

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1791

1. Name of Property

THE OHIO OIL COMPANY BUILDING
historic name: The Ohio Oil Company Building
other names/site number: Marathon Oil Company Building

2. Location

street & number: 159 North Wolcott Street not for publication: N/A
city or town: Casper vicinity: N/A
state: Wyoming code: 56 county: Natrona code: 025 zip code: 82601

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Richard B. Hunt
Signature of certifying official

June 12, 2001
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____
Edson H. Beall 7-25-01
Signature of Keeper Date of Action
for

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade

Sub: business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade

Sub: business, professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Modern Movement

Sub: Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete

roof : Concrete, tar & gravel

walls: Brick, concrete, stone (limestone, granite)

other: _____

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

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.
- 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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Commerce
Industry

Period of Significance: 1949-1951

Significant Dates: 1949; 1956

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) _____

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: A.G. Hall of Wilbur Watson Associates, Cleveland, Ohio (architects)
Rognstad-Olsen Construction Co., Casper, Wyoming (builders, 1949 component)
Riedesel-Lowe Company, Cheyenne, Wyoming (builders, 1956 component)

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 1/2 acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>0391910</u>	<u>4744900</u>

See continuation sheet.

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

Lots 1, 2, and 3, Block 11, Casper Addition, City of Casper

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert G. Rosenberg, Historian
organization: Rosenberg Historical Consultants date: 4/01/2001
street & number: 739 Crow Creek Road telephone: (307)-632-1144
city or town: Cheyenne state: WY zip code: 82009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Robert Ide, Ide-Ohio, LLC
street & number: P.O. Box 1595
city or town: Casper
state: WY zip code: 82602
telephone: (307)235-2500

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**THE OHIO OIL COMPANY BUILDING
NATRONA COUNTY, WYOMING**

7. Description

The Ohio Oil Company Building is located at 159 North Wolcott Street on the north side of downtown Casper, Wyoming. It is a four-story, light tan brick commercial building with a flat roof, built in a general U-shaped configuration. Its most distinctive feature is its regularly spaced rows of brick pilasters that extend in an uninterrupted line from the wide granite skirting to the capped parapet, creating an impression of verticality that is characteristic of the Art Deco architectural style. The building occupies a corner lot, and the facade or west side fronts on Wolcott Street. The north side fronts on East A Street. The west and north are the two finished sides of the building. The south and east sides are unadorned plain brick walls. The building was designed by A.G. Hall of Wilbur Watson Associates, Cleveland, Ohio. Construction began on the north half of the building, an L-shaped component, in March 1948 and was completed in November 1949. It was constructed by Rognstad-Olsen Construction Company of Casper. An almost identical T-shaped south half was added in 1955-1956 to complete the current basic U-shape. The 1956 expansion was anticipated in the original architectural design, and Wilbur Watson Associates were the architects for the expansion as well as for the original component. It was constructed by Riedesel-Lowe Company, Cheyenne, Wyoming. The building was designed and constructed to house the Casper regional office for the Ohio Oil Company.

The overall dimensions of the building are 178' N-S x 141' E-W. The building is basically U-shaped and consists of two joined components. There is an open recessed area on the east side between the north and south wings to provide natural light to the interior offices. The recessed area and the area directly east of the building are used for parking. The brick walls are laid with five rows of stretchers between an alternating row of headers and stretchers, or Flemish bond. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation with a full basement and has a reinforced concrete frame with face brick. It has a flat roof with a concrete deck covered with built-up tar and gravel. The roof was built of concrete to allow for two additional stories if needed, but there has been no vertical expansion. Rectangular flat-roofed penthouses extend above the roof level for the elevator and air shafts. Interior floors are also concrete slabs.

The facade or west side of the building is divided into ten major sections that are delineated by uninterrupted brick pilasters that extend the full height of the building. Each section has a recessed area between the pilasters with a pair of windows on each of the four floors. The windows are five-light casement units with steel frames, with an outward projecting top vent and an inward opening hopper bottom vent. The windows in each pair are separated by a narrower vertical brick pilaster that extends only from the bottom of the second story windows to the top of the building. The second story windows have a continuous Indiana limestone sill between the main pilasters that has dentil-like projections along its lower surface. This band-like sill across the north and west sides creates a subtle separation between the first and second stories. Directly

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below the second-story window sill is a plain geometric limestone block design centered above and between each two first-story windows. The area between the second and third-story windows in each section is filled with Indiana limestone accent panels. The above described pattern is repeated in each of the ten segments across the facade. The only variation consists of the two main entrances located three sections in from each building corner on the facade. Each entrance is trimmed in Diamond Pink Granite, a trade name for the mottled black, gray and rose-colored stone. The overall charcoal gray color contrasts with the lighter colored tan brick walls. The granite trim extends from the sidewalk to the sills of the second-story windows. The granite-trimmed entries are surmounted with a projecting granite band of the same color that repeats the dentil-like design of the second-story window sills. The entries are slightly recessed with stainless steel framed twin-leaf glass doors and transom. The two entrances in the facade are almost identical, except that "The Ohio Oil Company" is incised in capital letters in the granite above the north entrance, and there is an incised vertical decorative band with four evenly spaced light colored blocks accenting the trim on either side of this entry.

There is a wide limestone band or skirting along the base of the north and west sides that is about four feet high. It occupies the space between the sidewalk and the sill of the first-story windows. This band consists of large rectangular panels surmounted by a narrow band of stone that forms the sills for the first-story windows. The major and minor brick pilasters are capped with limestone. There is no unifying straight line along the top of the parapet, the result being an interesting and intricate pattern of major and minor vertical brick pilasters with recessed limestone decorative panels filling in all intervening areas. This characteristic adds to the overall vertical design and feeling of the building, so that it appears taller than its four stories. There is no visible indication that the facade or west side of the building was constructed during two building phases; the division is marked by only a barely visible expansion joint. This uniformity of the facade illustrates one of the strengths of the original design, which was the flexibility to allow for expansion and modification, both on the interior and exterior.

The south side of the building is plain and unadorned and is paralleled by a driveway associated with a modern drive-up banking facility, which is located directly south of the alley and has an associated parking lot to the east. The south side of the building consists of the south end of the facade and a wing that extends eastward. This portion of the building dates from 1955-1956. The most westerly component is 50' E-W x 20'5" N-S. It is four stories high and roughly matches the facade in terms of window placement. However, there are no first-story windows and no doors on its south side, because it originally abutted a one-story brick masonry auto dealership that has been razed. The second through fourth stories each have five windows set in a two-one-two east-west grouping, and the window in each story aligns vertically with those above and below. The windows have limestone sills and consist of five-light casement units with steel

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frames. This building component extends south beyond the east wing. There are two rows of windows on the east side of this component, and they extend from the first through the fourth floors. The window units are the same five-light casement windows as on the south side.

The four-story east wing (88'6" E-W x 47'8" N-S) continues the window pattern of vertically aligned bays with windows on each of the four floors. Windows are five-light casement units with steel sash. There are no door openings. The east side of the wing is also the rear of the building. The first floor has a recessed entrance with two-light twin-leaf metal doors that open into the main hallway in this wing. There is a two-light metal pedestrian door in the same vertical alignment on the fourth floor. It is likely that this door once led to an outside fire escape, but such a structure is no longer in place. Therefore, the door appears to open into space. Because of an internal stairway in the southeast corner of this wing, there is one vertical row of windows missing in the logical fenestration pattern. There is a set of four-light casement windows that illuminate the landings of the stairwells. In addition, the second row of windows in from the southeast building corner are slightly shorter than the other windows. They are located at the east end of the main hallway in this wing. The remaining windows appear to be original five-light casement windows with steel frames. The north side of the south wing continues a basic window pattern with rows of windows on each floor that are vertically aligned from top to bottom. Most are five-light casement windows, but there is a vertical row of side by side four-light windows where the men's restrooms are located on each floor. There are also two double five-light casement windows located in the last two window bays to the west on the second floor.

The east side of the recessed portion of the building between the north and south wings consists of regular rows of vertically aligned five-light casement windows with steel sash. The only variation in this pattern is the first row of windows from the south that are double five-light units on each floor. The window pattern is interrupted by a protruding rectangular brick structure that extends from the street level through the fourth floor. It appears to be a vent for the boiler rooms in the basement.

The north side of the building fronts East A Street and is identical to the facade or west side, except there are no entrances. It was part of the original 1948-1949 construction. Because of its narrower dimensions, it is confined to eight major sections rather than ten. The window pattern on the south side of the north wing is similar to the north side of the south addition. However, the location of the restrooms on each floor shifts to the west, and therefore there are two vertical rows of shorter four-light casement windows at the west end. There is also one window bay on the fourth floor that has been filled in or covered. This reflects the original location of the law library whose interior walls were covered with book shelves. Most of the windows in the south side of the north wing are five-light casement units except for shorter three-light bathroom windows. The east end of the north wing is nearly identical to the east end of the south wing but

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has a window instead of a pedestrian entrance on the fourth floor. The exterior of the building retains excellent physical integrity and has undergone no major modifications. All of the original windows and doors have been retained. In addition, the original granite curbing is still in place along the street on the north and west sides.

The interior of the building contains a full basement that is divided into a number of individual rooms by means of brick, clay tile and wire mesh partitions. The majority of the interior walls are finished with drywall, and most of the rooms have suspended tile ceilings. The basement houses an air conditioning room in each wing, a janitor's room and storage rooms in the north wing and an office supply room and building maintenance office in the south wing. The main or west portion of the building has a boiler room, a telephone equipment room, and three large record storage rooms.

The most interesting feature of the interior consists of movable metal partitions that were used to divide office space. These partitions were built of standard sizes and were metal on both sides and filled with rock wool insulation. They could be moved from one room to another and re-assembled as needed. Each partition had a raceway built into its bases for wiring. The partitions had cornices and posts, forming the junctions of standard units. The original metal partitions have been retained throughout most of the building; they have been sanded and repainted. The third and fourth floors retain the original ceilings, which consist of metal perforated acoustical tile set in a steel framing system suspended from the underside of the concrete slab above. Fluorescent lights are suspended from the ceiling; the original double tubes have been replaced with a single more energy-efficient tube but the grillwork over the lights remains. The original ceilings on the first and second floors have been replaced with grid ceilings using standard two-by-four acoustic tiles and fluorescent recessed lensed troffer lights.

The first floor consists of a vestibule, main lobby, a reception room, and tenant space for individual offices. The original conference room on the southwest corner of the first floor has been divided into tenant space but also retains a smaller conference room. There are stairwells located at the east end of both the north and south wings and at the inside corners of the recessed area. There are restrooms in the north and south wings. The elevators are located next to the inside stairwells. The vestibule has glass doors, marble walls of Montana Rose Tan travertine, Tennessee Imperial Black base, Tennessee Pink marble floor with non-slip inserts and joints, Buff Roman travertine stone borders, plastered ceilings with cast plaster cornice, recessed incandescent lighting, and recessed radiators with stainless steel grilles. The lobby walls consist of Montana Rose Tan travertine marble, with Tennessee Imperial Black base, Buff Roman travertine stone floor, plastered ceiling and cornice, and recessed incandescent lighting. The first floor corridors have terrazzo floors and base, plastered walls, and ceiling, and recessed incandescent lighting. The first floor lobby has

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been opened up and expanded by removing some of the interior walls. The original north-south hallway has been incorporated into this opening. There is a row of suspended glass lights that generally reflect the time period but are not original. The original metal partitions have been relocated to reflect the needs of office tenants, but otherwise the first floor is nearly original. The first floor corridors retain their original terrazzo floors and base, plastered walls and ceiling. Elevators are also original except for the addition of wood paneling. The building was constructed to be virtually fireproof so that very little wood was used. All doors and door frames are steel and have been retained along with brass hardware. Only the hand railings in the stairwells and a strip of rounded wall trim are made of wood. The stairs are steel with terrazzo filled treads. The interiors of the stairwells are built of glazed tile. All windows retain the original venetian blinds. The window sills or stools are constructed of polished alberene stone.

The remaining three floors are similar to the first floor except for the open lobby. Two law firms currently occupy the second and fourth floors. Each has a reception area directly across from the elevators that has necessitated opening up of smaller office space. The remainder of each floor is divided up into offices. Restrooms are in their original location and retain original plumbing fixtures and floor tile. The second floor required the addition of some stud walls covered with drywall where metal partitions were no longer available. An ADA bathroom was also added to the second floor. Corridor and office floors are covered with carpeting.

The owner has retained as many of the original interior materials as possible while still meeting the needs of individual tenants. Although it was unoccupied for nearly ten years, a custodian kept it in good condition. All necessary changes have been tasteful and add to the beauty and usefulness of the interior.

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8. Significance

The Ohio Oil Company Building is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, as it is related to the Wyoming oil industry and its importance to the economic development of the state as a whole and to the City of Casper in particular. The Ohio Oil Company Building was constructed in two stages in 1948-1949 and 1955-1956. The original component was specifically designed so that it could be enlarged to meet future needs. The building displays several basic elements of the Art Deco style of architecture, and the exterior is pristine.

The original building component was constructed to house the division headquarters of the Ohio Oil Company, which in 1962 became known as the Marathon Oil Company. It was designed by Arthur G. Hall of the architectural firm of Wilbur Watson Associates of Cleveland, Ohio. The same firm designed the main headquarters of the Ohio Oil Company in Findlay, Ohio. Wilbur Watson Associates also designed the 1955-1956 addition. The Casper division headquarters was the center for over eight hundred employees in the Rocky Mountain region, which covered an eleven-state area. The exploration, development, and marketing of the Ohio Oil Company's crude oil was controlled from the Casper headquarters, and it became one of Casper's major employers. The Ohio Oil Company was an economic force in Casper for several decades and injected capital into the local economy. With the help of the Ohio Oil Company, Casper became the Rocky Mountain oil capital during the prosperous 1940s and 1950s.

Casper had its origins as a railroad town. It was created in 1888 when the Chicago and North Western Railroad extended its line westward from Nebraska, laying its tracks up the North Platte River Valley through Douglas and Glenrock. At first the ranching-oriented town grew slowly, and the census counted only a thousand people by the turn of the century. However, the commercial production of oil in the area in the 1910s and 1920s quickly changed the character of the Casper community. The great Salt Creek Oil Field, located about fifty miles north of Casper, was extensively developed after 1910. Casper was strategically located as the nearest railhead to the field, and it became the major oil shipping point. Refineries and tank farms were built at Casper, and a system of pipelines was laid connecting them to the field. The Midwest Refining Company and Standard Oil Company of Indiana invested heavily in the field and assured a bright future for Salt Creek. As a result of these developments, Casper experienced an oil boom period that began in 1913-1914 and continued well into the next decade. The major oil concerns established their headquarters in Casper, providing employment and injecting capital into the local economy. The population multiplied, and prosperity accelerated community expansion and the construction of buildings.

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The modern petroleum industry had its origins in northwestern Pennsylvania where the first discoveries were made in 1859 just prior to the Civil War. Oil was first used for lubricating machinery, but when it was discovered that oil could be refined into kerosene and used for illumination, the demand for it quickly increased. Western Pennsylvania remained the center of the oil industry for over twenty-five years. It also became the training ground for thousands of oilmen who subsequently spread to nearly every corner of the United States where oil was found. The basic techniques of the oil industry were developed here, including cable tool drilling, transporting oil via pipelines, and the refining process.

As fields were depleted in western Pennsylvania, the industry spread westward into Ohio. Oil and gas discoveries were made in the areas of Findlay and Lima in northwestern Ohio in 1884 and 1885. A group of independent producers in the Lima Oil Field combined to form the Ohio Oil Company and incorporated on August 1, 1887. This corporation produced crude oil and sold it to the Standard Oil Company. The company was purchased by Standard the following year. Findlay, Ohio, became the headquarters for the Ohio Oil Company in 1905. In 1911, the United States Supreme Court forced the dissolution of the Standard Oil Company under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and the Ohio Oil Company became independent on December 9, 1911.

The Ohio Oil Company began to expand westward, and in 1912 its representatives arrived in Wyoming and Montana. Ohio Oil's first crude oil production came from leases in the Grass Creek Field in the Bighorn Basin in 1914. In 1915, the Ohio Oil Company recorded production in Elk Basin (also in the Bighorn Basin near the Montana border), and in the Big Muddy Field along the south side of the North Platte River east of Casper. The company also became active in the Lance Creek Oil Field in Niobrara County in east central Wyoming and in other smaller fields at Maverick Springs and Rock River in 1916. Within a few years, the company became involved in several other fields, including Mule Creek in 1919, the Oregon Basin Field in 1921, Rex Lake in 1923, and the Byron and Garland Oil Fields in 1924, and Medicine Bow in 1933.

The Salt Creek Field north of Casper was Wyoming's premier oil field for several decades. As the Second Wall Creek sands became increasingly productive, the Salt Creek Field continued to grow and provided an opportunity for new companies such as Ohio Oil to enter the field on its outer fringes. The Ohio Oil Company began drilling in the Salt Creek Field starting in about 1916. It held leases in the south and southwest portions of the field and established extensive camps, the Ohio Oil Company Camp and the Ohio Camp South, located on the site of the old Midwest South Camp. The company was also involved in the dispute over the Lavoye townsite. An estimated one thousand people lived in and around this town, hindering drilling operations. A battle raged in the courts for two years before the company ordered eviction on March 15, 1924. Nearly the entire town was moved to a new location five miles south.

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The demand for oil products was high from 1914 to 1918, the World War I years, and the Ohio Oil Company was one of the main suppliers. After the war, price controls were lifted, and crude oil prices increased by more than fifty percent, from two dollars a barrel in 1918 to more than three dollars a barrel in 1920. In about 1917, the company moved its headquarters from Thermopolis to Casper and built a two-story brick building at the corner of North Wolcott and A Streets. The headquarters originally housed fifteen employees and was subsequently enlarged twice to keep pace with the company's growth.

In 1921, the Ohio Oil Company took over the Midwest Oil Company, assuring its dominance in the region. By 1924, the company had acquired the refining and marketing assets that made it a fully integrated oil and gas company. Crude oil production in Wyoming peaked in 1923, then began a long decline due to the Great Depression and failure to compete with Midwest and West Coast oil. Casper's economy was closely tied to the oil industry and secondarily to agriculture, industries that suffered greatly during the Depression. Along with the rest of the country, Casper's economy did not recover until the World War II era.

World War II triggered a high demand for oil and gas, initiating a long period of increased production. As a result, the Ohio Oil Company began exploring for crude oil outside the United States. Post-World War II Casper experienced an economic boom that paralleled the renewed growth of the oil industry. In 1947, Wyoming's oil production reached an all-time high of 46,438,953 barrels, and in 1948, more than half of all the new wells discovered in the United States were found in Wyoming. In that year, Wyoming ranked fifth in oil reserves and seventh in production. Casper viewed itself as the oil capital of the Rocky Mountain region. The population, which had bottomed out at under 16,000 after the first oil bust cycle, reversed itself after 1940 and nearly doubled by the end of that decade.

It was during this post-war boom period that the Ohio Oil Company contracted with Wilbur Watson Associates of Cleveland, Ohio, to construct a large office building at the southeast corner of North Wolcott and East A Streets, replacing their smaller building just to the west. The building was completed for use by November 1949 at a cost of \$850,000. The importance of the building to the Casper and regional economy was reflected in the local media. Section Two of the *Casper Tribune-Herald* (20 November 1949), was entirely devoted to the completion of the building, the history of the Ohio Oil Company, and its regional operations. Casper residents and other oil company personnel were invited to tour the new facilities on Wednesday, the day before Thanksgiving.

As a regional headquarters, the Casper office directed exploration and production for an eleven-state area that included Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and parts of Arizona and New Mexico. When completed in 1949, the Ohio Oil Company Division

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Office in Casper had 145 employees, the largest of the company's division offices. Financially, it ranked second only to the Houston office. The Rocky Mountain Division had a payroll of \$300,000, twenty percent of which was allocated to the Casper office workers.

The Casper headquarters became the center for over eight hundred employees working in the Rocky Mountain region in the search, development, and marketing of petroleum. The exploration of oil was directed by the division geologist. While active fields were maintained, it was also necessary for a successful oil company to develop new sources as the old ones declined. The geological department conducted seismograph testing and mapped new oil formations. When a potential new area had been discovered and mapped, the land department stepped in to acquire leases at the state or federal land offices, or if the lands were private, the department sought permission from the landowner for a lease. Once the lands were under lease, the production department began testing. The geology department oversaw the actual drilling. If oil was discovered, the petroleum engineers were called in to analyze the oil and pressure of the well. The engineers also surveyed the exact locations for drilling wells, built the storage tanks, and determined the most economic rate of production. The new well was either completed as a flowing producer or put on the pump. The destination of the oil was the responsibility of the marketing department. The pipeline department was responsible for the pipeline gathering system for all of the Ohio Oil Company fields in the region and for the transportation of the oil to market. Tank trucks and railroads were utilized where pipelines had not been laid. The company also produced natural gas that was used as a heating fuel and as a source of liquid hydrocarbons such as natural gasoline, propane, and butane.

A legal department with a four thousand-volume law library was housed on the fourth floor of the Ohio Oil Company Building. The accounting department handled the accounts and payrolls, oil and gas sales, and detailed ledgers for thousands of accounts. It occupied portions of the first and second floors in the new building. The personnel department interviewed prospective new employees, processed hospital benefits for nearly a thousand employees, planned safety campaigns, and kept vital records on all workers.

The booming oil industry brought hundreds of workers and their families to Casper. As the population swelled, Casper experienced a housing shortage, and house construction began to soar. More than 250 new homes were constructed in 1948, the biggest construction year in the city's history. The Westridge, University Park, and Sunset additions were a major part of this building boom. The Westridge addition consisted of 42 acres with 198 lots and a ten-store shopping plaza. The houses were laid out attractively on curved streets. There were 34 different home designs, and they were offered with one, two, or three bedrooms costing from \$8,500 to \$10,000. The Westridge development was located on CY Avenue near the west edge of town.

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Casper was home to three refineries operated by Standard, Socony-Vacuum Oil Inc., and the Texas Company. All three were expanded in the late 1940s to handle the increased production from fields all over the state, but principally from the Bighorn Basin and Salt Creek, which were connected to the refineries via pipelines. Expansion at the Texas Company doubled its plant capacity and tripled its employment from 98 to 311. The Socony-Vacuum Oil Company plant was tripled in capacity. The expansion increased the work force by sixty-five percent. The Standard Refinery was also expanded in 1948-1949 with the addition of a new catalytic cracker and a new vapor recovery unit as well as new storage tanks. With its three refineries capable of handling 35,000 barrels of crude oil per day, Casper was the undisputed refining center of Wyoming. Casper was the point of origin for the trunklines for the Service and Platte pipelines, the two major arteries that carried Rocky Mountain crude oil to the major Midwestern markets. Casper was also the center for the complex pipeline gathering system that fanned out to the various Wyoming oil fields. One-third of the refining capacity of the Rocky Mountain region was located in Casper. About twelve percent of the daily Wyoming oil production was refined in the three Casper refineries, rather than sent east through the major trunklines.

Between 1947 and 1953, Casper experienced unparalleled growth and prosperity. During this time period, the number of oil field service, supply and trucking companies grew from 55 to 196. Stanolind Oil Company also had its division and district headquarters in Casper, and between 1947 and 1953 its work force increased from 70 to 316. During that same time period, the Ohio Oil Company work force increased from 104 to 167, and a total of 2,546 homes were built in Casper, one for every ten persons according to the 1950 census. In 1949, there were 4,586 students enrolled in thirteen public schools, including a senior and junior high school and ten grade schools. Many of the public schools were renovated, enlarged or rebuilt during this time period. Casper Junior College was established in 1945 and was the first two-year college in the state. It had a student population of five hundred.

The Wyoming oil industry and Casper continued to boom through the mid-1950s. In June 1955, Casper hosted the first Rocky Mountain Oil Show. Some 140 exhibitors set up displays and demonstrations at the Central Wyoming Fair Grounds to educate the public about the operations of the oil industry and to market new equipment and technologies to oil men. Over 30,000 out-of-town visitors were expected. A Burlington Railroad special excursion with Pullman cars brought visitors from Denver and Billings. The 1950s boom prompted Ohio Oil to once again retain the services of Wilbur Watson and Associates, this time to expand the original building. A nearly identical T-shaped south addition was constructed in 1955-1956, resulting in the building's present U-shaped configuration.

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Oil production finally leveled off in 1961, and companies such as Ohio Oil were forced to modernize their technology. New equipment was installed to boost production rates, and a pipeline was built to supply water to be forced by turbines down newly drilled injection wells and into deep oil bearing strata. The water pressure forced the remaining oil up to the producing wells. This costly technology was necessary to the longevity and production of any given field. The process was termed Maraflood and became the trademark of the Ohio Oil Company. In 1962, the company changed its corporate name to Marathon Oil to reflect its growth from a regional concern to a worldwide producer; also, the company had marketed its products under the Marathon brand since the 1930s. Marathon's marketing operations included a seventeen-state area, and Marathon products were sold through more than 3700 retail outlets throughout several states.

In around 1967, Marathon drilled six new wells in its oldest producing field at Grass Creek, as well as two at Rock River, and ten at Oregon Basin. A significant gas discovery was made at Oregon Basin that produced gas on test at the rate of 20,000,000 cubic feet per day. In 1967, Marathon's net oil production total for the region was 1.3 million barrels, almost 46,500 barrels per day from 2657 producing wells from thirty-one fields in Wyoming, three in Montana, twenty-five in western Nebraska, and twelve in Colorado. Casper continued to house the division headquarters, and there were also district offices at Calgary, Canada; Sidney, Nebraska; and Cody, Wyoming. The Marathon Pipeline Company's operations in the Rocky Mountain region were directed from Casper and Greybull.

In 1971, Marathon began refining and marketing lead-free gasoline to alleviate auto-caused air pollution. It was the first company to offer an environmentally formulated gasoline in all octane levels, preparing the company for automobiles with emission control devices. Marathon Oil continued to pioneer advancements in the oil industry and to contribute to Casper's economy. In 1972, the division headquarters in Casper at 159 Wolcott Street employed a staff of about five hundred people involved in production, geology, land acquisition, engineering, accounting, legal affairs, tax, title and lease records, environmental concerns, safety, office services, and employee relations. At this time, the division headquartered in Casper oversaw operations in a fourteen-state area in the Rocky Mountains and the West Coast, as well as western Canada. W. Cole Sylvester was manager of operations, and Lloyd D. Traupe was manager of exploration.

In 1982, Marathon was acquired by U.S. Steel (now USX Corporation) for \$5.9 billion and became the largest and most profitable arm of the new company. In the mid-1980s, the Casper headquarters employed about four hundred people in two locations, the main office at 159 Wolcott Street and at Aspen Creek on Werner Court. Marathon was Casper's fifth largest employer and Wyoming's second largest oil producer, with much of its almost twenty million barrels (about fifteen percent of Wyoming's total production) coming from its older prolific fields such as Oregon Basin, Byron and Garland, and Rock River. However,

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the mid and late 1980s saw a downturn in the energy industry, and in 1986 the Marathon offices were restructured, with a newly formed Rocky Mountain region to be headquartered in Cody, Wyoming, closer to its fields in the Big Horn Basin. The Casper office was finally closed, and the building stood vacant for ten years. It was purchased by the current owner Robert C. Ide in May 1997, who is responsible for its renovation. New tenants began moving into the building in January 1998, and it is currently fully occupied.

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Section 10. Geographical Data

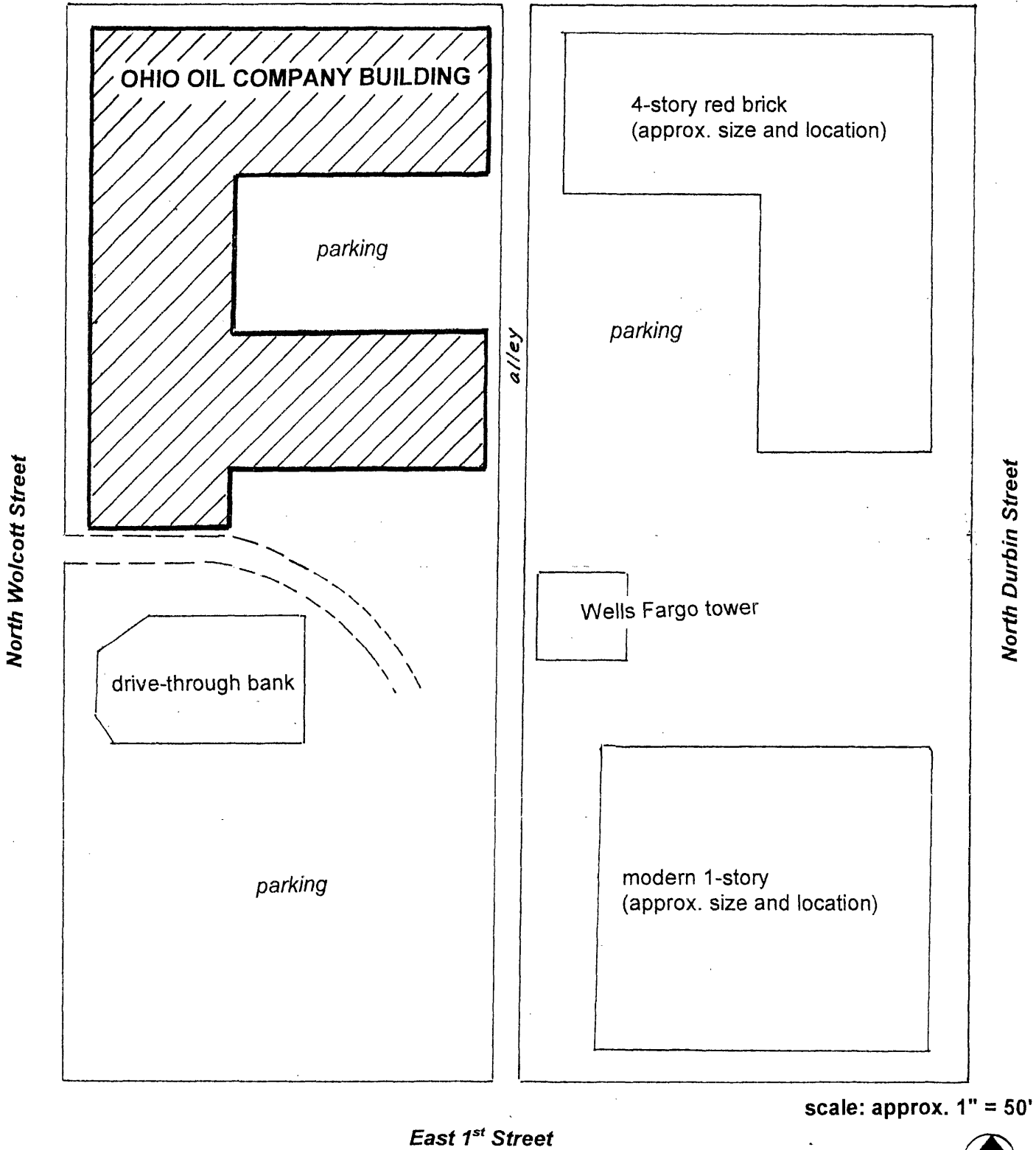
Verbal Boundary Description

The property is located at 159 North Wolcott Street, Casper, Wyoming, at the southeast corner of North Wolcott and East A Streets on Lots 1, 2, and 3, Block 11, Casper Addition.

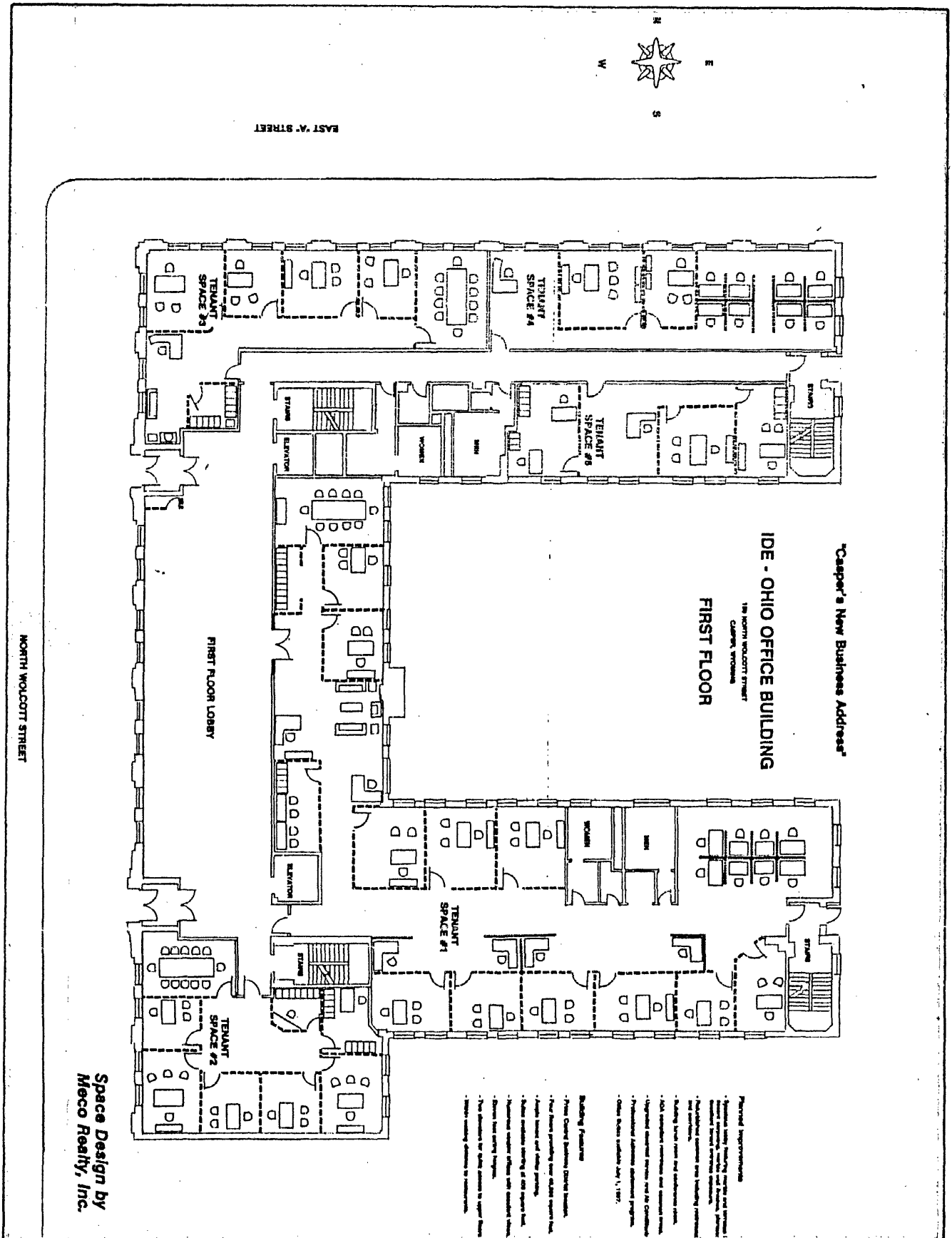
Boundary Justification

The boundary is defined by the legal boundary of the lots that the building occupies and includes the parking lot on the east side of the building.

East A Street



Site plan: Ohio Oil Company Building, Natrona County, Wyoming
drafted 3/01, E. Rosenberg



First floor plan of the Ohio Oil Company Building, reflecting recent renovations that include the replacement of several small offices with an attractive lobby area.