

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received FEB 28 1984
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Public Utility Buildings constructed in The Zig-Zag Art Déco Style in Tulsa, OK TR
1924-1930
and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Multiple locations N/A not for publication
city, town Tulsa N/A vicinity of
state Oklahoma code 40 county Tulsa code 143

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEMATIC	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership
street & number
city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tulsa County Courthouse
street & number 500 South Denver
city, town Tulsa state Oklahoma

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Oklahoma Historic Comprehensive Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1982 federal state county local
depository for survey records Oklahoma Historical Society, Preservation Office
city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

See Individual Nominations

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The three nominated buildings are all multistoried, commercial structures built in the Zig-Zag Art Deco Style by Public Utility Companies between 1924-1930. They are superb and well preserved examples of that jazzy style that reflects so well the boom time atmosphere of Tulsa in the late 1920's. (Tulsa's population increased from 72,075 in 1920 to 141,258 in 1930). They also demonstrate the changes in style and design from historic orientation to technological orientation.

Each of these buildings contain distinctive elements of Zig-Zag Art Deco Style including:

- 1) Verticality, with piers, window treatments and roof top decorations designed to add to the upward thrust and illusion of height.
- 2) Terra Cotta and vitreous tile used extensively for decoration on the exterior surfaces.
- 3) Design motifs featuring the energetic rhythm of the ziggurat; the sun with its rays or a half circle with radiating lines; the zig-zag; stepped-back stars, triangles, etc; stylized organic shapes in both the interior and exterior decoration.
- 4) The traditional treatment of the volume of the building as a solid sculptured form.
- 5) The symmetry of facade.

In addition the Oklahoma Natural Gas Building and the Public Service Building home the "L" shaped lobby popular in Art Deco Architecture.

All three buildings demonstrate the close relationship of the Gothic design which art deco supplanted in popularity in Tulsa at this time, as there are elements of this style apparent in the first story of both the Oklahoma Natural Gas Building and the Public Service Building, while decorative elements of the first two floors of the Southwestern Bell Main Dial Building constructed in 1924 are definitely Gothic.

These three buildings were all erected in what was at that time, and continues to be today, the heart of the down-town business district of Tulsa.

The research was conducted by a Tulsa University history masters degree candidate while she was taking a graduate preservation seminar at Oklahoma State University. Methodology included document search, interviews and field research.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

See Individual Nominations

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

These buildings are significant because they are excellent examples of the Zig-Zag Art Deco style of architecture and were built by public utility companies in Tulsa. Two of these three buildings were among the three earliest Art Deco buildings constructed in Tulsa, and the selection of this style by the generally conservative utility companies established its total acceptance and paved the way for the host of Art Deco buildings which were to follow. Unfortunately, many of those buildings were destroyed before their true value was recognized.

Additionally, these buildings are significant historically because they reflect the tremendous growth of Tulsa from 1920-1930. By 1927, construction costs in the downtown district were averaging one million a month, every month. Rivets were not welded in those days, they were beaten in, and the resulting noise made it almost impossible to conduct classes in the downtown Central High School. By 1930 Tulsa had more buildings of ten or more stories than any city of its size in the world. The Public Service Company of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Natural Gas Company, and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company all needed larger facilities to accommodate their growing number of customers. Not only did the population of Tulsa double during this period, but it was an optimistic, forward looking community which expected the growth to continue as is evidenced in the plans of these buildings where foundations were constructed to support additional stories.

The economy of Tulsa was based on the oil and gas industry, and in 1920 Oklahoma was the nations largest oil producing state.

Tulsans were quick to embrace the new in architecture and technology. The Tulsa municipal airport was established in 1928 when commercial air transportation began, by 1929 Tulsa led all airports in the world in paid passenger volume.

The Art Deco Style was perfectly suited to the taste of this energetic and progressive city and the black gold flowing from nearby oil and gas fields provided the money for construction of these outstanding buildings. They continue to be a viable part of downtown Tulsa and provide a visible and tangible link to an important period of its past.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____ See Individual Nominations

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale 1/24000

UTM References

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Individual Nominations

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Ann Anders, Ph.D.

organization Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey date December 1982

street & number 502 Math Sciences, Oklahoma State Univ. telephone 405-624-5678

city or town Stillwater state Oklahoma 74078

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature C. Empeck date 2/17/84

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Bob Groover date 6/22/81
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: See Continuation Sheet for Listing date _____
Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Item number #9

Page 1

Gibson, Arrell M. The Oklahoma Story, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978.

Morris, Lerona Rosamond. Tulsa The City Beautiful. 1927.

Junior League of Tulsa. Tulsa Art Deco. Tulsa: The Junior League of Tulsa, 1980.

The 1929 Consolidated Building Directory of Tulsa.

Research Files Tulsa Art Deco University of Tulsa Library.

Tulsa Tribune, April 14, 1981. Tulsa City-County Library Business and Technology files.

INTERVIEWS:

Mr. Ben Ball, A.I.A.

Mr. Joseph R. Koberling, A.I.A.

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 1

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Zig-Zag Art Deco Style ^{Public Utility Buildings} Thematic Resources
State Tulsa County, OKLAHOMA

Cover 6/22/84

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Southwestern Bell Main Dial Building Substantive Review

Keeper Beth Grovorn 6/22/84

Attest _____

2. Oklahoma Natural Gas Company Building Substantive Review

Keeper Beth Grovorn 4/10/84

Attest _____

3. Public Service of Oklahoma Building Substantive Review

Keeper Beth Grovorn 4/10/84

Attest _____

4. Keeper _____

Attest _____

5. Keeper _____

Attest _____

6. Keeper _____

Attest _____

7. Keeper _____

Attest _____

8. Keeper _____

Attest _____

9. Keeper _____

Attest _____

10. Keeper _____

Attest _____