

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received **OCT 28 1983**  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Hotel Capital LC13:C9-109

and/or common Capital Hotel; YMCA Building

2. Location

street & number 139 North 11th Street N/A not for publication

city, town Lincoln N/A vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Lancaster code 109

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: housing

4. Owner of Property

name Lincoln YMCA

street & number 139 North 11th Street

city, town Lincoln N/A vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lancaster County Register of Deeds

street & number 555 South 10th Street

city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date On-going  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date NA

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The former Capital Hotel is an eleven-story, rectangular building of brick and concrete construction with brick exterior walls having limestone and cast-concrete trim. Erected in 1925, the Georgian Revival Capital Hotel has eleven bays fronting North 11th Street (east wall) and three bays facing P Street (north wall). A one-story, six bay wing on the west was razed in 1969.

The former Capital Hotel is an eleven-story, rectangular building located at the southwest corner of 11th and P streets in Lincoln, Nebraska (1980 pop., 172,000). Lincoln's main thoroughfare, O Street, is one block south, and the main campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is two blocks north.

Construction is of brick and concrete, with exterior walls being dark brick and having limestone and cast-concrete trim. Georgian Revival detailing is used in the forms of quoins, diminutive blind balustrade sections, Ionic pilasters, classical window surrounds, panels, stringcourses, and stone urns.

All openings are rectangular, including those of the ground level, which have been modified. Upper-level windows originally were 8-over-1-pane, and 6-over-1-pane, double-hung sash, but they were replaced with the present units in 1970.

The roof is flat, and there is a continuous, stone-coped parapet that rises to broken swan's-neck pediments at the corners. Atop the building is a cubic penthouse that contains elevator machinery and a water storage tank.

The architect and builder, the H.L. Stevens company from Chicago, originally conceived the Hotel Capital as a U-shaped structure. The 1926 construction involved the erection of an 11-story, rectangular-shaped hotel tower with a 1-story, 6-bay wing on the west. The 1-story wing contained the hotel kitchen, a barber shop, a billiard parlor, and general small retail spaces. Envisioned later construction, however, would have seen the erection of an L-shaped tower of 10 stories atop the 1-story wing, creating a U-shaped structure with a 1-story, 3-bay section filling the core. Such construction, however, never occurred, and the 1-story wing was razed in 1969. On its site was built a 6-story recreational facility of cast-concrete construction with brick exterior walls. A lower section connects the former hotel with the wing's replacement. Simultaneously, the hotel tower was extensively renovated, with no interior features having any historic interest remaining. Changes to the hotel included modification of the shopfront openings on the ground floor. Importantly, these modifications were primarily a simplification of the original which preserved the bay spacing in a manner which is generally compatible with the character of the building.

On May 8, 1983, the Lincoln Sunday Journal and Star informed its readers about conversion plans for the Capital Hotel:

The renovation will include replacement of the windows with custom, double-glazed wood units much like the originals; insulation of the inside of the building's shell for energy conservation; and the complete replacement of mechanical and electrical systems, elevators, and fire protection systems ("YMCA Hotel Redevelopment to Fill Housing Need," pp.1 and 4).

The above description is a summary of the rehabilitation described in Part 2 of the Historic Preservation Certification Application, submitted to the National Park Service in Denver earlier this year. In a response dated May 20, 1983, the Park Service stated that the proposed rehabilitation project as described meets the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation".

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	

Specific dates 1926-1967

Builder/Architect H.L.Stevens & Co., Architects & Engineers

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The former Capital Hotel is architecturally significant to the City of Lincoln as a fine product of the Georgian Revival style. The building also attains local significance in the field of commerce through its provision of affordable hotel lodging in downtown Lincoln for over four decades.

The Hotel Capital opened during the midst of considerable public excitement on May 19, 1926. The building was constructed at a cost of \$600,000, and although equipped with all modern conveniences of the era, it was operated from the start as a popularly-priced establishment.

The hotel contained 200 rooms, and as much local materials as possible went into its construction: nothing which could be purchased in Lincoln was obtained elsewhere. Upon opening, the hotel received much attention. On May 16, 1926, the Lincoln Sunday Star featured a special "Hotel Capital Section," which declared the following:

The new commercial skyline of Lincoln represents something more than improvement, beauty, comfort, and convenience. Its new peaks proudly rear their heads above the buildings adequate for the village of yesterday, but antiquated for the forward-looking City of today and tomorrow. They represent Faith.

Interestingly, the Capital Hotel opened less than two months before the larger and grander Cornhusker Hotel (destroyed in 1981). Construction of the two Hotels were announced within 10 days of each other. At the meeting announcing the Capital, the representative for the individual propping the construction of the Capital stated that he was "here to kill the erection of the other hotel if possible" and that he "would be willing to pay a considerable sum to have the erection of any hotel postponed for two or three years..." (Evening State Journal, June 2, 1925 p.1). The ten-story, U-shaped Cornhusker was also a Georgian Revival design, and had brick exterior walls with limestone trim. Today, the former Capital Hotel is Lincoln's most substantial Georgian Revival building.

The Georgian Revival, which strove to be stately and formal, came into being in the late 19th century and continued well into the 20th century. Making use of various sources, it changed over time, and it was adapted to widely different building programs. At first, the revival was employed almost exclusively for residential architecture. Soon, though, it was adapted to skyscrapers, and Philadelphia appropriately became the site of such: the Curtis Publishing Co. Building, 1908; and the Public Ledger Building, 1922. And in the 1920's, several large Georgian Revival insurance company buildings were erected in Philadelphia also; among them the Insurance Company of North America Building, 1922.

In a two-volume work entitled The Colonial Revival, William Rhoads provides the following pertinent information:

The first important example of a full-fledged Georgian Revival hotel was McKim, Mead, and White's Garden City Hotel on Long Island. Built in 1900 to replace an earlier hotel that had burned in 1899. . . the new hotel was dominated by a Georgian tower modeled after Independence Hall's but with certain 'improvements' in the way of richer classical ornament, more plastic treatment of the walls, and a more ordered fenestration (p.292).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Lincoln, Nebraska

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	4	6	9	3	5	2	0	4	5	2	0	4	8	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Commencing at the Northeast corner of Lot A., Imhoff and Hyatt's Subdivision, of Lots 1, 2, and 3, Block 42, Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska; thence West along (continued)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
-------	-----	------	-----	--------	-----	------	-----

state		code		county		code	
-------	--	------	--	--------	--	------	--

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Daniel Kidd, Historic Preservation Officer

organization Lancaster Co./Lincoln City Planning Dept. date 1983

street & number 555 South 10th Street telephone 402/471-7491

city or town Lincoln state Nebraska

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Mary K. Knott* 10/26/83

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Beth Grosvenor*  
Keeper of the National Register

date

*12/5/83*

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

And Rhoads continues with the following:

New York's Vanderbilt Hotel (1910-12) by Warren and Wetmore was a towering rectilinear mass without setbacks and with Adamesque ornament. As Marcus Whiffen has pointed out, the 'accepted solution' to the problem of the Georgian skyscraper . . . was to concentrate ornament on the top and bottom stories while the middle ones were left 'to look after themselves'. . . By 1913 when the Architectural Review published a survey of hotels, the Adam (or Georgian) style had become popular as an alternative to the still dominant French academic type (p. 293).

The "solution" above that Rhoads quotes from Whiffen was applied to the Capital Hotel. Ornament is limited to the second, third, and fourth, and to the tenth and eleventh stories; those between are cleanly treated, except at the corners.

In 1962, Lincolnite Bennett S. Martin purchased the Capital Hotel from the Sheraton Corporation, placing the building under local ownership for the first time. In 1966, Martin and his wife donated the building to the Lincoln YMCA, which demolished the one-story west wing and converted a number of rooms to office and recreational uses. Retained, however, were 144 rooms for hotel use. The hotel operation ceased in June, 1983, and the building is undergoing conversion: 49 rental residential units will occupy the upper nine floors, while the YMCA's offices will remain in the lower levels.

The Capital Hotel is the last remaining older hotel building in Lincoln's central business district that retains significant architectural integrity. Directly north is the former Sam Lawrence Hotel, an eclectic survivor from the late 1800's. But this structure has suffered numerous mutations and does not retain enough of its significant design to be recognizable from its era of construction.

When the Capital Hotel operation ceased in 1967, the local press hailed it as a "landmark building" and summarized its beginnings as such: "It was opened in May of 1926 for the modern traveling man in the last days of the Model T" ("Capital Hotel Will Close Its Doors Jan. 1," December, 1967 - source unknown). Forty-five years earlier, the press had proclaimed the following: "Lincoln's fine new hotels are bound to be an influence in making Lincoln a 'stop-over' town for tourists in the future . . . The certainty of being able to secure comfortable hotel accommodations at a moderate price will be an important factor in drawing much business to our city" (The New Capital --America's Finest Popular Priced Hotel," The Lincoln State Journal, Sunday, May 9, 1926 p.6).

For four and one-half decades the Capital Hotel significantly served the City of Lincoln as an affordable place of short-term lodging in the downtown area.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography      ITEM NUMBER 9      PAGE 2

---

Butler, Mike. "Mayor Pledges to Help YMCA." Lincoln Star, March 25, 1983, p.7.

"Capital Hotel Will Close Its Doors Jan. 1." December, 1967, source unknown.

"Demolition of Old Hotel Begins." Lincoln Star, Feb. 19, 1969, p.18.

"Drawing of New Capital Hotel at 11th & P." Lincoln Star, June 25, 1925, p.1.

Jenkins, Bess. "Hotel Gift Sparking YM-YW Drive Plan." Lincoln Journal,  
August 7, 1966, page unknown.

Kelley, Gene. "YMCA Hotel Redevelopment to Fill Housing Need." Sunday Journal  
and Star, May 8, 1983, pp. 1 and 4.

"Mr. Eppley Will Build." Evening State Journal (and Lincoln Daily News)  
June 2, 1925, p.1.

Piersol, Dick. "Options Eyed on Old Y Hotel." Lincoln Journal, March 24, 1983,  
p. 31.

"Plan to Begin Capital Hotel." Lincoln Star, July 8, 1925, pp. 1 and 10.

Rhoads, William Bertolet. The Colonial Revival. New York: Garland Series --  
Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (originally submitted to the  
Department of Art and Archeology, Princeton University, Nov., 1974).

Section E, "Capital Hotel Section," Sunday State Journal, May 16, 1926  
(numerous articles).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

<b>FOR NPS USE ONLY</b>
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

Verbal Boundary Description

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

the South line of the Right of Way Line of "P" Street a distance of 50.83 feet; thence South along a line intersecting the South property line of Lot A at a point 50.48 feet West of the West line of the Right of Way line of North 11th Street a distance of 108.67 feet; thence East along the South property line of Lot A to a point of intersection with the West Right of Way Line of North 11th Street a distance of 50.48 feet; thence North along the West Right of Way Line of North 11th Street a distance of 108.67 feet to the point of beginning; continuing a calculated land area of 5,504.67 square feet, more or less.

The described property follows the foundations of the eleven-story portion of the former hotel, excluding the newer construction to the west, which has no historic significance.