

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



1. Name Plaza Hotel Complex

historic Same

and/or common Lindell-Locust Cut-Off, Drake Hotel, Pink Building

2. Location

street & number 307 N. Leonard; 3301-21 Olive; 3300-22 Lindell; not for publication

city, town 3301-39 Lindell; 3322-34 Locust; 308-310 Channing
St. Louis vicinity of congressional district

state Missouri code 29 county City of St. Louis code 510

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Liquidar Proceso, Inc. and Para Liquidor, Inc.

street & number 8 Chipper Road

city, town St. Louis vicinity of state Missouri 63131

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis City Hall

street & number Tucker Boulevard at Market Street

city, town St. Louis state Missouri 63103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historical Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

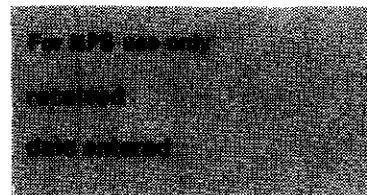
date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Missouri Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176

city, town Jefferson City state Missouri 65102

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 2

Page 1

Location, cont.

3301-39 Lindell; 3322-34 Locust; 308-310 Channing.

Item number: 7

Page 1

art glass skylights. The dinner-dance hall is 33' x 135'."2

The two buildings west of the cafe are also trapezoidal in plan and very similar in appearance. (Photos ## 1,2, & 4) The buildings were specifically designed to be used for automobile showrooms on the first floors and offices on the second floor. The interiors, while somewhat deteriorated, are structurally sound.

Echoing the hotel, large rectangular storefronts frame the first floor on the Lindell and Olive (north and south respectively) facades and the narrow west facade. Piers divide the Lindell and Olive facades of each building into symmetrical, but not identical, three bay compositions. Tablets ornament the spandrels between the first and second floors. On both facades, groupings of ribbon windows with multi-light upper sashes are clustered beneath a bracketed visor roof. Ornamental brickwork, in a herringbone pattern above the windows and an a narrow, soldier course, band running across the parapet, contrasts with the stucco finish and reveals a Craftsman influence.

Although the buildings have been vacant for many years and have begun to show some signs of deterioration, especially on the interiors, they appear much as they did in 1915 as demonstrated by a comparison of photographs ## 7 & 8.

Across the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off, the western triangular block embraces a single, irregularly shaped two story auto showroom and office building with masonry bearing walls and an interior structural system of steel. (Photos ## 5 & 6) The exterior of this Spanish Colonial Revival building is finished in smooth stucco painted pink. The interior, although somewhat deteriorated, is structurally sound.

Tall, round arched openings at the first floor create a rhythmic arcade that surrounds the oblique-angled building. Medallions are set in the spandrels between the arches. At the second floor, triple windows corresponding to the arches below, divide the Channing facade (facing west) into two bays, the facade facing Leonard (east) into one bay, and the Lindell and Locust facades (south and north respectively) into twelve bays each.

Rich, Renaissance style ornament embellishes entrance pavilions on the Lindell and Locust Street facades. Plateresque bas-relief work highlights the tympana above the arched entrances and ornaments the adjacent spandrels. Above the entrances, round arched windows are set between pilasters and surmounted by enriched, rounded pediments resting on shaped bases ornamented with grotesques. Balconets with balustrades emphasize the Spanish Colonial Revival styling. A parapet with tile coping conceals the flat roof.

Several original features were removed from the building at an unknown date. As illustrated in photograph # 8, four tile-roofed towers with Moorish arches once rose from the richly ornamented pavilions. Shaped work embellished the parapets between the towers and tile covered, bracketed visor roofs echoed features of the buildings in the east triangle.

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Plaza Hotel Complex comprises a grouping of early Twentieth Century buildings located in two triangular shaped blocks fronting on the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off in St. Louis' midtown area just east of Grand Avenue. (Fig's. 1 & 2) The Complex includes a six story hotel and an adjacent two story commercial annex in the eastern triangle and a single two story commercial building in the western triangle. (Fig. 2; photos ## 1, 5, & 7) Stucco exteriors articulated in Spanish Colonial Revival and Italian Renaissance styles with detailing suggesting a Craftsman influence characterize the Complex.

The largest building of the group is the six story, concrete frame, U-shaped hotel at the east end of the eastern triangle. (Fig. 2, Photos ## 1 & 2) Large rectangular storefronts fill the tall first floor of the hotel. Evenly spaced, single, rectangular windows divide the Olive and Lindell facades (facing south and north respectively) into six bays each and the Leonard facade (facing east) into twelve bays. Craftsman style brickwork at the sixth story contrasts with the stucco finish. A projecting metal cornice with ornamental double brackets crowns the hotel and enhances the Italian Renaissance feel of the building. In photograph #7 the rear of the hotel (facing west) and the flat roof are visible above the adjacent two story commercial buildings. The northwest corner of the hotel is beveled providing auxiliary light to the interior and creating a smooth transition to the two story annex. Although the interior of the hotel shows evidence of deterioration, the concrete frame structure is sound.

The exterior of the hotel has changed little over the years as illustrated by an examination of photographs ## 1 & 9. No early photographs of the interior of the hotel have been found but newspaper accounts from 1915 reveal that there were "200 rooms each with a bath or shower and every modern feature. The main entrance is in the center of the block fronting Leonard with the women's entrance fronting on Lindell. The first floor of this building is arranged in three stores fronting on Olive Street and three stores fronting on Lindell."¹ (Fig's. 3 & 4)

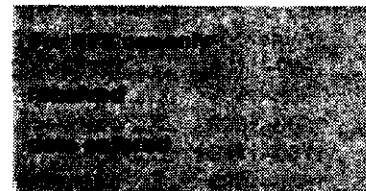
The two story commercial buildings west of the hotel comprise three separate buildings that appear, particularly the north facade facing Lindell, as one long storefront building. (Photos ## 1-4, 8) All are of masonry construction with wood joists, floors, and roofs. (See also Fig's. 2 & 3)

Immediately adjacent to the hotel is a trapezoidal shaped building that originally contained a cafe, a dinner and dance hall and a bar. (Photos ## 1-3) The interior consists of an unpartitioned two story room encircled by a balcony. None of the original fixtures remain. The Lindell (north) facade has two identical bays with large rectangular storefronts on the first floor, similar to those of the hotel, and groupings of ribbon windows on the second floor clustered between the elongated legs of geometric brackets that support a visor roof. A pavilion, in which is embedded a bas-relief depicting "The Coming of St. Louis," divides the Olive (south) facade into three bays. (Photo # 3) A large, round arched opening dominates the east bay; the west bay contains a rectangular storefront and two square windows. Pyramidal, tile covered caps crown the parapet end posts. There is a rusticated stone foundation.

Originally the Olive facade was symmetrical with a much more Spanish, even mission style, appearance. (Photos ## 8 & 9) Both east and west bays had massive round arches inset with paneled doors and, in the tympana, leaded glass. Above a molded metal cornice, a pediment, flanked by pyramidal capped parapet posts, was set before a pyramidal roof topping the pavilion. Although no photographs have been found that illustrate the original interior, a newspaper account from 1915 provides some information: "To the west of the hotel is a cafe, dinner-dance room and bar with a total area of greater than 17,000 square feet. The interior is finished with a paneling of Circassian walnut and in the center of the room is installed the original Italian Mermaid fountain. The ceiling is composed of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Plaza Hotel Complex Item number 7 Page 1

art glass skylights. The dinner-dance hall is 33' x 135'."²

The two buildings west of the cafe are also trapezoidal in plan and very similar in appearance. (Photos ## 1, 2, & 4) The buildings were specifically designed to be used for automobile showrooms on the first floors and offices on the second floor. The interiors, while somewhat deteriorated, are structurally sound.

Echoing the hotel, large rectangular storefronts frame the first floor on the Lindell and Olive (north and south respectively) facades and the narrow west facade. Piers divide the Lindell and Olive facades of each building into symmetrical, but not identical, three bay compositions. Tablets ornament the spandrels between the first and second floors. On both facades, groupings of ribbon windows with multi-light upper sashes are clustered beneath a bracketed visor roof. Ornamental brickwork, in a herringbone pattern above the windows and in a narrow, soldier course, band running across the parapet, contrasts with the stucco finish and reveals a Craftsman influence.

Although the buildings have been vacant for many years and have begun to show some signs of deterioration, especially on the interiors, they appear much as they did in 1915 as demonstrated by a comparison of photographs ## 7 and 8.

Across the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off, the western triangular block embraces a single, irregularly shaped two story auto showroom and office building with masonry bearing walls and an interior structural system of steel. (Photos ## 5 & 6) The exterior of this Spanish Colonial Revival building is finished in smooth stucco painted pink. The interior, although somewhat deteriorated, is structurally sound.

Tall, round arched openings at the first floor create a rhythmic arcade that surrounds the oblique-angled building. Medallions are set in the spandrels between the arches. At the second floor, triple windows corresponding to the arches below, divide the Channing facade (facing west) into two bays, the facade facing Leonard (east) into one bay, and the Lindell and Locust facades (south and north respectively) into twelve bays each.

Rich, Renaissance style ornament embellishes entrance pavilions on the Lindell and Locust Street facades. Plateresque bas-relief work highlights the tympana above the arched entrances and ornaments the adjacent spandrels. Above the entrances, round arched windows are set between pilasters and surmounted by enriched, rounded pediments resting on shaped bases ornamented with grotesques. Balconets with balustrades emphasize the Spanish Colonial Revival styling. A parapet with tile coping conceals the flat roof.

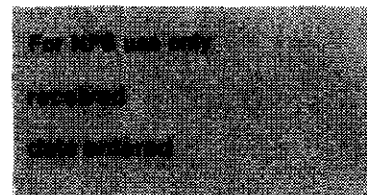
Several original features were removed from the building at an unknown date. As illustrated in photograph #8, four tile-roofed towers with Moorish arches once rose from the richly ornamented pavilions. Shaped work embellished the parapets between the towers and tile covered, bracketed visor roofs echoed features of the buildings in the east triangle.

Footnotes

1. "New Buildings At Lindell Cut-Off Nearly Finished," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, September 12, 1915.
2. Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

Item Seven, Footnotes

1. "New Buildings At Lindell Cut-Off Nearly Finished," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, September 12, 1915.
2. Ibid.

Item number 8

Page 1

shaped blocks in what immediately became a highly visible, heavily traveled location. (Fig's. 1 & 2)

Early in 1915, plans were announced for a new six story hotel to be built as part of a complex of commercial buildings planned by the Pickel Realty Company, owner of the two triangular blocks adjoining the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off.⁵ Architect Preston J. Bradshaw's design for the Plaza Hotel Complex broke sharply with St. Louis' traditional ornamental brick and terra cotta clad architectural aesthetic. His bold use of stucco, a material primarily associated in St. Louis with early Twentieth Century Craftsman and Spanish Revival domestic architecture, was unparalleled among commercial buildings in the City. The unique Plaza Hotel Complex stands out as St. Louis' largest concentration of stucco-finished commercial buildings.

A graduate of Columbia University, Bradshaw was associated with noted architect Stanford White before moving to St. Louis. Following a period as a draftsman for the Commissioner of Public Buildings of St. Louis, Bradshaw opened his own office. His diverse practice included designs for houses, apartments and commercial buildings. The success of the Plaza Hotel project led to subsequent prestigious commissions from influential real estate entrepreneurs for numerous large apartment buildings and hotels. Bradshaw eventually became a nationally recognized expert on hotel design.⁷ Among his best known St. Louis hotels are the Mayfair and the Lennox in downtown St. Louis, the Chase in the west end, and the Melbourne and the Coronado (which he designed, owned, and operated) in the midtown area.

The Plaza was Bradshaw's first hotel and his most original exterior design. (Photos #1,2, & 9) The building's well-proportioned, symmetrical facade and bracketed, projecting metal cornice contribute to the Italian Renaissance feel of the building. Although it appears from contemporaneous newspaper accounts that the Italian Renaissance was the style Bradshaw had in mind, the building's virtual lack of applied ornament, the emphasis on surface texture and the characteristic brick patterns embedded in the stucco at the sixth floor suggest a strong Craftsman influence also. The Plaza Hotel was enthusiastically received as indicated by the following excerpt from one of the many newspaper articles that appeared in advance of the hotel's opening.

The New Plaza Hotel...will be the center of a new white way according to Manager Harrison formerly of the Southern Hotel. The hotel, just being completed, occupies the eastern half of a triangle formed by Olive Street, Channing Avenue and

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1930	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1915-1930 **Builder/Architect** Preston J. Bradshaw, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Plaza Hotel Complex, constructed in 1915, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C in the following areas: **ARCHITECTURE:** Articulated in Spanish Colonial Revival and simplified Italian Renaissance styles, the buildings are significant as the first major commercial development in St. Louis to employ all stucco exteriors. The deliberate abstention from the use of ornamentation and emphasis on surface texture unifies the Complex and distinguishes the buildings from traditional St. Louis architecture, historically associated with decorative brick and terra cotta. **COMMERCE:** From 1915 to 1930, the two story showroom and office buildings figured prominently in the commercial phases of the automobile and film industries in St. Louis. During those years, in which the automobile industry in its combined phases grew into one of St. Louis' leading businesses, the City was a major regional distribution center for automobiles and automobile accessories. St. Louis was also an important regional distribution center for the film industry. Film exchanges, established in St. Louis and other large cities throughout the country, were an essential element in the tripartite film industry. **COMMUNITY PLANNING:** The Lindell-Locust Cut-Off is important as the first project planned and executed under the direction of the St. Louis City Plan Commission. Designed as the first automobile-related traffic improvement in St. Louis, the cut-off provided automobile traffic with the first direct, unencumbered route between the City's west end and suburban areas to the downtown area.

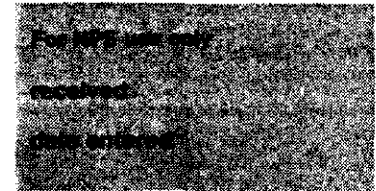
In the early years of the Twentieth Century, St. Louis' burgeoning automobile trade was concentrated along Locust Street from downtown to the City's midtown area; for this reason, Locust Street came to be known as "auto row."¹ Since, west of Twelfth Street, Locust Street was one of the few major streets free of trolley car lines, it also had become a preferred automobile traffic route. However, Locust Street's abrupt termination at Theresa, just east of Grand Avenue, stymied automobile traffic headed west from downtown. (Fig. 1) Eastbound auto traffic, enroute to downtown on Lindell Boulevard, a primary thorough fare west of Theresa, became clogged at the point where Lindell merged into Olive Street because Olive was considerably narrower and carried substantial trolley car traffic.

Responding to pressure from motorists and especially from the automobile trade associations, the City Plan Commission, established in 1911, obtained approval of a plan, in 1914, to facilitate the east-west flow of traffic. The plan proposed to connect Lindell and Locust Streets by means of a diagonal "cut-off" passing through the block bounded by Channing, Leonard, Olive and Locust Streets. (Fig. 1) The Lindell-Locust Cut-Off, as it was originally called, was both the first City Plan Commission project ever undertaken and the first project designed to engineer automobile traffic in St. Louis.² When finished in 1915, at a total cost of \$202,200, the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off was hailed as "a good indication of what will be accomplished by other city planning projects of a larger scale"³ and as "one of the show places of St. Louis."⁴

In preparation for construction of the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off, the site had been cleared of all existing buildings. Construction of the Cut-Off created two triangular

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Plaza Hotel Complex Item number 8 Page 1

shaped blocks in what immediately became a highly visible, heavily traveled location. (Fig's. 1 & 2)

Early in 1915, plans were announced for a new six story hotel to be built as part of a complex of commercial buildings planned by the Pickel Realty Company, owner of the two triangular blocks adjoining the Lindell-Locust Cut-Off. Architect Preston J. Bradshaw's design for the Plaza Hotel Complex broke sharply with St. Louis's traditional ornamental brick and terra cotta clad architectural aesthetic. His bold use of stucco, a material primarily associated in St. Louis with early Twentieth Century Craftsman and Spanish Revival domestic architecture, was unparalleled among commercial buildings in the City. The unique Plaza Hotel Complex stands out as St. Louis's largest concentration of stucco-finished commercial buildings.

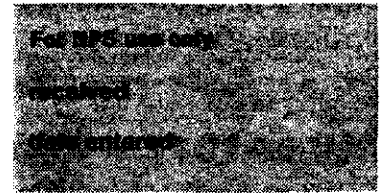
A graduate of Columbia University, Bradshaw was associated with noted architect Stanford White before moving to St. Louis. Following a period as a draftsman for the Commissioner of Public Buildings of St. Louis, Bradshaw opened his own office. His diverse practice included designs for houses, apartments and commercial buildings. The success of the Plaza Hotel project led to subsequent prestigious commissions from influential real estate entrepreneurs for numerous large apartment buildings and hotels. Bradshaw eventually became a nationally recognized expert on hotel design. Among his best known St. Louis hotels are the Mayfair and the Lennox in downtown St. Louis, the Chase in the west end, and the Melbourne and the Coronado (which he designed, owned, and operated) in the midtown area.

The Plaza was Bradshaw's first hotel and his most original exterior design. (Photos ##1, 2, & 9). The building's well-proportioned, symmetrical facade and bracketed, projecting metal cornice contribute to the Italian Renaissance feel of the building. Although it appears from contemporaneous newspaper accounts that the Italian Renaissance was the style Bradshaw had in mind, the building's virtual lack of applied ornament, the emphasis on surface texture and the characteristic brick patterns embedded in the stucco at the sixth floor suggest a strong Craftsman influence also. The Plaza Hotel was enthusiastically received as indicated by the following excerpt from one of the many newspaper articles that appeared in advance of the hotel's opening.

The New Plaza Hotel...will be the center of a new white way according to Manager Harrison formerly of the Southern Hotel. The hotel, just being completed, occupies the eastern half of a triangle formed by Olive Street, Channing Avenue and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Plaza Hotel Complex Item number 8 Page 2

the Lindell-Locust cut off.

This triangle will be surrounded by sixty-seven white way nitrogen lights, each of them 1,000 candle power...All the lights will burn until midnight and half of them from then until dawn. This hotel is a stucco, fireproof building. It is said to be one of the largest all-stucco buildings in the world...⁸

Immediately to the west of the Plaza Hotel, Bradshaw designed a building to serve as a cafe, dinner and dance room and bar. (Photo # 3) It, too, is finished in stucco and features Spanish Revival detailing. An unusual feature of the building is the bas-relief sculpture embedded in the pavilion of the Olive facade (south). The work of St. Louis sculptor Robert P. Bringhurst, it depicts "The Coming of St. Louis." Bringhurst studied at the St. Louis School of Fine Arts and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. His best known works outside St. Louis include monuments at the Gettysburg and Shiloh Battlefields and a statue of Elijah Lovejoy at Alton, Illinois. One of Bringhurst's bas-relief sculptures won first place at the St. Louis Artists Guild Competition in 1915. Bringhurst also won prizes at the Columbia Exposition in Chicago in 1895 and at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904. In 1913 he was chosen to be a member of the Advisory Committee of the Middle West for the Division of Exhibits of the Department of Fine Arts of the Panama Pacific Exposition.

The two westernmost buildings of the eastern triangle (Photo # 4) and the two story building in the western triangle known as the Pickel Building (photos ## 6 & 7) were designed as automobile showrooms and offices. Bradshaw capitalized on the unusually generous exposure provided by the triangular sites to create buildings that afforded an enviable quantity of display space. They are among the largest of any of the "auto row" buildings and, owing to their high visibility and well-designed display areas, were among the most commercially successful.

As illustrated in photograph #8, although Bradshaw chose to emphasize Craftsman characteristics (ribbon windows with multi-light upper sashes, herring-bone brickwork above the windows, and sparse applied ornament) in the buildings of the eastern triangle, and employed predominately Spanish Colonial Revival features in the Pickel Building in the western triangle (arcading, plateresque ornament, tile roof), the buildings were unified by their stucco exteriors, similar parapet lines, and configurations. Features of one triangle (visor roofs, elongated metal brackets) were echoed in the other and helped to visually tie the two blocks together. During their construction, the buildings elicited considerable comment from the press who predicted that the Pickel Building would "be one of the most ornate private structures in St. Louis"⁹ and applauded the "two story buildings with artistic stucco fronts"¹⁰ of the eastern triangle.

Although some original features have been removed, the Complex retains sufficient original materials, detailing, and integrity of design to convey a sense of its place in St. Louis' architectural heritage. The most serious alteration is the loss of the Moorish tile roofed stowers and bracketed visor roof on the Pickel Realty Building. While unfortunate, the loss is not irreparable and does not destroy the integrity of the building. The long expanse of arcading and plateresque ornament, to the Spanish Colonial Revival feel of the building, remain intact.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Plaza Hotel Complex Item number 8 Page 3

The new showrooms and offices in the Plaza Hotel Complex were considered some of the most valuable automobile display and office space on auto row. As construction work commenced, businesses began to advertise their locations in terms of proximity to the cut-off.¹¹ Enterprising businesses snapped up space in the new buildings even before construction was complete. The newly incorporated Chevrolet Motor Company of Missouri was among the first to procure a lease in the eastern triangle. The building was specifically chosen by Chevrolet's President for a retail salesroom and dealership "because of its commanding location with reference to drivers passing automobile row."¹²

St. Louis, by the end of the previous decade, had emerged as one of the country's fastest growing automotive trade centers and many of its seventy dealers who distributed and sold automobiles were located along Locust Street.¹³ Automobile accessories dealers who provided parts, accessories and supplies for the manufacturers and dealers in St. Louis and elsewhere were an important adjunct of the automobile business and also operated along auto row. These businesses, together served a large trade area which included eastern Missouri, western Kentucky, southern Illinois, Tennessee, and Arkansas; several dealers had even greater territories that extended as far as the Gulf Coast, Texas, and occasionally as far as Arizona and the southwestern United States.¹⁴ Combined, the total dollar volume of the various components of the St. Louis automobile business was, by 1915, conservatively estimated at \$15 to 20 million dollars.¹⁵

Chevrolet's location on the cut-off proved so successful that within a year Chevrolet formed a new corporation, the Triangle Motor and Sales Company, to handle its distributing operations and, to accommodate its increased needs, acquired space in the Pickel Building.¹⁶ Although Chevrolet is today the best known of the automobile businesses once housed in the Complex, numerous other automobile business concerns, both automobile dealers and accessories businesses occupied the first floor showrooms between 1915 and 1930.

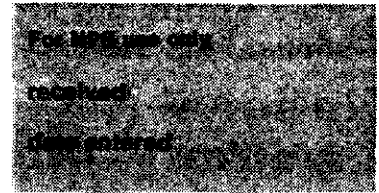
While automobiles and accessories were displayed and sold in the first floor showrooms, a colony of film exchanges had moved into the second floor offices in both blocks. St. Louis was, by 1915, an important regional distribution center for virtually all the major movie production companies. At that time, the motion picture industry had assumed its tripartite structure of producer, distributor and exhibitor. The distributor was the financial power center of the industry and, functioning as a "middleman," worked out of regional film exchanges located in major cities across the country.¹⁷

Between 1915 and 1930, the Plaza Hotel Complex was home to both independent distributors and branch offices of the licensees of Thomas Edison (who held patents on movie production equipment including cameras and viewers). In addition to Edison licensees Essanay, VLSE, Pathe, and Vitagraph, important distributors with offices in the Complex included Triangle Pictures, Goldwyn Distributing, Metro Pictures Corporation, Warner Brothers, United Film, Premier Pictures, Columbia Picture Corporation, and Tiffany-Stahl Productions. Several nearby buildings also housed film businesses and the association with the film industry was so strong that, not surprisingly, the area for many years was known as "film row."¹⁸

The stock market crash of 1929 followed by the depression of the 1930's dealt the midtown area a blow from which it only recently has started to recover. The automobile

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Plaza Hotel Complex

Item number 8

Page 4

trade, which earlier had begun migrating from auto row to outlying neighborhood centers, never again congregated along the Lindell-Locust cut-off. The movie industry was particularly hard hit by the depression and, while St. Louis remained a distribution center, many national companies folded. The film distributors drifted away from the Plaza Hotel Complex but never completely abandoned the midtown area. For a brief time during the 1960's a number of film exchanges moved back to the Complex. By the end of the 1960's, the shrunken ranks of the remaining film distribution companies had permanently departed the Plaza Hotel Complex; the Plaza Hotel, renamed the Drake in 1960, never recovered its former grandeur and closed in the early 1970's.

Grand Avenue has experienced a renaissance that recently has begun to stabilize the midtown area. The owner of the Plaza Hotel Complex property plans to restore the buildings and return them to their former "show place" appearances.

Footnotes

1. Automobile Club of St. Louis, Auto Review, vol. 9, Feb. 1914, P. 26.
2. Interview with Norbury Wayman, Former City Planner for the St. Louis City Plan Commission.
3. St. Louis City Plan Commission, A Major Street Plan For St. Louis, St. Louis, 1917, P.XII.
4. St. Louis Globe-Democrat, October 22, 1915.
5. "Women to Build Hotel on Olive," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Jan. 28, 1915.
6. "Preston J. Bradshaw, Noted Architec, Dies Unexpectedly," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Dec. 7, 1953.
7. Bradshaw's designs for hotels were frequently published by architectural journals and the September, 1929 issue of Architectural Forum featured an article by Bradshaw titled "Making Hotels Financially Productive."
8. "New Plaza Hotel Will Be Center Of 'White Way,'" St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Aug. 12, 1915.
9. Lebens, John C., "About Automobiles," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Oct. 22, 1915
10. "New Buildings at Lindell Cut-Off Nearly Finished," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Sept. 9, 1915.
11. "Tire and Film Companies Take Quarters Near Cut-Off," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Jan. 1, 1915.
12. "Motor Company Leases Building For Its Central Offices," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Oct. 10, 1915.
13. Lee, Robert E. "Automobiles," in Merchants Exchange of St. Louis, Annual Statement for the Year 1910, St. Louis, 1911, P. 65.
14. Ibid.
15. Merchants Exchange of St. Louis, Annual Statement for the Year 1915, St. Louis, 1916, Pp. 49-50.
16. "Triangle Company Will Handle Chevrolet Here," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Jan. 30, 1916.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Plaza Hotel Complex item number 8 Page 5

Footnotes, cont.

17. Stanley, Robert H., The Celluloid Empire, 1978, N. Y., Pp. 2-23.
18. Pollack, Joe, "When The Glory Fades, Only Memories Remain," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, July 6, 1979.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Automobile Club of St. Louis, Auto Review, various issues 1914-1915.
2. Merchants Exchange of St. Louis, Annual Statement for years 1910-1920.
3. Stanley, Robert H. The Celluloid Empire, Hastings House Publishers, 1978, N. Y.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 4 acres

Quadrangle name Granite City, Ill.- Mo.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	<u>1 5</u>	<u>7 4 1 3 3 10</u>	<u>4 12 7 19 8 16 10</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property includes all of City Blocks 1042E and 1042W.

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Deborah B. Wafer

organization N/A

date February 6, 1985

street & number 4425 Laclede Place

telephone (314) 652-3135

city or town St. Louis

state Missouri 63108

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

John Karel
 title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date 3/21/85

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

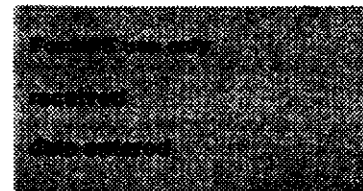
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

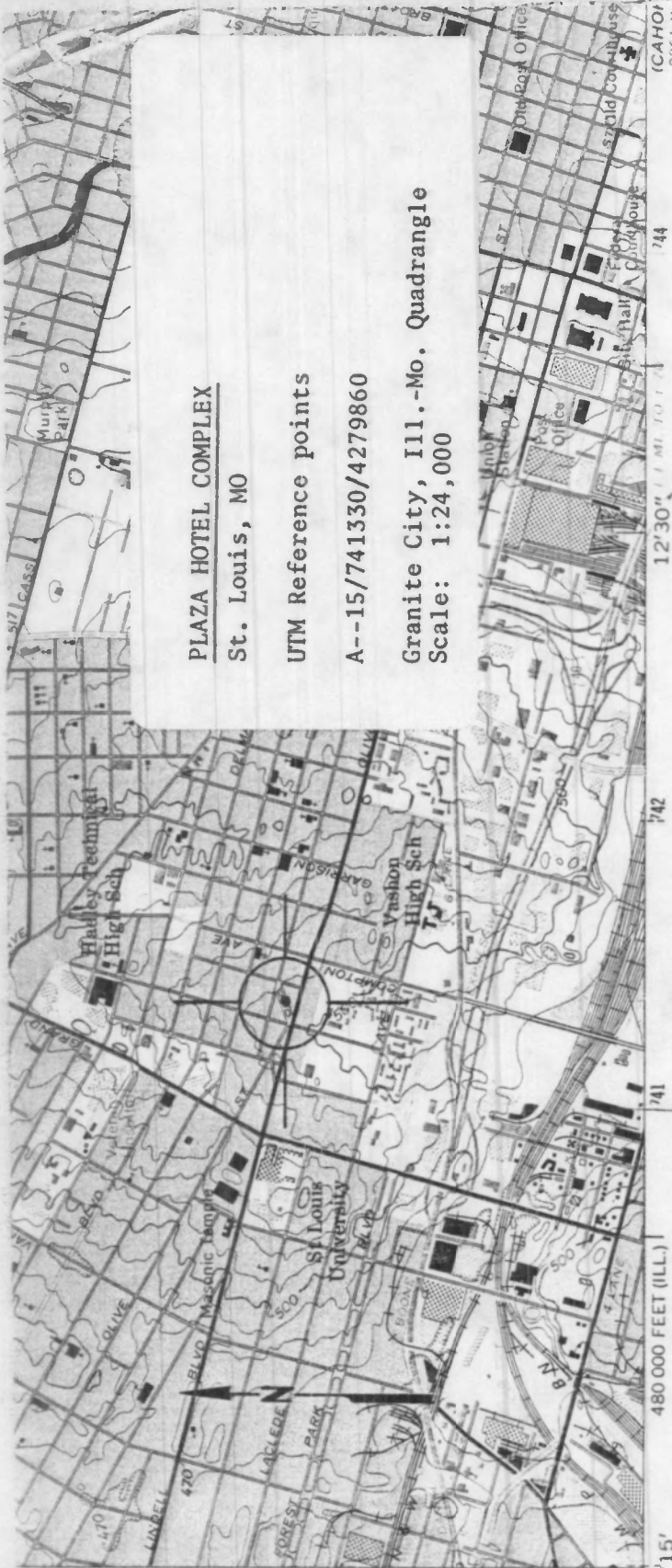


Continuation sheet Plaza Hotel Complex

Item number 11

Page 1

2. James M. Denny
Chief, Survey & Registration
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Phone: 314/751-4096
Date: March 15, 1985



PLAZA HOTEL COMPLEX
St. Louis, MO

UTM Reference points
A--15/741330/4279860

Granite City, Ill.-Mo. Quadrangle
Scale: 1:24,000

38° 37' 30" 90° 15'

480 000 FEET (ILL.)

741

12' 30"

744

(CAHO) 2961 11

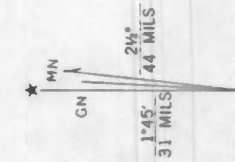
(WEBSTER GROVES)
2961 11 SE

Mapped by the Geological Survey
Revised by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography from planetable surveys by the Geological Survey 1930 and 1933. Planimetric detail revised from aerial photographs taken 1952. Field check 1954

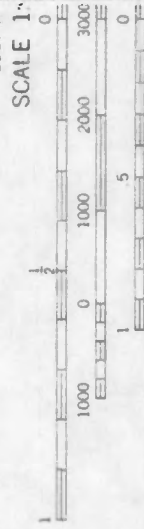
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grids based on Illinois coordinate system, west zone and Missouri coordinate system, east zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 2 meters south and 9 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks



UTM GRID AND 1982 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

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



SCALE 1" = 1000 FEET
SCALE 1" = 2000 FEET
CONTOUR INTER
DASHED LINES REPRESENT
NATIONAL GEODETIC VER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, AND THE DIVISION OF GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES. A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS A

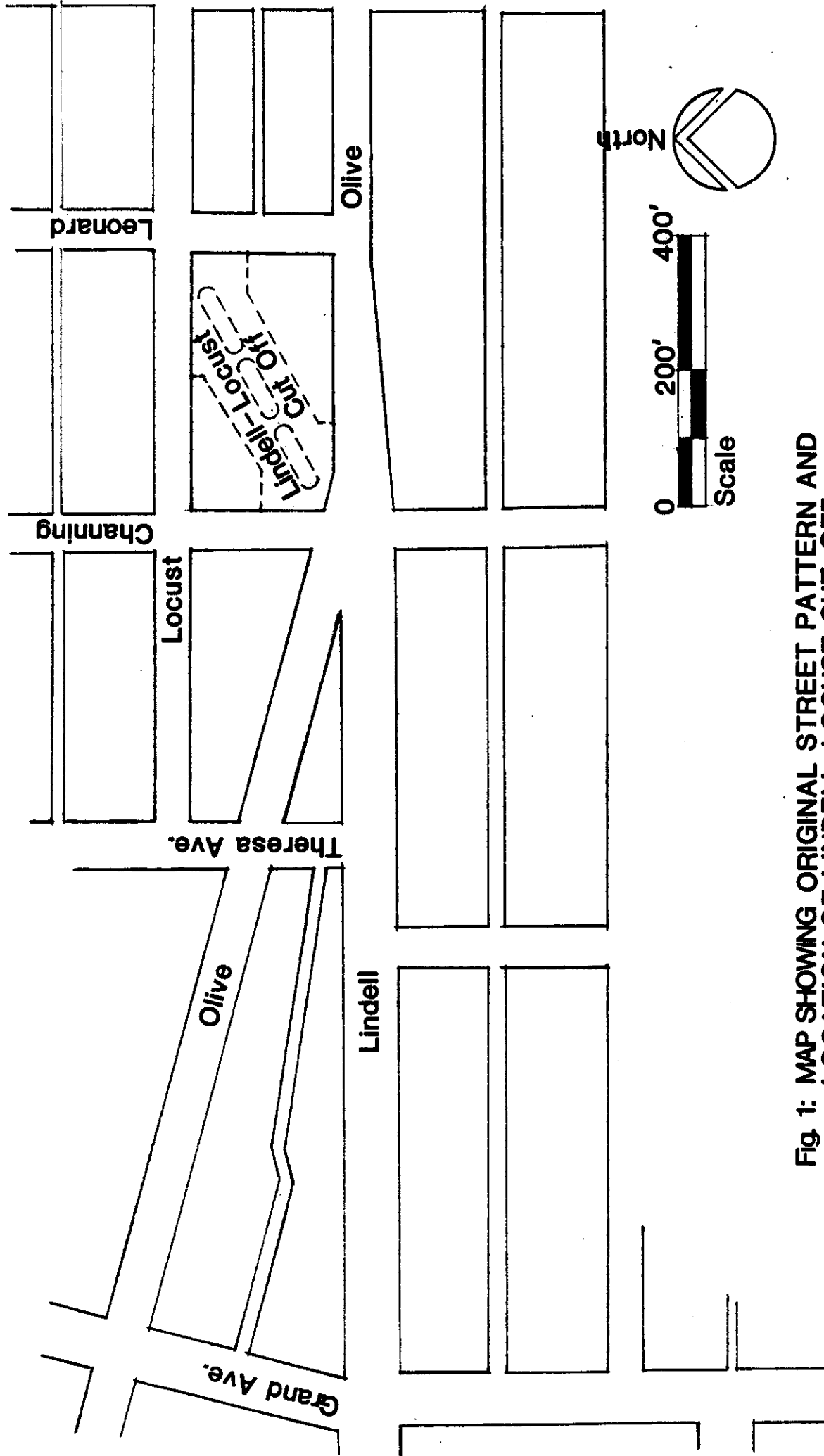


Fig 1: MAP SHOWING ORIGINAL STREET PATTERN AND LOCATION OF LINDELL-LOCUST CUT-OFF

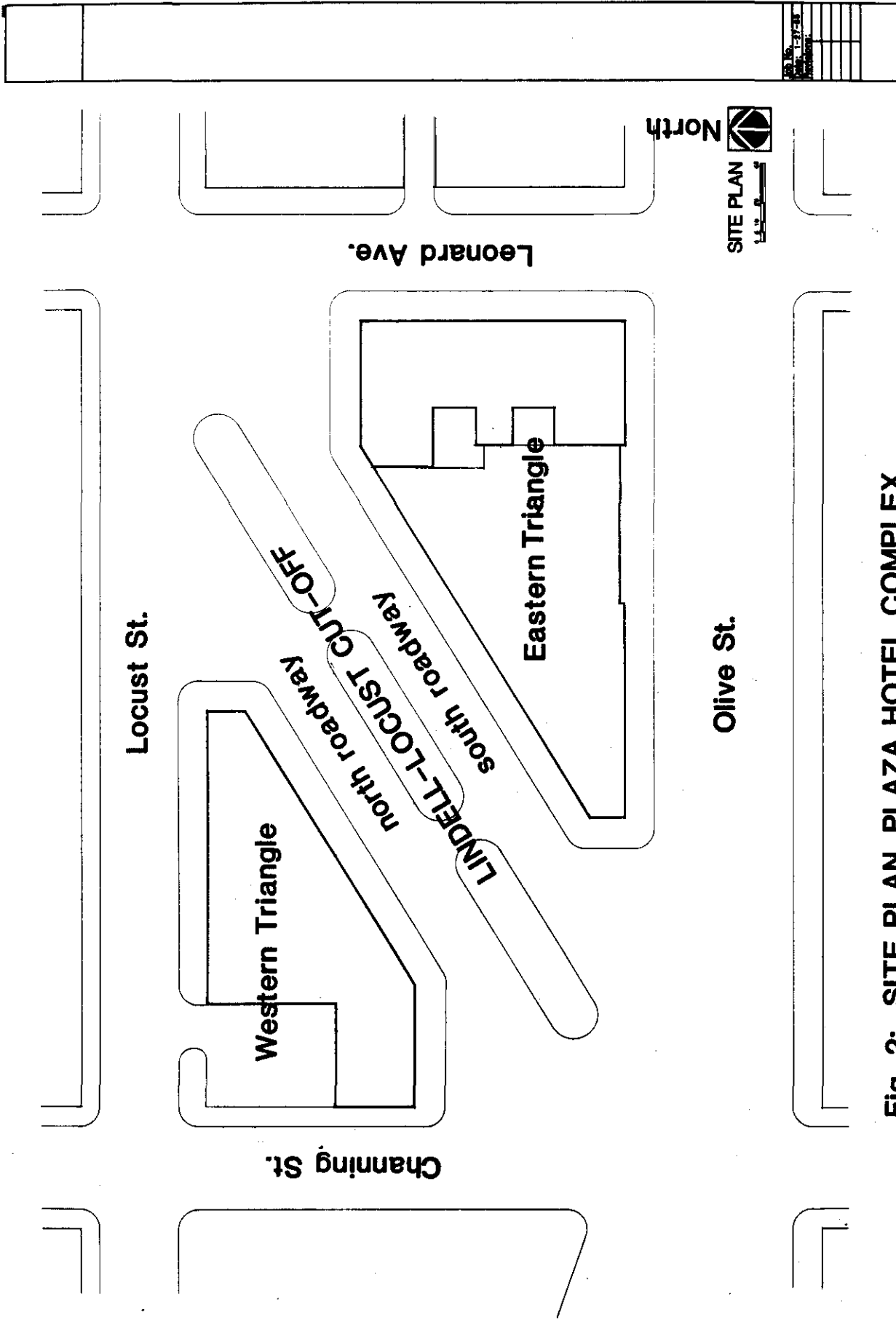
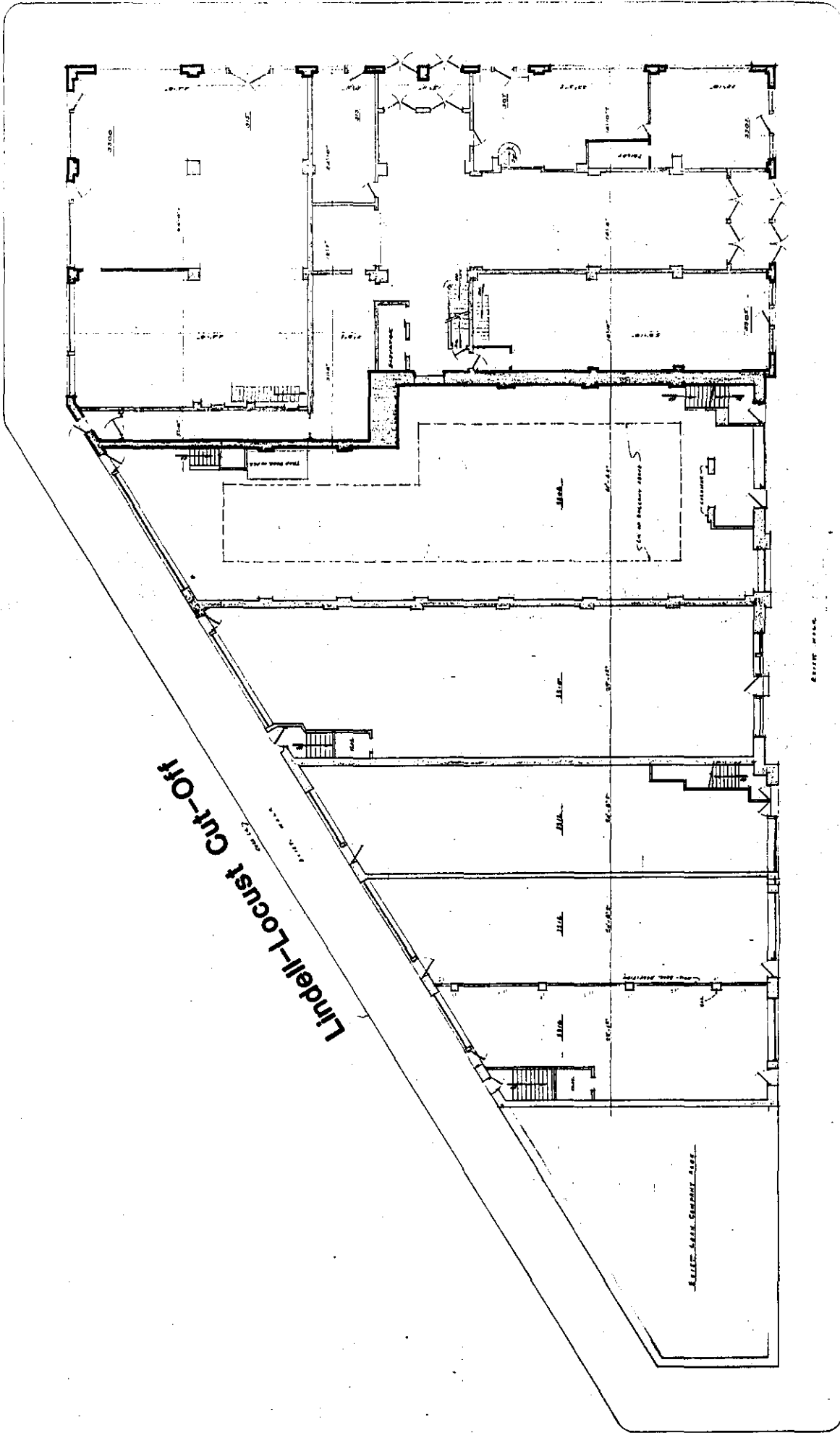
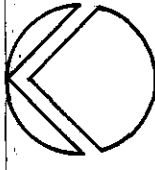


Fig. 2: SITE PLAN, PLAZA HOTEL COMPLEX



Leonard Ave.

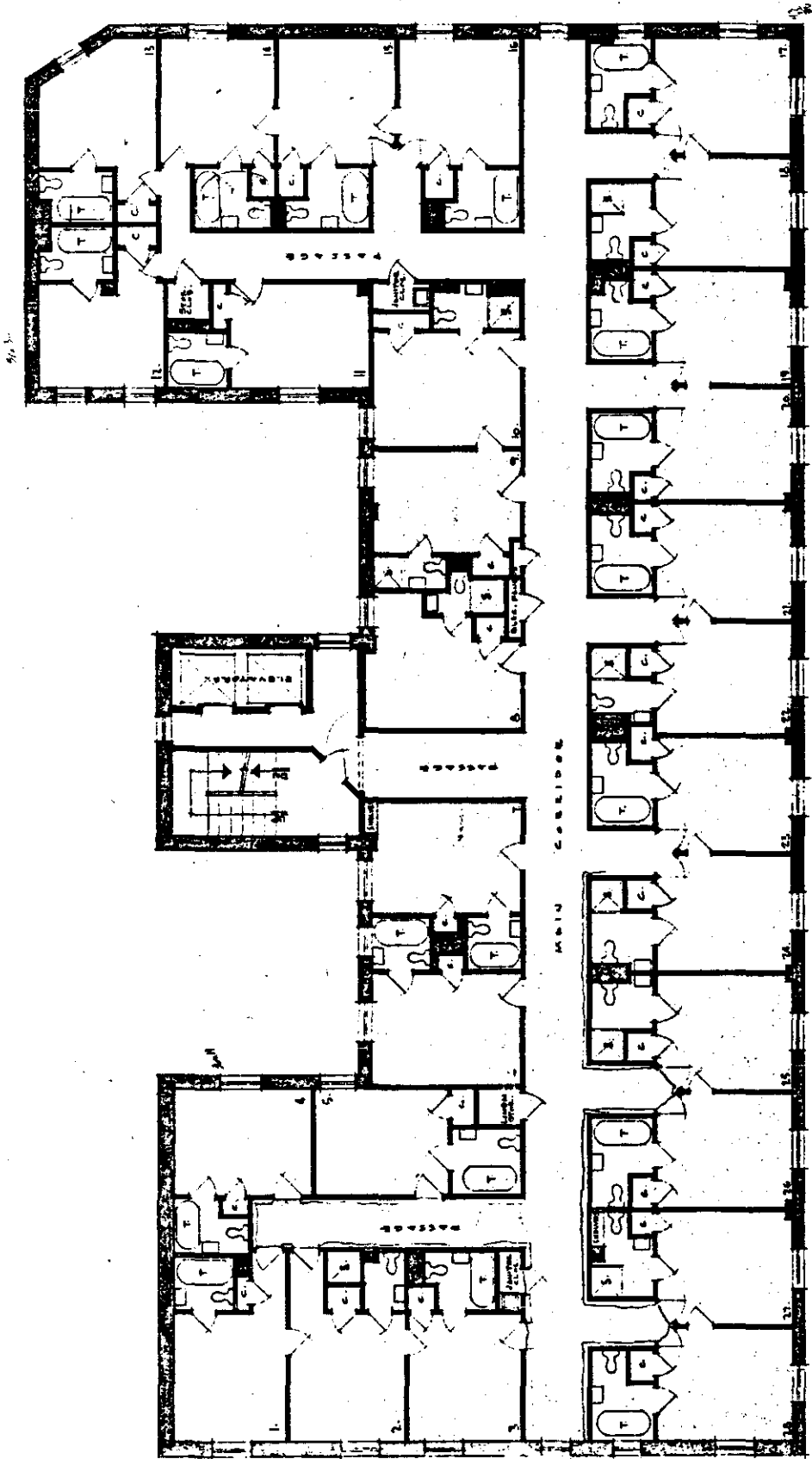
North



Olive St.

Lindell-Locust Cut-Off

Fig. 3: First Floor Plans Eastern Triangle, Plaza Hotel Complex



Leonard Ave.

Fig. 4: Typical Floor Plan, Plaza Hotel Eastern Triangle, Plaza Hotel Complex



North

Olive St.

Lindell- Locust Cut-Off

Locust St.

Channing St.

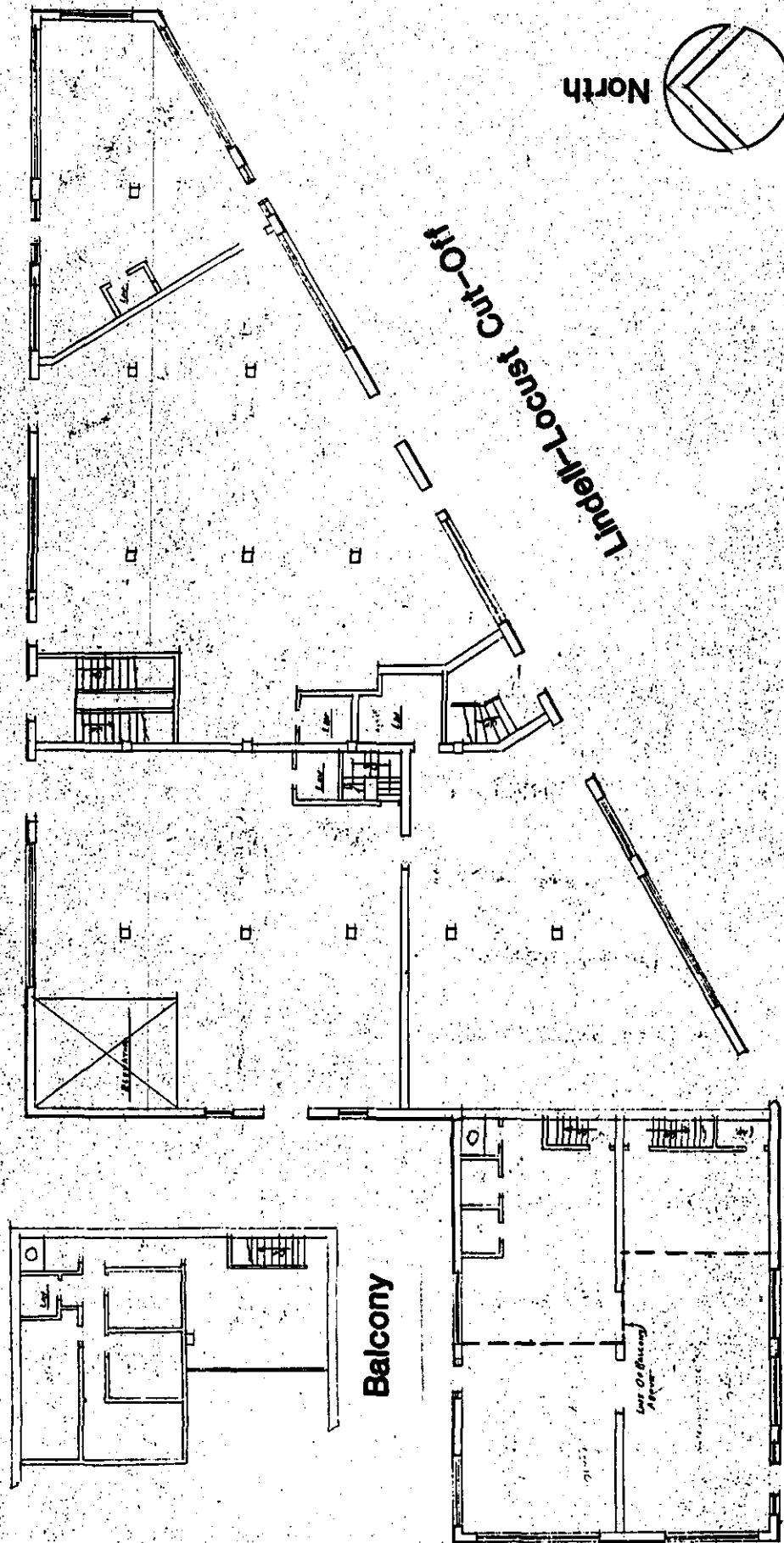


Fig. 5: First Floor Plan, Pickel Realty Building
Western Triangle, Plaza Hotel Complex

Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #1 of 9

St. Louis, Mo.

Photographer: Debby Wafer

Date: Jan. 1985

Neg: 4425 Laclede Pl.

St. Louis, Mo. 63108

View: Plaza Hotel in foreground, Eastern
triangle, camera facing northwest



Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #2 of 9

St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Debby Wafer

Date: Jan., 1985

Neg: 4425 Laclede Place

St. Louis, Mo.

View: Rear (north) of Hotel and adjacent
buildings of Eastern Triangle, camera
facing southwest.



Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #3 cF 4

St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Debby Wafer

Date: Dec., 1984

Neg: 4425 LaClede Pl.

St. Louis, Mo. 63108

View: Cafe, dinner & dance room & bar adjacent to Hotel with "The Coming of St. Louis" bas-relief. Camera facing north.



Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #4 cF9

St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Debby Wafer

Date: Dec., 1984

Neg: 4425 Laclede Place

St. Louis, Mo. 63108

View: Westernmost buildings of Eastern
Triangle. Camera facing north.



Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #5 of 9

St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Debby Wafer

Date: Dec., 1984

Neg: 4425 Laclede Place

St. Louis, Mo. 63018

View: Pickel Realty Building, Western
Triangle. Camera facing north.



Photo

Missing

#6

Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #7 of 4

St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Debby Wafer

Date: Jan., 1985

Neg: 4425 Laclede Place

St. Louis, Mo. 63108

View: Lindell-Locust Cut-Off & Eastern &
Western Triangles. Camera facing
northeast.



Plaza Hotel Complex

Photo #8 cF₄

St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Unknown

Date: c. 1915

Neg: Hastings & Chivetta, Architects
231 S. Bemiston Ave. 63105

View: Lindell-Locust Cut-Off, Eastern &
Western Triangles immediately after
construction. Camera facing northeast.



St. Louis, Mo.

Photo: Unknown

Neg: St. Louis Public Library

Date of copy: Jan. 1985

View: Plaza Hotel in 1915, Leonard and
Olive facades, camera facing northwest



PLAZA

PLAZA

PLAZA

PLAZA

PLAZA

PLAZA