

563073

NPS Form 10-900

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Poe Motor Company  
Other name/site number: San Antonio Overland Company, Willys-Knight Overland Company, Murray-Winerich Motor Company, Murray Motor Company, Baker Motor Company, Marcus H. Clark Motor Company, A. B. Poe Motor Company, Rieger Motors, Inc., Superior Pontiac Paint and Body Shop, Ace Automotive Inc., Barbara Sporting Goods  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 900 Broadway Street  
City or town: San Antonio State: Texas County: Bexar  
Not for publication:  Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Maur Wolf State Historic Preservation Officer Date 9/7/18  
Signature of certifying official / Title  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

11/5/2018  
Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

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:** COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store; auto showroom

**Current Functions:** COMMERCE/TRADE: business; WORK IN PROGRESS

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Brick, Cast Stone, Concrete

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-9)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria:** A, C

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Commerce, Architecture

**Period of Significance:** 1926 - 1968

**Significant Dates:** 1926, 1927, 1931, 1933, 1937, 1955, 1965

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** Will N. Noonan & Company (architect); C. H. Brient (contractor)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-17)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheets 9-18 through 9-19)

**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 (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: San Antonio Conservation Society

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): Historic Highways Survey – Meridian Highway Resource 669; unknown survey resource NRS79-20052

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** 0.32 acres

### Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (use decimal degree format)

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. Latitude: 29.433388° N Longitude: -98.481252° W

**Verbal Boundary Description:** Lots 1 and 2 of Block 32 according to the New City Block Red Tax Plat Map 454 for the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundaries include the two lots historically associated with the building.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Victoria Myers, Anna Mod, and Hannah Curry-Shearouse / Historic Preservation Specialists  
Organization: SWCA Environmental Consultants  
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Telephone: (512) 476-0891  
Date: September 2017

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheet Map-20 through Map-21)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets Figure-22 through Figure-40)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheet Photo-41 through Photo-51)

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## Photographs

Poe Motor Company  
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas  
Photographed by SWCA Environmental Consultants  
March, April, and July 2017

Northwest and southwest elevations, view east  
Photo 1

Northwest elevation, view southeast  
Photo 2

Southwest elevation, view east  
Photo 3

Northeast elevation, view southwest  
Photo 4

Southeast elevation, view west  
Photo 5

Interior, first floor  
Photo 6

Interior, vehicular ramp, view from second floor  
Photo 7

Interior, second floor  
Photo 8

Interior, second floor, skylight detail  
Photo 9

Interior, basement  
Photo 10

Northwest elevation entry detail, view southeast  
Photo 11

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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## Narrative Description

Located at 900 Broadway Street in northeast downtown San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, the Poe Motor Company is a symmetrical, two-story plus basement, reinforced concrete brick veneer commercial building built to function as an automobile dealership. Constructed in 1926, the commercial building has both Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission style ornamentation. These features are seen in the central Mission style parapet, and small urns on the front portion of the building that surround the flat roof. Other intact architectural elements include decorative cast stone Churrigueresque detailing, clay tile at the cornice, and some original multi-pane windows. Despite modifications to replace the storefronts, doors, some windows, and some interior finishes, the building retains a high level of historic integrity.

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## Location and Setting

The Poe Motor Company building's primary façade faces northwest onto Broadway Street.<sup>1</sup> Located on a 0.32 acre commercial lot, it is bordered by Broadway to the northwest, Ninth Street to the southwest, a surface parking lot to the northeast, and an alley in the rear or southeast (Photo 1). The building is approximately 13,464 square feet in size. The two-story (with basement), symmetrical, reinforced concrete commercial building has a brick veneer, and a rectangular form and flat roof with parapet. Gold brick covers the Broadway and Ninth Street elevations while beige brick covers the remaining elevations. The surrounding area is urban with perimeter sidewalks. Buildings in the vicinity are one- and two-story commercial buildings as well as four- to six-story infill mixed use projects. National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) properties in the area include the Gustav Uhl House and Store (NRHP 2002) two blocks to the south and the Old Lone Star Brewery (NRHP 1979), two blocks to the north.

## Primary (Northwest) Façade

The primary façade is five bays wide (Photo 2). The center bay features cast stone Churrigueresque ornamentation (Photo 11), typical of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, surrounding the central replacement paired glass and metal doors with transom. It serves as the primary entrance from Broadway Street. The first floor of the portal has smooth, coursed cast stone and an arch surrounds the entry doors. The portal has an entablature with a carved stone cornice, inspired in design by the Misión San Antonio de Valero, more commonly known as The Alamo, located approximately one-half mile south-southwest. A central cartouche fills the frieze and engages with the lowest dentil course of the cornice above and partially into the architrave below. The frieze is modestly detailed with regularly spaced unornamented panels. The modest architrave has a simple Classical molding. On the outer ends, the cornice and architrave project slightly. Below are small, engaged Solomonic columns atop corbels. The columns and corbels end just below the arch spring line. The upper floor of the center bay has a single window set in a segmental arched opening and flanked with paired, engaged *estipite* columns.<sup>2</sup> Above the *estipites* is a projecting cornice with paired finials, a repetition of the detailing below. Above the window is a small *nicho* (niche) with *coquillage* (shell) carving flanked by engaged columns and small finials. A Mission style parapet above the *nicho* rises above the otherwise flat parapet. Behind the entirety of the second floor portal is more cast stone detailing that resembles the façade of a Baroque church featuring a Mission style arch at the top and flared buttressed base.

Beyond the elaborate central bay, the first floor has replacement metal storefront windows with replacement wood transoms. There is a cast stone stringcourse that also serves the second-floor window sills. The windows flanking the central bay are arranged in groups of four on the far left and far right and paired windows to either side of center bay.

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<sup>1</sup> Broadway Street and "Automobile Row" are used interchangeably in the nomination.

<sup>2</sup> Type of column specific to the Churrigueresque style square on top and tapering downward, like a reverse obelisk.

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Upper level windows are replacement metal sash units with horizontal divides in a 3/2 pattern. Through at least 1948, the upper level windows were metal casement units.

The cornice has two primary elements: a cast stone stringcourse set atop regularly spaced corbels and terracotta mission tiles above and the paneled brick parapet. The stringcourse spans the main façade stopping short of the outer ends of the building and is interrupted by the decorative central portal. Four brick bases project slightly from the building plane and are detailed with cast stone urns (one urn is missing). Other decorative elements at this cornice level include engaged columns and two cast stone shields, inset cast stone panels, and small brick pilasters with cast stone capitals.

### **Secondary (Southwest) Façade**

The secondary façade faces southwest onto Ninth Street and is six bays wide on both stories (Photo 3). The first bay continues the replacement, fixed storefront window with divided wood transom as seen on the primary façade. The second bay storefront has been replaced by paired, metal and glass entry doors in the center of the bay flanked by painted plywood infill. An offset, single leaf, glass entry door and concrete infill make up the third bay. Stucco infill with glass blocks make up the fourth bay. The final two bays are both metal, rolling overhead garage doors – one double-wide and one single. The single garage door in the sixth bay opens to a ramp leading to the basement level.

The upper level bays all feature windows. The front bay windows are metal sash units with a horizontal 3/2 pattern with brick-infill to resize the opening. Like the Broadway Street windows, these are likely 1950s replacements. The cornice details found on the primary elevation repeat only on the first bay of this side elevation. The cornice on the remaining bays is more modest with only a cast stone coping cap. The upper floor windows on this elevation are four sets of triplet grouped original multi-light steel industrial type windows with central hopper sashes and a similar multi-light single steel window above the sixth bay single garage door.

Historic photographs reveal that both the primary and secondary façades original contained a mix of signage types that changed depending on the building's name at the time. There is one remaining blade sign on the primary façade; no other signs remain.

### **Tertiary Façades**

The northeast elevation currently faces a surface parking area (Photo 4). Historic photographs from the 1940s show that the lot originally had a one-story commercial building (Figure 14). Since the neighboring building obscured the elevation from the public, builders used the lighter brick for the façade. Also due to the neighboring building, this elevation has an irregular bay composition. The right bay, closest to Broadway Street, is the only one on this elevation that continues the storefront with transom, upper floor window and decorative cornice of the primary façade. Similar to the other elevations, the storefront window is not original, but it is likely that the multi-light transom is. There is a single multi-light steel window and three additional windows at this level closest to the alley. There is a horizontal multi-light steel window on the lower elevation.

The southeast (rear) elevation faces an alley, with three bays on the lower level and six bays on the upper level (Photo 5). Like the northeast elevation, the rear of the building was not meant to be seen by the public and was clad in the lighter, likely cheaper, brick. The center of the elevation has a window opening, likely steel multi-light industrial style windows that are obscured by metal screening. To the right of the window is a modern panel single leaf entry door. Around the door is concrete block, indicating a modification. Finally, there is a single metal overhead garage door. The upper level bays feature three sets of triple steel casement windows, two bays of single steel casement windows, and a flush metal door leading to an attached metal fire escape.

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## Interior

The basement is open with a concrete floor, exposed ceiling beams, and regularly spaced columns (Photo 10, Figure 3). Some of the columns have extended buttresses. Near the ceiling on the northwest and southwest walls are casement vents leading to metal grates in the sidewalk. One of the early dealerships used the basement for their Used Car Department showroom (Figure 9), and it is likely that other dealerships used the basement for additional showroom or service department space as needed.

The first floor interior is predominantly an open showroom with a concrete floor, exposed ceiling beams and regularly spaced square columns (Photo 6, Figure 4). There are two small restrooms centered on the southwest wall, most likely later additions. The southeast wall also has built out space with an additional restroom and a small office. The office and restroom walls are drywall; however, a concrete block wall extends from the office to the southwest wall between the double garage door and the single garage door. This wall connects to the basement ramp via a modern, flush, metal, single-leaf door near the top of the ramp. Part of the southeast section of the first floor has been built out with concrete block and a sliding metal garage door for a concrete vehicular ramp leading to the second story (Photo 7). Stairs to the basement level are under the ramp, with access from a flush metal door.

Like the first floor, the second floor is predominantly open space with a concrete floor, exposed ceiling beams, and regularly spaced square columns (Photo 8, Figure 5). It was likely used either as additional showroom space or as the service department. A drain toward the southeast wall indicates that the space was a carwash, suggesting the use of the floor for service. There is a small restroom on the southeast wall. The east corner has a small raised concrete section with lipped curbing. The center of the room has two rectangular skylights, which appear to be original (Photo 9).

## Integrity

The Poe Motor Company building in good condition and retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. Located on the corner of Broadway Street and Ninth Street, the building remains along an urban commercial corridor just outside of the core of downtown San Antonio. The setting on the 900 block has been somewhat comprised due to the loss of adjacent commercial buildings for parking lots and new construction; however, eight other auto dealership buildings and two automobile parts and repair shop building are still extant along Broadway Street. Additionally, limited infill encouraged the preservation of the built environment adjacent to the street and historic setbacks. These properties along with 900 Broadway Street convey feeling and association to its early twentieth century use as “Automobile Row.”<sup>3</sup>

The building also retains integrity of design and workmanship. The extant Churrigueresque door surround and straight barrel tile roofing on the cornice show the Spanish Colonial Revival influence on the building’s design while the arched details on the front elevation, including the Alamo inspired parapet reflect the Mission style. Some of the original windows are intact as well. The interior also retains original, board formed concrete automobile ramps to the basement and second-story levels included in the design for the building’s function as a dealership. The open space on all three floors retain its character as a showroom. While some of Ninth Street elevation storefronts have been in-filled and there are replacement materials, the building still retains the look and feel of a 1920s commercial building.

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<sup>3</sup> Moore, Freeman, Dudley, et. al., Appendix C, pp. 3-4.



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The loss of integrity is due to replacement materials. The Broadway elevation storefronts, including the transoms, have been replaced, as has the entry door. As noted above, most of the storefronts facing Ninth Street have been replaced with garage doors or in-fill materials. The second-story windows are replacements but appear to be historic age modifications. Based on a 1937 newspaper photograph (Figure 11), interior flooring on the first level appears to have been tile, although the material is unclear. Currently, all three levels have the concrete subfloor functioning as the flooring. Exterior signs with the dealership names and brands sold have been removed (Figure 10).

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## Statement of Significance

Poe Motor Company, located at 900 Broadway Street in San Antonio, Texas, was constructed in 1926 as an automobile dealership in the earliest segment of “Automobile Row,” and was a direct result of the rising consumer interest in car ownership, leisure, and travel in the early twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> Like other city’s nationwide, the arrival of the automobile encouraged growth and modernization in twentieth century San Antonio. Demand for road improvements to accommodate the new mode of transportation led to street paving and maintenance efforts by the city. Automobiles transformed the nature of urban development creating new commercial opportunities. Early growth expanded the city north-northeast of downtown along “Automobile Row,” toward neighboring communities such as Alamo Heights and the U.S. Army post Fort Sam Houston.<sup>5</sup> The Poe Motor Company emerged as part of this growth. The property is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce at the local level of significance for its association with the rise of the automobile dealerships in San Antonio. Additionally, Poe Motor Company is architecturally significant as the most intact and ornate early twentieth century automobile dealership featuring both Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission influences along “Automobile Row” in San Antonio. It also serves as an example of the work of architecture firm Will C. Noonan & Company and contractor C. H. Brient. The property housed many different automobile companies over the years, but consistently served as an automobile dealership between 1926 and the late 1970s. Thus, a Period of Significance spanning 1926 to 1968 which adheres to the 50-year threshold, is most appropriate. The building gets its name from the Poe Motor Company, which owned and occupied the building longest, from 1938 to 1955.

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## Broadway Street

The Poe Motor Company building is in a commercial neighborhood with other historic-age buildings and some modern infill. The street was originally known as Avenue C / River Avenue until the J. H. Kirkpatrick Company, developer of Alamo Heights, urged renaming the street Broadway in the early 1900s because it was one of San Antonio’s only wide thoroughfares and “one of the finest” streets in the city.<sup>6</sup> The urging worked, and early 1920s San Antonio City Directories noted the change in their street listings.

Broadway Street from Houston Street north was the major north-south thoroughfare between downtown San Antonio Alamo Heights, an affluent neighborhood that was just outside the city limits in the early twentieth century. As downtown grew, businesses along this stretch benefited from larger lots and lower costs than those located within the commercial core, while also benefiting from the downtown location. An early selling point of the Alamo Heights development was the access to regular streetcar service along Broadway Street between the residential area and Houston Street on a twenty-minute ride.<sup>7</sup> Passengers could also easily hop off to shop in one of the businesses lining

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<sup>4</sup> Initially there was some debate about the build date. The 1912 Sanborn map shows residential buildings on the block (Figure 1) while the 1951 map shows a commercial block and lists 1927 as the construction date for 900 Broadway (Figure 2). Bexar County Appraisal District records lists the date of construction as 1935, although an image of the building in a 1931 advertisement disputes this information (Figure 10). Two separate surveys that included the block recorded different construction dates for the building – one listing circa 1930 and the other listing circa 1925. Since the first dealership opened at the address in September 1926 (Figure 7), it is most likely that the building was constructed earlier that year.

<sup>5</sup> Moore, David; Martha Freeman, Tara Dudley, PhD., et. al. “The Meridian Highway in Texas.” Prepared for the Texas Historical Commission, May 27, 2016, p. 200.

<sup>6</sup> Davenport, Brian. “History of Broadway Street: A Research Paper”. Page 1. Unpublished, no date. Available at the San Antonio Conservation Society Archives.

<sup>7</sup> *San Antonio Express* “Just Far Enough: Rapid Transit Brings the Most Desirable Residence Property of Alamo Heights Close, But Not Too Close” November 29, 1908, Page 13.

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the route – including buying a car from one of the dealerships along Broadway. Besides Alamo Heights, this expanded downtown area was easily accessible from Monte Vista, another affluent neighborhood, and Fort Sam Houston.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the proximity to local consumers, Broadway Street north of Houston Street benefited from the establishment of the Meridian Highway in 1911. This major north-south corridor was one of the nation's early interstate automobile trails in the United States. According to a recent study on the history of the Meridian Highway, the route "was among the earliest, if not the very first, interstate auto trail" through San Antonio.<sup>9</sup> The alignment through San Antonio arrived from northern communities such as Solms, Comal, Selma, and Fratt, through Fort Sam Houston and onto Broadway Street before following Houston Street downtown and then continuing south towards Laredo, Texas.<sup>10</sup>

### **"Automobile Row"**

The automobile had a significant impact on American culture. Cars were more than "just another transportation mode" to Americans, they were symbols of wealth, leisure, and freedom.<sup>11</sup> Rapidly changing technology in the early twentieth century, such as interchangeable parts and Henry Ford's assembly line, allow manufacturers to produce more affordable vehicles for the growing middle class. The automobile, therefore, became "the epitome of possessions" in the expanded economic growth of the Progressive Era.<sup>12</sup>

The automobile's new status was visible through both public and private efforts. The growing popularity of the automobile caused the Texas legislature to pass automotive registration requirements in 1907, to create a department for managing highways in 1917, and to give the highway department authority to "construct and maintain a connected system of highways" in 1925.<sup>13</sup> With high consumer demand for automobiles, businessmen sought to open sales rooms to distribute models from various national manufacturers. In many cities, early dealerships were located on major roadways near the downtown core. San Antonio's "Automobile Row" is one example of this response to demand, although there are other examples in the United States of similar districts – such as Oklahoma City's Automobile Alley (NRHP 1999) and Norfolk's Auto Row (NRHP 2014).

The strategic location combined with the rise of the automobile industry, made Broadway Street ideal for early automobile dealerships in San Antonio. Early dealerships were concentrated on the 300 -1100 blocks, locally known as "Automobile Row" and eventually expanded up to the 1800 and 1900 blocks. As automobile ownership rose in popularity in San Antonio, stores along Broadway celebrated automobile events, such as racing, with decorations and parades.<sup>14</sup> By 1940, "Automobile Row" was home to half of the new car dealerships and a third of the used car dealerships in San Antonio. Increased demand for cars after World War II lead to the expansion of "Automobile Row" north, all the way to the 2700 block.<sup>15</sup> After the initial post-war boom, dealerships began to move from "Automobile Row" following the growth along the new and expanding Interstate Highway system. Development of new affluent

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<sup>8</sup> Davenport, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Moore, Freeman, Dudley, et. al., page 200.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 200

<sup>11</sup> McShane, Clay, *Down the Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1994; page 125.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Cocks, Stephanie Hetos, "Clarendon Motor Company Building National Register of Historic Places Nomination," United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 1994, pg. 8-11. Accessed September 13, 2017

<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/94001309/94001309.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> *San Antonio Express* "Activity in Motor Sports: Many Contest for Coming Season That Attract Attention" and "Automobiling is Now General in San Antonio", April 5, 1908, page 23.

<sup>15</sup> Davenport, p. 9; Vlieger, Mike. List of San Antonio dealerships from 1931, 1944, and 1957 San Antonio phone books. No date. Available at the San Antonio Conservation Society Archives.

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suburban neighborhoods outside of downtown meant that “Automobile Row” was no longer a convenient location and dealers followed the customers.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the increase in the number of dealerships on San Antonio’s “Automobile Row” in the early 1920s, property turnover was common, as seen at 900 Broadway Street. The property changed names eight times between 1926 and 1938. This was due to changes in ownership, but distributing models from the same manufacturers remained constant. In 1926, the San Antonio Overland Company moved from 305 Broadway to 900 Broadway with Frank A. Winerich as president (Figure 7). Soon after relocating, the company changed their name to the Willys-Knight-Overland Company. They were a local dealer for Willys-Knight-Overland manufacturers, owned by John Willys since 1908. Willys-Knight-Overland was one of the United States’ largest automobile producers from 1912 to 1918 – second only to the Ford Motor Company.<sup>17</sup>

Winerich also owned the Winerich Motor Sales Company, which remained on the 300 block of Broadway after the 900 Broadway showroom opened. In 1927, Winerich teamed with new general manger J. Roy Murray to rename the business at 900 Broadway the Murray-Winerich Motor Company (Figure 8). While the focus was on new car sales, in 1930 Murray-Winerich Motor Company advertised “San Antonio’s first and only used car bargain basement” in their 900 Broadway location (Figure 9).<sup>18</sup> The company explained that having the used car department in their 900 Broadway building cut overhead costs of a separate building – savings they would pass onto their customers.<sup>19</sup> Customers only had to “walk down one flight of stairs” to the building’s basement where they had “conveniently arranged” cars for potential buyers to inspect.<sup>20</sup> Newspapers from the era have listings for used cars at various dealerships, however, they were just written listings, taking up very little space. Larger ads covering more column inches or even over multiple columns were reserved for dealers to showcase the newest models and features offered by the brands they sold. It is likely that this two column block ad for Murray-Winerich Motor Company’s Bargain Basement was the first in San Antonio drawing special attention to used car sales.

During the Great Depression, San Antonio’s economic reliance on their military installations, light manufacturing, tourism, and a consumer economy began to weaken. The city’s leaders actively resisted efforts from Ford Motor Company to construct a manufacturing facility within Bexar County.<sup>21</sup> Downsizing of the military following World War I and resulting decreases in federal spending, coupled with San Antonio losing its status as Texas’ largest city, the 1930 census revealed that San Antonio had an unemployment rate twice the statewide average. San Antonio continued to lead Texas’ cities in unemployment and required relief efforts through the 1930s.<sup>22</sup> The financial insecurities of the Great Depression likely sparked the Murray-Winerich Motor Company’s advertisement for the Bargain Basement.

In 1931, Murray stepped into the role of president and changed the name to Murray Motor Company (Figure 10). The *San Antonio Express* stated the need for the name change because of public confusion between the Murray-Winerich Motor Company (900 Broadway) and the Winerich Motor Company (300 Broadway). Both men were “optimistic as to the future of the automobile business in general” as the business showed “considerable signs of marked improvement” that they both believed would “permanently continue.”<sup>23</sup> Murray relocated to Corpus Christi, Texas in 1933, taking the Murray Motor Company with him.<sup>24</sup> The 900 Broadway showroom changed hands to the Baker Motor Company,

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<sup>16</sup> Davenport, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> <http://myautoworld.com/chrysler/jeep/history/jeep-company-history/jeep-company-history.html>; accessed June 14, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> *San Antonio Express*, Murray-Winerich Motor Company advertisement, September 24, 1930, page 19.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.; *San Antonio Light*, Murray-Winerich Motor Company advertisement, October 5, 1930, page 6.

<sup>21</sup> L. Patrick Hughes, “Beyond Denial: Glimpses of Depression-Era San Antonio,” Austin Community College. Accessed September 13, 2017 <http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us/lpatrick/denial.htm>

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> *San Antonio Express*, “Firm President Up From Bottom: Murray Started in Business As File Clerk”, May 10, 1931, page A7.

<sup>24</sup> *The Corpus Christi Caller*, “Roy Murray is Appointed Ford Dealer for Corpus Christi Territory”, September 19, 1934, page 8.

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listed in the 1934 City Directory as used car dealership but also sold new Dodge models.<sup>25</sup> Within a couple of years, the building changed hands again when the Marcus H. Clark Motor Company took over. In 1937, when the Marcus H. Clark Motor Company operated in the building, a driver lost control of his car and crashed into a plate glass window on the front of the building (Figure 11).<sup>26</sup> Mission City Pontiac succeeded Marcus H. Clark, however, they quickly moved into a building on the southeast corner of Broadway and Ninth and sold the building to A.B. Poe Motor Company, Chrysler and Plymouth dealers.<sup>27</sup>

The A. B. Poe Motor Company began in El Paso, Texas when an alderman took over a Chrysler dealership in the city in 1928.<sup>28</sup> The company was a family venture with A. B. Poe and his son A. B. Poe, Jr. In 1937, the company expanded its operations to San Antonio when it took over Southern Motors, Inc. with Edgar A. Poe as general manager. A year later, the company, already praised by the newspaper for giving San Antonio “one of the finest automotive distributorships in the Southwest,” had done so well they launched an “expansion program.” This expansion meant a move to 900 Broadway, which was larger than their previous location, and they held “a formal opening” for the public to see the “modern, convenient” showroom the company “spent several thousands of dollars” to update (Figure 12).<sup>29</sup> There is no mention of what upgrades the A. B. Poe Motor Company did, however, Mission City Pontiac’s upgrades to their new building across the street included upgrades to the service department and showroom lighting and it is likely that the 900 Broadway location had similar updates.<sup>30</sup> By 1951, the business was known as Poe Motor Company. Combined, these two variants of the name occupied 900 Broadway for 17 years, the longest stent for any dealership in the building (Figure 13).

In 1955, Jack Rieger purchased the company from Edgar Poe and renamed the property Rieger Motors, Inc (Figure 15). Rieger had moved to San Antonio from Decatur, Texas in 1951, but had been in the automobile industry since 1935.<sup>31</sup> The new company continued selling Chrysler and Plymouth cars until 1965, the second longest occupant of the building. When Rieger Motors moved in 1965, it was to a new location on San Pedro Avenue and Basse Road about three time larger than the 900 Broadway location. The company also changed to Jack Rieger Chrysler Plymouth so customers would “know instantly” that the dealership handled products from that manufacturer.<sup>32</sup>

San Pedro Avenue was, in the 1960s, the new “Automobile Row” in San Antonio, with property owners advertising parcels with 150 feet fronting the road.<sup>33</sup> Dealerships on San Pedro Avenue jointly advertised the street as “San Antonio’s Most Convenient Automobile Row” with “plenty of parking.”<sup>34</sup> Though the advertisement did not directly mention Broadway Street, it speaks to the parking shortages for dealerships on Broadway Street. In addition, the development of the nearby Interstate 35 and Interstate 37 exchange changed traffic patterns as the design did not include entrance and exit ramps to feed Broadway Street traffic.<sup>35</sup> Since San Antonio’s residential population had begun to expand the city horizontally, automobile dealerships followed other businesses to location closer to suburban neighborhoods, abandoning their downtown locations for locations more convenient for consumers. In addition to following the customer base, manufacturers often suggested dealers relocate to accommodate for various models sold under one maker after companies merged and/or purchased smaller companies.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *San Antonio Light*, “Baker Motor Displays New Dodge Sixes” and advertisement, March 5, 1933, page 8.

<sup>26</sup> *San Antonio Light*, “Auto Crashes into Window”, October 14, 1937, page 16-A.

<sup>27</sup> *San Antonio Light*, “Pontiac Firm in New Home”, Sunday January 9, 1938, page 12.

<sup>28</sup> *El Paso Evening Post*, “Alderman Pie Goes Into New Business: Sells Interest in Tri-State Co. and City Service”, February 15, 1928, page 1.

<sup>29</sup> *San Antonio Light*, “A.B. Poe Motor Co. In New Location”, Sunday January 9, 1938, page 12.

<sup>30</sup> *San Antonio Light*, “Pontiac Firm in New Home”.

<sup>31</sup> *Wise County Messenger*, “Jack Rieger Buys Auto Agency in San Antonio”, July 21, 1955, page 11.

<sup>32</sup> *San Antonio Express and News*, “Rieger Motors to Move”, September 12, 1965, Page 7-B.

<sup>33</sup> *San Antonio Express and News*, March 22, 1964, page 34; *San Antonio Express*, July 12, 1964, page 39 and July 13, 1964 page 24.

<sup>34</sup> *San Antonio Express and News*, Classified Page, July 23, 1966.

<sup>35</sup> Davenport, Page 10.

<sup>36</sup> *San Antonio Express-News*, “Downtown will lose a landmark: Cavender leaving,” March 8, 2013.

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Although some dealerships began to relocate in the 1960s, others remained along Broadway until the 1970s saw the start of the final exodus of dealerships leaving “Automobile Row.”<sup>37</sup> Superior Pontiac Paint and Body Shop and Ace Automotive Inc. were the last auto industry related businesses at 900 Broadway (Figure 16). The Pontiac dealer moved out of both its 900 Broadway and 711 Broadway locations in 1976 - leaving Ace Automotive as the sole tenant.<sup>38</sup> Since then, 900 Broadway has been a retail sporting goods store then an antique shop. Building ownership is in transition, with the antique shop vacating and the new owners planning to adapt the building for office use.

The building’s primary historic use has been as an automobile dealership under various names before use for other retail. A 1981-82 survey by J.S. Clark recorded the building as Superior Pontiac/Ace Automotive, although the dealership had relocated a few years prior to the survey. The Meridian Highway Survey completed in 2016 used San Antonio Overland Company as the building name, even though the company changed names soon after the 1926 move to the location.<sup>39</sup> In 1988, the City of San Antonio designated 900 Broadway Street as a “Historic Significant Landmark” under the business name Barbara Sporting Goods, reflecting the building’s tenant and use at the time.<sup>40</sup> It is most fitting to call 900 Broadway the Poe Motor Company as Poe’s dealership operated out of the building the longest.

### Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival in San Antonio

American architects began studying abroad in the late nineteenth century at the *École des Beaux Arts* in France and a year-long Grand Tour [of Europe] was considered a necessary post-graduation complement to an architecture degree. If such travel and study abroad was not financially feasible, architectural books with high quality engravings were widely available. In the decades following, architectural practice became one of successfully adapting architectural elements from a wide range of European styles, or “intelligent use of classical composition adapted to contemporary uses.”<sup>41</sup>

While the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition showcased the works of *Beaux-Arts* trained American architects, it was the 1915 the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego and the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco that showcased more elaborate Spanish examples, sparking an interest in the more ornate Spanish Revival style.<sup>42</sup> Carved stone details found on these buildings became more intricate, typically *Pateresque* or *Churrigueresque*. Arched windows and decorative grilles were common, particularly for dwellings. While tile roofing is found on Mission style buildings, it became much more common in Spanish Revival design with multiple types and layouts common.<sup>43</sup> The Spanish and Mission styles took hold strongly in Texas, Florida, Arizona and California – states that had historically been part of Spain and Mexico and thus retained direct historical and physical ties to that architectural legacy.

In his book, *The Eclectic Odyssey of Atlee B. Ayres, Architect*, the author and University of Texas emeritus professor of architecture Robert James Coote researched and analyzed the drawings and buildings of Ayres within the context of how his work and position in San Antonio society shaped early twentieth century architecture in the city. The

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> The City Directory in 1968 has Superior Pontiac Paint and Body Shop at 900 Broadway while in 1974 it was Ace Automotive. The *San Antonio Express*, May 14, 1976 had an advertisement for a moving sale for Superior Pontiac at both their Broadway locations.

<sup>39</sup> Texas Historical Commission Historic Sites Atlas, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/> accessed 1 June 2017.

<sup>40</sup> City of San Antonio. “Ordinance 68210 Amending Chapter 35 of the City Code that constitutes the comprehensive zoning ordinance of the City of San Antonio by changing the classification and rezoning of certain property described herein.” Pass and approve October 27, 1988.

<sup>41</sup> Coote, Robert James, *The Eclectic Odyssey of Atlee B. Ayres, Architect*. Texas A&M University Press: College Station, 2001, page 4.

<sup>42</sup> McAlester, page 522.

<sup>43</sup> McAlester, page 521-523.

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bulk of Ayres' work includes buildings in South and Central Texas with scattered commissions in Kansas, Oklahoma, New York and Mexico.<sup>44</sup> Ayres was a prominent "pillar of the [San Antonio] community" and a member of the "conservative, elite, old guard society."<sup>45</sup> His early practice, established in 1898, was during the height of revival styles fueled by post-Civil War prosperity and continued well into the early twentieth century as industrialization provided transportation networks for the distribution of architectural materials.<sup>46</sup> Ayres was known for his vast library, now at the Blake Alexander Architectural Archives at the University of Texas in Austin, his travels in England, Western Europe, Mexico, and California, and his study and photo documentation of historic buildings.

In 1915 Ayres visited the Panama-California and Panama-Pacific expositions and was smitten with the California.<sup>47</sup> Coote writes that Ayres understood the "romantic and theatrical styles" of the Spanish and Mission Revival and how they were suited to California, and also "potentially so for San Antonio." Following his California visit, Ayres visited Spain where the vernacular buildings of the countryside provided the influence later seen in his residential work in San Antonio.<sup>48</sup> He became an early and influential proponent of the styles in San Antonio. His practice coincided with the exponential growth of the early twentieth century residential suburbs where he designed houses in a variety of eclectic styles ranging from Tudor Revival, Arts and Crafts, Colonial Revival, Prairie, as well as Mission and Spanish Revival.<sup>49</sup> In addition to his residential practice, his buildings had an impact statewide and included seven Texas courthouses, commercial buildings, schools and libraries mostly in South and Central Texas and collectively demonstrate his skill and adaptability of stylistic borrowing and composition.

### Architectural Significance

The building is typical of an automobile dealership subtype that developed during the period of the early highway system from 1917-1933.<sup>50</sup> Character defining features of this subtype are two-part, masonry buildings that are similar to typical commercial forms of the period with decorative parapets obscuring a flat roof. Found in commercial areas, many are on corner lots with large, fixed windows along the front and side and vehicle bay openings on the secondary façades, providing access to the service department typically located at the rear near the office. Poe Motor Company, retains its original two-part structure with a clear base as well as a decorative parapet around the flat roof. The location on a corner in a commercial area is also typical for this subtype. Although the storefronts have been modified, they still retain the appearance of large, fixed windows on the primary elevation and vehicle bays on the secondary elevation. It is not clear where the original service department was located at 900 Broadway, although it appears to have been the second floor with entry from the rear alley.

The building represents a blend of Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival stylistic detailing from the 1910s and 1920s. These styles were most prevalent in the southwest, such as California and Texas, as well as in Florida – all locations once under Spanish rule and influence.<sup>51</sup> Mission style buildings vary between symmetrical and asymmetrical subtypes, but have dormers or parapets mimicking the shapes of missions dating to the Spanish Colonial period. Patterned tiles, carved stonework, and/or small surface ornaments are typically the only decorative

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<sup>44</sup> Coote, Robert James, *The Eclectic Odyssey of Atlee B. Ayres, Architect*. Texas A&M University Press: College Station, 2001, page 3.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, page 3.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, pages 4-7.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, page 30.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, page 7.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, pages 68-69.

<sup>50</sup> Hardy-Heck-Moore, "The Development of Highways in Texas: A Historic Context of the Bankhead Highway and Other Historic Named Highways", page 499. Available at

<http://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/highways/auto%20businesses%20updated%20pictoral%20table%20property%20types-4.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> McAlester, Virginia Savage., *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Knopf: New York, 2013, pages 511 – 518; 521 - 534

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detailing for the style, instead favoring the more simplistic approach of the original missions that served as inspiration.<sup>52</sup>

Typically, Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was not generally associated with traditional commercial buildings. Outside of its use in residential design, this style was more typically associated with train depots in the southwest as well as institutional and civic buildings. A couple of the other 1920s automobile dealerships still extant along Broadway retain Spanish Revival influences, such as Spanish tile roofing and floral details. The three-story former Sanderson Motor Company building at 1100 Broadway, included in the Meridian Highway Survey with a 1926 construction date has minimal details, particularly on the pilasters, but is overall less ornate than Poe Motor Company. At 501 Broadway, formerly the San Antonio Buick Company (now KLRN, San Antonio's PBS affiliate) is an example of the floral string course and tile detail on the parapet wall. This building, also included in the Meridian Highway Survey, was constructed circa 1925 and has simplified, two-story Solomonic (spiraled) columns flanking paired windows and a course of decorative stucco swags visually divide the first floor from the upper two floors. While both have been converted for new uses, the Sanderson Motor Company building retains the look of a former dealership while the San Antonio Buick Company building does not. Both 501 Broadway and 1100 Broadway have elements of Spanish Colonial Revival style, however, Poe Motor Company has primary façade details, such as the Churrigueresque cast stone entry, that are more elaborate than the other buildings. The Poe Motor Company Building is also the only "Automobile Row" building with overtly Mission style details, specifically the parapet influenced by the Alamo.

### Will N. Noonan & Company

The Poe Motor Company building was designed by Will N. Noonan & Company and with C. H. Brient as the contractor.<sup>53</sup> Will Nelson Noonan was born on March 13, 1885 in Castroville, Texas to William and Abby Noonan. Little is known about him, but he designed several buildings in and around San Antonio between the early twentieth century including churches and several commercial buildings.<sup>54</sup> A few notable works include the 1925 First Baptist Church in San Antonio (NRHP 2018), the 1927 Schwartz House in Uvalde (RTHL 1997), the 1938 Nicolas Street School in Uvalde (NRHP 2010), and the 1930 City Hall in Uvalde.<sup>55</sup> He was listed as a practicing architect in city directories as late as 1960 when he retired.<sup>56</sup> Noonan passed away in Dallas, Texas on March 5, 1971.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> McAlester, page 511.

<sup>53</sup> Research on architect and contractor located through assistance from Stephen Fox. "San Antonio: Will N. Noonan Co., architect, preparing plans for 2-sy, 95x140 concrete garage for H. T. Wilson," *Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Journal*, (January 7, 1926): 23; "San Antonio: Dr. H. T. Wilson awards contract to C. H. Brient for 2-sy, 95x140 concrete garage, 9<sup>th</sup> and Broadway," *Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Journal*, (March 7, 1926): 33.

<sup>54</sup> "U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942 for Will Nelson Noonan," *Ancestry.com*, accessed September 5, 2018, [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1002/004150993\\_03208?pid=12529690&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D1002%26h%3D12529690%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26\\_phsrc%3DRbo35%26\\_phstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=Rbo35&\\_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1002/004150993_03208?pid=12529690&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D1002%26h%3D12529690%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26_phsrc%3DRbo35%26_phstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Rbo35&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true).

<sup>55</sup> Edwards, Corey, Hay, Jenny, Guerra, Claudia, and Gregory Smith, San Antonio Downtown and Riverwalk Historic District National Register Nomination, on file at Texas Historical Commission, December 2017; "Schwartz House (Recorded Texas Historic Landmark 12257, Atlas Number 5463012257)," *Texas Historic Sites Atlas*, accessed September 5, 2018.

<sup>56</sup> "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995 for Will N. Noonan, San Antonio, Texas. City Directory, 1960," pg 74, *Ancestry.com*, accessed September 5, 2018, [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/2469/5047606?pid=1122626673&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D2469%26h%3D1122626673%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26\\_phsrc%3DRbo41%26\\_phstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=Rbo41&\\_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/2469/5047606?pid=1122626673&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D2469%26h%3D1122626673%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26_phsrc%3DRbo41%26_phstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Rbo41&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true).

<sup>57</sup> "Texas, Death Certificates, 1903-1982 for Will Nelson Noonan 1971," *Ancestry.com*, accessed September 5, 2018, [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/2272/33154\\_b062824-01724?pid=1551419&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D2272%26h%3D1551419%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26\\_phsrc%3DCzO428%26\\_phstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=CzO428&\\_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/2272/33154_b062824-01724?pid=1551419&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D2272%26h%3D1551419%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26_phsrc%3DCzO428%26_phstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=CzO428&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true); "Noonan," *San Antonio Express and News*, March 7, 1971.



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Two other projects designed by Noonan in San Antonio can serve as comparisons for the Poe Motor Company. Noonan designed the two-story REO Motor Car Company at 801 Broadway Street in 1926. This building was constructed of reinforced concrete with large storefront windows and Spanish Revival detailing including cast stone ornamentation very similar to the design of the Poe Motor Company. However, it appears the building was stuccoed and many of the character defining features were modified including the windows, doors, and parapet (Figures 17-18).<sup>58</sup> The 1926 Quick Tire Service, Inc. building at 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Avenue E was also designed by Noonan with Spanish and Mission Revival influences. While it's hard to tell if the two-story building was originally stuccoed, it clearly featured a raised Mission-style parapet, Solomonic columns, cast stone detailing, and large storefronts. This building was also heavily modified which removed many important characteristics including the enclosure of the inset service area (Figures 19-20).<sup>59</sup> Thus, Poe Motor Company retains a high level of integrity compared to these other 1920s buildings and stands out as a remarkably intact example of Noonan's work.

### Summary

Poe Motor Company is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Commerce and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The property is the most intact and stylized 1920s automobile dealership with Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival architectural features remaining along "Automobile Row" in San Antonio. Designed by Will N. Noonan & Company, the building demonstrates the importance of the automobile in an era prior to the Interstate system. It reflects the appearance of auto-oriented development built in what was then the outer fringes of the urban core and strategically located to serve motorists as they left downtown to their houses in the newer neighborhoods. The Period of Significance is 1926-1968.

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<sup>58</sup> "New Home of Reo at Broadway and Eighth Will Be One of the Most Modern Automobile Buildings Here," *San Antonio Express*, January 31, 1926, 2 C.

<sup>59</sup> "At Last: A Realization," *San Antonio Express*, April 19, 1926, 14.

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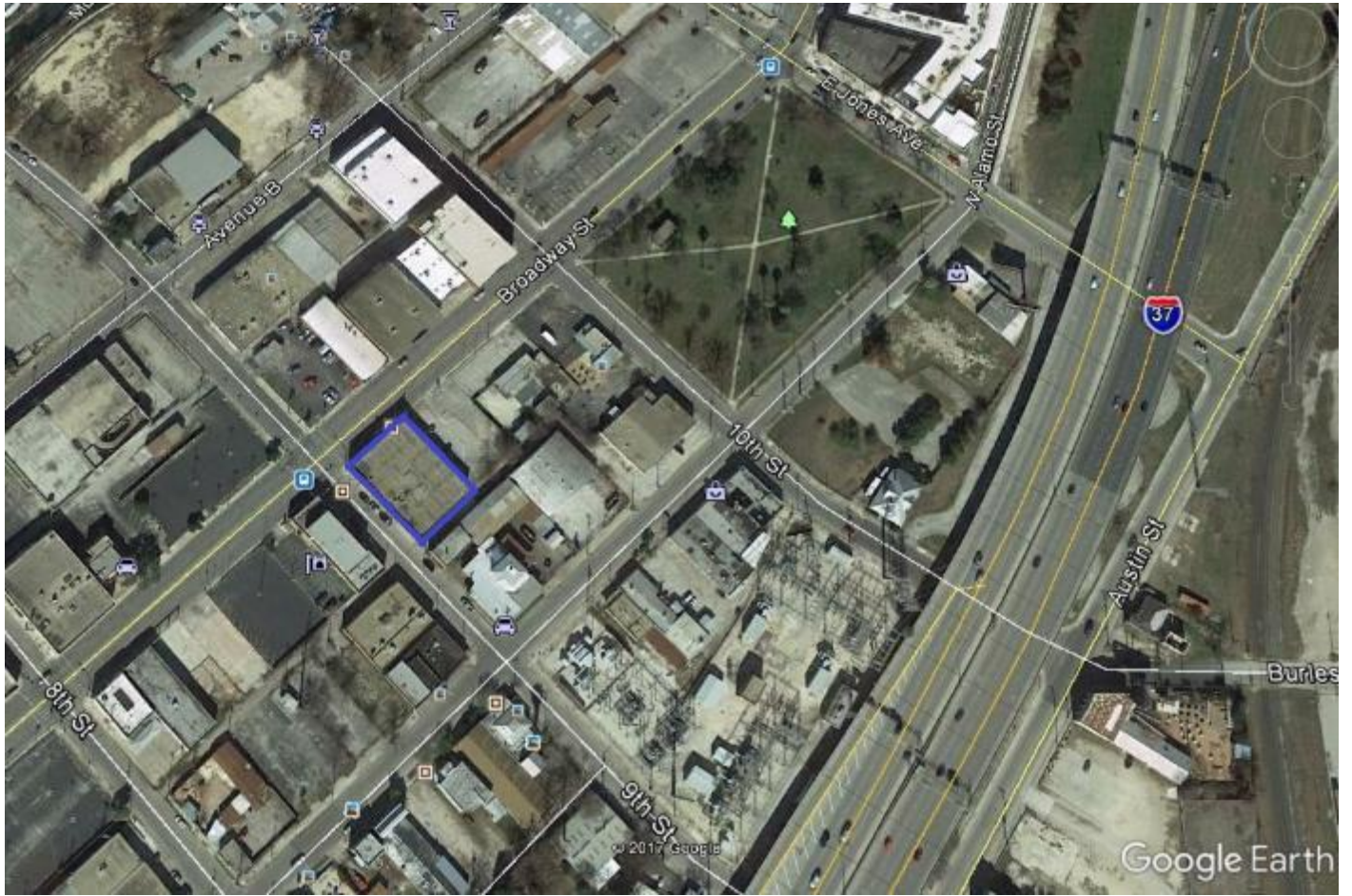


Map 1: Bexar County, Texas



Map 2: Google Earth, Accessed June 26, 2017

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas



Map 3: Aerial map; property outlined in blue.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

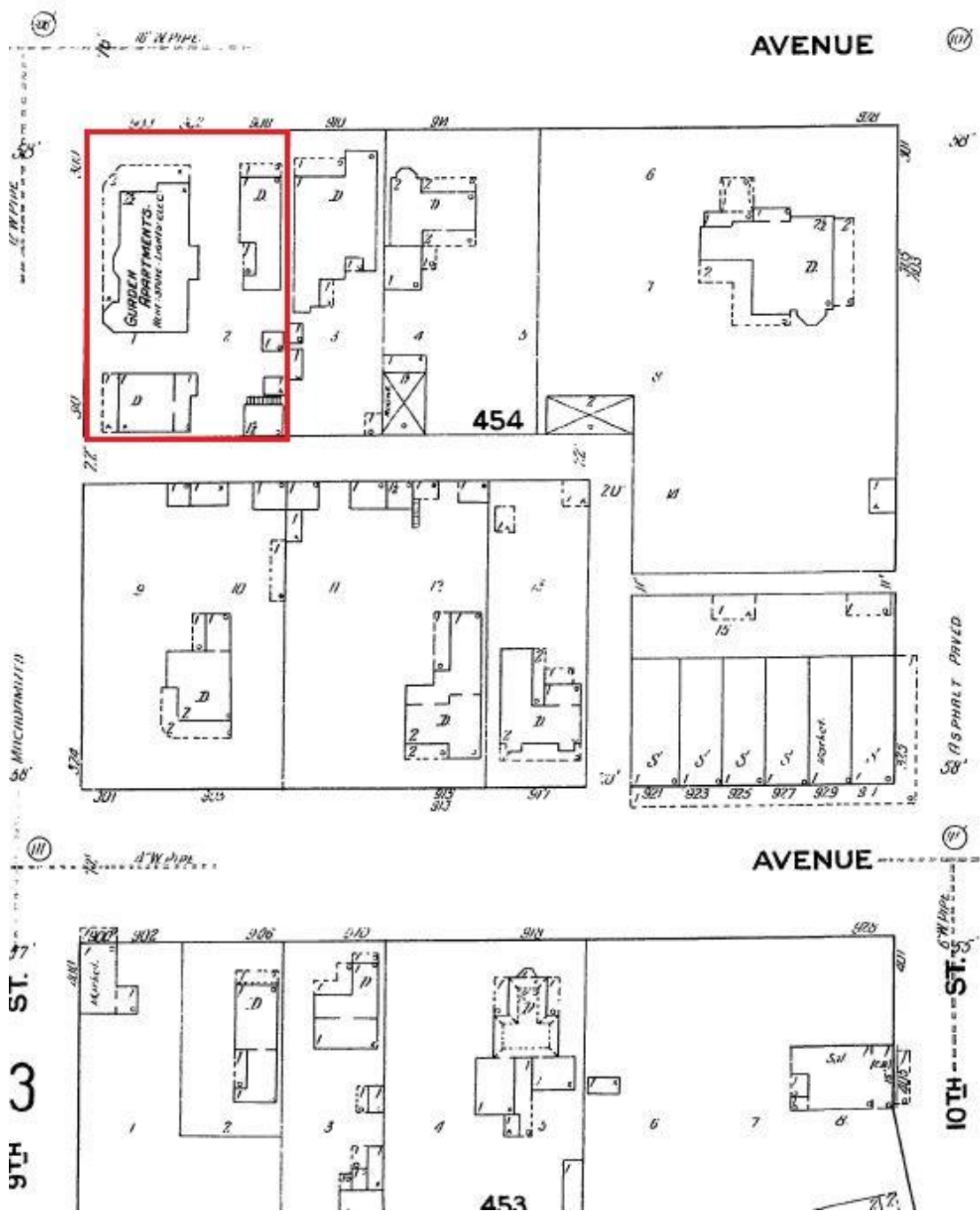


Figure 1: Sanborn Map, San Antonio, Volume 2, 1912 Sheet 154

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

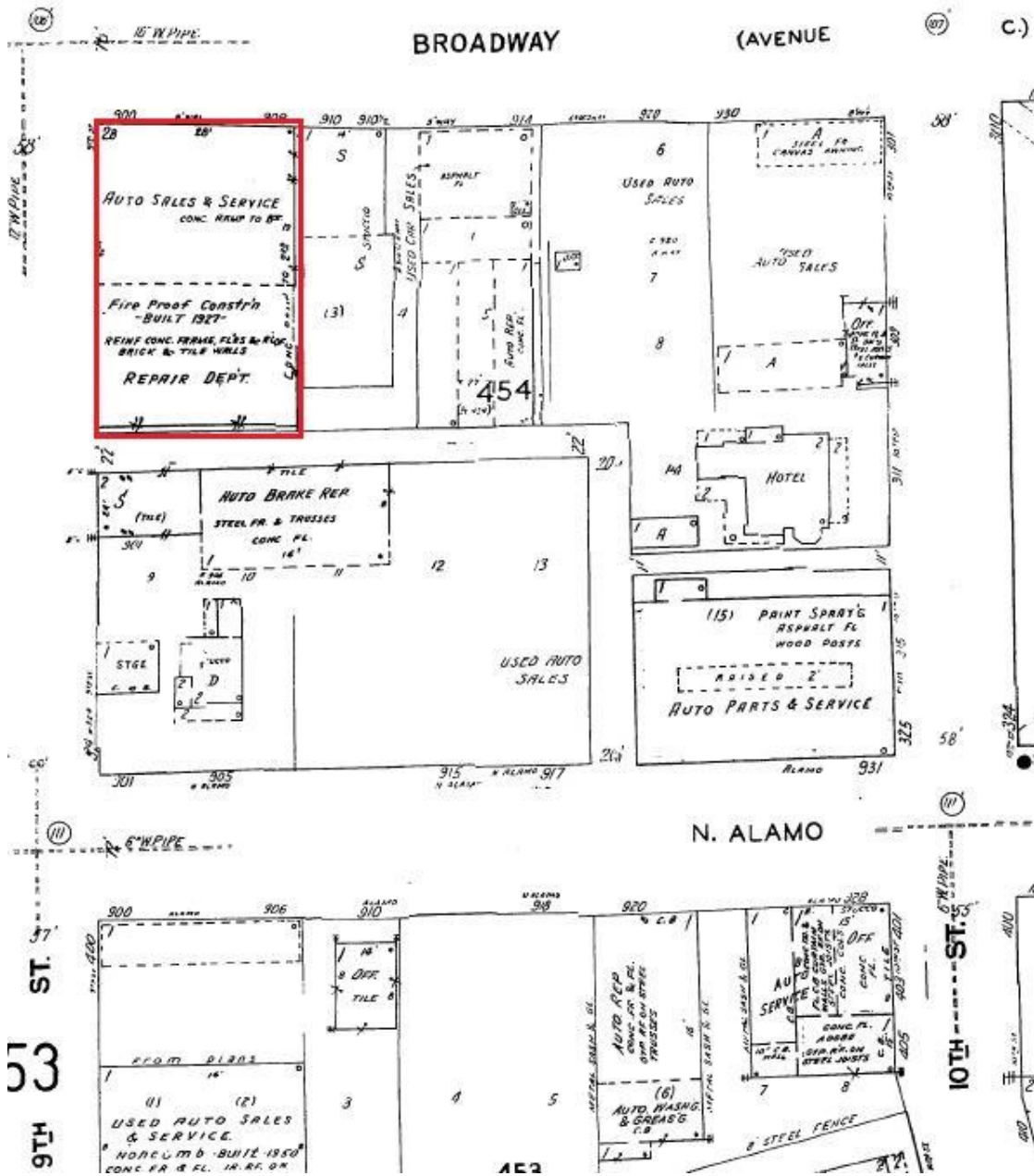


Figure 2: Sanborn Map, San Antonio, Volume 2, 1912-January 1951 Sheet 154

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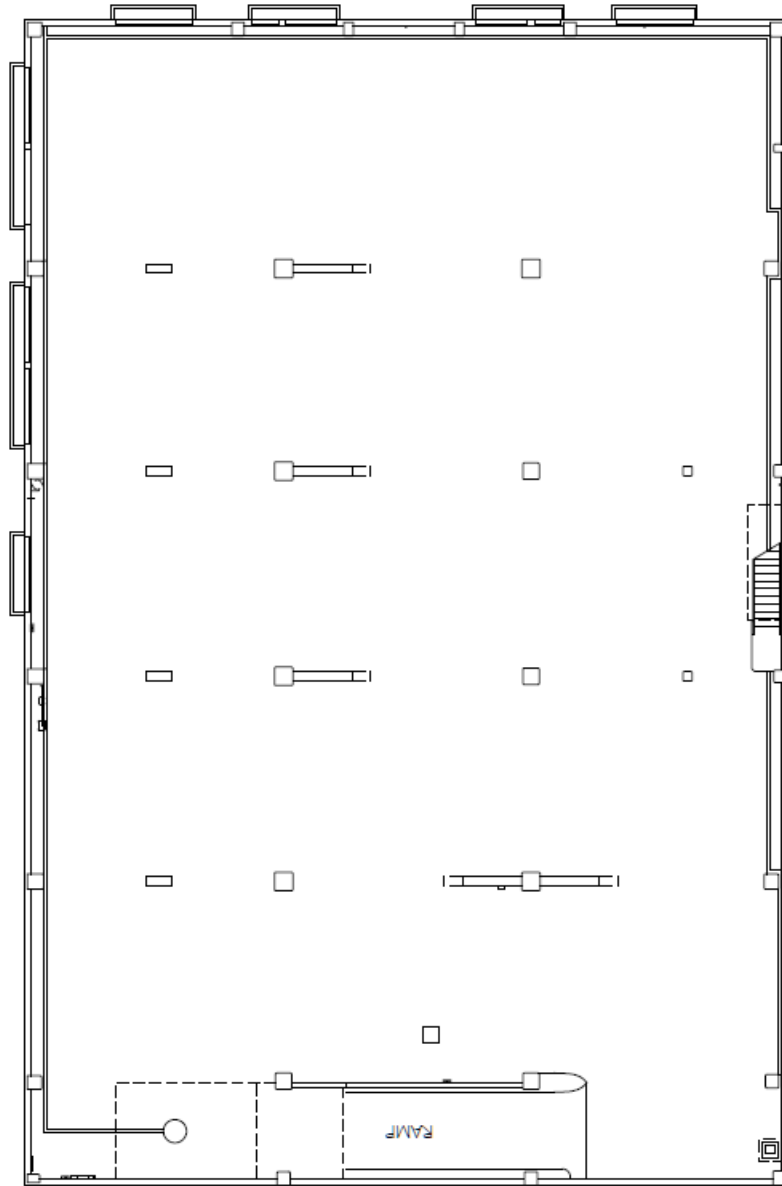


Figure 3: Existing Basement Plan. Courtesy of Open Studio Architecture. N ↑



Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

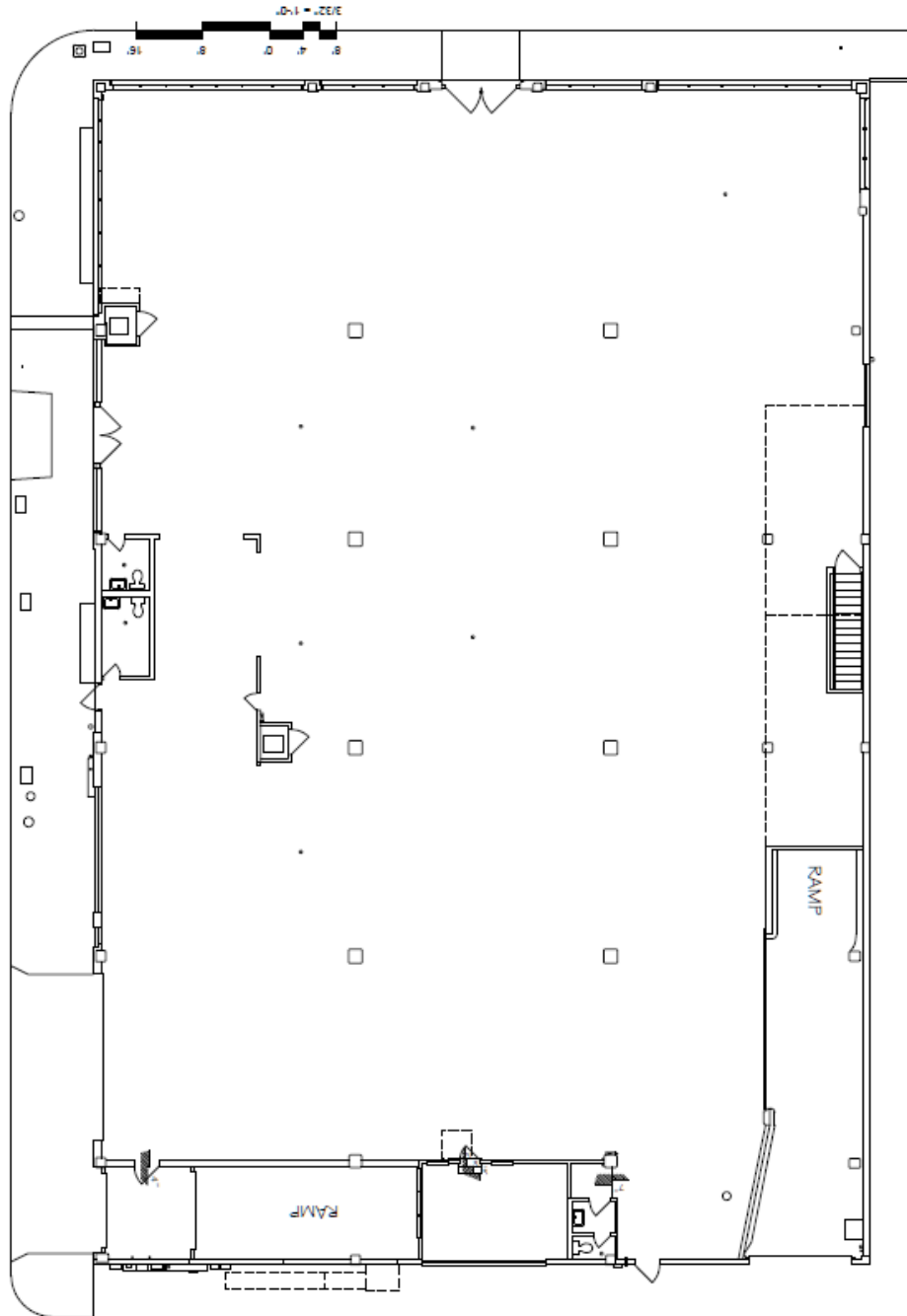


Figure 4: Existing First Floor Plan. Courtesy of Open Studio Architecture. N ↑

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

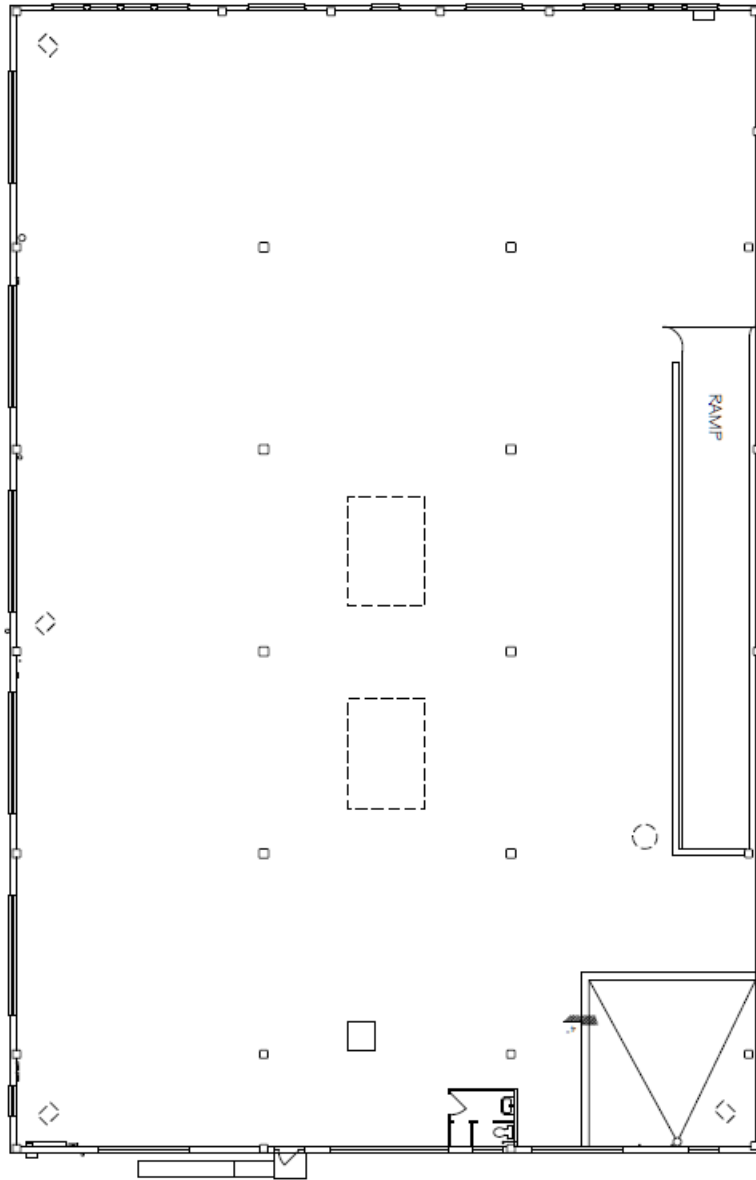


Figure 5: Existing 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Plan. Courtesy of Open Studio Architecture. N ↑

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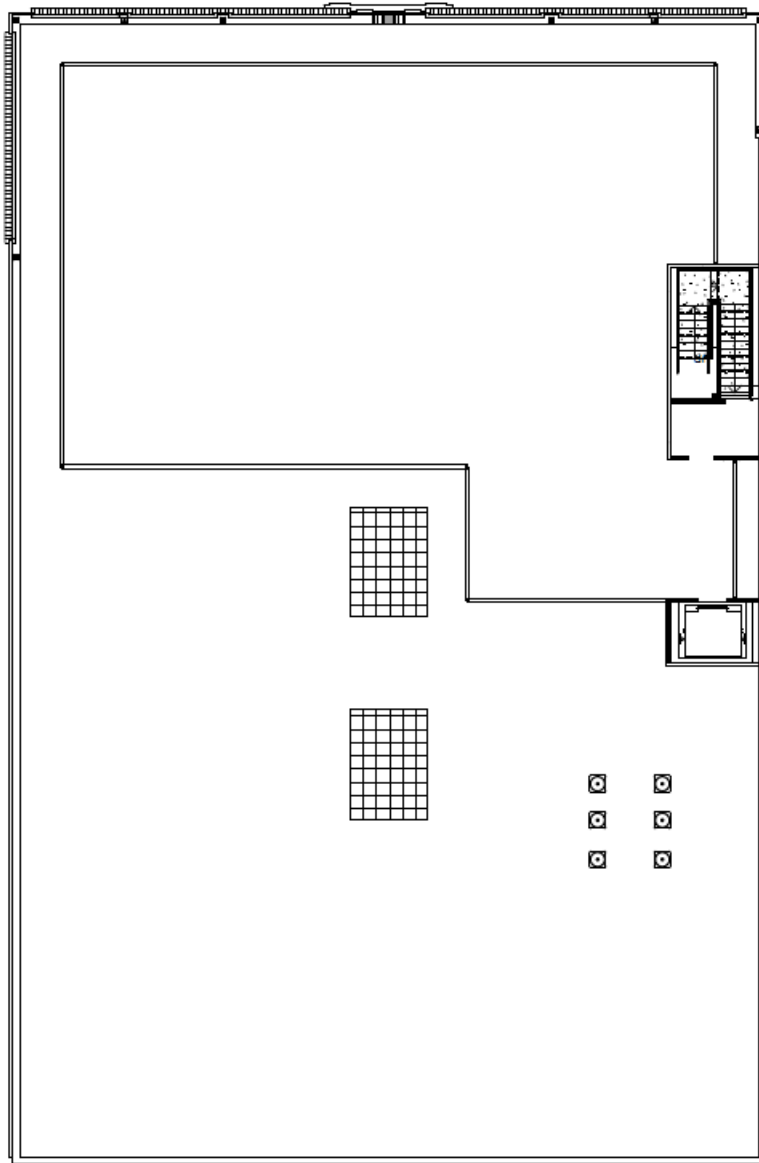


Figure 6: Existing Roof Plan. Courtesy of Open Studio Architecture. N ↑

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

# An Apology

The management of the San Antonio Overland Co. wish to publicly give expression of regret on account of our inability to serve promptly and efficiently the thousands of our friends and patrons who visited our store for the first showing of Willys-Overland's latest and greatest creation

## The Whippet

The personnel of our sales organization has been increased and strengthened to care for the unprecedented demand for this most unusual new type automobile.

Any who were disappointed in securing full information or a demonstration are invited to phone Cr. 1425 and a courteous salesman will call at your office or home at the earliest possible moment.

## San Antonio Overland Co.

305 Broadway  
Frank A. Winerich, Pres. I. D. McKee, Mgr.  
New Home 900 Broadway After Sept. 1st.

Figure 7: San Antonio Overland Company advertisement, *San Antonio Light*, July 19, 1926, page 5.

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**ANNOUNCEMENT!**

*Knight-Overland Co.*  
900 BROADWAY

Changes Firm Name To  
*Murray-Winerich Motor Co.*

No Change In Management—  
Personnel or Location—

*Murray-Winerich Motor Co.*  
Distributors Whippet and Willys-Knight Automobiles

900 Broadway Cr. 2244      (Branch) 1329-35 S. Flores St. Cr. 7587  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Figure 8: Newspaper advertisement announcing name change from Knight-Overland Company to Murray-Winerich Motor Company, *San Antonio Light*, September 2, 1928

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Opening Evenings and Sunday

# BARGAIN BIGGER

# BASEMENT BARGAINS

Every car marked with plain figures and at Bargain Prices. You be the judge of their real value and then consult the price tag. Cars conveniently arranged, so that they can be easily inspected from every detail.

1920 Chevrolet Sport Coupe 1920 Whippet 4 Coupe 1920 Willys 6 Sport Roadster 1927 Buick Standard Coupe 1920 Essex 6 Coach 1920 Whippet 6 4-door Sedan 1928 Willys-Knight Great 6 Roadster 1924 Overland Touring	1928 Oldsmobile Coach 1920 Whippet 6 Coupe 1920 Willys-Knight 70B Sedan 1926 Chrysler 70 Coach 1928 Willys-Knight 56 Sedan 1920 Whippet 6 Coach 1924 Ford Coupe 1928 Whippet 6 Sport Roadster
--	--

MANY OTHERS TO SELECT FROM

Don't Forget the BARGAIN BASEMENT  
**900 Broadway**  
 (Corner Broadway and 9th)

**MURRAY-WINERICH MOTOR CO.**  
 Willys-Knight and Whippet Distributors  
 Open Sunday Phone Crockett 2244 Open Evenings

Figure 9: Murray-Winerich Motor Company used car advertisement, *San Antonio Light*, October 5, 1930, page 6.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

# SEE THE NEW WILLYS CARS

## Price Reductions \$700<sup>00</sup> to

WILLYSIGHT DE LUXE SEDAN





WILLYSIGHT DE LUXE SEDAN



See the NEW WILLYS Cars for 31

Price Reductions \$700

A BIG SIX CYLINDER A FOUR  
 A NEW POWERFUL A FINEST WILLYS A



MURRAY MOTOR SALES CO.

WILLYS SIX STANDARD SEDAN



# MURRAY MOTOR SALES CO.

J. ROY MURRAY, President

900 BROADWAY CROCKETT 2244

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

WILLYS SIX DE LUXE SEDAN



WILLYS & WILLYS-KNIGHT DEALERS, SAN ANTONIO TERRITORY, AS OF APRIL 13, 1931:

Adkins Motor Co.	Alamo	San Antonio	W. T. Anderson	San Antonio	W. T. Anderson	San Antonio
Allen Motor Co.	Alamo	San Antonio	W. T. Anderson	San Antonio	W. T. Anderson	San Antonio
...	...	...	...	...	...	...

WILLYS SIX STANDARD SEDAN



# MURRAY MOTOR SALES CO.

J. ROY MURRAY, President

900 BROADWAY CROCKETT 2244

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

WILLYS SIX DE LUXE SEDAN



Figure 10: Murray Motor Sales Company Advertisement, *San Antonio Light*, May 17, 1931 Page 12. Courtesy University of Texas at San Antonio Special Collections.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

**AUTO CRASHES INTO WINDOW**

O. J. Bihn, 703 West French place, was injured by flying glass and several other persons narrowly escaped serious injury when a car driven by Bihn got out of control and crashed through a plate glass window at the Marcus Clark Motors company, 900 Broadway.

Bihn was attempting to avoid collision with another automobile when his own car got out of control, jumped the curb and passed through the window and onto the demonstration floor.

Bihn, an employe of the San Antonio Motors company, 801 Broadway, was taken to the Nix hospital.

**Farmers Cheered by General Rain**

Farmers over a wide area around San Antonio Thursday were rejoicing over the heavy rain of Wednesday. Bandera reported nearly two inches of precipitation.

Other communities reporting were: New Braunfels, 1.66; Devine, 1.53; Lytle, over 2 inches; Temple, 1.46; Gonzales and Lagrange, 1.31; Alice, Austin and Duval, .92; Carrizo Springs, .54; Columbus, 1.41; Corpus Christi, .20; Cuero, 1.30; Marble Falls, .95, and Kerrville, .32.

Del Rio reported the rain did not reach there.

**Hondo Girl Named Art Club President**

Annette Rothe of Hondo Thursday had been elected president of the Dramatic Art club, Delta Alpha Kappa, of Our Lady of the Lake college. Other officers named were

**AND THE GLASS FLEW**



**POLICEMAN SURVEYS DAMAGE TO WINDOW AT M ARCUS CLARK MOTORS**  
Man injured as car crashes through window at 900 Broadway avoiding collision.

Figure 11: "Auto Crashes into Window and the Glass Flew," *San Antonio Light*, October 14, 1937 Page 16-A.



Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

**BIG  
EXPANSION  
PROGRAM**  
.....  
**THE A. B. POE MOTOR CO.**  
CHRYSLER-PLYMOUTH DISTRIBUTORS  
MOVES INTO THEIR NEW AND LARGER HOME AT  
**900 BROADWAY**  
FORMAL OPENING - MONDAY, JANUARY 9th  
EVERYONE IS CORDIALLY INVITED

**O**UR reception and the public acceptance of the 1939 Chrysler and Plymouth line of motor cars has been far beyond our fondest dreams, and we very quickly realized that we would necessarily have to look for larger and more spacious quarters to enable us to render the public the kind of service they are entitled to, and to give this great line of Chrysler and Plymouth cars the high type of representation they so richly deserve.

**I**t is our sincere aim to make this one of the finest Chrysler-Plymouth distributorships in the entire southwest, one in keeping with San Antonio and Southwest Texas, a service too, that you will appreciate.

**THANK YOU....**  
To the many motorists of San Antonio and trade territory who I have not had the pleasure of meeting personally, I extend a special invitation to visit us in our new location. We will be pleased to see you.  
E. A. POE,  
General Manager.

Figure 12: Newspaper article announcing A. B. Poe Motor Company's new location, *The San Antonio Light*, January 8, 1939

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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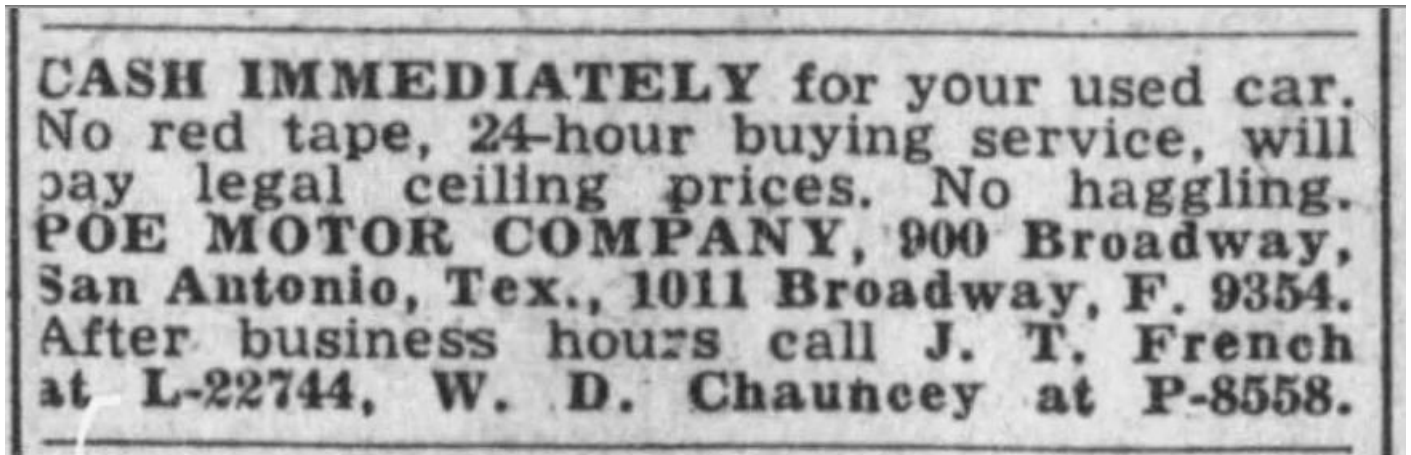


Figure 13: *Shiner Gazette* (Shiner, Texas), Thursday, Mar 22, 1945, Page 7

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas



Z-0908-A-4

900 block BROADWAY 1948

Figure 14: 900 Block of Broadway, 1948, view northwest. Courtesy University of Texas at San Antonio Special Collections.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

**LOOK! LOOK!**  
**VALIANT**  
START AT  
**\$1898**



**PLYMOUTH**  
START AT  
**\$2048**



**CHRYSLER**  
For A  
Sedan  
4-Door



36 MONTH OR  
35,000 MILE WARRANTY

**RIEGER MOTORS**  
SAN ANTONIO'S OLDEST CHRYSLER PLYMOUTH DEALER  
900 BROADWAY CA 6-9354  
OPEN 'TIL 8 NITES

121

Figure 15: Rieger Motors advertisement, *San Antonio Express and News*, April 21, 1962, Page 35.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

## Superior Pontiac

### \$200 to \$300 BELOW SAN ANTONIO MARKET SALE! \$250,000 INVENTORY

'71 Pontiac Grand Prix. The way leaves place of equipment. \$ for SUNO \$ 3995	'69 Camaro. Loaded. This car is a real white car is a Sport Car \$ 2595
'70 Old. Loaded, one owner. Two-1 standard shift. One of other automatic \$ 2495	'71 Chevrolet Vega. Two-1 shift \$ 2895
'70 Buick Wildcat 4-door \$ 3495 Loaded. The way it is	'70 Cadillac. Two-1 shift. It's new. \$ for \$ 2595
'68 Buick Wildcat. One owner. One of other \$ 1895	'69 Pontiac Firebird. One owner. \$ for \$ 2095
'69 Buick Wildcat. One owner. Fully equipped. Only one shift. \$ for \$ 2795	'67 Chevrolet Nova. 2-door. \$ for \$ 1295
'68 Buick Wildcat. One owner. One of other. \$ 1795	'70 Old. \$ 1550
'71 Opel Mercury. White with black vinyl top. Air cond. \$ 2195	

**NOW HEAR THIS** I've got \$150,000 worth of cars  
 NOT mentioned in this ad on sale.

'71 60HP EVANRUDE with 71 Buick roller on '68 highway 117  
 with 1000. In top. go look. \$1995

Open til 9 P.M. **227-5046** \$20. Holds any car  
**WHOLE BLOCK—900 BROADWAY**  
 YOU HAVE TRIED THE REST NOW  
**P.S. TRY THE BEST. SIGNED: DAVE CLARK**

Figure 16: Superior Pontiac advertisement, *San Antonio Express and News*, September 26, 1971, Page 52.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

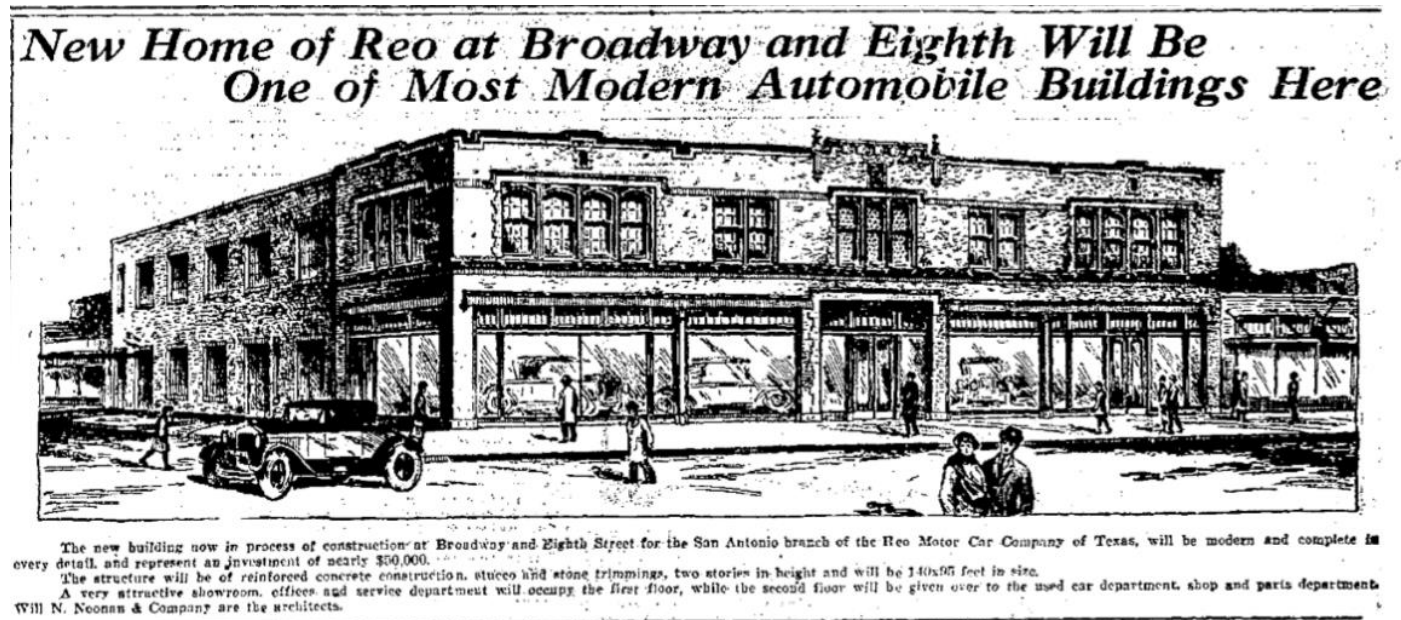


Figure 17: 1926 REO Motor Car Company, designed by Will N. Noonan & Company. Courtesy *San Antonio Express*, January 31, 1926.



Figure 18: Former REO Motor Company. Courtesy Google Street View.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

## *At Last: A Realization*



### **FORMAL OPENING** **SATURDAY MARCH 20th**

**W**E extend to our friends and the motoring public a cordial invitation to visit our New Home.

**4th Street at Avenue E**

**FREE!**  
**5 U. S. Tires Will Be**  
**Given Away Opening Day**

**Quick Tire Service, Inc.**  
*United States Tires*

**4th Street at Avenue E : : : Phone Crockett 515**

Figure 19: 1926 Quick Tire Service, Inc. designed by Will N. Noonan & Company, Courtesy *San Antonio Express*, March 19, 1926.

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 20: Former Quick Tire Service, Courtesy Google Street View



Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 1: Poe Motor Company, northwest and southwest elevations, view east

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 2: Poe Motor Company, northwest elevation, view southeast

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 3: Poe Motor Company, southwest elevation, view east

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 4: Poe Motor Company, northeast elevation, view southwest

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 5: Poe Motor Company, southeast elevation, view west

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 6: Poe Motor Company, interior, first floor

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 7: Poe Motor Company, interior, vehicular ramp, view from second floor

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 8: Poe Motor Company, interior, second floor



Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 9: Poe Motor Company, interior, second floor, skylight detail

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 10: Poe Motor Company, interior, basement

Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 11: Poe Motor Company, northwest elevation entry detail, view southeast





MOVES

SALE

SALE

SALE

SALE

SALE

SALE

Ninth  
4200 3000













MATIONES









BROADWAY & 5TH  
Antiques

OPEN

Closed  
Sunday & Monday

OPEN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination  
Property Name: Poe Motor Company  
Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
State & County: TEXAS, Bexar

Date Received: 9/20/2018 Date of Pending List: 10/17/2018 Date of 16th Day: 11/1/2018 Date of 45th Day: 11/5/2018 Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100003073

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept     Return     Reject    11/5/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Poe Motor Company is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce and Architecture. The 13,464 square-foot, two-story, reinforced concrete, brick veneered commercial building is a fine local example of early twentieth century Period Revival-style (Spanish Colonial/Mission Revival) commercial design. In particular, the 1926 building retains characteristic features of the auto showroom property type, with large street-facing display windows, interior ramps, large open volume interiors, and overbuilt concrete structural elements. Part of San Antonio's early twentieth century "automobile row" the building reflects the dynamic period of historic growth in car ownership and travel, and the resulting development of commercial operations to serve that demand.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 11/5/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

*real places telling real stories*



TO: Paul Lusignan  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

From: Mark Wolfe, SHPO  
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

DATE: September 11, 2018

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Poe Motor Company, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF
	Correspondence.

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do\_\_\_) (do not\_\_\_) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

