

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 673-5095 Phone
(612) 673-5100 Fax
(612) 673-2157 TDD

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 11, 2015

TO: Heritage Preservation Commission

FROM: Beth Elliott, Principal City Planner

SUBJECT: National Register of Historic Places Nomination – Strutwear Knitting Company Building

Background

On June 11, 2015, the Minnesota Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) sent the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission a letter requesting comments on the nomination of the Strutwear Knitting Company Building to the National Register of Historic Places (Attachment A). The property is located at 1010 7th Street South and is also known as 1010 Metrodome Square. It was originally a knitting factory but was converted and has been used as an office building for the last thirty years.

As a Certified Local government, the Commission is required by federal law to participate in the National Register nomination process as follows:

- Afford the public a reasonable opportunity to comment on the nomination;
- Prepare a report as to whether or not the subject property is eligible for National Register listing; and
- Have the chief local elected official (the Mayor) submit this report and his/her recommendation to the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer within sixty days of notice from the SHPO.¹

¹ More than a simple comment letter, this report provides the City with significant decision making power in the matter. If both the Commission and the chief local elected official recommend that the subject property should not be nominated to the National Register, the SHPO shall take no further action, unless within thirty days of the receipt of such recommendation by the SHPO an appeal is filed with the State. If such an appeal is filed, the State shall follow the procedures for making nomination pursuant to established procedures. Even then, the City's report and recommendations are included with the nomination submitted by the State to the Keeper of the National Register.

The owner has retained Hess, Roise and Company to nominate the subject property to the National Register of Historic Places as the first step in seeking financial aid for a substantial rehabilitation of this property. The owner is seeking state historic preservation tax credits and federal historic preservation tax credits to accomplish this goal which will require:

- The property to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- The work to consist of a substantial rehabilitation (an amount greater than the pre-rehabilitation cost of the building(s));
- The work meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*; and
- The property's historic character be maintained for five years.

Attachment A includes a copy of the nomination, prepared by Hess, Roise and Company, for your review and comment.

Previous Reviews

The property was included in a 2008 reconnaissance survey by Mead & Hunt which recommended it as a good candidate for intensive-level research to determine eligibility for local and/or National Register nomination. It was recommended as a potential candidate for local designation under *Criterion 1: History and/or Architecture/Engineering/Construction* and/or National Register listing under *Criterion A: History* and/or *Criterion C: Architecture*.

Nomination Review

To be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, a property must be significant within a given context and retain its integrity, defined as its ability to communicate that significance.

Significance

The nomination has identified that the Strutwear Knitting Company Building meets National Register Criterion A - the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The area of significance identified is Social History with a Period of Significance of 1935-1936.

The Strutwear Knitting Company Building is a seven-story Art Deco building with a tower that rises an additional three stories. It was designed by architectural firm Long and Thorshov for the purpose of a hosiery factory and constructed in phases between 1922 and 1930. It continued to be used by garment industries until 1986 when it was converted into office space. At that time, one of the two original front entrances was removed and a new entrance was located on the back. The new entrance included an atrium and the addition of a parking garage and landscaped plaza.

The Period of Significance relates to the Strutwear Knitting Company's relationship with the labor movement. Until the mid-1930's, Minneapolis was known as an "open-shop" town where the anti-union movement was strong. Many companies were backed by the Minneapolis Citizens Alliance, a union-busting business organization that had already crushed a previous effort at Strutwear for employees to unionize themselves in 1927. The Citizens Alliance had

hundreds of companies from all trades in its Minneapolis membership with the Struthers family members - namesakes of the company - serving terms on the organization's board of directors. Just like labor unions, the Citizens Alliance believed in solidarity among its membership in adhering to its anti-labor stance.

The National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 positively impacted the labor movement by establishing fair labor codes. These new regulations emboldened industrial workers in all trades to begin openly trying to unionize because there were now more protections to organize and collectively bargain. The well-known Minneapolis Teamsters Strike occurred just one year later in 1934, and the police violence seen during this strike in what is now known as the North Loop mobilized other local unions to show their support for the transport workers.

On the heels of this very public series of events, a group of eight Strutwear knitters invited union organizers to the business in 1935. Even though these Strutwear employees were fired for organizing the union drive and others were placated with a small raise, the tide had already turned and knitters formed Hosiery Workers Local 38 and subsequently called the strike to protest the firing of the eight workers.

The ensuing strike lasted for eight months and Strutwear Knitting Company was required to close the business during this period. A major success of the movement was the first major inclusion of women strikers due to the sheer numbers employed at the company – it added major volume to the quantity of available strikers. The number of supporters from outside the company that joined the picket line also seemed to have a galvanizing effect.

Despite deceptive practices to bolster their own side – including threatening to move the company to a different state – management settled the dispute with an offer to allow all employees back to work and increase wages similar to comparable plants. Company leadership also signed a “closed-shop” agreement to formalize its practices as labor-friendly.

Integrity

The National Register of Historic Places divides integrity into seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Possessing several, and usually most of these aspects allows resources to successfully communicate their historical significance within a given context.²

While the building was altered in 1986 to convert it to office space, it still exhibits good integrity. Even though the area surrounding the building has changed with the physical consolidation of health institutions and the introduction of the Metrodome and now the USBank Stadium, the building itself is in the same location as it was during the strike and therefore has kept its integrity of location. The building's immediate setting has changed with a parking ramp against the majority of the west wall, but the ramp is largely unattached to the west wall and it is set back from the historic front façade. Despite the ramp, the building's setting is still recognizable, particularly because of its prominence on the corner of the block.

² National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998) 44-49.

One of the most significant changes in the 1986 renovations was the addition of an atrium that enclosed the interstice of the original U-shaped footprint. This was done to what was the back of the original building in order to make it the new primary entrance. The original exterior walls are still visible in the atrium and continue to be an exhibit for the earlier U shape. The addition of the atrium has not inordinately affected visual cues of the original design.

The City encourages the property owner to find a publicly-accessible opportunity to interpret the Strutwear Knitting Company's labor history during the period of significance of the union strike of 1935-1936.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Commission *adopt* this CPED report, *approve* the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and direct staff to transmit a letter summarizing the report to the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Attachments

- A. Strutwear Knitting Company Building National Register of Historic Places Nomination prepared by Hess, Roise and Company

June 11, 2015

Ms. Laura Faucher, Chair
Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission
250 So. 4th Street
Room 300
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: Certified Local Government Comment on the nomination of: Strutwear Knitting Company Building, 1010 South Seventh Street, Minneapolis, Hennepin County, to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Ms. Faucher:

The above referenced property may be considered by the State Review Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 2015. Because the City of Minneapolis has been granted Certified Local Government (CLG) Status under the provisions of 36 CFR 61.5 and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office's "Procedures for Applying For and Maintaining Certified Local Government Status," the nomination (copy enclosed) is being sent to the Office of the Mayor and to the Heritage Preservation Commission for review at this time.

This nomination is classified as a historical nomination. After allowing a reasonable opportunity for public comment, the Commission may prepare a report indicating its opinion as to whether the property meets the National Register Criteria (copy enclosed). At least one Commission member who meets the Federal Standards for History (see Appendix A of the state CLG procedures) should participate in formulating that opinion.

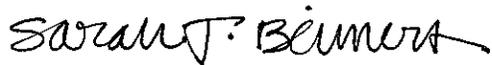
If the Heritage Preservation Commission does not include a member who meets the Federal Standards, the city may choose not to comment on this nomination through the CLG review process (in which case please advise the Preservation Office of that choice), or the Heritage Preservation Commission may obtain the opinion of a qualified professional in the subject area and consider the opinion in its recommendations. The comment must include both the credentials and opinion of the consulted professional. If the city chooses not to comment under the CLG process outlined above, comments on a nomination may be submitted to the Preservation Office in as much as any interested party may submit comments.

The Mayor may transmit the report of the Heritage Preservation Commission together with her comments on the eligibility of the property to Barbara Mitchell Howard, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, at 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102. This response must be received before the close of business on Friday, August 14, 2015. Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, if both the Heritage Preservation Commission and the Mayor determine that the property does not meet the criteria, the nomination will not be further considered unless an appeal is filed with the state office.

We should note that the standard notification of State Review Board consideration of this property has been sent to the owner. Appropriate officials will be notified approximately one month before the scheduled meeting.

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

Sincerely,



for Barbara Mitchell Howard
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

enc.: National Register Program
National Register Criteria
Copy of National Register Nomination

cc: 1010 Metrodome Square LLC
c/o Timeshare Systems Inc.
511 11th Ave. So.
Minneapolis, MN 55415

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

- (a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- (b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- (c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS. Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- (a) a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- (b) a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- (c) a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with their productive life; or
- (d) a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- (e) a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- (f) a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or
- (g) a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROGRAM

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of historic properties recognized by the Federal Government as worthy of preservation for their significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. The National Register was created in 1966 and is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our significant historic places under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act. The National Park Service provides oversight for the program under the Secretary of the Interior. The program is managed by the professional staff of the National Register in Washington, DC, State Historic Preservation Officers, and the Preservation Officers in Federal Agencies. Contact the State Historic Preservation Office for information describing the National Register program. For online information go to:

http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/national_register_fundamentals.htm

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr>

<http://www.mnhs.org/shpo>

<http://nrhp.mnhs.org/>

For further information refer to 36 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 60. For online information go to:
<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/regulations.htm>

LISTING IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER PROVIDES BENEFITS TO HISTORIC PROPERTIES:

Eligibility for Federal Tax Provisions: Since 1976 the Federal Internal Revenue Code has contained a variety of incentives to encourage capital investment in historic buildings and to spur revitalization of historic properties. These incentives include a 20% investment tax credit to encourage the preservation of historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings listed on the National Register by allowing favorable tax treatments for rehabilitation. Owners of National Register properties who choose to participate in the preservation tax incentive program must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and receive approval by the National Park Service of the rehabilitation project in order to receive the tax credit.

A 10% rehabilitation tax credit applies only to non-historic, non-residential buildings built before 1936. The 10% credit and the 20% credit are mutually exclusive. Buildings listed on the National Register are eligible only for the 20% tax credit. Owners of non-historic buildings in historic districts may claim a 10% credit only if they file a Part 1 Historic Preservation Certification Application with the National Park Service and receive a determination that the building does not contribute to the district and is not a certified historic structure. You may contact the State Historic Preservation Office for a brochure describing the Preservation Tax Incentives or for online information go to:

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

For further information on building certification requirements refer to 36 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 67. For online information go to: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/IRS.htm>

Eligibility for State Tax Provisions: The Minnesota Rehab Tax Credit was signed into law in April 2010. The state rehab tax credit mirrors the 20% federal historic preservation tax credit and must be used in conjunction with the federal credit. Property owners who are undertaking a historic rehabilitation project are eligible to receive a state income tax credit up to 20% of qualifying rehabilitation expenses. Owner may elect to receive a grant in lieu of a credit equal to 90% of the allowable credit. For online information go to: <http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/grants/MNHistoricStructureRehabilitationStateTaxCredit.htm>

Easement Donations: The Federal Internal Revenue Code also provides for Federal income, estate, and gift tax deductions for charitable contributions or partial interests in real property (land and buildings). Taxpayers' gifts of qualified interest may be "exclusively for conservation purposes." For online information go to:
<http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

Because tax aspects outlined above are complex, individuals should consult legal counsel or the appropriate Internal Revenue Service office for assistance in determining the tax consequences of the above provisions. Colleen Gallagher is the IRS representative who serves taxpayers in Minnesota. She can be contacted at 651/726-1480.

Consideration in planning for Federal, federally licensed, and federally assisted projects: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their actions on historic properties listed on or determined eligible for the National Register. Regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent Federal agency, guide this consultation process, which is intended to assure that the value of the historic property is considered in project planning. For online information go to: <http://www.achp.gov>

For further information on the Advisory Council refer to 36 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 800. For online information go to: <http://www.achp.gov/regs-rev04.pdf>

Qualification for Federal grants for historic preservation: Presently, funding levels are inadequate for these grants to be available.

Consideration in planning for State, state licensed, and state assisted projects: Minnesota Statutes Chapter 138 requires that state departments and agencies have the responsibility to protect the physical features and historical character of properties listed in the National Register by consulting with the Minnesota Historical Society before carrying out any undertaking, or funding, or licensing an undertaking by other parties to determine appropriate treatments and to seek ways to avoid and mitigate any adverse effects on listed properties. For further information, refer to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 138.665 and 138.666. The statutes are online at:

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=138.665>

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=138.666>

Consideration before demolition: The rules of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) require preparation of an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) by the responsible unit of government for any proposed demolition of a property listed in the National Register. For further information on the Environmental Quality Board refer to Minnesota Rules Parts 4410.0200, 4410.1000 and 4410.4300 subpart 31 or call 651/201-2477. For online information go to:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=4410>

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=4410.4300>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATIONAL REGISTER PROCESS AND THE MEANING OF LISTING:

Listing on the National Register does not mean that the Federal Government wants to acquire the property, place restrictive covenants on the land, or dictate the color or materials used on individual buildings. State and local ordinances, local historical commissions, or laws establishing restrictive zoning, special design review committees, or review of exterior alterations, are not a part of the National Register.

Historic properties of national, state, or local significance under private or local/state government ownership may be nominated by the State Historic Preservation Office. Property owners, historical consultants and Preservation Office staff may prepare nominations. A Federal agency's Federal Preservation Officer nominates properties under Federal ownership to the National Register. For online information go to: <http://www.achp.gov/fpoagencyinfo.html>

Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO) perform the same type of preservation activities as those performed by State Historic Preservation Offices. These activities, however, are associated with historic properties located on Tribal Lands. Contact the State Historic Preservation Office for a list of Tribal Historic Preservation Offices in Minnesota. For online information go to: <http://www.achp.gov/thpo.html>

Procedures have been developed to certify local governments (CLG). The mayor and the heritage preservation commission as the CLG may comment on a property being nominated in their city. If both the mayor and the heritage preservation commission determine that the property does not meet National Register criteria, the nomination will not be considered unless an appeal is filed with the Preservation Office. For a list of certified local governments, contact the Preservation Office.

Minnesota Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651-259-3450
Fax: 651-282-2374
mnshpo@mnhs.org
<http://www.mnhs.org/shpo>

9/1/2004; 6/8/2005; 6/27/2005; 6/7/2006; 11/13/2008; 8/13/2010; 4/11/2011; 1/30/2014

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Strutwear Knitting Company Building

Other names/site number: 1010 Metrodome Square

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1010 South Seventh Street

City or town: Minneapolis State: MN County: 053 Hennepin

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

foundation: STONE/Limestone

walls: BRICK; STONE/Limestone; CONCRETE; METAL/Aluminum

roof: SYNTHETICS/Rubber

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

See continuation sheet.

Narrative Description

See continuation sheet.

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1935-1936

Significant Dates

August 16, 1935

April 6, 1936

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

LONG AND THORSHOV (architects)

JAMES LECK COMPANY (contractor)

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

See continuation sheet.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

See continuation sheet.

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

See continuation sheet.

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 #
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Northwestern Architectural Archives, Elmer L Andersen Library,
University of Minnesota-Minneapolis

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): HE-MPC-1604

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 2.5 acres

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 44.971559° | Longitude: -93.257168° |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Block 21 of Atwater's Addition, Block 111 of Nelson's Addition, and Block 211 of Morrison, Smith and Hancock's Addition to the Town of Minneapolis.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary represents the historic parcel as well as a contemporary, non-contributing addition to the property.

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jessica Berglin and Charlene Roise
organization: Hess, Roise and Company
street & number: 100 North First Street
city or town: Minneapolis state: MN zip code: 55401
e-mail: berglin@hessroise.com; roise@hessroise.com telephone: 612-338-1987
date: May 21, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

See continuation sheet.

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

See continuation sheet.

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Strutwear Knitting Company Building
Name of Property
Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Strutwear Knitting Company Building is located at 1010 South Seventh Street on the southeastern edge of downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is a seven-story Art Deco building with a tower that rises an additional three stories. Designed by architects Long and Thorshov, the hosiery factory was constructed in phases between 1922 and 1930. Strutwear Knitting Company operated out of the plant until it sold the factory in 1958. Garment industries continued to use the building until the mid-1980s, when it was rehabilitated into offices. One of the front entrances was removed and an atrium, parking garage, and landscaped plaza were added to the site at that time. The building exhibits good integrity despite these late-twentieth-century alterations.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Exterior

The Strutwear Knitting Company Building is a seven-story Art Deco building with a tower (Photographs 1 and 2). Floors six and seven are stepped back from the primary walls, and the tower rises an additional three stories above the flat roof (Photograph 6). A historic elevator penthouse is also on the roof. The building fronts on South Sixth Street to the north and Eleventh Avenue South to the east.¹ A landscaped plaza is south of the building. A non-historic, five-story parking garage is adjacent to but largely unattached from the west wall (Photograph 5), maintaining a six-foot-wide clearance from the historic building in most places. The garage is set back from the front (north) facade of the historic building (Photograph 4) and has two five-story stair towers, one in the southeast corner and one in the northeast corner. The northeast stair tower is narrow and shallow and abuts the northwest corner of the historic building, but there are no penetrations between the two; the southeast stair tower does not touch the historic building. The materials and design details on the stair towers are complementary to but distinct from the historic building.

The north, east, and south facades of the historic building have a higher level of finishes than the west wall, which is exposed except for the garage link. On the north, east, and south walls, the foundation is clad in limestone and the upper stories are face brick, which is painted on the south wall. A historic recessed entrance on the north wall retains a historic stone surround and a stone panel bearing the inscription "Strutwear Knitting Company" above a non-historic aluminum and glass door (Photograph 7). A historic granite landing in front of the door has inlaid tiles that read "Strutwear" (Photograph 8). On the north, east, and south walls, brick is laid in raised horizontal courses on the first story (Photographs 1 and 7), and a stone stringcourse runs beneath the second-floor windows. On these three walls, stone bands line the fifth story, while geometric brick and stone details line the parapet walls on the sixth and

¹ The building is not directly aligned on cardinal points, but the following information assumes that South Sixth Street is north, Eleventh Avenue South is east, etc.

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seventh stories (Photograph 6). Geometric brick and stone details also adorn the four corners of the tower, which is clad in face brick and has stone bands along the top of all walls (Photograph 6). The building's reinforced-concrete frame is visible on the west wall, and the bays are filled with common brick. Both the concrete frame and the brick are painted (Photograph 5).

On the north, east, and south walls, historic window openings in the raised basement are filled with non-historic limestone or mechanical vents. Historic window openings on the upper floors hold non-historic fixed aluminum windows (Photographs 1, 2, 3, and 6). Despite the installation of non-historic windows, the original fenestration pattern is visible on all levels, and the openings retain historic stone sills. On the west wall, historic window openings on the first through fourth stories are filled with non-historic brick (Photograph 5), while non-historic fixed aluminum windows fill historic openings on the fifth through seventh stories (Photograph 6). Like the other walls, the original fenestration pattern remains discernible on this wall despite the installation of non-historic windows, and historic brick window sills are retained.

Two types of window configurations are present on each wall of the tower: vertical bands of windows separated by painted historic cast-iron spandrel panels, and a horizontal row of individual openings. Non-historic fixed aluminum windows fill these historic openings (Photograph 6).

In 1986, a non-historic atrium was installed to enclose the interstice on the rear of this historically U-shaped building (Photographs 2 and 3). The atrium rises five stories and has a glass and steel Kalwall skylight. The first two stories form a three-bay, brick-walled vestibule that projects from the south wall. This is currently the building's main entrance. An aluminum and glass door system fills the center bay, while the outer two bays hold aluminum windows. The wall and windows above the entrance curve outward. Stone spandrel panels and stone banding complement the building's historic details. On the third through fifth stories of the atrium, the exterior wall is metal-clad, as are four pilasters that extend the height of these three levels. The upper walls are recessed behind the historic south walls.

Interior

The interior of the vestibule has a non-historic terrazzo floor and gypsum-board walls. Doors on the north wall lead to the five-story atrium, which also has a non-historic terrazzo floor. The east and west walls of the atrium were formerly the exterior walls facing the rear interstice of the building. They have been sheathed in gypsum board, but the historic fenestration pattern is maintained (Photograph 15). Non-historic aluminum windows fill the historic openings. Open corridors lined with metal railings are along the north and south walls of the atrium (Photograph 15). A bank of three non-historic elevators is in the north corridor. Geometric patterns along the top of the atrium walls complement the building's Art Deco details.

Individual tenant offices were created in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Photograph 12). Throughout many of these spaces, historic concrete-slab floors are covered

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with carpet or vinyl tile and the concrete-slab ceilings are concealed by suspended acoustic tiles. These alterations are reversible and have been selectively removed in some areas to reveal the historic finishes (Photograph 13). Most of the historic concrete columns are painted and remain visible, although some are concealed in gypsum-board surrounds.

Historic industrial finishes are visible in the tower (Photograph 14). Concrete-slab floors and ceilings are exposed, as are the brick and clay-tile walls. Exposed columns and pilasters reveal the building's reinforced-concrete structural system. A historic elevator penthouse also retains historic finishes, including a concrete floor and ceiling, as well as clay-tile walls. A historic steel fire door is extant on the west wall of the penthouse.

Historic industrial finishes are also visible in the basement and subbasement (Photographs 10 and 11). Concrete-slab floors and ceilings are exposed throughout much of these levels, although some rooms are carpeted and have suspended acoustic-tile ceilings. Concrete columns—as well as their mushroom capitals—are visible in most of the basement and subbasement. Non-historic mechanical equipment runs along the ceiling in several rooms. Concrete blocks and gypsum board form non-historic walls. A non-historic garage door was installed on the west wall of the basement.

Historic terrazzo stairs are at the historic entrance fronting South Sixth Street (Photograph 9). They run from grade to the first floor. Historic poured-concrete stairs are at the south walls of the east and west wings. Both stairs extend from the basement to the sixth floor. Non-historic steel-pipe railings were installed in 1986. A historic stairwell north of the elevators runs from the subbasement to the sixth floor. A non-historic metal and concrete staircase with steel-pipe railings was installed in 1986, but the historic stairwell was maintained. Another non-historic metal and concrete staircase was constructed in the tower at the same time; it runs the three stories of the tower. In the atrium, non-historic stairs with decorative metal railings run from the basement to the first floor. A non-historic freight elevator was installed in the west wing of the building in 1986.

INTEGRITY

The building has good integrity despite alterations in the late twentieth century. It has not been moved from its historic location on the edge of downtown Minneapolis, so it has integrity of location. The building's setting has been affected by the construction of a parking garage along the west wall, but the garage is set back from the historic building's front facade and is lower than the historic building, diminishing the visual impact of the new structure. Additionally, the garage is largely unattached from the west wall. A stair tower in the northeast corner of the garage abuts the historic building, but most of the structure maintains a six-foot-wide clearance from the west wall. Setbacks on the upper floors of the historic building, a prominent tower, and geometric details are hallmarks of the Art Deco design. On the interior, historic column grids reveal the character of the building's industrial design, and the building's historic U-shaped footprint is maintained even though the interstice was enclosed with an atrium. Historic

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materials—such as concrete-slab floors and ceilings—are extant throughout the building. While they have been concealed by removable carpets and suspended ceilings in many areas, these finishes are exposed in the tower, basement, and subbasement. Historic stone and brick details on the exterior add to the building's integrity of materials and workmanship. All of these considerations contribute to the integrity of feeling and association for this Minneapolis landmark.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY PARAGRAPH (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Strutwear Knitting Company Building represents one of the most important labor victories in Minneapolis's history. The property is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History. Its period of significance is 1935 to 1936, when Strutwear employees were on strike against the company's anti-union policies. It was not only a battle against Strutwear officials but against the Minneapolis Citizens Alliance, an anti-labor business association and militant defender of the city's open-shop reputation. Thousands of industrial workers from across all trades, skill levels, and genders joined the eight-month-long standoff, which marked a turning point in Minneapolis's labor movement. It was particularly a triumph for Strutwear's nearly 900 female operatives, who were initially excluded from the union's member drive. Prior to the Strutwear strike, the American Federation of Hosiery Workers had not included women among its ranks, but their participation was crucial to the strike's success.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Strutwear Knitting Company Building is historically significant under Criterion A for its association with the Strutwear Strike of 1935. This event was a major turning point for the labor movement in Minneapolis, which was notoriously an "open-shop" town. On August 16, 1935, Strutwear workers went on strike, protesting management's discharge of eight knitters for union activities. Within days, thousands of industrial workers from throughout the city rallied with the strikers in their fight for a better working environment and higher wages. Strutwear management was supported by the Citizens Alliance, a prominent anti-labor business association that was the most militant defender of the open-shop status. Labor's triumph after an eight-month standoff between union activists and Strutwear continued the momentum gained from the successful Minneapolis Truck Drivers' Strike of 1934. As the documentary *Minneapolis Past* remarked: "The truckers' strike proved labor could win against management in Minneapolis. The Strutwear strike proved that the truckers' strike wasn't a fluke."²

² *Minneapolis Past*, videorecording, written and produced by Brendan Henehan (Saint Paul, Minn.: Twin Cities Public Television, 1993).

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Early Prosperity

The Strutwear Knitting Company began production in 1916. James Struthers founded the hosiery firm after working as a purchasing agent at the Northwestern Knitting Company for several years. Strutwear was originally located at 731 East Fourteenth Street, but the company had relocated to the 1000 block of South Sixth Street by 1921. In 1922, the *Minneapolis Tribune* announced Strutwear's plans to construct a new factory building on the site. The reinforced-concrete and brick plant was designed by local architects Long and Thorshov. The initial construction was more modest than what the architects planned. Photographs of the building from 1924 reveal a three-story building with a penthouse on the roof rather than the five-story building with a tower that Long and Thorshov had envisioned. Notes on the drawings, however, indicate that the building was intended to be expanded.³

The first expansion came in 1925, when a concrete and brick addition was constructed. The new building, also designed by Long and Thorshov, was one story over a raised basement. It was placed in front of and perpendicular to the 1922 plant to provide an attractive facade along South Sixth Street. An ornate door surround with stone detailing marked the new main entrance. On the north wall, face brick was laid in raised horizontal courses, and area wells provided natural light to the basement.⁴

Two additional stories were added to this new section in 1926. That year, Strutwear experienced a 30-percent gain in sales and the company had outgrown its existing plant. James Struthers announced plans for yet another expansion to keep pace with production levels: "As fast as our additions have been built, they have been filled to capacity with our machinery, and are operating to the limit. We have to have more space and more equipment because of the growth which the business shows." The company added \$3 million in capital and embarked on a \$250,000 expansion in 1927.⁵

³ "Work on \$150,000 Plant Is Started," *Minneapolis Journal*, March 14, 1927; *Davison's Minneapolis City Directory* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Directory Company, 1914), 1955; *Davison's Minneapolis City Directory* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Directory Company, 1918), 2021; "Strutwear Company Plans New Plant," *Minneapolis Tribune*, April 2, 1922; Minneapolis Building Permit B160285, June 8, 1922; Long and Thorshov, "Building for Strutwear Knitting Company," Sheet 55, June 6, 1922, Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

⁴ Long and Thorshov, "Addition to Strutwear Knitting Company," Sheets 1 and 5, July 21, 1925, Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; Minneapolis Building Permit B189147, June 5, 1925.

⁵ Minneapolis Building Permit B199278, August 4, 1926; "Factory Here Adds 3 Million Capital; To Build New Unit," *Minneapolis Journal*, December 11, 1926.

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Once again, Long and Thorshov provided designs for the newest section of the factory, which ran along Eleventh Avenue South and completed the building's U-shaped plan. Like earlier additions, the actual construction fell short of the architects' vision, which called for a five-story building with a decorative terra-cotta cornice. Instead, the expansion was three stories tall over a raised basement. The newest section continued several architectural details from the earlier wing, including a second entrance on South Sixth Street that matched the previous one, and brick laid in raised horizontal courses on the first story.⁶

Within two years, production once again outpaced the plant. Strutwear commenced its biggest expansion in 1929. The hosiery company added approximately four hundred employees and launched a building campaign that more than doubled the plant's size. A description of the project ran in the *Minneapolis Tribune*:

When completed the building will be six stories high with a "monitor" on top, and a tower that will rise an additional five stories, which will be surmounted with a 40-foot flagpole. The cost of the new structure will approximate \$175,000, and it will virtually double the present floor space. Long & Thorshov, associated with an eastern firm, are the architects and the general contract is held by the James Leck Co.

The expansion of the plant was made necessary by the increase in business, Mr. Struthers said. This expansion program will come to about \$650,000, including the addition to the plant. When the program is completed, the number of employees will be increased from 600 to 1,000 persons. The company owns the entire block and future additions are contemplated when necessity shall require.

Although the building is to be only six stories high, the height of each story is so great that it will be taller than most eight-story buildings. The tower is of the set-back type and the upper floor will be used as an observation floor, and will have an illuminated top.⁷

⁶ Long and Thorshov, "Addition to Strutwear Knitting Company," Sheets 1-11, May 25, 1927, Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

⁷ "Addition to Strutwear Building," *Minneapolis Tribune*, January 12, 1930; "Strutwear Knitting Company Building Addition under Construction 1930" photograph, Minneapolis Collection, Hennepin County Central Library Special Collections; Long and Thorshov, "Addition to Strutwear Knitting Company," Sheets 1-10, November 30, 1929, Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

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Trouble Begins

The prosperity that allowed Strutwear to rapidly expand did not last very long into the new decade as the Great Depression disrupted Minneapolis's manufacturing success. As labor historian Elizabeth Faue explains: "Between 1929 and 1933 in the manufacturing sector alone, the value of goods produced fell by more than half; and the number of factories had decreased by nearly one quarter." Thousands of industrial workers faced unemployment or cut wages in the wake of this severe economic reality. Workers in the garment industry were especially susceptible to layoffs. Even before the Depression began, jobs in the trade were characterized as low-paying, unstable, and seasonal. As one worker who Faue interviewed remarked: "You were lucky to work four days a week. Wages were small, and you worked long hours." Attempts to combat these conditions were unsuccessful. In 1927, a small group of Strutwear knitters tried to unionize the plant, but their efforts were crushed by the company, which was backed by the anti-labor Minneapolis Citizens Alliance. An effort in 1933 to organize the Robitshek-Schneider Company, another local garment factory, was met with the same resistance.⁸

For thirty years, the Citizens Alliance had been suppressing union activities in Minneapolis and protecting the city's open-shop reputation. It was founded in 1903 by prominent business leaders and bankers, and by the early 1930s membership had grown to approximately eight hundred companies representing every major trade in the city. Like unions, solidarity was instrumental to ensuring the alliance's success. Any member that dissented from the group's strict anti-labor dogma risked boycotts or having their credit revoked. Strutwear had been a strong supporter of the Citizens Alliance since the company was founded, and members of the Struthers family also served terms on the organization's board of directors. Management adhered to common alliance tactics such as using "yellow dog" contracts with employees, engaging in espionage to track union grumblings within the plant, and dismissing union workers.⁹

After the National Industrial Recovery Act was passed in 1933 to regulate industry and establish fair labor codes, industrial workers in all trades began to unionize more openly. They were protected under Section 7a of the new law, which gave workers the right to organize and collectively bargain. Many businesses, however, found ways to

⁸ Elizabeth Faue, "Women, Work, and Community, Minneapolis, 1929–1946" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1987), 73, 147, 161–162; Elizabeth Faue, "Paths of Unionization: Community, Bureaucracy, and Gender in the Minneapolis Labor Movement of the 1930s," in *We Are All Leaders: The Alternative Unionism of the Early 1930s* ed. Staughton Lynd (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 179–183.

⁹ "Historical Sketch," Citizens Alliance of Minneapolis Records, Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul, Minnesota, hereafter CA Papers; Faue, "Women, Work, and Community," 161–162; "Strutwear Co. and Citizens Alliance Link," *Minneapolis Labor Review*, March 17, 1933.

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circumvent the Section 7a mandate. Strutwear formed a company union to prevent an external union from gaining traction among its employees. On paper, Strutwear abided by the law, but in reality the company union did little to protect workers' rights. According to Faue, "workers paid 25 cents a month for the privilege of joining, but there was no benefit for the membership."¹⁰

A Battle Ensues

In the spring of 1935, a group of discontented knitters visited an organized hosiery shop in Milwaukee as guests of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers (AFHW), a national union. While there, the Strutwear knitters witnessed the disparity in wages and working conditions between union shops and their own. Upon their return to Minneapolis, the knitters requested that union representatives visit Strutwear to assist with organizing the plant. Historian William Millikan described the company's hostile response to the activities that took place over the following months: "When union organizers arrived during the summer of 1935, company President Florence Struthers [widow of former president James Struthers, who died in 1933] personally directed surveillance of the meetings. Strutwear knitters were called in to the company offices one by one and warned that any further union activity would bring the penalty of discharge. Between May and July, the leading spirits in the union drive were fired while other employees were placated with one dollar-a-week raises." Undeterred, the knitters formed Hosiery Workers Local 38 and called a strike on Friday, August 16, to protest the discharge of eight union workers.¹¹

On the first day of the strike, throngs of pickets encircled the building and obstructed entrances to the factory. The company requested a contingent of police to escort employees through the picket lines, but only eight officers were on the scene and only fifty employees gained entry. Outside, Strutwear workers were joined by labor activists and other industrial workers from throughout the city, including leaders of Teamsters' Local 574, who organized Minneapolis truckers in a successful battle against the Citizens Alliance the previous year.¹²

¹⁰ William Millikan, *A Union against Unions: The Minneapolis Citizens Alliance and Its Fight against Organized Labor, 1903-1947* (Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001), 249, 264; Faue, "Women, Work, and Community," 161-162.

¹¹ Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 294; Faue, "Women, Work, and Community," 163; "1,100 Idle at Strutwear Co.," *Minneapolis Star*, August 16, 1935; "Pickets Force Strutwear Plant to Close," *Minneapolis Journal*, August 16, 1935.

¹² Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 294-295; Elizabeth Faue, *Community of Suffering and Struggle: Women, Men, and the Labor Movement in Minneapolis, 1915-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 116.

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Strutwear officials anticipated reopening the plant the following Monday, but the weekend gave laborers the opportunity to organize in even greater numbers. Between four and six hundred pickets arrived at the factory Monday morning. This time the crowd was met by a force of approximately one hundred police officers, who brandished clubs to escort strikebreakers into the plant. In the commotion, Ray Dunne—a prominent Teamster and local labor activist—was beaten and arrested. News of the incident spread quickly, and by the afternoon over one thousand pickets surrounded the factory, forcing the company to close. Police shuttled the workers out of the back of the factory and down South Seventh Street to Dayton's Department Store, where they hoped the workers would blend in with other shoppers. Pickets followed the parade into the department store. Accounts of the event vary in intensity. One newspaper claimed that a strikebreaker "was given a beating by his attackers" in the store, while another ambiguously reported that "the scabs were discouraged from attempting to repeat their Monday performance." Whatever the encounter, Strutwear officials announced Monday evening that it would remain closed until further notice.¹³

In the press release, company officials contended that workers had "no quarrel" with the company and that "no demands [had] been made" to management before "employees were forcibly turned away from the plant" by "outsiders." The officials made similar claims in a letter to Minneapolis mayor Thomas Latimer, stating that the majority of the plant's approximately 1,100 employees sent letters or made phone calls "demanding their right to go to work" and "adequate protection" to do so. The company maintained this position as the strike wore on into the fall. It released another statement to try to garner public support for their workers' welfare after the plant was closed for nearly two months and the city's relief funds were dwindling. Strutwear claimed: "These employees are now in distress, and they and their families are suffering want because of their inability to peaceably carry on their work and earn a livelihood" due to the "forced unemployment" of a situation that was "wholly unnecessary and a disgrace" to the Minneapolis community.¹⁴

¹³ "Strutwear Firm Waits Protection for Reopening," *Minneapolis Journal*, August 18, 1935; "Strutwear Set to Open Today," *Minneapolis Tribune*, August 19, 1935; "Strike Ranks Growing Fast at Strutwear," and "Ray Dunne Brutally Clubbed, Booted by Police," *Northwest Organizer*, August 21, 1935; Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 295; Lois Quam and Peter J. Rachleff, "Keeping Minneapolis an Open-Shop Town: The Citizens Alliance in the 1930s," *Minnesota History* 50 (Fall 1986): 112; "Plant Issues Closing Order," *Minneapolis Tribune*, August 20, 1935.

¹⁴ "Plant Issues Closing Order," August 20, 1935; "That the Public May Know," *Minneapolis Star*, August 26, 1935; "Strutwear Firm Waits Protection for Reopening," August 18, 1935; "Resolution," [1935-1936], CA Papers.

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These tactics were typical of the Citizens Alliance, which was directly involved with managing Strutwear's strategies. During the strike, Lloyd MacAloon—a lawyer with the alliance—advised Florence Struthers and acted as vice president and director of employee relations. George Belden—president of the alliance—managed the firm's public relations and served as chairman of a business committee that was established specifically to pressure Mayor Latimer into action. According to historian William Millikan, Belden's committee "could disassociate itself from the anti-union record of the [Citizens Alliance] and pretend to consider the Strutwear problem from an impartial position." MacAloon and Belden also advised management to refuse arbitration and to form a fake "Back to Work Club" to claim that workers demanded to return.¹⁵

One of the most coercive maneuvers Strutwear and the Citizens Alliance used, however, was the threat to relocate the company. Strutwear owners established the Peacock Knitting Company, a dummy corporation, in Saint Joseph, Missouri, which they claimed was a more pro-industry community. The owners filed a federal writ of replevin to recover \$5,000 worth of goods from the Minneapolis plant. On November 27, loading trucks arrived at Strutwear, protected by local law enforcement officers and deputies from the U. S. Marshals Service. Despite the guards, the move was delayed because Teamsters Local 574 threatened to strike the transfer companies that provided the trucks. Two days later, trucks from the non-union Winona Dray Line arrived amid riotous strikers who stoned the vehicles, bashed windshields, and broke over one hundred windows at the factory. Four Winona truck drivers and one marshal were injured, and armored cars were called to the scene. The transfer continued under heavy guard until the end of the month, although only hosiery, underwear, and small pieces of equipment were moved from the plant according to newspaper accounts.¹⁶

The relocation threat was just a front to force the city and Mayor Latimer into action against the union activists, but Strutwear continually used it when progress was stalled. In early December, a spokesman for the business committee announced: "There is a citywide misunderstanding about the moving operations at the Strutwear factory last week. . . . The plant has not been moved and while the situation is largely as it has been

¹⁵ Quam and Racheff, "Keeping Minneapolis an Open-Shop Town," 112–113; Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 300.

¹⁶ Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 300; Faue, *Community of Suffering and Struggle*, 121; "Marshals Put Court Order into Effect," *Minneapolis Journal*, November 27, 1935; "Moving Job Nearly Done," *Minneapolis Journal*, November 29, 1935; "Pickets Stone Final Trucks at Strutwear," *Minneapolis Star*, November 30, 1935; "Removal of Strutwear Goods Due to be Completed Today," *Minneapolis Tribune*, November 30, 1935; "Strutwear Co. Peace Nearer," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 1, 1935; "Goods Moved When Police Stand Guard," *Northwest Organizer*, December 4, 1935. A writ of replevin is a court order issued to recover personal property that has been wrongfully taken.

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for the last three months, there is the same hope the city has always had that some basis can be reached whereby the plant will reopen and this large army of employees given the work many of them so desperately need."¹⁷

Mayor Latimer offered assurances that "law and order [would] be enforced" should Strutwear reopen, but the AFHW pressured the company to sign a union agreement if it did so. The union's terms included reemployment of the eight knitters fired in August, agreement to submit disputes to arbitration, no discrimination related to employees' union status and participation in the strike, wage adjustments to meet regional averages, a forty-hour work week, and recognition of employees' rights to join a union of their choosing and to collectively bargain. (The last provision was federally protected under the National Labor Relations Act, which was passed in July 1935 after the National Industrial Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional.) Unwilling to reach an agreement with the AFHW, Strutwear once again threatened to leave Minneapolis and negotiations remained in a stalemate. Strike activities were calm until the company announced its plans to reopen "under non-union conditions" at the beginning of the new year, reigniting labor's fury.¹⁸

Thirty-five maintenance workers arrived at the knitting factory on December 26 to prepare for the company's anticipated reopening. Once again, they were greeted by angry protesters who hurled stones through car and factory windows. Despite Mayor Latimer's pledge to protect workers and enforce law and order, the mob outnumbered his police force. The siege continued as maintenance workers returned to the factory the next day. Shortly thereafter, Latimer conceded that the situation had escalated beyond his control and called on Governor Floyd B. Olson and the National Guard for reinforcement. A cadre of soldiers arrived within hours. They closed the plant to prevent further destruction or injury and guarded the empty factory. Only two workers with military passes were permitted to enter during each shift. With this move, the tide had turned on the Citizens Alliance, which usually called on the National Guard to protect its interests, not hinder them. As Millikan remarked: "The National Guard was now being used to defeat the [Citizens Alliance's] support of one of its staunchest members."¹⁹

¹⁷ "Deny Knitting Plant Moved, Seek Opening," *Minneapolis Journal*, December 2, 1935; Millikan, "A Union against Unions," 302.

¹⁸ Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 302; "Pledge Made to Strutwear," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 10, 1935; "Hosiery Union Asks for Contract," *Minneapolis Journal*, December 10, 1935; "Plan to Settle Strutwear Row Is Deadlocked," *Minneapolis Star*, December 24, 1935.

¹⁹ Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 275, 302-303; "Clean-Up Crew Is Stoned upon Leaving Plant," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 27, 1935; "Crew Removed from Building; Not to Return," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 28, 1935; "Latimer Out of Strutwear Case, He Says," *Minneapolis Journal*, December 30, 1935.

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Guided by MacAloon's public relations and legal expertise, Florence Struthers demanded "free and unlimited access to and use of" the factory by company officials and employees. She publicly admonished Mayor Latimer and threatened legal action against the "unlawful seizure" of the plant. In January 1936, Strutwear filed an injunction against Governor Olson, Mayor Latimer, and Brigadier General Ellard Walsh, adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, for closing the shop and preventing the company from conducting business. The defendants appeared before three federal judges at the end of the month. Both Governor Olson and Brigadier General Walsh criticized authorities from the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County for failing to take responsibility for the guardsmen, while Mayor Latimer and Hennepin County sheriff John Wall denied that it was their responsibility to direct the troops. Siding with the plaintiff, the judges ordered that the National Guard be withdrawn from the knitting factory. Strutwear leaders, however, did not emerge faultless from the suit. Governor Olson issued a statement blaming the company for allowing the situation to escalate to a point where troops were necessary: "It clearly appears to me that a willingness to arbitrate the industrial differences between the Strutwear company, which has been unusually absent, would have avoided any necessity for the use of armed forces, just as the spirit of arbitration would avoid the necessity for armed conflict between nations."²⁰

The cycle continued for two more months. Management would attempt to reopen the plant and be met with angry mobs. Company officials and Belden's business committee would then pressure Mayor Latimer for better police protection and threaten relocation. Strutwear initiated new legal battles as well. The company sought over \$100,000 in damages from Governor Olson and Brigadier General Walsh for the factory's forced closing by the National Guard, and it also filed temporary injunctions against Hosiery Workers Local 38, Teamsters' Local 574, and nearly one hundred individual protesters. These proceedings lasted through the end of March 1936.²¹

The End in Sight

Several missteps compromised Florence Struthers during the hearings. The *Minneapolis Journal* recounted how the Strutwear president admitted that setting up the Peacock Knitting Company in Missouri was just a ploy after defense attorney Fred

²⁰ "Court Action Is Considered by Strutwear," *Minneapolis Journal*, December 29, 1935; "Demands Use of Strutwear Plant at Once," *Minneapolis Journal*, December 31, 1935; "Latimer Asked about Troops by Strutwear," *Minneapolis Star*, December 31, 1935; "Troops Taken from Plant of Strutwear Co.," *Minneapolis Star*, January 28, 1936; "Judges Open Strutwear Suit Hearing," *Minneapolis Journal*, January 25, 1936.

²¹ Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 303-304.

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Strutwear Knitting Company Building
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Ossanna accused the writ of replevin as being fraudulent. She also testified that the American Federation of Labor was "not a legal organization in the country and in the state" and that her company had "no reason to deal with" the group. Additionally, Struthers dismissed the fact that hundreds of her company's employees had joined the AFHW, stating that only eight were members and the rest were "outsiders." When Ossanna contended that surely she knew that more than eight employees were members, she replied, "I'm sure there weren't." In another dismissive move, Struthers responded that she was unaware of Strutwear's wage disparities and that she did not have "the strength or vitality to see to all details. That's what we hire people for."²²

After the trial, the headline of the weekly *Minneapolis Labor Review* boldly exclaimed that "Mrs. Struthers Aids Defense," while the subsequent issue triumphantly proclaimed: "Strikers Are Returning to Their Jobs." It is not clear why Strutwear officials changed their stance so suddenly, but over the course of the week, Struthers wrote Francis Cloutier, president of Hosiery Workers Local 38, with a settlement offer. Her letter indicated that Strutwear would reopen on April 6 and that all employees on the payroll as of August 15, 1935, could return to work "without discrimination as fast as work is available." She also noted that "if all of the employees [were] not returned to the active payroll" within fifteen days of reopening, work would be "staggered in so far as is possible so that all employees on the payroll as of August 15, 1935, [would] be employed at least part time." Furthermore, the case of the "alleged" eight employees dismissed for union activities would be sent to arbitration. Strutwear would also increase wages to ensure employees received comparable earnings as similar plants offered. In her remarks, Struthers noted: "Recognition will be given the fact that like work and ability require like wages." Finally, Struthers's letter imparted a new willingness to settle differences. She remarked: "The Company will meet at any reasonable time with any employee or representative of employees for the purpose of discussing any complaint affecting employees' employment with the Company." Cloutier accepted Struthers's proposal on behalf of his contingent and called off the strike. Although Millikan concludes his account of the Strutwear strike saying "the settlement did not mean [the company] would be operating a union or closed shop," company officials signed a closed-shop agreement the following spring, further cementing labor's victory in one of Minneapolis's most heated union battles.²³

²² "Plant Owner Admits Ruse by Strutwear," *Minneapolis Journal*, March 25, 1936. See also "Mrs. Struthers Goes on Stand in Mill's Suit," *Minneapolis Star*, March 25, 1936.

²³ "Strikers Are Returning to Their Jobs," *Minneapolis Labor Review*, April 10, 1936; Millikan, *A Union against Unions*, 304; "Hosiery Workers Sign Strutwear," *Minneapolis Labor Review*, May 7, 1937; "Strutwear Is Now Fair to Union Labor," *Minneapolis Labor Review*, May 21, 1937.

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Strutwear Knitting Company Building

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Not only was the victory a triumph over the notoriously anti-union Citizens Alliance, it was a milestone for working women in Minneapolis. Prior to organizing Strutwear, the AFHW only recruited skilled males to join its ranks. The hosiery union belonged to the American Federation of Labor, a coalition of craft unions that excluded women from its membership because they were often seen as competition in the workforce or were used as strikebreakers when labor disputes erupted. When union representatives arrived in the summer of 1935, they signed up 150 of the 200 male knitters at Strutwear. Approximately 900 women employed at the factory, on the other hand, were excluded from the initial member drive because most of them were production line operatives. This unskilled position placed the women outside the purview of the AFHW, although according to Faue, "on the day of the strike, the divisions . . . seemed to make little difference." The labor historian remarked: "The knitters who called the strike had made no provision for the participation of the operatives, but their recruitment was essential" to the strike's success.²⁴

Faue contends that when the Strutwear knitters first attempted to organize in 1927, they failed because they did not have sufficient numbers without the female operatives to battle management. As a result, the men were forced to sign yellow-dog contracts and join the company union or face dismissal. Similarly, when union leaders organized knitters at the Robitshek-Schneider Company in 1933, they only recruited skilled male laborers, once again resulting in poor numbers for that campaign. Activists learned from these defeats when the 1935 Strutwear strike broke out. According to Faue: "A strike that began with the grievances of skilled workers eventually had to address the poor pay and working conditions of operatives, both men and women." On the first day of the strike, the female operatives held the line and union leaders subsequently began recruiting them into the fold. By the end of August, union newspapers announced that factory girls were increasingly joining the daily strike meetings. By the end of the eight-month battle, women accounted for approximately 70 percent of Local 38's seven hundred members.²⁵

The majority of women joining the union were in their teens and twenties. Writers for the local labor newspapers regularly commented on their youth and enthusiasm. Alexander McKeowan, an organizer for the AFHW, proclaimed: "I have seen these young strikers under fire and there has never been a group of boys and girls I took more pride in working with . . . than this group of young people. They have youth and will bring progressive thoughts to the labor movement that will be of great value."²⁶

²⁴ Faue, "Paths of Unionization," 179–183.

²⁵ Ibid.; "Knitters Practically All Member Unions," *Minneapolis Labor Review*, August 23, 1935.

²⁶ Faue, "Women, Work, and Community," 165; "Big Throng Cheers Strutwear Workers," *Minneapolis*

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Just as young women began to join the ranks of Hosiery Workers Local 38, industrial workers from across the city united in the crusade to support the Strutwear strike. This broad base of support reflected a new community-based unionism that reached beyond the narrow scope of craft unionism that had dominated the labor movement until the 1930s. As Faue illustrates in *Community of Suffering and Struggle: Women, Men, and the Labor Movement in Minneapolis, 1915–1945*: “For many workers and activists, the Strutwear campaign represented a coming of age for the Minneapolis labor movement as the forces of community were both vital and visible in the struggle. The culture of solidarity created by the strike promoted cross-union cooperation, the coalition of political and workplace organizations, and the support of community and social activists.”²⁷

Part of the communal success can be attributed to the shared heritage and common values of the Strutwear workers that extended beyond the factory walls. Many were of Scandinavian and Eastern European descent and resided near the knitting plant in the Cedar-Riverside and Seward neighborhoods. In these tight-knit immigrant neighborhoods, local landmarks like Dania Hall, the South Side Auditorium, and the Eagles Hall provided gathering spaces for union meetings and strike fundraisers, as well as dances, meals, and rallies that united other working-class families in the community with the strike effort.²⁸

Labor’s victory at Strutwear marked the climax of community-based unionism in Minneapolis. Workers united across gender and skill lines to defeat unfair shop policies, while thousands of union sympathizers across all trades joined the picket line to defeat the Citizens Alliance. The spirit of Minneapolis’s labor movement morphed as the city moved towards becoming a union town in the late 1930s. Attempting to mirror the success of local community organizers, national union leaders tried to exert greater control over Minneapolis branches and bureaucratize what had started as a grass-roots movement. At the national level, rivalries between the American Federation of Labor (representing skilled craft unions) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (representing largely unskilled trades) diminished the cross-union solidarity that earlier Minneapolis campaigns had achieved. Furthermore, rank-and-filers—both men and women—became removed from decision-making as industrial efficiency and union hierarchies superseded community organizing in leaders’ priorities.²⁹

Labor Review, December 13, 1935. See also “Young Courage,” *Northwest Organizer*, December 4, 1935.

²⁷ Faue, *Community of Suffering and Struggle*, 116.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 119.

²⁹ Faue, “Paths of Unionization,” 183–189.

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Strutwear continued production for another twenty years, weathering war-time silk shortages and Minneapolis's mid-century industrial decline. The firm operated at a reduced scaled until 1958, when it sold the factory to a group of Saint Paul businessmen who intended to develop the building as a merchandise mart. Among the new owners was Carl Sharpe, president of Sharpe Manufacturing Company, an outerwear company that operated out of the building until the mid-1980s. In 1986, Minneapolis businessman Carl Pohlad purchased the former garment factory and renovated the plant into offices. A front entrance was removed and an atrium, parking garage, and landscaped plaza were added to the site at that time.³⁰

³⁰ "Silk Shortage May Close Unit at Strutwear," *Minneapolis Tribune*, July 28, 1941; "Strutwear Cuts Knitting Crew by Third Today," *Minneapolis Times*, August 23, 1941; "Strutwear Sells Building to St. Paul Group," *Minneapolis Tribune*, February 18, 1958; "Factory Near Metrodome to be Transformed," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, October 9, 1986; "Fiber Access Fuels \$33M Investment," *Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal*, January 21, 2001.

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Strutwear Knitting Company Building
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Strutwear Knitting Company Building
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"Crew Removed from Building; Not to Return." *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 28, 1935.

"Demands Use of Strutwear Plant at Once." *Minneapolis Journal*, December 31, 1935.

"Deny Knitting Plant Moved, Seek Opening." *Minneapolis Journal*, December 2, 1935.

"Factory Here Adds 3 Million Capital; To Build New Unit." *Minneapolis Journal*, December 11, 1926.

"Factory Near Metrodome to Be Transformed." *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, October 9, 1986.

"Fiber Access Fuels \$33M Investment." *Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal*, January 21, 2001.

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- "Marshals Put Court Order into Effect." *Minneapolis Journal*, November 27, 1935.
- "Moving Job Nearly Done." *Minneapolis Journal*, November 29, 1935.
- "Mrs. Struthers Goes on Stand in Mill's Suit." *Minneapolis Star*, March 25, 1936.
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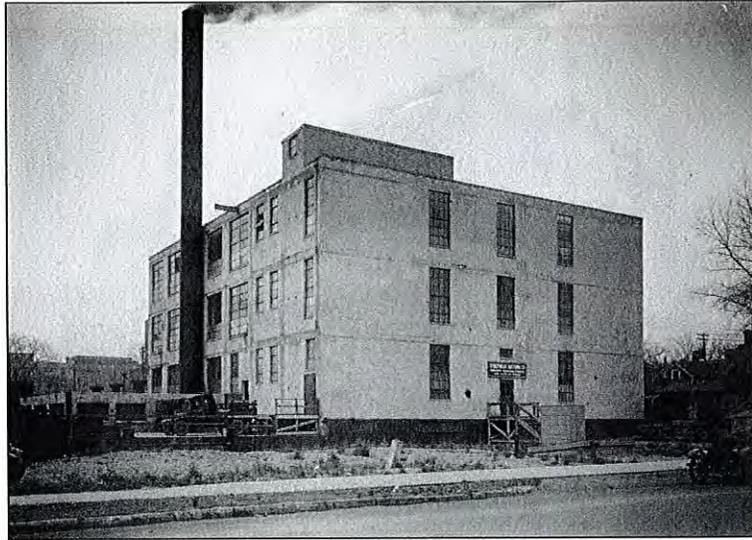


Figure 1: A historic photograph from the *Minneapolis Times* showing the north (right) and east (left) walls of the 1922 factory. Photograph dated January 8, 1924. Source: Minneapolis Collection, Hennepin County Central Library Special Collections.

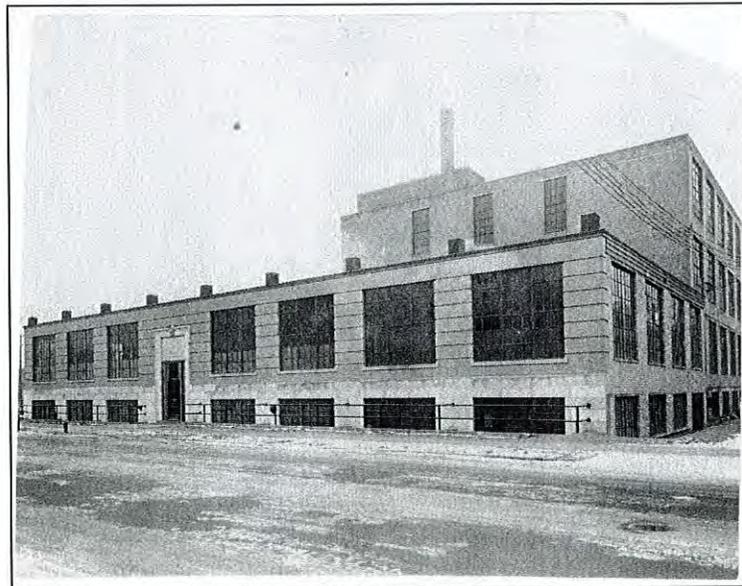


Figure 2: A historic photograph from the *Minneapolis Times* showing the north (left) and west (right) walls of the 1925 addition to the factory. Photograph dated January 3, 1926. Source: Minneapolis Collection, Hennepin County Central Library Special Collections.

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Figure 3: A historic photograph showing the north (right) and east (left) facades after the 1929 expansion. Photograph by Norton and Peel, June 1952. Source: Minnesota Historical Society.



Figure 4: A historic photograph showing the interior of a shop floor, with historic concrete columns visible in the background. Photograph by Philip C. Dittes, circa 1936. Source: Minnesota Historical Society.

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Figure 5: A historic photograph showing pickets and striking workers gathered in front of the building. Photograph dated 1935–1936. Source: Minnesota Historical Society.

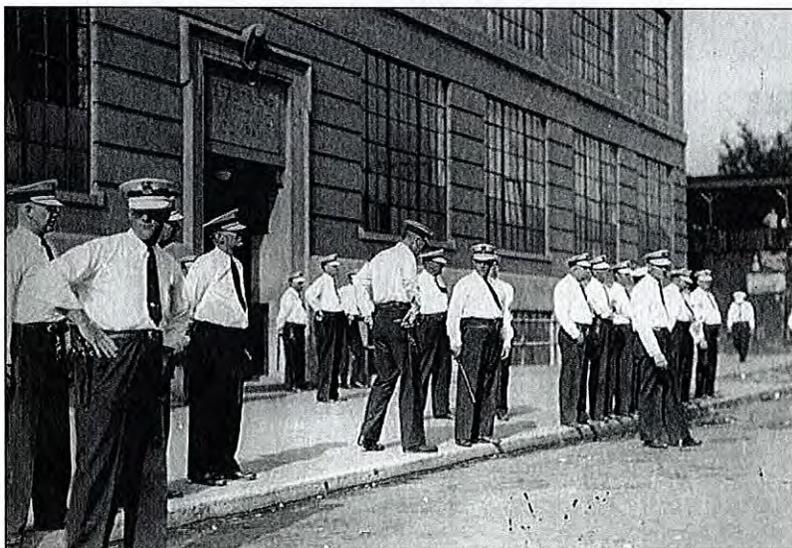


Figure 6: A historic photograph showing police in front of the building during the strike. Photograph dated 1935–1936. Source: Minnesota Historical Society.

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2.50 miles



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500 feet



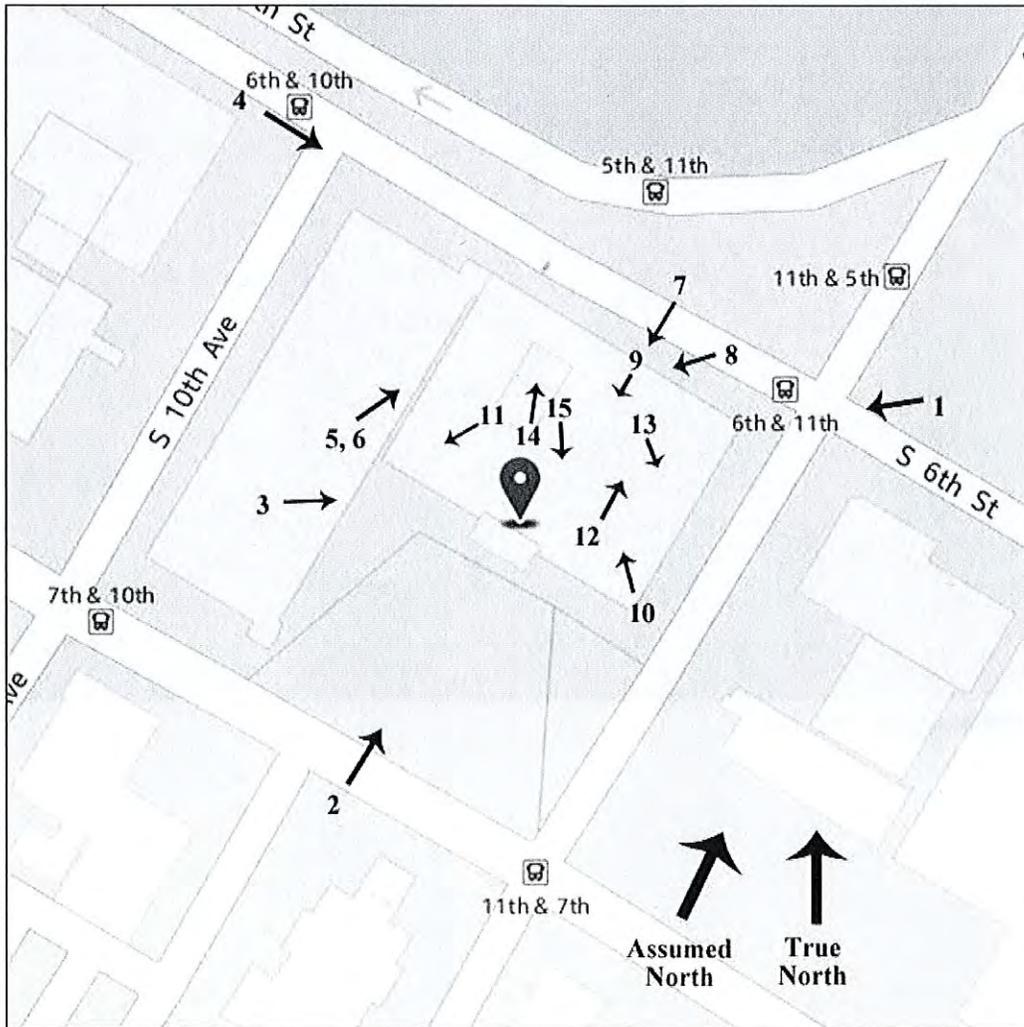
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Strutwear Knitting Company Building
National Register Nomination Sketch Map and Photo Key



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Photographs Page 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0001
North (front; right) and east (left) facades, looking southwest.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0002
South (rear) facade, looking north.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0003
View of the atrium addition, looking northeast.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0004
General view of the block, looking east.

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City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0005
West wall, looking northeast.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0006
Setbacks on the upper stories, looking northeast.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0007
Detail of the historic entrance on the north facade, looking south.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0008
Detail of the historic granite landing with inlaid tiles at the historic entrance on the north facade, looking southwest.

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Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0009
Detail of the historic terrazzo steps at the entrance vestibule at the entrance on the north facade, looking south.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0010
Subbasement, showing concrete columns, ceiling, walls, and floor, looking northwest.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0011
Basement, showing concrete column with mushroom capital, looking southwest.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0012
North (front; right) and east (left) facades, looking southwest.
Fourth floor, showing historic column grid and non-historic office finishes typical of most floors, looking north.

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Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0013

Fourth floor, showing non-historic ceiling partially removed to reveal intact mushroom capitals and concrete ceiling, looking southeast.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

MN_HennepinCounty_Strutwear Knitting Company Building_0014

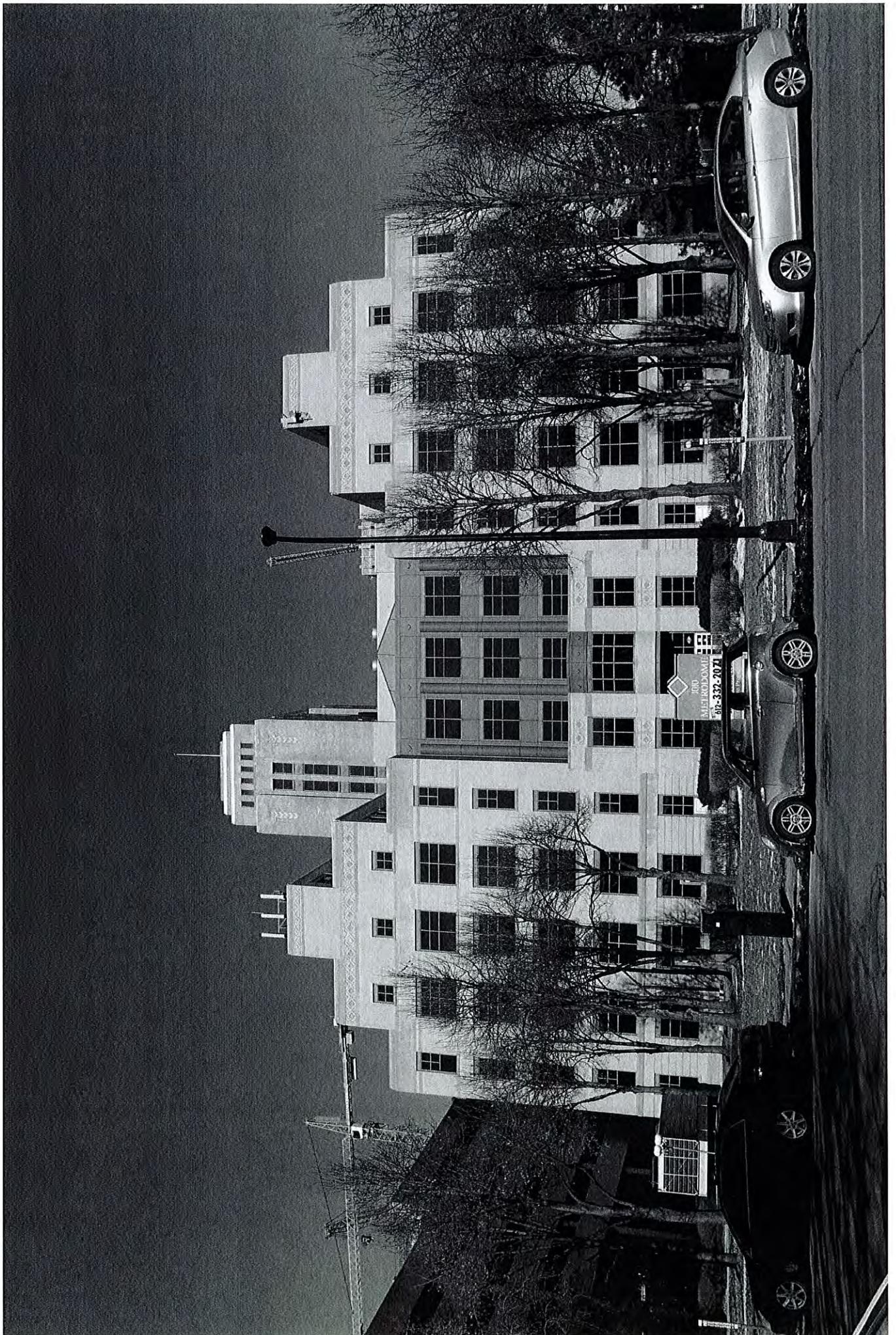
Tower, showing historic industrial finishes, looking northwest.

Name of Property: Strutwear Knitting Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Name of Photographer: Jessica Berglin
Date of Photograph: February 2015

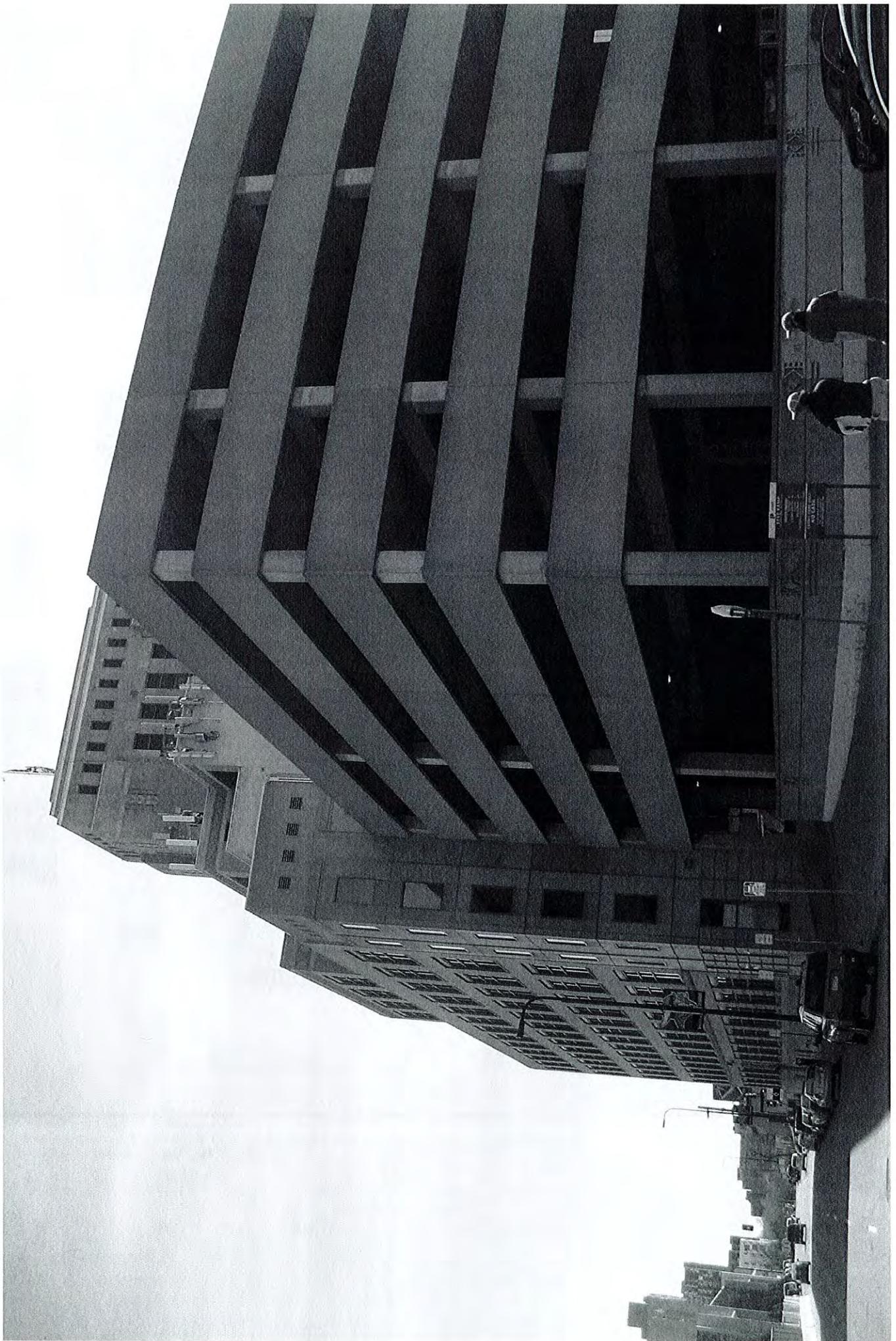
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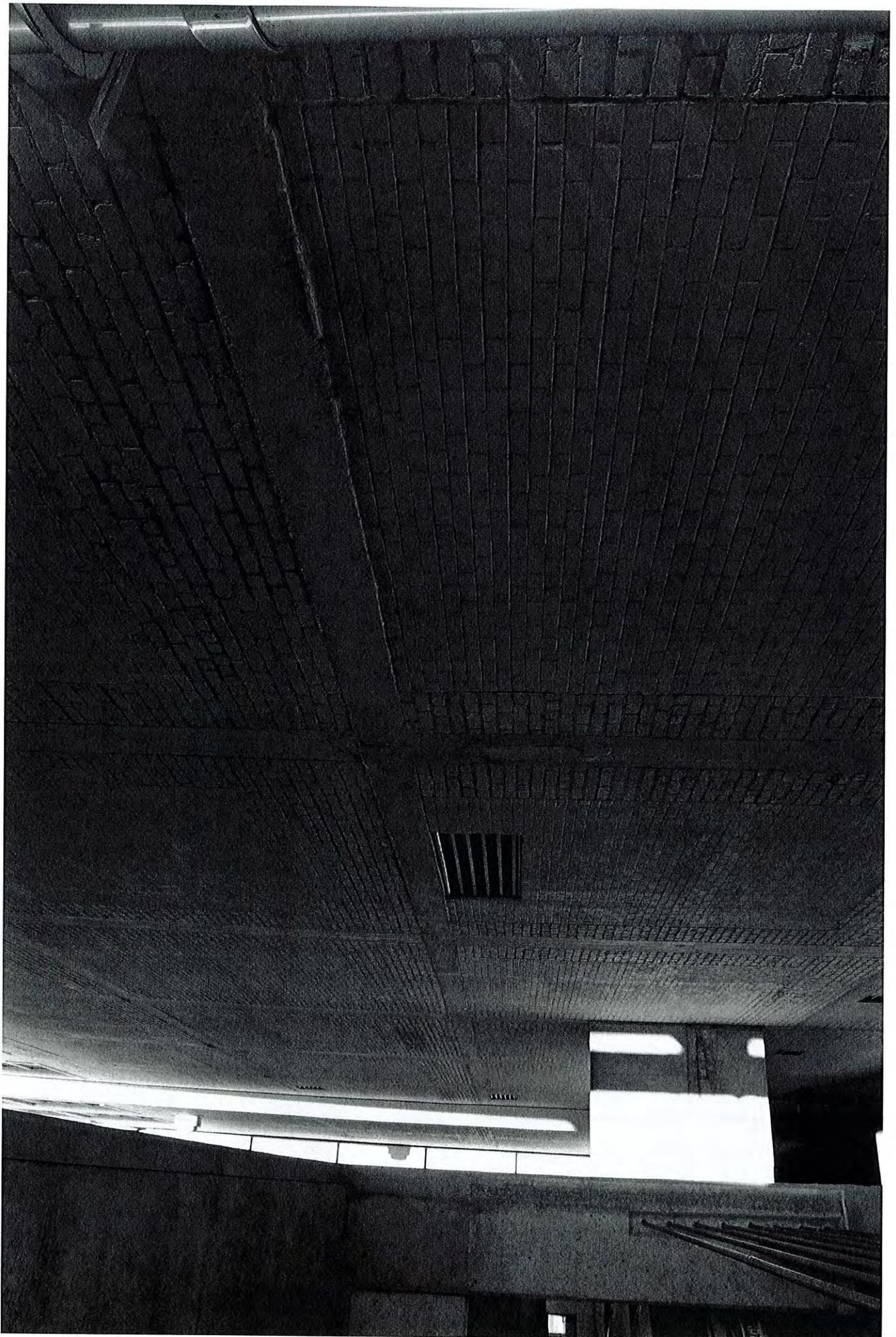
Non-historic atrium, looking southeast. The east (left) wall was formerly an exterior wall.

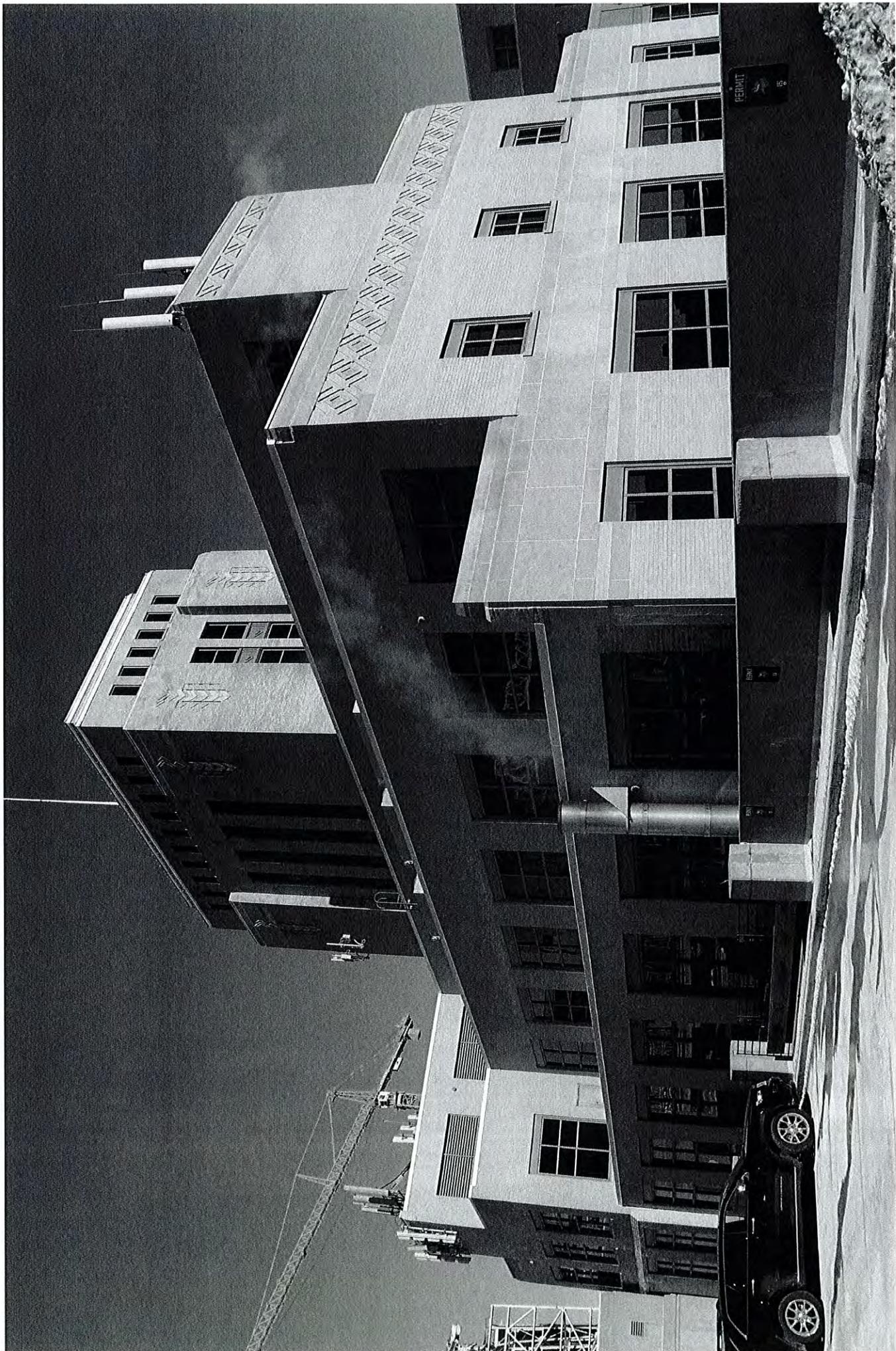














STRUTWEAR
KNITTING
COMPANY





