = 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana (Latitude= 29.958227°, Longitude = -90.077382°)



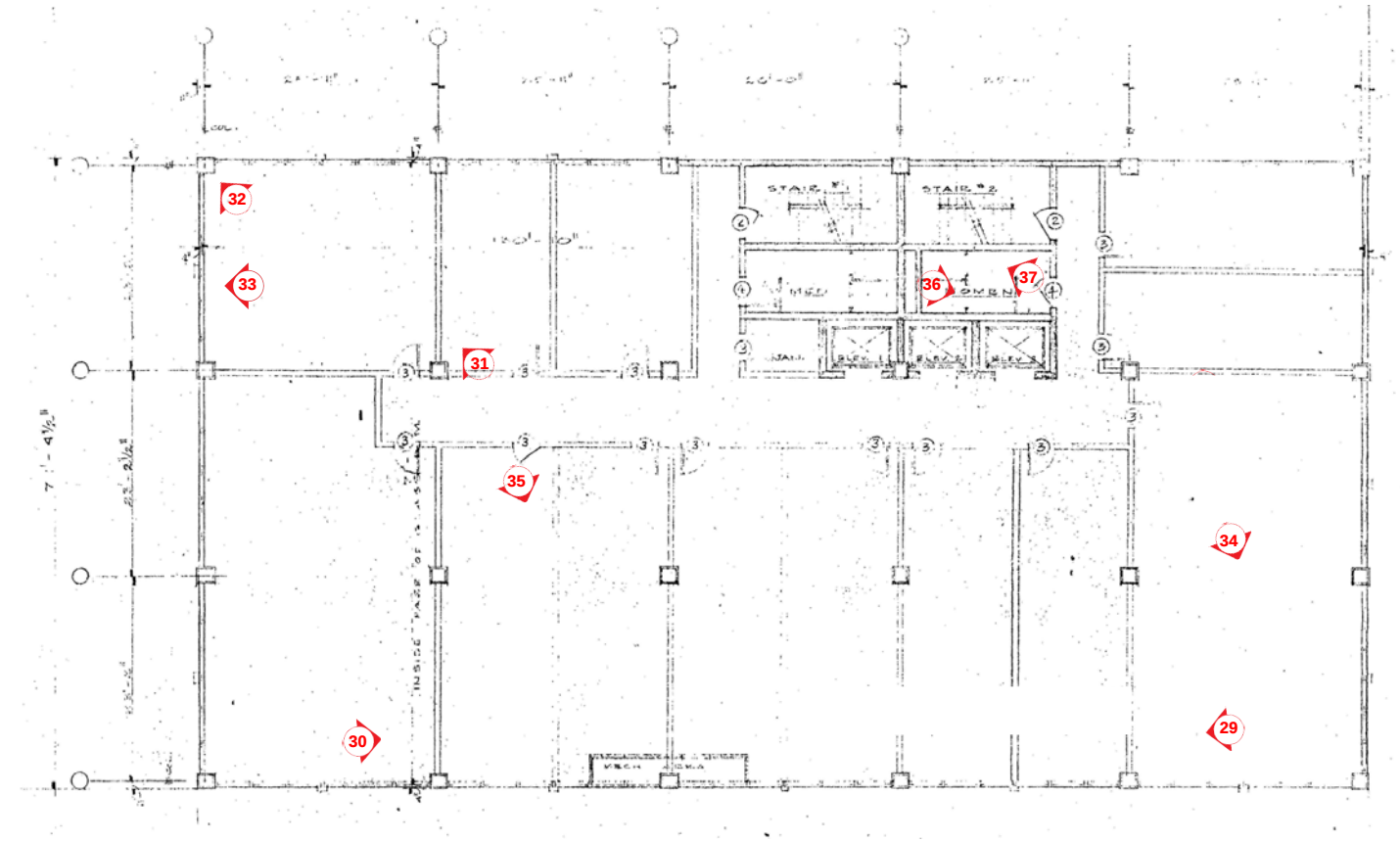
North

N

SKETCH MAP AND PHOTO KEY [1 of 2] - ODECO Building, 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, LA



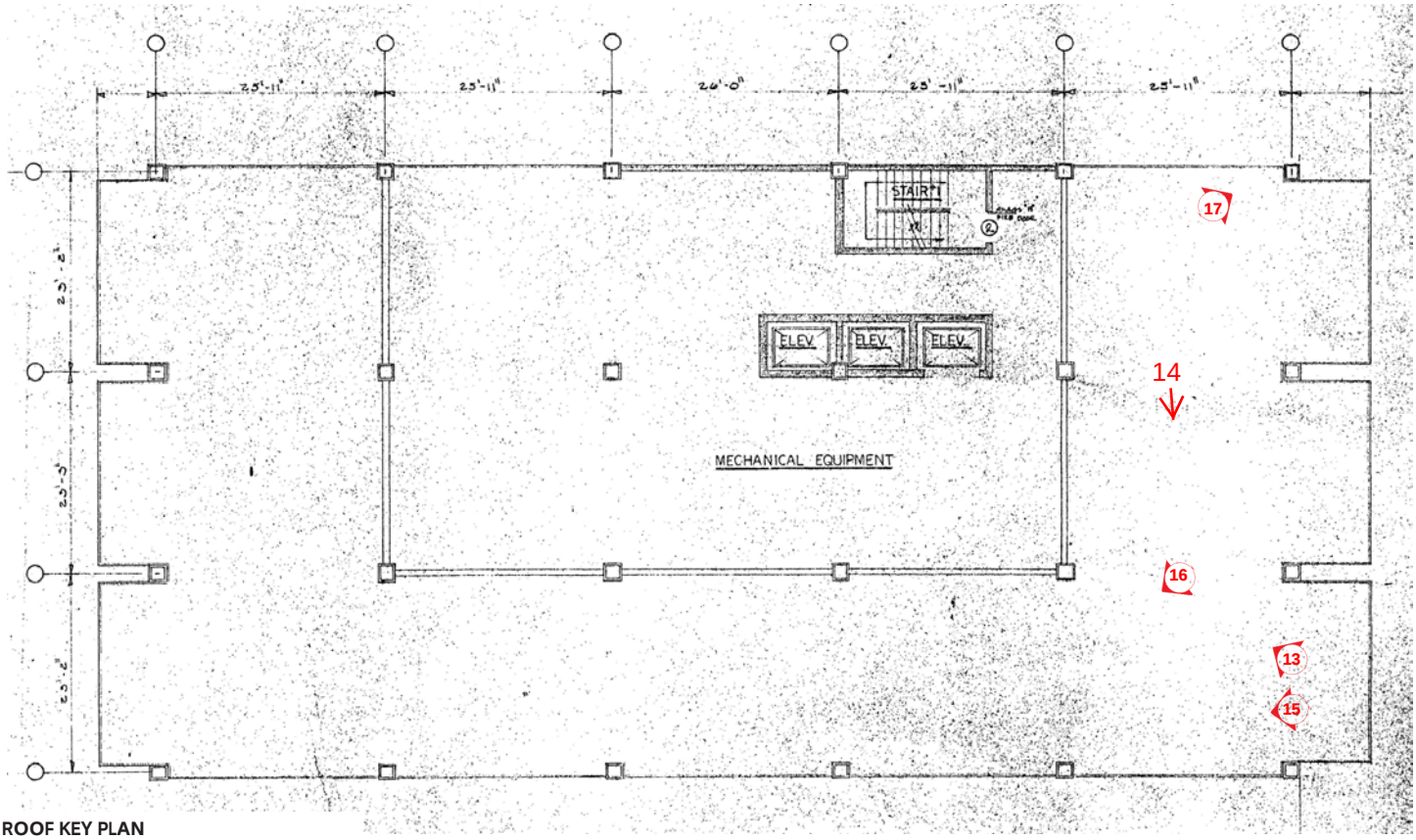
1ST FLOOR KEY PLAN



TYPICAL FLOOR KEY PLAN

N

SKETCH MAP AND PHOTO KEY [2 of 2] - ODECO Building, 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, LA



ROOF KEY PLAN


UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS
FOR SALE
DON RANDON
REAL ESTATE, INC.
581-1111
1600
FOR SALE
DON RANDON
REAL ESTATE, INC.
581-1111


UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS


UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS
Technology
Enterprise
Center
SHOP on
CANAL
NOLA


FOR SALE
DON RANDON
REAL ESTATE, INC.
581-1111
EXT. 24 EXT.
University of New Orleans
FOR SALE
DON RANDON
REAL ESTATE, INC.
581-1111
EXT. 24 EXT.
BIG FREEDIA
BIG FREEDIA
ATM


FOR SALE
DON RANDON
REAL ESTATE, INC.
581-1111


FOR SALE
University
Of New Orleans
uno
BIG
FREEDIA
BIG
FREEDIA


SUP
HOMIE


UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS


Carrier
Tulane


THIS DOOR IS LOCKED
THIS DOOR IS LOCKED
THIS DOOR IS LOCKED


ICE
COLD


Temtrol

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.
Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: ODECO Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Orleans

DATE RECEIVED: 4/15/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/19/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/03/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/31/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000300

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	Y	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	Y	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA_____

REVIEWER_____ DISCIPLINE_____

TELEPHONE_____ DATE_____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

RENNIE S. BURAS, II
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

April 12, 2016

TO: Mr. James Gabbert
National Park Service 2280, 8th Floor; National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street, NW; Washington, DC 20005

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: ODECO Building, Orleans Parish, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the ODECO Building to the National Register of Historic Places. The second disk contains the photographs of the property in TIF format. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595 or jrichardson@crt.la.gov.

Thanks,

Jessica

Enclosures:

x	CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form and correspondence
x	CD with electronic images (tif format)
x	Physical Transmission Letter
x	Physical Signature Page, with original signature
	Other:

Comments:

	Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
X	This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67 (**Part 1 denied**)
	The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do_____ do not_____ constitute a majority of property owners. (Publicly owned property)
	Other:

400 POYDRAS STREET
SUITE 1410
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70130
P: 504.598.4440
F: 504.598.4448
Email: jtcampo@jtcampo.com

CAMPO ARCHITECTS

May 23, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether
Chief National Register of Historic Places/National Historic Landmarks Program

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Fax: 202.371.6447

RE: **Support Letter Comments for:**
ODECO Building
1600 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
A/E Project # 1506

Dear Mr. Loether:

John T. Campo & Associates, Inc. ("Campo Architects") is writing this letter of support for the nomination and Individual Listing of the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company (ODECO) building (#16000300). The ODECO Building is located at 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana and has been submitted under National Register Criterion C in the area of Engineering.

The ODECO Building is significant in that it embodies three key themes that characterized the work of master structural engineer, William J. Mouton, Jr.;

1.) An excellent example of the **efficient and economical construction** for which Mouton was well known.

2.) An important example of **Mouton's early experimentation with precast concrete building components**,

3.) Early use of Brunspile foundations, **which have allowed three of his other prominent New Orleans works to be listed on the National Register: the Plaza Tower, the International Trade Mart, and the Rault Center.**

The ODECO building is the **only** high-rise in Downtown New Orleans to use the unique hybrid system of steel framing with hollow core precast concrete floor planks. The hollow core planks were manufactured locally for the first time for use on this building, introducing a new economic market for the New Orleans construction industry.

Although vacant for the past 10 years, the property retains a vast amount of integrity to support its nomination to the National Register. The original 1960's exterior facades are still fully intact, signifying Mouton's structural achievements. Conversion of this historic property will retain and enhance the building's historic elements, bringing life and light back to the currently dull facades.

Campo Architects respectfully requests your approval of the ODECO Building Nomination.

Sincerely,

John T. Campo, Jr, AIA, NCARB
President

John T. Campo & Associates, Inc.
400 Poydras Street | Suite 1410
New Orleans, LA 70130

NewcrestImage

May 24, 2016

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye St. NW
8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

SENT BY FAX: 202-371-6447

RE: ODECO Building, 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans LA 70112

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to support the nomination of the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company (ODECO) building -- located at 1600 Canal Street in New Orleans -- for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The candidacy of this building was published by the National Park Service for comment in the May 19, 2016 edition of the *Federal Register*.

The National Register Nomination, which has been submitted for your review, documents thoroughly and thoughtfully why this building is worthy of consideration under key criterion, notably integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

We do not wish to be repetitive, so let us simply emphasize that the building's structural engineer -- William J. Mouton, Jr. -- was a pioneer in the use of four construction techniques that created safer and most cost-effective, yet elegant and aesthetically pleasing buildings:

1. Long-span steel space-frame structures
2. Tubular systems in high-rise structures
3. Modular pre-stressed concrete panels
4. Deep-pile foundation systems for improved support of multi-story structures

These innovative construction features -- the last three of which were part of the ODECO building -- are among the reasons Mr. Mouton was honored in an exhibit titled *"Engineers of the Century"* held in 1997 at the George Pompidou Center in Paris.

We respectfully urge you to now similarly honor Mr. Mouton's work on the ODECO building as "historic." It is a distinction that is deserved -- not just because the building has already achieved a rich legacy, but because as the owners of the building, we believe that its best days still lie ahead.

Why? Because we expect the ODECO building -- which is strategically situated along the spine of the New Orleans Central Business District, itself a designated historic district -- to be at the heart of the city's emerging world-class medical complex. These ambitious plans, originally proposed as early as 1966, will give this landmark building new life as a powerful inspiration for the city's future.

We trust our comments are helpful as you deliberate our application. Thank you in advance as together we strive to pay proper respect to the ODECO building's unique historic past.

Respectfully,

Mehul Patel

700 State Highway 121, Suite 175
Lewisville, TX 75067

Tel: 214.774.4650
Fax: 214.540.8449

BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

RENNIE S. BURAS, II
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

April 12, 2016

Mehul Patel
Supreme Bright New Orleans II, LLC
700 State Highway 121, Ste 175
Lewisville, TX 75067

RE: ODECO Building, Orleans Parish, LA

Dear Mr. Patel:

As you may know, the National Register Review Committee recommended the above referenced property to the State Historic Preservation Officer at its April 7th meeting. I have completed the paperwork for the nomination and am forwarding it to the National Park Service in Washington. Review at that level, and receipt of notification of listing, generally takes about two months.

Upon receipt of official confirmation from Washington that your property has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, you will be notified and presented a National Register certificate.

Sincerely,

Jessica Richardson
National Register Coordinator

CC: John Campo, Kerry Soniat, Beth Jacob

JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

CHARLES R. DAVIS
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PAM BREAUX
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DATE: 5-25-16

Please forward the following number of pages *(including this cover sheet)* 2

TO: National Park Service

FAX: 202-371-6447

PHONE:

FROM:

Shirley Lang
Administrative Assistant
Office of Cultural Development

P. O. Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4247

Phone # (225) 342-8200
Fax # (225) 219-9772

BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

RENNIE S. BURAS, II
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

May 25, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether
Chief National Register of Historic Places

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Fax: 202.371.6447

Subject: ODECO Building Support Letter
1600 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA
Reference Number 16000300

Dear Mr. Loether:

As the State Historic Preservation Officer for Louisiana I fully understand the implications the National Register program has on historic properties in Louisiana. Receiving the designation can lead to positive results of a building receiving incentives for its revitalization and not receiving the designation can lead to its fate with a wrecking ball. Its times like this that I ask myself this simple little question, "What's the best thing to do for historic preservation?"

I write this letter to offer my wholehearted support of the listing of the ODECO building to the National Register of Historic Places to ensure it is preserved for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Phil Boggan
Assistant Secretary and
State Historic Preservation Officer

The Council
City of New Orleans

LaToya Cantrell
Councilmember - District B

City Hall, Suite 2W10
1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
(504) 658-1020
Fax (504) 658-1025

May 25, 2016

TO: Mr. J. Paul Loether
Chief National Register of Historic Places/National Historic Landmarks Program
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Fax: 202.371.6447

RE: **ODECO Building Support Letter**
1600 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA
Reference Number 16000300

Dear Mr. Foster:

I am writing this letter, on behalf of the New Orleans City Council District "B", in support of the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company (ODECO) building National Register Nomination.

In August 2015, the City of New Orleans adopted a new Zoning Ordinance which designates Canal Street as an Enhancement Corridor. The intent is to protect and promote the aesthetic character and functionality of Canal Street for the overall welfare of the community.

The ODECO Building has sat vacant for over 10 years now, in an area of the City that was blighted since the early 1990s. This essential part of Canal Street was an unsafe place for local residents and tourists, discouraging development, in general. A National Register listing for this property, would not only provide incentive for rehabilitation of the building itself, but would also provide a substantial impact to downtown New Orleans via urban revitalization.

The Owner intends to transform the property into a Marriott Dual-Branded Hotel. Local artists will be featured within the ground floor lobby area, and gallery openings will be held monthly for the local community. This development promotes the City's adopted concept of generating business through heritage-based economic development and attracting visitors to this currently unoccupied part of Canal Street.

A new biomedical district is currently completing construction, located just two blocks away from the ODECO Building. This 2.4 square mile area will house medical schools, universities, hospitals, and research institutions working to advance bioscience knowledge. The ODECO Building's new hotel function will provide a key lodging component for transient patients, students and medical staff occupying this district.

The humanitarian aspects of the ODECO Building redevelopment play an essential role in the city leaders' commitment to make New Orleans a place of social well-being and growth.

We hope that the National Register of Historic Places shares in our endeavors, and look forward to hearing positive feedback on the nomination.

Sincerely,

LaToya Cantrell
Councilmember, District 'B'

400 POYDRAS STREET
SUITE 1410
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70130
P: 504.598.4440
F: 504.598.4448
Email: jtcampo@jtcampo.com

CAMPO
ARCHITECTS

May 23, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether
Chief National Register of Historic Places/National Historic Landmarks Program

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Fax: 202.371.6447

RE: **Support Letter Comments for:**
ODECO Building
1600 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
A/E Project # 1506

Dear Mr. Loether:

John T. Campo & Associates, Inc. ("Campo Architects") is writing this letter of support for the nomination and Individual Listing of the Ocean Drilling & Exploration Company (ODECO) building (#16000300). The ODECO Building is located at 1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana and has been submitted under National Register Criterion C in the area of Engineering.

The ODECO Building is significant in that it embodies three key themes that characterized the work of master structural engineer, William J. Mouton, Jr.;

1.) An excellent example of the **efficient and economical construction** for which Mouton was well known.

2.) An important example of **Mouton's early experimentation with precast concrete building components**,

3.) Early use of Brunspile foundations, **which have allowed three of his other prominent New Orleans works to be listed on the National Register: the Plaza Tower, the International Trade Mart, and the Rault Center.**

The ODECO building is the **only** high-rise in Downtown New Orleans to use the unique hybrid system of steel framing with hollow core precast concrete floor planks. The hollow core planks were manufactured locally for the first time for use on this building, introducing a new economic market for the New Orleans construction industry.

Although vacant for the past 10 years, the property retains a vast amount of integrity to support its nomination to the National Register. The original 1960's exterior facades are still fully intact, signifying Mouton's structural achievements. Conversion of this historic property will retain and enhance the building's historic elements, bringing life and light back to the currently dull facades.

Campo Architects respectfully requests your approval of the ODECO Building Nomination.

Sincerely,

John T. Campo, Jr, AIA, NCARB
President

John T. Campo & Associates, Inc.
400 Poydras Street | Suite 1410
New Orleans, LA 70130

CLIO
ASSOCIATES

May 31, 2016

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C St. NW
MS 2280
Washington, DC 20240

Re: **National Register Nominationfor the ODECO Building**
1600 Canal Street, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the ODECO Building's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The ODECO Building, an office tower located at 1600 Canal Street in New Orleans, is an excellent example of the work of master structural engineer William J. Mouton, Jr. Mouton was nationally recognized for his innovative work in the areas of tall building foundation design,precast concrete building systems and components, and steel truss systems and domes.

To meet the project's time and budget constraints, Mouton designed a hybrid structural system for the building that combined steel framing and precast hollow-core concrete floor planks. This unusual approach for a highrise, used locally for the first the first time, allowed the building's 14-story frame to be erected in just six weeks. This project exemplified Mouton's approach to his work, as he was known for responding to each project's individual challenges, and developing creative solutions that pushed the boundaries of structural efficiency and economy.

I had the pleasure of preparing the National Register nomination for the ODECO Building. After immersing myself in the engineering literature of the mid-1960s,researching Mouton's body of work, and interviewing former students, colleagues, and practicing engineers, I strongly believe that the ODECO Building is eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Beth A. Jacob

Clio Associates LLC | 1139 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113 | clioassociates.com