

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name United Office Building

other name/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 220 Rainbow Boulevard not for publication
city or town Niagara Falls vicinity _____
state New York code NY county Niagara code 063 zip code 14302

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
[Signature] Commissioner for Historic Preservation 11/06/8
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

*United Office Building
Niagara County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

Description

The United Office Building, 220 Rainbow Boulevard North, in Niagara Falls, sits on a 72.41' x 63.25' site on what was formerly First Street. The footprint of the 20-story office tower is an approximate square and, at 4,436 square feet, covers nearly the entire site. The building was built in 1928-1929 and consists of a two-story base, followed by a multistory tower that is capped by a series of setback floors. The site is two blocks from the Niagara Reservation State Park and the falls at Niagara.

The building has a fireproofed steel skeleton with reinforced concrete floors. Walls are covered on the exterior with varying colors of flat roman brick laid in stretcher bond pattern.

The Exterior

A steel skeleton forms the basic structure of the building. The steel columns are encased in firebrick that is faced in marble, terra cotta and face brick at various levels of the building. The steel columns are placed at approximately 17-foot intervals on the north/south axis with spacing of approximately 15 feet on the east/west axis (figure 1). The steel frame is expressed in the brick covered shafts that rise from the base of the building. The brick sheathing is shaded so that the lower dark brown brick gradually lightens until it becomes a gray buff color on the upper floors. At the base of the building, a six-foot high band of polished "rainbow" marble surrounds the building with dark brown terra cotta reaching from the marble band to the top of the second floor. The terra cotta is subtly ornamented with low relief forms in a Mayan style. The facing covering the columns is edged in decorative terra cotta with inset flat panels of the same material. The base is further developed at the entry where, near the top of this base, the columns are decorated with stylized eagles sitting on wreaths below which appears the letter "U". This beautifully articulated detail lies within the plane of the 2-story terra cotta façade. Here, four columns, two that do not correspond to the steel skeleton, separate windows that occur as singles at each end and a triple window above the main entry doors. Above this, surrounding the building, is a terra cotta frieze with ribbed and foliated forms in the spandrel areas. Centered above the entry in the frieze are the words "United Office Building", while above the first floor doors and windows are numbered or spelled out the addresses "220", "Two Twenty Two" and "224" (figure 2). Like the overall entry, all of the lettering is done in terra cotta. The terra cotta covering of the column areas continues into the third floor with the decorative edging surrounding ribbed, rather than flat, terra cotta panels. At the street level, commercial style steel framed windows occupied the space between the columns.

The building rises from the third to the fifteenth floor with identical levels showing eight windows, in four pairs, on each side of the building (the north wall is blank to the fourth floor where a previous building adjoined the office tower). The window pairs, separate by wide brick mullions, fit in the spaces between the brick covered columns. The original windows were steel double hung three-

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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over three windows some of which have been replaced. The original windows are in varying, and in many cases substantial, degrees of deterioration as discussed in a window survey prepared by Flynn Battaglia Architects. Given the number and deteriorated condition of the windows, current plans approved by the New York State Office of Parks and Historic Preservation and the National Parks Service call for the replacement of the windows with windows that match the configuration, profiles, setbacks and visual/reflective qualities of the original windows

At the sixteenth floor the building begins the first in a series of setbacks that occur again at the 18th floor and culminate at the roof above the 20th floor. At the two set back levels, shallow, paved terraces occur. The parapets of the terraces are capped in cut stone and faced with polychrome terra cotta friezes mimicking the Mayan theme at the entry level. The upper level friezes contain figures of ancient Gods. The areas directly above the columns are carried above the level of the frieze as highly articulated terra cotta piers with vertical bands of smooth terra cotta flanking centers with foliated insets above a composite sculpture showing serpents surrounding the letter "U"(figures 3 & 4).

The first setback contains the 16th and 17th floors and the narrowed façade is accommodated by reducing the end window pairs to single windows. The second setback holds the 18th through 20th floors and its façade is composed of two pairs of windows on each side. Once again the steel frame is articulated by brick facing and capped by decorated stone and terra cotta piers.

The Interior

The building is entered at the ground floor level through bronze revolving doors flanked by standard single entry doors. The lobby floor is patterned terrazzo and the walls contain a wainscot of smoky blue-gray marble. Ornamental plaster ceilings are coffered and delineated with egg-and-dart moldings. A grand staircase, finished in gold leaf and bronze with black walnut handrail, ascends to the second floor (figure 5). The west wall of the lobby originally contained the doors to three high-speed (600 feet per minute), self-leveling elevators, one of which has been removed (figure 6). Two large commercial spaces open off the lobby. The space to the south was originally occupied by a stock brokerage firm that moved to an upper floor in the 1960's when a restaurant took over this first floor space. The northern commercial space off the lobby was originally a drug store with a mezzanine for serving lunch. This later became an office supply business with the mezzanine level used as office space. The remaining floors in the tower were nearly identical with the core of the building providing space for the elevators, heating and ventilation stacks, lavatories and service rooms. The perimeter spaces were left for the offices, with 32 windows on each floor to provide natural light. The entry at each floor was a repeat of the lobby with terrazzo floors and black walnut trim

(figure 7). The interior walls of the office floors were never intended to be permanent, moving for the needs of new tenants. They were removed from the building in preparation for a failed apartment project in the 1990's (figure 8). The fireproofing of the interior columns was removed at the same time leaving the steel exposed.

The space in the top setback level is reserved for the mechanics of the elevators. There is a small service basement. Originally, there were no boilers in the building. Supply for the steam heating system came from a boiler in the Hotel Niagara across First Street via pipes passing through

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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a tunnel under the street. When the hotel management company was no longer associated with the buildings, an independent heating system was installed in the United Office Building.

Today the United Office Building exterior and its interior lobby retain a high level of architectural integrity of design, materials and craftsmanship.

United Office Building
Name of Property

Niagara County, New York
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- public-local
- private
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

- district
- building(s)
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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 Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/office building

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco skyscraper

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick, stone, terra cotta, marble
steel
roof
other

Narrative Description

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Significant Statement

The United Office Building is historically and architecturally significant as one of the most outstanding examples of an early twentieth century urban skyscraper found in Western New York. Built between 1928-1929, the building stands as a reminder of an important period of progress, which is associated with the use of Niagara Falls as a power source that spurred the industrial development in the City of Niagara Falls. Designed by Esenwein and Johnson, a prominent Buffalo Architectural firm, the United Office Building with its distinctive tower featuring a Mayan motif, is one of the most outstanding Art Deco commercial buildings in Western New York. The twenty story United Office Building, the tallest historic commercial skyscraper in the city, embodies the characteristics of the Art Deco style and reflects the requirements of the New York City Zoning regulations of the period. Additionally, it holds significance as the headquarters for the earliest hotel chain in the United States, The United Hotels Company of America. The United Office Building retains a high degree of architectural integrity of design, materials and craftsmanship.

Development of the Skyscraper

The skyscraper is a building type that originated in America in the late 19th Century. A variety of economic, cultural and social factors led to the need for a maximum usage of land in major cities within the U.S. At the same time the emergence of three important developments in the field of architecture allowed for the building of structures of previously unheard of height with full access to all levels of the building. These three developments were the metal frame, fireproof cladding and the elevator.

Prior to this time, tall buildings were required to have lower walls of sufficient thickness to carry the load of the upper portion of the building. On large lots this presented less of a problem. However, on the increasingly cramped city lot of the mid to late 19th century, a thick supporting base could drastically reduce the percentage of space available for use on the lower floors. The iron or steel frame presented a simple solution to this problem. With the metal frame supporting the structure, the exterior and interior walls became more of "sheathing" than support, allowing for the lower floors to have the same thin wall thickness as the upper floors. Since the metal frame was susceptible to failure under high temperatures, fireproof cladding was developed to insure the structural integrity of the building¹. The materials used for cladding (for example terra cotta, brick and concrete) became associated with skyscraper design and led to the development of decorative forms that became typical of the building type.

In addition, the steel frame allowed for an increase in glazing since exterior walls no longer needed to support the structure. This changed the internal environment of office buildings forever: cavernous dark interior spaces were replaced with internal areas filled with natural light.

¹ An 1890's experiment by the Royal Technical Laboratories in Berlin showed that steel lost tensile strength at an increasingly rapid rate above 205 °C.

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The development of the tall building could only have occurred concurrent with the appearance of the elevator for without a mechanical conveyance system, the height of the building would be limited by the number of stairs the public was willing to climb. As elevators became more efficient and high-speed operation a reality, the higher floors became even more desirable as they provided a view and the absence of street noise and dust.

As tall buildings proliferated in big city commercial areas, it was found that the grouping of these structures caused the surrounding street areas to be devoid of natural light. In response, the nation's first zoning law appeared in New York City in 1916. For the purpose of this law, the city was divided into three zones: residential, business and unrestricted. One of the zoning regulations regulated the bulk of the building, using the concept of "setbacks" at upper floor levels. It stated that unrestricted building height could occupy only 25% of the plot with the remaining space regulated by a series of dimensions determined by the width of the street that the structure faced.² The architect used the hypotenuse of a right triangle to determine at what height the building was required to start the stepping procedures of the setbacks. To some extent this law succeeded in providing more light and air for crowded inner-city areas but to a greater degree it succeeded in establishing a style for the tall building that would be characterized by soaring towers stepping back at the upper levels.

The United Office Building: Niagara County's First Skyscraper

The United Office Building is the sole example of an early 20th Century Skyscraper built in Niagara County. The Niagara Falls United Office Building, Inc. was granted a demolition permit on November 24, 1928, to remove a brick building on the site. The building permit for the new 20-story structure was filed on December 31st of the same year. The general contractor was the Amsterdam Building Company of New York City. The architectural firm chosen for the building was that of Esenwein and Johnson, a prominent Buffalo architectural firm headed by senior partner August Carl Esenwein and James A. Johnson. Johnson had come to Buffalo from the office of McKim, Mead and White where he specialized in ornament. Johnson was involved in other local projects, such as the General Electric Tower, the Calumet Building and Lafayette High School in Buffalo. In each he exhibited a facility in the use of terra cotta ornamentation. The Calumet and Lafayette High School building, both built prior to 1910, show an exuberant use of terra cotta decoration, especially on the Calumet where the material is used to form multi-colored stylized "reeds" that highlight many areas of the façade. The later (1912) Electric Tower is more subdued, although the entire surface is covered in monochromatic glazed white terra cotta. Here foliated swags, clusters and wreaths add dimension and texture to the tall thin tower.

In the United Office Building the architects were faced with a building type similar to the Electric Tower. However, their response is very different with the 1930 building. Influenced by the then popular Art Deco style, the United Office Building is a more forceful, masculine form in contrast to the delicate, almost feminine Electric Tower. With a name derived from the 1925 Paris fair, the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, Art Deco became an aggressive style combining many influences as far reaching as Cubism and Mayan forms. European designers working in the "machine ethic" used the style freely and it thus became associated with the progressiveness of the machine age. This

² The Empire State Building, the Making of a Landmark, pp. 55-58.

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association with commercialism made Art Deco the ideal style for detailing the great monument to commercialism: the American skyscraper. Like other early 20th Century phenomena such as the Art Nouveau and the Arts and Crafts movements, Art Deco eschewed the historicism of the Beaux Arts School, choosing instead more "honest" forms employing angular and curvilinear lines. Art Deco went beyond the idea of applied decoration. It used materials, forms and color to express a total sense of life in a building. Carved stone, polished marble, terrazzo and terra cotta were used with metals like chrome, aluminum and bronze to create a coordinated overall scheme that united the basic building matter like concrete and brick with these richer materials. One particular form of skyscraper developed called the "campanile" form in which a tall slender almost denuded tower would be topped by a highly decorative crown. New York City's Chrysler Building (1928-1930) and Chicago's Tribune Tower (1925) come to mind when speaking of this building type. This, too, applies to the United Office Building where the building's underlying structure, the steel frame, finds its expression in the brick covered shafts that rise from the base of the building emphasizing the verticality of the design. On the United Office Building the brick sheathing is shaded so that the lower dark brown brick gradually lightens until it becomes a gray buff color on upper floors, thus raising the eye to the decorative cap. Here the terra cotta is subtly ornamented with low relief forms in a Mayan (or "Indian" as it was referred to in 1929) style. A Mayan revival, centered in Southern California and expressed by such architects as Robert Stacey-Judd, Walter Burley Griffin and Barry Byrne employed Central American and pre-Columbian themes in the decoration of buildings in the early part of the 20th century³. This coordinated scheme flourishes on the setback floor of the United Office Building where polychromed terra cotta friezes crown the top of the building. Each of the setbacks provides a shallow, paved terrace affording unparalled views of the Horseshoe and American Falls as well as the city and surrounding suburban and rural areas. The entire exterior scheme remains unchanged to this day and is in relatively good condition. As the surrounding neighborhood has changed by the demolition of older buildings and to some extent rebuilding on those sites with new, lower structures, the imposing vertical shaft presented by the United Office Building seems to be even more impressive.

In the early 20th Century, the skyscraper allowed for maximum return on high priced downtown building lots in thriving cities. This did not appear to apply in the building of the United Office Building. The site was but a short walk from ample park land and the Niagara River and there was not then, nor would there be in the foreseeable future, a condition even approaching the crowding of buildings in the area near the site. Additionally, land was not particularly high priced at any time in downtown Niagara Falls and the owners of such an extravagantly finished building could easily have afforded a larger plot on which to build out rather than up. Author Spiro Kostov gives a possible reason for the building in his A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals when he states: "...the main role of the skyscraper remained commercial.... It symbolized capitalistic success, and most self-respecting cities built at least one, even when the economic justification for it was not there."⁴ Certainly the United Office Building provided a symbol for its owners to advertise the success of the business ventures of those housed in the impressive building. Kostov may give further insight into the reason behind the building of the United Office Building. He states:

³ Eva Weber, Art Deco, p. 32.

⁴ Spiro Kostov, A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals, p. 708.

United Office Building
Niagara County, New York

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For a corporate client, the skyscraper held two rather conflicting promises...intensive occupancy in a revenue-rich downtown site and the advertising value of visibility on the skyline. One argued for a dense building that could take up all of the land at its disposal; the other pushed toward a tall, strikingly capped building that could stand clear of its neighbors.⁵ The visibility of the United Office Building was and has remained one of its strongest points. The building can be seen from all points of the City, from across the river in neighboring Niagara Falls Ontario, from the roads approaching from the suburbs and from some 20 miles away at SUNY Buffalo's Main Street Campus where the United Office Building can be viewed from the third floor rooms of the Department of Architecture buildings.

Signage and Lighting

An additional device for coordinating the overall effect of early skyscrapers was exterior lighting and signage. Here the United Office Building presented a particularly representative example of this effect. In its original design, the setback floors were lit with floodlights secured to the terraces. Fifty-two floodlights, 28 ruby-colored lights at the 16th floor and 24 amber colored lights at the 18th floor bathed the top of the tower with light harmonizing with the colors of the material on the building. The illumination commenced on the 24th of December of 1929. An earlier newspaper article praised the proposed lighting scheme saying it would serve as a beacon to aviators and serve as the center point of a symbol of the advancements occurring in the city. The reporter stated the "By night, when the lights are on, the city across the water looks like a fair land of industry and business. It is then that the beholder realizes the great strides that have been made in the growth of this wonderful city of beauty and opportunity".⁶ Subsequent to this a lighted sign was installed atop the building. Thirty two feet wide tapering from a center height of 16 feet were the letters spelling out "United" with the word "Hotels" centered in smaller letters. Alternating lighting of the letters flashed the spelling of the words, both individually and simultaneously to the public. This sign, highly sophisticated for its time, was removed after the building was vacated in the 1980's.

The Interior

Eva Weber in Art Deco states that "one of the most recognizable characteristics of Art Deco style was a wealth of surface ornament on the exteriors of the building echoed in their interior fittings."⁷ Buffalo's famed Guaranty Building by Louis Sullivan uses a seedpod form in the terra cotta cladding of the exterior that is repeated in the metal railings of the interior stairway and in the intricately beautiful elevator cages. Not only design, but also materials were similar on the exteriors and interiors of early skyscrapers. Once again the United Office Building is representative of the form. Entering through revolving doors into the lobby, the viewer was surrounded by colored marble wainscoting, patterned terrazzo floors, ornamental plaster ceilings and a grand staircase "finished in gold leaf and ornamental metal with walls finished in a 'futuristic' manner."⁸ Three high-speed

⁵ Kostov, p. 709.

⁶ Niagara Falls Gazette, October 29, 1929.

⁷ Eva Weber, Art Deco, p. 17.

⁸ Niagara Falls Gazette, October 29, 1929.

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elevators decorated in a similar style would travel at 600 feet per minute and operate with an automatic floor-leveling device. Two of these elevators are still in operation in the building while one has been removed in anticipation of building an enclosed stairway in its place. The interior was finished with black walnut wood trim and doors in the lobby and on each floor. Most of these, along with the non-load bearing interior walls on each floor, disappeared when the building was being prepared for retrofitting for a failed condominium project. Typical of early tall slender skyscrapers, the center of the interior space was reserved for the elevators and service rooms, placing the office space in the perimeter areas where ample glazing (3,600 panes of glass to 180 offices when built) would provide ample natural light for even the smallest office space. The building was originally heated by steam provided in pipes that came from a boiler in the nearby Hotel Niagara via a tunnel under First Street. Later, the United Office Building had its own heating system.

Early Tenants and Services

In its early years, the United Office Building attracted attorneys, investment brokers, insurance companies and development firms that were prominent in the community as well as medical and dental offices for which a specific floor was provided. In 1934 Durwood, Martin and Goodbody, Investment Brokers were on the second floor along with the Mutual Life Insurance Company. Attorneys Dudley, Gray and Phelps were on the 13th floor along with companies associated with the principals in that firm. The firm included the United Office Building's developer, Frank A. Dudley, and Alpheus Phelps who would remain as a tenant in the building until the day it closed in the 1980's. The United Hotels Company of America occupied the 14th floor office space. The tenants were provided with excellent services within the building, including two restaurants that would deliver lunch to the tenant's office, and the Office Service Bureau providing clerical and secretarial services by the hour and full automobile service at the Motoramp Garage adjacent to the building. Erected in the summer of 1929, the nine-level Motoramp Garage provided, in addition to parking, auto lubrication, oil changes, washing and waxing and a valet service that delivered a tenant's car to the front door of the United Office Building. This garage was demolished as part of Urban Renewal Plan of the 1960's. As a result, Elk Place, behind the United Office Building, disappeared from the City streetscape.

The United Hotels Company of America.

The United Hotels Company of America was founded by Frank A. Dudley, a prominent attorney and businessman from the Niagara Falls area. Dudley's association with hotels began with the erection of the Hotel Ten Eyck in Albany, NY, in 1910. By 1926 his United Hotels Company of America was the largest hotel chain in the country with 23 hotels and capital investments of over \$76,000,000.⁹ The chain had in its fold such well known hostleries as The Roosevelt, in New York City, and the King Edward and Royal York in Toronto. It would later manage the Hotel Niagara across First Street from

⁹ Niagara Falls Gazette, March 14, 1927.

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the United Office Building. Frank Dudley, himself, was a principal in the law firm of Dudley, Gray and Phelps whose offices were on the 13th floor of the United Office Building.

Recent Times

Although the depression contributed to early vacancies, the United Office Building had a relatively stable tenancy for decades until the 1970's when a glut of office space, fueled by the exodus of corporate offices from the city, made it difficult to rent the spaces. By the 1970's the building became difficult to market, especially with the parking situation exacerbated by the demolition of the Motoramp Garage. Two failed projects attempted to convert the building to residential condominium use and even mixed-use residential/commercial could not find sufficient financial backing. The building is currently in the process of being sold to a local developer who plans to convert the tower to a mixed-use project featuring office space on the lower floors and high-end market-rate residential units, taking full advantage of the remarkable views from the Art Deco skyscraper.

United Office Building
Name of Property

Niagara County, New York
County and State

8. 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1929-1955

Significant Dates

1929

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

James A. Johnson of Eesenwein & Johnson of Buffalo, N.Y.

Amsterdam Building Company of New York City

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: _____

United Office Building
Name of Property

Niagara County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.11 acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 657710 4772100
Zone Easting Northing

2 17
Zone Easting Northing

3 17
Zone Easting Northing

4 17
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 Claire L. Ross, Historic Preservation Program Analyst

organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

date August 11, 2005

street & number PO Box 189

telephone 518-237-8643

city or town Waterford

state NY zip code 12188-0189

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/title Hon. Vincenzo V. Anello, Mayor, City of Niagara Falls

street & number Niagara Falls City Hall, 745 Main Street

telephone 716-286-4310

city or town Niagara Falls

state N.Y. zip code 14302

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section number 10 Page 1

Geographical Data:

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for the United Office Building at 220 Rainbow Boulevard, Niagara Falls is shown as a heavy black line on the accompanying Survey Map, scale 1" to 20'.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the nomination has been drawn to coincide with the current Survey lot line as drawn by Wendel/Duchscherer, 6/3/2004.

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Section number Consultant Page 1

National Register Nomination Prepared by:

Mr. Thomas Yots
Preservation Consultant
740 Park Place
Niagara Falls, New York 14301

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Section number PHOTOGRAPHS Page 1

Name of Property: United Office Building

Location, County, State: 220 Rainbow Boulevard, Niagara Falls, New York, Niagara County

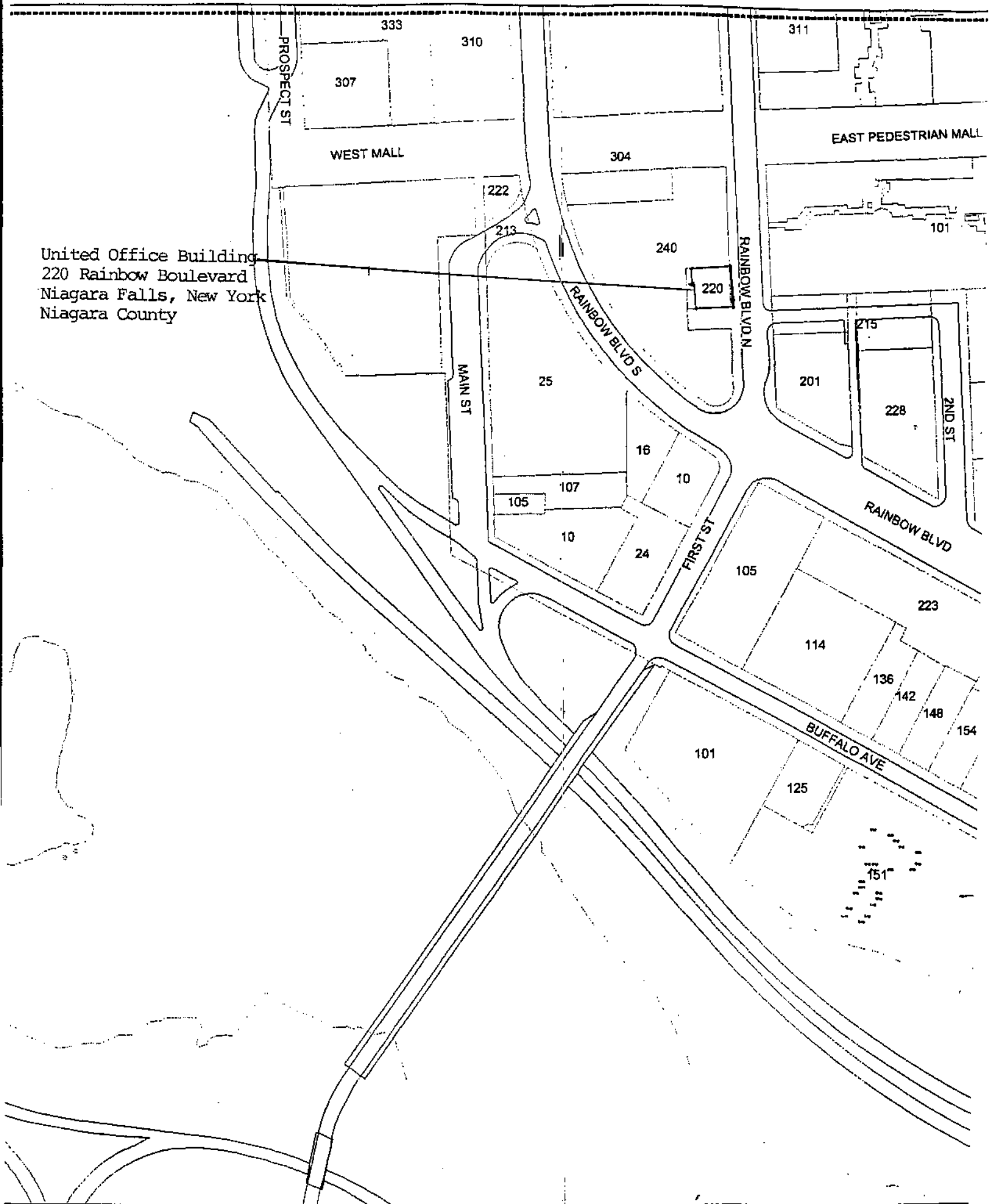
Photographs by: Thomas Yots, Consultant, 9/21/05

Negatives at: 740 Park Place, Niagara Falls, New York 14302

Key to Photographs:

1. Façade viewed from east.
2. Façade (east), Building identification above main entrance.
3. Looking northwest, Close-up of the terra cotta Mayan Figures and cut stone detailing at the 16th floor setback.
4. Looking northwest, terra cotta Mayan Figures and cut stone detailing at the 20th floor setback.
5. Staircase and marble wainscoting in entrance lobby.
6. Typical upper floor (actual 4th floor looking southeast).

United Office Building
220 Rainbow Boulevard
Niagara Falls, New York
Niagara County



Legend:
DRAWING NAME:
01.048

AVE. = AVENUE
BIT. = BITUMINOUS
CB = CATCH BASIN
CH = CHAIN
CLR. = CLEAR

CON. = CONCRETE
C.C.V. = CABLE TV BOX
C. = CENTERLINE
D. = DEED
DIA. = DIAMETER
DST. = DISTANCE

EJB = ELECTRICAL JUNCTION BOX
ENC. = ENCROACHMENT
ESMT. = EASEMENT
EX = EXISTING
FNC. = FENCE

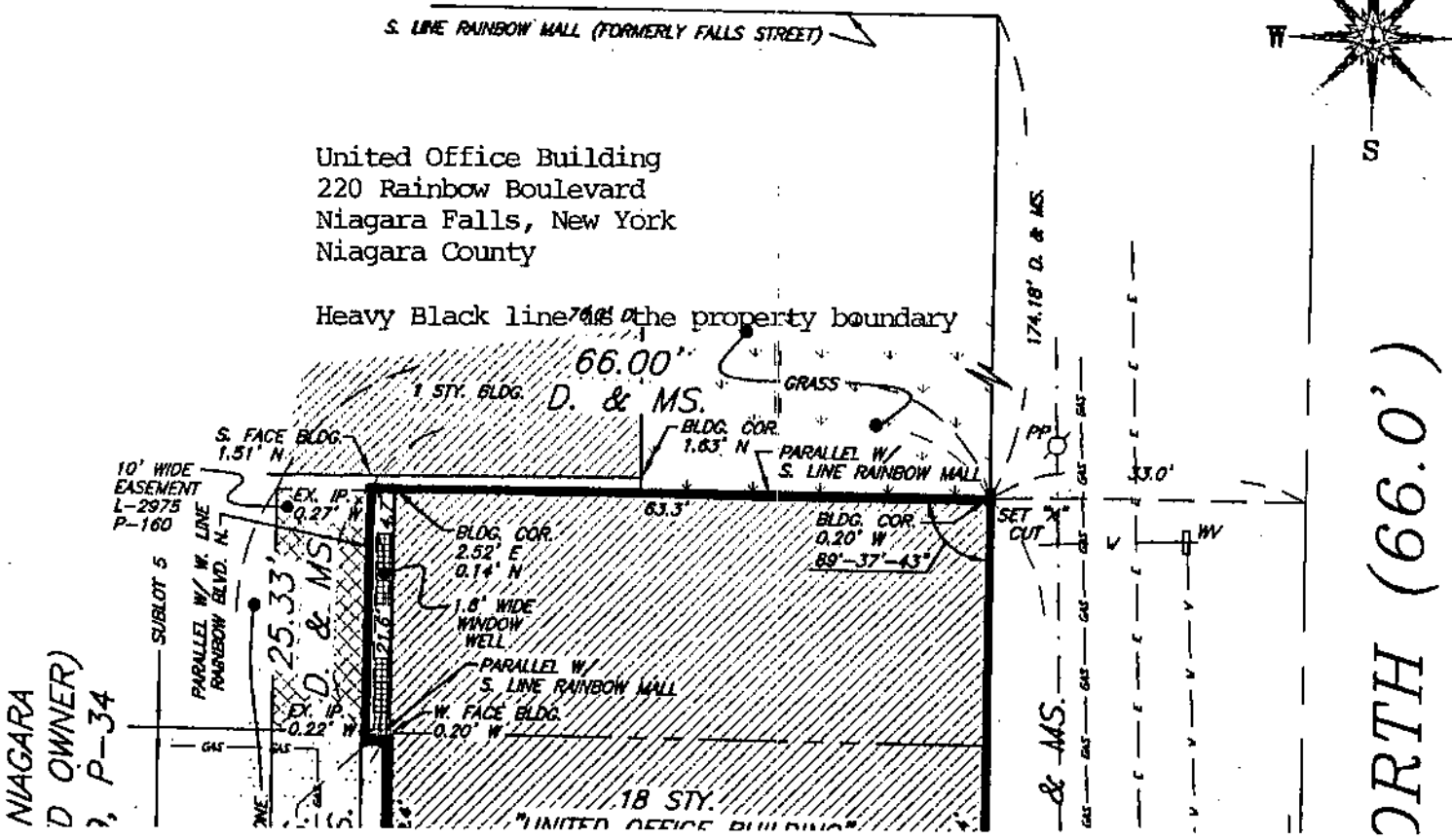
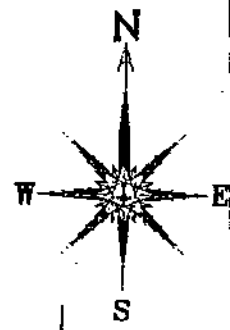
IP. = IRON PIPE
IRON PIN
L. = LIBER
LN. = LANE
MH = MANHOLE
MP. = MAP

N. = NORTH
NTS = NOT TO SCALE
O/H = OVERHEAD
O/L = ON LINE
PO. = PORCH
PP = POWER POLE

E = PROPERTY LINE
PAV'T = PAVEMENT
RD = ROAD
S = SOUTH
ST. = STREET
STY. = STORY

JUMETS
TYP. = TYPE
W = WEST
H. = HIGH
W.D. = WIDTH
WV. = WATER

NOTE:
UNDERGROUND UTILITIES AND STRUCTURES
ARE SHOWN IN THEIR APPROXIMATE LOCATION
AND MAY NOT BE SHOWN IN THEIR ENTIRETY.
VERIFICATION IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION





City of Niagara Falls, New York

P.O. Box 69, Niagara Falls, NY 14302-0069

Office of the Mayor

745 Main Street

Niagara Falls, NY 14302

Tele: (716) 286-4310; Fax: (716) 286-4349

Vincenzo.Anello@niagarafallsny.gov

June 29, 2005

RUTH L. PIERPONT, DIRECTOR
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation
Peebles Island, PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

RE: United Office Building
220 Rainbow Boulevard North

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

I support the listing of the United Office Building, located at 220 Rainbow Blvd. North, on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and I request that the property be added to the State and National Registers. Anyone familiar with the building will recognize its historic and architectural significance to our City. Sadly, few of the magnificent structures from our past remain. Listing this building on the State and National Registers will, I hope, aid in the preservation of this landmark building.

Very truly yours,

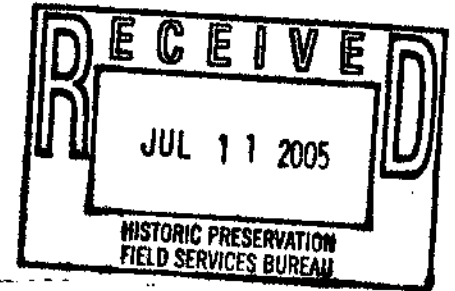
VINCENZO V. ANELLO
Mayor

cc: Thomas Yots



First Street Group, LLC
295 Main Street, Suite 210
Buffalo, New York 14203

July 6, 2005



Ruth L. Pierpont
Director
New York Office of Parks, Recreation
And Historic Preservation
Peebles Island
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189


Re: Nomination for listing on the National Register -
The United Office Building
220 Rainbow Boulevard, N
Niagara Falls, NY

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

As the proposed developer of the project to redevelop the United Office Building, this letter confirms that we support its nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely yours,
ELLCOTT DEVELOPMENT COMPANY


CARL P. PALADINO
Manager



City of Niagara Falls, New York

P.O. Box 69, Niagara Falls, NY 14302-0069

Telephone: (716) 286-4310 • Fax: (716) 286-4349 • Email: vanello@falls.niagara.ny.us

Office of the Mayor

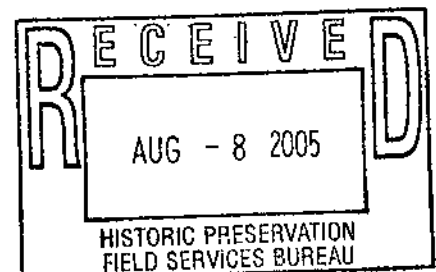
Vincenzo V. Anello
Mayor

STATEMENT OF MAYOR'S SUPPORT

I, Vincenzo V. Anello, Mayor of the City of Niagara Falls, New York, do hereby support the United Office Building, 220 Rainbow Boulevard North, for consideration and inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places as the building meets the criteria for embodying the distinctive characteristics representative of the architecture of early 20th Century high-rise office buildings.

Aug 4-05
Date

Vincenzo V. Anello
Mayor Vincenzo V. Anello



Printed on Recycled Paper



City of Niagara Falls, New York

P.O. Box 69, Niagara Falls, NY 14302-0069

RESOLUTION NIAGARA FALLS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Re: United Office Building, 220 Rainbow North

Date: August 3/2005

The Niagara Falls Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on August 3, 2005 met to consider the nomination to the National and State Register of the above referenced property. After due consideration, the Commission finds that the property meets the following criteria for listing on the State and National Register listings of Historic Places:

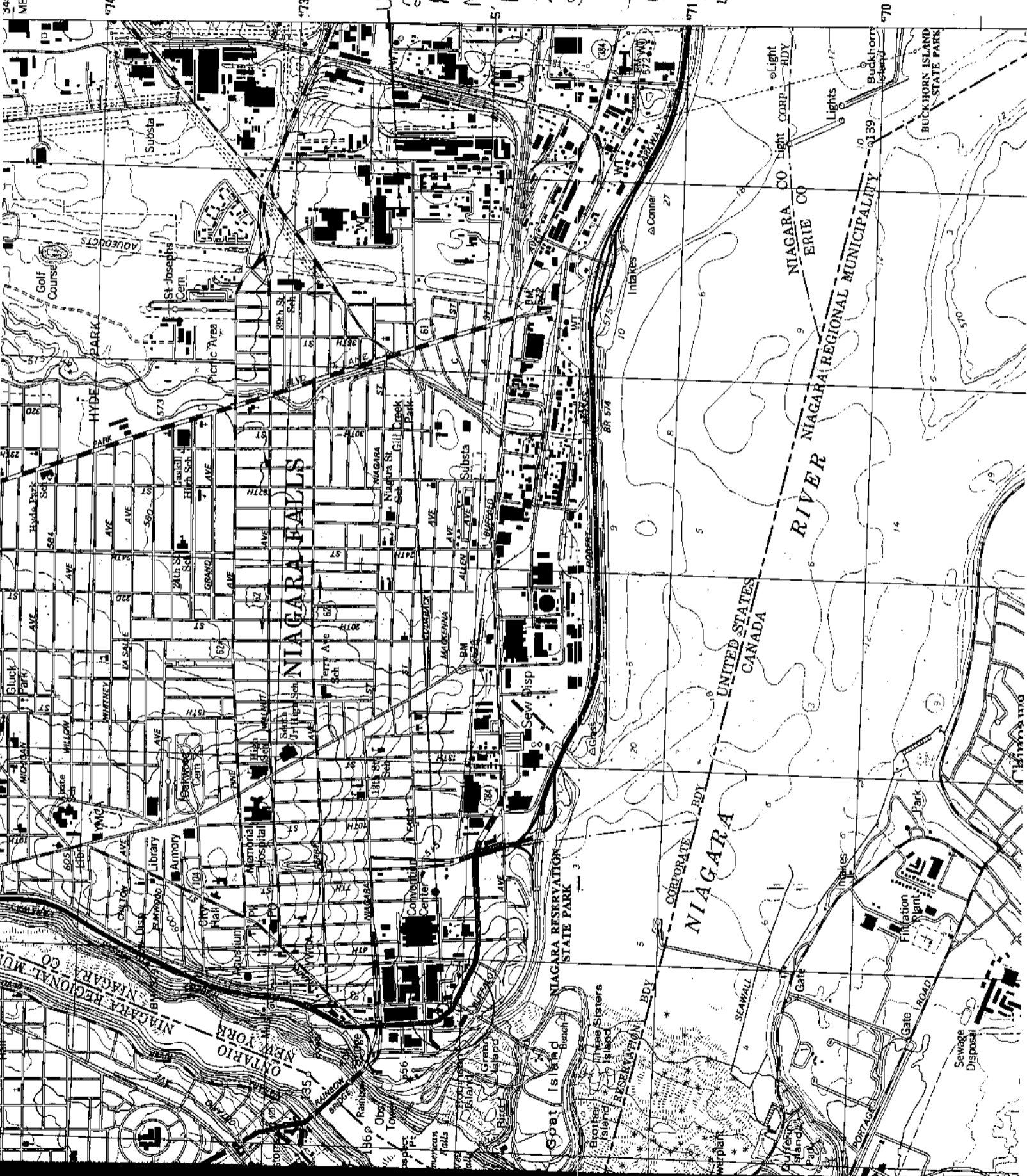
Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, a period, or a method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. The United Office Building on Rainbow Boulevard North in Niagara Falls is significant both architecturally and historically as an intact example of early 20th Century office building. Designed by James A. Johnson of Esenwein & Johnson of Buffalo the 20 story art-deco style building with three dimensional setbacks and Mayan Revival ornamental character is a key feature in the City's skyline and visible from both Buffalo and QEW highway in Canada. The building has also been designated as a City of Niagara Falls Landmark.

For the above noted reasons we support the nomination of the United Office Building to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Pamela Smith
Vice Chairman
The Niagara Falls Historic Preservation Commission



345 000
METERS



United Office Building
 220 Rainbow Boulevard
 Niagara Falls, New York
 Niagara County
 Niagara Falls Quad

Zone 17
 Scale: 1:24,000

Easting
 657710

Northing
 4772100

74

73

71

70

