SG 2509

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **BUFFALO GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY COMPLEX**

other names/site number Cataract Power & Conduit Company Terminal Station B; Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation

name of related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 960-996 Busti Avenue; 990 Niagara Street [ ] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [ ] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14213

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Roger Daniel Mackay 4/9/2018
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

DSHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[X] entered in the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper date of action

Alexis Abernathy 5/25/18

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)

[X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

[X] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
		sites
	3	structures
		objects
3	**3**	**TOTAL**

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRATION/
energy facility/industrial storage
COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
TRANSPORTATION/garage

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING EXTRACTION/
energy facility/industrial storage
DOMESTIC/multiple family
VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th C REVIVAL/Romanesque
EARLY 20th C AMERICAN/Commercial Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick, precast concrete, limestone
roof membrane
other

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

8. Statement of Significance

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

[**X**] **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[**X**] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

[ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B** removed from its original location

[ ] **C** a birthplace or grave

[ ] **D** a cemetery

[ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] **F** a commemorative property

[ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance:
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Industry

Period of Significance:

1906 – 1941

Significant Dates:

1906, 1922, 1923, 1941

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

1906 Terminal Station B: H.W. Buck of the Canadian Niagara Power Company

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[**X**] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. **NPS # 28,783**
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by historic American Building Survey
_____
[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
_____

Primary location of additional data:

[ ] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal Agency
[ ] Local Government
[ ] University
[ ] Other repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.19 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	671372	4752960	3	17		
2	17			4	17		

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kerry Traynor; Annie Schentag (Edited by Jennifer Walkowski, NYSHPO)

organization kta preservation specialists date 2/22/2018

street & number 422 Parker Avenue telephone 716.864.0628

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14216

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

Narrative Description

The Buffalo General Electric Complex consists of three contributing historic buildings, located at 960 and 996 Busti Avenue and 990 Niagara Street, and three non-historic steel transmission towers [1] The oldest building is Terminal Station B located at 990 Busti Avenue, which was constructed in 1906 for the Cataract Power & Conduit Company (CP&CC).[2] In 1915 the Buffalo General Electric Company (BGEC) purchased CP&CC and, with it Terminal Station B. In 1922, BGEC constructed a service building to the south and in 1923 a garage to the north of Terminal Station B.[3] Narrow driveways separate Terminal Station B from the garage and the service building.

The buildings sit on a bluff, elevated above the Belt Line Railroad (CSX Rail), the New York State Thruway (Interstate 190), and the Niagara River, which are all located to the west. Across the river is the town of Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada.[4] The elevated location allowed for electric transmission lines to be "flown" across the river from Fort Erie to transmission towers on the west side of Terminal Station B. The service building is cut into the bluff, resulting in an at-grade exit from the basement of the service building. The garage and Terminal Station B sit on top of the bluff. The buildings are located on the west side of Busti Avenue, where it terminates at the intersection with Niagara Street. Busti Avenue continues southeast, where it forms the southwest edge of the residential Prospect Hill Historic District (NR 2016). The nominated site is a relatively narrow rectangular parcel, just over two-acres, with no setback from the sidewalk along Busti Avenue and Niagara Street. A parking lot is located to the south and a vacant parcel is located to the south. The Peace Bridge Plaza is located to the southwest of the street. The Peace Bridge is an international bridge constructed in 1927, which crosses over the Niagara River connecting Buffalo with Fort Erie.[5] To the north, Niagara Street is a mix of commercial, light industrial and late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century residential properties. Buffalo's central business district is located approximately 2.5 miles to the southeast along Niagara Street.

The exterior elevations of the Buffalo General Electric Company Complex reflect their historic use. Centrally located is the 1906 Terminal Station B, a powerhouse located at 996 Busti Avenue. The three-story steel frame building features Romanesque-inspired masonry detailing and a two-story window arcade running the length of

[1] In 1900 Busti Avenue was called Front Avenue. The name was changed to Busti after 1925, however later Sanborn Maps still reference Front Avenue.

[2] The Terminal Station is also referenced as Terminal House in period publications. The Cataract Power & Conduit Company received electricity from the Niagara Falls Power Company and the Buffalo General Electric Company was the distributing agent. Refer to Section 8 for a full discussion.

[3] New York State Public Service Commission, 2nd District, *Ninth Annual Report*, (Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, 1916), 477-481; New York State Public Service Commission, 2nd District, *Tenth Annual Report*, (Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, 1917), 116-118.

[4] Historically the Erie Barge Canal and the ship canal leading to the Black Rock Harbor and Erie Canal were located to the west. The canal was infilled and I-190 was constructed on top in the 1950s. The I-190 was completed in ca. 1961.

[5] The Peace Bridge is National Register eligible. (USN 02940.006743)

each elevation. Above the window arcade each bay features a rectangular masonry opening with either louvered vents or openings for double-hung wooden sash windows. The window openings on the east elevation facing Busti Avenue have been covered with corrugated metal; however, wood sash remain visible on the south and north elevations. A dressed limestone watertable is continuous around the building at the sill height of the window arcade, and limestone sills are located at each window on the third floor. At grade, a dressed limestone sill separates the building from the sidewalk. A portion of the quarry-face limestone foundation is visible to the north because the grade slopes slightly to the north. The main entrance into Terminal Station B is centrally located on the south elevation, with secondary entrances on the other elevations.

A four-story, steel-frame red brick service building constructed in 1922 is located to the south of Terminal Station B.[6] This building has been rehabilitated to function as apartments and commercial space. The main entrance into the service building is located to the north, while two separate entrances to the south access the main stairwell and the commercial space along Busti Avenue. Between the main entrance and those to the south are rectangular bays that historically functioned as truck loading bays, which have been infilled with fixed window sash horizontally divided by three muntins. The windows on the upper floors of the Busti Avenue elevation are historic tripartite one-over-one double-hung wooden sash units with wood mullions, while those on the other elevations are industrial metal sash units. A simple pre-cast concrete cornice completes the composition on the Busti Avenue elevation.

The final building in the complex is a two-story garage, constructed in 1923, located to the north and west at 996 Niagara Street.[7] The reinforced concrete frame garage features brick curtain walls. A large garage door, located in the bay to south, accesses a ramp delineated on the south elevation by a sloping band of concrete. The windows on the first floor have been infilled, while industrial sash windows remain on the upper floors of the east elevation facing Busti Avenue. The aesthetic of each utilitarian building is in response to the requirements of its historic function, with simple brick articulation and the rhythm of the fenestration the primary detailing.

To the west of Terminal Station B are international power transmission lines that extend to Niagara Falls, Canada and to Bertie Hill in Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada. The lines stretch across the Niagara River, parallel to the Peace Bridge, to connect with three, non-historic tubular steel poles.[8]

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[6] *American Architect and Building News* Volume 89 (New York: The American Architect, 1906), ix. The advertisement notes that the cost of construction will be between $300,000 and $400,000.

[7] The building cornerstone notes the date of the 1923 garage.

[8] The new tubular steel poles and transmission lines were constructed in 2014, replacing the 1906 lattice steel tower and transmission lines.

Terminal Station B – 1906
990 Busti Avenue
1 Contributing building

Exterior

Terminal Station B is three stories in height and fourteen bays wide on its east and west elevations. A continuous dressed limestone beltcourse runs beneath the two-story arched window openings. The openings have been covered with corrugated metal; however, their appearance is documented in historic and contemporary photos. Above the arcaded openings, a masonry belt course separates the second and third floors. A rectangular masonry opening with dressed limestone sill marks each bay on the third floor. At the first, seventh, eight and fourteenth bay from the south louvered vents fill the openings. The remaining openings have been covered with corrugated metal. It is highly probable that historic windows illustrated on period and contemporary photographs remain extant behind the corrugated metal.[9] A corbelled masonry band and dressed limestone coping completes the east elevation.

An entrance occurs at the fifth bay from the south. At this location, the continuous beltcourse breaks, allowing for a single, non-historic hollow metal door. Above the door is an arched opening, similar to the others, except reduced in height. The door provides a sense of human scale on the expansive east elevation. The arcaded rhythm, continuous sill and corbelled scalloped frieze continue on the west elevation; however, the openings have been infilled with brick and louvered vents. It is at this location that transmission lines from the towers enter the building at the third story.

The north and south elevations are three-bays wide. These elevations feature a limestone beltcourse at the first floor, masonry beltcourse between the second and third floors, and corbelled scalloped frieze with limestone band above turn the corner, and continue along the north elevation. The beltcourse at the first floor is interrupted by a door in the bay to the east. There are no windows on the first floor. A louvered vent is located in the bay to the west. Each bay on the second floor is defined by blind arched openings, with limestone sills. Window triplets, with wood mullions, limestone sills and segmental heads are located at the third floor. The windows in the outer bays feature a two-over-two double-hung windows with fixed two-light sash above. The windows in the middle bay are two-over-two double-hung wooden sash units. A driveway separates the three bay north elevation from the garage building.

The south elevation of Terminal Station B is separated from the service building to the south by a narrow driveway. Each bay features a two-story arcaded masonry opening above the limestone beltcourse. In each bay

[9] Historic photographs ca. 1923; 1981 and 2008. The 2008 photograph suggests the windows were not removed when the corrugated metal added, which is reinforced by the fact that historic windows remain extant on other elevations.

the windows are organized in a tripartite arrangement with simply articulated paneled wood mullions. A wood spandrel is located between the first and second floor levels. The bays to the east and west feature a slightly different organization than the entrance bay centrally located. At the first floor, there are three triple-hung wooden sash windows. Above the spandrel panel are one-over-one double-hung wooden sash windows. Within the arch, and separated from the windows below by a heavy, wood mullion, is a central one-over-one double-hung wooden sash window flanked by fixed quarter rounds.

At the middle bay the arched opening continues to grade to accommodate the primary entrance into the building. The entrance bay features large, paired six-light paneled stile and rail wood doors with transom. The transom is composed of four, nine-light fixed windows. Above the door, the windows within the arch are detailed similarly to the flanking bays. Though some are covered, the window triplets at the third floor windows feature one-over-one double-hung wooden sash with limestone sills and segmental heads in each bay.

Interior

Terminal Station B is three stories tall, designed to house equipment necessary for the conduction of electricity. The interior of this building is not accessible; however, the *Sanborn Fire Insurance* Maps and period descriptions describe a fireproof building with concrete floors and steel frame encased with brick. The map illustrates that the building was divided into thirds with walls running north-south, parallel to Busti Avenue. This is supported by period publications, which describe transformers being housed in the central bay. This bay is described as being open through the full height of the building with an electrical crane running the length of the building to move the transformers when necessary. The height of the building, at 47-feet, was determined by height necessary for the cranes to lift one transformer over the other. The bays on either side are divided into three floors with built-in equipment that received electricity from the transmission lines, carried it to the transformers where it was stepped down, and then distributed to the city.

Service Building – 1922
960 Busti Avenue
1 Contributing building

Exterior

The primary, east elevation of the four-story, steel frame building is six-bays wide. The curtain wall elevation features Bradford red smooth brick laid in common bond.[10] The end bay to the south features two one-over-one double-hung wooden sash windows on the upper three stories, while the bays to the north are defined by

[10] The original construction drawings identify the materials.

tripartite, one-over-one double-hung wooden sash windows with simple wood mullions. All of the windows have a precast concrete sill and masonry jack arch at the head. At the first floor the precast concrete sill continues as a beltcourse across the width of the building, returning to the north and south. At the third and fourth floors the sills are precast concrete with a brick soldier course beneath. A stacked stretcher course runs vertically between the beltcourse and head of the third floor windows, defining each window bay. A simple precast concrete cornice continues across the elevation, turning the corner to the north and south.

The first floor does not maintain the six-bay organization of the upper floors. There are three entrances into the building at the first floor, one to the north and two to the south, with eight bays that originally functioned as truck loading docks in between. The docks are raised on a concrete bulkhead. The glass in each bay features three horizontal muntins and is set back within the loading bay masonry opening, which is faced with steel that has been painted gray. The second and fifth bays from the south are narrower than the other bays, and feature an arch with inset brick panel centrally located at the window head. The arch is also lined with steel, painted gray. A soldier course runs across the elevation at the head of the window bays and entrance doors. The entrance at the last bay to the south leads into a stairwell and features a single door flanked by two inset panels, each detailed with a geometricized artistic rendition of a transmission tower executed in red brick set against a white, precast concrete panel. The panels and entrance door are framed by a stacked header course which continues up to the soldier course at the height of the loading bay heads. A similar soldier course extends across the width of the bay at the head of the door opening. The aluminum frame entrance door with single glazed panel immediately to the north features a transom window and sidelights. This entrance is set back from the plane of the wall and the masonry opening is lined with steel painted gray. This entrance leads into commercial retail space on the first floor. The aluminum frame entrance door to the north is also set back from the wall plane and features sidelights. A horizontal canopy extends over the sidewalk and is attached by rods to the wall at this entrance. A transom window is located above the canopy. This entrance leads into the elevator and stair lobby for the apartments.

The west elevation faces the Belt Line (CSX) Rail Line, I-190, and Fort Erie, Canada, across the Niagara River. The elevation is seven bays wide and four stories above the basement, which exits at grade as a result of the building being set into the bluff. The curtain wall is common brick and the foundation is concrete. Each bay is defined by paired four-by-four, industrial sash windows with horizontal pivot vent. The windows are set within the masonry opening with a brick header course and precast concrete sill. A square chimney stack marks the north corner of the elevation.

The north elevation faces the alley space shared with Terminal Station B. The elevation is seven bays wide and features triplet three-by-four industrial sash windows with horizontal pivot vent on the second through fourth floors. There are no windows on the first floor except at the last bay to the west. Similar to the west elevation,

the windows are set within the masonry opening defined by a brick header course and precast concrete sill. A square chimney stack marks the west corner of the elevation.

The south elevation faces a parking lot. The fenestration on the elevation is organized in response to interior function. To the west there are two bays of paired three-by-four industrial sash widows with horizontal pivot vent on each floor. The windows are set within the masonry opening with a steel lintel and brick sill. To the east there are five one-over-one double-hung windows on the second floor and two on the third and fourth floors. These windows also have a brick sill and steel lintel at the head. At the east corner of the fourth floor are two, six-light industrial sash windows with precast concrete sill. Two window openings on the first floor have been infilled with brick; however, the precast concrete sill remains at each.

Interior

There are three entrances into the service building, which houses commercial space and apartments on the first floor and apartments on the upper floors. The entrance at the last bay to the south on the east elevation leads into a historic stair that connects the basement through fourth floors. The metal pan stair features concrete treads and pipe rail. A similar historic stair is located to the west along the north elevation. The entrance at the second bay from the south on the east elevation leads into the commercial space, while the entrance to the north leads into a vestibule and stairs leading up to the elevator lobby on the first floor.

The steel frame building features exposed steel columns, beams and joists and concrete ceilings on each floor. In locations the floors are polished concrete and in other locations, where the concrete was damaged the finish is vinyl plank. The perimeter walls to the east on each floor are plaster. Historically offices were located along this wall, facing Busti Avenue. At all other locations, the perimeter walls are painted brick. Interior partition walls in the apartments contain large borrowed lights allowing for an understanding of the spatial volume. The basement features an open plan and is used for storage. Six apartments and a commercial space are located on the first floor and nine apartments on each of the three floors above. The commercial space is located to the east, adjacent to the large, first floor windows facing Busti Avenue. The first floor apartments are located to the west and are oriented east-west, with each apartment occupying a bay facing west toward the Niagara River. The apartments on the upper floors are arranged around the perimeter of the building, organized to take advantage of the window bays with large industrial sash. One each floor the corridor is centrally located, running essentially north-south between the stair located at the southeast corner of the building and the one to the west along the north elevation. Monitor lights on the roof provide additional light into the corridor and apartments on the fourth floor.

Garage – 1923
996 Niagara Street
1 Contributing building

Exterior

The west elevation of the two-story garage is four bays wide. Engaged pilasters with a precast concrete cap define each bay. Above the cap, a brick entablature and precast concrete band extends across the elevation. completing the composition. A precast concrete beltcourse runs between each pilaster at the sill of the second floor windows. A simple jack arch runs between each pilaster at the height of the head of the door and window openings on the first floor. A metal roll-up door is located at the first and third bays from the south on the first floor. The door to the south is larger, occupying the entire bay; while the one to the north is smaller, centrally located within the bay. The window opening, with continuous brick sill, occupying the second bay from the south has been in-filled with concrete block and two small rectangular glass block openings. An entry door is centrally located at the bay to the north. A window opening on either side of the door is located directly adjacent to the masonry pilasters. A continuous sill extends from the pilaster to the door. Traces on the masonry suggest that a pedimented surround has been removed from entrance door. The window openings have been in-filled with concrete block with small glass block openings. The windows on the second floor are all six-light industrial sash, with horizontal, metal muntins. In the last bay to the south and north there are two windows; one directly adjacent to each pilaster. The two middle bays are each filled by two window triplets separated by a brick mullion.

Two-and-a-half bays remain visible on the south elevation of the garage as a repair shop was added along the south elevation to the west. The interior organization is revealed on this elevation. The reinforced concrete frame defines each bay vertically. The concrete structure of the ramp accessing the main parking level on the second floor is revealed along this elevation, as is the second floor level at the front bay to the east. Window openings have been in-filled with concrete block, and small replacement units added. The remainder of each bay is in-filled with brick masonry.

The concrete frame structural grid is revealed on the north and west elevations of the garage. The concrete frame, with brick in-fill, defines each of the six bays in the north elevation. There is only one window in the first bay to the east on the second floor, and a service opening in the fifth bay. On the first floor an entry door is located at the third bay from the east and garage doors are located at the fourth and fifth bays. The west elevation of the garage is also utilitarian, defined by the concrete structural grid and masonry in-fill. Small windows are located in each bay allowing light into the space.

Interior

The first floor of the garage is open, defined by a grid of concrete columns with mushroom caps and concrete floors and ceilings. The perimeter walls are painted brick. To the east, adjacent to the exterior wall is office space. A stairwell is located in the northeast corner of the building, accessed from the exterior through a non-historic door. Roll-up garage doors are located along the north elevation, while windows, located just beneath the ceiling occupy the bays to the west. The entrance to the main parking level on the second floor occurs through a garage door in the south bay of the east elevation. The ramp is also accessed through an interior door in the southwest corner of the first floor.

A ramp along the south elevation provides vehicular access to the second floor, which is defined by a grid of concrete columns with mushroom caps. The ceiling in this space is relatively low as one might expect in a parking garage. A large room, which historically functioned as a repair shop and printing space, is located to the west along the south elevation.

Steel Electric Transmission Towers – 2015
3 Non-contributing structures (outside of period of significance)

When constructed, the steel transmission tower was considered a revolutionary design in terms of its design and materials. In 2015 three tubular steel poles were constructed to receive electricity from transmission lines flown across the Niagara River from Bertie Hill in Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada. Lines from the towers enter Terminal Station B at the third floor.

Statement of Significance:

> NIAGARA POWER IN BUFFALO, thanks to such men as Adams, Huntley, Rankine and Wickes, is now a greater reality than the pioneers imagined, and two-thirds of the motive power of industrial Buffalo comes from the Falls.[11]

The Buffalo General Electric Company Complex is significant as an early and largely intact electrical station in Buffalo, Erie County, New York. Constructed overlooking the Niagara River and Canada between 1906 and 1923, the complex contains three contributing buildings including Terminal Station B (1906), a service building (1922), and a garage (1923). The Buffalo General Electric Company Complex is important for its association with the early development and transmission of electricity from Niagara Falls to the city of Buffalo at a time when this technology created a lasting impact that would forever change the region and the nation. The complex is significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its contribution to the historical development and distribution of electricity in the city of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. The first terminal constructed to receive and distribute electricity was Terminal Station A, designed by Louise Bethune and constructed further north of downtown at 2280 Niagara Street in 1896-1898. Station A soon became overwhelmed by demand for electric power, and Terminal Station B was constructed in 1906 to alleviate the increased demand.[12] The terminal was constructed for the Cataract Power and Conduit Company (CP & CC), which received the electricity, and the Buffalo General Electric Company (BGEC), which distributed it. Terminal B provided both alternating and direct current and four levels of service to the City of Buffalo: arc lighting, distant incandescent lighting, motor circuits, and incandescent lamps. The BGEC was described as "the most potent factor in Buffalo's industrial life."[13] Operating from its main station on Niagara Street, the BGEC played a role "that cannot be understated since the illumination effects were not only one of the most memorable features of the Pan-American Exposition, but proof to the general public that the water-power from Niagara could successfully be harnessed and that electricity could be utilized for more than just industry."[14]

In addition to embodying the early history of hydro-powered electrification, the buildings are significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The design of each building in the complex was specific to its functional requirements. Terminal Station B, a powerhouse, is detailed in the Romanesque Revival style and features a large open central volume to house transformers. The height of the building was determined by the distance

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[11] *Electric World*, Volume 47, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1906), 1290.

[12] George J. Kirchgasser, "Electricity in Buffalo, N.Y.," *Electric World* 53, no. 19 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1909), 1083. Buffalo's industries began changing from steam to electricity, and the use of small motors and the introduction of household electrical appliances increased the load factor.

[13] Buffalo Evening News, *A History of the City of Buffalo, Its Men and Institutions*, (Buffalo: The Buffalo Evening News, 1908), 114.

[14] "Electricity and its Development at Niagara Falls," *Pan-American Exposition of 1901*, (Web.), Accessed via web December 20, 2017. https://library.buffalo.edu/pan-am/exposition/electricity/development/.

required for the crane, suspended from the ceiling just below the roof, to lift and move the transformers, one over the other. The adjacent bays, which were divided into three floors, housed machines necessary to receive and transmit the electricity. The service building to the south features large openings on the first floor along the east elevation that served as truck loading bays. On the floors above facing east, towards Busti Avenue, were offices. The wood sash windows on the Busti Avenue elevation reflect the office function behind, while the secondary elevations facing west, north and south featured large, industrial sash windows that allow light into the large, open plan storage spaces on each floor. The garage building reveals its concrete structural system on the exterior, with the concrete frame of a ramp accessing the second floor garage visible on the south elevation.

The period of significance begins with the construction of Terminal Station B in 1906 and ends in 1941, when the garage building was sold and no longer had a function associated with electricity.[15] The Buffalo General Electric Complex tells the story of producing and transmitting hydro-electric power between Niagara Falls, on both sides of the Canadian border, and Buffalo, New York. The construction of Terminal Station B and its associated service buildings physically and symbolically merged the various companies in Canada and the United States, as it allowed for a continuous "loop" in the transmission of electricity bi-nationally.

Historical Background and Significance

Hydroelectric Development at Niagara

The tremendous power and opportunity of Niagara Falls was recognized as early as the eighteenth century, when European-Americans began to explore and settle western New York State. Because of its proximity to the seemingly unlimited power source, Niagara Falls and Western New York became an important early center for the generation and distribution of electricity. In 1805 Augustus and Peter Porter of Buffalo, New York, realized the power inherent in the Niagara River and Niagara Falls and purchased the American portion of Niagara Falls from the State of New York at public auction, which included acquisition of water rights to the eastern rapids above and below the falls. Utilizing the ditch that Daniel Joncairs had built in 1759 to divert water, the Porter brothers built a water powered gristmill and tannery.[16] Even after this, Augustus envisioned building a canal to bypass the falls and harnessing the water energy directly. Unfortunately, both died before their vision was realized.

The Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power & Manufacturing Company was chartered in 1853 and had, by 1860, purchased the water rights. Construction on the canal was completed by 1861. Initially the 35-feet wide and 8-

[15] Hewitt Rubber Corporation occupied the space, as noted in the City Directories by 1942. The property was vacant between 1941 and 1942.

[16] Daniel Joncairs dug a narrow ditch on the American side of the Falls. By doing this he was able to divert water from the river to turn a waterwheel to power a small sawmill.

feet deep canal carried water from the top of the falls to mills below. It was not until 1876 that the water was harnessed to turn wheels and generate power. In 1877 Jacob F. Schoellkopf, a German immigrant who became highly successful in the tannery business, purchased the rights to the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Canal, as well as water and power rights, for $71,000. He took over the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Company and in 1881 built a small generating station that produced primarily direct current electricity (DC), a system credited to Thomas Edison, where electrons flow in one direction through a wire. Schoellkopf utilized the electricity to power his mills along the high bank of the falls and to provide small amounts of electricity to light the village of Niagara Falls. Since DC could not be transmitted across any significant distance, the plant could only provide electricity to manufacturers within a one-mile radius of the station.

In 1886, the Niagara River Tunnel, Power and Sewer Company, led by industrial entrepreneur Edward Dean Adams, hired Thomas Evershed, a hydraulic engineer specializing in canals. Evershed's primary task was to find a way to transmit Niagara's hydroelectric power past the river banks, in order to reach a larger industrial market beyond Niagara Falls in Buffalo. Grappling with this issue for about a decade, Evershed proposed a system of canals and tunnels to be constructed under the city of Niagara Falls which could be used to divert water above the falls through penstocks to vertical shafts housing turbines.[17] Known as the 'Evershed Plan,' construction began on the canals and tunnels in 1890, a few years before Adams's power company had even identified that alternating current (AC) would be the best method of transmitting electricity over long distances.

DC to AC: War of the Currents

In 1886 a charter was obtained from New York Legislature which allowed for further development of water-power at Niagara Falls.[18] The Village of Niagara Falls had a population of only 20,000 people at this time. The potential market for hydro-generated electricity was significantly greater in the much larger, and still growing, population of Buffalo, which was approximately twenty-two miles away. Technological limitations made the economics of harnessing the hydro-electric power of the falls in Buffalo unrealistic, given that it was still difficult and dangerous to transmit electric power over such a long distance.

The years between 1890 and 1895 were pivotal in the global history of hydroelectric power generation and transmission, and the majority of this innovative activity occurred in the Buffalo-Niagara Falls region. Important events in this history occurred in quick succession, and as new technologies emerged others quickly became outdated. Construction on the Evershed Canal was completed in 1892, but it took another year for the Niagara Falls Power Company to be convinced that Tesla's AC system was the safest, most efficient, and most

[17] "Niagara Power," *Cassiers* (1895), 224.

[18] William C. Andrews, "How Niagara Has Been 'Harnessed,'" *The American Monthly Review of Reviews,* (New York: The Review of Reviews Company, 1901), 694.

economical way to transmit power over distances. Thomas Edison, George Westinghouse, and other experts from the United States and Europe all approached the problem. The issue was quite simple: How to transmit electricity over a long distance? The kernel of the problem was that electricity could not be transmitted efficiently over a distance using direct current (DC). Thomas Edison's DC system was determined to be too expensive and inefficient.[19] George Westinghouse acquired the patent for AC transmission from Gaulard and Dixon in 1885 and licensed the transformer and Edison's patented motor. William Stanley, who worked for Westinghouse, modified the design to produce the first transformer commercially available in the United States in 1886.[20] Nikola Tesla, who was once employed by Edison, pioneered and developed the alternating current (AC) induction motor, which became an industry and manufacturing standard.[21] Looking to break Edison's mounting monopoly and profit from electric technology, George Westinghouse bought the patents for Tesla's AC motors, for much less than they soon proved to be worth.

Westinghouse's display at Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1893 finally convinced Edward Dean Adams and several Niagara power companies that AC would be the best method of transmitting hydroelectricity from the falls. There, Westinghouse "proposed a 'universal' system of electrical distribution from Niagara. Electricity was to be generated at one voltage – stepped-up to a higher voltage for transmission, and stepped-down again for distribution. Using transformers of varying ratios and rotary converters that were capable of changing AC to DC, the universal system allowed tailoring electricity to the individual needs of consumers…"[22] In other words, one generator, in conjunction with these transformers, could supply electricity for DC motors, single or poly-phase alternating motors, electrochemical processes, and incandescent and arc lamps.

Utilizing this technology in conjunction with elements of the Evershed plan, the Adams Powerhouse was constructed to generate and transmit hydroelectricity at Niagara Falls and was completed in 1895. In November 1896, the first power transmission was sent by AC from the Adams Powerhouse in Niagara Falls to Terminal A on Niagara Street in Buffalo. This event marked a major turning point in the history of electricity, as it was the largest amount of electricity transmitted through AC over the longest distance thus far in the world.[23] Long distance power transmission through polyphase AC electric current at Niagara Falls was now a reality.

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[19] Thomas Edison patented the incandescent light bulb in 1879.

[20] Ibid.

[21] M. Whelan & Steve Rockwell, "The History of the Transformer," *Edison Tech Center*, (Web, 2014). Accessed via web December 22, 2017. http://www.edisontechcenter.org/Transformers.html. Early systems of AC transmission were developed by the Ganz Company in Hungary who built the ZBD Transformer in 1878, and Lucien Gaulard and John Dixon Gibbs built a step-down transformer in England in 1882. Other Europeans were also developing the transformer including Sebastian Ziani de Ferranti and William Thomson in England. Charles F. Bruch of the Brush Electric Company in Cleveland, Ohio developed his own design of transformer in 1881

[22] Duncan Hay, Hydroelectric *Development in the United States, 1880-1940*, (Washington: Edison Electric Institute, 1991), 22.

[23] Edward Dean Adams, *Niagara Power: History of the Niagara Falls Power Company*, Volumes 1, (New York: The Niagara Falls Power Co., 1927), 66. See also David Nye, *Electrifying America: Social Meanings of a New Technology, 1880-1940* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 28.

Electricity had become a feasible, transmissible, industrial commodity available to market and consume - it was no longer localized. The technological advancements of AC, combined with an industrial market located just over twenty-miles of power generation stations at Niagara Falls, were primers for the rapid growth in the transmission of electricity to the city of Buffalo during the early twentieth century.

Transmission of Power

The Companies

Niagara Falls Hydroelectric Power and Manufacturing Company & the Niagara Falls Power Company

The two major power producers of hydroelectric power by 1901 were the Niagara Falls Hydroelectric Power and Manufacturing Company (NFHP), and the Niagara Falls Power Company (NFPC). The NFHP, also known as the "Schoellkopf Plant," after its founder Jacob Frederick Schoellkopf, was located on the lower Niagara River, just north of the falls. The plant supplied DC current to industries located within a 1-mile radius. The NFPC was formed in 1889 by New York City financier Edward Dean Adams as part of an enterprise that included the Cataract Construction Company. The Cataract Construction Company was headed by financier J.P. Morgan.[24] Notable investors in the enterprise included John Jacob Astor and William K. Vanderbilt. The Cataract Construction Company "owned the entire capital stock, and acted as the financial agent of the latter company, and the Niagara Falls Power Company acted as the engineering organization. The purpose of the venture was to specialize in large scale power generation and transmission… ."[25]

Cooperation between Edward Dean Adams and Jacob F. Schoellkopf brought about the first development of electric power at Niagara Falls that could be transmitted to Buffalo, Tonawanda, and Lockport. The Adams Transformer Station, named in Edward Dean Adams's honor, was constructed by the Cataract Construction Company in 1895, upriver from Niagara Falls. Unlike the NFHP, which supplied electricity, the NFPC only produced power, relying on other companies, such as the Cataract Construction Company, the Cataract Power & Conduit Company and the Buffalo General Electric Company to transmit and distribute power.[26]
In order to generate and transmit electricity on the Canadian side, the NFPC acquired an organization called Canadian Niagara Power Company, chartered by the government of the Province of Ontario, Canada.[27] A powerhouse was built in Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park in 1904. "The power transmission line on the Canadian side was authorized early in September, 1905, as a two-circuit three-phase 22,000-volt line, of an

[24] Hay, 21.
[25] Robert Blake Belfield, *The Niagara Frontier: The Evolution of Electric Power Systems in New York and Ontario, 1880-1935*. (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1981), 9.
[26] "Electricity and its Development at Niagara Falls."
[27] Adams, Vol I, 240.

approximate capacity of 25,000 electric horse-power by the use of both its 12,500 electric horse-power units in commercial operation at that time." The Canadian transmission lines were constructed along the Niagara River on an old railroad bed.[28]

In order to assure continuity of electrical supply to Buffalo, it was determined that there should be two sources of supply and multiple transmission lines from Niagara Falls. Transmission lines were to be on the United States side of the Niagara River and on the Canadian side, with interconnections at the Suspension Bridge in Niagara Falls, and at the crossing from Fort Erie, Ontario, to Buffalo at Black Rock.[29] The transmission building in Black Rock was the first constructed and became known as Terminal Station A at 2280 Niagara Street. An early criticism of this station was its distance from the city of Buffalo; later, it was judged for its inability to meet the growing demand for electricity. It was determined that a second transmission station, closer to the city was needed. The Cataract Power & Construction Company won the contract to lay transmission lines from the NFPC to a location further south in the city of Buffalo, where the International Railroad Company and the Buffalo General Electric Company were the major consumers of electricity. The BGEC was also the major distributor of electricity throughout the city.

The Cataract Power & Conduit Company[30]

The Cataract Power & Conduit Company (CP&CP) was a wholesale electricity distribution business incorporated in 1896 by William Birch Rankine, George Urban Jr., and Charles R. Huntley.[31] Essentially the company was organized by the NFPC to transmit electricity from Niagara Falls to Buffalo, where it was converted to various uses in the city.[32] The company bought property at Niagara Street and Front Avenue from the Cary Estate in 1906. As Huntley himself noted, over twenty residential properties were demolished to allow for construction of the transformer house.[33] In 1906 CP&CC constructed "Terminal Station B" on the high bank of the river at Niagara Street and Front Avenue. [34] The building, designed by H.W. Buck of the Canadian Niagara Power Company, was three-stories in height and 57-feet wide by 180-feet long on a site that was 315-feet long by 80-feet deep. A tower 150-feet high was constructed at the rear of the transformer house. The transformer house had a 25,000 horse power capacity. The electricity received at this location was carried along

[28] Adams, Vol. II, 291,292
[29] Adams, Vol I, 336
[30] George J. Kirchgasser, "Electricity in Buffalo, N.Y.," *Electric World* , Volume 53, no. 19, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1909), 1083-1085; A. H. Van Cleve, "The Hydro-electric Development and Transmission Lines of the Canadian Niagara Power Company," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers,* Volume 62, (New York: The Society, 1909), 199, "Canadian Niagara Power Company's Transmission to Buffalo," *Electrical World*, Volume 49, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1907), 1299 and *Electric World*, 1290. These sources provide detailed descriptions of Terminal Station B.
[31] Adams, Vol. I, 343. Huntley was president of the Buffalo General Electric Company.
[32] Adams, Vol.I, 342
[33] The residences are visible on the 1899 Sanborn Map.
[34] *Electric World*, 1290. Terminal Station B is also referred to as Terminal House B in period publications.

two power transmission lines on the Canadian side of the Niagara River. The lines ran from the Rankine Power Station, located just above the Horseshoe Falls in Niagara Falls, to Fort Erie, where an overhead span crossed the river. The Rankine Power Station was owned by the Canadian Niagara Power Company, an American based company formed under the leadership of William B. Rankine in 1892. The main reason for moving the electricity along the Canadian side of the river was that the distance of travel was shorter than it would have been on the American side and the route was not populated. Additionally, Terminal Station B was located closer to downtown Buffalo than Terminal Station A. Two towers in Canada, one on Bertie Hill and one at the river's edge received the lines from the Rankine Power Station. Lines were flown at a height of 150 feet above the Niagara River, suspended from shore towers 210 feet in height on the Canadian and American sides. The first transmission cables were brought from the Canadian side by tugboat and attached to cables on the American side at Bird Island Pier. The span over Fort Erie between the two towers was 1,667.57 feet, while the one crossing the river was 2,192.64 feet.[35] At the time of construction the towers were "cutting edge" in terms of their design and materials. "Greater spans have been used elsewhere on transmission lines, notable at the Straits of Carquinez, yet it is believed that the combination of spans of this magnitude, with the large amount of current to be carried, had never been attempted."[36]

Prior to the construction of Terminal Station B, connections already existed between the two powerhouses owned by the NFPC on the American side and the Rankine powerhouse on the Canadian side. Four transmission lines connected these plants with Buffalo along the American side of the river to Terminal Station A, which was located in Black Rock. Terminal Station B connected with the old terminal station via underground cables, resulting in a complete loop system for the transmission of Niagara power, on the Canadian and United States sides, to Buffalo. The equipment for Terminal Station B consisted of six 3,000-kw transformers, stepping down from 22,000 volts to 11,000, at which pressure energy was distributed underground to five sub-stations located at various points about the city, where the pressure was again transformed to 2,200 volts for distribution for commercial use. The productive capacity of the three powerhouses connected by this system was 155,000 hp.[37] By 1908, the use of electricity in Buffalo was not just for industry and manufacturing. It had "become general, and the community is living up to its name – the Electric City. In particular, the application of this force to all domestic requirements is becoming popular; such as those for house lights, heat for cooking and laundry purposes for operating sewing machines, mechanical elevators, and so forth."[38]

[35] Van Cleve, 232-237
[36] Ibid
[37] *Electric World*, 1290
[38] Buffalo Evening News, *A History of the City of Buffalo, Its Men and Institutions*, (Buffalo: The Buffalo Evening News, 1908), 114.

The Buffalo General Electric Company

> The history of the Buffalo General Electric Company is largely the history of the electrical development of Buffalo in the past twenty-five years.[39]
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> *A History of the City of Buffalo, Its Men and Its Institutions*, 1908

The Buffalo General Electric Company was formed in 1892 by the consolidation of three utility companies, or as they were noted in City Directories "Electric Light Companies:" the Buffalo Electric Light and Power Company; United States Electric Light and Power Company; Brush Electric Light Company, and Thomson-Houston Electric Light and Power Company.[40] The Buffalo General Electric Company was directly related to the General Electric Company (or GE) and in period publications is often referred to as the "General Electric Company of Buffalo."[41] The General Electric Company was formed in 1891 through the consolidation of the Edison General Electric Company of Schenectady and the Thomson-Houston Electric Company, and the Buffalo General Electric Company became its local presence for the distribution of electricity, although it was a separate company with its own officers.[42] In 1892 The Buffalo Electric Light and Power Company and the Brush Electric Light Company had their office, coal and iron exchange building at 257 Washington Street, and the Thomson-Houston Electric Light and Power Company operated out of 40 Court Street. Charles R. Huntley was the secretary for Brush and the Buffalo Electric Light and Power Company. Daniel O'Day was president of Brush, and James Adams was vice-president, while George Urban Jr was president of the Thomson-Houston Company. Among the trustees of the Thomson-Houston company were Urban, W.W. Sloan, and O'Day.[43] In 1897 officers in the Buffalo General Electric Company were noted as Daniel O'Day, president; George Urban Jr., first vice president; W.W. Sloan, second vice president and treasurer; D.T. Nash, secretary. Charles R.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Henry, Streifler, *Illustrated history of the United Trades and Labor Council of Erie County: Commercial history of Buffalo, photographs and biographies of citizens, photographs and biographies of officers, state, city and miscellaneous labor laws*, (Buffalo: United Trades and Labor Council of Erie County, 1897), 228 and Adams, Vol. I,348, 352. Huntley came to Buffalo in 1888 to assume the position of general manager of the Brush Electric Light Company. He was also an incorporator of the Cataract Power and Conduit Company.

[41] "Joint Committee Appointed to Investigate the Diversion of the Waters of Niagara for Power Purposes," *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, Volume 20, nos. 51-56, (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1914), 350, 485.

[42] "Electricity and its Development at Niagara Falls." Discusses the General Electric Company. "Joint Committee Appointed to Investigate the Diversion of the Waters of Niagara for Power Purposes," 11 & 12. Discusses the "close inter and intra relationship between the companies, their contracts, officers and stockholders."

[43] *City Directories for Buffalo, New York*, (Buffalo, New York: The Courier Company, 1892), 105.

Huntley was the general manager.[44] The businesses of generating, transmitting and distributing electricity saw close relationships within and among companies, contracts and stockholders.[45]

When the BGEC formed in 1892 they took over the facilities at 40 Court Street and, as noted in the 1893 city directory, BGEC was the only electric light company in the city. BGEC continued the service of electric distribution to the city, which initially used coal to fuel steam engines to produce AC and DC power for city and residential lights, motors, and traction.[46] When Terminal Station A was constructed between 1896 and 1898 it was possible to receive hydro-electric power from Niagara Falls and distribute it via substations throughout the city. The 1899 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps shows the building at 40 Court Street housing storage space and the "dynamo room," where power "transmitted from Niagara Falls was distributed to the city. The Cataract Power & Conduit Company is shown to occupy a small room in the complex. BGEC corporate offices remained at 40 Court Street until 1903, when they relocated to the Ellicott Square Building and Fidelity Building. Other than the corporate headquarter office address no other building addresses are associated with the company in the city directories. Given that the company owned a number of substations by this time, it is probable that they stored materials and equipment necessary to service equipment and transmission lines throughout the city. In 1912 the company moved its corporate headquarters to the General Electric Building at 39 Genesee Street that it constructed in 1912.

Before 1900, BGEC recognized the rise of inexpensive hydroelectric power and stopped competing with the Niagara power project. They began purchasing electricity directly from CP&CC. This was a sound decision, given that the company's officers, Urban and Huntley, had also incorporated CP&CC in 1896. BGEC was CP&CC's main customer until 1915, when BGEC completed the purchase of CP&CC.[47] At that time the president of BGEC was Charles R. Huntley, who was also one of the incorporators of CP&CC. BGEC had absorbed many of the prominent light and power companies by 1915. In the past, CP&CC installed and operated transmission lines and BGEC distributed the power, but by 1915 BGEC controlled both, resulting in it being Buffalo's largest power company.[48] In 1922 BGEC constructed a four-story service building to the south of Terminal Station B. It is likely that this allowed them to consolidate the various storage and maintenance facilities they had throughout the city into one location. The design of the service building, with offices along

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[44] Streifler,230.

[45] "Joint Committee Appointed to Investigate the Diversion of the Waters of Niagara for Power Purposes," 11 & 12. Rankine served as second Vice-President of the Niagara Falls Power Company and Secretary and Treasurer, Chairman of the Executive Committee and Director of the Cataract Conduit and Power Company. O'Day served as director in the Niagara Falls Power Company and Cataract Power and Conduit Company, and was also president of the Buffalo General Electric Company

[46] Belfield, 36

[47] Adams Vol.I, 346; New York State Public Service Commission, 2nd District. *Ninth Annual Report*, 477 – 481; New York State Public Service Commission, 2nd District. *Tenth Annual Report*, 116-118

[48] In 1912 the company constructed the General Electric Tower (NRHP # 08000865), designed by local architects Esenwein & Johnson to house their corporate offices.

the east elevation facing Busti Avenue and large, open plan warehouse space accommodated the requirements to store equipment and materials necessary to service transmission, distribution and electric equipment associated with lighting and machines. The series of truck loading bays along Busti Avenue recognized the emerging reliance on trucks for transportation in the late teens and early 1920s and, in turn, the ability to store equipment at a distance from the machinery and lines being serviced. In 1923 they constructed a garage for company cars and trucks to the north of Terminal Station B and a repair shop at the southwest corner of the garage. The 1951 Sanborn Map notes that the garage had a capacity for 150 cars, an indication of just how large the company had become. By 1923 the BGEC Complex received and distributed electricity from Canada and serviced electric equipment. At this time, close to 90 percent of the industrial plants in Buffalo were electrified and most received their power from BGEC and Terminal Station B.[49]

Historic Photo showing a truck and cable equipment for the Buffalo General Electric Company, "Cable Dep'T."[50]

Buffalo, Niagara and Eastern Power Corporation

In 1925, NFPC and BGEC, among others, merged to form a new corporation called Buffalo, Niagara and Eastern Power Corporation. This entity promised a "centralized policy and a coordinated system of production and distribution."[51] Despite the reorganization and change in name, the players remained consistent. Paul A. Schoellkopf and William R. Huntley were first vice-presidents, Alfred H. Schoellkopf was second vice-

[49] Adams Vol.I, 348
[50] "Our History," *National Grid*, (Web,), Accessed via web February 20, 2018. https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/about-us/our-history
[51] Adams Vol.I, 350

president, and Fred D. Corey was chairman of the executive committee. In 1926, Jacob E. Schoellkopf became chairman of the board after Charles R. Huntley died.[52]

The Buffalo, Niagara and Eastern Power Corporation merged with the Frontier Corporation to form the Niagara Hudson Power Company in 1929, which was, at the time, the largest utility in the world. The Buffalo General Electric Terminal B Complex embodies an era where bi-national endeavors allowed for the transmission of electricity, as a commodity, with relative ease across international borders, involving a relatively few number of individuals who would form and merge companies, and become the largest supplier of electricity to the city of Buffalo.

Terminal Station B Complex and the Power Station Typology

Terminal Station B belongs to a typology of power station design that emerged with the beginnings of large-scale electric power generation and/or transmission at the end of the nineteenth century. Designed by H.W. Buck of the Canadian Niagara Power Company for the Cataract Power & Conduit Company in 1906, Terminal Station B was constructed at a cost of $400,000 to $500,000 to "house 50,000 horse-power of transformers with the necessary switch gears, there being a horse-power for every 0.2 sq. ft. of floor space."[53] Terminal Station B received its energy from Niagara Falls and the Buffalo General Electric Company, then distributed it "through the street arc system, the Edison three-wire system, the 500-volt direct-current system, and nearly all the alternating-current systems for lamps and motors in the city, both 25- and 60- cycles being used."[54] Transmission lines were run from the Canadian Niagara Power Company Plant along the Canadian side, which was described as being "open country" and "thinly populated."[55] The lines were "flown" over the Niagara River from Bertie Hill in Fort Erie, Ontario and entered Terminal Station B at the third floor of the west elevation.

While Terminal Station B served primarily as a station for receiving, transforming and redistributing electricity from Niagara Falls, rather than generating that electricity, its architectural features share several characteristics with the typology of powerhouses and power stations. Many of these early power stations, from the period of 1890-1920, shared a number of common architectural features that were only minimally altered by the constantly advancing technology contained within their walls. Nearly all power stations shared definitive architectural characteristics during these decades, making them readily identifiable from the exterior as part of a typology by the turn of the twentieth century.

[52] The Schoellkopfs were related to Jacob F. Schoellkopf, a leading pioneer in power development on the Niagara Frontier.
[53] *American Architect and Building News*, ix, and "Canadian Niagara Power Company's Transmission to Buffalo," 1301.
[54] Kirchgasser, 1084.
[55] Ibid., 1083.

Many of the first notable precedents for power station design originated in the Buffalo-Niagara region, where the generation and transmission of hydroelectric power was first developed in the late nineteenth century. While some historians point to Edison's 1882 power plant in lower Manhattan as the first of this type, the predominant styles did not begin to take a consistent form until the 1890s, when a series of rapid technological innovations advanced the course of electrical development in profoundly influential ways. Many of these early power stations first emerged in the Western New York region, as the 'War of Currents' raged between Tesla and Edison to utilize hydroelectricity at Niagara Falls and transmit it to industries located in the city of Buffalo, about twenty miles away. The power station affiliated with Schoellkopf's company was one of the first power stations to be constructed along the Niagara River at Niagara Falls in the early 1880s, a simple three-story building with two-story windows, built of rusticated stone from the surrounding gorge. The exterior ornamentation of this first power station was quite simple compared to the examples that followed in the coming decades, but the building marked an important step in both the history of hydroelectric development and in the history of power station architecture.

In 1895, the first transmission of electric power generated at Niagara Falls was sent to Buffalo from inside the Adams Powerhouse.[56] Befitting this pivotal innovation, the Niagara Falls Power Company and the Cataract Construction Company, led by Edward Dean Adams, hired the nationally recognized architects McKim, Mead and White to design the powerhouse. As a leading firm known for its civic, not industrial, buildings, McKim, Mead and White played an important, if often overlooked, role in establishing these stylistic characteristics as the typology developed over time. Designing the exterior of the building with ornamental details that echoed their background at the Parisian Ecole des Beaux-Arts, McKim, Mead and White clad some of the world's most scientifically innovative technology inside an exterior façade that conveyed a neoclassical sensibility. The exterior featured elements that soon became common to the typology: long rows of two-story arched windows, a clerestory row of windows near the roofline, stone pilasters, and a segmental arched opening over the grand entrance. Clean neoclassical lines throughout the building's composition suggested a stylistic affinity to a civic building, and in this sense the powerhouse "set the aesthetic standard for future powerhouse construction at Niagara Falls and elsewhere."[57] While the technology inside would continue to change at an exponential rate in the following decades, many of the common exterior features that would soon characterize subsequent powerhouses were evident in the 1895 Adams Powerhouse. Nearly a decade later in 1904, McKim, Mead and White designed another powerhouse in New York City for the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, utilizing many of the architectural details they had first applied to the Adams Powerhouse in Niagara Falls. By this time, architects and engineers around the nation employed Beaux-Arts inspired designs for powerhouses, and the

[56] The Adams Powerhouse was originally known more simply as the Niagara Power Station No 1.
[57] William Irwin, *The New Niagara: Tourism, Technology, and the Landscape of Niagara Falls, 1776-1917* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1996), 121.

typology had emerged as a unique combination of cutting edge technology and neoclassical exterior facades, designed to house the industrially sophisticated machinery inside.

Much like the early examples that emerged in Buffalo and Niagara Falls, power stations tended to exhibit rows of elongated arched windows that wrapped around the entire building, often set above substantial plinths. Often towering two or three stories high, these windows were one of the most distinctive, character-defining features of early twentieth century power stations. Another row of clerestory windows near the roofline was also typical, providing additional light and ventilation. For those that had boiler rooms, tall smokestacks were usually located over that portion of the powerhouse, visually indicating the building's industrial purpose from a great distance.

The overall massing and ornament of the typical power station, however, appeared to be more civic than industrial on its exterior elevations. Observing this, one architectural critic proclaimed in 1909, "Beauty is truth, and truth is knowledge, and knowledge is power. A powerhouse, therefore, should be as beautiful as any other public structure- say an art gallery or a public library."[58] Beaux-Arts, neoclassical or Richardsonian Romanesque-inspired ideals characterized many power stations from about 1890-1920, where architectural details in the form of arched windows, decorative capitals and ornate spandrels conveyed a dignified, institutional presence more so than an industrial impression. Completed in 1906, Terminal Station B exhibits many of these typical characteristics. The overall massing resembles the typology in its simple rectangular form. The elongated two-story arched windows and clerestory windows provided ventilation and light in a manner consistent with many power stations and powerhouses. The brick cornice articulates the roofline in a manner befitting a civic institution rather than an industrial one.

While many of the ornamental details on the typical power station exterior served primarily aesthetic purposes, the overall size, structure and massing did result at least in part from the careful calculations of engineers who ensured that the technical specifications required by the power-generating machines would be met. Power station designers published their concerns for accommodating the climatic conditions of these machines, stating, "cleanliness, good ventilation, good lighting, and good drainage are essential. ... Good ventilation is especially necessary, so as to prevent the acid fumes from escaping into the engine room or other parts of the power house."[59] The substantial height of all power stations provides additional evidence of this concern. By placing machines at ground level with high ceilings, power station designers ensured that plenty of uninterrupted vertical space would enable heat to dissipate as it rose. Furthermore, a band of clerestory windows provided plenty of ventilation near the roofline of the building, allowing heat to escape from the building as it rose.

[58] "Power-Houses: Beautiful and Ugly," *Literary Digest 38* (June 1909), 1058.
[59] Ibid., 61.

Inside, power stations typically featured a single, large, volumetric space characterized by high ceilings and a relatively open floor plan. Transformers, conductors and other machines were often bolted to the floor and separated from one another by internal division walls. This internal division between rooms appears to have been at least in part an attempt to minimize their impact on one another. In his volume *Power House Design*, engineer John Snell advised powerhouse designers "great precautions have to be taken against vibration, noise, smoke or steam nuisance."[60] In order to ensure that an explosion, fire, or simply an extreme vibration in one room would not affect the other, Snell further advised, "The machinery foundations must be entirely separate from the main walls so as to minimize or eliminate vibration."[61] Bolted to the concrete floor towards the center of each room and divided by a brick wall and fireproof door, the boiler room and the engine room were thus intended to operate as two separate, but interrelated units. The internal division of Terminal Station B is consistent with this pattern; the building was internally divided into thirds with walls running north-south, parallel to Busti Avenue. Transformers were housed within the central bay, which was open through the full height of the building with an electrical crane running the length of the building to move the transformers when necessary. The height of the building, at 47-feet, was determined by height necessary for the cranes to lift one transformer over the other. The bays on either side are divided into three floors with built-in equipment that received electricity from the transmission lines, carried it to the transformers, where it was stepped down and then distributed to the city.

Much like other power stations, the organization of the interior at Terminal Station B was based solely on how the building functioned to receive, transform, and distribute electricity to the city. It was described as being "very compact and simple."[62] Large windows are described in a period publication as providing ample light into the three-story building that is "divided longitudinally into three nearly equal parts."[63] The central portion of the first floor housed twelve transformers, each set into a brick, fireproof cell. The central portion was described as being open to the underside of the roof, 47-feet above, where an electric crane, travelling the length of the building, could pick up any transformer device. The height of the building is a direct result of the space necessary to pick up a transformer and move it over the others. The bays on either side housed "bus-bars and oil switches." The flat copper buses were contained in a yellow, pressed-brick structure with Cleveland sandstone open shelves to allow for inspection and cleaning. At the bay to the west were "high-tension switchboards," where "four-three phase, 22-000-volt, 25-cycle transmission lines entered" the building.[64] The switchboards were located in a glass enclosed room on the third floor, allowing for a clear view of the second floor. The boards, which were constructed of black slate, were arranged in two parallel rows. The centrally located transformers stepped the voltage down, and 11-000-volt distributing switchboards on the east side of the

[60] John F. Snell, *Power House Design* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), 47.
[61] Snell, 28
[62] Ibid., 82.
[63] Kirchgasser, 1084.
[64] Ibid., 1083.

building supplied electricity to substations throughout the city.[65] The transformers were 3000- kw "oil insulated, water cooled" units. The water to cool the transformers was taken from both the city mains and the Niagara River. The outgoing electricity was distributed underground to eleven substations throughout the city where it was further reduced to 2200-volts for distribution to customers of the Buffalo General Electric Company.

Aside from these practical concerns, however, the most pronounced characteristic of early-twentieth-century power stations, the arcaded rows of tall, arched windows, may have been primarily an aesthetic choice rather than an structural requirement. The two-story windows on the exterior of Terminal Station B exemplify the application of these aesthetic values to this industrial building typology, continuing in the tradition set by precedents nearly twenty years earlier by buildings like the Adams Powerhouse. As in many other powerhouses, the elongated windows at Terminal Station B did provide some ventilation where they opened in small parts, and also enabled heat to dissipate a small percentage due to the relative thinness of glass compared with brick. More importantly, however, the windows also provided a great amount of natural illumination, flooding the building with light on all sides. Using brick piers and spandrels to support large spans of glass, the construction at Terminal Station B similarly prioritizes the presence of windows on its exterior elevations, placing high value on natural light and transparency.

At Terminal Station B, as well as many other buildings of the same typology, the monumental scale of these windows is a bit puzzling when one considers that a powerhouse was surely able to generate enough electric light to be able to function inside without them. While the windows did provide some opportunity for heat dissipation, they often did not fully open, or even open at all in some case, indicating that their inclusion was an aesthetic choice rather than a purely practical one. Additionally, power station designers went to great effort to ensure that these long rows of large windows would be sufficiently supported by a series of brick piers and arches. In this sense, these window arcades were likely included to emphasize the monumental scale and importance of the technological achievements and machinery housed inside. Particularly given the public concern over the impact of electricity, steam power and industrial technology on both the natural and built environment, the presence, style and scale of these windows would have provided a reassuring touchstone of traditional cultural values amongst an otherwise modern entity. A familiar architectural language, present in the neoclassical forms of arches, columns and spandrels, ensured that the powerhouse would not be too threatening to suspicious passersby. Nye has similarly identified the careful attention paid to the exterior of powerhouses for this very reason, stating, "Since the public primarily experienced only the exteriors of these buildings, seen from automobiles or passing trains, each plant was designed to convey a large scale magnificence."[66] Visible to the curious public only from Busti Street or the Niagara River, the designers of Terminal Station B adopted

[65] Ibid.
[66] Nye, 10.

many of these pre-established modes of using traditional ornamental motifs to soften the otherwise inherently modern nature of this industrial building.

After the Period of Significance, 1941-present

By 1941, the garage and repair building were vacant, and in 1942 Hewitt Rubber Corporation occupied these buildings. In 1950 the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation purchased the Canadian Niagara Power Company and the Niagara Power Company. As indicated on the 1951 Sanborn Map, by this time they owned Terminal Station B, which was now referred to as Substation B; however, the Service Building is noted as belonging to the General Electric Supply Company. The Trico Company occupied the service building and garage during the 1950s.

In 2002, Niagara Mohawk became part of National Grid USA. Terminal Station B continues to function under this company today, although at a reduced rate. An employee enters the building for maintenance only a few times a week. The large windows are currently boarded. The tower was changed in 2015, when three tubular steel poles were constructed to receive electricity from transmission lines flown across the Niagara River from Bertie Hill in Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada. Lines from the towers enter Terminal Station B at the third floor.

Summary

The story of harnessing the hydro-power of Niagara Falls in the United States and Canada and its transmission to Buffalo, New York embodied bi-national co-operation. The names Schoellkopf, Rankine, Urban, Huntley, Adams, O'Day and Sloan repeat themselves as key players who incorporated and merged a number of companies in the business of producing and transmitting hydro-electric power between Niagara Falls, on both sides of the border, and Buffalo. Construction of the Terminal Station B, and its associated service building and garage, physically and symbolically allowed for a continuous "loop" in the transmission of electricity bi-nationally, which continues today. The complex of buildings retains a high level of integrity and is significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry for contributing to the historical development and distribution of electricity in the city of Buffalo and as parent companies to contemporary large utility companies such as Niagara Mohawk and National Grid. The complex is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The buildings were constructed for a specific function, which is reflected in their design. Terminal Station B's design is a direct result of housing transformers, which could be moved by crane, and galleries to received and distribute electricity. The service building was designed to receive and house electric equipment and the garage to store cars and trucks used for servicing electric lines and utilities. The period of significance begins with the construction of Terminal Station B and ends in 1941 when the garage was sold and no longer had functions associated with electrical distribution.

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----------*Tenth Annual Report*. Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, 1917.

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Verbal Boundary Description

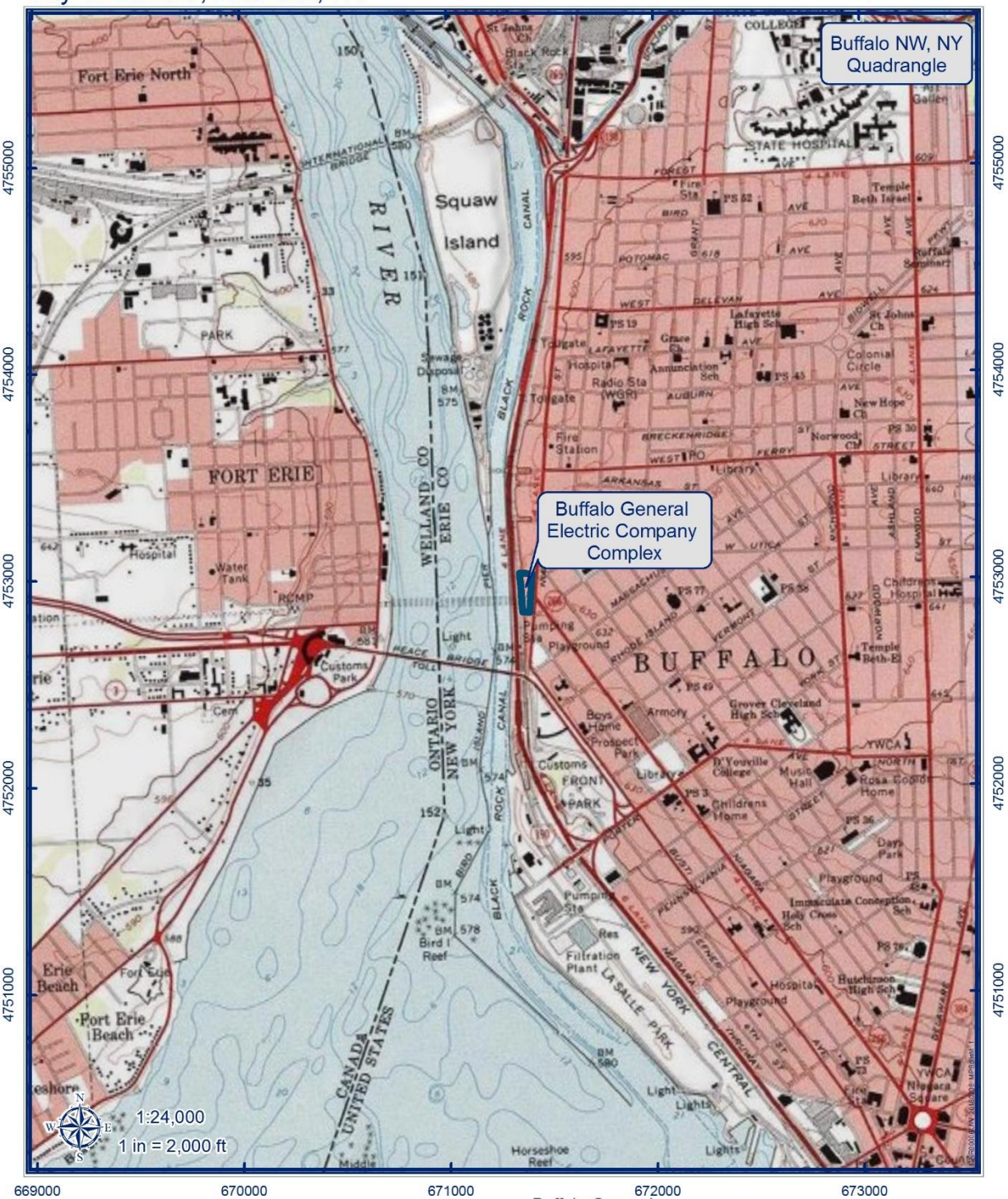
The boundary is indicated with a heavy line on the attached maps with scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass those resources that are historically and functionally related to the Buffalo General Electric Company. The boundary corresponds to the historic ownership of the company and its successors.

Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

960-996 Busti Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

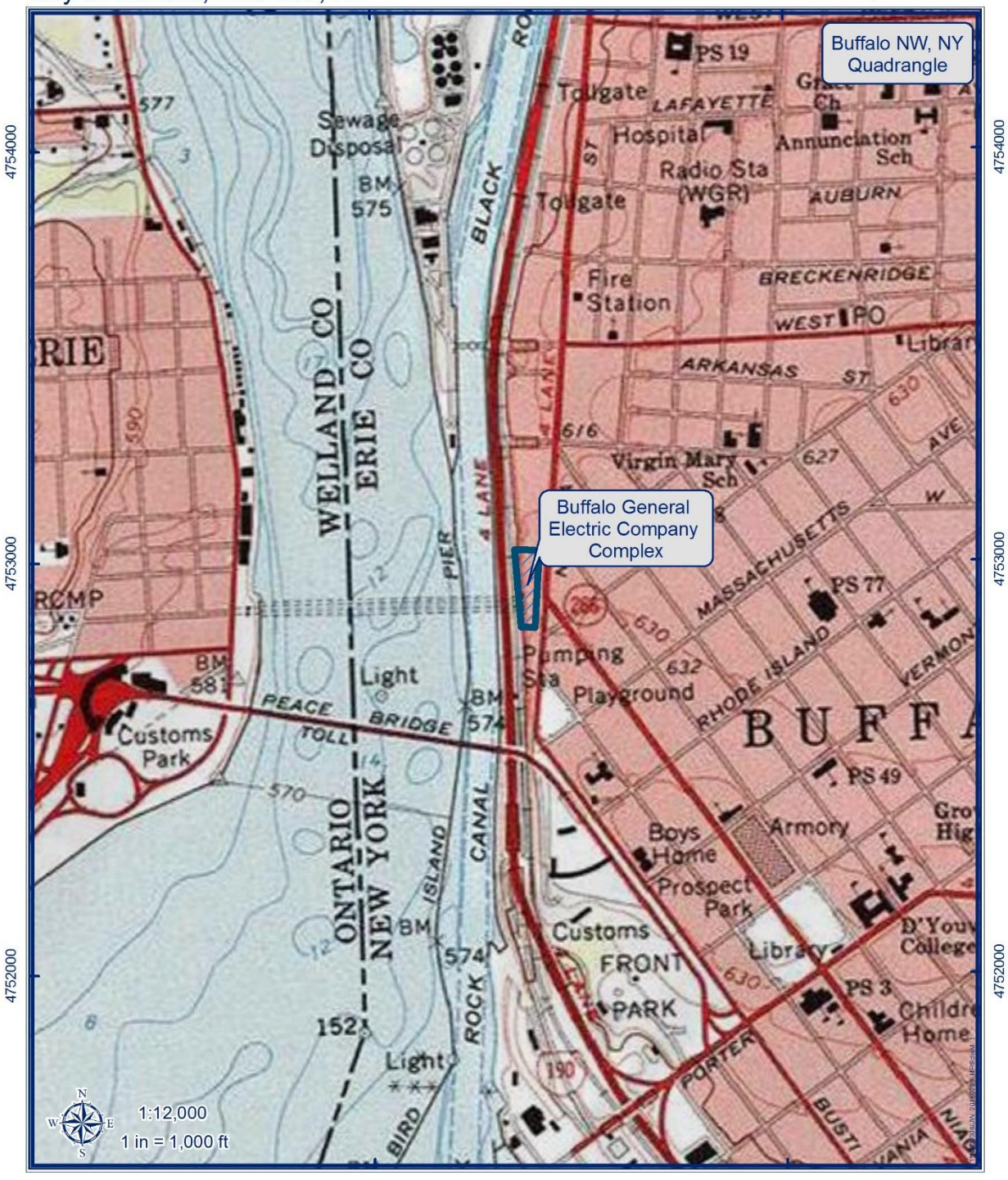
Feet
0 5501,100 2,200

Buffalo General Electric Company Complex

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

960-996 Busti Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213




Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY
960-996 Busti Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213
∑ = 2.19 Acres
E 671372 N 4752960
4753300
4753000
4752700
671100
671400
671700
I 190
Niagara Thruway
Riverwalk
Niagara Street
Albany Street
Fargo Avenue
School Street
West Avenue
Public School 18
Hampshire Street
Prospect Avenue
Busti Avenue
Massachusetts Avenue
7th Street
Busti Avenue Sheridan Terrace
Pat Sole Park
Bird Island Pier
Bird Island Pier Trail
Buffalo Ship Canal
Black Rock Channel
Peace Bridge
Peace Bridge
Niagara Thruway
Sheridan Terrace
Busti Avenue
1:4,000
1 in = 333 ft
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 95 190 380
Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

960-996 Busti Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213

Additional Information

Photo Log:

Name of Property:	Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City or Vicinity:	Buffalo
County:	Erie
State:	New York
Name of Photographer:	kta preservation specialists
Date of Photographs:	February, 2018
Location of Original Digital Files:	kta preservation specialists Buffalo, NY 14216

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0001
View looking northwest along Busti Avenue showing east elevations of 960 and 996 Busti, and 990 Niagara Street.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0002
View looking southwest from the intersection of Niagara Street and Busti Avenue and Niagara Street showing east and north elevations of 990 Niagara Street and east elevations of 996 and 960 Busti Avenue.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0003
View looking southeast from Bird Island Pier showing the east elevations of the buildings in the Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B Complex.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0004
View looking northeast from Bird Island Pier showing the east elevations of the buildings in the Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B Complex.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0005
View looking west showing the east elevation of 960 Busti Avenue.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0006
View looking west showing the east elevation of 996 Busti Avenue.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0007
View looking west showing the east elevation of 990 Niagara Street.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0008
View looking northwest showing a detail of the entrance and windows on the south elevation of 996 Busti Avenue.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0009
View looking northwest showing the south elevation of 990 Niagara Street. Note concrete detail marking the slope of the ramp leading to the second floor garage space.

Name of Property:	Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City or Vicinity:	Buffalo
County:	Erie
State:	New York
Name of Photographer:	kta preservation specialists
Date of Photographs:	July, 2016
Location of Original Digital Files:	kta preservation specialists Buffalo, NY 14216

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0010
View looking west showing apartment interior, 960 Busti Avenue. Note steel columns, beams and concrete ceiling.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0011
View looking west showing apartment window and industrial sash windows, 960 Busti Avenue.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0012
View showing detail of stair, 960 Busti Avenue.

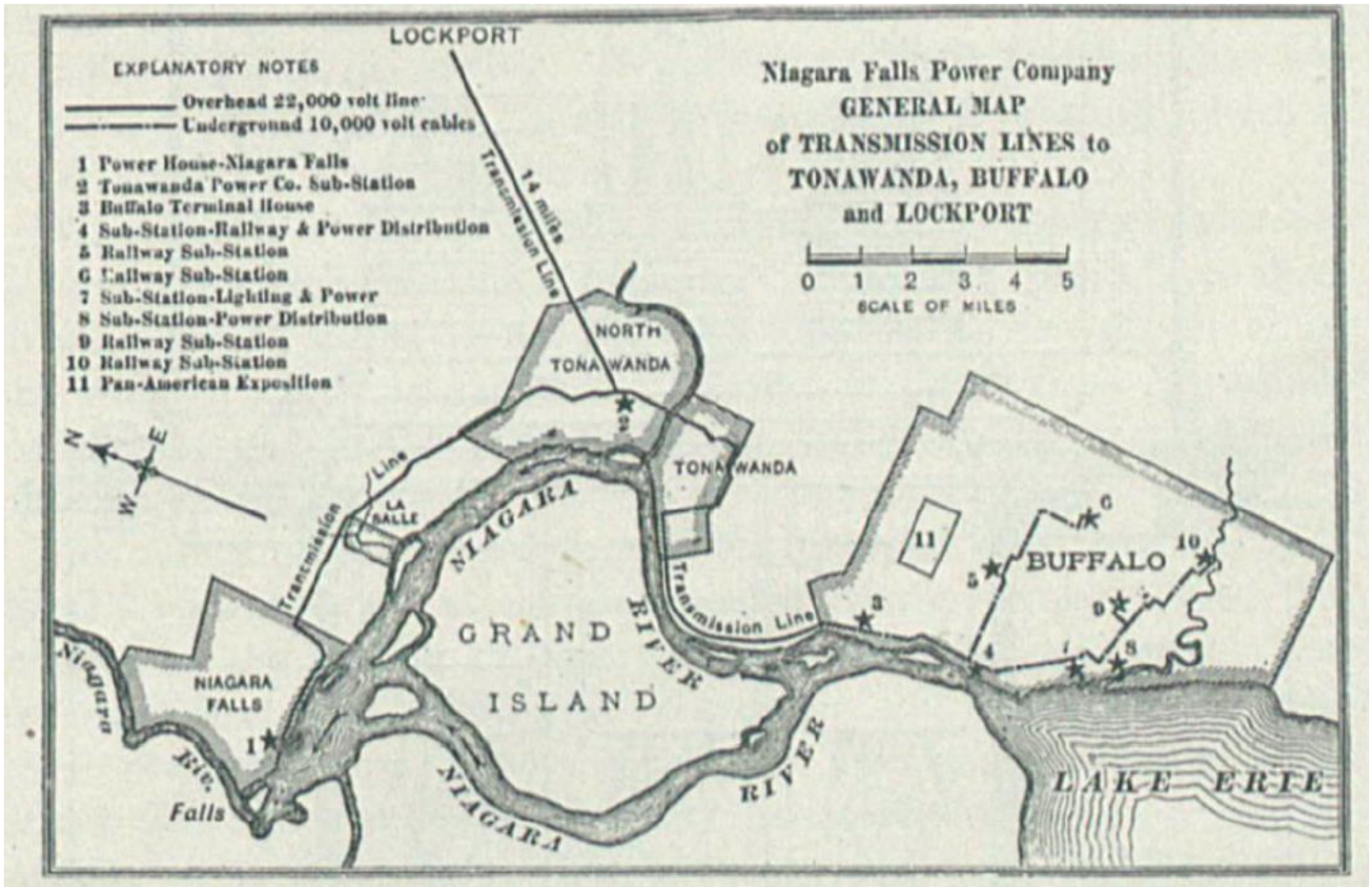
NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0013
View showing detail of monitor lights at roof in apartment, 960 Busti Avenue.

Name of Property:	Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
City or Vicinity:	Buffalo
County:	Erie
State:	New York
Name of Photographer:	kta preservation specialists
Date of Photographs:	September, 2012
Location of Original Digital Files:	kta preservation specialists Buffalo, NY 14216

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0014
View showing interior of 1st floor, 990 Niagara Street. Note concrete mushroom cap columns, and concrete floors and ceiling.

NY_Erie County_Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B_0014
View looking down and east along ramp to second floor garage space, 990 Niagara Street.

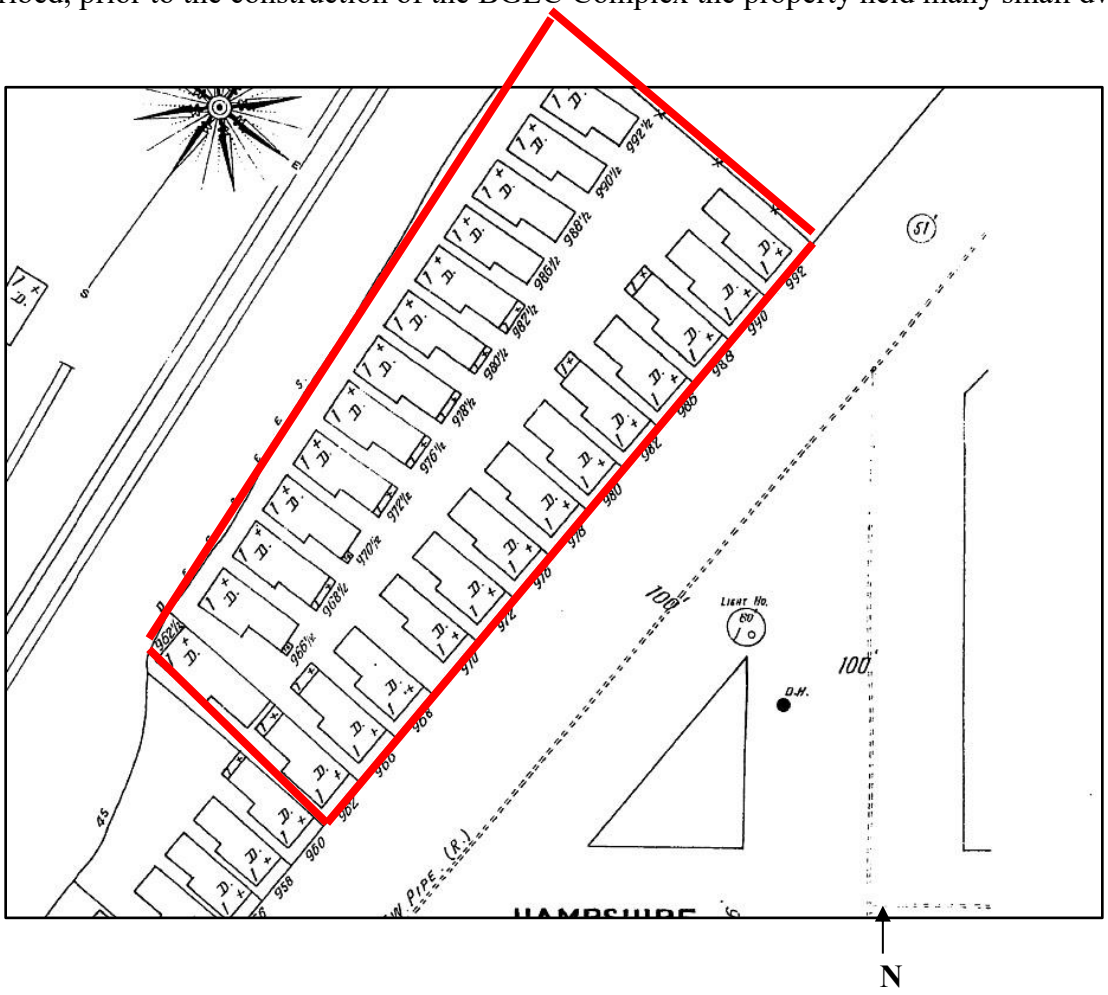
Figure 1. Map showing the distribution of power from Niagara Falls to the City of Buffalo in 1902. Although this map was made 4 years prior to the construction of Terminal Station B, it illustrates the extent of interconnected power stations as electricity was transmitted, transformed and redistributed from Niagara Falls to the City of Buffalo. Terminal A is labeled as location number 3, and Terminal B would be built 4 years later in 1906 near location number 8.
From Buck, 1902.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

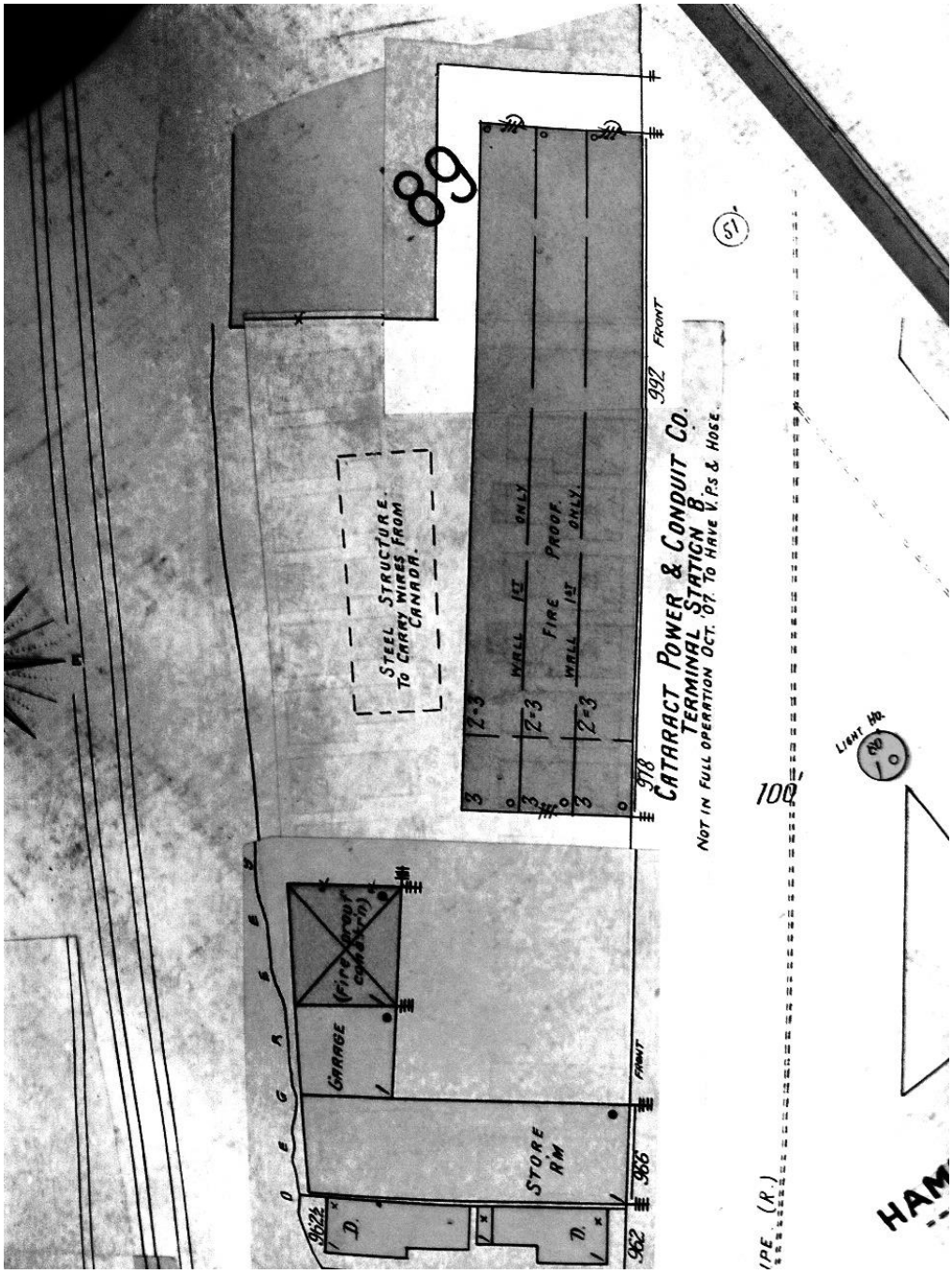
Buffalo 1889-1900vol.1,1899, Sheet 85.

As described, prior to the construction of the BGEC Complex the property held many small dwellings.



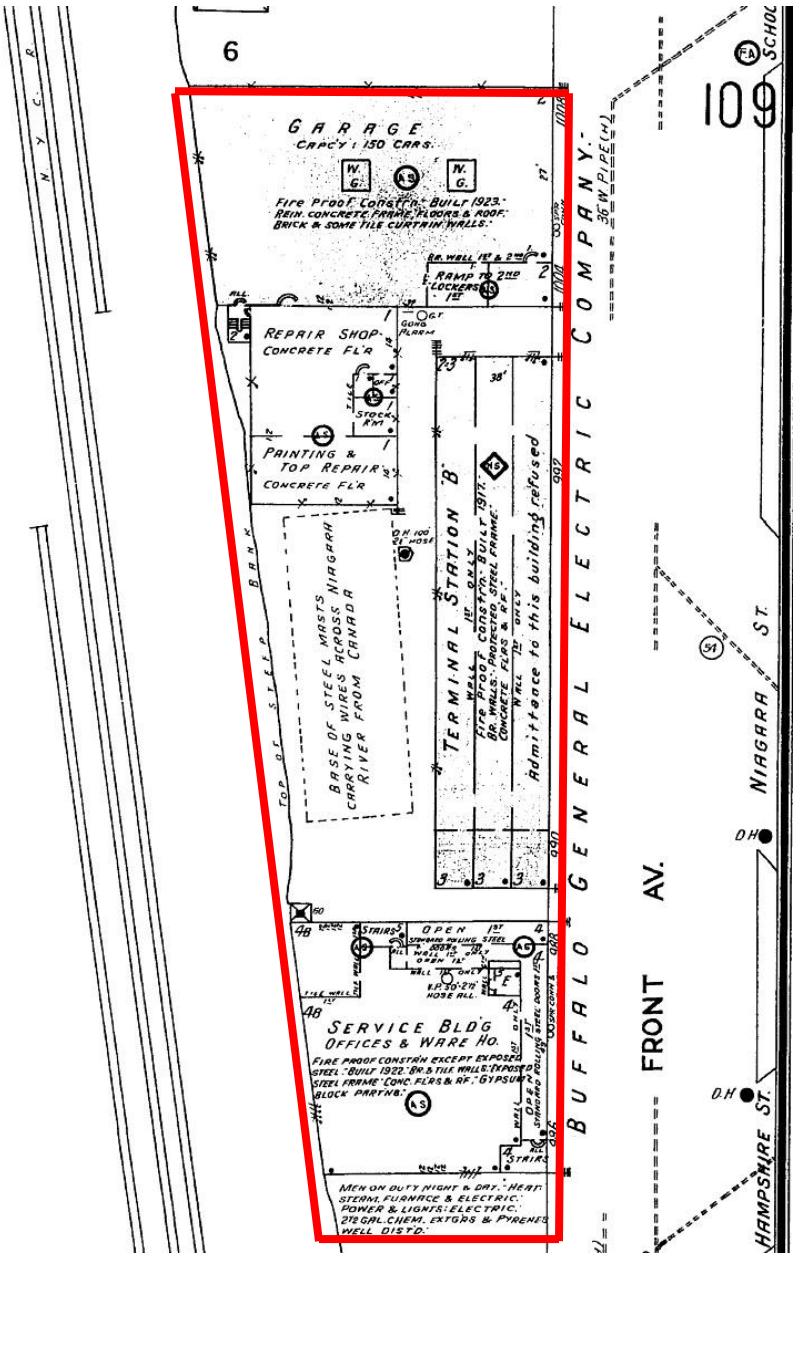
Buffalo 1899 corrected to 1913 Plate 85.

Note Terminal Station B has been constructed by this time (in 1906), but the service building and garage remaining today have not yet been built. The steel structure to the west of the Terminal Station B is a tower.



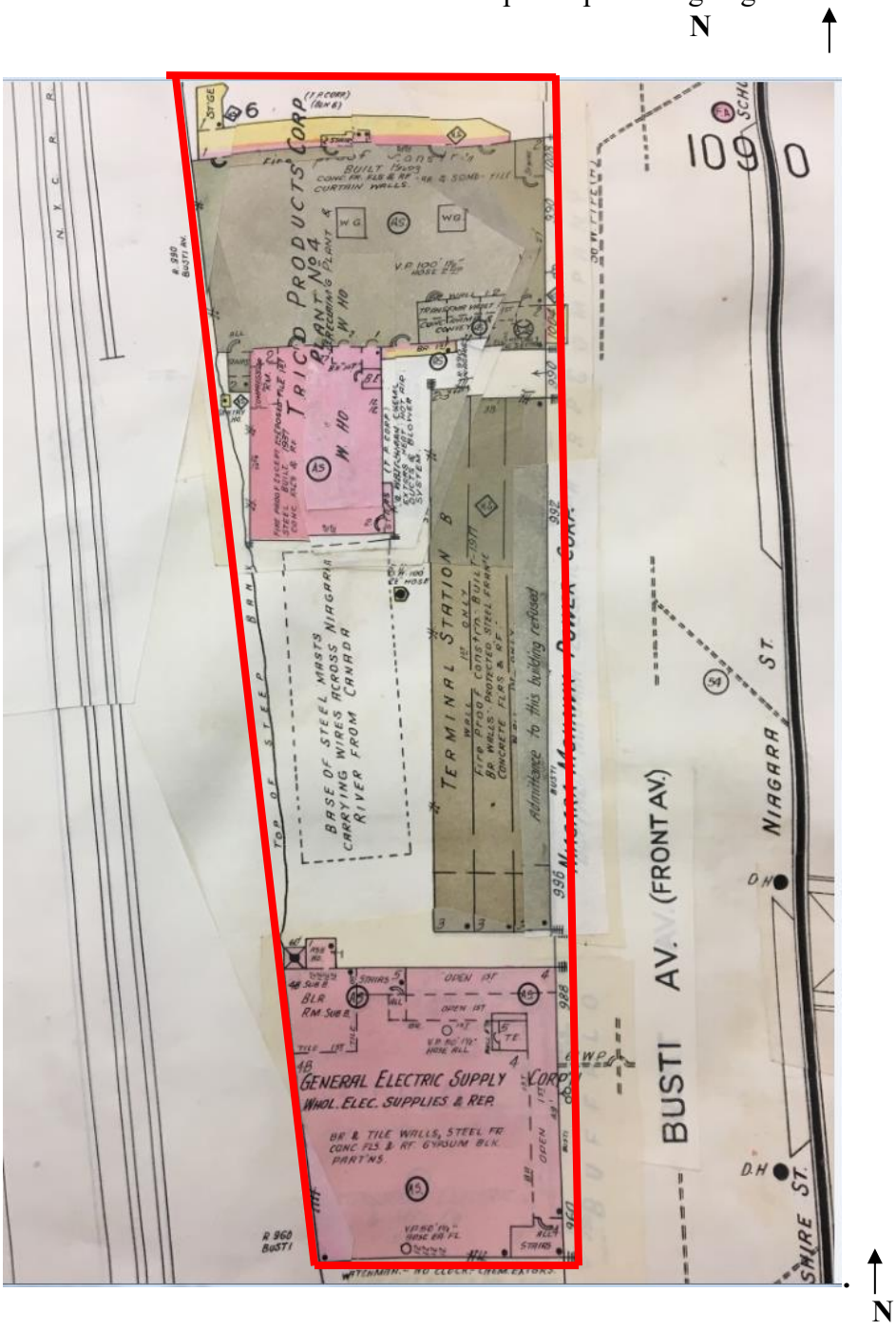
Buffalo 1916-1940vol.1A, 1925, Sheet 108.

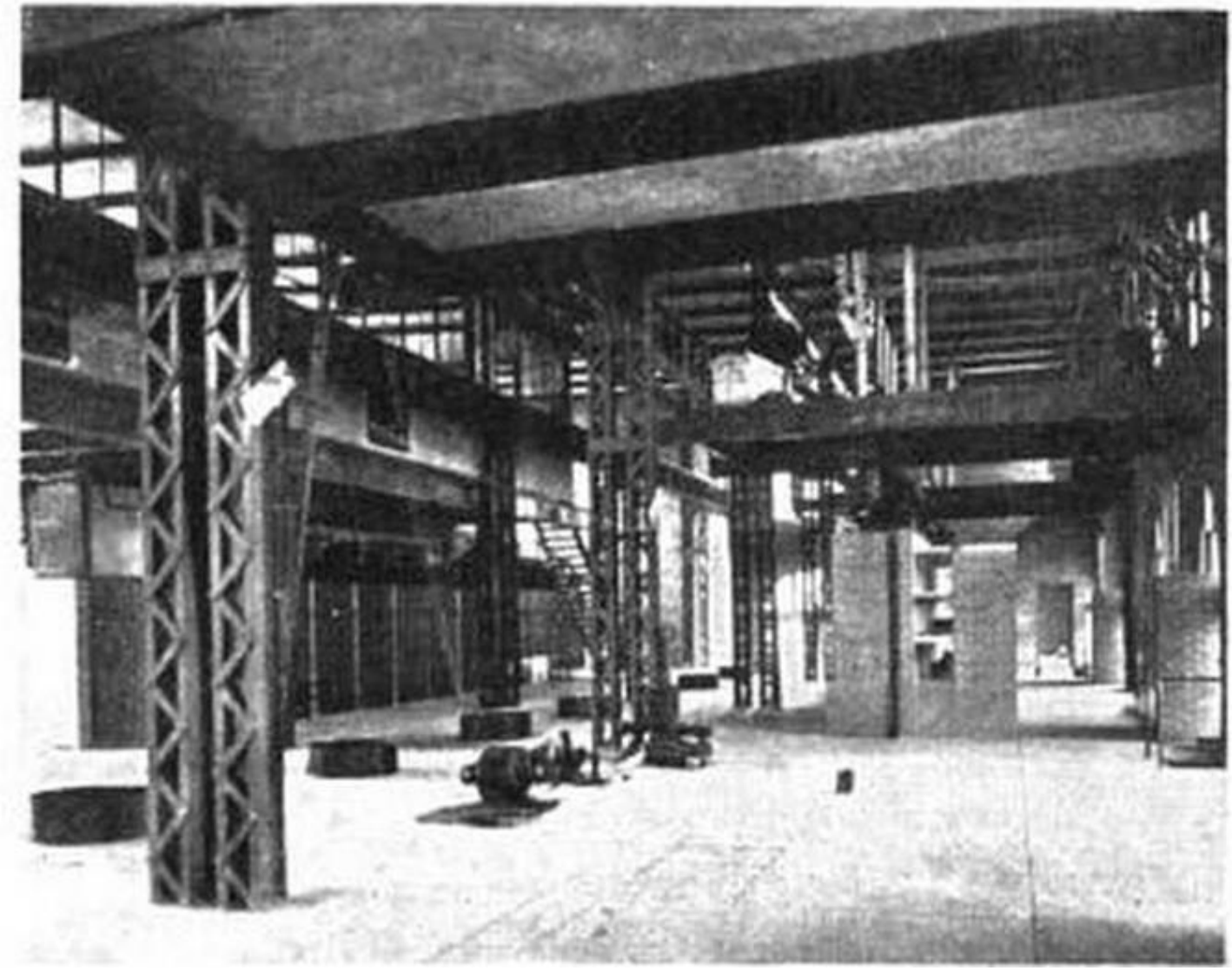
Note all remaining buildings in the complex have been constructed by this time. Terminal Station B, the garage and the repair shop to the west and the service building to the south.



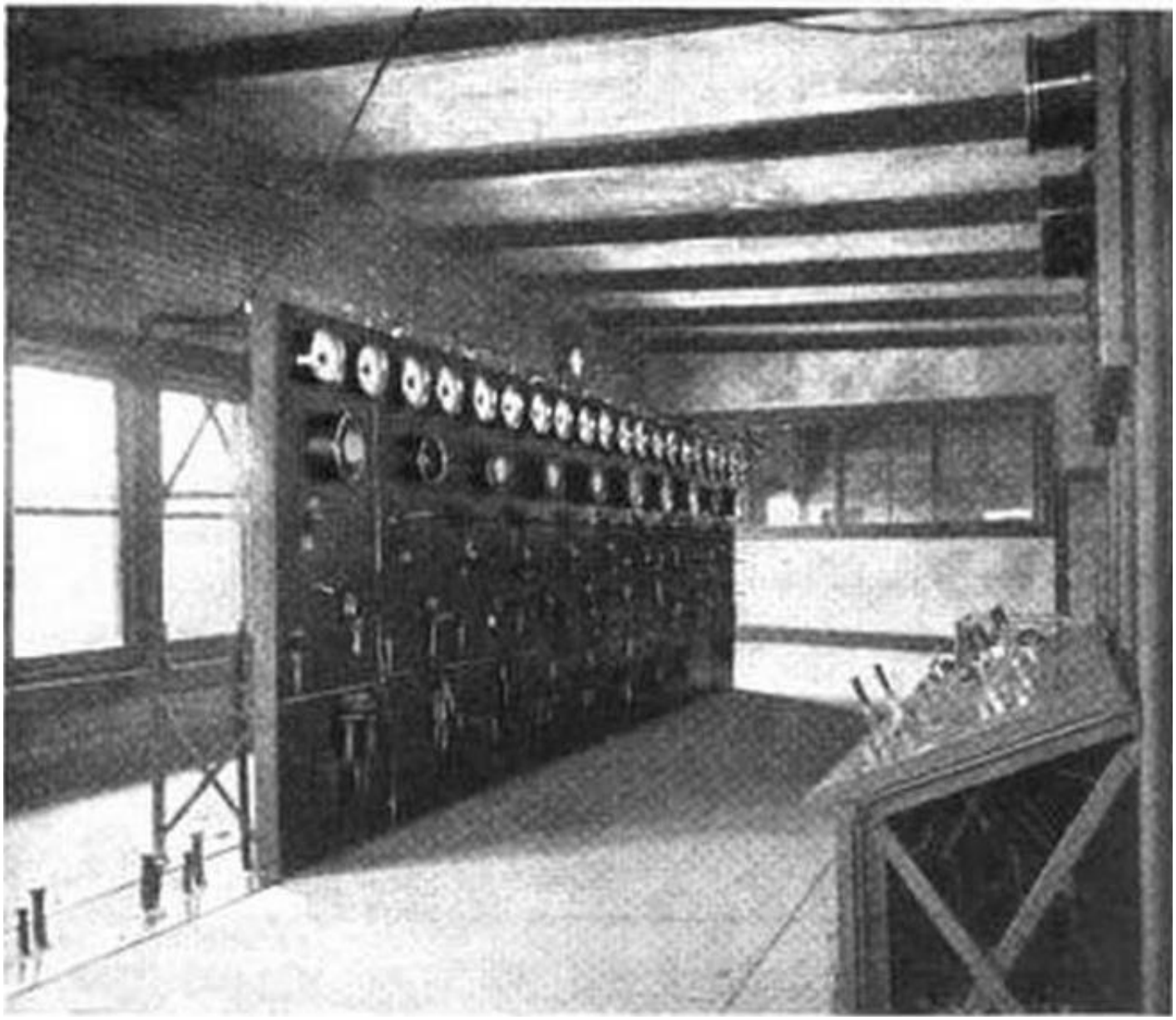
***Buffalo 1925-1951vol.1A, 1951, Sheet 108*. Corrected to 1961.**

Note that the property has changed ownership by this time. The Niagara Mohawk Power Corp has purchased Terminal Station B and the Trico Products Corp occupied the garage at this time.





Interior of Terminal Station B, 1907
Showing center bay with transformer and crane.
"Canadian Niagara Power Company's Transmission to Buffalo," 1301.



Interior of Terminal Station B, 1907
Showing operating gallery and switchboards at third floor.
"Canadian Niagara Power Company's Transmission to Buffalo," 1301.

Historic Photo, ca. 1923 looking northwest showing Service Building and Terminal Station B.

Buffalo General Electric Company Service Building (1981)
From Historic Resource Inventory Form

Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B (1981)
From Historic Resource Inventory Form

Buffalo General Electric Company Terminal Station B (2008)


Five Star Bank


SOUTH TO NORTH
266
PEACE BRIDGE
190
NIAGARA ST
TO SOUTH
190
BUSTI AVE
990


HENLEY CHAMPS 2017
1000
FedEx
HENLEY CHAMPS


2006 HENLEY CHAMPS
HENLEY CHAMPS


DEFINE
YOUR
SPACE.
OFFICE/RETAIL
APARTMENTS
REFINE
YOUR
LIVING.
716 854-0060
960
BUSTI
960
BUSTI


BUSTI


990


PRIVATE PROPERTY
DANGER


DANGER
CONSTRUCTION AREA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination
Property Name:	Buffalo General Electric Complex
Multiple Name:	
State & County:	NEW YORK, Erie

Date Received:	Date of Pending List:	Date of 16th Day:	Date of 45th Day:	Date of Weekly List:
4/19/2018	5/4/2018	5/21/2018	6/4/2018	5/25/2018

Reference number:	SG100002509
Nominator:	State

Reason For Review:

X Accept _____ Return _____ Reject **5/25/2018** Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date

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

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

J. Roger Trettel
990 Niagara, LLC
285 Ellicott Street
Buffalo, NY 14203

March 9, 2018

Mr. William Paladino
Ellicott Development Company
210 Ellicott Square
295 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14203

Re: Potential Historic Designation of 990 Niagara Street (aka 990 Busti Ave), Buffalo, NY

Dear Mr. Paladino,

By this letter I acknowledge that you have presented 990 Niagara Street (aka 990 Busti Avenue) as a possible contributing structure to the Buffalo General Electric Company Historic District that is being reviewed by the NYSHPO on March 16, 2018.

We understand your inclusion of this property, and subsequent acceptance of this property as part of the Buffalo General Electric Company Historic District, would not bind us to pursue historic tax credits nor bind us to conform to the Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for any subsequent development of the property. By this understanding, we are not opposed to having the building included in the historic district if deemed appropriate by the NYSHPO and the U.S. National Park Service.

We commend you and Ellicott Development for your exceptional historic renovation of 960 Busti and your continued efforts to revitalize Niagara Street.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,
990 Niagara LLC

J. Roger Trettel
Managing Member

Michael E. Guerin
Manager, Real Estate Operations
US Business Services

nationalgrid

March 12, 2018

VIA OVERNIGHT COURIER

R. Daniel Mackay
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Division for Historic Preservation
Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

RE: Buffalo General Electric Company Complex
960-996 Busti Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213
Erie County

Dear Mr. Mackay:

I am writing on behalf of Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, d/b/a National Grid ("National Grid") in response to your letter of February 14, 2018 announcing the above-noted property (the "Property") as under consideration for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places (the "Registers"). National Grid appreciates its role in shaping the utility industry as we know it today, and takes very seriously its place in the history of Upstate New York – particularly its place in the history of the City of Buffalo. Each day, we strive to honor that role by continuing to improve the lives of our Upstate New York customers through positive stewardship and community engagement.

In specific regard to the Property (which we sometimes refer to as the "Terminal Station B" facility), National Grid would respectively ask that it be excluded from the designation process. This Property contains facilities that support our electric distribution network and is crossed by a critical electric transmission corridor as well. As a more general matter, National Grid did not take part in the nomination of the Property, or authorize any third party to pursue historic designation on its behalf. National Grid certainly appreciates the importance of historic preservation efforts, but respectfully suggests that it should have an opportunity to consider fully the implications of the

Property being listed on the Registers, whether such a listing is in the best interests of the community and its customers, and to pursue such listing if and when it so chooses.

Accordingly, and to the extent National Grid may lawfully do so as the record owner of the Property, **National Grid respectfully objects to the listing in the Registers**. If you desire any additional information regarding this objection, please contact me at (781) 907-1741.

Sincerely,

NIAGARA MOHAWK POWER CORPORATION, d/b/a
National Grid

By: _____
Name: Michael E. Guerin
Title: Authorized Representative

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS)

COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX)

On this 12th day of March 2018, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, personally appeared Michael E. Guerin, Authorized Representative of Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, to me known to be the individual whose name is subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he executed the same in his capacity, and that by his signature on the instrument, the individual, or the person upon behalf of the individual acted, executed the instrument.

_____
NOTARY PUBLIC

CHRIS PARELLA
Notary Public
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
My Commission Expires
November 25, 2022

40 Sylvan Rd, Waltham, MA 02451
T: 7819071741 ■ F: 7815221052 ■ michael.guerin@nationalgrid.com.com ■ www.nationalgrid.com

NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY.

Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

15 April 2018

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following eight nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Edith B. Ford Memorial Library, Seneca County
Austerlitz Historic District, Columbia County
Spencertown Historic District, Columbia County
Ingleside Home, Erie County
Westminster House Club House, Erie County
Copeland Carriage House , Saratoga County
Tibbetts-Rumsey House, Tompkins County
Buffalo General Electric Complex, Erie County

In addition, I have also enclosed a request for a change to contributing status for 348 Ashland Avenue in the Elmwood Historic District (West), Erie County. Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office