NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 10024-0018 (Oct. 1990)

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property		
historic name The Safeway Stores Office and	Warehouse Building	
other names/site number <u>N/A</u>		
2. Location		
street & number 2029-43 Wyandotte Street	[	n/a ] not for publication
city or town Kansas City	·	[n/a] vicinity
state Missouri code MO county Jac	ckson code 095	zip code <u>64108</u>
3. State/Federal Agency Certification		
As the designated authority under the National Historic Pres [x] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility me in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the propert 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [] does not reproperty be considered significant [] nationally [] statewish comments [].)	2000	•
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Bla	ckwell/Deputy SHPO	Bo Marle 20 Date
Missouri Department of Natural Resources State or Federal agency and bureau		
In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the ( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)	National Register criteria.	
Signature of certifying official/Title		·····
State or Federal agency and bureau		
4. National Park Service Certification		
I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date
[ ] entered in the National Register		
See continuation sheet [ ].		
[ ] determined eligible for the National		
Register		
See continuation sheet [ ]. [ ] determined not eligible for the National		
Register.		
[] removed from the National Register		
[ ] other, explain see continuation sheet [ ].		
1		

# The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building Jackson County, Missouri

5.Classification				
Ownership of Property  [X] private [] public-local [] public-state [] public-Federal	Category of Property  [X] building(s) [] district [] site [] structure [] object	umber of Resources within contributing none  1  0	contributir 0	
		0		_objects _total
Name of related multiple property listing.		Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Function COMMERCE/TRADE: business COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse		Current Functions COMMERCE/TRADE: busin COMMERCE/TRADE: ware		<del>-</del>
COMMERCE/TRADE: spec	ialty store			
7. Description				
Architectural Classification LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY		Materials foundation_concrete		<u></u>
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style		walls <u>brick</u> concrete roof asphalt		  
see continuation sheet [].		othersee continuation sheet [ ].		<del></del> - <del>-</del>

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION See continuation sheet [x]

# The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building Jackson County, Missouri

8.Statement of Significance		
Applicable National Register Criteria	Areas of Significance COMMERCE	
[X] 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.	Periods of Significance	
[] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates	
Criteria Considerations	1929	
Property is:		
[] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.		
[] B removed from its original location.	Significant Person(s)	
[]C a birthplace or grave.	<u>N/A</u>	
[]D a cemetery.		
[] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
[] F a commemorative property.	IVA	
[] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Architect/Builder Archer and Gloyd, architects/ J.H. Thompson Construction Company	
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.	)	
9. Major Bibliographic References		
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one	e or more continuation sheets.)	
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:	
[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested	[x] State Historic Preservation Office	
[ ] previously listed in the National Register	[ ] Other State Agency	
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register	[ ] Federal Agency	
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark	[ ] Local Government	
[ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	[X ] University	
#	[X ] Other:	
1 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record	Name of repository: The Kansas City Public Library	

### The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building Jackson County, Missouri

# 10.Geographical Data

### Acreage of Property Less than one acre

#### **UTM References**

A. Zone 15

Easting 36291Ŏ Northing 4327870 B. Zone

Easting

Northing

C. Zone

Easting

Northing

D. Zone

Easting

**Northing** 

[ ] See continuation sheet

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

**Boundary Justification** 

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

#### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cydney E. Millstein, architectural historian organization Architectural and Historical Research, L.L.C. date August 31, 1999 street & number P.O. Box 22551 telephone 816/363-0567 city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code <u>64113</u>

#### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### **Continuation Sheets**

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### **Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional Items

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

**Property Owner** 

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

name Paul Brown, Associated Building Parntership

street & number 2029 Wyandotte Street \_telephone<u>816/421-0407</u> city or town Kansas City \_ state<u> Missouri</u>\_\_ \_ zip code <u>64108</u>

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building Jackson County, MO

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#### SUMMARY

The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building, located at 2029-2043 Wyandotte Street, Kansas City, Missouri, was designed by Kansas City architects Archer and Gloyd and built by the J. H. Thompson Construction Company in 1929. The four-story reinforced concrete and brick building is rectangular in plan and measures approximately 100 feet by 140 feet. Stone stringcoursing, wide brick spandrels and prominent piers visually divide the main or west façade horizontally and vertically. The north, east, and south façades of the building each exhibit a painted concrete structural grid and a brick parapet with terra-cotta coping. A loading dock was added in 1949 on the south side, while another one-story addition was added in 1976 to the north. Containing a total of 84,000 square feet, the building's interior was remodeled in 1934, based on a design by Kansas City architect Charles E. Keyser. Although the first-story has been modified, the Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building has retained the majority of its historic features to convey its significance. Its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association has been retained.

#### ELABORATION

West or Main façade

The primary façade of the original 1929 unit measures five bays divided by wide, painted concrete piers that are each marked with an amortizement just below the second floor level. The piers flanking the end bays are heavier, project slightly further from the surface and extend beyond the parapet, where they terminate in pyramidal caps. Each end bay is also emphasized at the first floor level by a wide segmental arch, deep recess and a concrete lintel placed just below the second floor level, adding visual weight to the base of the building. The end bays are further

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articulated by paired and slender, intermediate concrete piers.

The three central bays are distinguished at the parapet level by a stone panel carved in raised relief with the words: "SAFEWAY STORES INCORPORATED." The central bay is wider than the end bays, and the three central bays on the first floor have a lower lintel that suggests a scaling down of the openings at the street level.

At the storefront level, the original tripartite south bay of the first floor features original multipaned industrial sash fenestration with hopper and awning units, while the north bay has been infilled with brick, concrete and a vent panel. The recessed entrance bay, second bay from the south, has double glass doors surrounded by a wide pediment surround and topped by a raking cornice. The opening is flanked by sidelights that are divided into a vertical strip of four lights and rest above a concrete sill. Above the concrete lintel, the original transom area is now solid infill with two intermediate columns of brick. The two bays to the north of the main entrance display ribboned, aluminum-framed fenestration above brick infill, a wide lintel course and corresponding multipaned transom.

The second floor of the main façade features brick infill and sloping concrete sills. At the far south bay, there is one rectangular, fixed window in the center section between the intermediate piers. Moving to the north, the next bay is divided into three sections above the sill by intermediate columns of brick, and the center section of this bay also has a fixed rectangular window. The fenestration is repeated at the ends of the center bay, and at the center section of the next bay to the north. The far north bay is devoid of any fenestration.

Multipaned industrial style fenestration at the third and fourth stories is original and features hopper style units. End bays display paired windows, one on top of the other,

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separated by piers, while the center bays feature eight hopper units to a floor.

#### North Façade

The north façade is partially obscured by the 1976 one-story addition, which runs across all but the two westernmost bays, and terminates midway up the second story. This façade features fenestration only at the fourth floor, with two openings each in the third through sixth bays (moving from west to east). These units are multipaned industrial sash, with an operable awning window just above the center of each, comprised of six lights.

#### East Façade

The east façade of the Safeway building is canted at its northern section, which projects approximately five feet. A loading dock is located at the southern-half of this façade. Throughout the east façade, fenestration varies in size and configuration, yet the multipaned industrial sash units have a characteristic division into smaller lights and most of the larger ones have operable, hopper sections. There is at least one opening per bay, while other bays display three window units. There is a non-original secondary entrance at the end bays of the north section of the original unit, an additional one at the second bay (moving south to north) of the south section, and a non-original overhead door at the south end bay. The east façade of the one-story 1976 addition to the north is devoid of any articulation.

#### South Facade

The loading dock addition (canted at the far eastern end), at the south façade spans the entire first story. Overhead doors are located at the eastern bays and non-original entrances are located at the western half. Several overhead doors and an entrance, originally located at the western end, have been infilled. The second through fourth stories

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feature multipaned, industrial sash (second and third floors) and double-hung units (fourth floor). The narrow far east bay is devoid of fenestration. The remaining six bays feature paired units at the second through fourth floors. The second and third floor windows are divided with an operable awning unit comprised of six lights. The fourth floor windows are four-over-four vertical light, double-hung, sash. Additionally, the interior columns of the first, second, and third floors each have mushroom capitals, while the first, second, and third floor columns at the east corner, and all but the westernmost fourth floor columns, have bracket supports, to receive additional post and beam construction.

#### Interior

The interior of the original 1929 unit of the Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building has been modified over the years. The western half of the first floor features modern offices, while the remainder of the entire building is warehouse space. Concrete columns with bell-shaped capitals are exposed on several floors. Floors and ceilings are concrete; walls are a combination of brick, clay tile, and plaster.

#### Future Plans

Currently there are proposed plans for the renovation and adaptive reuse of the Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building. Plans include renovation of the fenestration, storefront level, and modernization of the interior quarters for offices or apartments. These plans are being prepared by Duncan Architects, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri, in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for The Treatment of Historic Properties. Once the proposed plans are completed, they will be submitted to the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office for review.

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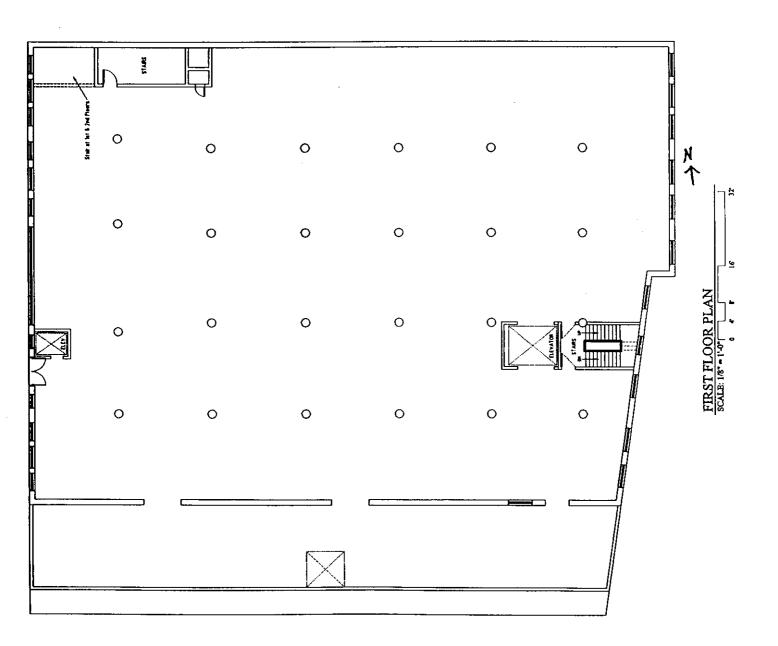
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The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building
This plan illustrates the 1929 unit and the 1949 loading dock addition.
The 1976 north addition is not shown.



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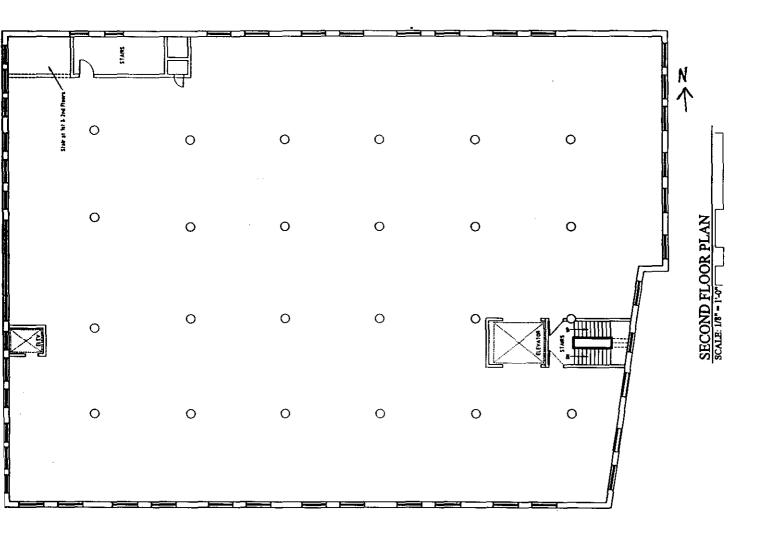
The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building Jackson County, MO

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# The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building

This plan illustrates the 1929 unit and the 1949 loading dock addition.

The 1976 north addition is not shown.



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#### SUMMARY

The Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building, 2029-2043 Wyandotte Street, Kansas City, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and is locally significant in the following area: COMMERCE: Constructed in 1929, the Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse Building inaugurated the grocery company's concerted building campaign of the 1930s in Kansas City and now stands as a witness to the rapid and sustained expansion of one of the great chain business developments within the region. Representative of the growth of Safeway Stores, Inc., to changes in the national economy, the Safeway Stores General Office and Warehouse facility on Wyandotte Street remained the flagship of the grocery chain's Kansas City offices that operated and administrated stores throughout the metropolitan area. Additionally, as the regional warehouse for produce, other perishable items and canned goods, the building continued to be the backbone of the grocery chain's activities in Kansas City for many years, even as some of its functions were transferred to more modern and spacious facilities in 1939. Furthermore, the Safeway building is representative of the changing economic conditions brought about by the great depression and the nationwide rise of chain food stores during the ensuing years. The Safeway Building also housed the regional bakery and a coffee roasting plant for their retail stores throughout Missouri and Kansas. The period significance is 1929 to 1949, the end date established by the arbitrary fifty-year limit.

#### ELABORATION

The Development of Safeway Stores, Inc.
Son of a postmaster and Baptist minister, Martin B. Skaggs, a native of Aurora, Missouri, opened a modest, independent

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grocery store in American Falls, Idaho, on August 15, 1915.1 At this location Skaggs developed sound retailing theories regarding bulk sales. Skaggs ordered a carload of peaches, parked the car on a siding at American Falls and "advertised the fruit for sale in bushel lots at a price reflecting considerable savings. The peaches sold quickly."2 Carlot sales, such as these, were made before they ever left the tracks. This successful and somewhat revolutionary selling method led Skaggs to open over 428 stores throughout ten western states by 1926. In California, several hundred units had been operating under the Safeway name. The company immediately acquired the California corporation, and within a year, merged with the Skaggs chain, increasing the number of stores operated to over 800. Two years later, Safeway increased its holdings in 1928 by acquiring six more chains and opening stores in Canada. By 1929, Safeway operated more than 2,000 stores.3

Despite the disastrous effects of the economic depression, growth continued slowly but steadily when, in 1931, Safeway began an intensive building and acquisition campaign. This new phase of expansion was highlighted by Safeway's merger with the MacMarr chain, approved by the shareholders August 27, 1931. This acquisition "[made] Safeway the third largest retailer in the country with a sales volume only exceeded by the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. (A&P), and Sears, Roebuck." The company's continued success was ensured through the decade by more than 4000 stores, numerous production and warehouse units, a formidable coverage, and the excellent management skills of Skaggs and

S Ibid.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Kansas City Journal-Post, September 25, 1932, n. p.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Huge Gains Made by Safeway Since Its Humble 1915 Start," *The Kansas City Times*, July 13, 1955, n. p. <sup>3</sup> J. C. Clifford, "Chain Food Stores Appeal to Public as Depression Encourages Thrift," *The Magazine of Wall Street*, May 28, 1932, 156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "Companies Showing Profitable Readjustment to Depression," *The Magazine of Wall Street*, September 5, 1931, 653.

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his successor Lingan A. Warren. Skaggs retired in June of 1941.

Safeway Stores Inc., Bulk Buying and the Start of Depression Era Economics

Early in his career, Skaggs became aware of the advantages of bulk purchasing and selling. His tactics also involved both the consolidation of resources through merger and careful expansion of store units in established markets. Skaggs and other grocers nationwide took advantage of improved transportation and communication systems that sped mass production and distribution of goods. These business practices, which were initiated well before the general depression of the economy in the United States, were well suited to the psychological, if not actual, needs of Americans: the "necessities of existence where the prices are low and the quality satisfies."

According to historian James M., Mayo in his book The American Grocery Store, ". . . mass retail distribution required multiple locations where customers could shop and these stores had to be efficiently designed for volume business as did the manufacturer's factory." The solution," Mayo asserts, "was the chain store system."

Grocers were the first retailers to use this systematic method of conducting business with lower, overhead costs. Buying in bulk directly from farmers and the food manufacturer, while avoiding the wholesale jobbers market altogether, allowed the grocer to establish the chain

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Kansas City Times, July 13, 1955, n. p.

<sup>&#</sup>x27; Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Magazine of Wall Street, May 28, 1932, 156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> James M. Mayo, The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998), 77.

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store. By this method, food and labor costs were reduced which resulted in marked savings for the customer. Unlike the independent grocer, "where the principle of maximizing profits for every sale, the chain store grocer was motivated to offer the lowest retail price in order to sustain a volume trade."

During the 1920s, because of the immediate savings felt by the consumer, grocery chains were expanding tremendously. By the end of that decade, the chain store had become so powerful that it was replacing the traditional system of independent retail business. Consequently, the corner market found that it was increasingly difficult to complete with the bulk buying power and lower prices of the chain store. In 1929 "corporate chains had captured thirty-nine percent of the grocery store trade . ." The cumulative growth of Safeway and other chain grocers such as A&P, Kroger and First National between 1920 and 1930 was 294 per cent. 13

One aspect of the chain store that helped to maximize efficiency and distribution and, in some cases, the manufacture of goods, was the traditional warehouse. Grocery chains like Safeway established their own warehousing system to store and route goods. Warehouses were often sited to be the hub to the retail stores in the chain. When the chain built a new store, the location was based, in part, to the distance between the new facility and the warehouse. In the early 1930's, "ininety percent of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid., 78. Mayo states that The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company was initially devoted to selling only tea. The company's strategy was to buy whole cargoes of tea and to sell it at cut-rate prices right on the docks in New York City. This was the first major grocery store chain that emerged from stores that already used the system of bulk buying, rather than from stores already specializing in the grocery trade. <sup>12</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ibid., 99.

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the sales of the chains store's warehouse are within seventy-five miles of that warehouse." "14

Kansas City, Safeway Stores, Inc., and the Importance of the Building at 2029 Wyandotte Street

Just two years before the MacMarr merger, Safeway Stores, Inc., engaged in an ambitious building campaign in Kansas City, Missouri. Several factors contributed to the investment of Safeway and other transportation-dependent businesses in Kansas City and the surrounding region. The city's central location in the country and well-established rail lines facilitated the growth of the region's already strong agricultural businesses, while the "advent of overthe-road trucking, as vehicles and roads improved, added another positive element to the transportation mix." The chain grocery stores benefited from such developments and responded by building ever-larger warehouse and production facilities.

The four-story warehouse and office building at 2029-43 Wyandotte was built with these issues in mind. This facility was not only the first building constructed in Kansas City for Safeway, but also the sole warehouse for the region from 1929 to 1939, serving as a distribution point from Kansas City to "St. Joseph south to Joplin and the tri-state district west to Topeka and east to Columbia." The building, totaling 84,000 square feet, not only served as the principal distribution warehouse for the region with fruit, vegetable, and egg departments, but was also the location of a bakery and coffee plant, and later, the company's district offices. 17

<sup>14</sup> As quoted in The American Grocery Store, 121.

<sup>15</sup> Kansas City Business Journal, "Kansas City: 100 Years of Business," 1988, 16.

<sup>16</sup> The Kansas City Star, February 19, 1939, n. p.

<sup>17</sup> The Kansas City Star, June 12, 1932. See also Kansas City, Missouri City Directory, 1942.

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To distribute their products, Safeway's Wyandotte warehouse typically used the method of "cross-docking" where goods were off-loaded by vendors and then transferred to the surrounding retail stores. Furthermore, administrators at general offices like the one located in Kansas City could evaluate the existing stores and decide where to build new ones. By processing some of their own products such as coffee and baked goods, Safeway could control as much of the food distribution procedure as was economically possible, and at the same time, promote their own private label.

Ironically, Safeway tapped into the Kansas City market at the height of the nationwide "anti-chain movement" where lobby groups created a "wave of legislative discontent by supporting 728 bills that were introduced in state houses." This would have undoubtedly put the chain stores, such as Safeway, in a rather insecure position. In addition, chain store profits during the period from 1928-1929 shrank in spite of increased sales. As a result of these two factors, chain stores generally suffered nationwide, yet Safeway's profits were fairly steady in the midst of the protests and the onset of the great depression.

In Kansas City in 1930, Safeway had opened two retail stores, both located on Prospect Avenue, at a time when there were more than 850 groceries in business. The general office and warehouse was listed at 2029 Wyandotte. By 1935, Safeway had opened seventeen stores in Kansas City, Missouri, and by 1938, there were over forty-five

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Arnie Collins, Architect and Building Supervisor, Safeway, Inc. Interview with author, August 18, 1999. <sup>19</sup> The American Grocery Store, 108. See also The Progressive Grocer 9 (June 1930), 82.

Most of these groceries were independent businesses.

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retail stores.<sup>21</sup> The facility at 2029 Wyandotte was named the district office for Safeway a few years after a new 27,500 square foot produce warehouse facility was constructed at Roanoke Road and Karnes Boulevard in 1939. Safeway continued to operate the Wyandotte building as a warehouse "from which the principal distribution to the stores [was] made" until 1953 when Halls Company purchased the property for their warehouse.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Triway Brokerage Company, Safeway's produce subsidiary, was also located at the Wyandotte facility from 1935 through 1942.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The Kansas City Star, December 1, 1940, n. p. Safeway also operated their truck department at 2029 Wyandotte from 1947-1951.

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### Bibliography

Clifford, J. C. "Chain Food Stores Appeal to Public as Depression Encourages Thrift," The Magazine of Wall Street, May 28, 1932, 156-57.

"How Detroit Grocers Are Fighting Chain Stores," Progressive Grocer 9 (June 1930), 34, 82-87.

Kansas City Business Journal, "100 Years of Business, Kansas City Business Journal, 1988.

Kansas City Journal-Post. September 25, 1932.

"Martin Skaggs, Chain Store Magnate, Returns to Ozarks for Fox Hunting," Kansas City Journal-Post, September 25, 1932, 6b.

Mayo, James. The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Mid-west Contractor. October 16, 1929, 28.

"Safeway Merger May Lead to Other Chain Combines," The Business Week, July 22, 1931, 12.

"Safeway Stores, Inc.," The Magazine of Wall Street, September 5, 1931, 653.

"The Chain Situation," The Progressive Grocer 9 (May 1930), 20-21, 82, 97.

The Kansas City Star. June 12, 1932; February 19, 1939; February 21, 1940; December 1, 1940; November 23, 1941.

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The Kansas City Times. July 13, 1955.

The New York Times. August 22, 1930; March 18, 1931; August 8, 1931.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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# **Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 of Block 20, Goodrich Addition, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

# **Boundary Justification**

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Safeway Stores Office and Warehouse building.

# Key to Photographs

The following applies to all photographs.

Photographer: Cydney E. Millstein, Architectural and Historical Research, L.L.C., Kansas City, Missouri.

Date: July 1999 (exterior)
October 1999 (interior)

Location of Negatives: Negatives are with the photographer.

- 1. Main or west and south facades; view facing northeast.
- 2. Main or west and north facades; view facing southeast.
- 3. North façade; view facing south-southeast.
- 4. Detail of west façade; view facing east.
- 5. South and east facades; view facing northwest.
- 6. First floor interior toward lobby; view facing southwest
- 7. First floor interior, warehouse and loading dock; view facing southwest.
- 8. First floor interior; view facing south.
- 9. Second floor interior; view facing east-northeast.
- 10. Fourth floor interior; view facing southwest.



