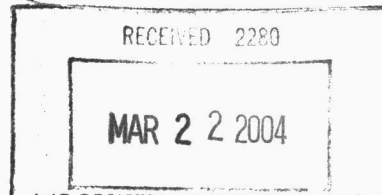


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



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 Buick Automobile Company Building

other name/site number N/A

2. Location

street & town 216 Admiral Boulevard N/A not for publication

city or town Kansas City N/A vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Jackson code 095 zip code 64105

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.)

Mark A. Miles 03/17/04  
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- 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

Edson H. Beall 5/5/04

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty showroom

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:  
Tudor Revival

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof asphalt

other terra cotta

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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### SUMMARY

The Buick Automobile Company Building, located at 216 Admiral Boulevard (originally 220 Admiral Boulevard), Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, is a three-story brick building with elements of the Tudor Revival, constructed of cast-iron columns, steel girders and heavy timbered joists. The original facility was designed by prominent local architect Frank S. Rea in 1907 and constructed by George L. Brown in 1907-1908. Characterized by a wide, molded water table between the first and second story and prominent keystones at the storefront level (both south and east facades), the Buick Automobile Company building also features an exposed structural concrete grid at the west façade. In c. 1934, a three-story brick addition was constructed to the rear of the original unit by General Motors Company. T. D. Bryant was the general contractor. Morris Hoffman Construction Company constructed a two-story brick addition placed at the rear of the building in 1958.

Despite the alteration of the storefront level and replacement of the original fenestration at the south and west facades, the Buick Automobile Company Building still retains the majority of its historic features to convey its significance. Its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association has been retained. The 1958 addition is subsidiary to the original building.

### ELABORATION

The main façade faces south and measures five bays wide. The centrally located entrance is slightly recessed and features a modified pointed arch surround with a modillioned keystone. The sides of the surround have been faced with marble. Recessed storefront fenestration set in modified pointed arches feature stone keystones. Tripartite windows with cast stone bases are modified from the original. The bulkheads flanking the main entrances are faced in ceramic tile. Upper story fenestration has been modified from the original with tripartite, aluminum-framed units. Stone lugsills are original. Prominent brick spandrels and piers divide the fenestration.

The fenestration of the south façade, which measures seven bays, wraps to the east façade and the first bay of the west façade. At the east façade, the basement is exposed and features non-original aluminum-framed fixed windows. A single-leaf, non-original man door is located at the far north bay of the east façade.

Multipaned metal industrial-sash fenestration with stone lug sills marks the south bays of the west façade. The far two north bays of the south façade display an exposed concrete structural grid. The basement windows of these two bays are fixed, multipaned. Contrasting

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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stone stringcoursing embellishes the cornice line of the first through fourth bay (moving south to north). The north façade also displays an exposed concrete structural grid and industrial sash fenestration.

The two-story addition to the rear of the original unit features multipaned industrial sash windows at the east and west façades. Overhead doors are placed at the end bays of the east façade and at the far north bays of the west façade.

The original bracketed parapet, as seen in the attached 1925 photograph, was modified, quite possibly when the c. 1934 addition to the rear of the building was constructed. In 1961, the original wood windows were replaced with aluminum-framed units.

### **Future Plans**

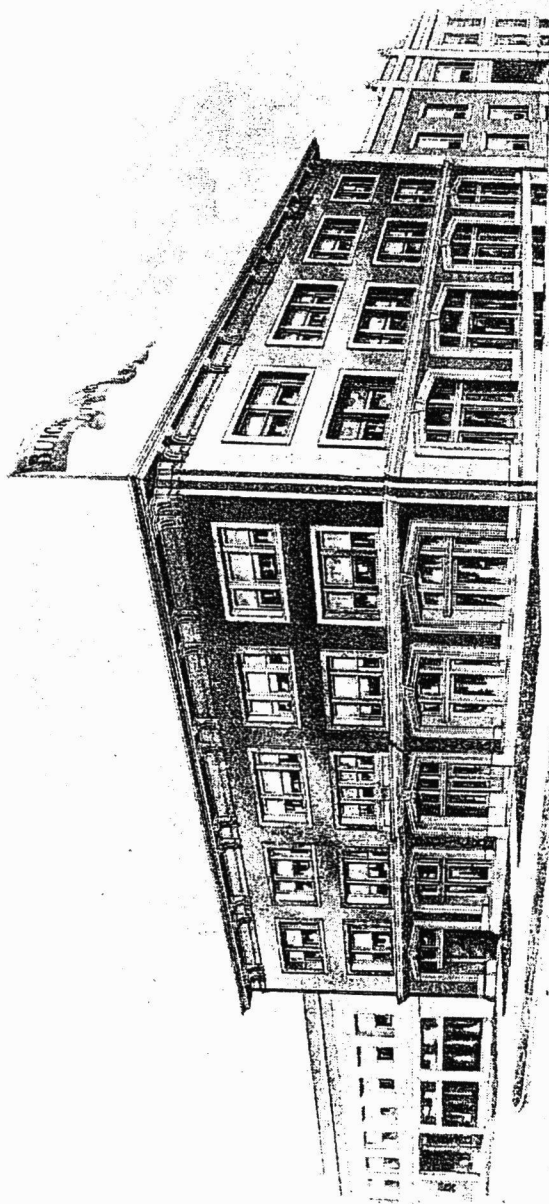
Currently, there are plans for the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of the Buick Automobile Company Building. Future plans for the project will be prepared in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Once the proposed plans are completed, they will be submitted to the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service for review and compliance.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**



**The Home of the Buick Automobile Company, 1908.  
(Source: *Annual Review of Kansas City Illustrated, 1908.*)**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

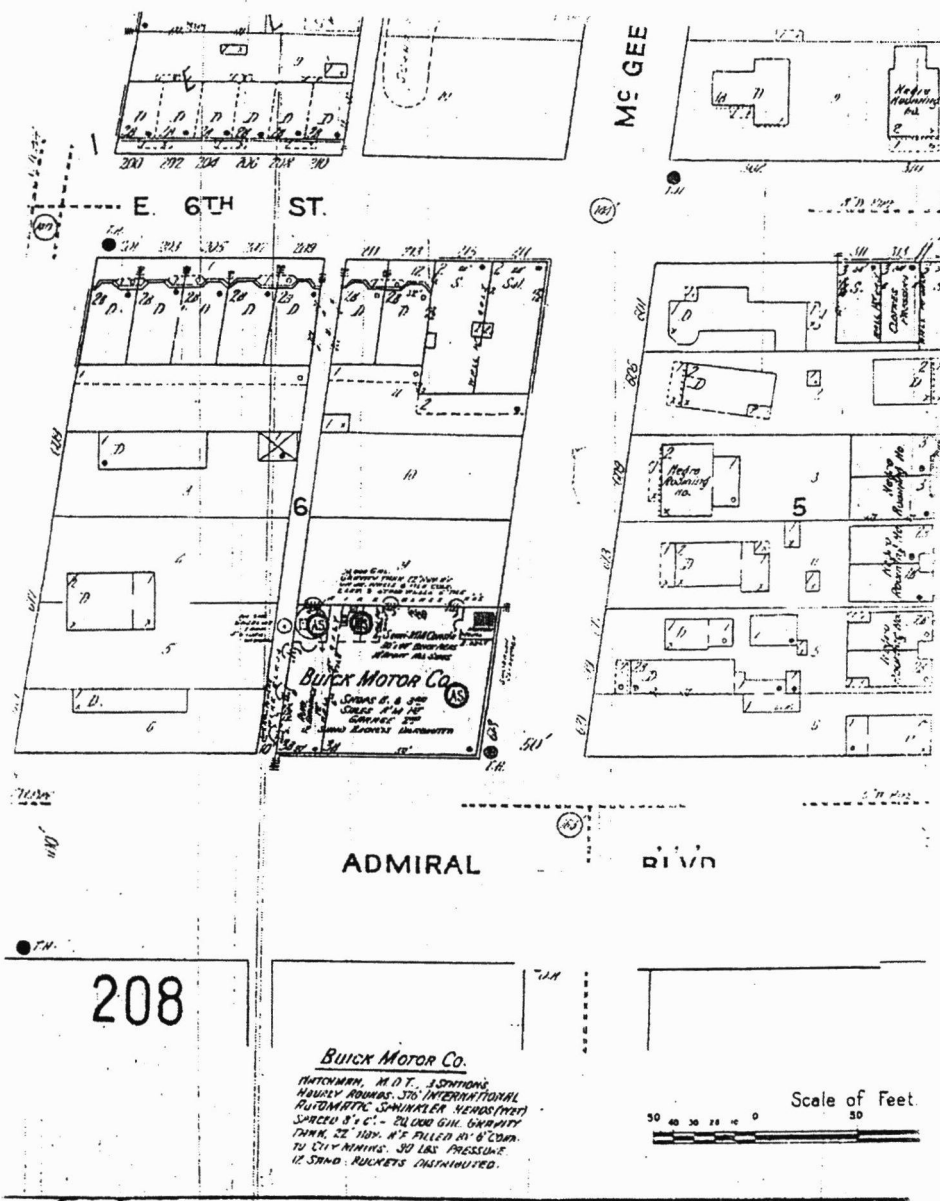
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

**Buick Motor Company: 1909  
216 (220) Admiral Boulevard**

(Source: 1909 Sanborn Insurance Map, plate 194.)



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

## 1925 Looking East on Admiral

(Source: Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, MO)



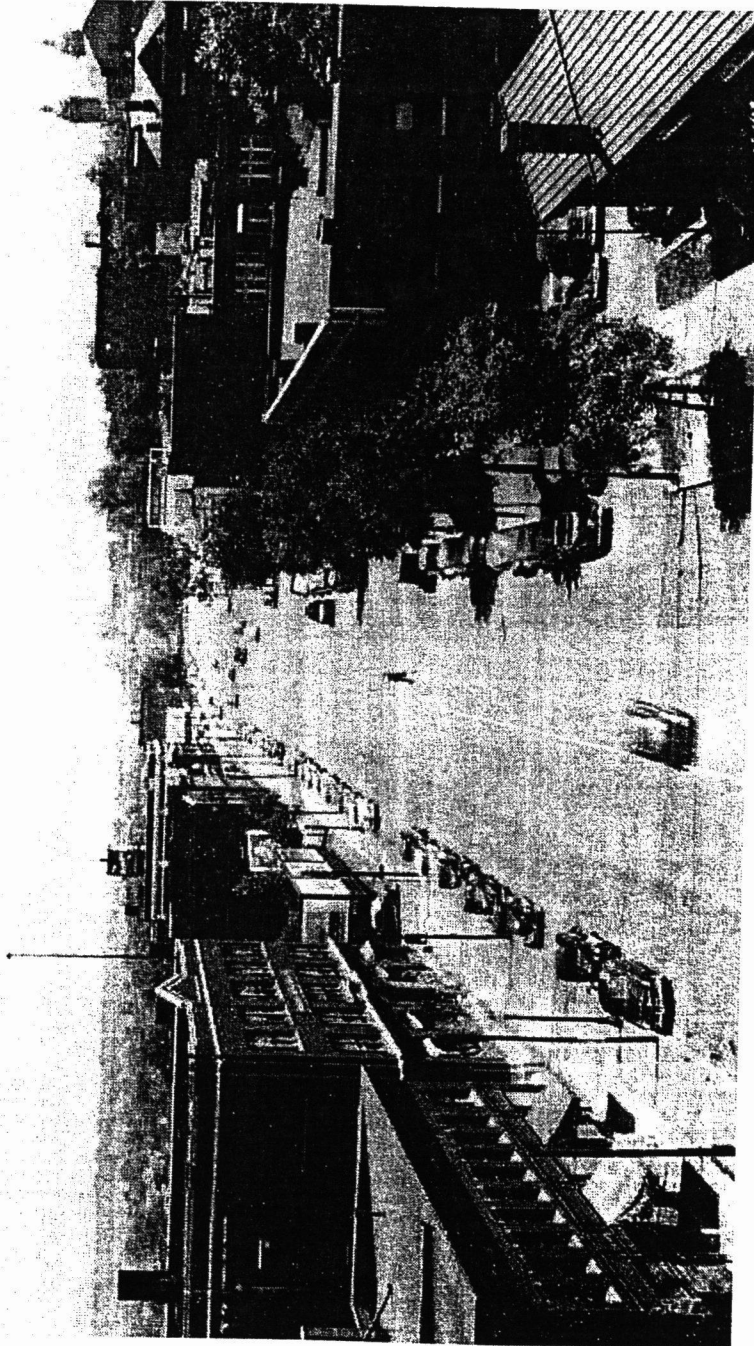
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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**1949 Looking East on Admiral  
(Source: Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, MO)**

**8. Description**

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1907-1948  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1907  
\_\_\_\_\_  
1934  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Rea, Frank S., architect (1907-08)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brown, George L., contractor (1907-08);  
Bryant, T.D., contractor (c. 1934)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

### SUMMARY

The Buick Automobile Company Building, located at 216 Admiral Boulevard, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the following area: COMMERCE: Constructed in 1907-1908, The Buick Automobile Company Building was the first automotive company in Kansas City to build a dealership and warehouse specifically to show and store the Buick corporation's line of automobiles. This landmark building type illustrates, in Kansas City, the transition from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century Main Street auto merchant first-generation storefront, to the salon-type showroom that coincided with the explosion of the automobile industry nationwide. At the time, Buick was one of only three of the major automobile companies in Kansas City.

The period of significance is 1907 from the date of construction through 1948, the year that the Buick dealership no longer occupied the building.

### ELABORATION

#### Early Automotive Industry in the United States

As the popularity of the automobile increased in the United States at the turn-of-the century, wealthy Americans began to import cars from Europe. Although automobile development was initially largely experimental, many inventors began making vehicles for individual clients. Making one vehicle at a time was costly and time consuming, thus early entrepreneurs began looking at ways to increase the production of motorcars. The year 1897 is considered a landmark in automotive history when bicycle and wagon manufacturers were among the first to mass-produce the American automobile.<sup>1</sup>

The Pope Manufacturing Company of Hartford, Connecticut, is noted as the birthplace of the automotive industry. Prior to 1897, Albert A. Pope's company was the largest bicycle manufacturing plant in the United States. Between 1895 and 1897, with the help of M.I.T. graduate Hiram Percy Maxim as chief engineer and Henry Souther, also from M.I.T., Pope's company produced 500 electric cars and 40 gasoline cars.<sup>2</sup>

Likewise, bicycle manufacturer, Alexander Winton of Cleveland, Ohio, was the sixth person to build an American gasoline automobile. Although his idea was not original, being the owner of a bicycle manufacturing business put Winton in the best position to undertake

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<sup>1</sup> John B. Rae, *The American Automobile Industry* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

commercial production. Mostly unknown today, Winton was the leading manufacturer of automobiles in the United States during the first two decades of automotive history. Winton's acclaim is that his was the first automobile sold off a production line rather than an experimental model.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, his company was hit hard by the depression of 1920 and was dissolved by 1924.<sup>4</sup>

A logical move for wagon makers in 1900 was to convert to the horseless carriage. The Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, South Bend, Indiana, was the world's largest horse drawn carriage manufacturer in the world. With the advent of the automobile, they stood to lose their financial stronghold. Instead, they proceeded to join the ranks of automobile manufacturers, and by 1898 they began marketing cars for other manufactures. By 1904 they began producing their own model.<sup>5</sup>

By 1910 electric and steam engines were being replaced by the gas-operated motor. Many automobile manufacturers failed during the first 15 years of automotive history in the United States. The successful companies that formed the base of the automotive industry during the first two decades of the twentieth century include Ford, Oldsmobile, Cadillac, Packard, Studebaker and Buick.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Buick Automobile Company**

In 1899, when industrious American entrepreneurs were experimenting with the development of the horseless carriage, soon-to-be automotive mogul David D. Buick sold his plumbing supply business in Detroit, Michigan, in order to devote his time to developing a gas-powered engine. He ultimately planned to invest his money in producing an automobile using his own engine design. Buick partially built his first automobile by April 1901. He offered to sell the vehicle to Walter L. Marr. Instead, Buick, Marr and Eugene C. Richard formed a partnership in developing the "valve-in-head" engine, as described below:

The valve-in-head engine, unlike the "L-head" engine in general use at this time, was built with the valves directly over the pistons. The result was a more compact combustion chamber and a faster fuel burn rate, in general, a more efficient

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 14-17.

<sup>4</sup> John B. Rae, *American Automobile Manufacturers: The First Forty Years* (Philadelphia: Chilton Company, 1959), 184-85.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 16-18.

<sup>6</sup> Rae, *The American Automobile Industry*, 21.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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machine. The Buick engine was thus more powerful for its size than any other, and eventually the entire industry made use of its principle.<sup>7</sup>

The engine was patented under Richards name, and he was given initial credit for its development. However, Walter Marr was later identified as the chief engineer.<sup>8</sup> Although the engine was the factor in the success of the Buick cars, Marr and Buick quarreled over who would take credit. Soon there after, Walter Marr dissolved his partnership with Buick to work on the first line of Oldsmobiles with Ransom E. Olds.

The problems between Buick and Marr illustrated that Buick was an undisciplined businessman, who eventually suffered from financial problems. When he incorporated in 1903, Buick lacked the expertise and funds to follow through with production. In order to gain financial support, Buick partnered with Maxwell and Briscoe (the precursor to the Chrysler Corporation), developers of the early Maxwell cars.<sup>9</sup> Maxwell and Briscoe quickly lost patience and interest and sold their portion of Buick Motor Car Company to James H. Whiting, a wagon maker from Flint, Michigan. Whiting was also discouraged by Buick's lack of direction and sold his shares to William Crapo Durant.<sup>10</sup>

William C. Durant was a successful match for Buick. By November 1, 1904, William Durant had purchased controlling interest in the Buick Motor Car Company and began to build an empire.<sup>11</sup> Buick, more interested in developing and perfecting the automobile than running a successful business, became disillusioned. In 1906 David Buick left the company that bore his name. Buick's earlier financial issues left him in debt to the company. Durant wrote off the debt and reportedly gave Buick \$100,000 to invest as he saw fit. Buick's lack of judgment would eventually leave him penniless and his death in 1929 went largely unnoticed.<sup>12</sup> Although David D. Buick undeniably developed the first Buick automobile featuring the 'valve-in-head engine', it was William Durant that later consolidated into the General Motors Corporation on September

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<sup>7</sup> Lawrence R. Gustin, *Billy Durant: Creator of General Motors* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), 58.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 57-59.

<sup>9</sup> Rae, *The American Automobile Industry*, 34.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 26.

<sup>11</sup> Rae, *American Automobile Manufacturers: The First Forty Years*, 19. Some sources state that Buick went on to open other businesses. His last is reported to have been a hamburger stand.

<sup>12</sup> Gustin, *Billy Durant*, 96.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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10, 1908. Today, GM is considered to be the leading American automobile company in the world.<sup>13</sup>

### **Buick and Automobile Dealerships in Kansas City**

The Day Automobile Company and E. P. Moriarity and Company were the first automobile dealers in Kansas City. The year was 1901.<sup>14</sup> By 1904 E. P. Moriarity was still operating its business, but Day Automobile was no longer in existence. However, nine automobile dealers, including the first reference to two of the largest automobile manufactures of the twentieth century, Cadillac and Oldsmobile, were established by 1904.<sup>15</sup> In 1905 Ford Motor Company entered the market in Kansas City and in 1906, less than two years after its incorporation, Buick opened their first automobile warehouse in Kansas City at 1318 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

Twenty-four automobile dealers were doing business in Kansas City in 1906, including Buick, Cadillac, Ford, and REO.<sup>16</sup> The twenty independently-owned car dealerships sold various makes and models. One of the independents was E. P. Moriarity who dealt in Steven-Duryea and Winton Touring cars and later sold Oldsmobiles for a short time. Other dealers (like Moriarity) also manufactured their own models.<sup>17</sup>

In Kansas City and around the country during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, automobile sales and service operations took place in converted 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. Carriage shops, bicycle shops, livery stables and blacksmith shops became the site of automobile retailers as well as manufacturers. As the automobile retail business expanded and manufacturing grew, the larger companies began opening satellite offices to show off their product lines as well as promote interest in expanding their territories.

In 1907, Buick Motor Company, Kansas City, moved to 1108 E. 15<sup>th</sup>, just prior to construction of their new showroom and warehouse at on the northwest corner of McGee and

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<sup>13</sup> By 1910 the well-known names that comprised the General Motors Corporation included Buick, Cadillac, Oldsmobile and Pontiac. Durant had hopes of adding Ford Motor Company to this list but Henry Ford would not agree to anything less than a cash transaction. Durant had already invested all of the corporation's cash assets into the previous acquisitions.

<sup>14</sup> *Hoye's Kansas City Directory, 1901* (Kansas City: Hoye Directory Company, 1901), 1210.

<sup>15</sup> *Hoye Directory, 1904*, 1356-57.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* REO belonged to Ransom E. Olds and predates the Oldsmobile name.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* By 1911 over one hundred dealers were doing business in Kansas City. Of those dealers only Buick, Cadillac, Ford and Oldsmobile along and Maxwell-Briscoe which became the Chrysler Corporation, continue to manufacture automobiles today.

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
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Admiral Boulevard that same year.<sup>18</sup> At the time, Buick was one of only three major automobile companies in Kansas City. The other two were Cadillac and the Ford Motor Company. The new Buick Motor Company Building was among the first facilities in Kansas City to be designed specifically as an automobile warehouse and the first and only Buick dealer and distribution center in Kansas City until 1912.<sup>19</sup> Frank S. Rea, a noted Kansas City architect, was responsible for the design of the new facility, constructed in 1908.<sup>20</sup>

As originally designed, the three story building features cast iron columns, steel girders and heavy timbered joists.<sup>21</sup> Repair shops were located in the basement and third story, a showroom/warehouse on the first floor and a garage on the second floor. A ramped floor on the west side of the building accommodated the auto entrance.<sup>22</sup>

Richard H. Collins was sales manager of the Kansas City dealership from 1907. When the new facility was completed, Collins became president. His success in the Kansas City automotive market led to his promotion the following year. He later left Kansas City to become a vice-president of General Motors at their headquarters in Detroit in 1912.<sup>23</sup> In 1912, General Motors of Detroit, Michigan, acquired control of the Buick Automobile Company.

Sales distribution played a key role in the success story. In the early years, the manufacturing plants bought parts and assembled their vehicles on credit, then sold the product for cash to dealer agents.<sup>24</sup> A distributor could easily change his mind and chose to sell other product lines. Although the basic relationship between manufacturer and dealer was established early on, it wasn't until much later that the more stringent guidelines of franchise ownership were put into place. In the case of the Buick Motor Car Company, the early development of Buick-owned dealerships gave them the stability that most independent automobile dealers lacked. By the 1920s, Buick was a well-established and respected name and the number of independent Buick dealerships rose, as did sales.

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<sup>18</sup> *Hoye Directory*, 1906, 1514.

<sup>19</sup> *Hoye's Kansas City Directory*, 1907 (Kansas City: Hoye's Publishing Company, 1907), 1568. The Buick Motor Company, the only car dealership in the immediate neighborhood, was owned by The Buick Automotive Company.

<sup>20</sup> "Condensed Construction News," *Western Contractor* 14 (13 May 1908), 6.

<sup>21</sup> "Condensed Construction News," *Western Contractor* 14 (22 April 1908), 7.

<sup>22</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Insurance Map of Kansas City, Missouri, 1909* (Pelham: New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1909), Plate 194.

<sup>23</sup> "Buick Won the Events," *Arkansas City Daily Traveler*, 5 July 1912, 5. Internet Access: April 26, 2003, <http://winfield.50megs.com/Cowley/4Jul12.htm>

<sup>24</sup> John B. Rae, *The American Automobile* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), 18.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

Between 1908 and 1910, Durant acquired Cadillac Motors and in 1912, he promoted Collins to preside over the Cadillac Division of the General Motors Corporation.<sup>25</sup> After the General Motors Corporation (GM) acquired the Buick name in 1912 following the departure of Collins, the Buick Automobile Company continued operating under the leadership of J. Frank Martin, General Manager (1912-1925). In 1915, Buick Automobile Company was changed to the Buick Motor Company. By the mid-1930s, two other automotive divisions of GM, Pontiac and Oldsmobile, were jointly operated with the Buick Motor Company.<sup>26</sup> The building operated as a Buick dealership until 1948.<sup>27</sup>

By 1915, Kansas City was the third largest automobile market in the United States. The Kansas City Buick Company was under the directorship of the parent company in Detroit. The five-year increase in automobile sales in Kansas City alone, between 1910 and 1915, was 442%.<sup>28</sup> The advent of the automobile brought about challenges in marketing a product that had a very limited clientele in 1900 yet tripled in the short span of just seven years.

The introduction of the automobile in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was greeted not only with excitement but apprehension as well. In 1900 only 4,192 automobiles were produced in the United States; 1,500 were electric, 1,700 were steam operated while only 936 had gasoline engines. The early vehicles were individually manufactured and expensive. Ranging in price from \$3,000 to \$12,000 each, salaries for industrial and farm labor was only \$1.00 per ten-hour day. This made the horse the cheapest and most reliable form of transportation in the country.

Subsequently, a solution to the high price of automobile manufacturing occurred in 1906, when Henry Ford began using an assembly line approach to mass-produce his Model-T. Ford was able to increase his production from 1,599 autos in 1905 to 14, 887 by 1907. The cost of automobiles was greatly affected by automation; by 1917 Ford was selling cars for less than \$600 a piece. Other auto manufactures quickly followed his lead.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Rae, *American Automobile Manufacturers*, 178-80. By 1917, Richard Collins became the President of the Cadillac division of General Motors. When Durant left GM in 1918, Collins left with him and went on to establish his own automobile manufacturing company.

<sup>26</sup> *Gate's City Directory of Kansas City, Missouri* (Kansas City: Gate's Publishing Company, 1915- 1941).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* Franchising did not occur until the late 1920s. By 1948 four businesses were located at 220 Admiral Boulevard: Marshall's U. S. Auto Supply and three clothing manufacturing companies. One of the manufactures, Frances Gee Garment Company, a uniform manufacturer, was listed at 220 Admiral from 1948 through 1990. In 1992 the building became vacant

<sup>28</sup> *The Kansas Citian* 4 (11 May 1915): 152-158. Buick Motor Company was a member of the KC Commercial Club in 1915.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, *America's Highways: 1776-1976* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 54-56.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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The automobile had one of the single most significant impacts on the commercial and industrial development of the western world and was instrumental in the development of the Good Roads Movement that was vital to the growth of Kansas City during the 1910s. Architecture also was affected by the advent of the automobile. Some buildings, used as livery stables for the horse and carriage industry, made way for the heavier horseless carriage. When mass production took hold of the automobile industry, new building designs were needed for a utilitarian approach to fit the space to the need of the trade.

### **Richard H. Collins**

During his years as president of the Buick Automobile Company of Kansas City (1908-1912), Richard Collins was instrumental in the success of the local business.<sup>30</sup> Collins was an active member in the Kansas City Commercial Club, the precursor to the Chamber of Commerce and a promoter of the city's image. In 1908, in an article for the *Annual Review of Greater Kansas City*, Collins stated that:

Only through the use of an [A]utomobile can one be brought to a full appreciation of the "Fairy Land" in which we live. Other means of travel, will in time, acquaint you with the more prominent parks and boulevards in picturesque Kansas City and Jackson County, but like a continued story the pleasure would come in parts.<sup>31</sup>

Collins spearheaded an annual five-mile auto race for privately owned cars in Kansas City. Held from 1909 through 1912, these races took place at the Elms Ridge Club, formerly a horse track that had been closed in 1906. The races were open to any vehicle regardless of manufacturer. It was an endurance test, as well as a promising marketing tool to promote automobile ownership.<sup>32</sup> The prize for the race was the R. H. Collins Trophy, a sterling silver winning cup named for its sponsor. The entries were not limited to Buick alone but open to all makes and models of automobiles of the day. The friendly competition between rival automobile styles made the races an interesting spectator sport, as well as a sales tool. On June 15, 1912,

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<sup>30</sup> Collins was the general manager for the John Deere Plow Company prior to becoming president of Buick in Kansas City.

<sup>31</sup> R. H. Collins, "Kansas City an Automobile Market," *Annual Review of Greater Kansas City Illustrated* (Kansas City: D. M. Bone Publishing, 1908), 108.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* The Elm Ridge Club race course had served as a short lived horse track from 1904 through 1906 at which time, horse racing was outlawed in Missouri. It was located one block east of The Paseo between 59<sup>th</sup> Street and 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. In 1912 it became the Blue Hills Country Club.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 14

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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coinciding with Collins departure from Kansas City to Detroit, the last race for the Collins Trophy was held at the Elm Ridge Club. Shortly thereafter, the club was sold and the track was turned into a golf course.<sup>33</sup>

**Frank S. Rea**

To date, little is known about Frank S. Rea. What is known is that Rea was working in Kansas City as an architect during the 1890s. In 1898 Rea had an office in the Sheidley Building while he roomed at 1424 Cherry. In 1901, Rea was listed as a resident of 2825 Park Avenue, which was also the residence of Charles A. Smith, who he later joined in practice. Although both Rea and Smith were located 722 Dwight Building, they were listed as separate firms. Rea and Smith had collaborated as early as 1903 on the Faxon, Horton and Gallagher Drug Company at 720 Broadway but did not form a partnership until 1910 when Walter U. Lovitt also became a partner.<sup>34</sup>

Another building designed by Frank Rea as a sole practitioner was the McCune Home for Boys in eastern Jackson County (1908). In several articles regarding the approval and construction of the McCune Home, Rea was identified as the "county architect."<sup>35</sup> By November 18, 1908, the cornerstone for the administration building was laid. In 1910, Rea designed plans for three more buildings on the McCune property.<sup>36</sup>

The firm of Smith, Rea and Lovitt was active between 1910 and 1921, until the deaths of Walter Lovitt in 1920 and Frank Rea in 1921.<sup>37</sup> Some of the most notable commercial buildings designed by the firm of Smith, Rea and Lovitt include The Rialto Building, Dwight Building, and the Kansas City Club Building.

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> George Ehrlich, *Kansas City Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, Revised Ed. (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 62.

<sup>35</sup> "McCune Home: Purchase of Winslow Rogers Farm," *The Kansas City Star*, 13 February 1908, n. p.

<sup>36</sup> "McCune Home," *The Kansas City Star* 25 July 1910, n. p.

<sup>37</sup> Sherry Piland, *Historic Kansas City Foundation Gazette*, 10 (January/February 1986): 4-5.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 15

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 16

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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*Western Contractor* 14 (22 April 1908): 7; 14 (13 May 1908): 6.

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than one acre

**UTM References**

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

1 1/5 3/6/3/4/0/0 4/3/2/9/6/9/0  
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cydney Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield

organization Architectural and Historical Research, LLC date August 25, 2003

street & number P.O. Box 22551 telephone 816.363.0567

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64113

**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**

name/title Del Hedgepath

street & number 5930 Ward Parkway telephone 816.822.7788

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64113

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 17

**Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri**

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### Verbal Boundary Description

McDaniel's Addition, Lots 7 – 10 Block 6 and E ½ of Vac Alley LYW and Adjacent, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Buick Automobile Company Building, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

### Key to Photographs

Len Fohn, photographer; September 2003.  
Negatives maintained by the nomination preparer.

1. Main or south façade; view facing north.
2. Main façade and east façades; view facing northwest.
3. Main façade and a portion of the west façade; view facing northeast.
4. East façade and a portion of the north façade; view facing southwest.
5. Portions of the north and west façades; view facing southeast.
6. Portion of the west façade; view facing east.
7. First floor; view facing northeast.
8. Second floor; view facing northeast.
9. Third floor; view facing southeast.
10. Third floor; view facing northwest.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Buick Automobile Company Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MISSOURI, Jackson

DATE RECEIVED: 3/22/04      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/21/04  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/06/04      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/05/04  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 04000386

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    5/5/04 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the  
National Register**

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

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

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

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

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



Buick Automobile Company Bldg

No. 1

216 Admiral Blvd

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri



Buick Automobile Company Bldg  
216 Admiral Boulevard  
Kansas City  
Jackson County  
Missouri

No. 2



**WAREHOUSE**  
DISCOUNT ELECTRONICS

COPIES  
TAPES  
REPAIRS  
REPAIRS  
REPAIRS  
REPAIRS

320

← 320

NO PARKING

NO PARKING

Buick Automobile Company Bldg

No. 3

216 Admiral Boulevard

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri



Buick Automobile Company Building

No. 4

216 Admiral Boulevard

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri



Buick Automobile Company Bldg

216 Admiral Boulevard

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri

No. 5



NO PRIVATE PARKING  
VIOLATORS WILL BE  
TOWED

Buick Automobile Company Bldg

No. 6

216 Admiral Boulevard

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri



Buick Automobile Company Bldg  
216 Admiral Boulevard  
Kansas City  
Jackson County  
Missouri

NO. 7



Buick Automobile Company Bldg  
216 Admiral Boulevard

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri

No. 8

24/11/16



Buick Automobile Company Bldg

No. 9

216 Admud Boulevard

Kansas City

Jackson County

Missouri



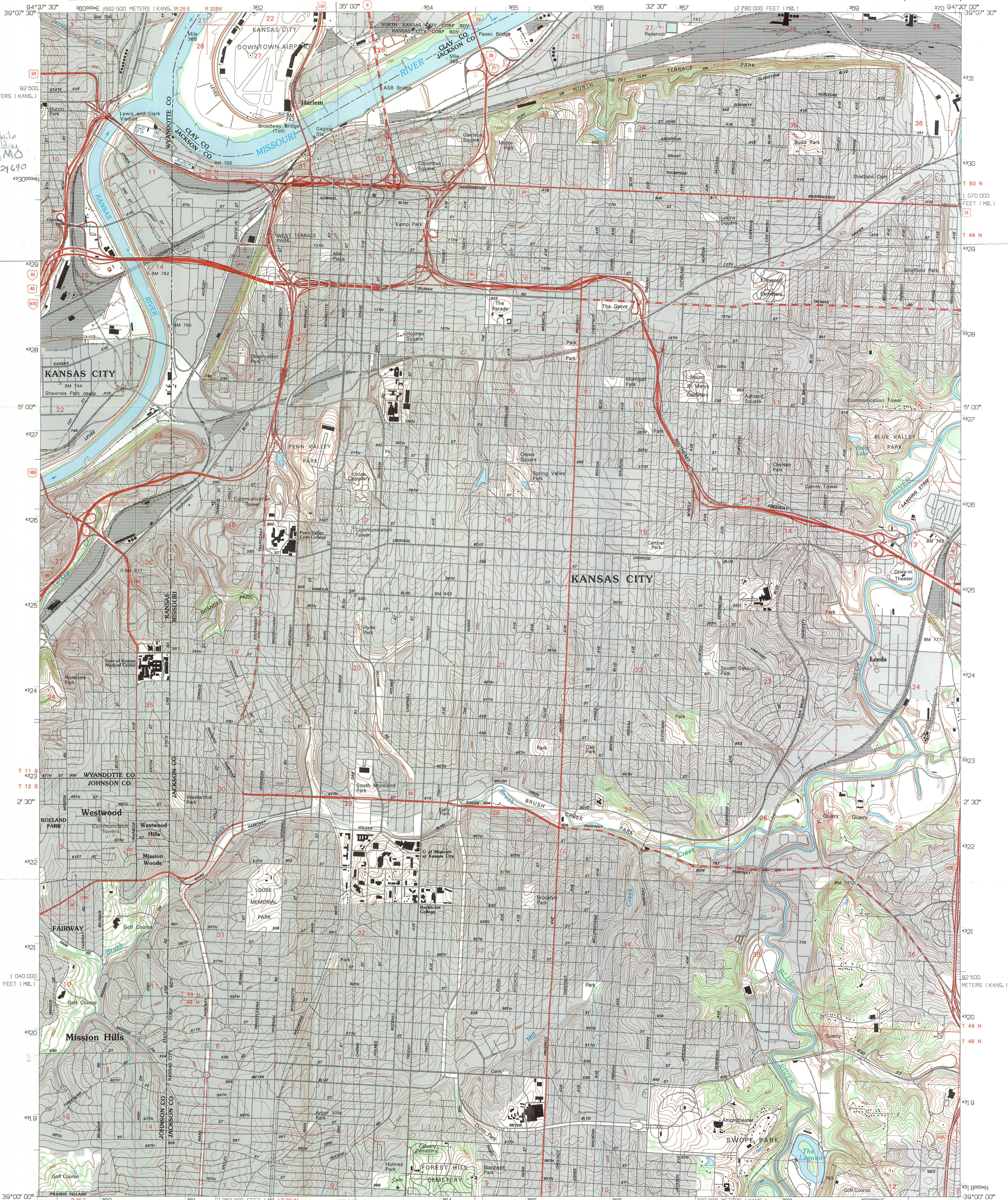
Buick Automobile Company Bldg  
216 Admiral Boulevard  
Kansas City  
Jackson County  
Missouri

No. 10

3rd

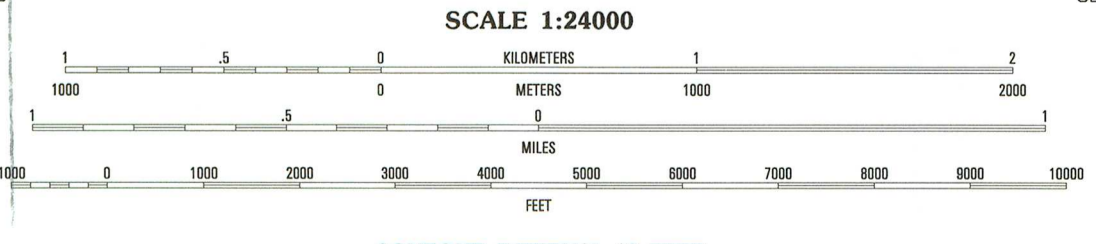
→ NW

Buick Automobile  
Company Building  
Jackson Co., MO  
15/363400/4329690



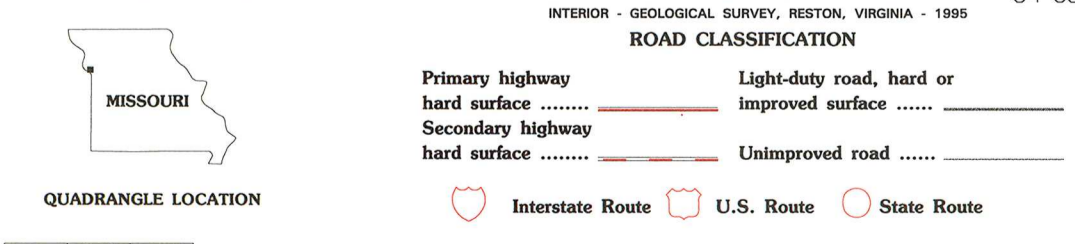
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Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from imagery dated 1955  
Topography by planimetric surveys 1954-55. Revised 1964  
Revised from imagery dated 1990-91. PLS and survey control  
current as of 1995. Map edited 1995. Contours not revised  
Contours that conflict with revised planimetry are dashed  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and  
blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15  
10 000-foot ticks: Missouri Coordinate System of 1983 (west zone)  
2 500-meter ticks: Kansas Coordinate System of 1983 (north zone)  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed  
contour ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27  
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic  
Survey NADCON software

UTM GRID AND 1995 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

COMPLIES WITH U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY STANDARDS FOR SPATIAL ACCURACY - CLASS 2  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND DIVISION OF GEOLOGY AND LAND SURVEY  
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ROLLA, MISSOURI 65401  
AND KANSAS GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66044  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

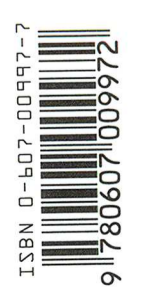
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

- 1 Parkville
- 2 North Kansas City
- 3 Liberty
- 4 Shawnee
- 5 Independence
- 6 Lenexa
- 7 Grandview
- 8 Lees Summit

KANSAS CITY, MO-KS  
39094-A5-TF-024

1991

DMA 7062 II SE-SERIES V879

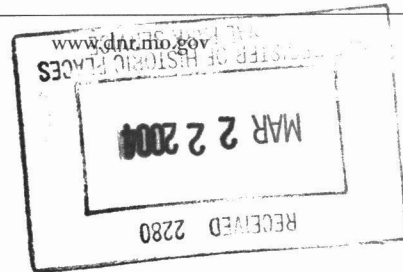


STATE OF MISSOURI  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Bob Holden, Governor • Stephen M. Mahfood, Director

March 17, 2004

Ms. Carol Shull  
United States Dept. of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" Street NW, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find enclosed the following submissions from Missouri for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

Buick Automobile Company Building  
Jackson County, Missouri

Park Lane Apartments  
Jackson County, Missouri

Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on November 14, 2003. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register. No objections, notarized or otherwise, were received for the above referenced nomination.

The City of Kansas City, as part of its responsibilities as a Certified Local Government, was provided an opportunity to review the proposed nomination prior to its presentation to the state review board. Letters from the Mayor and the Kansas City Landmarks Commission supporting the nominations are enclosed.

If you have any questions concerning this submission, please contact Tiffany Patterson of my staff at 573/751-7800, tiffany.patterson@dnr.mo.gov, or at the State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

Sincerely,

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Mark A. Miles, Director and  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures: as stated

*Integrity and excellence in all we do*





Office of the Mayor

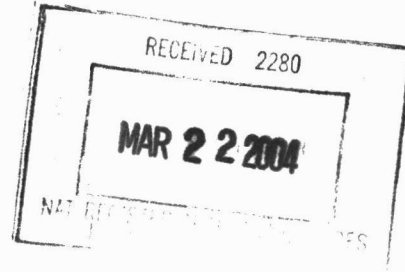
Mayor Kay Barnes

29th Floor, City Hall  
414 East 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2778

(816) 513-3500  
Fax: (816) 513-3518

November 5, 2003

Stephen M. Mahfood  
Missouri State Historic Preservation Officer and  
Director, Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176



Dear Mr. Mahfood:

As Mayor of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, a Certified Local Government, I have reviewed the nomination to the **National Register of Historic Places** for the **Buick Automobile Company Building** located at 216 Admiral Boulevard in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. It is the opinion of the Landmarks Commission that this landmark is of historical significance and we recommend its nomination to the National Register.

Notification of intent was mailed to the property owners on October 15, 2003, and a public notice was printed in the *Pulse* on October 9, 2003. The Landmarks Commission office received no letters or calls in opposition to the nomination.

The Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, reviewed the nomination for the **Buick Automobile Company Building** to the **National Register of Historic Places**. They also recommended approval of the nomination with the recommendation that that the preparers elaborate on the changes made to the building over the years, expand on the description of the interior, and address the building's historic integrity in relationship to the modification made after the dates of significance (1907-08 to 1948).

Sincerely,

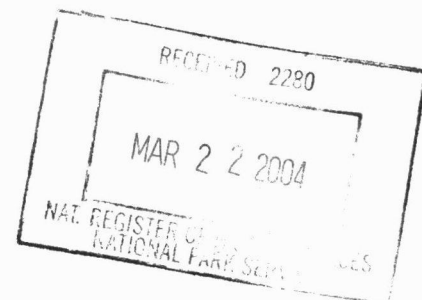


Kay Barnes

cc: Wayne Cauthen, City Manager  
Vicki L. Noteis, AIA, Director of the City Planning & Development Department  
Bradley Wolf, Administrator, Landmarks Commission  
Cydney E. Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield of Architectural and Historical Research, LLC, Nomination Preparer

CITY OF KANSAS  
HEART OF THE NATIONKANSAS CITY  
MISSOURI**City Planning and Development Department****Planning, Preservation and Urban Design  
Landmarks Commission**26th Floor, City Hall  
414 E. 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2795(816) 513-2902  
Fax: (816) 513-2899

October 30, 2003

Stephen M. Mahfood  
Missouri State Historic Preservation Officer and  
Director, Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176Re: **National Register Nomination for the *Buick Automobile Company Building***

Dear Mr. Mahfood:

As Chair of the Landmarks Commission of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, a Certified Local Government, I am pleased to inform you that the Commission has reviewed the nomination to the **National Register of Historic Places** for the ***Buick Automobile Company Building*** located at 216 Admiral Boulevard in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. In the opinion of the Landmarks Commission, this building is of historical significance, and we recommend its nomination to the National Register.

The nomination was reviewed by the Landmarks Commission at a regularly scheduled hearing on October 24, 2003. Notification of intent was mailed to the property owners on October 15, 2003, and a public notice was printed in the *Pulse* on October 9, 2003. The Landmarks Commission office received no letters or calls in opposition to the nomination.

At the October 24<sup>th</sup> hearing of the nomination, the Landmarks Commission made a motion to **recommend** to the State Advisory Council on Preservation the following:

Stephen M. Mahfood  
October 30, 2003  
Re: *Buick Automobile Company Building*  
Page 2

The Commission finds that the ***Buick Automobile Company Building*** located at 216 Admiral Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri, and designed by Frank S. Rea, embodies a distinctive character of a type, period, and method of construction and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, character and association with the development of the transportation industry in Kansas City and the nation. And that the ***Buick Automobile Company Building*** is significant under ***Criterion A***. Therefore the Commission recommends that the ***Buick Automobile Company Building*** **MERITS INCLUSION** in the **National Register of Historic Places**. They also recommended approval of the nomination with the recommendation that the preparer modify Section 7 of the nomination to elaborate on the changes made to the building over the years, expand on the description of the interior, and in Section 8 address the building's historic integrity in relationship to the modification made after the dates of significance (1907-08 to 1948).

Sincerely,



William Bruning  
Chair, Landmarks Commission

cc: The Honorable Kay Barnes, Mayor  
Wayne Cauthen, City Manager  
Vicki L. Noteis, AIA, Director of the City Planning & Development Department  
Bradley Wolf, Administrator, Landmarks Commission  
Cydney E. Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield of Architectural and Historical Research, LLC, Nomination Preparers