

(Oct. 1990)  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1245



1. NAME OF PROPERTY

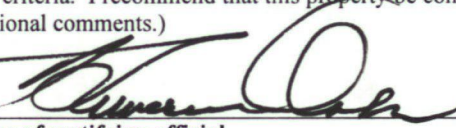
HISTORIC NAME: Blackstone Building  
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 315 N. Broadway  
CITY OR TOWN: Tyler  
STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: Smith CODE: 423  
NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A  
VICINITY: N/A  
ZIP CODE: 75702

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ( nomination) ( request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ( meets) ( does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ( nationally) ( statewide) ( locally). ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

  
Signature of certifying official  
Date: 4-15-2002  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official  
Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

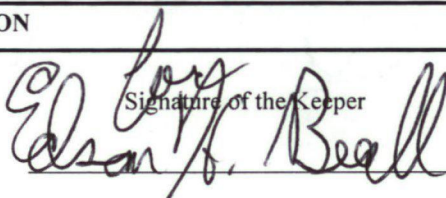
I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

  
Signature of the Keeper  
Date of Action: 6/14/02

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**5. CLASSIFICATION**

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**OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:** Private

**CATEGORY OF PROPERTY:** Building

<b>NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:</b>	<b>CONTRIBUTING</b>	<b>NONCONTRIBUTING</b>
	1	0 <b>BUILDINGS</b>
	0	0 <b>SITES</b>
	0	0 <b>STRUCTURES</b>
	0	0 <b>OBJECTS</b>
	1	0 <b>TOTAL</b>

**NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER:** 0

**NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING:** Historical and Architectural Resources of Tyler, Smith County, Texas

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

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**HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:** Commerce/Trade: Business = office building

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS:** Commerce/Trade: Business = office building

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

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**ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:** Modern Movement: Art Deco

**MATERIALS:** FOUNDATION BRICK, CONCRETE  
WALLS BRICK, CAST STONE, STONE/limestone  
ROOF ASPHALT  
OTHER GLASS, CONCRETE, METAL, WOOD

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-7).

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Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

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### DESCRIPTION

Built in 1938, the Blackstone Building is a landmark in downtown Tyler and is one of two outstanding Art Deco office buildings in the city. The Blackstone Building is a six-story, two-part vertical block constructed by prominent Tyler contractor Hugh E. White from plans attributed to well-known Fort Worth architect Preston M. Geren, AIA, (Brown interview 2001). Located at the north edge of Tyler's central business district, the buff brick building occupies a highly visible corner at North Broadway and East Line Street, two blocks north of the courthouse square and one block south of the primary railroad line. The building's design incorporates an asymmetrical facade, restrained Art Deco ornamentation in cast stone and limestone and a six-story tower. The Blackstone Building was one of the first in Tyler to be fully air conditioned. Adjacent to the no-longer extant Blackstone Hotel, Tyler's premiere hostelry, the Blackstone Building originally housed the Union Bus Station on the ground floor and offices for oil industry firms, insurance and grocery companies and geologists, engineers, and attorneys on the upper floors. In the 1960s the building was the main offices of the Delta Drilling Co., headed by prominent Texas oilman and Tyler resident Joseph Zeppa. Today, the building serves as offices for the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce, Heart of Tyler, the local Main Street organization, and other civic organizations. Rehabilitation work commissioned by the Chamber of Commerce in 1998 and conducted by the Tyler firm of Sinclair & Wright, Architects, removed incompatible exterior alterations, restored the original ground floor fenestration patterns and compatibly integrated a small-one story, ca. 1965 addition at the rear of the building. The Blackstone Building is one of several commercial property types defined in greater detail in the *Historic and Architectural Resources of Tyler, Texas* Multiple-Property National Register nomination. The Blackstone Building is preserved in excellent condition, retaining its architectural and historic integrity to a high degree.

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### GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

As the largest city (U.S. Census 1999 population est. 83,796) and seat of government in Smith County, Tyler is about 90 miles southeast of Dallas. The surrounding East Texas topography consists of timbered, rolling hills of gray clay and red sandy soils. Intermittent creeks water the area before draining into the Sabine and Neches rivers on the north and west of town, respectively. The Blackstone Building is in the heart of downtown Tyler two blocks north of the courthouse square and one-block south of the main line of the St. Louis Southwestern (Cotton Belt) Railway tracks. Sited on the southeast corner of North Broadway and East Line Street, and fronting onto North Broadway, the building's blocky, asymmetrical facade with six-story tower remains a prominent visual presence in an area containing a mix of parking lots, and one-to-10 story historic and non-historic commercial and warehouse buildings. Three early 20th century commercial buildings survive in the immediate area, although only two of these retain their historic integrity. The remaining surrounding development reflects construction or major exterior remodeling of primary facades in the post 1951-period. No historic commercial district survives in Tyler's central business district due to the demolition of the imposing 1909 Classical Revival Smith County Courthouse and its replacement in 1956 with a modest Modernist style building; at that time the courthouse block was divided to allow the extension of Broadway through the center of the square and the construction of the new courthouse on the east parcel. The focal point of the current square is the 1956 courthouse, located on the east side of Broadway, and the hardscaped park west of Broadway. Further changing the historic character of the square is the 1980s redevelopment of all of one block and portions of another facing the square and extensive on-going alterations to most 19th and early 20th century buildings fronting the square.

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## THE BLACKSTONE BUILDING

The Blackstone Building faces west onto North Broadway and was built in 1938 from plans attributed to Fort Worth architect Preston M. Geren, AIA. The building features restrained Art Deco styling and Classical formalism and occupies a rectangular lot at the southeast corner of North Broadway and East Line Street (**Figure 1**). Constructed by prominent Tyler builder Hugh E. White, the building was financed by the McKenna Hotel Company, under the direction of Edmond P. McKenna, owner and manager of the adjacent Blackstone Hotel (now demolished). The Blackstone Building's primary materials are concrete and brick with cast stone detailing around the entry doors and first floor windows (**Photo 2**). Topped with a flat built-up roof, the building's solid, volumetric form is lightened by the primary facade's asymmetrical massing, which creates two sections consisting of the larger rectangular five-story building block and a narrower, integrated six-story tower containing the main entry recessed in a detailed cast stone portal (**Photo 3**). A slightly projecting continuous window lintel and belt course divide the first floor from the upper stories, creating the impression of a stepped facade. A decorative, cast-stone parapet projects above the flat roof, which contains a small elevator penthouse.

The rectangular plan building (**Figure 1**) measures 52 feet fronting on North Broadway by 89.5 feet fronting on East Line Street (City of Tyler a) and reflects the corner lot's shape and limited space north of the larger, and much more visually and socially important, but now demolished, Blackstone Hotel. Sited in an urban block, the area's commercial nature precluded any landscaping or outdoor amenities. A paved parking lot now surrounds the building on the south and east, occupying the site of the razed hotel. North of the building, across Line Street, is another parking lot and beyond that an incompatibly altered early 20th century commercial warehouse building. Across Broadway to the west are altered one- and two-story 20th century commercial buildings, and the remnants of two demolished early 20th century commercial buildings. To the northwest are the two-to-five story ca. 1912 Moore Grocery Co.-Sledge Manufacturing Co. Building and the one-to-two story ca. 1912 Tyler Grocery Co.-William Cameron Co. Building, both highly intact brick Commercial Style commercial warehouse buildings currently being nominated to the National Register. Four other commercial buildings in the nearby area are also being nominated to the National Register.

The Blackstone Building's conservative styling, detailing and exterior finishes emphasize the functional and visual division between first floor and upper floor uses. While the upper floor exterior wall surfaces were originally very pale buff brick and remain so, the first floor walls appear to have been carefully finished concrete, or possibly cast stone (the original plans for the building are lost and no detailed, pre-1950 photos have been located). Today, the first floor exterior is finished with smooth stucco embellished with a barely visible, shallowly incised pattern that resembles square blocks of stone. Walls above the first floor remain unchanged. The street elevations are enhanced by pilasters that divide the primary facade into three vertical bays and the side street (north) facade (**Photo 4**) into eight vertical bays resulting in regular fenestration patterns. The ribbon design of the molded spandrels beneath the windows is extended at the cornice to form stepped elements that protrude above the parapet creating a scalloped effect suggesting movement. Because the south facade (**Photo 5**) originally faced the Blackstone Hotel, and the east facade (**Photo 6**) incorporated a canopied area supported by iron posts, neither first floor facade was visible, and pilasters, spandrel and parapet detailing were not used.

Original first floor windows on the street elevations featured large plate glass panes; current windows are compatible replacements within the original openings, consisting of two vertical panes divided by an aluminum strip for strength and safety. The original aluminum frame double-hung sash windows remain on the upper floors, arranged in an evenly spaced pattern on each facade. Cast sills project slightly from the wall surface. The primary entrance (**Photo 3**) on North Broadway is recessed in a cast stone entry flanked by glass and metal lanterns and fluted "pilasters." Above the entry is a stylized keystone topped by a lintel carrying the words "Blackstone Building," simplified spirals and molded decorative panels. New aluminum doors referencing Art Deco styling are installed in the primary facade and side street

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entrances. Other doors in the building are utilitarian glass and aluminum storefront types. The north elevation entry originally provided access to Line Street, and served bus terminal patrons. It continues to allow access from Line Street, and the parking lot to the north. Windows and doors are few on the south and east elevations.

A one-story addition erected in the 1960s is at the rear (east) of the building (**Photos 5, 6 and 7**). The addition encloses the area originally covered by a canopy. This was part of the bus terminal operations. The addition is not visible from the primary elevation, and it forms a minor, low-profile extension to the historic building on the north and south elevations that is dwarfed by the mass of the six story building. More visible from the east elevation than from the north, the addition obscures a complete view of the rear of the historic building, a facade not fully seen in the historic period due to the canopied loading area at the rear of the building and adjacent development fronting on Spring Street, ½ block to the east. The addition is stylistically differentiated from the historic building but utilizes massing, fenestration and finishes compatible with the original building (**Photo 7**).

Inside, the Blackstone Building consists of five floors of equal size and a small, sixth floor at the top of the tower (**Figures 2 -7**). The first floor, originally a bus terminal, coffee shop, and partial loft area now contains the lobby for the building, meeting rooms and office space. Floors two through six are divided into offices of varying sizes. Original interior concrete wall surfaces and all but two original wood and glass interior doors remain. Missing interior doors were replaced with new doors manufactured to match the original design. Because the building was occupied by many different businesses and uses, original interior historic fabric was lost through successive remodeling.

The 1998 rehabilitation conducted for the Chamber of Commerce by architect Garland Wright of the Tyler firm Sinclair & Wright, Architects cleaned the exterior walls using a low pressure water method, preserved remaining interior fabric--doors, subflooring, the freight elevator at the rear of the building, and interior wall surfaces in offices with exterior walls. The firm also refurbished the interior of the original passenger elevator and introduced compatible new materials to create a variety of office space. On the first floor, the 1998 rehab introduced a contemporary color scheme and installed terrazzo flooring in place of the existing asbestos tile and carpet. The first floor windows on the north elevation were reopened by removing brick infill and replicating the pane pattern found on the front elevation. The north elevation doorway was also reopened returned to use as an entrance. Cloth awnings were installed over the windows and the door on the south elevation to deflect the sun. The original rear canopied loading and parking area cum ca. 1965 addition was integrated into the original building design using compatible exterior materials, fenestration, and coloration.

### SUMMARY OF PHYSICAL CONDITION AND INTEGRITY

With few exterior alterations since its construction in 1938, and a recently completed sensitive rehabilitation program, the Blackstone Building is an excellent example of a two-part vertical block. Built from plans attributed to regionally known Fort Worth architect Preston M. Geren, AIA, the building blends conservative Art Deco massing and details with elements of formal Classicism and displays a high level of craftsmanship. The building's exterior and interior character-defining elements—brick and cast stone work, window materials and fenestration patterns, and parapet and entry detailing—are maintained in excellent condition and retain a high level of integrity of location, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association within the period of significance.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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**APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA**

- 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 VALUE, 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:** N/A

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:** Community Planning and Development, Architecture

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** 1938-1952

**SIGNIFICANT DATES:** 1938

**SIGNIFICANT PERSON:** N/A

**CULTURAL AFFILIATION:** N/A

**ARCHITECT/BUILDER:** Geren, Preston Murdock (architect); White, Hugh E. (contractor)

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** (see continuation sheets 8-8 through 8-16).

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (see continuation sheets 9-17 through 9-19).

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS):** N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

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Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1938 from plans attributed to Fort Worth architect Preston M. Geren, AIA, the six-story Blackstone Building is one of two Art Deco style office buildings in Tyler. Conceived and financed by Tyler businessman Edmond P. McKenna and his associates to serve Tyler's growing need for office space during the early years of the East Texas Oil Boom, the building housed oil companies, geologists, attorneys, engineers, insurance companies and wholesale grocery firms and served the community as the location for the Union Bus Terminal from 1938 until the early 1950s. The building's design and stylistic treatment are a modest interpretation of the Art Deco style shaped by limited funding and conservative local tastes. The Blackstone Building is significant for its architecture and for its associations with the Tyler business community during a period of rapid population growth and economic development fostered by the discovery of the East Texas Oil Field in 1930-1931. The Blackstone Building is one of 13 Art Deco buildings in Tyler, all commercial or governmental resources, each distinguished by distinctive massing treatments and architectural detailing within the oeuvre of Art Deco design. The Blackstone Building is maintained in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity. It derives its primary significance from its architectural form and its association with Tyler's oil boom economy, which spanned more than 40 years and fostered intensive community development. For these reasons, the Blackstone Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criteria A and C in the areas of significance of community development and architecture within a period of significance extending from 1938 to 1952.

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN TYLER

Settled in 1846, when Smith County was created from Nacogdoches County, Tyler incorporated in 1850 and served as the seat of Smith County as well as the site of branches of State and Federal courts. From its earliest settlement in the 1840s, when businesses located around the courthouse square, until the arrival of the railroad in 1873 the marketing and shipping of Smith County agricultural products formed the basis for Tyler's economy. But almost at once this base was augmented by small scale manufacturing such as blacksmithing, milling, logging and tanning as well as legal and government services. As a result Tyler's economy was diversified at an early date, even though the scope was small and the territory served limited. With the arrival of the International & Great Northern Railroad in 1873 and the establishment of the Tyler Tap Railroad in 1877 and its subsequent merger into the St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt, thereafter), manufacturing, food processing, food distribution, saw and planing mills, and banking and insurance firms became important components of Tyler's economy (Whisenhunt 1983:29). The railroad made an enormous impact on Tyler and the surrounding area, more than doubling business (Smallwood 1995:ch.15a, p. 11). In the late 19th century this diverse economy fostered 15 labor unions representing workers in various fields (Smallwood 1999:426). Local bank failure occurred in 1891 and then the nationwide Panic of '93 slowed the economy but by mid-decade economic troubles eased and Tyler's position as a Federal, state and local government and legal services center bolstered the economy and Tyler's influence statewide. "During the last quarter of the nineteenth century Tyler enjoyed a reputation as the political capital of Texas: the so-called 'Tyler Crowd' furnished governors, senators and lesser officials galore, and for more than a generation, its influence in both [Democratic] party and state affairs had to be reckoned with." (White 1940:1245).

The area around the courthouse square remains Tyler's commercial core, and retains many pre-1900 buildings. However, most have been altered with facade modernizations dating to the 1950s and 1960s. These changes significantly modify understanding of the original, or historically significant, roles of many buildings. A few downtown buildings have been restored or rehabilitated to reveal underlying historic fabric that once again connects the historical record with the physical artifact. Additional buildings may benefit from future restoration. Among the few unaltered surviving 19th

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century commercial buildings in Tyler is the one-story brick Kamel Building on East Ferguson Street, just off the square. Surviving, intact early 20th century commercial warehouse buildings include the Moore Grocery Co. and the Tyler Grocery Co. buildings on adjacent North Broadway parcels.

Throughout the 1890s and for the next 30 years, agriculture, manufacturing, wholesale and retail commerce, banking, insurance and legal services continued to fuel the economy. The Tyler Chamber of Commerce was established in 1900 as the Tyler Commercial Club to promote business interests. Meat processing, storage and shipment, canning, storage and distribution of grain, fruit and vegetables were joined by several wholesale grocery firms in the early 1900s including the Moore Grocery Company, which was established prior to 1900. The wholesale grocery industry expanded in 1903 when John B. Mayfield, a resident of what would become the Charnwood Residential Historic District started a second wholesale grocery, the Mayfield Grocer Co. By 1914 Mayfield's firm had grown to six branch facilities (Tyler Public Library g:215). Telephone service was established in Tyler in 1896, and Tyler had two phone companies until the 1940s. One was the S.A. Lindsey Telephone Company, which by 1905 had 25 miles of telephone lines in city (Texas State Library b). Samuel A. Lindsey was a prominent attorney, judge and businessman also involved in land speculation in south Tyler including the area that would become part of the Azalea District. In 1932 Lindsey developed the 15-story People's National Bank, a Tyler landmark and testament to the community's economic health during one of the worst years of the Great Depression.

Better roads throughout Texas facilitated commerce and in 1918 a Tyler-Dallas motor truck service was established to carry freight and passengers. The seven hour, 106-mile trip included several stops (Texas State Library c). As roads continued to improve truck, bus and auto travel became more attractive spurring by the 1920s development of gas stations and vehicle repair garages throughout central Tyler. By the mid 1920s Tyler retail enterprises included 30 businesses involving the automobile, eight auto salesrooms, five hotels, 12 barber shops, four bakeries, 18 cafes and restaurants, eight furniture stores, six hardware stores, 27 grocers, three theaters, eight shoe stores, 10 drug stores, three large department stores, three banks, 24 drygoods stores and many more (St. Louis Southwestern Railway:14). Suburban development included neighborhood grocery stores, dry cleaners and other service establishments. Tyler remained a legal center with a U.S. District Court, as well as the various Smith County courts; none of the associated buildings survive. The Blackstone Hotel opened in 1921 and was demolished in 1985; a parking lot now occupies the site. Its companion, the 1938 Blackstone Building, survives on North Broadway. It originally housed Tyler's first union bus station and office space. The Tyler Chapter of the Texas Association of Business was established in 1922 in response to a booming business climate (Whisenhunt 1983:59). In the late 1920s the Minnelee Bus Lines operated from 110 North Broadway (Tyler Public Library d), providing inter-city transit service. In 1929 the Jenkins-Harvey Super Service Station and Garage was erected to served the growing number of motorists. Between 1920 and 1930, significant economic growth in Tyler and Smith County occurred in dairying operations. Rose culture remained important and developed more rapidly after irrigation was introduced in 1924. Tomatoes, pecans, and peanuts also became important crops. Two fertilizer plants used a cottonseed meal base to make their product, and the Sledge Manufacturing Co. employed more than 100 people.

In 1930, Tyler was on the threshold of its greatest economic era, a 30-year-plus period of unprecedented growth and development. In October 1930 oil was found in nearby Rusk County when Dad Joiner's Daisy Bradford #3 proved to be a producing well. In March 1931 Guy Vernon Lewis brought in the first producing oil well in Smith County, located near the community of Arp, southeast of Tyler. As more wells came in drillers, riggers, geologists, pipers, surveyors and others moved to Tyler, and refineries and exploration companies developed headquarters in Tyler. The boom affected just about every aspect of life in East Texas, and oil added greatly to the Tyler and Smith County economy (UT, Austin PCL:a). While the population increased from 9,255 in 1920 to 13,009 in 1930, Tyler received a huge influx of people between 1930 and 1950. In 1940 the population reached 20,879 and in 1950 it had grown to 28,854 (U.S. Census). The population continued to increase through the 1950s and 1960s.



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Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

Tyler benefited greatly from the discovery of the East Texas Oil Field. As the largest town in the five county oil field area before the oil boom, it provided the most developed infrastructure and a wide range of business and professional services. At the junction of several state and U.S. Highways, Tyler had good communications, rail and truck service, a number of banks and related financial institutions, hotel and office space, a system of paved roads, and a variety of neighborhoods offering housing types to people of all income levels. As a result Tyler became the East Texas headquarters for many oil companies beginning with the discovery of the Van gas field west of Tyler in the 1920s. With the discovery of the East Texas field in 1930-31, 33 companies established offices in Tyler and almost all of the larger independent operators in the field set up land-leasing headquarters. Although Tyler had several office buildings and two large hotels, the Tyler and the Blackstone, neither existing hotel rooms nor the office space would prove adequate to meet new demands. In 1932 Samuel A. Lindsey, Chairman of the Board of People's National Bank, financed the construction of a 15-story bank and office building immediately west of the courthouse. In 1932 "the Blackstone [Hotel] added nine stories to accommodate the newcomers" (Clark:131), and in 1938 Edmond P. McKenna, owner of the Blackstone Hotel, and a group of investors active in the Chamber of Commerce financed the construction of the Blackstone Building, containing a union bus terminal on the first floor and five floors of office space.

The East Texas Field fostered construction of refineries, and a rail network around the field made it possible to move the oil efficiently. The field's crude oil was of good quality needing only minimal equipment to make gasoline. At least 95 small refineries were initially built, but after a few years as production evened out, that number dropped to 76. One of these was just east of downtown Tyler. Called LaGloria, the refinery turned out gasoline and originally was known as the McMurrey Refinery. It remains in operation. Trucking also became big business, hauling refined gas from the local refineries.

Legal services became even more important after the discovery of oil as related law suits and corporate activities surged; the need for office space grew. Throughout the 1930s agriculture, especially dairying, continued to be important to Tyler's economy. By the mid 1930s, 48 dairies had permits to retail or wholesale dairy products in Tyler. Roses, blackberries, peaches, pecans, and vegetables also were important local crops. Lumber and related milled wood products significantly contributed to local prosperity with 25 saw mills county-wide in 1937 (UT, Austin PCL:a). Additional principal industries in the county in the 1930s included canning factories, foundries, machine shops, a rail car factory, a grist mill, peanut products, and the manufacturing of crates, boxes mattresses, work clothing and house dresses. Services included 16 passenger auto agencies, six commercial auto agencies, 19 auto tire dealers, seven bakers, 33 cigar stands, 36 confectioners, 13 delicatessens, 15 department stores, 26 druggists, 38 dry goods stores 134 independent grocers and seven chain grocers, seven lumber companies, and 59 restaurants, and a pottery, among many others (Tyler Public Library:h).

In the 1940s oil and gas production and services related to that industry were the primary economic engines. In February 1940, the East Texas Industrial Exhibit Association sponsored the second annual Industrial Exhibit to showcase Tyler manufacturing, distribution and service capabilities. In addition, a number of local industries expanded in 1940, adding more space and personnel. Prominent among these are Sledge Manufacturing Company and Tyler Iron and Foundry Company. Both had government contracts associated with pre-World War II mobilization activities. Surveys were made of plant and tool capacities in Tyler to assist local firms in securing national defense contracts. To attract business and support local companies seeking government work, the Tyler Chamber of Commerce's Industrial Committee prepared facts and statistics for certain defense industries sending briefs to government bureaus and agencies reporting the advantages of Tyler including its large supply of surface water and underground water available from reservoirs at Blackburn Dam on the Neches and Prairie Creek Reservoir in Smith County (Tyler Chamber of Commerce b).

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Blackstone Building  
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Writing in the early 1940s, Tyler's business boosters could boast of the community's great economic advantages. The Chamber of Commerce described Tyler as the "Center of the East Texas Oil Industry," a statement well founded. "The people of Tyler and of all other cities and towns within or adjacent to the oil field have been told that they have not known what the late depression meant" (Tyler Public Library g). As a result of the boom, Tyler school population increased from 4,261 students in 1930 to more than 6,000 in 1936. Assessed valuations for 1930 were \$17,477,254, for 1935 they were \$28,679,113 (Tyler Chamber of Commerce b). While prosperity was a reality for those involved in the oil business, other aspects of the economy were affected, with minorities, unskilled laborers and tenant farmers largely bypassed by the boom.

As important as the East Texas field was to the local and regional economy it proved vital to the success of the Allies in World War II. Texas oil fields produced 80 percent of all oil needed by the Allies, and the East Texas Field provided the major portion. As World War II began, oil producers and the government realized overland transit of oil was the only safe way to ship oil from the fields to east coast ports, from where it would be transferred to the battlefront. To secure transit, two pipelines were laid, one from the East Texas Field to the refineries of New York and the Philadelphia area, stretching about 1,400 miles. Called Big Inch, it measured 24 inches in diameter and every day during the war it delivered almost 300,000 barrels of crude oil. The other pipeline was known as Little Inch, and it measured 20 inches in diameter. It ran from Beaumont to Big Inch near Little Rock, Arkansas. From there it paralleled Big Inch eastward. Every day of the war it delivered almost 200,000 barrels of aviation gasoline, motor gasoline and other refined products for use by the Allies (*New Handbook of Texas*:774). U.S. military presence also fueled the Tyler economy through the local Signal Corps Radio Operator Training School, the U.S. government's lease of the Tyler airport for use as a government field, and the establishment in 1943 of Camp Fannin (Whisenhunt 1983: 69-78), an infantry training center northeast of Tyler that employed 2,500 civilians. In 1945, the camp became a military separation center and the airport returned to civilian use.

By the mid 1940s Tyler had three banks, two large hotels--the Blackstone with 200 rooms and the Tyler with 75 rooms, offices of more than 30 oil companies, refineries, garment factories, box and crate factories, canning plants, an airport, two commercial colleges, two colleges for African Americans--Butler College and Texas College, one daily and one weekly newspaper, two rail lines, four bus lines and several truck freight lines (Tyler Public Library g:235). Residential development boomed with new areas of substantial brick dwellings in revival styles appearing in south Tyler and northwest Tyler. One of the city's most visible neighborhoods from this era is the Azalea District, in south central Tyler, which contains a large concentration of Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival brick dwellings. This area was Tyler's elite address between the 1930s and early 1960s, housing oil company executives, oil entrepreneurs and others associated with the oil industry or made wealthy by it. It remains one of the community's most prestigious residential neighborhoods.

Oil and gas, industrial and manufacturing enterprises and the machine shops of the St. Louis and Southwest Railway (Cotton Belt) were Tyler's primary post-World War II businesses. The railroad was the largest industrial employer in the city in 1947 with 523 employees and an annual payroll of more than \$1,000,000. Other large firms included the Sledge Manufacturing Co., the Woldert Company, the Tyler Pipe and Foundry Company, and the McMurrey Refining Co., Delta Drilling Co., Thompson Manufacturing Co., the Richardson Co., the Bryant Heater Co., American Clay Forming Co., the East Texas Cotton Oil Co., and the East Texas Crate and Basket Manufacturing Co. The Mayfield Grocery Co., still in business with four branch offices, was joined by two competitors. The Wadel-Connally Co., a wholesale hardware distributor, had nine branch offices (Woldert 1948:148-149). In the late 1940s the State of Texas located a tuberculosis sanitarium at former Camp Fannin (later the Tyler Chest Hospital and now University of Texas, Tyler Health Center), and the McMurrey Refinery announced plans to build a \$40,000 plant in Smith County. Both facilities added to Tyler's economic diversity and created new jobs. Business and residential development continued as new office buildings were erected in the late 1940s and the 1950s. One of the most visible is the 1953 modernist

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Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

Petroleum Building on South Broadway. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, a prominent social and service club present in Tyler since 1891 erected a Modernist lodge building in 1949 on south Broadway, opening their doors to the community for dances, private parties and other social activities. Residential construction continued as in-fill in established neighborhoods throughout south Tyler, including the Azalea District and in northwest Tyler. New neighborhoods of tract-type housing also appeared in southeast Tyler and northwest Tyler.

By the end of 1931 there were 3,607 wells in the East Texas field, and more than 109,000,000 barrels of oil were produced. Members of the Texas Geological Society met in Tyler December 17, 1931, and 59 geologists gave papers estimating the field's potential barrels. The average estimate was 2.1 billion barrels. In time the field proved to have far more oil than these experts predicted. "Cumulative production of crude oil and natural gas liquids in northeastern Texas through 1950 was approximately 4 billion barrels. By January 1, 1993, when the Texas Railroad Commission calculated the field at 100 percent production, it had produced more than 5 billion barrels of oil (*New Handbook of Texas*:774). After more than 60 years, some wells still operate.

## THE BLACKSTONE BUILDING

The Blackstone Building was built in 1938 at an approximate cost of \$100,000 (City of Tyler a) in response to state and local demands for more office space as the oil boom brought new business to Tyler. Located on lot 1-A of Block 13, the Blackstone Building is within the Issac Lollar Survey on land owned in the 19th and early 20th centuries by Thomas J. Wiley and then by T. A. Niblack, members of two prominent Tyler mercantile families. The Blackstone Building replaced a large 19th century residence still in use as a boarding house in the mid-1930s. In 1931, the McKenna Hotel Company purchased the Blackstone Building site and land adjacent to it on the south from Mrs. M.E. Niblack for \$25,000 in cash and promissory notes. The hotel company built a nine-story hotel annex on the southerly portion of the property in 1932, reserving the northerly portion for future development. Eventually the northerly lot was legally divided from the hotel property and the hotel company's assets. Shares in the Blackstone Building corporation were distributed among the five primary hotel company stock holders according to their investments: Edmond P. McKenna (president, McKenna Hotel Co.) 44 percent, Albert F. Sledge (president of the Moore Grocery Co. and the Sledge Manufacturing Co.) 44 percent, Francis J. McKenna (son of E. P. McKenna) 6 percent, Gus F. Taylor (president, Citizen's National Bank) 3 percent, and Burnet Wadel (partner in Wadel-Connally Hardware) 3 percent (Smith County Deed Records). In May 1937 these five men incorporated as the Blackstone Building and transferred title to the Blackstone Building lot to Henry M. Bell, Sr., as Trustee. Bell was an officer of the Citizen's National Bank, president of the East Texas Chamber of Commerce and later became head of the Tyler Chamber of Commerce. Bell deeded the lot back to the Blackstone Building (Smith County Deed Records). These transfers apparently secured funding for design and construction of the new office building and bus terminal while protecting the hotel and personal assets of the investors. By August 1937 the Blackstone Building was completed and the corporation dissolved. Title to the new building and its lot were transferred back to the McKenna Hotel Company.

With business booming in Tyler during the 1930s, office space became scarce when the 1932 People's National Bank Building was fully occupied. In early 1937, the Chamber of Commerce organized a committee to study the office space problem and attempt to provide additional space. Investigations revealed that McKenna and his associates were planning to build an office building and bus terminal. The committee felt the new building would provide ample additional space, and thereafter discontinued its efforts (Tyler Chamber of Commerce c). Construction on the Art Deco office building and bus terminal began in February 1938; it was one of the first office buildings, if not the first, in Tyler to be air conditioned. The building's convenient location two blocks north of the courthouse and immediately north of the Blackstone Hotel and Annex (**Figure 8**)--an important landmark in Tyler's social and business life--combined with its

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Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 13Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

modern, stylish design and air conditioning made it a desirable business address. The building's design is attributed to Preston M. Geren, AIA, (Brown interview) a well-known Fort Worth architect. Although the original plans for the building have been lost, records retained by the firm of Robert Y. Brown, Jr. Architect, which conducted renovation work in the 1960s, indicate Preston Geren as the original architect. The original design, published in the *Tyler Journal* on February 11, 1938 shows a symmetrical facade with a centrally placed seven-story tower flanked by two six-story office wings (**Figure 9**). Funding short-falls apparently scaled back the project to a six story tower with one five-story office wing, creating a building with asymmetrical massing clearly derived from the original design. Conservative in design, the building is an imposing buff brick mass finished with cast stone. Detailing includes fluted spandrels, a scalloped parapet, zigzag embellished window lintels and an entry portal embellished with a keystone and molded panels showing gear or wheel forms.

The building housed Tyler's first union bus terminal on the ground floor and offered space to oil companies, attorneys, geologists, engineers, food brokers and insurance companies. An advertisement in the 1938 Tyler City Directory billed the Blackstone Building as "Tyler's newest, most modern air conditioned office building." In 1945 the building housed 15 oil related companies including offices for the McMurrey Refining Co. In 1952, 10 oil related firms were renting space in the building and it was also occupied by the Tyler Retail Merchants Association, three insurance companies, offices of the Cotton Belt Railroad, food brokers, real estate firms, accountants and attorneys. The building continued to serve as Tyler's bus terminal until the 1950s. Thereafter increase in private automobile use caused a decline in bus business. Bus terminal services located elsewhere in downtown Tyler and today Tyler's bus station occupies a small site on west Locust Street about two blocks west of the Blackstone Building. A series of loans between the Tyler Hotel Company, descendant of the McKenna Hotel Company, and Citizen's National Bank eventually brought ownership of the Blackstone Hotel and the Blackstone Building to Tyler resident and Delta Drilling Co. president Joseph Zeppa. By 1963 Zeppa had acquired sole ownership of the Blackstone Building (Smith County Deed Records) and subsequently moved his headquarters there from the Citizen's National Bank Building, occupying the entire building. Delta Drilling renovated the Blackstone Building prior to occupancy using the Tyler architectural firm of Bruce, Brown and Bellamy. The bus terminal facilities were converted to office space, and it is thought that the rear one-story addition was added in the mid-1960s. Delta Drilling vacated the building in the early 1980s, leasing portions of it to local firms and allowing the Chamber of Commerce to use it for storage (Justice interview). Eventually the Blackstone Building came under ownership of Tyler Bank and Trust (descendant of Citizen's National Bank), which donated it to the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce in 1996. In 1998 the Chamber of Commerce completed a fundraising drive that raised one million dollars for rehabilitation and hired the Tyler firm of Sinclair & Wright, Architects, under supervision of Garland Wright, to conduct the rehabilitation of the building (Bell interview). The building is now owned and occupied by the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce. Other civic groups also operate out of the Blackstone Building, including Heart of Tyler, Inc., the non-profit organization that participates in the Texas Main Street Program.

Erected in response to Tyler's growing oil-based economy during the late 1930s, the Blackstone Building is associated with important regional economic and development trends and an era of prosperity unprecedented in Tyler's history. While the Great Depression continued to grip most of the rest of the nation, bread lines, declining tax revenues, and closed businesses were virtually unknown in Tyler. The oil boom built businesses, neighborhoods and personal fortunes, many of which remain as reminders of Tyler's atypical experience during the nation's worst economic crisis.

Architecturally, the Blackstone Building is an important local example of conservative Art Deco styling with elements of formal classicism. The building's asymmetrical massing, fluted spandrels, scalloped parapet and entry detailing recall the highly decorated, flamboyant versions of the Art Deco style popular throughout the United States between about 1928 and 1940. The formal symmetry of the entry portal with its use of a keystone over the front entry and

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Blackstone Building  
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flanking fluted pilasters establishes the building as modern, but serious, paving the way for prestigious tenants. The Blackstone Building represents an important transitional era in American architecture, when designers, building owners and tenants sought modernity but had not yet let go of established classical forms or adopted the avant guard principals of the International Style.

The Art Deco style is a modernistic architectural form that grew out of early 20th century attempts to redefine the character of architectural design. This style is not considered truly modern by architectural historians, but rather a transitional form that bridges the thinking of historicism and International Style modernism. The first major American impetus for modernistic design was in 1922 when the *Chicago Tribune* sponsored a world-wide competition for a new headquarters design. Although the *Tribune* selected a Gothic Revival design, "...second prize went to an Art Deco design by a young Finnish architect, Eliel Saarinen. His design was widely publicized and much of the architectural profession felt that he deserved the first prize..." (McAlester:465). As a result Art Deco styling became the most fashionable architectural form of the 1920s and 1930s, and it laid the ground work for the rejection of historicism and the acceptance of the unadorned, volumetric designs known as Modernism, or the International style.

Art Deco design uses boxy massing, typically more vertical than horizontal and flat roofs. Skyscrapers and other large, urban buildings often have stepped parapets to increase light and air circulation within the building and at the same time enhance the verticality and ornamental quality of the building. High style examples incorporate much interior and exterior ornamental detail in exotic metals, glass, carved stone and cast stone. Geometric ornament includes zigzags, chevrons, stylized flowers, fruit, vines and leaves, classical columns and pilasters, lozenges, fluting, reeding, sunrise and sunburst patterns and elements that reference mechanization including gears and wheels. The blend of compact massing, modified to improve interior conditions by increasing light and air, and exuberant ornament reflect both historical references and contemporary life and illustrate Art Deco's appeal and its position as a transitional architectural form. Most Art Deco design was applied to commercial buildings, with few residential examples. Tyler has 13 Art Deco influenced buildings, all commercial or governmental resources; the Blackstone Building and the People's National Bank Building are the most visible examples in the city.

### NOTABLE INDIVIDUALS

Preston Murdock Geren (1891-?), a native of Sherman, Texas, received a Bachelor of Science in architectural engineering from Texas A& M University in 1912. After graduating he traveled in Europe and then was a partner in the firm of Giesecke & Geren, in Austin, Texas between 1914 and 1916. During World War I he served in the Army Corps of Engineers. In 1922-23 Geren was chief engineer for Sanguinet, Staats and Hedrick, and from 1934 until 1962 he was principal of Preston M. Geren Architects & Engineers in Fort Worth, Texas. By 1970 the firm was known as Preston M. Geren & Associates. Geren joined the American Institute of Architects in 1942 and was a licensed Texas engineer. He served as president of the Fort Worth chapter of the AIA in 1948, and was a member of the Fort Worth Zoning Board from 1945 until 1951. Major commissions include the 1951 American Airlines hangar and Terminal at Amon Carter Field (with Joseph R. Pelich of Fort Worth), Fort Worth National Bank (with Shreve, Lamb and Harmon of Fort Worth), Continental National Bank, and Texas Christian University, all in Fort Worth. He designed also schools in Gladewater, and Midland, Texas. In 1954 Geren placed first in a competition of seven outstanding Texas projects awarded by the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. His winning design was for several buildings at Amon Carter Field (UT, Austin APL a). No other known building designs in Tyler are attributed to Geren.

Hugh E. White was a prominent, successful building contractor in Tyler. He worked in partnership with Allen M. Campbell in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and then went on to practice individually. In addition to the Blackstone Building, White was the contractor for the 1949 Elks Lodge. He partnered with Allen M. Campbell on The 1928 Crescent

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Blackstone Building  
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Laundry dry cleaning building and the 1932 People's National Bank Building. He worked on dwellings in Tyler and provided contracting services for large public works projects throughout Texas.

Edmond Patrick McKenna (1872-1944) worked in merchandizing before becoming manager of the Blackstone Hotel in 1922. In 1930 he purchased the lease of the Tyler Hotel Company, and became owner and manager of the Blackstone Hotel (under the corporate ownership of the McKenna Hotel Company. He served as a director of the Citizen's National Bank and along with four prominent Tyler businessmen developed the Blackstone Building. Born in Monroe, Louisiana, McKenna came to Tyler in 1912 (White:49). He operated the 200 plus room hotel until his death in 1944.

The Delta Drilling Company, with headquarters in Tyler, was established with bank loans and personal investment of the five founding stock holders. Created in November 1931 and headed by Joseph Zeppa (1890-1975), the company provided drilling services for independents and those with leases on small tracts. Delta Drilling became highly successful, and in 1980 it was the largest, privately owned, domestic, land based drilling company in the world (Presley 1978:4). Joe Zeppa was born in Northern Italy and came to the United States at the age of 12. He spoke no English upon arrival in New York and had no money or connections. He worked as a runner for a New York investment firm, learning about the world of finance and making friends and contacts. Zeppa moved west and became an important figure in oil production having worked in the Arkansas, Oklahoma and California fields prior to settling in Tyler. In 1933 Zeppa moved to Tyler with his wife and family. He bought a Victorian-era house in what is now the Charnwood Residential Historic District (Smith County Deed Records) and in 1935 completely remodeled it, adding a second floor and turning it into a white columned landmark (Smith County Mechanics Liens) on South Broadway, one of the city's most prominent residential addresses.

When the heated issue of proration, or production control, surfaced in the East Texas field in 1932, it captured the state and the nation's attention. While the issue polarized East Texans, controlled production was more complicated than just the obvious points of self-determination and money. The long term effects of indiscriminant pumping were of concern, and more than one oil field suffered unnecessary loss of oil when overproduction, lack of proper storage and decreased demand wasted or made the product undesirable or unsalable. Salt water was a component of the East Texas field, and as oil was pumped out, salt water migrated east pushing the oil before it. With each barrel of oil and water, internal pressure decreased, and oil flowed more slowly to the surface. Eventually, with uncontrolled pumping, no more oil would flow naturally, and pumps, an expensive tool, would be needed on every well. "An oil pool that yields 100,000,000 barrel in its lifetime is considered good, and through 1941, the East Texas Field produced 1,702,915,000 barrels, but it also produced millions and millions of barrels of salt water, which was saltier than either the Atlantic or the Pacific" (Clark:263). Few viable ideas surfaced about what to do with the water.

In 1941, after proration, or controlled production, was firmly in place, the issue of pressure in the field became acute. Internal pressure was down to 1,020.71 pounds per square inch (psi), close to the 750 psi point at which the pressure would be too weak to provide natural pumping. With World War II on the horizon, oil producers realized the field would be very valuable to the war effort. Many ideas for disposing of the water were put forth, including a canal to the Gulf of Mexico and dumping into the Sabine River. Obviously, the first was cost prohibitive and neither were environmentally sound. In July 1941 Joseph Zeppa suggested pumping the water back into the ground and letting well owners take out an extra barrel of oil each day for putting back all the water they got out in a day. Zeppa further suggested a non-profit organization be created to gather and dispose of all the water originating in the field. Costs would be borne by the operators and financed by the extra barrel per day. The East Texas Salt Water Disposal Co. was approved by the Texas Secretary of State on January 20 1942, and Zeppa was made a director. On October 1, the first salt water was pumped back into the field. During World War II more than 200,000,000 barrels of salt water were pumped back into the field, and pressure remained almost constant (Clark:259-266). Thus, slowly, people came to understand that

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Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

conservation was good, not just from a basic price per barrel standpoint, but also because it would save them money in the long run and ensure the longevity of the field's production. Zeppa's idea remains in use today, an important contribution to the oil industry.

## JUSTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Blackstone Building is an important local landmark signifying the role of the oil industry in Tyler's growth and development from the late 1930s through the 1950s. Built in 1938 from plans attributed to Fort Worth architect Preston M. Geren, AIA, using conservative Art Deco massing and detailing, the Blackstone Building provided office space for firms operating within Tyler established agriculture and transportation related markets as well as for companies and individuals serving Tyler's growing petroleum based economy. With Tyler's bus station on the first floor throughout World War II, the Blackstone Building also was the door through which thousands of military personnel accessed nearby Camp Fannin. The Blackstone Building is one of two architecturally distinguished Art Deco office buildings in Tyler, and it reflects the prosperity and development created by the ascendant East Texas oil boom. The building retains high levels of integrity of location, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association within the period of significance and is maintained in excellent condition. Its setting has been affected by the demolition or alteration of nearby commercial buildings but the Blackstone Building remains one of Tyler's most significant and intact office buildings. The boundaries of the nominated property conform to the extant building and the boundaries of the land on which it is located and the building conveys not only the rich heritage of early 20th century architectural styling, but provides an understanding of the financing developers' desire to build economically while promoting Tyler as progressive and sensitive to then current trends in architectural taste and community needs.

The nominated property is significant for the way it reflects Tyler's growing economy and population during the late Depression years and the vital role bus service played in passenger transportation during World War II and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance. It is also significant for its conservative Art Deco styling, created by plans attributed to well-known Fort Worth architect Preston M. Geren, AIA, and the way it reflects local budgetary constraints and tastes during the late Depression era. For these reasons the Blackstone Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level of significance. The building retains its original metal windows on floors two through six and its original exterior brick and cast stone finishes and detailing. Through a sensitive rehabilitation in 1998 original ground floor windows and doors enclosed at an unknown time were reopened and finished with glazing compatible with original materials. Interior office spaces on floors two through six were rehabilitated for office use with original interior doors, perimeter wall surfaces and elevators retained. The bus terminal facilities on the first floor were remodeled into offices during the 1960s. During the 1998 rehabilitation the first floor was changed into a lobby area with reception and meeting rooms and finished with Art Deco influenced stone, tile and metal detailing. A small one-story addition at the rear of the building contains offices and a meeting room. It was erected about 1965 and enclosed the original bus passenger loading area. The addition is distinct from, but compatible with, the original design of the building and its small scale and siting at the rear of the building make it unobtrusive. These changes respect the original historic fabric and do not detract from the integrity of the building. The building is worthy of preservation as a highly intact local landmark that through its office and terminal function documents the impact of the oil industry and bus service on economics and development patterns in Tyler and provides interpretation of local social and architectural trends between 1938 and 1952.

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- a) Tax parcel map.

Smith County Clerk

- a) Smith County Deed Records.
- b) Smith County Mechanic's Liens Records.
- c) Smith County Plat Records

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- a) Vertical File, Blackstone Hotel
- b) *Chronicles of Smith County, Texas* Vol. 29 #1, Summer 1990, pp. 35-38.

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- b) Smith County Tax Rolls, various dates.
- c) *Tyler Tidings*, 1918.

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- a) *Tyler*, February 1941.
- b) *Tyler*, April 1940.
- c) *37th Annual Report*, 1937, p. 16.

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- d) Tyler City Directories, 1882-1960.
- e) *Tyler Morning Telegraph*, Commemorative Issue "Century of Our Lives," 1-1-2000.
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**Interviews**

Bell, Henry III.	Personal interview with Diane Williams, December 6, 2000.
Brown, Jr., Robert Y.	Telephone interview with Diane Williams, January 29, 2001.
Freidlander, Loren.	Personal Interview with Diane Williams, February 12, 2001.
Justice, John.	Telephone interview with Diane Williams, January 24, 2001.
Wright, Garland.	Telephone interview with Diane Williams, December 6, 2000.
Zeppa, Keating.	Telephone interview with Diane Williams, December 18, 2000.

**Correspondence**

Brown, Jr., Robert Y.	Letter to Diane Williams, February 8, 2001.
Zeppa, Keating.	E-mail transmittal to Diane Williams, December 18, 2000.

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** less than one acre

<b>UTM REFERENCES</b>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
	15	283540	3581720

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** Lot 1A of Block 13, City of Tyler, Texas

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:** Nomination includes all property historical associated with the building

---

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

---

**NAME/TITLE:** Diane Elizabeth Williams

**ORGANIZATION:** for the City of Tyler and Historic Tyler, Inc.

**DATE:** June 20, 2001

**STREET & NUMBER:** PO Box 49921

**TELEPHONE:** (512) 458-2367

**CITY OR TOWN:** Austin

**STATE:** Texas

**ZIP CODE:** 78765

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**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

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**CONTINUATION SHEETS**

**MAPS**

**PHOTOGRAPHS** (see continuation sheet Photo-29)

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS** (see continuation sheets Figure-20 through Figure-28)

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**PROPERTY OWNER**

---

**NAME:** Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce, attn: Henry Bell

**STREET & NUMBER:** 315 N. Broadway

**TELEPHONE:** (903) 592-1661, ext. 230

**CITY OR TOWN:** Tyler

**STATE:** Texas

**ZIP CODE:** 75702

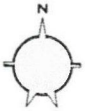
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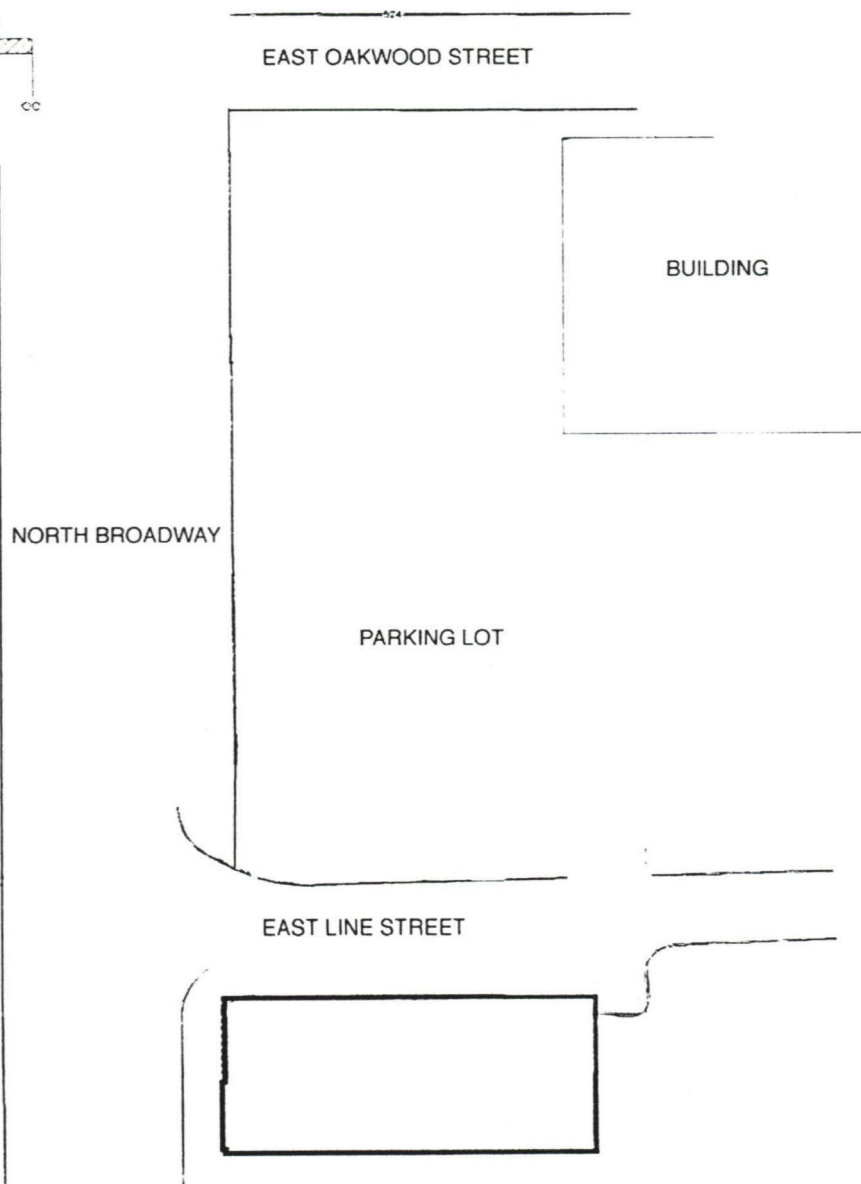
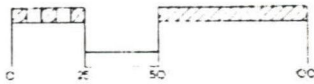
Section FIGURE Page 20

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 1: Site Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)



1 SITE PLAN



**Sinclair & Wright**  
  
ARCHITECTS  
119 NORTH SPRING  
TYLER, TEXAS 75702  
AREA OFFICE 901-895-1050

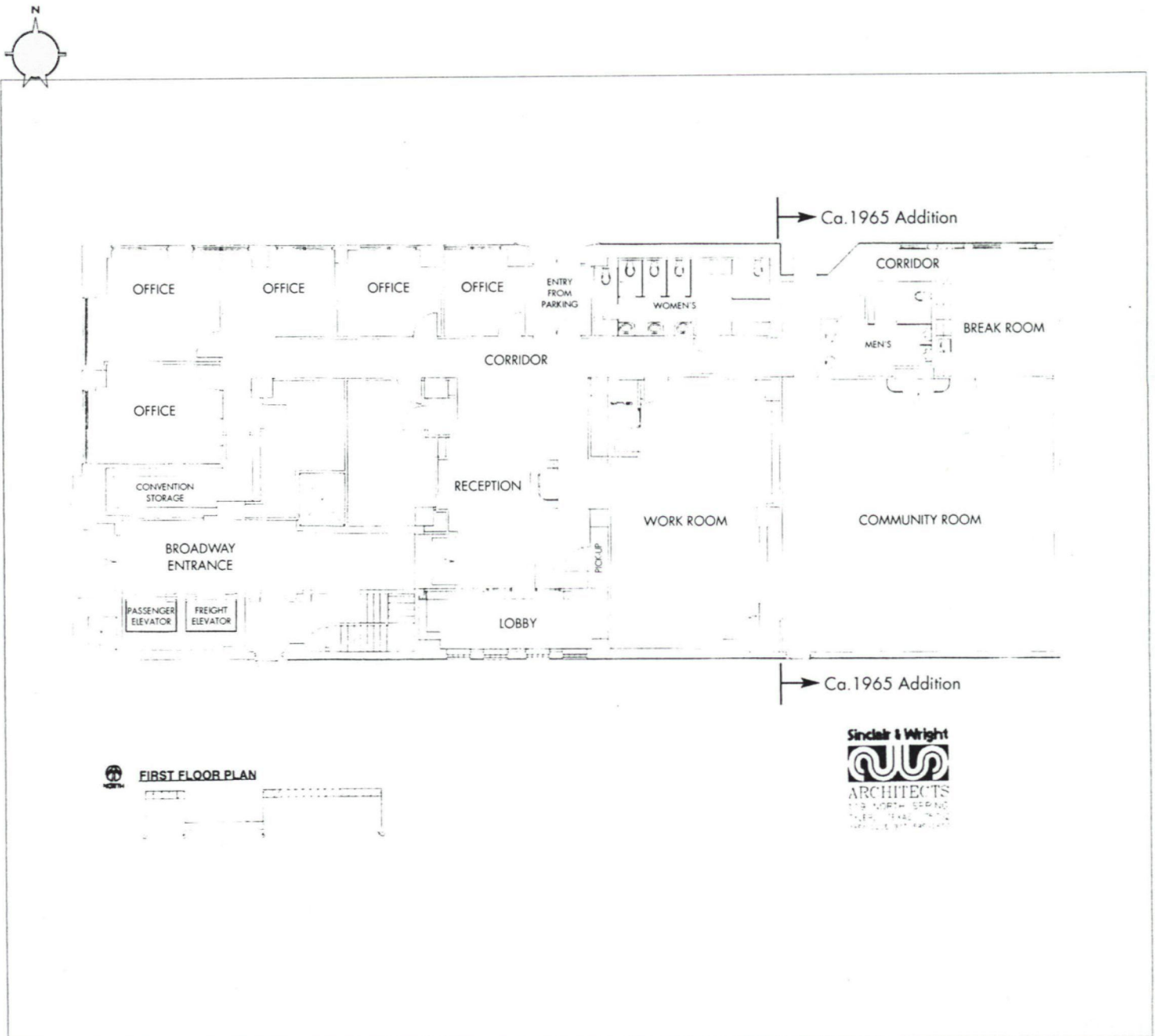
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Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 2: First Floor Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)



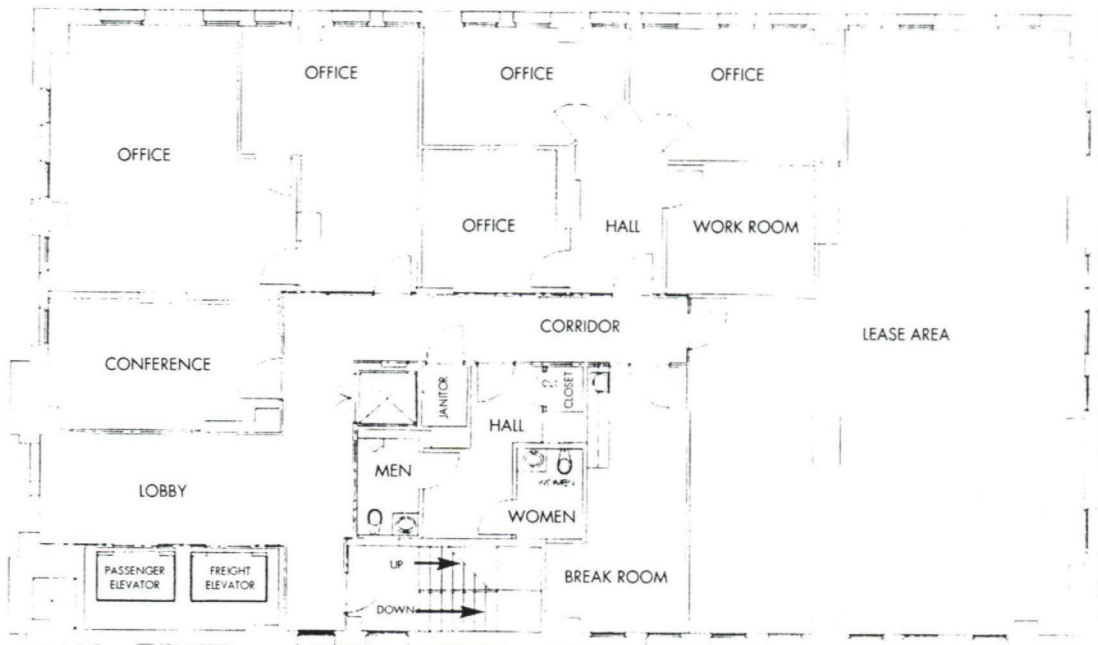
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Blackstone Building  
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**Figure 3: Second Floor Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)



**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**



**Sinclair & Wright**  
  
**ARCHITECTS**  
119 NORTH SPRING  
TYLER, TEXAS 75702  
AREA CODE 409-295-1299

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 23

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 4: Third Floor Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)



**THIRD FLOOR PLAN**



**Sinclair & Wright**  
  
**ARCHITECTS**  
119 NORTH SPRING  
TYLER, TEXAS 75702  
AREA UNDER PERMITS 1988

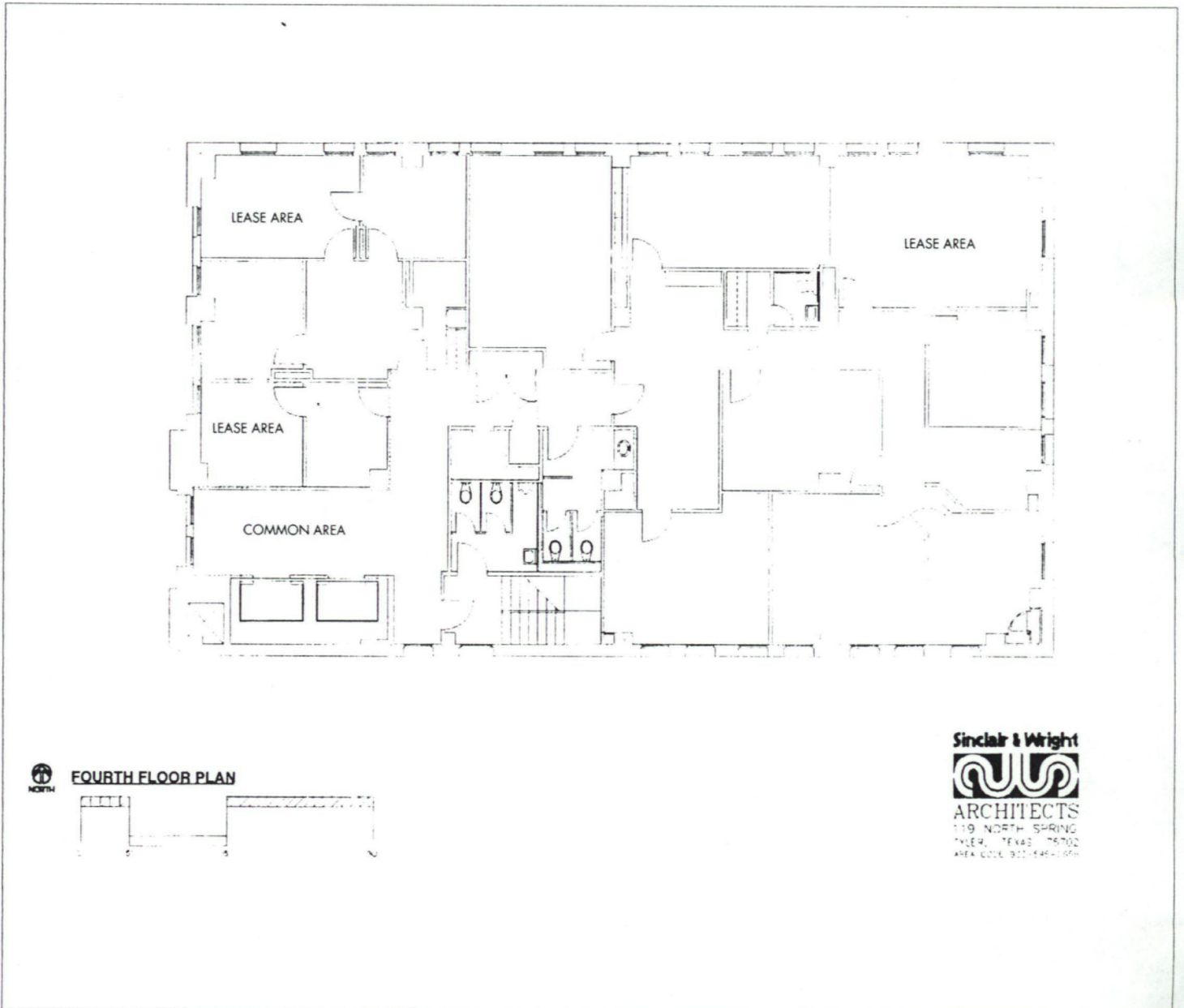
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 24

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 5: Fourth Floor Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)





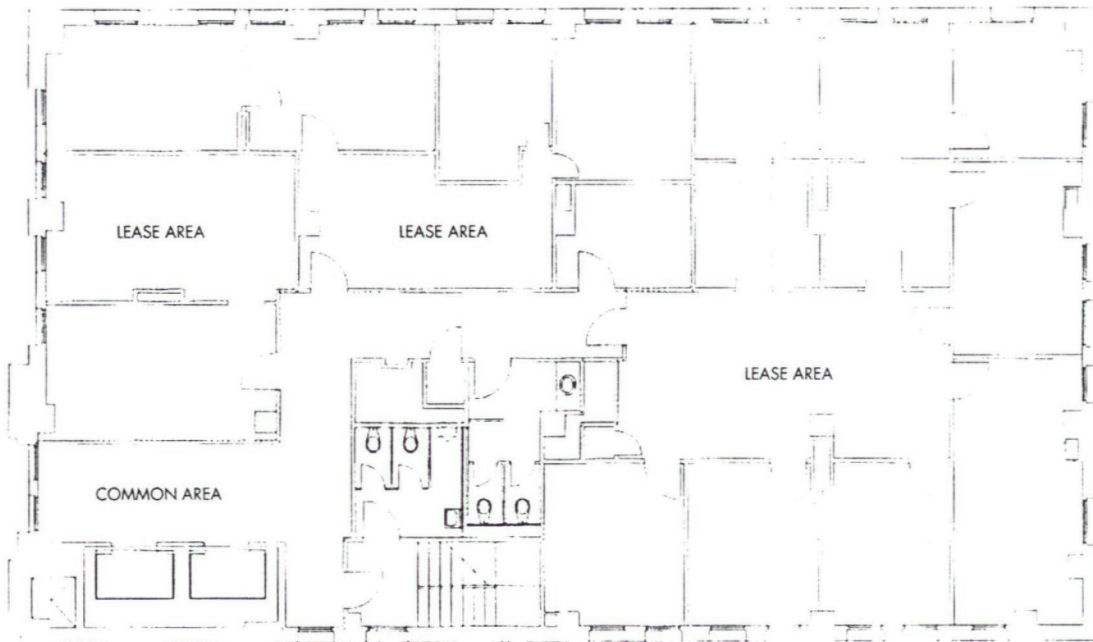
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 25

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 6: Fifth Floor Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)



**FIFTH FLOOR PLAN**



**Sinclair & Wright**  
  
**ARCHITECTS**  
119 NORTH SPRING  
TYLER, TEXAS 75702  
AREA CODE 936-444-2100

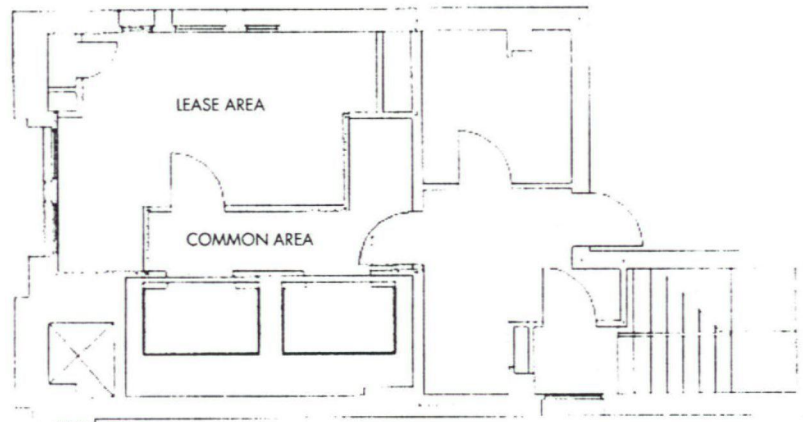
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 26

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 7: Sixth Floor Plan**  
(Source: Sinclair & Wright, Architects)



**SIXTH FLOOR PLAN**



**Sinclair & Wright**  
  
**ARCHITECTS**  
119 NORTH SPRING  
TYLER, TEXAS 75702  
AREA CODE 907-695-1650

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 27

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 8: Blackstone Building and Blackstone Hotel and Annex, 1938.**  
(Source: *Tyler City Directory*, 1938)



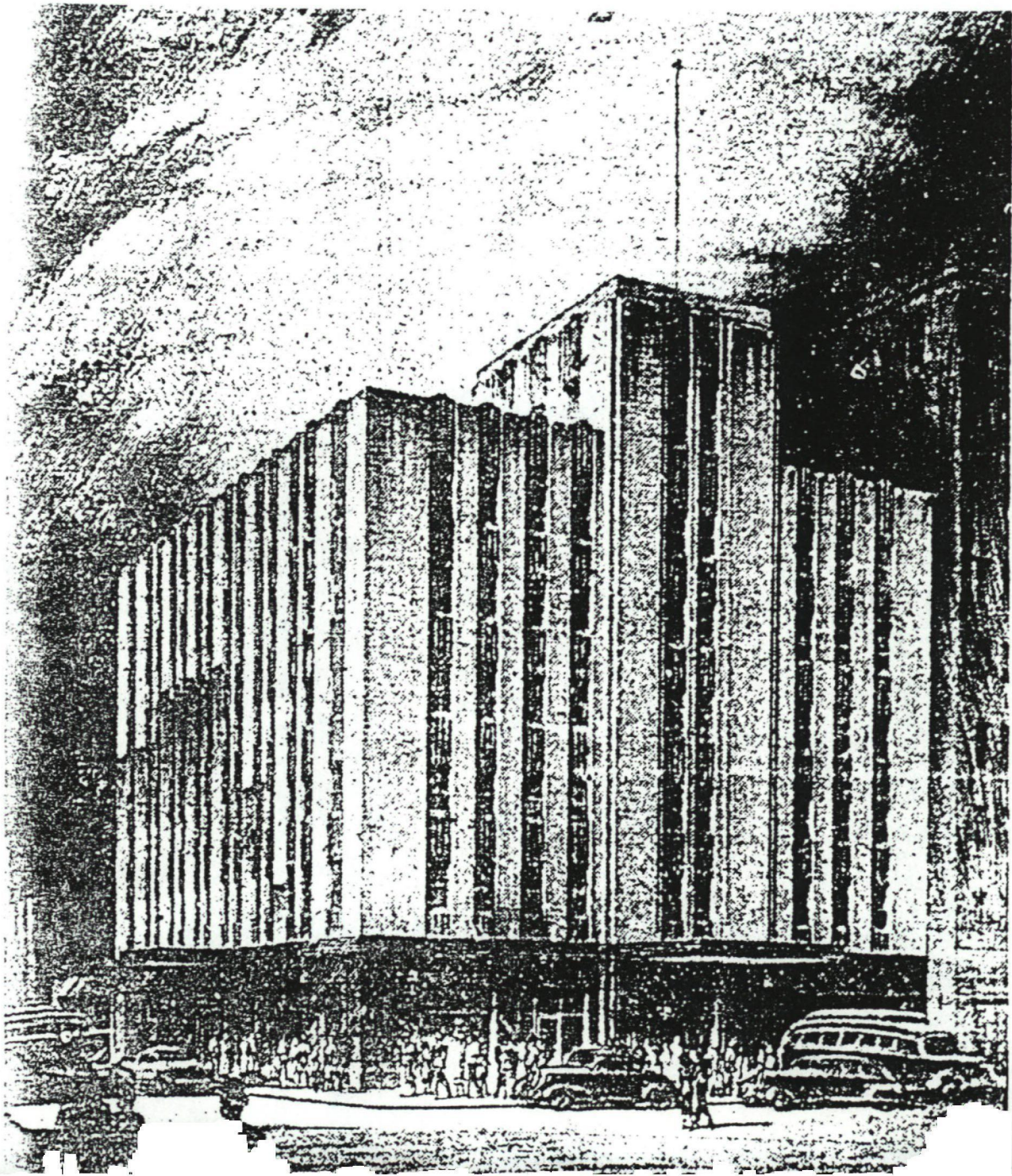
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 28

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

**Figure 9: Architect's Rendering, Blackstone Building, 1938.**  
(Source: *The Tyler Journal*)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section PHOTO Page 29

Blackstone Building  
Tyler, Smith County, Texas

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### PHOTO INVENTORY

BLACKSTONE BUILDING  
TYLER, SMITH COUNTY, TEXAS  
DIANE ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, PHOTOGRAPHER  
DECEMBER 2000, JANUARY 2001  
ORIGINAL NEGATIVES ON FILE WITH THE TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

PHOTO 1 OF 6:  
West elevation looking east.

PHOTO 2 OF 6:  
Detail of entry, west elevation looking east.

PHOTO 3 OF 6:  
North and west elevations looking southeast.

PHOTO 4 OF 6:  
West and south elevations looking northeast.

PHOTO 5 OF 6:  
East and south elevations looking northwest.

PHOTO 6 OF 6:  
Rear addition, north elevation looking southeast.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Blackstone Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Tyler, Texas MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Smith

DATE RECEIVED: 4/30/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/16/02  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/01/02 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/14/02  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02000645

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 6/14/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register

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

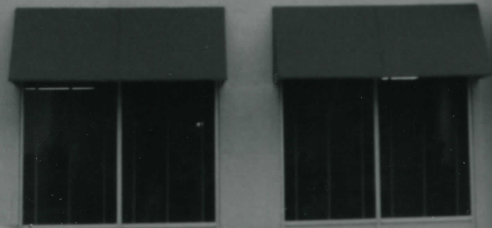
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



BLACKSTONE  
BUILDING



BLACKSTONE BUILDING  
315 NORTH BROADWAY  
TYLER, SMITH CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 6





BLACKSTONE  
BUILDING

NO  
PARKING  
ANY  
TIME  
↔

BLACKSTON BUILDING

315 NORTH BROADWAY

TYLER, SMITH CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 6



BLACKSTONE BUILDING  
315 NORTH BROADWAY  
TYLER, SMITH CO., TEXAS  
PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 6



Tyler  
TEXAS  
CELEBRATING  
100  
YEARS

Tyler  
TEXAS  
Area Chamber  
of Commerce

BLACKSTONE BUILDING  
315 NORTH BROADWAY  
TYLER, SMITH CO., TEXAS  
PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 6



*Blackstone Building*  
BLACKSTONE BUILDING

315 NORTH BROADWAY

TYLER, SMITH CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 6





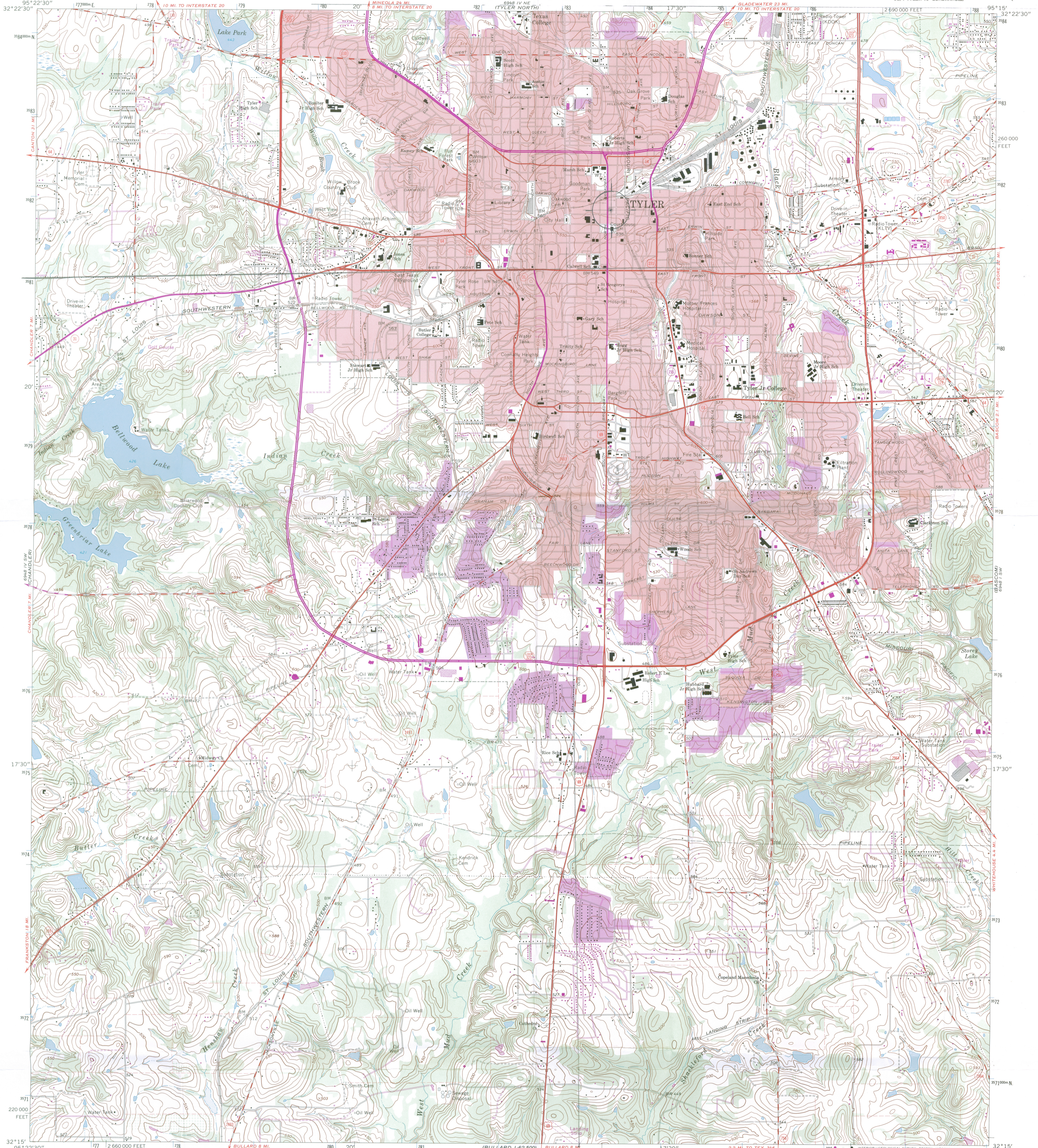
NO  
PARKING  
ANY  
TIME  
←

*Blackstone Building*  
BLACKSTONE BUILDING

315 NORTH BROADWAY

TYLER, SMITH CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 6



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1966

Polygonic projection. 1927 North American datum

10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, north central zone

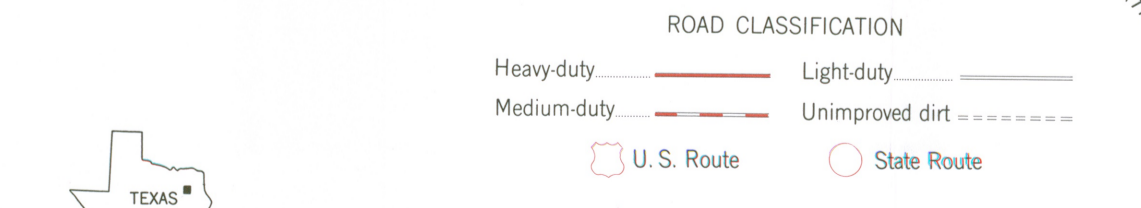
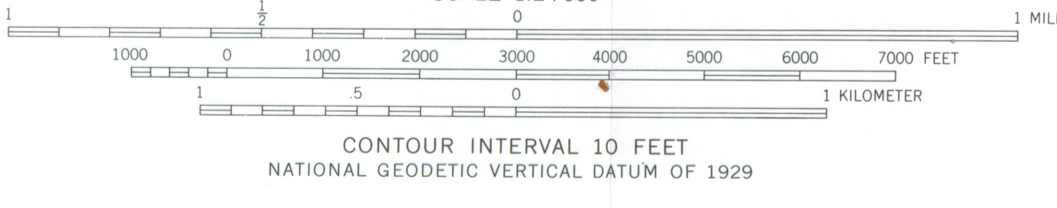
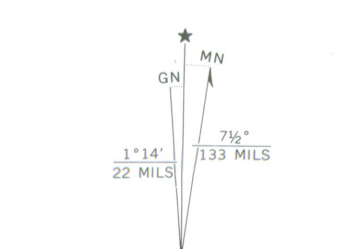
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



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AMS 6948 IV SE—SERIES V882