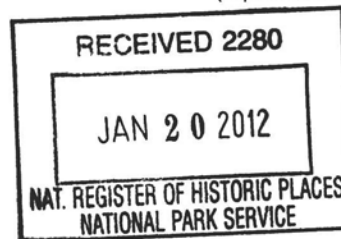


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building

other names/site number Protection One; 173-11059

## 2. Location

street & number 120 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Wichita

☐ vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Sedgwick code 173 zip code 67202

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

national x statewide local

Patricia E. Selmer  
Signature of certifying official

1-13-12  
Date

DSHPO  
Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

John Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

3.7.12  
Date of Action

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	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)

COMMERCE/TRADE: office building

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: concrete

walls: limestone

brick

roof: tar and gravel

other: aluminum



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**Narrative Description**

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**Summary**

The Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building was designed in 1953 by the architectural firm of Glen H. Thomas & A. B. Harris, Wichita, with an addition designed by the successor firm of Thomas Harris Ash & Mason in 1969. The original "L"-shaped building was constructed by Dondlinger & Sons Construction Company, Inc., Wichita. As originally designed and constructed, the 7-story building features ribboned aluminum-framed fenestration, expansive brick spandrels and continuous concrete sunshades (extensions of the monolithic floor slabs), with aluminum fascia above each floor. The exterior also displays large expanses of black pearl "Granux" or manufactured granite<sup>1</sup> at the storefront level and monumental planes of limestone. The modern office building remains virtually as originally designed and is in excellent condition. The property rests on a 3-½ foot thick concrete slab; pillars, beams and floor slab were poured in one operation where prefabricated forms were dismantled and reused as construction continued. The basement walls were waterproofed with four piles of felt and a layer of melted pitch. As described in an August 1953 article, "Unit One" of the building measured seven stories over an area of 69 by 140 feet, with an additional, two-story unit over an area 140 by 184 feet.<sup>2</sup> A five-story addition to the west façade of the building began in 1969 and was completed one year later. Provisions for this five-story addition were planned when the present building was constructed.<sup>3</sup> Interior spaces and finishes remain virtually as designed, with the exception of the first-floor serpentine-shaped counter, which has been slightly modified. Original finishes including those at the lobby, auditorium, and boardroom (for example) are extant and in excellent condition.

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**Elaboration**

Sited on Main and First Streets, the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building is located in a commercial neighborhood of the Central Business District characterized by a variety of architectural styles dating from the early to late 20th century. To the west of the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building is a modern, multi-story parking garage; to the north is a surface parking lot, to the east is a series of smaller-scaled, modestly articulated commercial properties dating from the early to mid-20th century and to the south is a multi-story brick and terra cotta Classical styled building dating from the 1920s.

**Original Building: 1953-1955**

While the south and east facades are similarly embellished with like materials, the main façade of the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building faces south. The faux granite and aluminum framed storefront, with stretches of fluted aluminum screening and steel sheathed columns<sup>4</sup> at the eastern half, features a double-leaf door with fixed sidelights and wide transom at the western bay along 1st Street. The remainder of this entry bay is clad in faux granite. The eastern bay of the south façade is marked by a

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<sup>1</sup> The Granux Corporation, Chicago, supplied the Granux. See Glen H. Thomas & A. B. Harris, "Specifications" for the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building, April 10, 1953. G-1, 85. Files. Gossen Livingston McCluggage and Van Sickle, Architects, Wichita, Kansas. Pre-manufactured granite by Granux was used across the U.S. during the post-war period.

<sup>2</sup> "First Floor Slab of K.G.E. Building to Be Poured Friday," *The Wichita Eagle*, 20 August 1953, 4C.

<sup>3</sup> Dick Dilsaver, "KG&E Announce Million Office Expansion Project," *Wichita Beacon*, n.d., n.p. 6704 Owner's File/PLANNING. Files. Gossen Livingston McCluggage and Van Sickle, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Specification for the KG&E Building, the steel used for the column covers is A.I.S.I. Type 430 annealed, 12-gauge with a brush finish. See Glen H. Thomas & A. B. Harris, "Specifications" G-1, 52. Files. Gossen Livingston McCluggage and Van Sickle, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

continuous recessed storefront.<sup>5</sup> A single-leaf door, facing east, is tucked behind a fluted aluminum screen; heat lamps are recessed into the ceiling of the first floor sheltered walkway.

The western unit of the south façade slightly projects beyond the eastern portion. Its exposed east façade features large rustic buff Indiana Oolitic Limestone panels, smooth planed.<sup>6</sup> Each of the upper floors is characterized by Sealux aluminum ribboned fenestration<sup>7</sup> set below concrete sunshades with aluminum fascia. Wide brick spandrels separate each floor. The articulation of the upper floors of the eastern half of the south façade is virtually identical to that of the western portion, with the exception of the second story, where the spandrels are composed of Ashlar limestone. The remainder of the floors (three through seven) is recessed, forming a deck above the second story, where a curved aluminum railing is featured. Additionally, the sunshades wrap to the upper floors of the east façade, giving depth and variety to the surface of the east-facing plane, casting shadows at the corner.

Similar details to that of the main façade are found on the east façade, which faces Market Street. The aluminum-framed storefront of the east bay of the south facade continues to the east façade and at its southern bay is protected by a canopy supported by three columns. Two single-leaf aluminum framed doors are placed beneath the canopy. A monolithic limestone plane clads the upper floors of this bay and terminates in a seventh floor open patio where four columns, sheathed in stainless steel, support the edge of the massive roof.

Echoing the materials and form of the main façade's second story limestone configuration is the two-story unit at the east façade. Limestone spandrels, aluminum-framed fenestration and railings follow the same design, while the storefront façade is faced with granite placed below ribboned fenestration. A single-leaf door is found toward the southern portion of the two-story unit; an overhead door is located at the far north bay.

The north façade reads as a blank masonry wall at the two-story unit, adjacent to the surface parking lot. At the seven-story unit, the aluminum framed fenestration and brick spandrels are the same as that of the main façade, without the sunshades. The 7th-floor canopy wraps to the first bay of the north façade where the wall is faced in brick.

Facing the alley adjacent to the contemporary parking garage is the west façade. Limestone panels mark the southern bays with a series of three slender windows placed at the lower level. The brick portion features loading docks and secondary entrances at the first floor. The upper levels are characterized by one-over one and two-over two aluminum framed fenestration set between wide brick spandrels. Paired vents are located at each spandrel. The terminating floor features tripartite, aluminum-framed windows which flank paired multipaned units.

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<sup>5</sup> When completed in 1955, there were five large, aluminum-framed fixed storefront windows on the south façade. These windows were removed in the 1969-1970 remodeling (and addition) and replaced with the current configuration. In a 1969 newspaper article, the new area of the building was described as a "landscaped, sheltered plaza." "Business as Usual Planned During KG&E Expansion." *The Wichita Eagle and the Beacon*, n.d. KG&E files, No. 6704, "Owner's File/PLANNING." Gossen Livingston McCluggage and Van Sickle, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>6</sup> Description of the finish produced by planer machines plus the removal of objectionable tool marks, is also known as "smooth planer finish" and "smooth machine finish". Window sills, copings, caps are also smooth planed or dressed machine. Veneer and soffits are shot-sawed finish, a finish obtained by using steel shot in the gang sawing process to produce random markings for a rough surface texture.

<sup>7</sup> The windows have an aluminite finish with methacrylate lacquer. Universal Corporation, Dallas, Texas, supplied the units. See Plans, Universal Corporation, dated May 29, 1953. Files, Dondlinger Construction Company, Wichita, Kansas and Specifications, which state Model Number 42A, page 53.

Interior:

As originally designed, the architects planned for a flexible workflow for a growing company. Subsequently, there have been some changes to the interior of the building, as a result of the 1969-1970 addition and remodeling and upgrades to office arrangement. Space requirements for future staffing levels were considered and the "adequacy of existing work stations was determined by interview[s] with department heads..."<sup>8</sup> The most apparent alteration is that of the main lobby area, where the original curvilinear-shaped counter, light cove and luminous ceiling (with corrugated acrylic finish) were removed.<sup>9</sup> (See historic photograph of the Main Lobby, page 38 below.)

However, the original elevator lobbies, with Roman Travertine marble wainscoting, are intact, as well as the terrazzo marble flooring. On the first floor, the "KG&E" auditorium remains virtually intact, with the exception of the stage, resized at the rear to accommodate a storage room. The volume of space on the second floor (originally KG&E's treasury department), third floor (Wichita Division offices, purchasing department and medical unit), fourth floor (Engineering department), fifth floor (production department and employee's lunch room), and sixth floor (tax and claims department, general sales department and Assistant to General Manager office) remain but have been remodeled with new partitions and fixtures. The Executive Offices located on the seventh floor, featuring wood paneling and a fireplace, are intact.<sup>10</sup>

Addition: 1969-1970

In 1969, Thomas Harris Ash & Mason designed a five-story addition for the Kansas Gas & Electric Company that generally utilized the same materials of the original building designed by the predecessor firm sixteen years earlier. Hahner, Foreman & Harness, Inc, Wichita, was the general contractor. The steel-framed, brick and limestone addition was placed to the west of the existing two-story portion (measuring 140 x 184 feet) and to the north of the original seven-story unit, thus forming an "L". The addition added approximately 18,000 square feet to the original 72,000 square foot facility.

The east façade of the addition features the same fenestration and spandrel design and configuration of Thomas and Harris's original scheme. Varying from that plan, the columns separating the ribboned fenestration are steel instead of concrete. The new plan extended the masonry wall at the north façade, as well.

Thomas Harris Ash & Mason skillfully reconfigured the original northern bays of the west façade to unify the building as a whole. They reintroduced the monolithic limestone plane and entry canopy of the west facade at the far north bay. At the first story, beneath the canopy are two freight doors, placed off-center. The remainder of the additions west façade is detailed with ribboned fenestration, steel clad columns and brick spandrels like those of the addition's east façade.

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<sup>8</sup> "Office Facilities Requirements Study for KG&E," No. 6704 Owner's File/PROGRAM, 3. A new standard of space allocation for office's was taken into account in the remodeling program.

<sup>9</sup> A drop ceiling was added in the 1986 and may be covering the original light fixtures. The lobby alterations were designed by Law/Kingdon, Inc.

<sup>10</sup> According to J. M Guy, the conservative décor of the executive offices was the choice of the president of KG&E.

As part of the 1969 remodeling of the KG&E building, a large penthouse to house mechanical and electrical equipment was constructed of anodized aluminum and was originally lighted with colored lights that changed colors with the season.<sup>11</sup>

The 1969-1970 addition doubled the area available on floors three through six to permit department groupings more in line with company operating practices. Generally speaking each floor is wide open and can accommodate partitions. The volume and configuration of space at each of the floors is very similar to the original interior of the Kansas Gas & Electric Building. Each floor of the addition flows almost seamlessly into the original office spaces.

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<sup>11</sup> *Op site 3*, above. "Business as Usual Planned During KG&E Expansion." KG&E files, No. 6704, "Owner's File/PLANNING." Gossen Livingston McCluggage and Van Sickle, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1953-1955

### Significant Dates

1953-1955

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Thomas & Harris, architect (1953-1955)

Thomas, Harris, Calvin & Ash, architect (1969-70)

Dondlinger Construction Company, builder

### Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance is the date of the original construction, 1953-1955.

### Criteria Considerations (justification)

N/A

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## Narrative Statement of Significance

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### Summary

The Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building located at 120 East First Street, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture as a fine example of the work of Thomas & Harris, architects, Wichita, Kansas and merits statewide significance. Designed in the International Style, the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building marks the beginning of the Modern era for the Central Business District and was the first in a major building boom for the city. On March 18, 1953, the Kansas Gas & Electric Company announced plans for the construction of a seven-story office building on the site of their former offices located on the corner lot of First and Market Streets. Planned by noted Wichita architects, Glenn H. Thomas and Arthur B. Harris, also responsible for the design of numerous buildings in a variety of architectural styles in Sedgwick County, the KG&E Building stands as one of the firm's most notable examples of the Modern Style and merits Statewide significance.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the firm's work in the International Style is best expressed in the KG&E Building. It is important to note that provisions for the five-story addition (1969) were made when the original plans were designed in 1953. Examples of other buildings designed by the firm and their successors (see below) in the Modern Movement include the Wichita Municipal Airport Terminal (1954), the new Sedgwick County Courthouse (1955), Clark County Courthouse (1960) and the Nemaha County Courthouse (1956). The period of significance for the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building is 1953-1955, the date of construction.

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### Elaboration

#### The Architecture of the Kansas Gas & Electric Building

The 1996 book entitled *Guide to Kansas Architecture* by David Sachs and George Ehrlich acknowledges the architecture of the State of Kansas in the form of an inventory of the architectural treasures within the state. The following is an excerpt describing the Kansas Gas & Electric Building:

The building displays the full range of Modernist vocabulary and reveals the adaptability of the style. The structure responds to the demands of function, the size of its floor plate is varied through its seven levels, yet the urban context is respected.<sup>13</sup>

According to Sachs and Ehrlich, Glen H. Thomas (the founder of the firm responsible for the design of the KG&E building), as a graduate of the University of Illinois School of Architecture, was influenced by the conservative modern traditions of Eliel Saarinen and Bertram Goodhue, as well as a modified rendition based on Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style, which is used in his design of Wichita High School

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<sup>12</sup> The firm of Thomas & Harris was on of the earliest practioners of the International Style in the State of Kansas. While Brinkman & Hagan (see the Lyon County Courthouse, Emporia (1954) also designed in the International Style, the Kansas Gas & Electric Building best expresses the hallmarks of this Modernist form.

<sup>13</sup> David H. Sachs and George Ehrlich, *Guide to Kansas Architecture*, (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 242. In their introudction to the catalogue of Kansas architecture, Sachs and Ehrlich list architects William Kiene, Jack Bradley, Robert Shaefer and Henry Schirmer who "activly promoted the new forms," following WWII, yet Thomas and Harris was omited from that roster. (Thomas's name is mentioned in association with Lorentz Schmidt.) Their firm clearly emerged as a leader in the Modernest movement not only in Wichita but in various other locations throughout the state during this Post-War period.



North (1928), Wichita, Kansas.<sup>14</sup> With the design of the Kansas Gas & Electric Company building, Thomas and Harris took on the defining principles of the International Style, which changed the face of downtown Wichita.

Thomas, who earned a degree in architecture, was also a scholar of architectural history and theory. From an examination of his personal papers, Thomas seemed particularly interested in the International Style and its founders. Thomas's notes from a speech given before a group of business owners at a Twentieth Century Club meeting in January 1933 espoused his personal philosophy on modern architecture:

[The] International Style [is an] aesthetic principle based primarily on the nature of modern materials and structure and modern requirements in planning. [which is] relieved of symmetry required by tradition and flexibly dependent on convenience.

These technical and utilitarian factors, in the hands of designers who understand inherent aesthetic possibilities have resulted in a new Architecture comparable in integrity and even in beauty to the past styles.

The Modern Architect's work in new style conceives of his building not as a structure of brick and stone with heavy walls and columns, but as a skeleton enclosed in a light shell. He thinks in terms of volume, of space enclosed with surfaces or planes rather than of mass and solidity.<sup>15</sup>

Modern architects who inspired and were admired by Thomas include F. L. W. Hood, Le Corbusier, Gropius, Van Der Rohe, Oud, Howe, Lescaze, Nuetra and the Bowman Brothers.<sup>16</sup>

Closer to home, the reinforced concrete, seven-story Century Electric Company, St. Louis, brought the International Style to the Midwest several years before construction began on the KG&E Building. Century Electric's exterior, like that of the KG&E Building, staggered levels, introduced terraces, sunshades at the ribboned fenestration and incorporated satin-finished aluminum trim throughout. Designed by William B. Ittner, Inc., Architects & Engineers, St. Louis,<sup>17</sup> the building has had an unfortunate Post-Modern facelift, all but erasing Ittner's original, creative program.

It was clear that the International style, which first appeared in the United States in 1928, inspired Thomas.<sup>18</sup> A description of this Modern form of architecture is as follows:

...characterized by a complete absence of ornamentation and by forms in which effects of mass and weight are minimized for the sake of pure volume; compositionally, a balance of unlike parts is more often than not substituted for axial symmetry. Flat roofs, smooth and uniform wall surfaces, windows with minimal exterior reveals (which are perceived as continuations of the

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<sup>14</sup> Sachs and Ehrlich, *Guide to Kansas Architecture*, 245.

<sup>15</sup> Glen H. Thomas, Outline for Speech to The Twentieth Century Club, 1 January 1933. Glen H. Thomas Papers, GLMV Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> "Century Electric Company, St. Louis," *Architectural Record*, Vol. 112, No. 3 (September 1952), 137-139. The factory was built in two stages, c. 1947 and c. 1952.

<sup>18</sup> Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780*. (Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, 1969), 243.

surface in another material rather than as holes in the wall), and windows that turn the corner of a building are among the means by which the effect of volume is obtained.<sup>19</sup>

The Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building is clearly characterized by the hallmark features of the International Style. Its form and massing, emphasis on the horizontal, ribboned fenestration, and large unadorned walls provide elements of great contrast in the building's exterior. As there are few examples of Modern style buildings in Kansas listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and none in the International Style, the Kansas Gas & Electric Company building remains one of the best expressions of this architectural era in the state and a landmark building for the firm of Thomas & Harris.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Planning and Construction of the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building**

From its beginning in 1909, Kansas Gas & Electric Company operated utilities in Pittsburgh, Frontenac and Wichita, the latter where the general office was located. At the end of 1910, the company provided power to 5,525 customers. As the company grew, service extended to 50 communities and 48,773 customers.<sup>21</sup> The company had increased in size to the point that larger office space at the main office in Wichita became a necessity by 1953. Subsequently, the Wichita firm of Glen Herbert Thomas and Arthur Blaine Harris, architects was commissioned to design the new building. In addition, KG&E decided to demolish their old office and build on the same site rather than move to another location.<sup>22</sup>

Requests for construction bids were published in numerous trade magazines and newspapers from Wichita to Topeka, as well as Kansas City, Missouri and Tulsa, Oklahoma, on March 18, 1953. Bidding closed April 15, 1953 and by May 1953, work on the demolition of the old KG&E building had begun. General contracting for the project was let to Dondlinger & Sons, whose office was located at 1206 E. Lincoln, Wichita, Kansas.<sup>23</sup>

Sub-contractors involved in the construction of the new seven-story building included: Ripstra-Turner Company for the combined heating, ventilation, cooling and plumbing; Southwestern Electric Company for the electrical work and lighting, both of Wichita. E. F. Hauserman Company of Cleveland, Ohio, supplied the metal partitions. Westinghouse Electric Company, Elevator Division was the contractor for both the passenger and freight elevators.<sup>24</sup>

Excavation work began in June 1953. Pilings were driven to a depth of 25 feet. A floor of reinforced concrete, 3 ½ feet thick, was poured over the entire floor of the excavation supplying a base on which the building rests.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 241-242.

<sup>20</sup> Although the Lyon County Courthouse in Emporia (Brinkman & Hagan, 1954) has been labeled an International Style building, its vertical sun screens suggest New Formalism. The design of the Kansas Gas & Electric Company building appears to better express the International Style in its pure form.

<sup>21</sup> Westar Energy History, Online, Accessed August 24, 2011.

<http://www.westarenergy.com/wcm.nsf/content/company%20history>

<sup>22</sup> *Mid-West Contractor*, 25 May 1953, 12. See also *The Wichita Eagle*, 14 May 1953, 4C.

<sup>23</sup> *Mid-West Contractor*, Vol. 103 18 March 1953, n.p.

<sup>24</sup> *Mid-West Contractor*, Vol. 103 25 May 1953, 12.

<sup>25</sup> "Lifting Wichita's Face," *The Wichita Eagle* 14 June 1953, 10B.



The construction of the KG&E building was a slow yet methodical process. As reported in *The Wichita Eagle* in August 1953, to wit:

The basement floor of the first unit of the building has been completed and first floor framing is about 20% complete....15% of the first floor slab will be ready for pouring Friday, beams and the floor slabs...poured in one operation, although the work on the...reinforced concrete framework [is] speeded up by the use of fabricated forms which may be quickly erected and dismantled for future use...Unit one of the KG&E building, the section now under construction, will be seven-stories high over an area 69 by 140 feet, and two stories high over an area of 140 by 184 feet. If the construction proceeds according to schedule, Unit 1 will be ready for interior painting this time next year.<sup>26</sup>

The KG&E building was the first of a major building boom that occurred in Wichita in 1954. Construction of the new KG&E offices took over two years to complete due to the customized detailing of both exterior and interior features of the building's design. KG&E held an open house on November 15 and 16, 1955 offering the public a view of the new headquarters. That same year, KG&E had grown to the point that it was able to list its common stock on the New York Stock Exchange.<sup>27</sup>

The population had continued to increase in the State of Kansas and KG&E found it necessary to expand the general office in Wichita to accommodate the growing customer base. A twenty-year utility requirement study by Ebasco Services Inc., New York, a utility consultant firm, completed in April 1967, estimated that the anticipated growth of Wichita between 1970 and 1990 would increase around 55%. The growth criterion for 1970 was estimated at a total client base of 189,000 customers. By 1990 that total was expected to rise to 294,000 customers.<sup>28</sup>

Because of the Ebasco study, KG&E announced their plan for a major addition of five stories to the existing 1953 building. The company stated that it was more important for KG&E to remain in downtown Wichita area.

Regarding the decision to stay in the city, Gordon W. Evans, president of KG&E, gave the following statement to the press:

Our reasons are essentially the same as when we decided to construct our present building. The downtown helps to stabilize the city and its ad valorem tax base. Our policy here and in other communities where we have offices is to locate centrally, as convenient as possible to all customers. The core area certainly meets these criteria.<sup>29</sup>

The addition increased the original building from 72,400 sq. ft. to 100,400 sq. ft. and was anticipated to handle the company's growth through 1990. It was also planned that the building would be ready

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<sup>26</sup> "First Floor Slab of KG&E Building to be Poured Friday," *The Wichita Eagle* 20 August 1953, 4C.

<sup>27</sup> Westar Energy History.

<sup>28</sup> "Office Facility Requirement Study for Kansas Gas and Electric," April 1967, Ebasco Services Incorporated, NY. Papers for Thomas Harris Ash and Mason, Architects, GLMV, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>29</sup> Dick Dilsaver, 'KG&E Announces Million Office Expansion Project,' *The Wichita Beacon*, n.d. News clipping, Papers for Thomas Harris Ash and Mason, Architects; GLMV, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

for occupancy by September 1969, while the original building was slated for remodeling.<sup>30</sup> Thomas, Harris, Ash and Associates, the successor firm to Thomas & Harris, was commissioned to design the addition.<sup>31</sup>

### **Additional Works by Glen H. Thomas and Successor Firms**

Glen H. Thomas and his successor firms (see below) designed a number of important buildings not only for Wichita, but the surrounding area. Considering the variety of building types designed by the firm, from commercial to institutional and residential, it is surprising that their impact on the state's built environment has been mostly ignored by contemporary professional journals.<sup>32</sup> Some of the firm's more notable projects that had a decidable influence, both city and countywide, include the Wichita Municipal Airport (1954), the Sedgwick County Courthouse (1961) and the Kansas Coliseum (1977). In addition, the firm designed numerous projects outside of Sedgwick County, including several buildings located in Oklahoma. According to a project list of the firm's commissions, of over 350 jobs that were completed, approximately 230 jobs were located in Sedgwick County and constructed between 1919 and 1952.<sup>33</sup>

### **Wichita High School North, 1437 N. Rochester, Wichita.**

Often referred to, by locals, as the most recognizable of Glen H. Thomas's building designs is the Wichita High School. This Art Deco style building was constructed in 1928 with a buff colored brick that is trimmed in polychrome terra cotta in an ornamental style that Thomas called "Prairie American." A notable exterior feature is the sculptural motif, which represents the history of Kansas. Designed by Bruce Moore, an internationally known sculptor of the period, the ornaments and decorative panels of the exterior of the building depict scenes of Native American and pioneer life, as well as eagles and buffalo in various colors.<sup>34</sup>

This building is listed locally on the Wichita Historic Register, n. d.<sup>35</sup>

### **The Administration Building, Building No.1, McConnell Air Force Base, Wichita.**

Designed by Glen H. Thomas in 1929, prior to Harris joining the firm, this building was the beginning of the Wichita Municipal Airport. Construction began in 1930 but was not completed until 1934. Funding for this Art–Deco style building was part of the New Deal relief program. The property was sold to the government in 1951 and was the beginning of McConnell Air Force Base. The building also served as

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> The body of Thomas's projects dating from 1919–1952 is well documented in a list found in the files of Gossen, Livingston, McCluggage and Van Sickle Architects (GLMV), Wichita, Kansas, the successor firm.

<sup>33</sup> Glen H. Thomas, Architect, Completed Job List, Glen H. Thomas files, Gossen, Livingston, McCluggage Van Sickle, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>34</sup> The sculpture is made of Carthalite, an artificial ornamental stone that was developed by the Cement, Stone and Supply Company of Wichita.

<sup>35</sup> 35"Wichita High School North," Historic Preservation Alliance of Wichita and Sedgwick County, Kansas. Online Accessed August 25, 2011. <http://members.cox.net/wichitahpa/landmarks.html>

the local airport until the new municipal airport, designed by the successor firm, Thomas, Harris and Calvin, opened in 1954. This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (6/11/1990).<sup>36</sup>

**Allen's Market, 2938 East Douglas Avenue, Wichita.**

Thomas and Harris designed Allen's Market early in their partnership. Henrion Improvement Company, a well known and respected investment and construction company in the southwest commissioned the firm. Roy A. Allen leased the property after it was constructed in 1930 for the operation of his up-scale grocery market, which contained a health food section featuring a selection of health foods from Battle Creek Sanitarium. Thomas, again, utilized Carthalite Decorative Stone in the Art Deco style building. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (11/21/2006).<sup>37</sup>

**Eugene Ware Elementary School, 900 E. Third Street, Fort Scott.**

Eugene Ware Elementary School is part of the Historic Public Schools of Kansas, MPDF and was placed in the National Register of Historic Places (6/9.2005). As a Progress Works Administration project, Thomas and Harris worked with PWA architect, Ben W. Friedel. The school, built in 1935 and designed in the Colonial Revival style, diverged from the architectural style of PWA projects that typically called for Art Deco and Art Moderne design. The reason for this may be attributed to the more conservative tastes of the client, who more than likely required a traditional style for their school building.<sup>38</sup>

**Lane County Community High School, 200 S. Wichita, Dighton, Kansas.**

The Lane County Community High School and Stadium was a PWA project designed by Thomas and Harris in the Art Deco Style. The building was completed and ready for fall enrollment in 1938. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Historic Public Schools of Kansas MPDF (9/06/2005).<sup>39</sup>

**Wichita Municipal [Mid-Continent] Airport Complex.**

The architectural firm of Thomas-Harris-Calvin and Associates, formed in July 1953, designed this landmark complex in the International Style. The Municipal Airport, which includes seven separate buildings, opened in 1954. It took three and one-half years to complete. The Terminal building alone was a 1.8 million dollar project. The firm also designed and prepared plans for the National Flying Farmers Office Building, the Water Supply Building, the Remote Radio and Receiver Stations, the Administration Building, the U.S. Weather Bureau Building and the Airlines' Service Building. With this project, the firm abandoned Art Deco architecture for the International style. Paralleling the overall

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<sup>36</sup> Sandra S. Kurt, "Administration Building, McConnell Air Force Base," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Online, Accessed August 25, 2011. <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/90000908.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Pamela D. Kingsbury, PhD, "Allen's Market," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Online, Accessed August 25, 2011. <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/06001050.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Susan Jezak Ford, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Online, Accessed August 25, 2011. <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/06001050.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Brenda Spencer, "Lane County Community High School," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Online, Accessed August 25, <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/05000978.pdf>

design of the KG&E building, the Terminal building is characterized by large horizontal spandrels, unadorned masonry walls and aluminum detailing.

#### **Nehama County Courthouse, Sixth and Nemaha streets.**

Thomas Harris Calvin and Associates designed this modern brick building located in a rural county of the north central region of Kansas. This one-story building provides an example of Modern architecture as designed by Thomas' firm in areas outside of Sedgwick County.<sup>40</sup>

#### **New Sedgwick County Courthouse, Wichita, Kansas.**

The last major project constructed prior to the death of Glen H. Thomas in 1962 was the New Sedgwick County Courthouse, Wichita, built in 1960. While the courthouse reflects some of the design decisions made in the KG&E building, such as the ribboned windows, large spandrels, two-story annexes tied to the main multistory unit and lack of exterior ornamentation, here the much restrained International Style seems to all but eschew that form of expression, while heralding the New Formalism, with the first story arcade, that began to appear at the same time.

#### **Architect Biographies**

Glen Herbert Thomas (1889-1962) was born in Waterville, Marshall County, Kansas. He spent the first seven years of his career working as a carpenter in California. Dissatisfied with working conditions he decided to go to the school of architecture at Urbana, Illinois at the suggestion of a relative. After completing his education, he returned to Kansas in 1916 and joined the firm of Lorentz Schmidt, whom he had met when they were students of architecture at the University of Illinois.<sup>41</sup> Thomas served in the military during WWI. When he returned to Wichita, Kansas in 1919, he opened his own architectural firm.<sup>42</sup>

Thomas worked as an accomplished architect under his own name for over a decade. In 1928, he designed Wichita High School North, for which he is best known. In 1929, *The Wichita Magazine* had interviewed Glen H. Thomas. When asked about the High School he stated:

...for sometime, there has been a constantly increasing desire among architects and a demand from the public for something new, something different, something American. The thoughts, ideas, suggestions and study of all the men in my office...were combined to develop what we hoped would be distinctive, modern, and interestingly American.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to his architectural practice Thomas was an accomplished ball player having lettered in baseball while studying at the University of Illinois. He continued to play baseball, both semi-pro and

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<sup>40</sup> Sachs and Ehrlich, 187.

<sup>41</sup> "Senior Architect Took Up Building When He Was 16," Wichita Silhouettes, *The Wichita Eagle*, News clipping, Glen H. Thomas papers, GLMV, Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>42</sup> "Discover Wichita: A Listing of Wichita's Registered Landmarks and Historic Districts," Pamphlet, City of Wichita, Online. Accessed August 15, 2011. <http://www.wichita.gov/Residents/History/>

<sup>43</sup> "Glen H. Thomas," *The Wichita Magazine*, October 1929, p.8.

professionally for many years in Wichita during the 1920s with the Western League. In 1944, he was inducted into the Kansas Baseball Hall of Fame.<sup>44</sup>

He was also a member of the Wichita City Planning Commission for seventeen years and the Chairman of the Sedgwick County Planning Committee in 1954. In 1957, he was the second Wichita architect to receive a fellowship from the AIA in Washington D.C. The first was his former partner, Lorentz Schmidt.<sup>45</sup>

Arthur B. Harris (1898-1957) joined Thomas in 1928. He was a graduate of the University of Kansas School of Architecture. Harris received the AIA School Medal and the Thayer Medal. During his years with Thomas, Harris was instrumental on the following projects; First Baptist Church (1949), Women's Residential Hall, Wichita State University (1952), Wichita High School West (1953), Municipal Airport Terminal (1954) and the KG&E building.

Roy E. Calvin joined the firm of Thomas and Harris as an associate in 1946 after serving in the military during WWII. In July 1953, he was made a partner, at which time the firm's name became Thomas, Harris, Calvin and Associates. Calvin was a graduate of the School of Architecture, Washington University, St. Louis in 1942.<sup>46</sup>

Architects connected with the firm when the KG&E building was under construction included: Wilbur F. Kruse; Doran W. Barham; John M. Hickman; Robert B. Harris (son of Arthur Harris), Charles G. Bean, Kenneth V. Brown, William M. Ames, Arthur T. Woodman and Claude Van Doren, and Glen C. Thomas, (engineer and son of Glenn H. Thomas). Construction superintendents were Chester T. Simmons and Glenn R. Routledge and Raymond A. Leininger, who worked as an industrial designer for the firm.<sup>47</sup>

Arthur B. Harris died in 1957 but the company's name retained the Thomas and Harris association. On November 19, 1962, Glen H. Thomas died of a heart attack on the eve of the 43rd anniversary of opening his architectural practice in 1919. With both of the senior partners deceased, it was necessary to reorganize the firm.

The sons of Glen H. Thomas and Arthur B. Harris had joined the firm as associates sometime following WWII. Both Glen C. Thomas and Robert B. Harris were with the firm when the KG&E building was constructed in 1953. The sons maintained the traditional name of Thomas and Harris but subsequently joined by Charles S. Ash, and Claude E. Mason to become Thomas, Harris, Ash and Mason/Architects & Engineers. The firm was commissioned by KG&E for the addition to the building in 1969.

Glen C. Thomas, P.E. (1922- 2008) born in Sedgwick County, was a professional engineer. He received his degree in Electrical Engineering at Kansas State University. He died in 2008.

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<sup>44</sup> Glen H. Thomas, Letter dated July 29, 1954, addressed to the Board of Education, Wichita, Kansas. KG&E files, Project 6704 of Gossen, Livingston, McCluggage Van Sickle, Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>45</sup> "Senior Architect Took Up Building When He Was 16," Wichita Silhouettes, *The Wichita Eagle*, News clipping, Glen H. Thomas papers, GLMV, Architects, Wichita Kansas.

<sup>46</sup> "New Firm Name," Vol. 104, *Mid-West Contractor*, 8 July 1953, 44.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*



Robert B. Harris (1927) was born in Sedgwick County, Kansas. He obtained a BA in Architecture at Kansas State University at Manhattan in 1951 and joined the firm as an associate shortly thereafter.

Charles S. Ash (1917-2009) was born in Topeka. He attended the University of Kansas, in Lawrence and graduated in 1940. He opened his own architectural firm under Ash and Harrison from 1952 until 1961. He joined the firm in 1963. The following buildings are to his credit: Friends University Fine Arts Building (1966), Emergency Center, Wesley Medical Center (1968) and Memorial Medical Pavilion, Wesley Medical Center (1969), KG&E, (1969). Ash retired from the firm in 1984 and died in 2009 at the age of 91.<sup>48</sup>

Claude E. Mason became a member of the firm c. 1968. He received his degree in architecture at the University of Kansas. Further information regarding his career has not been found.<sup>49</sup>

### **A Brief Look at the History of the Kansas Gas & Electric Company**

Kansas Gas & Electric Company was incorporated in December 1909. Yet, as Wilson K. Cadman, the former president of KG&E stated, "it never was very easy to be in the energy business." From the early years of the 20th century, there were many episodes that illustrate just what Cadman meant. In 1905, Kansas Legislature threatened to build a refinery and operate it with convict labor. One year later, nightriders terrorized Kansas pipeline workers "in an effort to prevent gas from leaving the state." Additionally, a political group advocated takeover of Wichita's electric system; one of the leaders was later elected mayor.<sup>50</sup>

While several electric companies started up in the late 19th century, Kansas Gas & Electric Company is "the survivor of well over 100 separate electric utilities" that went broke.<sup>51</sup> The company quickly grew and their system extended to sixty-six communities. Curiously, the "gas" service was removed in 1925, yet KG&E remained in the gas business, buying it and burning it to produce a "clean, efficient and safe form of energy."<sup>52</sup> In the 1950s, the federal government artificially held down gas prices and well into the 1960s, KG&E, like other companies, was lacking in any incentive to find more gas.<sup>53</sup>

Later as gas and coal prices escalated, KG&E joined with several regional utilities in a group known as Southwest Atomic Energy Associates in an effort to develop nuclear research. Subsequently, this collaboration resulted in the construction of a breeder reactor. Called SEFOR or the Southwest Experimental Fast Oxide Reactor, the plant was located near Fayetteville, Arkansas.

At the same time, KG&E weighed the benefits of nuclear and coal and decided to invest in both, thereby spreading the risks. They became partners with several coal-fueled companies including

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<sup>48</sup> Professional Catalog, Thomas Harris Ash & Mason\ Architects and Engineers. n.d. Archives, KG&E files, Gossen, Livingston, McCluggage Van Sickle (GLMV), Wichita, Kansas.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Wilson K. Cadman, *Kansas Gas and Electric Company: Eighty Years of Innovation*. (New York: The Newcomen Society of the United States, 1989), 10-12. After 18 years with KG&E, Cadman became president of the company in 1979 and chairman of the board in 1982.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>53</sup> Cadman points out that gas-fueled plants were "delightfully simple and inexpensive to build." See page 21.

Kansas City Power & Light Company and also agreed to build Wolf Creek Station (along with KCP&L) using uranium as fuel.<sup>54</sup> Wolf Creek was completed in 1986.

In 1992, Kansas Power and Light (established in 1924) merged with Kansas Gas & Electric Company to form Western Resources. In 2001, Western Resources became Weststar Energy. Weststar vacated the KG&E building in 2010. Their head office is located in Topeka, Kansas.

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 22. Congress passed a law that disallowed the use of gas as fuel in new plants constructed after 1989.

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County, Kansas. Online Accessed August 25, 2011.  
<http://members.cox.net/wichitahpa/landmarks.html>

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been  
Requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☒ Other  
Name of repository: **GLMV Architects, Wichita**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 14 646670 4171560  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

ODD LOTS 49 TO 61 & S 8.37 FT LOT 63 & 2.46 FT SURPLUS MARKET ST. GREIFFENSTEIN'S  
ORIGINAL TOWN

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cydney E. Millstein and Maryann Warfield

organization Architectural & Historical Research, LLC

date September 1, 2011

street & number 1600 Genessee, Suite 701

telephone 816.472.4154

city or town Kansas City

state MO

zip code 64102

e-mail Cydney@ahr-kc.com

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Historic images, maps, etc.)

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**Photographs:**

Name of Property: The Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building  
City or Vicinity: Wichita  
County/State: Sedgwick  
Photographer: Richard Welnowski  
Date of Photos: August 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 15: The main (south) and east façade; view facing northwest
- 2 of 15: The main (south) façade; view facing north
- 3 of 15: Detail of the southeast corner; view facing northwest
- 4 of 15: Detail of the east façade; view facing west
- 5 of 15: The east and north facades; view facing southwest
- 6 of 15: Detail of the east façade addition; view facing west
- 7 of 15: The northeast corner; view facing southwest
- 8 of 15: The north and west facades; view facing southeast
- 9 of 15: Detail of the west façade; view facing east
- 10 of 15: First floor lobby; view facing west
- 11 of 15: First floor lobby; view facing east
- 12 of 15: First floor auditorium; view facing west
- 13 of 15: Sixth floor elevator lobby; view facing east
- 14 of 15: President's room, 7<sup>th</sup> floor; view facing west
- 15 of 15: Detail of light fixture, 5<sup>th</sup> floor; view facing east

Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building  
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, Kansas  
County and State

---

**Property Owner:**

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Protection One

street & number 1025 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

telephone 785.856.5500

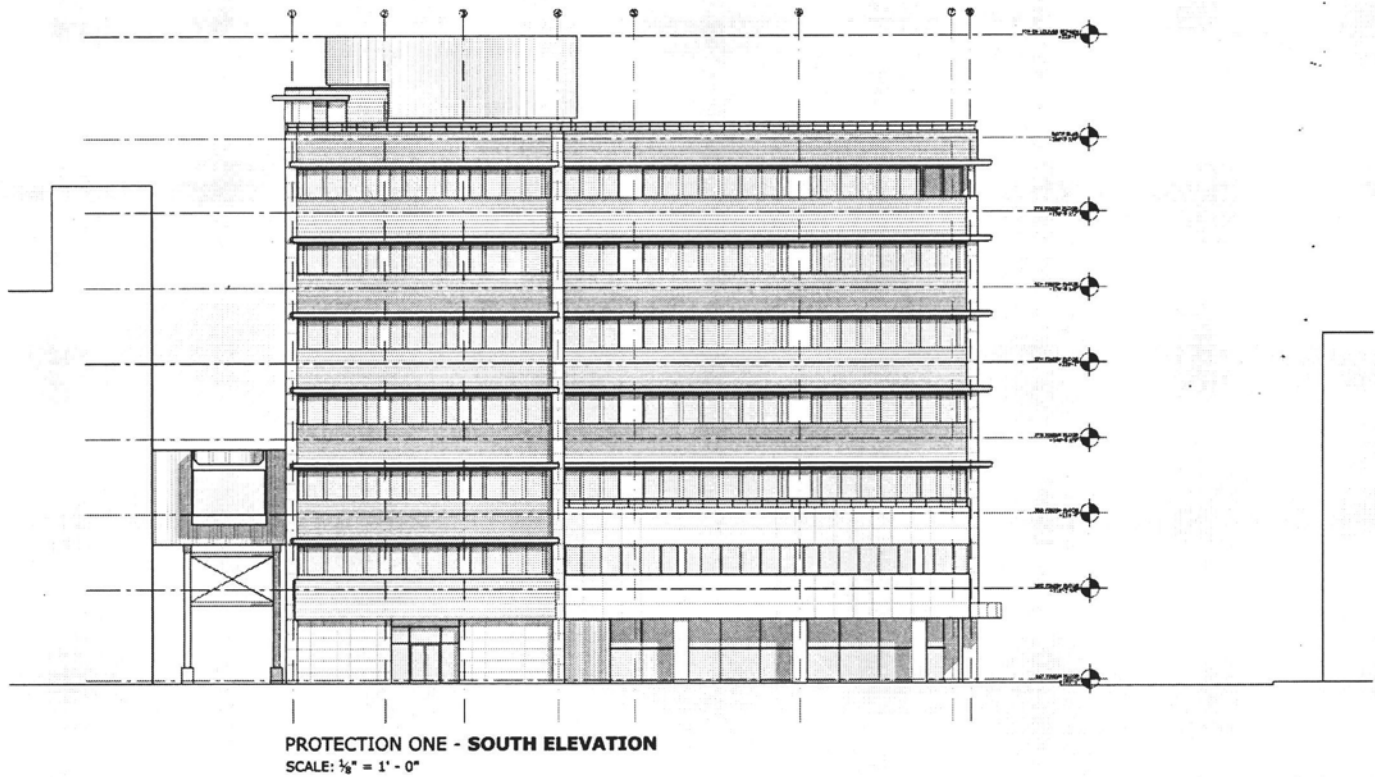
city or town Lawrence

state KS

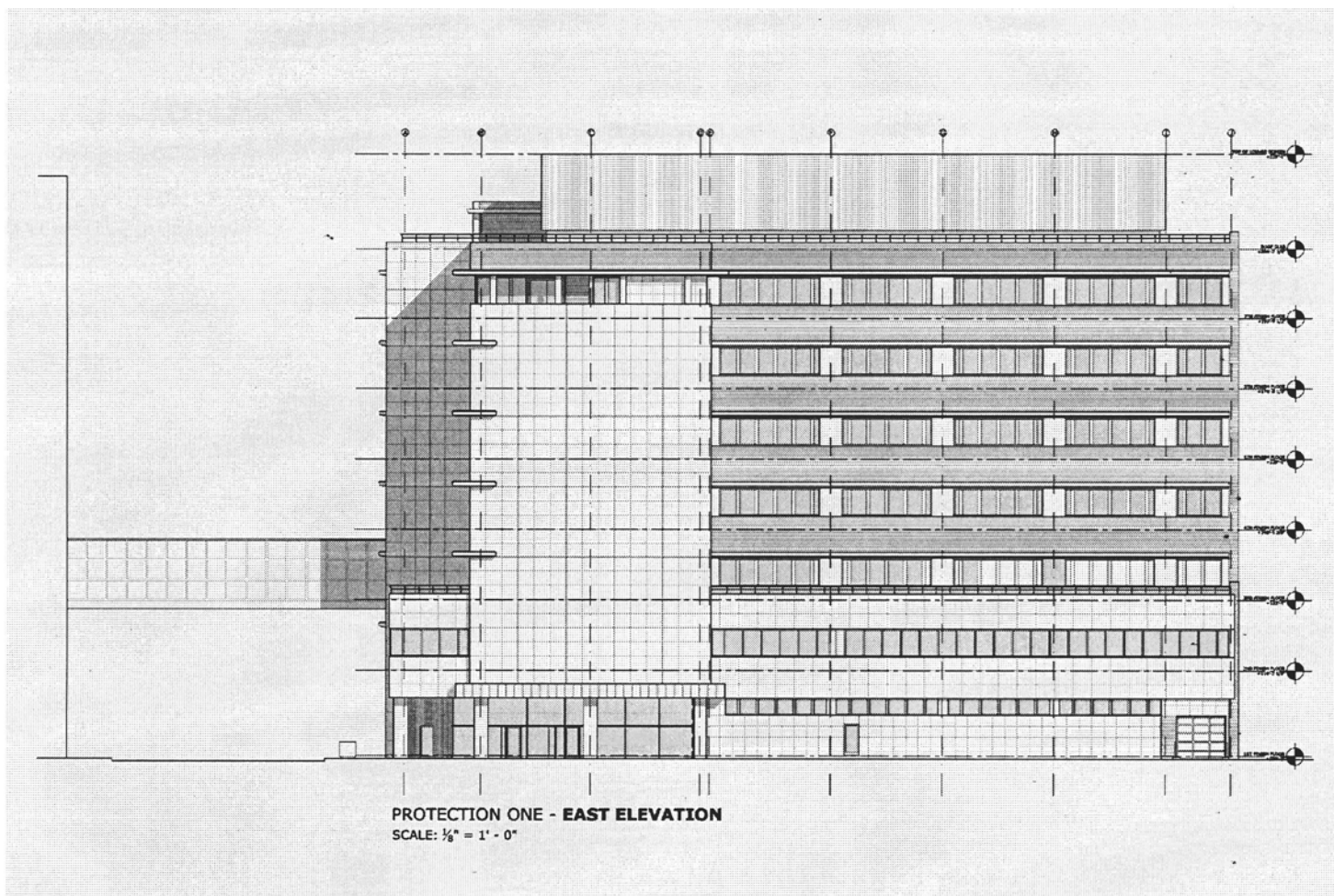
zip code 66044

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

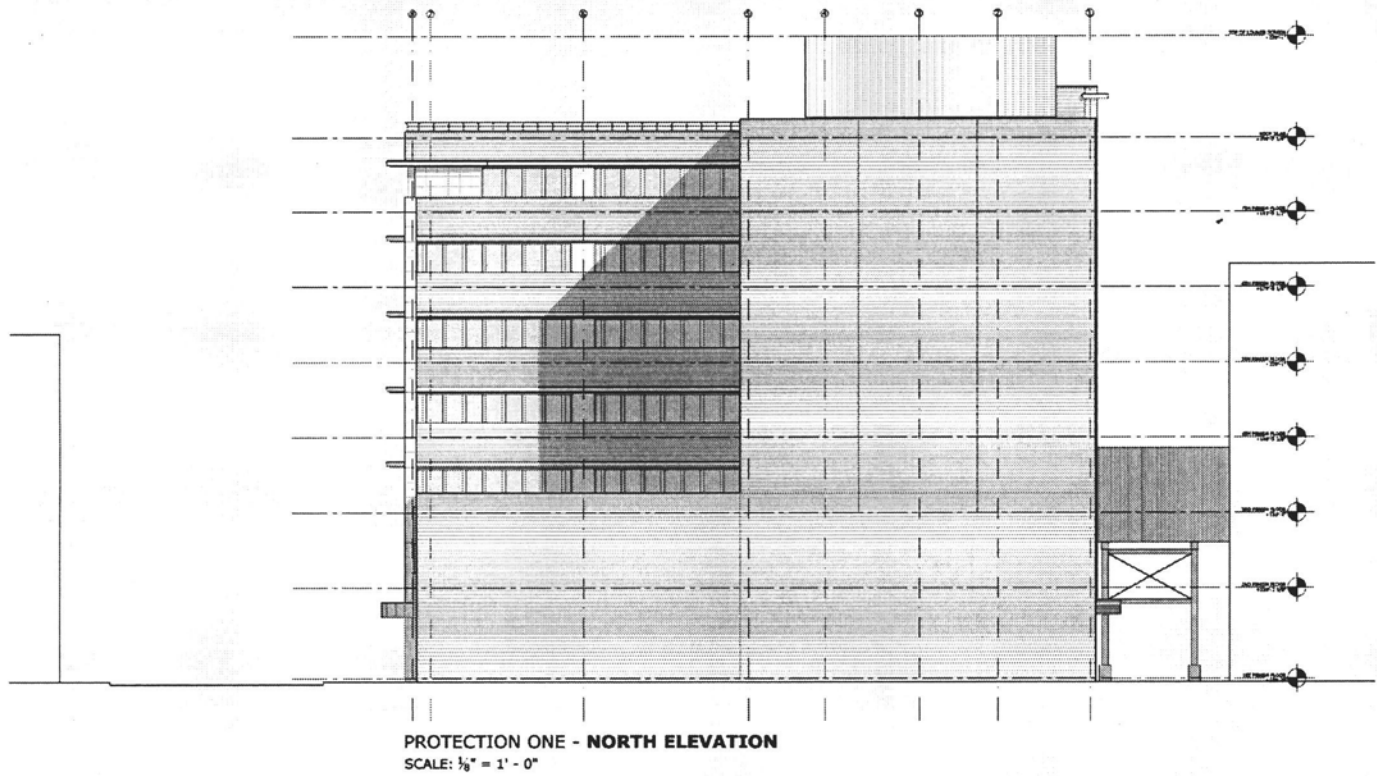
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



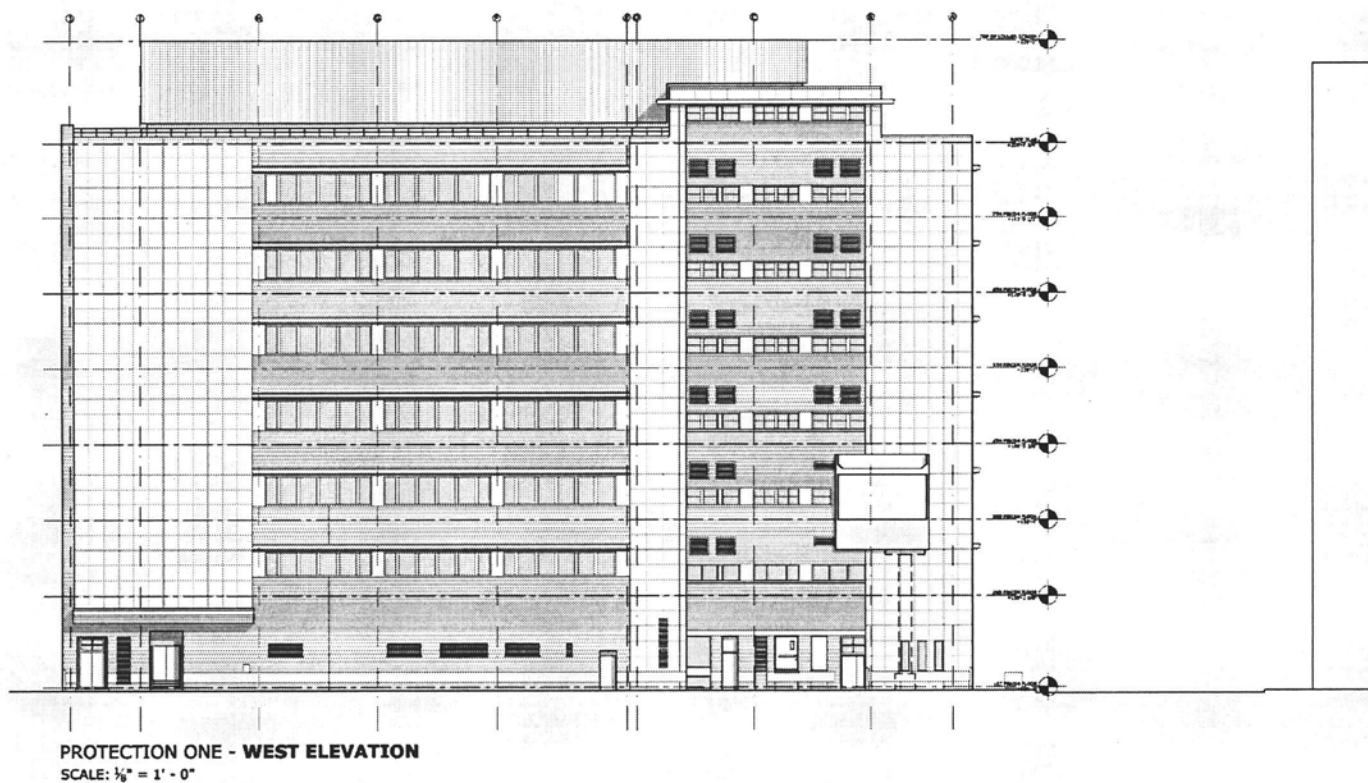
Kansas Gas & Electric Company, South Elevation.  
Source: eldorado architects, Kansas City, MO



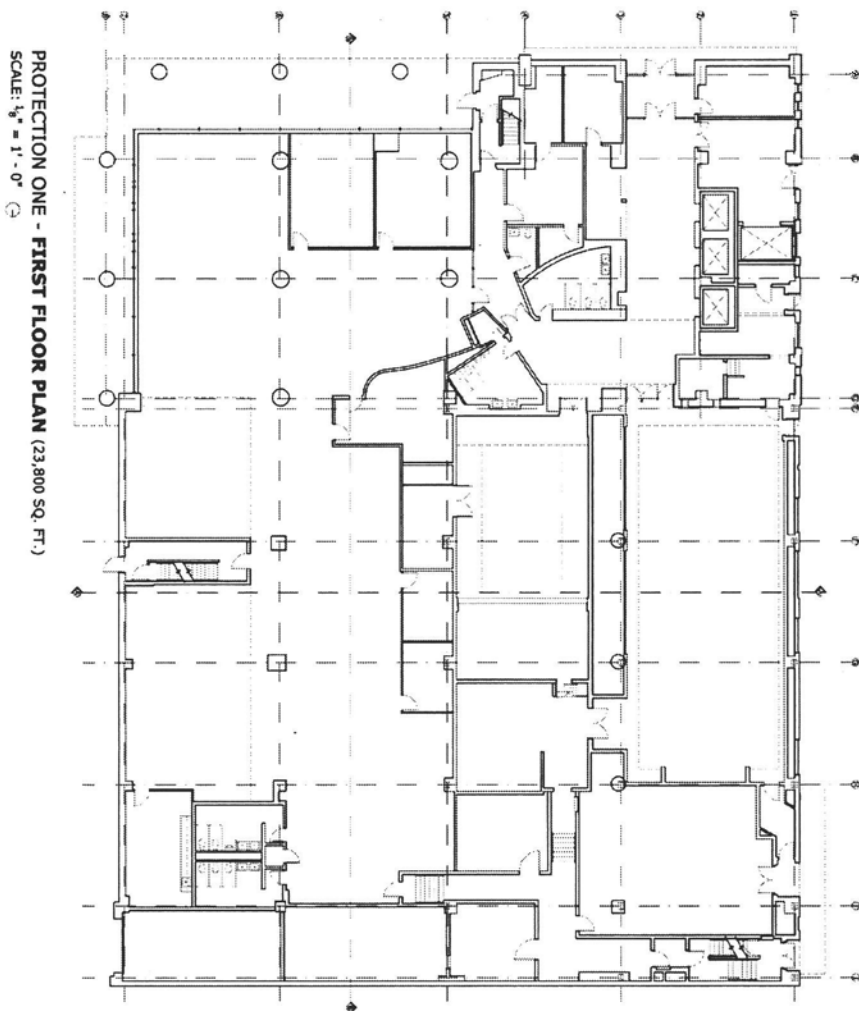
Kansas Gas & Electric Company, East Elevation.  
Source: eldorado architects, Kansas City, MO



Kansas Gas & Electric Company, North Elevation.  
Source: eldorado architects, Kansas City, MO

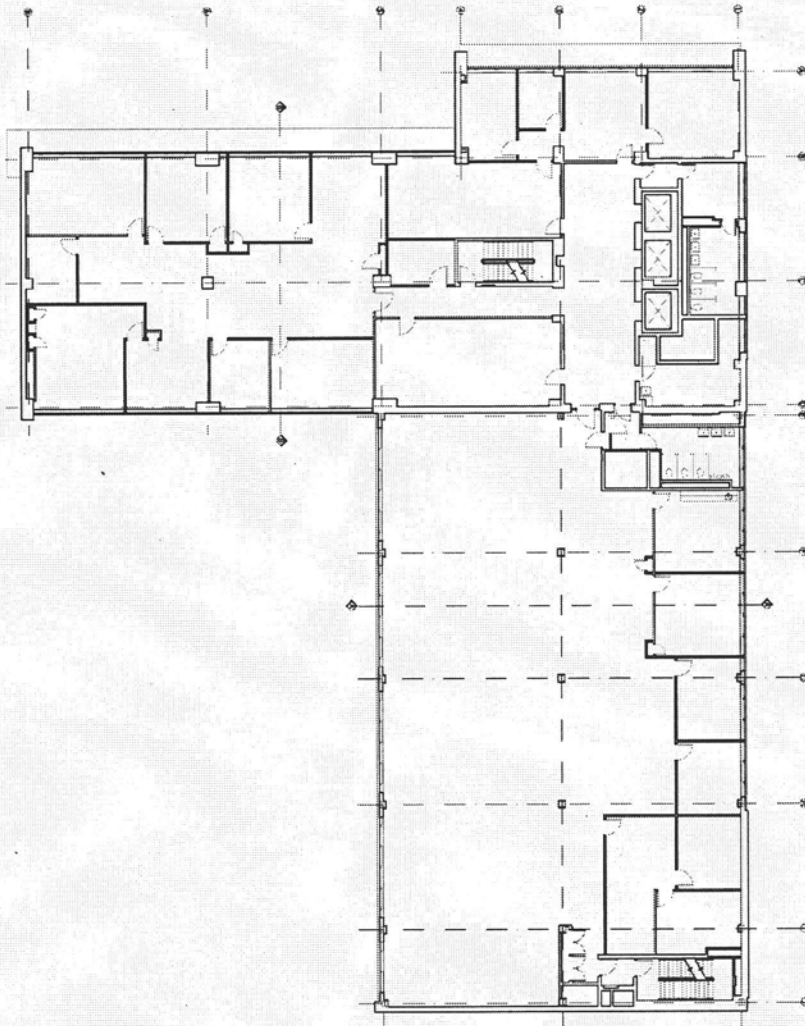


Kansas Gas & Electric Company, West Elevation.  
Source: eldorado architects, Kansas City, MO



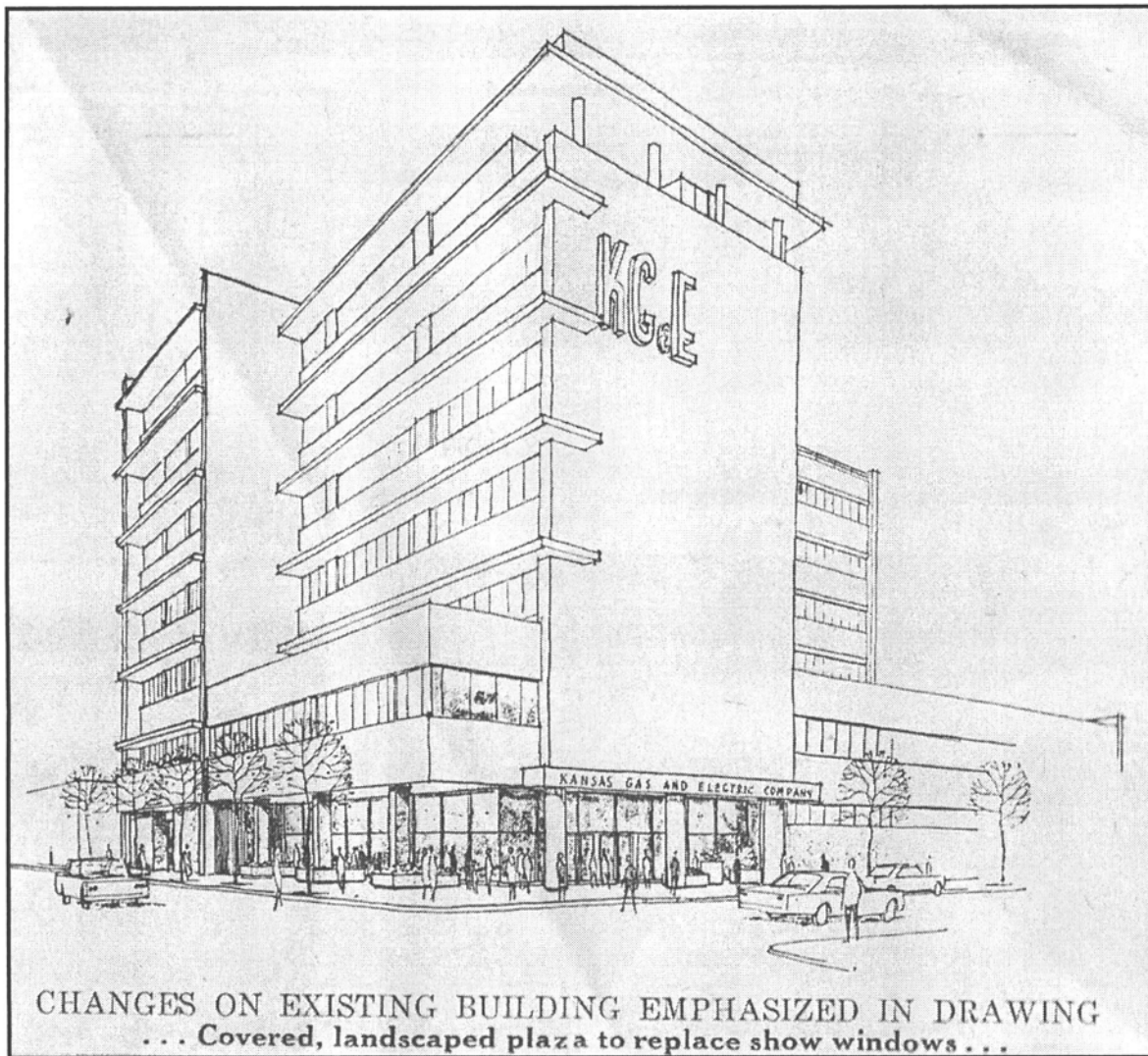


PROTECTION ONE - SIXTH FLOOR PLAN (16,200 SQ. FT.)  
SCALE:  $\frac{1}{8}" = 1' - 0"$





Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building, c. 1955  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita, Kansas



Drawing of KG&E, c.1969  
Source: *The Wichita Eagle and The Beacon* n.d.  
Files, GLMV, Wichita, Kansas.



Concept image of KG&E, c.1967  
Source: Files, GLMV, Wichita, Kansas.



Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1953

Source: Dondlinger and Sons Construction Company, Wichita, Kansas



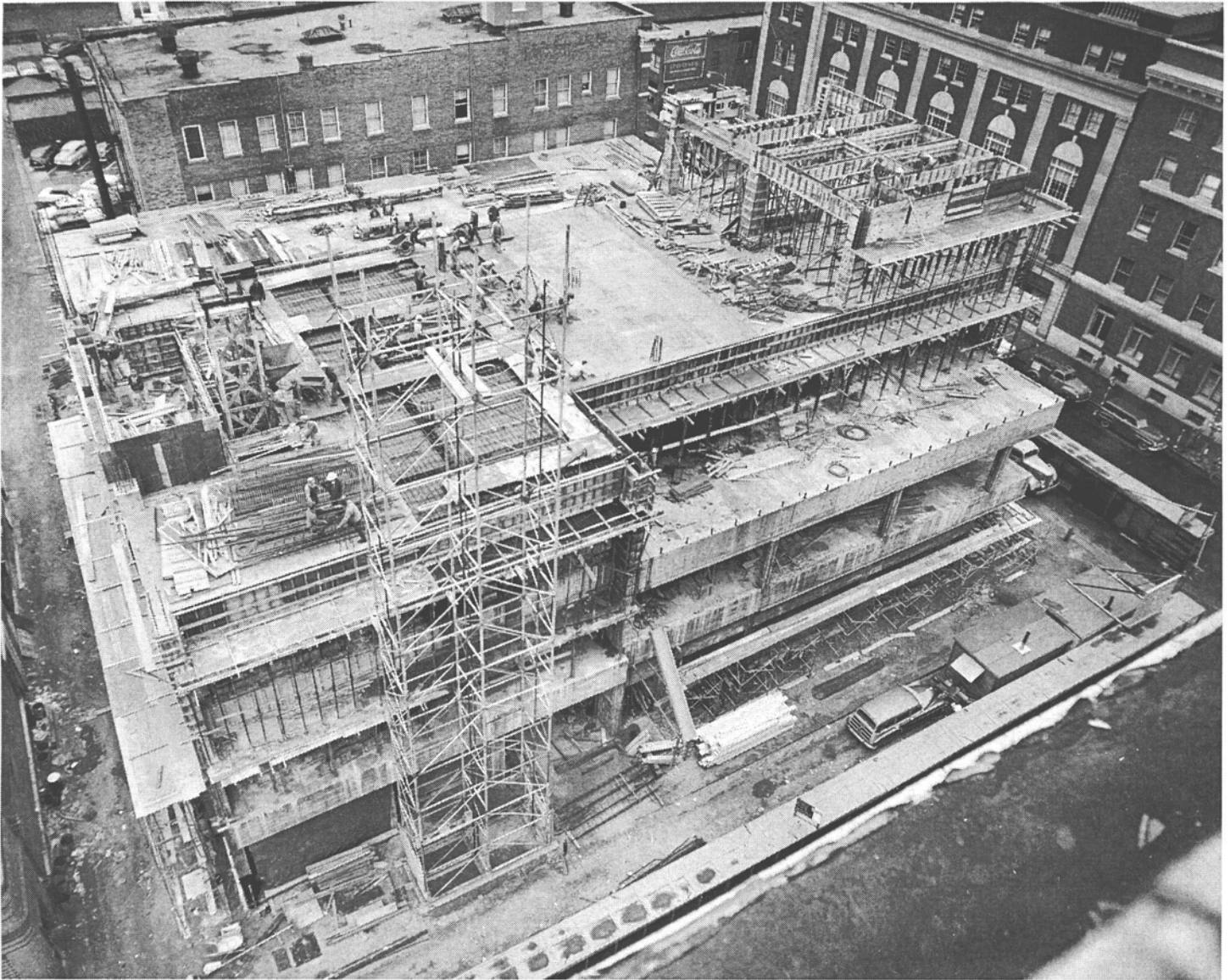


Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1953

Source: Dondlinger and Sons Construction Company, Wichita, Kansas

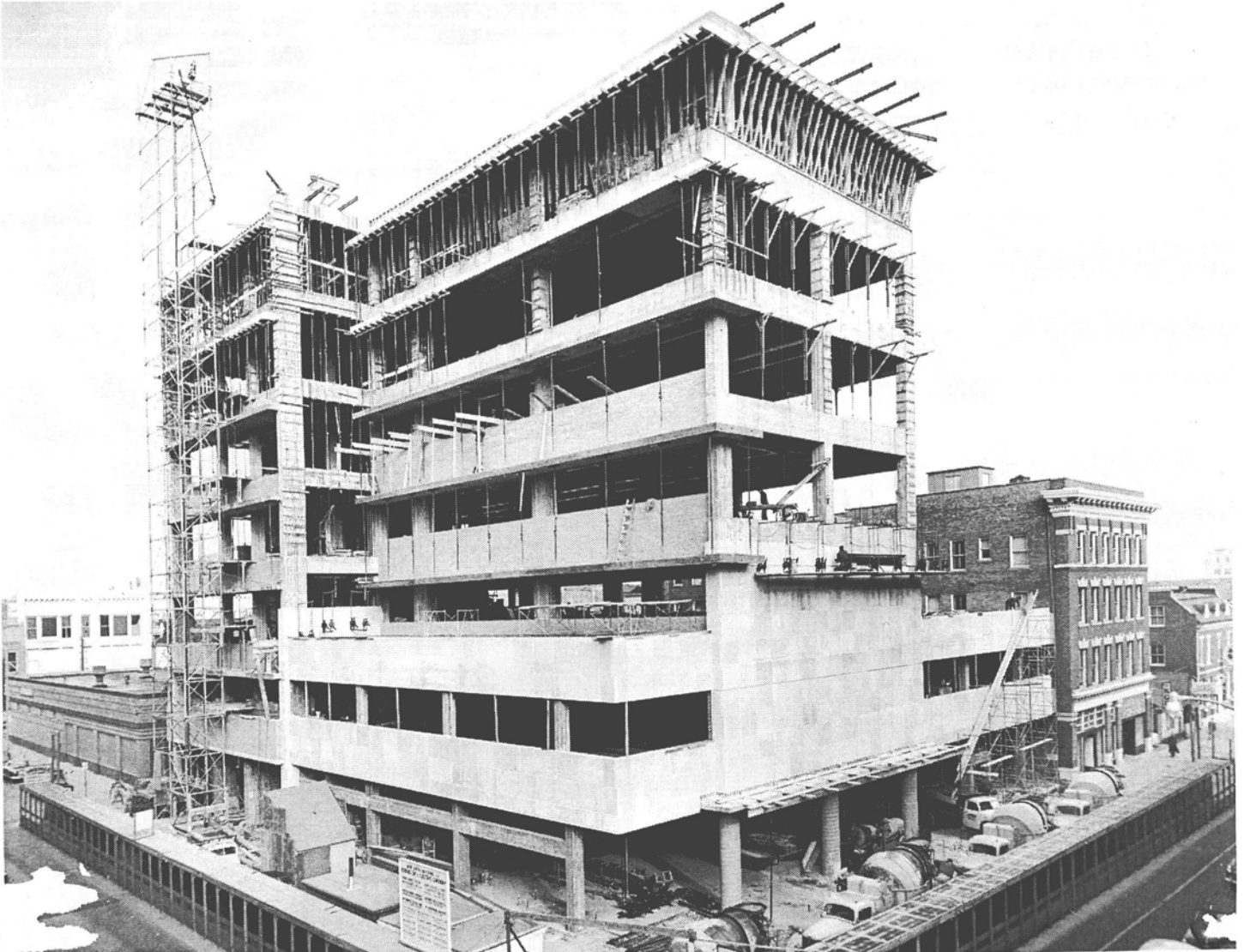


Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1953  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita



Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1953  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita





Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1954  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita



Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1954  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita



Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1954  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita



Kansas Gas & Electric Company, Main Lobby, 1954  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita





Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1955  
Source: Dondlinger and Sons Construction Company, Wichita, Kansas

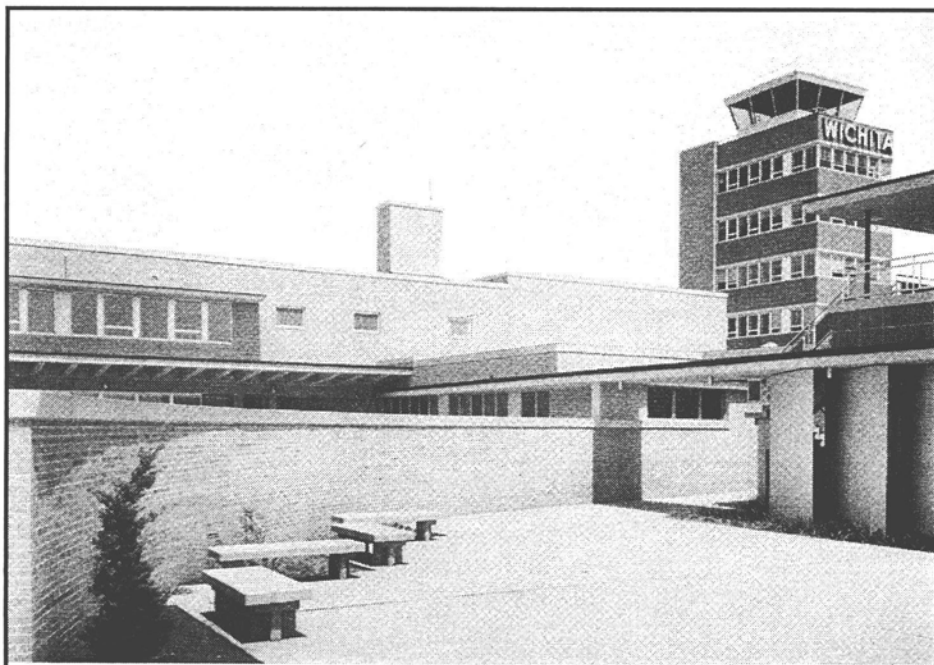


Kansas Gas & Electric Company, 1954  
Source: Files, GLMV Architects, Wichita

Wichita Municipal Airport: 1954



*Brick and Tile: Vol. 2. No. 12, December 1955.*





Sedgwick County Courthouse: 1960

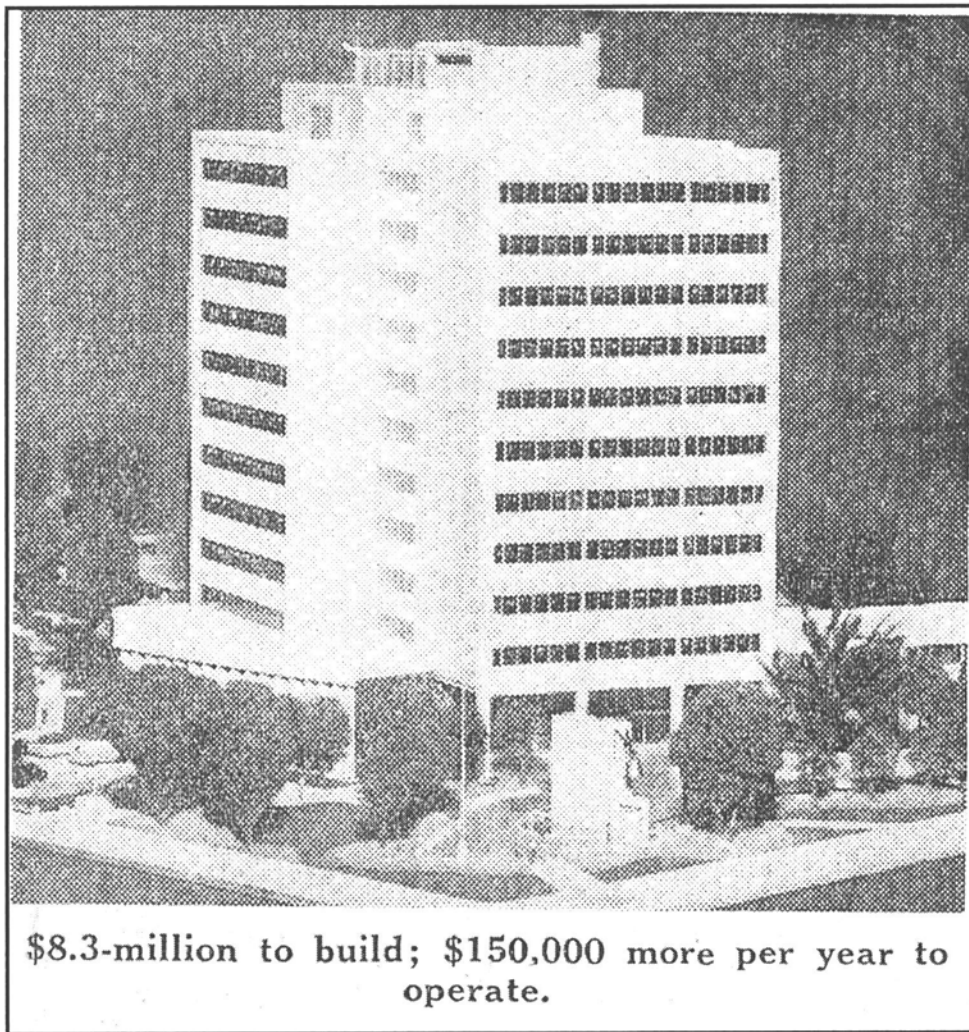


Photo of Architect's Model, *The Wichita Eagle* 13 August 1959 n.p.  
Source: Archives, GLMV Architects, Wichita, Kansas.

GLEN H. THOMAS, A.I.A.

ARTHUR B. HARRIS, A.I.A.

ROY E. CALVIN, JR., A.I.A.

THOMAS  
HARRIS  
CALVIN

and Associates

ARCHITECTS  
and  
ENGINEERS

321 WEST SECOND STREET • WICHITA 2, KANSAS

**Architects**

Wilbur F. Kruse  
Doran W. Barham  
John M. Hickman  
Robert B. Harris  
Charles G. Bean  
Kenneth V. Brown  
William M. Ames  
Arthur T. Woodman  
Claude Van Doren

**Engineer**

Glen C. Thomas

**Construction  
Superintendents**

Chester T. Simmons  
Glenn R. Routledge

**Industrial Design**

Raymond A. Leininger

**Secretary**

N. Aldine Sheppard

TO OUR FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES:

1953

It is with real pleasure that we announce a new name for our firm. THOMAS-HARRIS-CALVIN AND ASSOCIATES will now be the name by which we will be known.

Glen H. Thomas came to Wichita in 1916 and began his own practice of architecture in 1919. He was joined by Arthur B. Harris in 1927 who became a partner in 1944 and in 1946, Roy E. Calvin, Jr., joined us.

Mr. Calvin is a graduate of the School of Architecture, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, and he came to us after his return from service in World War II. He has had considerable experience in a number of Architects' offices and has demonstrated to us that he is most capable, efficient, energetic and ethical, which qualities we feel justify our acceptance of him as a partner.

We recognize, also, the fine qualities of all of our Associates and are happy to introduce them to our friends and acquaintances who have not met them personally. All of the men in the office are graduate Architects or Engineers and with continued interest and cooperation of all, we look with confidence to the future and its increasing opportunities to be of continued service.

Sincerely yours,

THOMAS-HARRIS-CALVIN AND ASSOCIATES

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KANSAS, Sedgwick

DATE RECEIVED: 1/20/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/21/12  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/07/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/08/12  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000064

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3.7.12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the  
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





















Protection One Branch Office

Protection One

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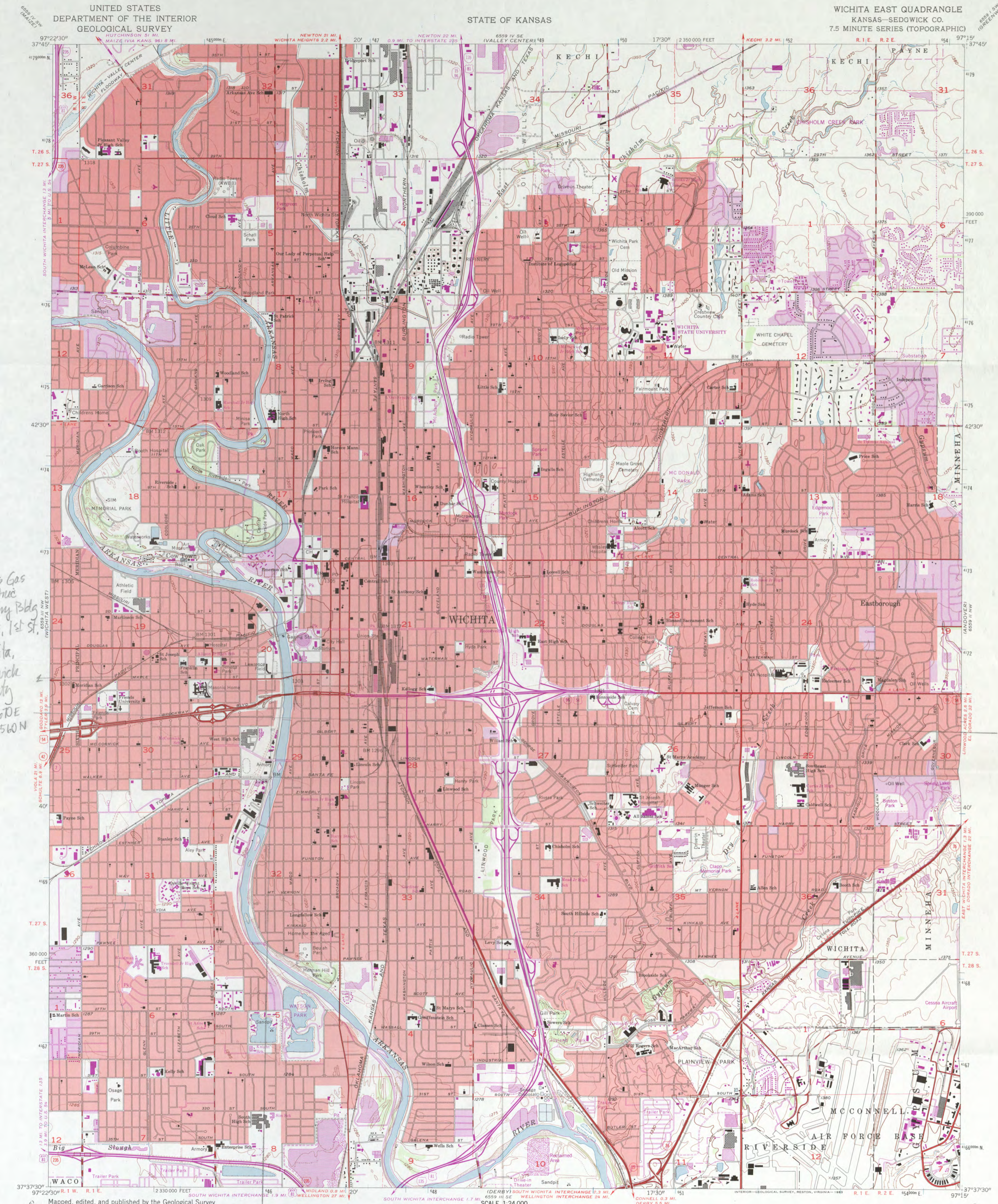








Kansas Gas  
& Electric  
Company Bldg  
120 E. 1st St.  
Wichita,  
Sedgwick County  
14:6466DE  
4171560N



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
in cooperation with State of Kansas agencies

Control by USGS and USC&GS

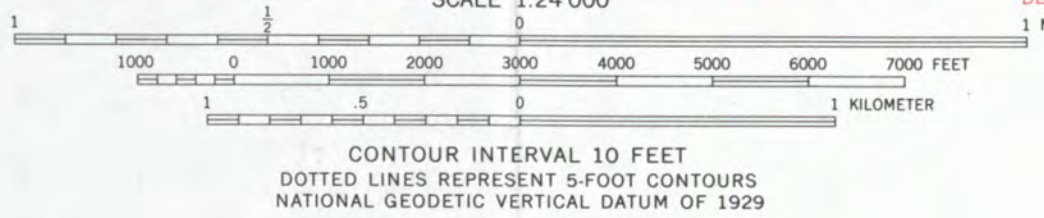
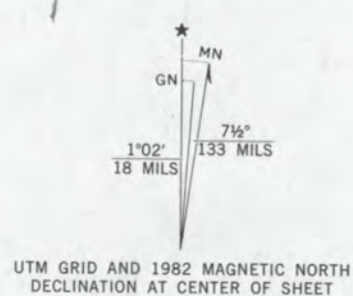
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1954. Topography by planetable surveys 1940-1941  
Revised 1961 in cooperation with the City of Wichita

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum.  
10,000-foot grid based on Kansas coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue

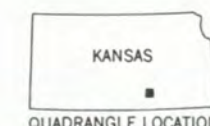
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
move the projection lines 27 meters east as shown by  
dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
the National or State reservations shown on this map



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66044  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

WICHITA EAST, KANS.  
N3737.5-W9715.75

1961

PHOTOREVISED 1982

DMA 6559 III NE—SERIES V878





6425 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66615



Kansas Historical Society



January 13, 2012

Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, N. W.  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor (MS 2280)  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find enclosed the following National Register nomination:

- Kansas Gas & Electric Company Building – Wichita, Sedgwick County (new submission)

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I may be reached at 785-272-8681 ext. 216 or [smartin@kshs.org](mailto:smartin@kshs.org).

Sincerely yours,

Sarah J. Martin  
National Register Coordinator

Enclosures