NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

595

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: Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant
Other names/site number: Fred Jones Manufacturing Company Building
Name of related multiple property listing:
(N/A)
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 900 W. Main Street
City or town: Oklahoma City State: Oklahoma County: Oklahoma
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B X C ___D

Bob Blackburn July 21, 2014

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

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**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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: 9/10/2014

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

---

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/Industrial Storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)
Late 19th and Early 20th Century American/Commercial Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: _BRICK_

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 Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant (Oklahoma City Plant) at 900 W. Main Street in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is a rectangular building with a concrete frame, brick cladding, and a flat roof. The east end of the building, constructed in 1916, is four stories tall, while the west end, added in 1924, is two stories. A one-story train shed attached to the south elevation covers the south end of the lot. The building occupies a corner lot with primary elevations facing north and east. Fenestration patterns define the primary elevations, with large multi-light metal industrial windows filling the wide openings in the concrete frame. The primary elevations have restrained ornament in the form of turquoise and purple terra cotta tiles, carved limestone beltcourses, and historic metal sconces. The historic metal and wood storefronts are intact at the northeast corner of the first floor. While the historic metal window frames are extant, the glazing in the multi-light sashes has been replaced with plexiglass. The interior has modestly finished spaces at the northeast corner of the first and second floors. Limited areas retain historic terrazzo flooring, plaster partitions, and wood window and door frames are historic. The rest of the building is manufacturing and warehouse space with utilitarian finishes; floors and ceilings are concrete; walls are painted brick. A regular grid of robust concrete columns displays architect Albert Kahn's signature octagonal shape with splayed

capitals. The interior and exterior features clearly communicate the building's historic function and its association with the Ford Motor Company and architect Albert Kahn.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Oklahoma City Plant lies approximately one mile east of the downtown business district *(Photo 12)*. Interstate Highway 40 and the Oklahoma River run approximately one mile to the south. Smaller one- to three-story industrial and commercial buildings comprise the surrounding blocks *(Photos 12 and 13)*. A new county jail complex lies two blocks to the north. A historic civic center, comprised of the former city hall and municipal auditorium, lies roughly four blocks northeast of the property.

The roughly two-acre property sits on the north half of the block bounded by West Main Street on the north, Fred Jones Road on the east, West Sheridan Avenue on the south, and North Classen Boulevard on the west. Wide public sidewalks with integrated tree grates abut the building on the north and east elevations. Various industrial buildings fill the south half of the block, across the public alley. A small enclosed loading area occupies the property on the west side of the building.

Assembly Plant

Exterior

The main rectangular building faces north and is comprised of two blocks *(Photo 1)*. The original four-story block occupies the eastern two-thirds of the building, while the western third is a two-story block added in 1924. A narrow one-story train shed extends along the south side of the building. The main building stands on a granite foundation and has a flat roof. Red brick and terra cotta details clad the building. Wide bands of windows define the fenestration patterns on each elevation.

Decorative brickwork and limestone define the north and east elevations and continue into the first bay of the west elevation. Brick pilasters rise from the foundation to the parapet between each bay and at each end of the elevations. They have granite bases and limestone caps. A historic decorative metal sconce adorns each pilaster at the first floor *(Photo 6)*. A band of carved limestone extends across the façade above the first and fourth floors. Geometric carved ornament adorns the band at the pilasters. Decorative panels adorn the spandrels above the second and third floors. A rowlock brick course frames each panel, surrounding a secondary frame of turquoise and purple terra cotta tiles. The terra cotta band surrounds a soldier course band that is punctuated by groupings of four purple terra cotta tiles. A straight parapet with a limestone cap rises above the east, north and west elevations. The pilasters continue from below, creating the same number of bays in the parapet. Squares of turquoise and purple terra cotta in geometric patterns pierce the decorative brickwork in each parapet bay.

Two blocks comprise the primary, north elevation *(Photo 1)*. The east block is four stories tall and eleven bays wide. On the first floor, historic wood-frame storefront windows with historic

transoms fill bays 1 and 3 at the east end of this elevation. A non-historic aluminum-framed door with a transom pierces the center of bay 1. Bay 2 contains the main entrance *(Photo 5)*. It has similar historic wood-frame storefront windows flanking each side of the doorway. A pair of non-historic glazed, aluminum framed doors with a transom accesses the building. A historic suspended metal canopy extends across this bay. An aluminum-framed transom fills the bay above the canopy.

Continuing west on the first floor, four historic multi-light metal awning windows fill each opening in bays 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The two center windows have twenty lights. The windows on each end have fifteen lights. In bay 5, a large metal overhead door and metal pedestrian entrance fill the center of the bay. The same fifteen-light fixed metal windows flank each side of the doors, and a multi-light metal transom spans the top of the doors. Bay 10 has a single metal overhead door that extends to the top of the bay. Twenty-light metal windows flank each side of the door. Four fifteen-light metal windows fill the east portion of bay 11. A metal pedestrian entrance with a three-light metal window above pierces the west end.

On the second through fourth floors, four metal windows with the same configuration as the first story windows fill most bays. Bays 1-5 on the second floor each have a band of five replacement windows. The vinyl windows have a tripartite configuration of sashes, with small awning lower sashes, taller fixed center sashes and opaque upper sashes. Another band of replacement windows fills bay 9 on the second floor. The aluminum windows match the color, configuration, and dimensions of the historic windows, with two twenty-light windows in the center and fifteen-light windows on each end. All windows have limestone sills and steel lintels.

The second block is two stories tall and five bays wide. On the first floor, Bay 1 has a single metal overhead door that extends to the top of the bay. Twenty-four-light metal windows flank each side of the door. The remaining bays on this block have three windows each that include twenty-four-light metal windows flanking thirty-light metal windows, all with awning sashes.

The east elevation has ornament and fenestration patterns similar to the north elevation *(Photo 2)*. Brick pilasters divide the elevation into five bays. On the first floor, a large overhead metal door fills the south portion of Bay 1 at the south end of the elevation. A metal pedestrian door, surrounded by a multi-light fixed metal window fills the north portion of the bay. Four twenty-light metal windows fill bays 2 and 3. A smaller brick pilaster divides bay 4 into two sections. The south section has a single entrance and window set into a historic wood frame. A non-historic aluminum-frame glazed door accesses the building. A historic suspended metal canopy with circular details covers the entrance. The three-light transom above the canopy has a metal frame. To the right of the door, is an historic sixteen-light metal window on a non-historic brick knee-wall. A fourteen-light transom extends across the top of this section. A historic wood-frame storefront window and three-light transom fill the north section of the bay. The same configuration of historic storefront window and transom continues in Bay 5.

The second floor has four sixteen-light metal windows in each bay, except the northernmost bay which has tripartite replacement windows similar to the north elevation. The vinyl windows have

a tripartite configuration of sashes, with small lower awning sashes, taller fixed center sashes, and opaque upper sashes. On the third and fourth floors, four twenty-light metal windows with awning sashes fill most bays.

On the west elevation, the third and fourth floors are set back from the exterior wall of the two-story block *(Photo 3)*. Five bays organize the first and second floors. The same façade ornamentation from the north elevation continues on the first and second floors of Bay 1. A band of three historic metal windows fills each bay. The center window has thirty lights. The windows on each end have twenty-four lights. White concrete parging covers the wall on the rest of the façade. Corrugated metal panels cover each bay on the first floor. In Bay 2, a single window pierces the corrugated metal. An overhead metal door pierces the metal panel in Bay 4. A one-story block clad in concrete masonry units extends south from the first floor. It has a single metal door and a large overhead metal door. On the second floor, a band of four twenty-light metal windows fills each bay. Modern metal awnings cover Bays 3-5. A band of brick is visible beneath each of the second floor windows and at the parapet.

Four bays organize the west elevation of the third and fourth floors. A band of four twenty-light metal awning windows fills each bay. A metal shed-roof extends across part of Bay 1 and all of Bay 2. A metal door pierces the south end of Bay 2.

The south elevation is divided into two blocks *(Photo 4)*. The train shed covers the entire first floor. The west block has two floors and four bays. Three historic multi-light metal windows fill each bay on the second floor. The center window has twenty-five lights. The windows on each end have twenty lights. The second block is four floors and has eleven bays. Bands of historic twenty-light metal awning windows fill each bay on the second through fourth floors.

Two penthouses rise above the fourth floor roof. On the east is a small brick structure with a monitor roof in the center and a shed roof on the east side. A single multi-light metal window pierces the north and south elevations. A metal door accesses the north elevation. A separate penthouse to the west is larger and comprised of two blocks. The larger one-story block has a low-pitch gable roof and concrete cladding. Wide bands of historic multi-light metal windows pierce each elevation. A two-story block with a flat roof and brick cladding rises from the southwest corner. Multi-light metal windows pierce the north and south sides of the second floor. A circular metal water tower rises from the center of the roof.

Interior

Most of the historic layout is intact on the interior. Historic office and salesroom space fills the northeast corner of the first and second floors *(Photo 7)*. Wide open manufacturing spaces interrupted only by the regular grid of columns characterize the remainder of the building *(Photos 8 and 9)*.

Three staircases and two freight elevators provide vertical circulation through the building. One half-turn staircase near the northeast corner of the building rises from the first to the fourth floor. From the first to the second floor, the stairwell has drywall partitions. The metal stair has a

historic metal picket railing with decorative metal newel post and a wood cap. From the second to the fourth floor, the stairwell has brick walls with concrete steps and a metal pipe railing. Two separate brick shafts enclose circulation cores that rise from the basement to the rooftop penthouses near the center of the building *(Photo 10)*. The configuration of these shafts is identical. On the east is a concrete half-turn stair with a metal pipe railing. A large freight elevator with a historic cab rises to the west of each stairwell.

Offices and the salesfloor historically occupied the northeast corner of the first floor. Non-historic partitions have divided the space into smaller rooms. Non-historic office space has been created to the south. Both have non-historic vinyl floors with vinyl base molding, drywall partitions, and dropped ceiling grids. Non-historic wood and metal doors in wood frames access most of the rooms. The historic terrazzo floor is extant in portions of the area. The bathroom immediately south of the east staircase has historic terrazzo floor and marble stall partitions.

Historic and non-historic offices fill the northeast corner of the second floor. Historic elements include wood panel doors in wood frames, interior windows in wood frames and wood base molding and chair rail. A large metal vault is also extant. Two historic bathrooms feature original tile walls, terrazzo floors, and marble stall partitions. Non-historic finishes include vinyl tile floors with vinyl base molding, drywall and chipboard partitions, and dropped ceiling grids. Metal and wood doors are set in metal and wood frames.

Large open floors punctuated by rows of columns characterize the remainder of the first and second floors and the entire third and fourth floors. These areas have exposed concrete floors and ceilings. Octagonal concrete columns have splayed capitals. Varying configurations of non-historic partitions divide small portions of each floor.

Secondary restrooms are located at various places on each floor. Those on the first and third floors have concrete floors. The historic terrazzo floors are intact on the fourth floor. Non-historic restrooms have concrete block walls.

Train Shed

Exterior

The train shed parallels the main building and covers most of the south end of the lot between the building and the public alley. The train shed is composed of two canopies with metal trusses. The trusses flank a concrete floor. The historic north canopy has a steel frame supported on concrete corbels that projects from the south façade of the main building. The corbels are cracked and deteriorated. The steel beam resting on the corbels is rusted in several locations. It has a modified bitumen roof. The historic south canopy has an exposed concrete deck laid on regularly spaced steel trusses attached to free-standing steel posts. A non-historic roof covers the space between the trusses creating an enclosed space. The flat roof is clad with corrugated metal panels at the east end and tar and gravel at the west end. It is unclear when the roof was added to the train shed. A historic photo from c. 1939 shows a one-story brick structure attached at the southwest corner of the main building *(Figure 12)*.

A non-historic CMU wall closes the west end of the train shed. A non-historic metal shed enclosing the loading dock attaches to the east end. Five large overhead metal doors access the east side of the dock. Metal panels clad the south elevation and the north elevation where the south canopy stands alone at the west end of the lot. Historic multi-light metal windows pierce the south elevation.

Interior

The interior of the train shed has concrete floors, metal panel walls, and metal or concrete ceilings *(Photo 11)*. The lowered track area at the center of the space has been filled to create a level concrete floor. Non-historic partitions are painted CMU. The floor plan is open between the metal support posts.

Integrity

The Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant retains excellent integrity. The building remains in its historic location in a commercial and industrial setting just outside Oklahoma City's downtown business district. The property retains the exterior features industrial architect Albert Kahn designed to communicate its historic function as a manufacturing facility, including the large expanses of multi-light windows, the formal storefront at the northeast corner, and the rear train shed. The interior has simple, utilitarian finishes and a wide open floor plan designed to accommodate the manufacturing processes housed within. Alterations include the addition of structures to the east and west ends of the train shed to accommodate loading docks for trucks and the replacement of windows frames and glazing. Non-historic partitions were constructed as the space was adapted to new uses. These changes do not compromise the integrity of the building. The Oklahoma City Plant retains feelings about and communicates its associations with the Ford Motor Company, architect Albert Kahn, and the period in which it was constructed as a regional assembly plant.

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
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] 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.)
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1916
1924

Significant Dates
1916
1924

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Kahn, Albert (Architect)
Hodgin Construction Co. (Builder)

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 Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant (Oklahoma City Plant) is locally significant under Criterion C for the area of ARCHITECTURE. Completed in 1916, the building is an excellent example of a manufacturing facility designed specifically for the assembly of automobiles through a process pioneered by the Ford Motor Company (Ford). Famed industrial architect Albert Kahn designed the original building for Ford in 1915 and its expansion in 1924. Ford developed the process of shipping a complete set of parts via rail from its Highland Park Plant in Michigan to regional plants for assembly. This process was designed to be more efficient and economical for Ford and to meet the growing public demand for new vehicles in a timely manner. In an unprecedented expansion, Ford constructed twenty-four regional assembly plants, including the Oklahoma City Plant, between 1910 and 1915. The building retains the character-defining features of an automobile manufacturing facility, including reinforced concrete construction, the long, open floor plan to accommodate the assembly-line process, and large expanses of windows for light and ventilation. The Ford Assembly Plant also retains Kahn's signature design elements, such as the octagonal concrete columns with splayed capitals and the geometric terra cotta ornament on the exterior. The period of significance is 1916 and 1924, the construction completion dates for the four-story building and the two-story addition, respectively.

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

The Oklahoma City Plant retains all of the interior and exterior features that identify it as a regional assembly plant designed by Albert Kahn for the Ford Motor Company. Regional assembly plants were scaled down versions of Ford's Highland Park Plant outside Detroit, though they varied in size and exterior ornament based on the location and regional market. They housed the assembly line for the final stages of production, from the initial assembly of the kits sent from the manufacturing plant, to the final exterior paint. They have reinforced concrete frames, brick exteriors with large window openings and minimal terra cotta and stone ornament, and multiple floors with open floor plans. Utilitarian finishes included concrete floors, painted brick walls, and exposed concrete ceilings. As was common with any industrial property that incorporated both sales and manufacturing, offices and showrooms displayed a higher level of finish, including plaster walls and ceilings and terrazzo floors. The Oklahoma City Plant retains some minimally finished spaced in the northeast corner of the lower floors while the rest of the building has open floors with utilitarian finishes.

The Oklahoma City Plant housed Oklahoma's first Ford assembly plant and the state's earliest major automobile manufacturer.[1] Ford commissioned renowned industrial architect Albert Kahn to design the plant in accordance with the company's program of strategically placed regional assembly plants for the production of the Model T *(Figure 9)*.[2] The Oklahoma City Plant embodies the industrial innovations Kahn developed for Ford and other manufacturing facilities in the early twentieth century, specifically the "all-under-one-roof" structure.[3] Such buildings improved the efficiency of production by reducing the time and distance between processes. The four-story building's reinforced concrete frame provided the uninterrupted floor space necessary for Ford's assembly line process. Rebar laid in an overlapping grid formed a reinforced truss in the floors and at the columns to provide the strength needed to support the heavy machinery and products *(Figure 8)*. Large freight elevators moved the vehicles between floors to complete production. Long expanses of windows provided adequate light and ventilation well into the interior of the building. In keeping with Kahn's industrial aesthetic and philosophy that function rather than ornament was the primary design consideration, the exterior of the Oklahoma City Plant displays minimal decorative ornament. The design focused on the function of the building with ornament a distant secondary priority. Kahn's work epitomized the industrial architecture trends at the beginning of the twentieth century, stressing the importance of form over function.[4] Kahn's signature octagonal columns with splayed capitals provide visual interest while remaining entirely functional.

The property incorporates all of the features designed by Kahn for Ford to maximize the efficiency of automobile production. Ford selected Oklahoma City because it was a freight rate break point, the point on the rail line after which transportation costs increased.[5] The region proved to be a successful market, "one of the Company's most valuable properties" due to its centralized location in relation to the downtown business district.[6] Railroad sidings provided direct access to reliable transportation. Parts delivered from the Highland Park Plant were assembled on site and completed vehicles were loaded and transported to dealerships throughout Oklahoma.

Ford Motor Company

Five years after producing the first Model A in 1903, the Ford Motor Company of Detroit, Michigan introduced the Model T in 1908 and revolutionized the automobile industry, both in product and process. With the goal of providing affordable vehicles to individuals of all income levels in both urban and rural areas across the country, Ford developed the assembly line process to streamline production. Increased efficiency during production generated a greater number of vehicles. These vehicles could then be shipped to dealerships throughout the country. Ford

[1] Dianna Everett, "Automotive Manufacturing," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d. http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/A/AU002.html (accessed March 3, 2014).
[2] "Ford Motor Company Factory Building, Oklahoma City, 1916," Historic Photograph, from the collection of The Henry Ford. A gift from the Ford Motor Company.
[3] Federico Bucci, *Albert Kahn: Architect of Ford* (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), 37.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Allan Nevins, *Ford: The Times, The Man, The Company*, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 651.
[6] "History of Oklahoma City Branch," Reported March 6, 1941, *The Benson Ford Research Center*, Dearborn, MI.

quickly realized that completed automobiles occupied a great deal of cargo space. The company recognized that transporting parts in pre-packaged "kits" to designated sites where the kits could be assembled and distributed regionally was a more efficient and economical use of freight cars.[7] In evaluating appropriate sites for these new regional assembly plants, Ford selected major cities at rate break points to minimize shipping costs.[8] These were cities where Ford already had an established network of dealerships and a sustainable market. Parts were centrally manufactured at the Highland Park plant and shipped via rail directly to these scattered assembly plants. Workers would complete production and distribute the completed vehicles at a much lower cost to dealerships throughout the region. Ford was the first automobile company to generate sufficient demand to make such regional assembly plants economical.[9] Within the five years after first implementing the assembly plant process, Ford constructed twenty-four regional assembly plants in strategic locations, including Omaha, Nebraska and Oklahoma City.[10]

Ford established a relationship with Detroit architect Albert Kahn early in the company's history. After gaining notoriety for designing manufacturing facilities for automotive companies such as Packard in Detroit and the George N. Pierce Company[11] in Buffalo, Kahn collaborated with Ford on the design of a building to house its newly developed assembly line process. Kahn modified the existing mill building typology, adapting it for the new scale that automobile production required. Kahn's understanding and implementation of reinforced concrete technology appealed to Ford and provided a solution to the problem of needing large expanses of open space. Albert Kahn's brother, civil engineer Julius Kahn, assisted with the development of reinforced concrete, which enabled Kahn to pioneer the use of industrial metal windows.[12] Improvements in structural methods accommodated larger openings in the walls. Large expanses of metal windows, often with operable pivot sashes, improved ventilation and illumination of the spaces within. Kahn designed long, linear buildings with multiple floors. Wide rows of concrete columns supported the concrete floors embedded with steel reinforcing bars. The Oklahoma City Plant is an excellent illustration of these functional features.

Property History

The Ford Motor Company opened a small sales office in downtown Oklahoma City in 1912. Business was brisk and growing. Ford moved to a larger building a block away the following year. The second building housed a parts department and garage for assembly as well as the sales office.[13] This increase in business occurred during Ford's period of national expansion. The

[7] Nevins, 407.
[8] George C. Nimmons, "Modern Industrial Plants: Part II," *Architectural Record* 34 (July-December, 1918): 532-549.
[9] Nevins, 501.
[10] John C. Wood and Michael C. Wood, *Henry Ford: Critical Evaluations in Business and Management* (London: Rutledge Publisher, 2003), 181. The Omaha Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 29, 2004.
[11] George N. Pierce was the maker of the Pierce-Arrow. The Pierce-Arrow Factory Complex (Historic District) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.
[12] "Albert Kahn," *Michigan Modern: Design that Shaped America*, Designers, n.d. http://michiganmodern.org/designers/albert-kahn (accessed March 3, 2014).
[13] "History of Oklahoma City Branch." Neither of these buildings is extant.

Hodgin Construction Company from St. Paul, Minnesota began building the Oklahoma City Plant in the fall of 1915. The four-story building was 400 feet long by 125 feet wide, had 186,000 square feet of floor space, and cost an estimated $500,000. [14]

The Oklahoma City Plant occupies the north half of a block on the south side of Main Street in an industrial area just west of downtown Oklahoma City. According to the 1922 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, a lumber yard occupied the south half of the block. Modest one-story dwellings were scattered between larger manufacturing concerns, including a steam laundry facility, a bottling works, and a farm implement warehouse. The Oklahoma City Mill & Elevator Company occupied a large swath of land between the main rail lines running through the city just one block north of the Oklahoma City Plant. Both the St. Louis & San Francisco Railway and the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway ran nearby.[15]

Although the Oklahoma City Plant began producing Model Ts in April, 1916, Ford celebrated the formal opening four months later on August 11th. At its peak, production by the plant's 1,400 employees reached 200 units per day.

After sixteen years, Ford converted the building to a parts distribution center. Company-wide changes in vehicle models reorganized elements of the regional plant structure.[16] While production ceased at the Oklahoma City Plant on November 17, 1932, Ford continued to operate the building as a parts and sales branch. Designated at the time as one of the country's three "slow-moving parts branches," the Oklahoma City Plant served the entire Midwest. Approximately 115 employees continued to work at the facility and supervised over 200 dealerships in the region.[17] The Oklahoma City Plant operated as a regional parts and sales branch for Ford from 1932 to 1967.

Fred Jones

At twenty-four years old, Fred Jones moved to Oklahoma City from Georgia in 1916 and got a job at the newly opened Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant. He quickly learned the automotive business and became one of the region's leaders in automotive sales, service, and parts production. Jones established a Ford dealership in 1922 and began reconditioning parts for his service department in 1938, creating the Fred Jones Manufacturing Company. He continued to grow his enterprises throughout the twentieth century, and eventually purchased the former Ford Assembly Plant in 1968.[18] The Fred Jones Manufacturing Company operated the building as a parts and distribution center until 2013. During that time they made minor modifications to the building, adapting the facilities for truck rather than rail transport.

---

[14] Ibid.
[15] Fire Insurance Map of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Vol. 1, Sheet 34, 1922, Sanborn Map Company of New York. http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ok/7202/dateid-000007.htm?CCSI=45n (accessed March 3, 2014).
[16] "History of Oklahoma City Branch."
[17] Ibid. The branch history does not state the year in which the plant reached peak production.
[18] Tally D. Fugate, "Fred Jones Manufacturing Company," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d. http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/f/fr009.html (accessed March 3, 2014).

Architect: Albert Kahn

Albert Kahn was born in Germany in 1869 and immigrated to Detroit in 1880. He immediately started working as an office boy at an architecture firm that designed facilities for the carriage industry, providing a solid foundation for Kahn's future work in the automobile industry. In 1903, Albert Kahn collaborated with his brother, civil engineer Julius Kahn, to implement a system to reinforce concrete, called the Kahn Bar System. Kahn's first major industrial commissions utilizing reinforced concrete technology and establishing the architectural vocabulary of manufacturing facilities were the Packard Automotive Plant in Detroit and the George N. Pierce Plant (Pierce-Arrow) in Buffalo, New York. These facilities attracted the attention of Henry Ford, beginning a professional relationship that lasted until Kahn's death in December, 1942.[19]

Nearly half of the roughly 2,000 buildings that Albert Kahn designed were for the Ford family or the Ford Motor Company. Many of Kahn's works are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and several are designated as National Historic Landmarks, illustrating how influential Kahn was to industrial development as well as to the field of architecture. Kahn designed Ford's seminal Highland Park (1909) and River Rouge (1917-1928) plants, the regional assembly plants, the company's New York headquarters, and the private residence of Edsel and Eleanor Ford.[20] His portfolio includes industrial facilities and refined office towers for other companies as well, including the Fisher Building and the General Motors Building, both in Detroit.[21]

Conclusion

The Oklahoma City Plant is an excellent example of a regional assembly plant designed for the Ford Motor Company. The building retains excellent integrity of the character-defining features historically designed to expedite the assembly process of Ford automobiles, specifically the Model T. Important physical characteristics include linear massing, a reinforced concrete frame, open floor plans with a wide grid of octagonal columns, and minimal exterior ornament. Historic proximity to the city's rail lines and commercial business district along with its location and ability to serve a regional market were key factors in Ford's decision to construct the plant in Oklahoma City. Regional assembly plants were an integral part of Ford's production process and the business model that enabled nation-wide distribution in an efficient and economical manner. The Oklahoma City Plant continues to communicate associations with its historic function, the Ford Motor Company, and Albert Kahn.

[19] "Albert Kahn."

[20] The Highland Park Plant was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on February 6, 1973 and designated a National Historic Landmark on June 2, 1978. The River Rouge Plant was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark on June 2, 1978. The Edsel and Eleanor Ford House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

[21] The Fisher Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 14, 1980 and designated a National Historic Landmark on June 29, 1989. The General Motors Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark on June 2, 1978.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

"Albert Kahn." *Michigan Modern: Design that Shaped America*. Designers, n.d. http://michiganmodern.org/designers/albert-kahn. Accessed March 3, 2014.

Bucci, Federico. *Albert Kahn: Architect of Ford.* New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991.

Everett, Dianna. "Automotive Manufacturing," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d. http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/A/AU002.html. Accessed March 3, 2014.

Fire Insurance Map of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Vol. 1. Sanborn Map Company of New York, 1922. http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ok/7202/dateid-000007.htm?CCSI=45n. Accessed March 3, 2014.

"Ford Motor Company Factory Building, Oklahoma City, 1916," Historic Photograph, from the collection of The Henry Ford. A gift from the Ford Motor Company.

Fugate, Tally D. "Fred Jones Manufacturing Company." *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*. Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d. http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/f/fr009.html. Accessed March 3, 2014.

"History of Oklahoma City Branch." Reported March 6, 1941. *The Benson Ford Research Center*, Dearborn, MI.

Nevins, Allan. *Ford: The Times, The Man, The Company*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954.

Nimmons, George C. "Modern Industrial Plants: Part II," *Architectural Record* 34 (July-December, 1918): 532-549.

Wood, John C. and Michael C. Wood. *Henry Ford: Critical Evaluations in Business and Management*. London: Rutledge Publisher, 2003.

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:

__X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
__X__ Other
Name of repository: _Benson Ford Research Center, Dearborn, Michigan_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _N/A_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____1.94_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 35.467449 Longitude: -97.528099

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The building occupies the north half of the lot bound by W. Main Street on the north, Fred Jones Road on the east, W. Grand Avenue on the south, and N. Classen Boulevard on the west. A public alley runs between the north and south halves of the block. The property occupies Lots 1-17 of Block 19 in the Main Street Addition.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundary for the nominated property includes the parcel of land historically associated with the resource.

---

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Elizabeth Rosin, Principal and Rachel Nugent, Associate
organization: Rosin Preservation, LLC
street & number: 215 W. 18th Street
city or town: Kansas City state: MO zip code: 64108
e-mail rachel@rosinpreservation.com
telephone: 816-472-4950
date: March 28, 2014

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.)

Figure Log:

Figure 1. Context map
Figure 2. Site map
Figure 3. Exterior and First floor plan and photo map
Figure 4. Second floor plan and photo map
Figure 5. Third floor plan and photo map
Figure 6. Fourth floor plan and photo map
Figure 7. Roof plan
Figure 8. Historic plans. Rebar drawing, 1915. From the Collections of The Henry Ford, Oklahoma City Branch vertical file. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.
Figure 9. Historic photograph, north elevation, c. 1916. From the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.
Figure 10. Model T Cars on Assembly Line, Ford Motor Company Plant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, c. 1916. From the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.
Figure 11. Historic photograph, west and south elevations and train shed, 1925. From the Collections of The Henry Ford, Oklahoma City Branch vertical file. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.
Figure 12. Historic Photograph, north and east elevations, c. 1939. From the Collections of The Henry Ford, Oklahoma City Branch vertical file. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.
Figure 13. Historic Photograph, north elevation, view southeast, c. 1939. From the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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: Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant

City or Vicinity: Oklahoma City

County: Oklahoma County State: Oklahoma

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date Photographed: December, 2013

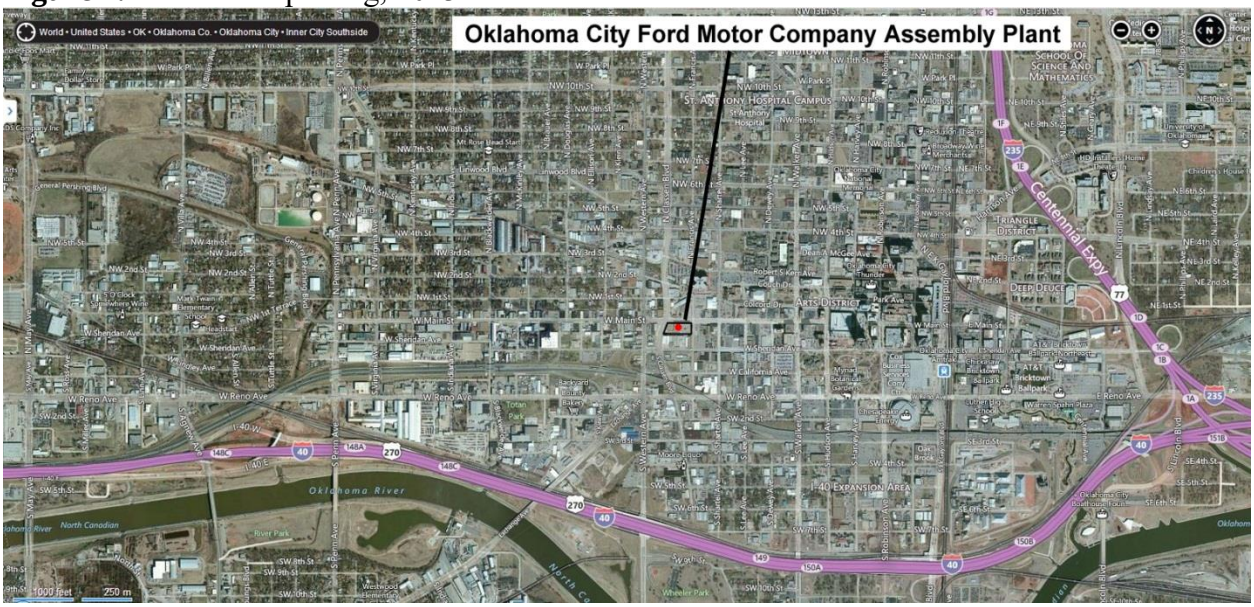
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 13. North elevation, view southwest
2 of 13. East elevation, view west
3 of 13. West elevation, view northeast
4 of 13. South elevation, view north
5 of 13. Primary building entrance, north elevation, view south
6 of 13. Historic exterior light fixture, north elevation, typical
7 of 13. Interior, former showroom, 1st floor, view northeast
8 of 13. Typical manufacturing area, 2nd floor, view northeast
9 of 13. Typical manufacturing area, 2nd floor, view southeast
10 of 13. Typical circulation core, 3rd floor, view south
11 of 13. Train shed, view northeast
12 of 13. Context, W. Main Street, view east
13 of 13. Context, view southwest from 4th floor roof

Figure 1. Site Map. Bing, 2013

Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant
900 W. Main Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
WGS datum 1984
35.467449, -97.528099

Figure 2. Context Map. Bing, 2013



Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant
900 W. Main Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
WGS datum 1984
35.467449, -97.528099

Figure 3. Exterior and 1st Floor plan and photo map

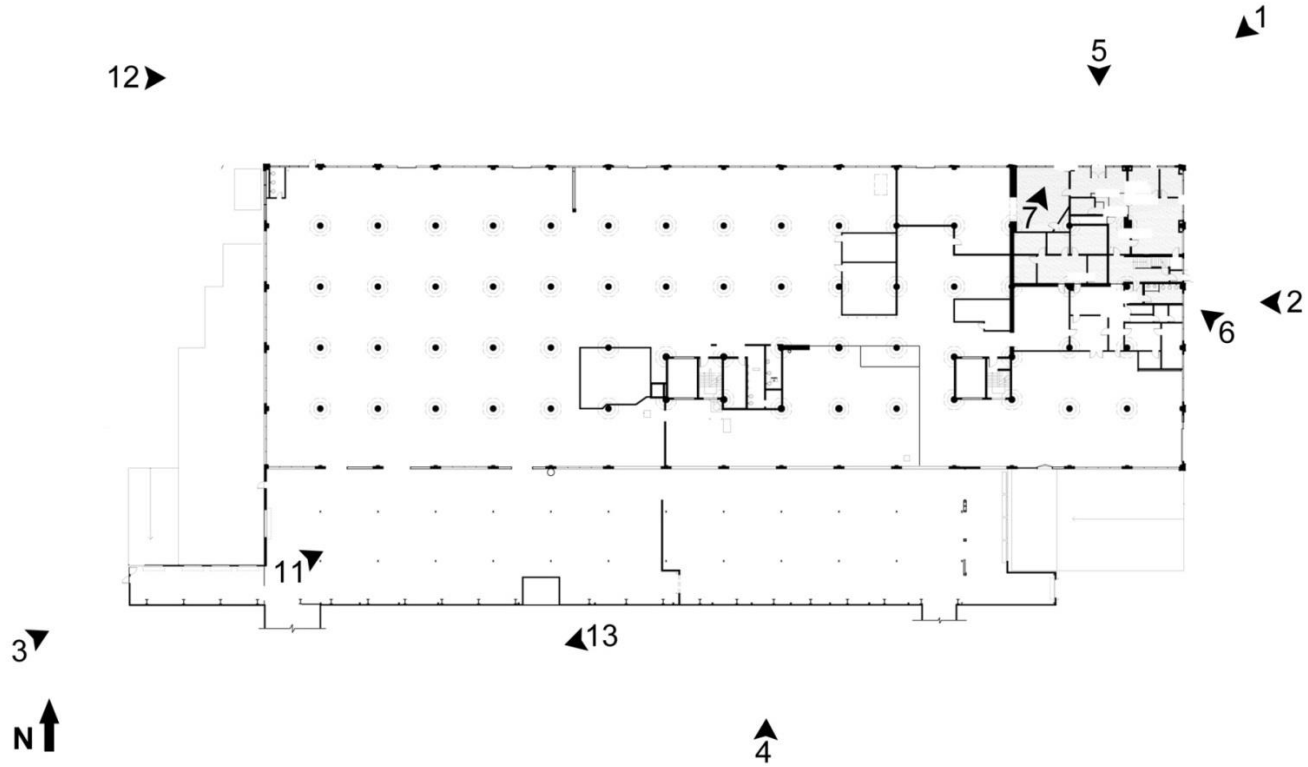


Figure 4. 2nd Floor plan and photo map

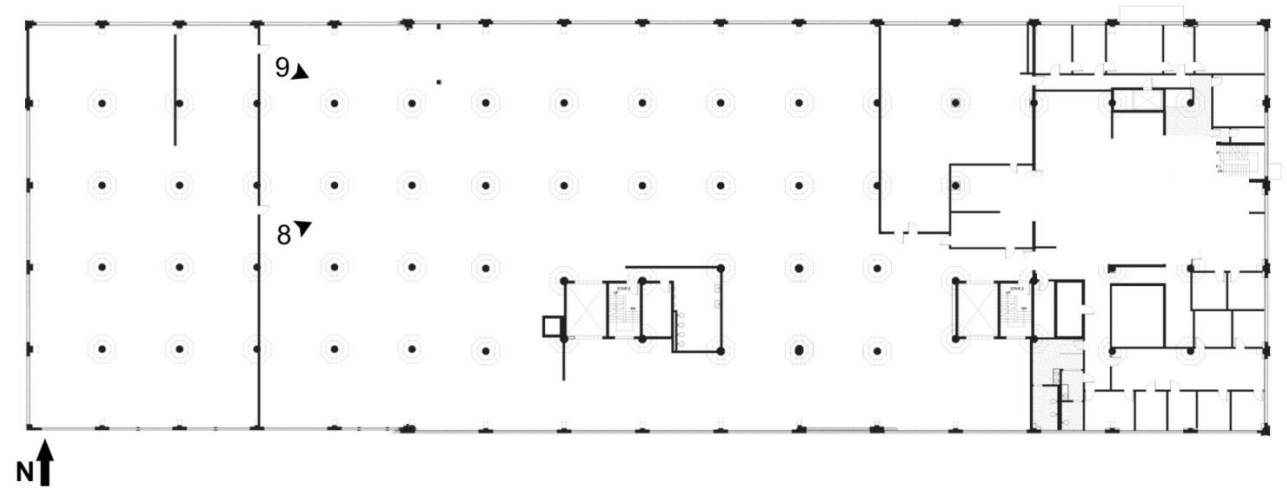


Figure 5. 3rd Floor plan and photo map

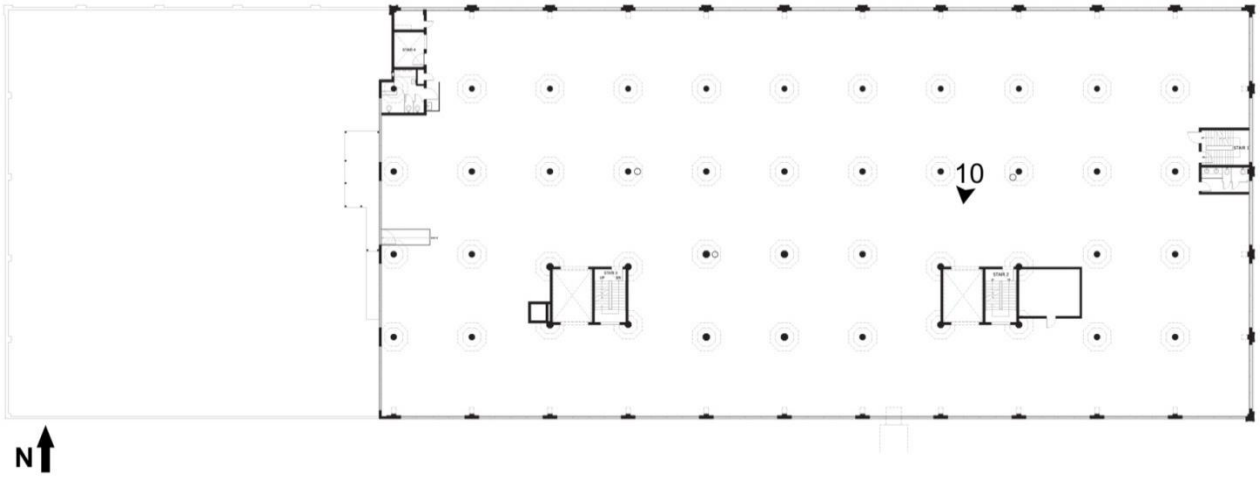


Figure 6. 4th Floor plan

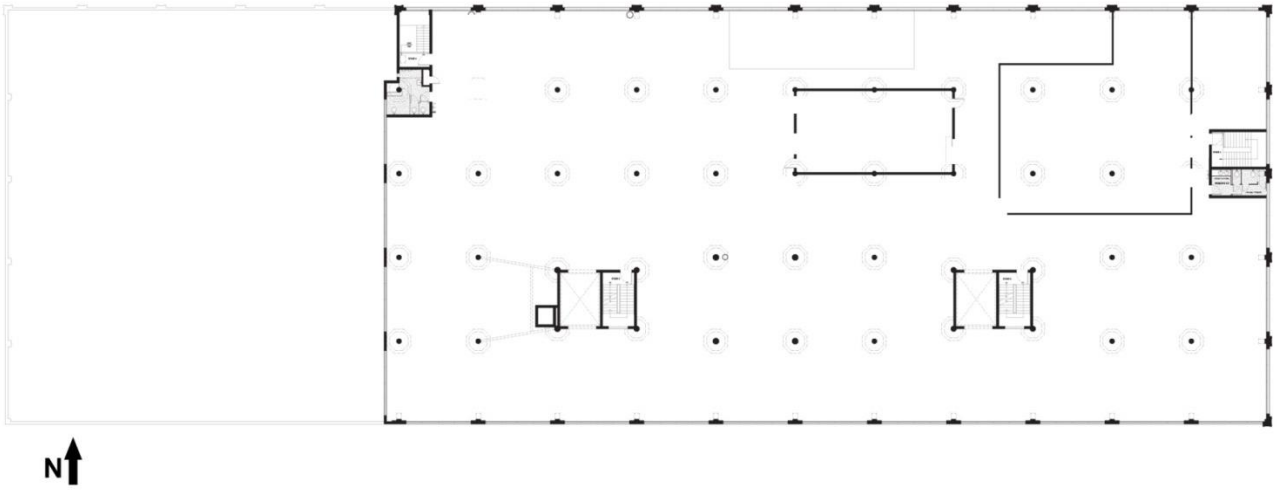


Figure 7. Roof plan

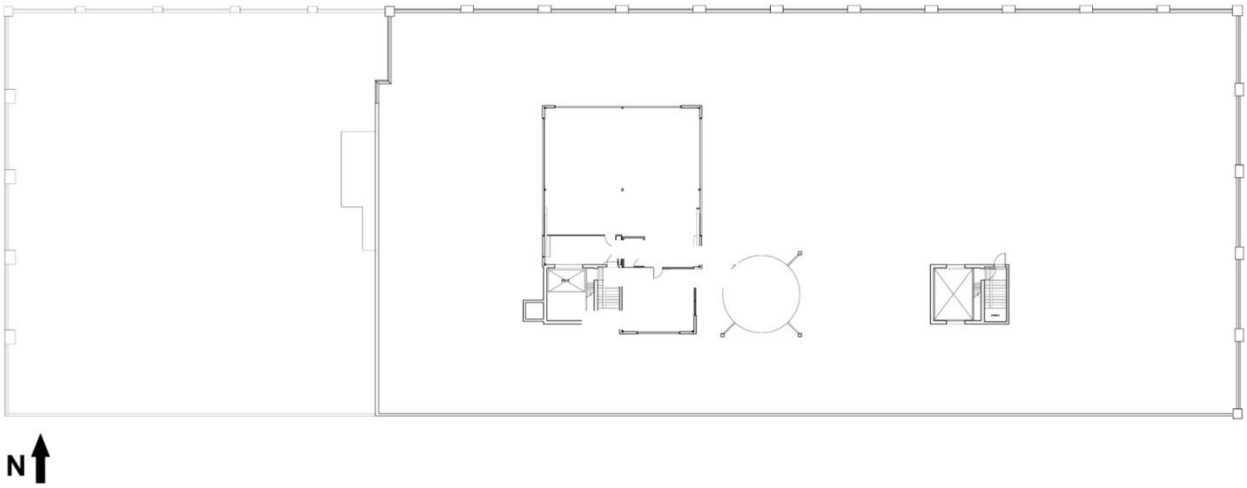


Figure 8. Historic plans. Rebar drawings, 1915. From the Collections of The Henry Ford, Oklahoma City Branch vertical file. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

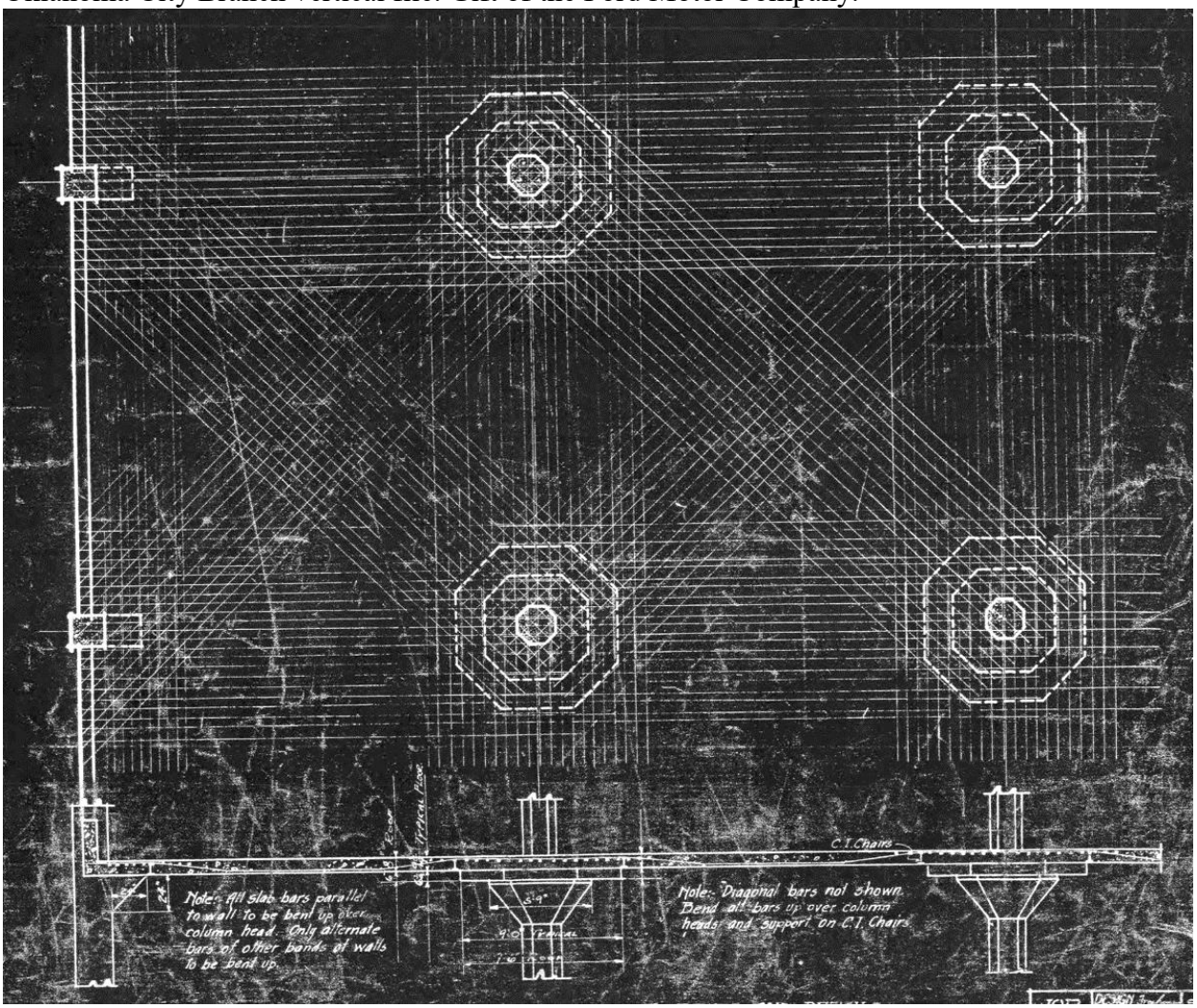


Figure 9. Historic Photo, north elevation, c. 1916. From the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

Figure 10. Model T Cars on Assembly Line, Ford Motor Company Plant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, c. 1916. From the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

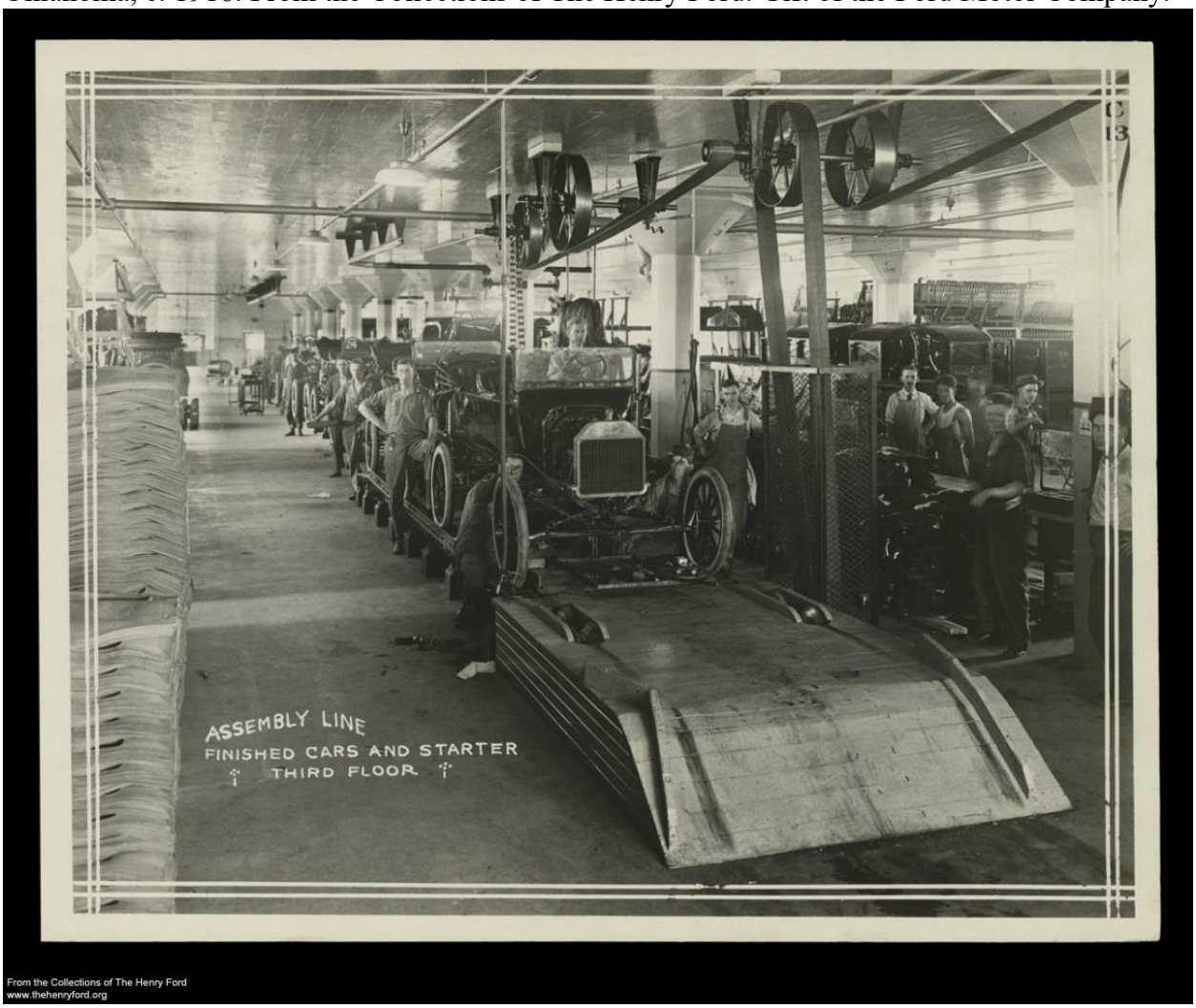


Figure 11. Historic photograph, west and south elevations and train shed, 1925. From the Collections of The Henry Ford, Oklahoma City Branch vertical file. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

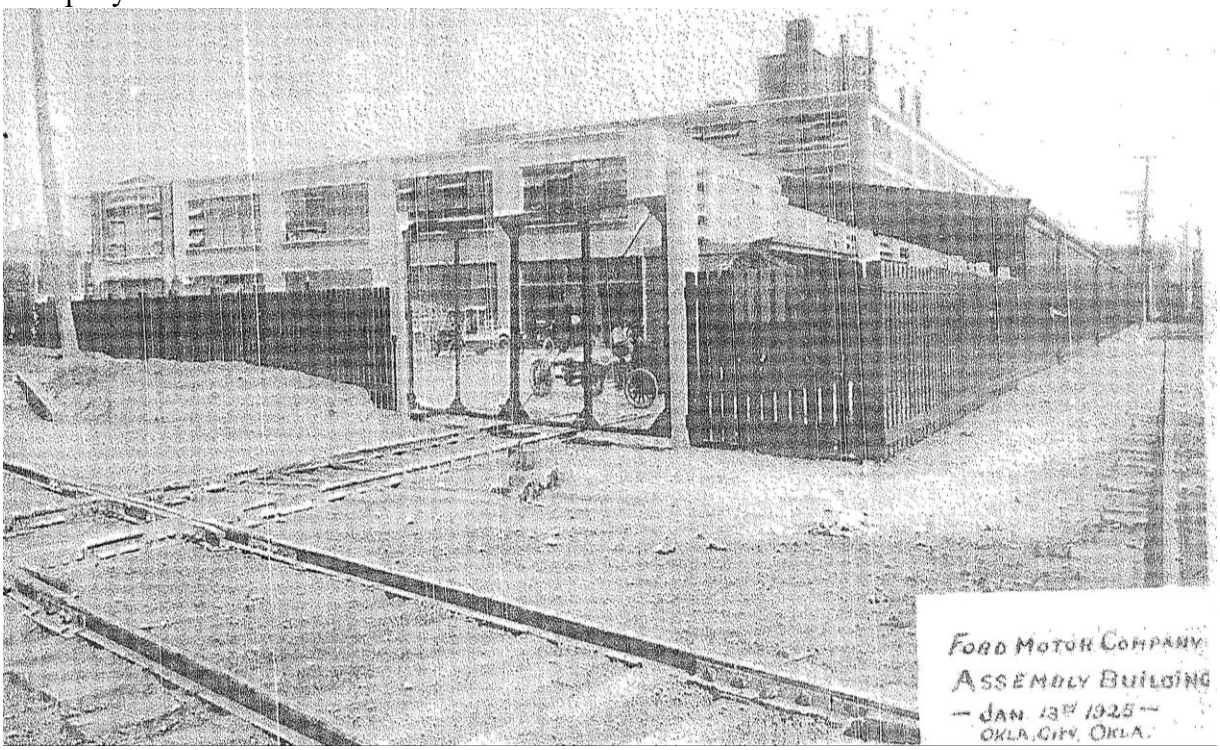


Figure 12. Historic Photograph, north and east elevations, c. 1939. From the Collections of The Henry Ford, Oklahoma City Branch vertical file. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

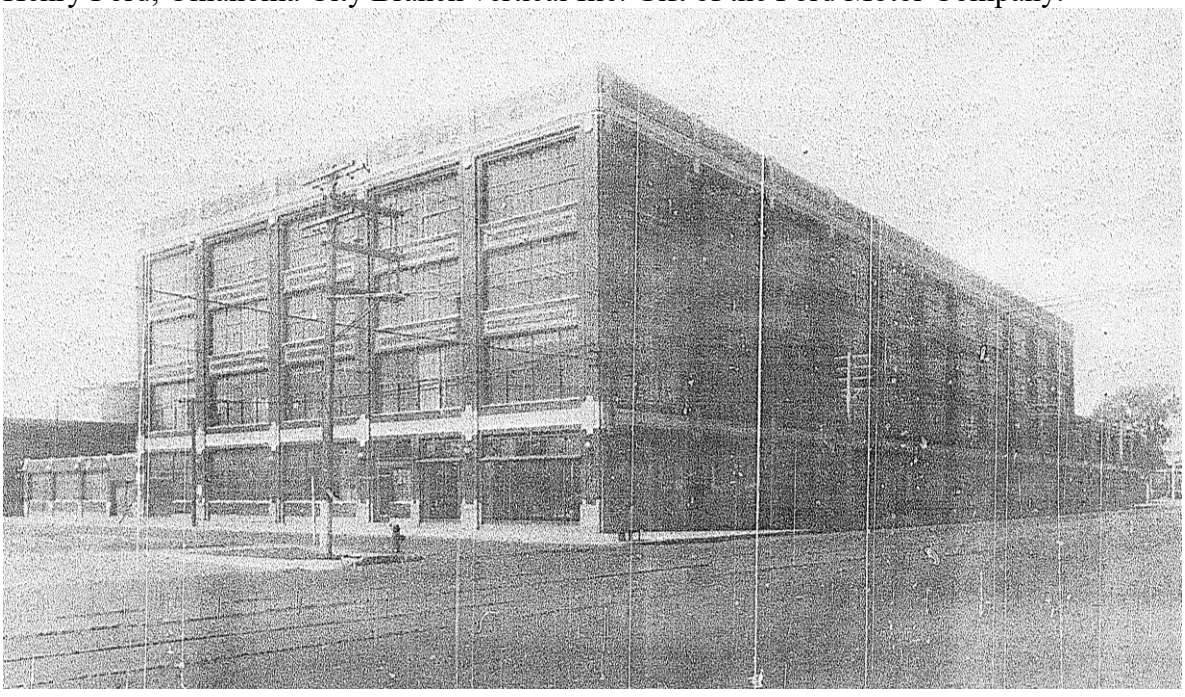


Figure 13. Historic Photograph, north elevation, view southeast, c. 1939. From the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of the Ford Motor Company.

Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant
900 W. Main Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

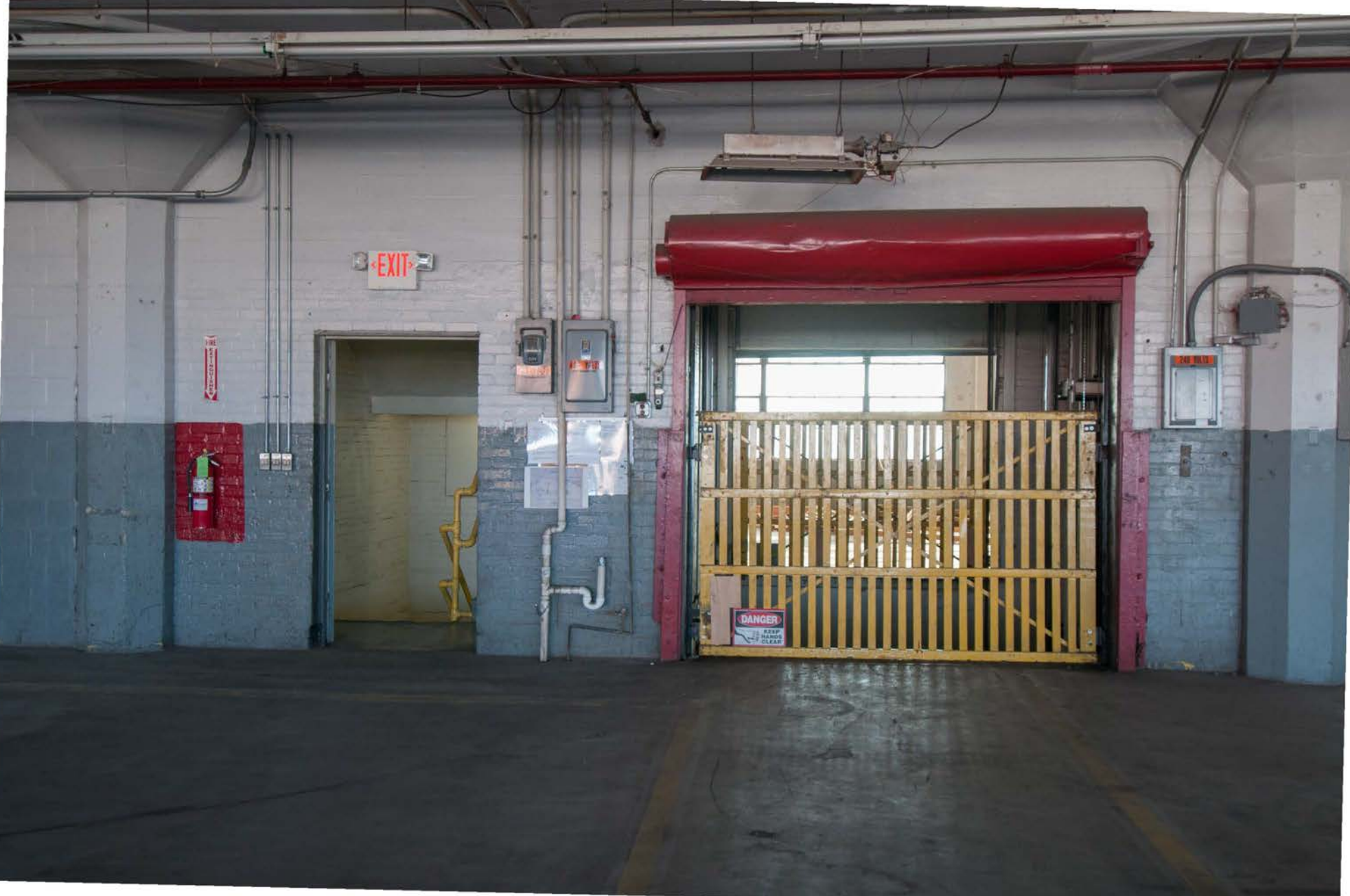
0 0.02 0.04 0.08 0.12 0.16
Miles

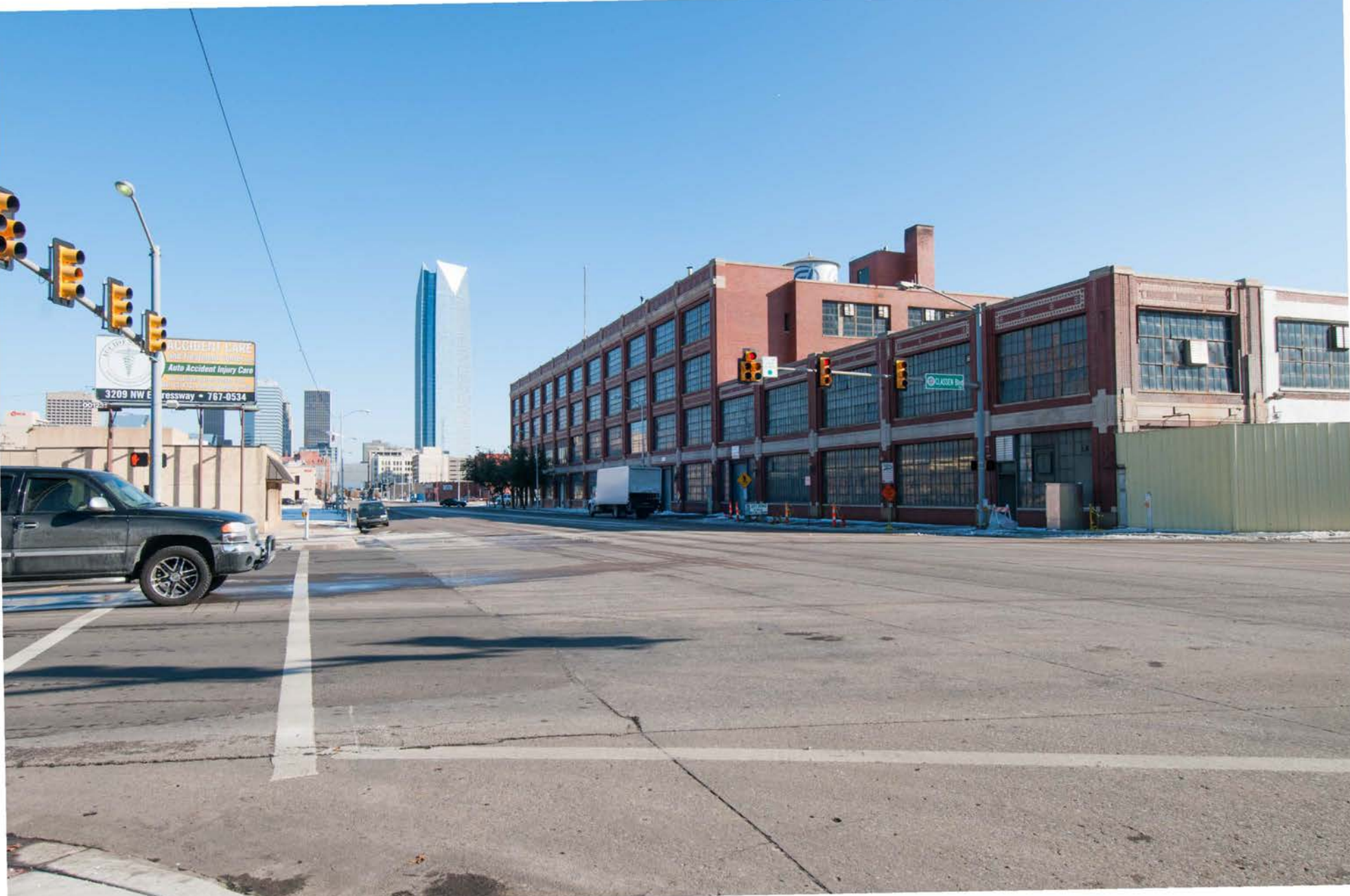

STOP


H
HOSPITAL


Mfg. Co.
909 W MAIN


EXIT


EXIT
DANGER
KEEP HANDS CLEAR


Auto Accident Injury Care
3209 NW E
767-0534


GLASS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OKLAHOMA, Oklahoma

DATE RECEIVED: 7/25/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/22/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/08/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/10/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000595

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant is locally significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Completed between 1916 and 1924, the building was one of 24 regional assembly plants built in the United States by the Ford Motor Company during the early twentieth century. Designed by famed industrial architect Albert Kahn to meet the company's regionalized manufacturing process, the assembly plant took sets of complete car parts sent from the company's main Michigan manufacturing plant and completed final auto assembly procedures to meet local/regional needs and demands. The handsome brick and reinforced concrete building features characteristic forms of early twentieth century industrial design, with large expansive multi-light steel windows, concrete structural systems, and an open plan. Kahn's signature design flourishes of octagonal interior columns and geometric terra-cotta exterior ornamentation enriched the utilitarian design.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criterion C

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 9/10/2014

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.

Oklahoma Historical Society *Founded May 27, 1893*
State Historic Preservation Office
Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm

July 22, 2014

Ms. Carol Shull
Acting Keeper of the Register
National Park Service 2280, 8th floor
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

We are pleased to transmit six National Register of Historic Places nominations for Oklahoma properties. The nominations are for the following properties:

Waynoka Telephone Exchange Building, 200 South Main, Waynoka, Woods County
Meloy House, 131 West Carson Drive, Mustang, Canadian County
Oklahoma City Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant, 900 West Main Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County
Kelley Club, 2300 North Kelley Avenue, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County
Long Branch Creek Bridge, Stillwater Vicinity, Payne County
Depew Route 66 Segment, Depew Vicinity, Creek County

All members of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (state review board) were present for the public meeting at which each of these nominations was considered and the recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer was formulated. Therefore, the member possessing the requisite professional qualifications for evaluation of each nominated property participated in the recommendation's formulation.

We look forward to the results of your review. If there may be any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Lynda S. Ozan of my staff or myself.

Sincerely,

Melvena Heisch
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

MKH:lso
Enclosures