

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Paul Jones Building

Other names/site number: Marion E. Taylor Building / JFCD-301

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

2. Location

Street & number: 312 S. 4th St.

City or town: Louisville State: KY County: Jefferson

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 Xlocal
Applicable National Register Criteria: XA B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Craig Potts/SHPO** Date _____
Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office _____
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

1

Noncontributing

buildings
sites
structures
objects
Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE / TRADE: business, professional, department store

Current Functions

COMMERCE / TRADE: business, professional, restaurant

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals: Beaux Arts

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Commercial

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property: Pressed brick, stone (steel frame)

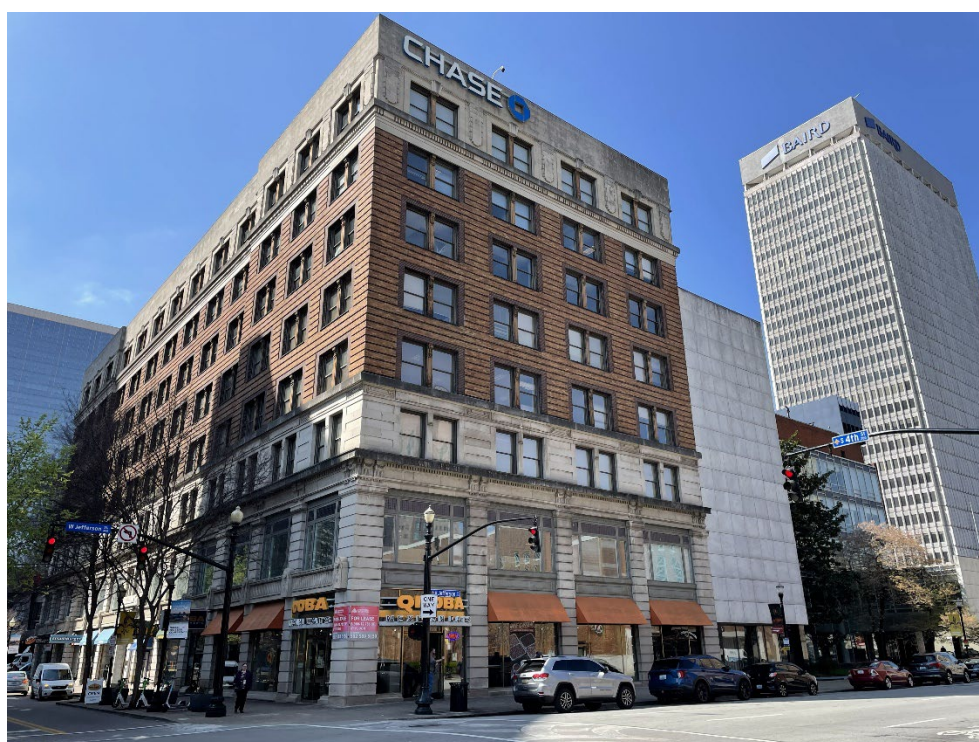
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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Paul Jones Building (JFCD-301; known as the Marion E. Taylor Building after 1919) is an eight-story, steel-framed commercial office building constructed in 1906 in downtown Louisville, Kentucky. It is located at 312 South Fourth Street (west side) and spans the entire short block between West Jefferson Street to the north and West Liberty Street to the south. The building has simplified Beaux Arts styling and is generally rectangular in shape, occupying most of its parcel with the north, east, and south facades meeting the sidewalk boundaries. The area proposed for listing is 0.35 acres and includes one contributing building.



Facing SW across intersection of W. Jefferson St. and S. Fourth St.

The Paul Jones Building is located in Louisville's downtown Central Business District, surrounded mostly by newer construction. While the Paul Jones Building was considered an early skyscraper in Louisville when it was built, it now literally sits in the shadows of modern high-rise buildings nearby, such as the 26-story Fifth Third Bank Tower (1982) to the southeast. The Hyatt Regency Hotel (1978) is immediately across South Fourth Street to the east and the sprawling Kentucky International Convention Center (1977) is to the northeast across the intersection of Jefferson and Fourth. Louisville's Fourth Street Live! bar and entertainment district – where Fourth Street is closed to thru-traffic – is to the south across West Liberty. The midcentury modern headquarters for the Liberty National Bank & Trust was constructed in 1960 to the west of the nominated building. An annex to the bank building was built in the late 1960s;

Paul Jones Building

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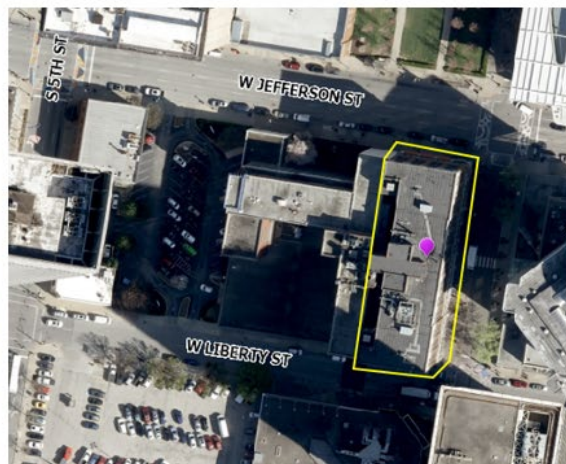
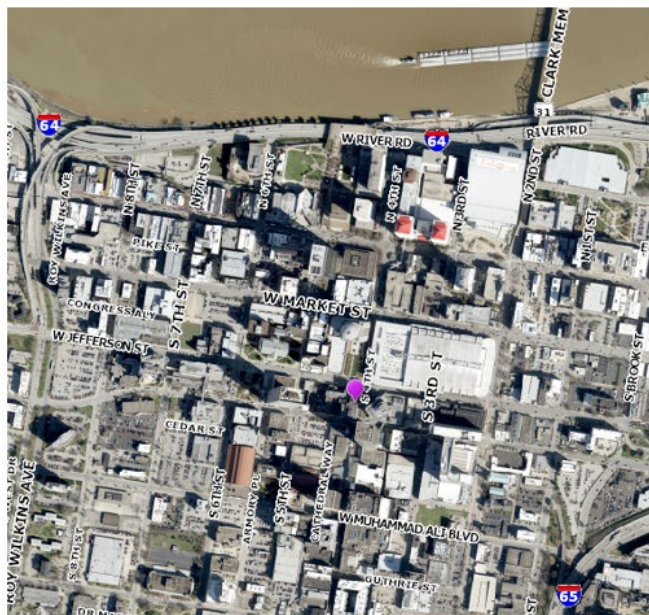
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providing a connection between the Bank and the Paul Jones Building, as both buildings were owned by the same entity.

Character of Site

While the density has changed over time, the Paul Jones Building is located in an area of downtown with many other recognized historic resources still extant. The nearest National Register listings include the Inter-Southern Insurance Co. Building (NRIS #80001606) to the northwest and the Cathedral of the Assumption to the southwest (NRIS #77000623). Also located within a few blocks include: Old U.S. Customhouse and Post Office / Fireproof Storage Company Warehouse (NRIS #77000626), and the Kaufman-Straus Building (NRIS #78001357). Its location is also within 2 blocks of local government buildings, such as the Jefferson County Jail (NRIS #73000808) and the Louisville Metro Hall complex, which includes the Jefferson County Courthouse (NRIS #72000537), Jefferson County Courthouse Annex (NRIS #80001607), and the midcentury Jefferson County Fiscal Court Building (NRIS #100010228). Many lawyers had offices in the Paul Jones Building, so this proximity would have been valuable for those professionals.



The Paul Jones Building is marked on both maps with a purple teardrop shape

The block where the Paul Jones Building was constructed in 1906 appears much differently today than it did at the turn of the twentieth century. The nomination for the Keisker Building (NRIS #100011677) explains some of these general changes:

Downtown Louisville, like the city center of any city of a similar size, is characterized by the presence of skyscrapers, densely packed buildings, and historic structures. It consists of a mix of commercial buildings, multi-family residential buildings, hotels, restaurants, recreational buildings, religious facilities and more..... The development of this area of

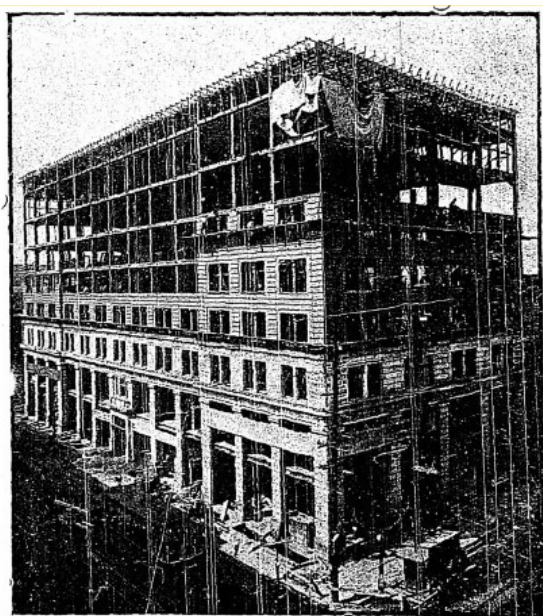
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Downtown Louisville dates to the earliest expansion of the city, but it underwent significant changes around the turn of the century. It was during this time that Louisville underwent an economic growth which facilitated and necessitated the construction of larger commercial and hospitality buildings in place of small-scale commercial properties and dwellings”¹

Exterior Description of Resource

The Paul Jones Building is eight stories tall with the appearance of a flat roof behind a simple stone cornice. Many newspaper articles at the time it was built stated that the foundations were dug deep enough to support a building of twelve to fifteen stories. As the “combined office and store building” was originally designed, it was “to be the largest structure of its kind in Louisville.”² The building permit was issued in early November 1905, with construction estimated to take less than a year.³ Considered an early skyscraper in Louisville, the Paul Jones Building was built with a steel frame and documented in historical photographs during construction (see next page). The intent was to open the building with eight complete stories and later build it higher if necessary, although that expansion did not come about.



NEW SKYSCRAPERS—THE PAUL JONES, NEARING COMPLETION.

Courier-Journal, Sept. 30, 1906



Royal Photo Co. (postcard on eBay)

The primary (east) façade fronts the west side of South Fourth Street and spans 13 bays – about 210 feet – along the entire block face between West Jefferson Street to the north and West Liberty Street to the south. On the front elevation, three bays on each end protrude slightly from

¹ Keisker Building, NRIS #100011677)

² Courier-Journal, “The Paul Jones As It Will Look When Completed,” Nov. 28, 1905

³ Courier-Journal, “Permit For Paul Jones,” Nov. 3, 1905

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the middle section. The exterior materials were announced to be “granite, Bedford limestone, marble and pressed brick.”⁴

Originally the building’s design followed the tripartite division principle seen in other late nineteenth and early twentieth century skyscrapers. This building form and technique – as well as early adoption of steel frame technology for commercial buildings – was influenced by the Chicago School of Architecture. Architects applied tripartite division to tall buildings by dividing the building’s elevation “into three distinct horizontal sections the base, the shaft, and the capital (or crown). ... This approach helped to break down the verticality of skyscrapers, making them more relatable to human scale while also emphasizing their height.”⁵ On the Paul Jones Building, there was originally an elaborate cornice – an early 1906 article stated that it was a copper cornice, “the only one in Louisville”⁶ – was present on the building until it was removed sometime between 1932 and 1957, based on historical photographs.



Facing NW towards the primary façade



Ground floor fast-casual restaurants

Some early newspaper articles called the applied architectural style French Renaissance, and the building displays simplified Beaux Arts ornamentation. The style was popular at the time for large buildings and featured rusticated first floor masonry treatments, accentuated cornices, and other elaborate brackets or decorations around windows and doors. The Paul Jones Building has stone on the exterior of the first three floors as well as on the top floor. Floors four through seven are two colors of pressed brick; the darker brick is slightly inset and surrounds each set of paired windows. The pressed brick is set in a pattern to extend the rustication appearance seen on the lower floors.

There are currently five fast-casual restaurant tenant spaces that occupy the ground floor retail locations: three to the south of the central entrance and two to the north. The storefront window and door treatments vary, as does the signage. Generally these spaces span the depth of the building with interior finishes that reflect the individual establishment’s design requirements.

⁴ Courier-Journal, “Bedford Stone Will Be Used,” Oct. 25, 1905

⁵ Chicago Architecture Center, Architecture.org, “Tripartite Division”

⁶ Courier-Journal, “The Paul Jones,” Jan. 1, 1906

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These restaurant spaces were recreated in 2009 when the ground floor was converted from bank office space back to retail.



Entablature entrance



Architectural details – primary façade

On the primary façade, the central entrance bay is flanked with pilasters and a heavy stone entablature. The storefront entrance doors are non-historic, full-panel glass with brass fixtures and framing. A glass panel above the doors mimics what was historically a transom.

Decorative elements include egg-and-dart molding between the first and second floors over a repeating oblong design, with a swagged round cartouche between bays. The second floor windows each have an upper multi-light transom that is still present. In between the second and third floor is a heavy implied balustrade-like division with dentil molding and paired brackets. The dentil molding division repeats in between the upper two floors. The only ornamentation in the pressed brick floors – besides the pattern of the brick itself – is an elaborate bracket in between the paired windows. The top floor windows have a keystone instead of a bracket.

The north and south elevations (photos next page) are similar in appearance with the same materials as on the primary façade except for the egg-and-dart molding band between the first and second stories. Each end elevation is four bays with paired windows in each bay on the upper floors. These end elevations are immediately adjacent to the nearby bank annex, built in the late 1960s.

The rear or western elevation is difficult to view from the public right-of-way due to the proximity of the annex built by the adjacent Liberty Bank in the late 1960s. This elevation has light wells with windows in between the three stair towers. These rear elevation windows have segmental arches on the exterior, as viewed from the rear central stair well.

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Facing NE towards south elevation



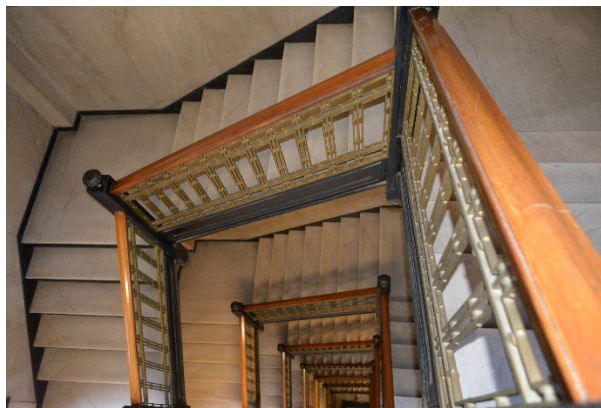
Rear elevation / light well

Interior Description of Resource

There is one main entrance to the building in the middle of the block face fronting Fourth Street. Immediately inside the glass entrance doors and vestibule, the elevator lobby features several types and colors of marble with brass detailing around the elevator doors. There are four elevators in use (originally there were six) and a grand staircase that wraps around to the second floor. This central stair tower ascends to the upper floors; two additional stair towers are present at both rear corners of the building, extending outward from the elevation. The lobby features an entrance into the two restaurant tenants on either side, as well as a connection point to the bank building through the annex to the rear. No interior photographs have been located that show the original lobby or lower level tenants.



Elevator Lobby



Grand Staircase

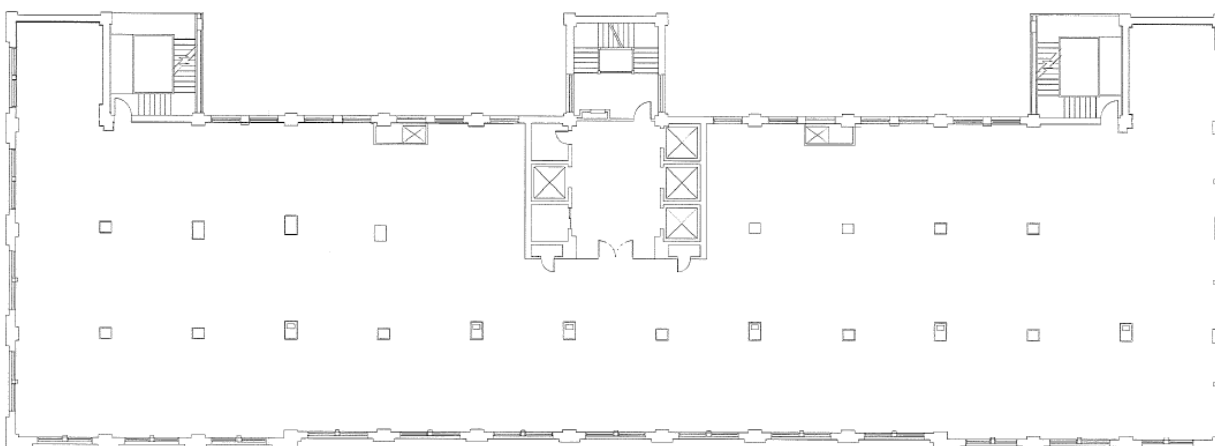
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This commercial office building has been in use for nearly 120 years. The interior floor plans and finishes have changed over time, and the original office suite layout on upper floors is unknown. It was stated in an article that “in the six floors devoted to offices, one hundred and sixty-eight suites will be included,”⁷ so there were likely many more wall divisions than exist today. The University of Louisville Digital Collections include various sets of photos taken in the late 1920s and early 1940s that show interior professional offices on the upper floors with wood door trim, walls with transom windows, narrow hallways, and different types of floor coverings.



Example of the open floor plan for floors 3-8

Each floor today is generally a wide open space showing the structural columns, but originally it would have been divided into multiple office suites. The current finishes are modern and vary by floor: many floors have dropped ceiling systems, carpet tiles, and modular office furniture. The large windows are still present, providing great views of the downtown streets. One upper floor is currently in use by an office tenant and the others are in transition.



This floor features individual offices



Most floors are open like this one

⁷ Courier-Journal, “Bedford Stone Will Be Used...,” Oct. 25, 1905

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Changes to the Property Since the Period of Significance

The Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building has been in constant use as an office building since it was constructed in 1906, while only recently having been vacated by upper story office tenants in transition to a new use. It was designed to have first floor retail store rooms with their own exterior entrances. The exterior of these shops can be seen in historical photographs with various signs and entrance treatments along the block face, particular to each tenant. Several fast-casual restaurants now occupy these storefronts, and the entrance locations, storefront window sizes, and signage have changed over time to modernize their appeal.

The most obvious change to the exterior of the building is the loss of the decorative original cornice, which happened sometime between historical photographs that were dated 1932 and 1957. No documentation has been found to indicate the reason for this change, but the removal pre-dates the construction of the adjacent and more modern Liberty National Bank & Trust Building. This could have been done for safety reasons, issues with the materials, or possibly as a way to modernize the appearance of an early twentieth century building to blend in with newer, clean-lined construction in the area.

The Liberty National Bank & Trust Building was built in 1960 to the west; originally a one-story, block-depth retail store building was present in between the two buildings. A large annex to the Liberty building was constructed in 1969. A connection to the adjacent Marion E. Taylor Building was created within the Annex, once both buildings came under the same ownership. Connections between the two buildings are located on floors 1, 2, and 6.

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8. Statement of Significance

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 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

- ☐ 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

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE

Significant Person

n/a

Period of Significance

1906-1960

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Dates

1906

1919

Architect/Builder

Andrews, Frank Mills (architect)

Herman Probst & Co. (builder)

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Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Paul Jones Building (JFCD 301; later, the “Marion E. Taylor Building”) in Louisville, Kentucky, meets National Register eligibility Criterion A for its importance in the area of Commerce. Its significance is evaluated within the historic context “Office Skyscrapers in Louisville’s Central Business District: 1900-1930.” The Paul Jones Building was one of the earliest answers to Louisville’s turn-of-the-century real estate boom and demand for professional office space in the city center. As a steel-framed office skyscraper built in 1906, its owners made an important choice for Louisville to employ the newest technology of the day. That choice suggests the owners’ confidence in the city’s rapid economic growth. The Paul Jones Building played a major role in spurring development of other office high-rises that would soon follow in the central business district, which increased the density of workers in the pre-war era. Named by the owners in memory of their uncle, a prosperous businessman, the building was locally significant as a place of employment for thousands of workers. Whether the tenant was a sole practitioner, a small firm, or mid-sized corporation, the building allowed business people to keep a professional office with a downtown address when land’s value and demand was rising. When the Paul Jones Building was sold for \$1 million in 1919 to local investor, Marion E. Taylor, it brought the largest sale price for a commercial building that Louisville had ever seen. The period of significance begins in 1906 when the building was constructed and ends in 1960, when urban renewal began in Louisville and began to change the face of the central business district, impacting development downtown. The building continues to be recognized as the Marion E. Taylor Building today.

Historic Context: Office Skyscrapers in Louisville’s Central Business District: 1900-1930

Louisville’s commercial growth paralleled that of other mid-sized cities in the United States at the turn of the century, with building construction increasing due to industrialization, urbanization, and technological innovation. These advances led to great demand for professional offices. Real estate investors actively sought to meet this need downtown. “In the early 1900s, the United States entered a period of peace, prosperity, and progress. As the promise of jobs and higher wages attracted more and more people into the cities, the U.S. began to become a nation of city dwellers. By 1900, 30 million people, or 30 percent of the total population, lived in cities.”⁸

In August 1905, the city of Louisville was recognized as having the second-highest building expenditures in the country, behind only its sister city of New Orleans.⁹ Population was increasing in the city of Louisville. By 1907, there was an average of five applications for every vacant house in Louisville. “The demand for rentals ... extends to commercial and business

⁸ Library of Congress, “Cities During the Progressive Era”

⁹ Courier-Journal, “To The Front,” Sep. 12, 1905

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sections, and the demand for office space is almost unprecedented.”¹⁰ Investing in downtown was profitable in the early 1900s: office buildings filled with tenants nearly as soon as they were completed. Land was at a premium in the dense city center, and novel construction methods allowed new, taller buildings to take advantage of smaller footprints.

Enter the skyscraper. Large cities like Chicago and New York City had been experimenting with tall building technology – made possible through the advent of the elevator – many decades before high rises finally appeared in Louisville. William Starrett, in his 1928 book *Skyscrapers and the Men Who Build Them*, reflected with a bit of humor:

*As land values and taxes rise, owners must get an increased return from their properties... Rental space can be increased only by adding stories, and there the property owner was stopped by the limitations of the human leg muscles. Before the invention of the elevator, six stories was the practicable limit of commercial building. At any time in the past two thousand years, builders could have erected masonry structures higher than that, but even the sturdy calves of our unpampered forefathers balked at climbing more than six stories, and the rental value of floors above the third fell off in more than an arithmetical ratio.*¹¹

In her book *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered*, Ada Louise Huxtable described four different phases or styles of skyscrapers: functional, eclectic, modern, and postmodern. “The early, or functional, skyscraper was an economic phenomenon; business was the engineer that drove innovation. The patron was the investment banker and the muse was cost-efficiency; architecture was the servant of engineering, and design was tied to the bottom line. These buildings are as handsome as they are utilitarian.”¹² Insurance companies, for example, built skyscrapers as “visual totems for an industry lacking a tangible product,”¹³ which led to other investors taking on commercial office buildings as investment strategies.

The Paul Jones Building was in good company as an exciting, tall addition to the Louisville skyline. A few, pre-1900 load-bearing masonry buildings preceded it, but the Louisville Trust Co. Building (NRIS # 77000624) is the only one that is still extant. The *Courier-Journal* newspaper would often publish full-page spreads with photographs of construction with headlines such as “Some of Louisville’s New Buildings: Pictures Showing the Progress of the Work, and How the Structures Will Appear When Completed” (Dec. 3, 1905) and “Tall Buildings and Modern Architecture Prove Louisville a Progressive Metropolis” (Mar. 25, 1913).

The 1913 spread was particularly interesting, as it placed the since-completed Paul Jones Building in the company of nine other tall buildings in Louisville. Of those ten, 4 have been demolished and one is still extant but has a non-historic façade that hides its original appearance. The other 4 early skyscrapers are already listed on the National Register. “All of this building was related to the spread of the central business district, especially south on Fourth Street toward

¹⁰ *Courier-Journal*, “Heavy Demand For Houses Will Result in Big Building Boom,” Jan. 31, 1907

¹¹ Starrett, *Skyscrapers and the Men Who Build Them*, p. 21.

¹² Huxtable, *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered*, p. 14

¹³ Moudry, “The Corporate and the Civic,” from *The American Skyscraper*, p. 120

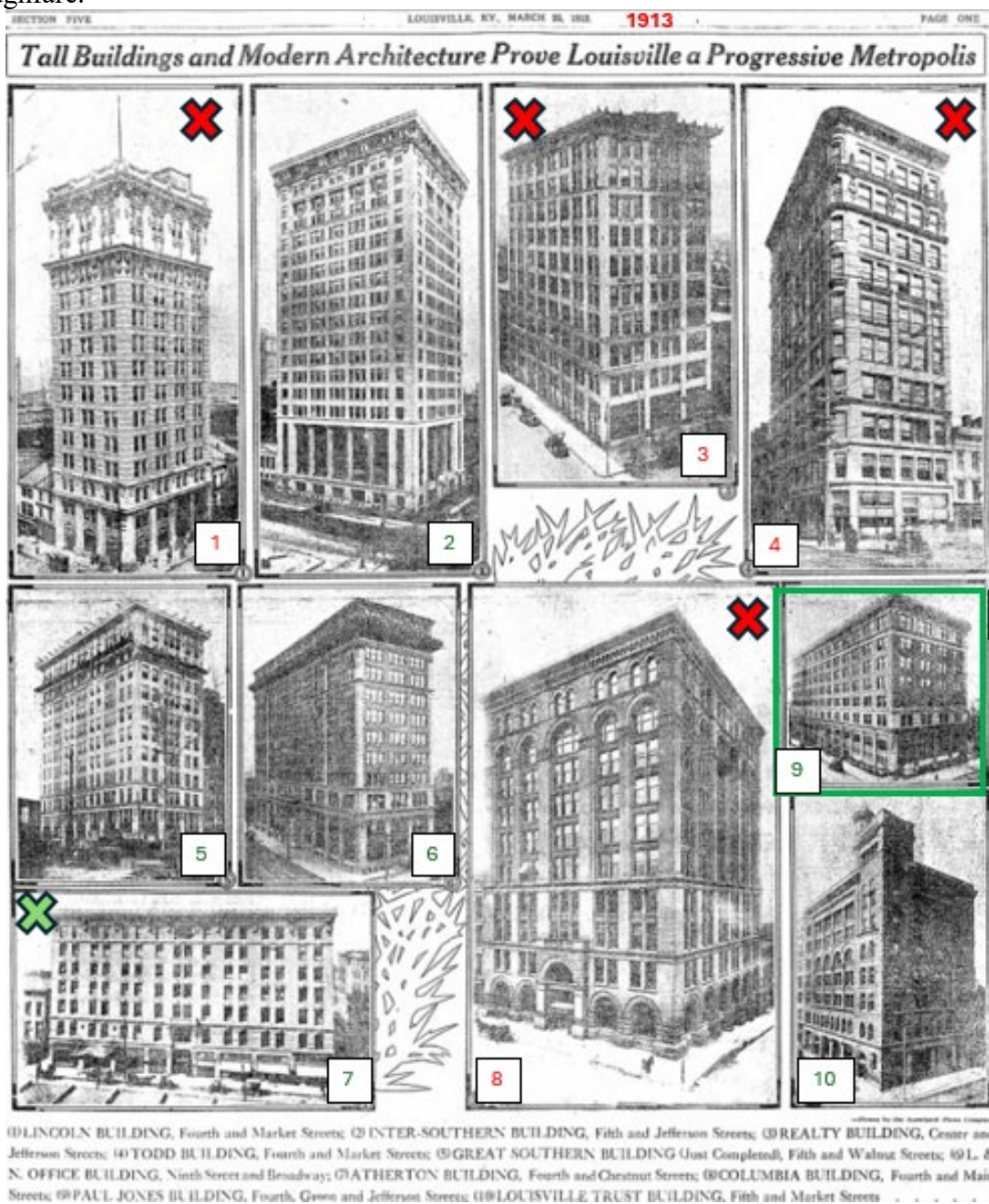
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Broadway, and the simultaneous decline of Market Street as the principal shopping thoroughfare.”¹⁴



These numbers correlate with the images in the photo spread, which was published on March 25, 1913. It was page one of the “Southern Prosperity Number” co-headed with the Courier-Journal and The Louisville Times:

¹⁴ Kleber, *Encyclopedia of Louisville*, p. xxiii

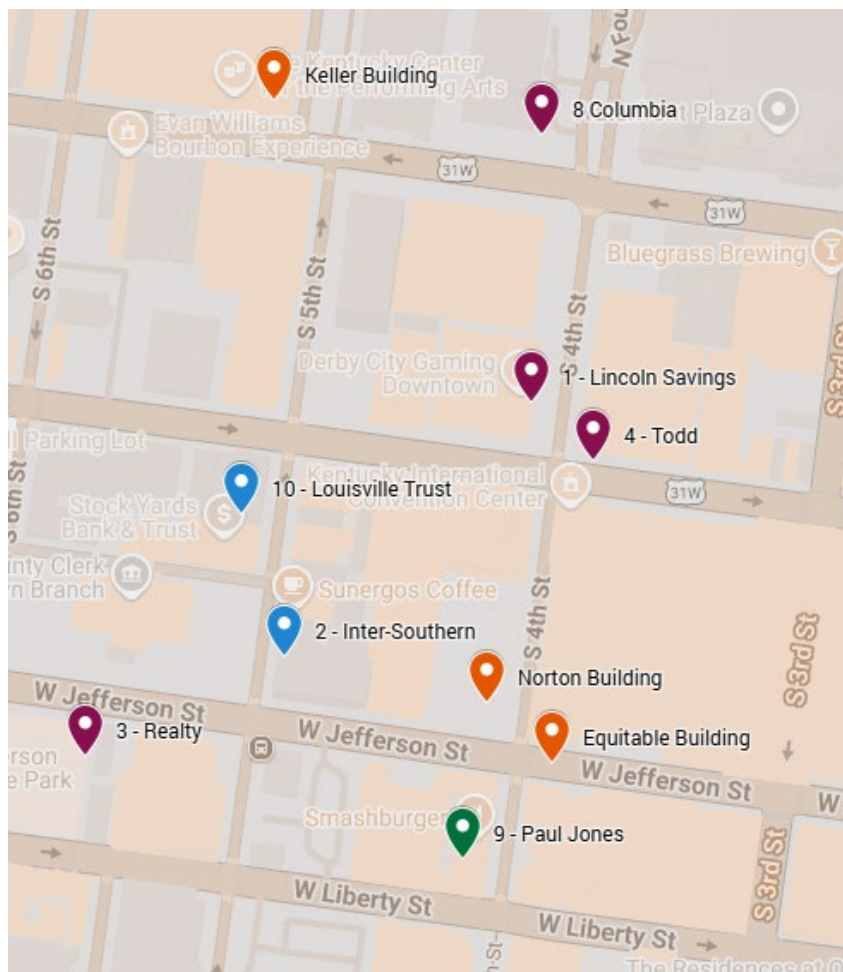
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1. Lincoln Savings Bank Building / Washington Building, ca. 1907. 15 stories – tallest at the time. Architect: McDonald & Dodd with Alfred Joseph. Demolished 1973.
2. Inter-Southern Insurance Building / Kentucky Home Life , ca. 1913, expanded in 1922. 19 stories. Architect: Brinton B. Davis. NRIS #80001605
3. Realty Building / Center Building, ca. 1912. 10 stories. Architect: Henry Wolters. Demolished ca. 1966.
4. Todd Building / Bellevue Building / Hoffman Building, ca. 1902. 10 stories. Architect: Clark & Loomis. Demolished 1983.
5. Great Southern Building / Republic Building, ca. 1912-16. 11 stories. Architect: Joseph & Joseph. NRIS #82002718 (not shown on map below – it is one block to the SW of the Paul Jones)
6. Louisville & Nashville Railroad Office Building, ca. 1902-07, expanded in 1930. 11 stories. Architect: W.H. Courtenay. NRIS #83002696
7. Atherton Building / Francis Building, ca. 1907. 7 stories. Architect: McDonald & Dodd. Still extant but has a non-historic façade.
8. Columbia Building / originally called Commerce Building / Commercial Club Building, ca. 1890. 10 stories – tallest in Kentucky until 1900. Architect: Cornelius Curtin. Demolished 1966.
9. **Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building, ca. 1906.** 8 stories but foundations built for 12-15 stories. Architect: Frank Mills Andrews.
10. Louisville Trust Building, ca. 1889-91. 7 stories. Architect: Maury & Dodd. NRIS #77000624



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Note: Keller, Norton, and Equitable Buildings have all been demolished but were mentioned in the square footage discussion towards the end of this section. They were considered other large office buildings ca. 1905.

Completion of the Paul Jones Building spurred construction of other large buildings downtown: “While such a building is one of which any city should be proud, the example of its erection was particularly helpful to Louisville, for following it there came into being the Stewart Dry Goods building, the Atherton, the Lincoln Savings Bank building and Seelbach Hotel annex, all attesting grit and energy, and helping to place the city on the truly metropolitan basis.”¹⁵



[Letter notations added by author] Facing NW. This Caufield & Shook image of the Paul Jones Building from the University of Louisville Digital Collections was undated, but the author has determined it was taken sometime between 1913 and 1922 based on the other buildings indicated. A: Realty Building (no longer extant); B: City Hall; C: Courthouse; D: Inter-Southern Building (pre 1922 expansion). The other 3 “skyscraper” buildings farther north along Fourth Street are no longer extant: E: Liberty Bank Building; F: Columbia Building; and G: Todd Building.

The preceding photo ca. 1913-1922 highlights the monumentality of the new Paul Jones Building with several of the office buildings that were built only a few years prior. As the caption indicates, many of those have since been demolished. In attempting to evaluate the significance of the size of the Paul Jones Building in comparison to the other big buildings in Louisville at the time it was built, a brief reference in a November 1905 article was found that included office floor space.¹⁶

¹⁵ Courier-Journal, “The Paul Jones: One of the Most Convenient and Complete...” Nov. 17, 1907

¹⁶ Courier-Journal, “The Paul Jones As It Will Look When Completed...” Nov. 28, 1905

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The building name and square footage that were listed in the 1905 article are reproduced in the first two columns below, with more information for reference. This article compared the square footage of office floor space, and while the accuracy of the measurements cannot be verified, these figures show that the Paul Jones Building may not have been the tallest in the city but dominated the office market at the time due to the size of its rentable space.

Table 1: Office Square Footage in large Louisville buildings, ca. 1905

Building Name (** = demolished)	Sq Ft Office Floor Space (Approx.)	Corner	Number of Stories
The Paul Jones	153,750	SW cor 4 th & Jefferson	8
<i>Columbia Building**</i>	99,760	NW cor 4 th & Main	10
<i>Norton Building**</i>	57,120	NW cor 4 th & Jefferson	4
Louisville Trust	55,232	SW cor 5 th & Market	7
<i>Equitable Building**</i>	49,302	NE cor 4 th & Jefferson	6
<i>Keller Building**</i>	36,450	NE cor 5 th & Main	6
<i>Todd Building**</i>	31,700	NE cor 4 th & Market	10

“The Paul Jones is to be a monument to the public spirit and enterprise of Lawrence and Saunders Jones... and its completion will mark a new era in office building construction in Louisville.”¹⁷ The early 1900s were rife with optimism that the 20th century promised to begin a new era, and the arrival of these big buildings in Louisville was proof of it.

Other large buildings would continue to be built in Louisville while the central business district was in demand, but business development started to push south to Broadway. The Brown Hotel (NRIS #78001346) was completed in 1923 at Fourth and Broadway to compete with the Seelbach Hotel. A few years later in 1927, the 17-story Heyburn Building (NRIS #79001007) was the last major high-rise office building constructed in downtown Louisville before the Great Depression and World War II.

Shifts in the economic and political climate in the mid-20th century affected all aspects of human life, including real estate and commercial enterprise. The rise of personal automobile use and highway development caused owners/investors to recalculate the value of downtown land for professional and office use. After World War II, the need for parking lots downtown led to many building demolitions, and the growth of suburbanization focused additional energy outside of the city center.

Urban renewal began to take effect in Louisville in the late 1950s and early 1960s after passage of the 1949 American Housing Act and the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. The removal of buildings and density changed the landscape and the entrepreneurial spirit in which the Paul Jones Building was initially constructed. While there is not a single event that marked the end of the period, where downtown Louisville was the center of commerce, this nomination selects 1960 as the end of that phase of the City’s downtown dominance. In the 1960s, transportation, telecommunications, and the rise of computer processing enabled businesses to conduct their activities over much wider areas, deflating the value of downtown properties.

¹⁷ Courier-Journal, “The Paul Jones As It Will Look When Completed...” Nov. 28, 1905

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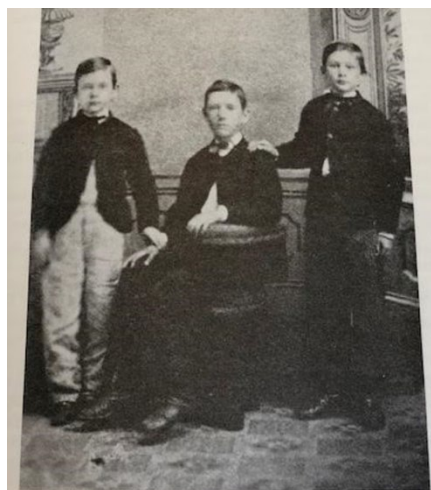
History of Nominated Property

Paul Jones Building (1906-1919)

First, some genealogy. Paul Jones, Sr. (1801-1877), a native Virginian, started the wholesale whiskey and tobacco company of Paul Jones & Co. in 1868 in Georgia. With his first wife, Mary, he had two children that survived to adulthood, sons Col. Warner Roland Jones (1829-1864) and Paul Jones, Jr. (1840-1895). Warner served as a colonel for the Tennessee Infantry during the Civil War but was killed at the Battle of Atlanta in 1864.

After Paul Jones, Sr. died in 1877, his son, Paul Jones, Jr., continued the company in the stead of his father, relocating to Kentucky after legislation was passed in Georgia prohibiting the production of liquor:

Paul Jones, a noted whiskey distiller from Atlanta relocated his successful business to Louisville in 1884 when Georgia passed its state alcohol Prohibition laws. The Paul Jones Company was established at 136 East Main (now 118 East Main), occupying the property from 1884 to 1922. In 1892 Paul Jones registered the Four Roses trademark for whiskey. ... Although there is no indication of any dedicated Office Space ... it is not hard to imagine that Paul Jones could very well have conducted all his business at home, which was across the street and a few doors down at the [second] Galt House [Hotel], where Jones used a guest room as his home, and perhaps his office, from the time he arrived in Louisville until his death in 1895.¹⁸



WARNER, SAUNDERS, and LAWRENCE JONES (Nos. 1025-27)



LAWRENCE L. JONES,
Paul Jones & Co., Distillers.



SAUNDERS P. JONES,
Paul Jones & Co., Distillers.

(Left) Photo of the Jones brothers ca. late 1860s, from a Jones family history document; (Center and Right) Illustrations by F.W. Cawein from the book "Kentuckians as we see them, by Louisville newspaper cartoonists", 1905. (All images: Courtesy Jones Family Archive Collection)

Warner Paul Jones (1855-1889), Saunders Paul Jones (1857-1916) and Lawrence Lavalie Jones (1860-1941) were the sons of Col. Warner Jones. After their father was killed in 1864, their mother died shortly thereafter. Their uncle, Paul Jones, Jr., took the three young boys in and

¹⁸ NRHP nomination: Miller Paper Company Buildings (NRIS 11000007)

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raised them. Lawrence relocated to Louisville with his uncle in the mid-1880s. Warner and Saunders were in the grocery business in Columbus, Georgia. After Warner died in 1889, his brother Saunders also relocated to Louisville to work with his uncle Paul, Jr. Paul Jones, Jr. died in Louisville in 1895 after establishing his successful distilling company on Main Street. His nephews – adopted sons to him – would name the Paul Jones Building in honor of their adoptive father.

Brothers Lawrence and Saunders Jones were not new to investing in downtown real estate: they had purchased the Masonic Temple building in 1899, considered at the time as “one of the most centrally-located pieces of property in Louisville and right in the heart of the retail district.”¹⁹ The Masonic Temple building had mixed uses, with retail on the ground floor, a theater on the second, and lodge rooms on the third. One article in 1900 stated that the Jones brothers were considering remodeling and adding upper floors to the Masonic Temple building for offices. It would be destroyed by fire in late 1903 before their plans could be realized.

They set up the Jefferson Realty Company in 1903. In February 1904, the Courier-Journal reported that brothers Lawrence and Saunders Jones “have practically reached a decision to build a skyscraper on their property at Fourth avenue and Jefferson street” and that “local capital will be devoted to the improvement of the site made vacant by fire [at the Masonic Temple] several months ago.”²⁰ Frank Mills Andrews was announced as the architect in 1905. Contract bids were opened in October 1905 and the building permit was issued in November.

Architect Frank Mills Andrews had established himself with several high profile projects. He had just finished the Kentucky State Capitol in Frankfort and the Seelbach Hotel in Louisville. His conception for the Paul Jones Building combined office and commercial building with Beaux Arts style and massing, placing it with Andrews’ other large hotel designs. The Paul Jones Building opened in late 1906, already in great demand.

“Store rooms will be constructed on each side of the [central entrance] arcade, making each of the stores, in effect, corner ones... A unique feature to the building, one that has been adapted largely in the East, will be second-story stores. For this reason an adequate battery of elevators will be installed.”²¹ The earliest tenants of the building were for the first and second floor retail shops, with the first lease signed by the Boston Shoe Company. Second floor shops were designed for sole proprietors such as tailors, milliners, haberdashers, and dressmakers.

The 1907 city directory showed that the building was not yet full, with only about 25 professional office tenants, which included real estate agents, all types of insurance companies, accountants, stenographers, and lawyers. By 1909, the city directory was much more robust, showing the same types of office tenants previously mentioned, as well as utility companies, railroad offices, and distilling companies, among others. Coca-Cola Co. had an office there in 1909, so did the Kentucky State Fair, for example. Lawyers dominated the building, which was only about two blocks east from the city’s government center.

¹⁹ Courier-Journal, “Sold for \$275,000,” Nov. 21, 1899

²⁰ Courier-Journal, “Present Owners,” Feb. 22, 1904

²¹ Courier-Journal, “The Paul Jones, Eight Stories, On Masonic Site,” Jul. 15, 1905

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Saunders Jones died in 1916 after many years of paralysis, and his brother, Lawrence Jones, as the remaining owner, had another major development to address:

*Prohibition was enacted in 1920... New laws dictated that in order to remain an alcohol merchant, companies could only sell alcohol for medicinal use ... so the [Paul Jones Co.] bought one of the only six companies that had a permit to sell medicinal whiskey. So, in 1922, the Paul Jones Company acquired Frankfort Distillery but changed its own company name to Frankfort Distillery, Inc. in order to maintain the permit to sell whiskey during prohibition.*²²

Lawrence Jones sold the Paul Jones Building in between Prohibition being ratified in January 1919 and enacted in January 1920. Perhaps dealing with a large investment office building was not high on the list of business priorities at the time.

Marion E. Taylor Building (1919-present)

Marion E. Taylor was a distiller and philanthropist. Originally from Louisiana, he came to Louisville in 1884 and organized the firm of Wright & Taylor to produce Old Charter whisky. He purchased the Paul Jones Building in April 1919 at an unheard-of price for the time: \$1 million. It was “the largest realty transaction for a single piece of property in the city’s history.”²³ The same article speculated: “There is gossip in business circles to the effect that a part of Mr. Taylor’s big stock of whisky figured in the trade, as both principals in the deal are engaged in the wholesale liquor business. Both also are among the city’s wealthiest men. Mr. Taylor is said to have made the purchase as an investment.”²⁴



Left: Portrait of Marion E. Taylor in 1919 (Univ. of Louisville); Right: Illustration by F.W. Cawein from the book “Kentuckians as we see them, by Louisville newspaper cartoonists”, 1905.

The name of the building was changed to the Marion E. Taylor less than a year after the sale. However, Marion E. Taylor would die a short time later, in July 1921. The building carries his

²² NRHP nomination: Miller Paper Company Buildings (NRIS 11000007)

²³ Courier-Journal, “Paul Jones Building Sold,” Apr. 15, 1919

²⁴ Ibid.

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name to this day and has been in continuous use as a commercial office. It was sold by Taylor's company, Wright & Taylor, to a New York realty company in 1958 as the face of downtown continued to change.

Works of Frank Mills Andrews

A brief discussion of the architect is warranted due to his connections to Louisville and Kentucky, as well as his overarching stylistic themes in his hotel designs as applied to an office building. Frank Mills Andrews (1867-1948) was born in Iowa and studied civil engineering at Iowa State College. In 1888, he earned a bachelor's degree in Architecture at Cornell University in New York. He trained there as an architect under William Miller and George B. Post, as well as in Chicago with Jenney & Mundie. He worked at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. While based in Dayton, Ohio, in the early 1900s, he designed many of the National Cash Register campus buildings (no longer extant) as well as the Dayton Arcade (NRIS #75001498) and the Conover Building (NRIS #75001497).

Andrews began work on the Paul Jones Building on the heels of designing the Kentucky State Capitol building in Frankfort, Kentucky, and completing the Seelbach Hotel (NRIS #75000775) in Louisville. He would also work on the Seelbach Hotel Annex in 1907. Lawrence Jones, one of the owners of the Paul Jones Building, was an early incorporator in the Seelbach Hotel project²⁵ so he had already established a working relationship with Andrews. The same builders, Herman Probst & Co., would also work on the Paul Jones Building after the Seelbach.

Early renderings of the Paul Jones Building published in the newspaper showed the proposed twelve-story office and commercial building; it strongly resembled the Seelbach Hotel, which opened May 1, 1905 and was considered one of Louisville's first grand European-style hotels (the following post card image of the Seelbach Hotel (on the right) includes the later annex, which included the seven bays at the left of the image).



Rendering of proposed Paul Jones Building



Seelbach Hotel with Annex

²⁵ Courier-Journal, "Is Assured: Seelbach Hotel On Fourth Avenue," Apr. 1, 1903

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Andrews had a varied early career and may have been influenced by the Chicago School of Architecture, as its architects applied technology to the construction of tall buildings. However, by the time he designed the Paul Jones Building, he was starting to shift almost exclusively to large hotels with applied ornament. Even his office building looked like a hotel, but without the arched window and door openings. The Paul Jones resembled the Seelbach in massing and appearance, with Beaux Arts detailing, stone at the base and capital and brick in between. Two of Andrews' next major hotel projects shared this same stylistic influence. One was the Hotel McAlpin in New York City (still extant as a condominium building called Herald Towers). Constructed ca. 1910-1912, it was a 25-story hotel, said to be the largest hotel at the time it was built, with reportedly "more rooms than other hotels in the world."²⁶ Also built during this same time period was the Hotel Taft in New Haven, Connecticut (still extant as the Taft Apartments, part of the Chapel Street Historic District, NRIS #84001123).



Hotel McAlpin (NY)



Hotel Taft (CT)

Andrews has a powerful tie to Kentucky as the designer of the Kentucky State Capitol building, and his hotel influence can be seen in the design of the Paul Jones Building, which resembles the Seelbach Hotel in Louisville. The use of Beaux Arts styling with steel frame technology for tall buildings is a traditional application on a modern, developing form. His later large hotels in New England embraced the style and technique he pioneered in his Louisville buildings.

Evaluation of the Significance of the Property within the Historic Context

Overall, the Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building is a good example of an office skyscraper purpose-built as an investment strategy at the turn of the century during Louisville's

²⁶ Shepherd, *Skyscraper*, p. 95

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building boom. It is one of the earliest downtown “skyscrapers” that is still extant and has been used consistently as an office building since it was built.

The Paul Jones Building played a major role in spurring development of other office skyscrapers that would soon follow in the central business district, which increased the density of workers in the pre-war era. It was locally significant as a place of employment for thousands of workers, as well as a location for a small firm or sole practitioner to keep a professional office with a downtown address.

This sustained value of high-rise office / commercial buildings in the city center was demonstrated even as the building changed ownership in 1919. The 13-year-old Paul Jones Building sold for a record \$1 million to Marion E. Taylor, who subsequently changed its name; no other building in Louisville had sold for such a high price until then. Both owners had ties to the distilling industry, and large office buildings were seen as strong investments to carry their names into the future.

Evaluation of the Integrity Between the Significance and the Property’s Physical Condition

A building in Louisville that meets Criterion A for its importance in commerce from 1900-1930 needs to retain the physical elements of the property that convey how office and commercial businesses became important during this era.

Location and Setting: The Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building has not been moved and remains in its location in the central business district of downtown Louisville. It was built on the site of the Masonic Temple that was destroyed by fire in 1903; this area of the city at the time was considered centrally-located for retail and other business endeavors. As real estate needs for commercial and professional offices grew, the Paul Jones Building was constructed by its investors in an area to meet that demand. Fourth Street was a thriving shopping and retail district, and the Paul Jones Building was located to be close to banking and government centers as well. The concentration of these other early high-rises can be seen on the map on page 16 above.

Design and Materials: The Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building retains an integrity of Design and Materials. The design of the building utilized a steel frame and deeply dug foundations that could support additional floors in the future if needed; this process was not only a developing technology in use for large commercial structures, but it also looked forward with confidence for the potential of future growth. The simplified Beaux Arts architectural details as designed by architect Frank Mills Andrews are sufficiently intact on the exterior, save for the original cornice which was removed sometime in the midcentury. The European-influenced ornamentation and excellent workmanship elevate the appearance of what might otherwise be an ordinary downtown office building. A grand entablature entrance into an elevator lobby with high quality materials such as marble, glass, and brass gives a good first impression for any professional. The building retains much of its original stylistic features and materials, which enable us to recognize the monumentality that this office building had, in addition to its impressive size, for prospective tenants and early 20th century Louisvillians who experienced it.

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Association and Feeling: Because the Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building has integrity of setting, location, materials, and design, it can be said to have integrity of Association, which is the key integrity factor to support the claim that the building meets Criterion A. The building's physical form helps us associate it with the important aspects of office skyscraper demand during the early decades of the 1900s. It retains sufficient materials and design to support an integrity of Feeling that downtown businesspeople may have had when encountering it. As a commercial office building, the Paul Jones Building expressed a massing and level of decoration that people may have associated with European-style hotels at the time, adding a sense of grandeur to the typical worker's day.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Courier-Journal (Louisville, KY) historical articles, accessed online via ProQuest

Encyclopedia of Louisville, ed. John Kleber (University Press of Kentucky, 2001), accessed via Google Books.

Huxtable, Ada Louise. *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered: The Search for a Skyscraper Style*. (Patheon Books, 1993).

Moudry, Roberta. "The Corporate and the Civic: Metropolitan Life's Home Office Building," in *The American Skyscraper: Cultural Histories*, ed. Roberta Moudry (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

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- Cunningham, Wes and Michael Langmyer. "Keisker Building." (NRIS 100011677; Jefferson County, KY). 2025.
- Gilbert, Chris and L. Martin Perry. "Miller Paper Company Buildings." (NRIS 11000007; Jefferson County, KY). 2011.
- Ohno, Kate, "Chapel Street Historic District," NRIS #84001123, 1983.
- Langsam, Walter E., "Seelbach Hotel" (NRIS #75000775), 1972.
- Gannon, Loren S., "Dayton Arcade" (NRIS #75001498), 1974.
- Cannon, Loren S., "Conover Building" (NRIS #75001497), 1974.
- Hedgepeth, Marty Poynter, "Heyburn Building" (NRIS #79001007), 1979.
- Stern, Douglas L. and Walter Langsam, "Louisville Trust Co. Building" (NRIS #77000624), 1975.
- Zemelka, Peter and Daniel Kidd, "Cathedral of the Assumption" (NRIS #77000623), 1977.
- Kinsman, Mary Jean, "Old U.S. Customhouse and Post Office (Chamber of Commerce Building)" (NRIS #77000626), 1976.

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- Latham, Tooba K., "Kaufman-Straus Building" (NRIS #78001357), 1976.
- Langsam, Walter E., "Jefferson County Jail" (NRIS #73000808), 1976.
- Thomas, Samuel W., "Jefferson County Courthouse" (NRIS #72000537), 1972.
- Hedgepeth, Marty Poynter, "Jefferson County Courthouse Annex" (NRIS #80001607), 1979.
- McCarron, Jessica, "Jefferson County Fiscal Court Building" (NRIS #100010228), 2023.

Skyscraper: The Search for an American Style 1891-1941, ed. Roger Shepherd (McGraw-Hill, 2003).

Starrett, W. A. *Skyscrapers and the Men Who Build Them* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928).

Personal communication with Jones family descendants: siblings Stephen Jones and Julie LaValle "Valle" Jones, Dec. 10, 2025.

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: University of Louisville Library (Digital Collections)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): JFCD-301

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.35 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

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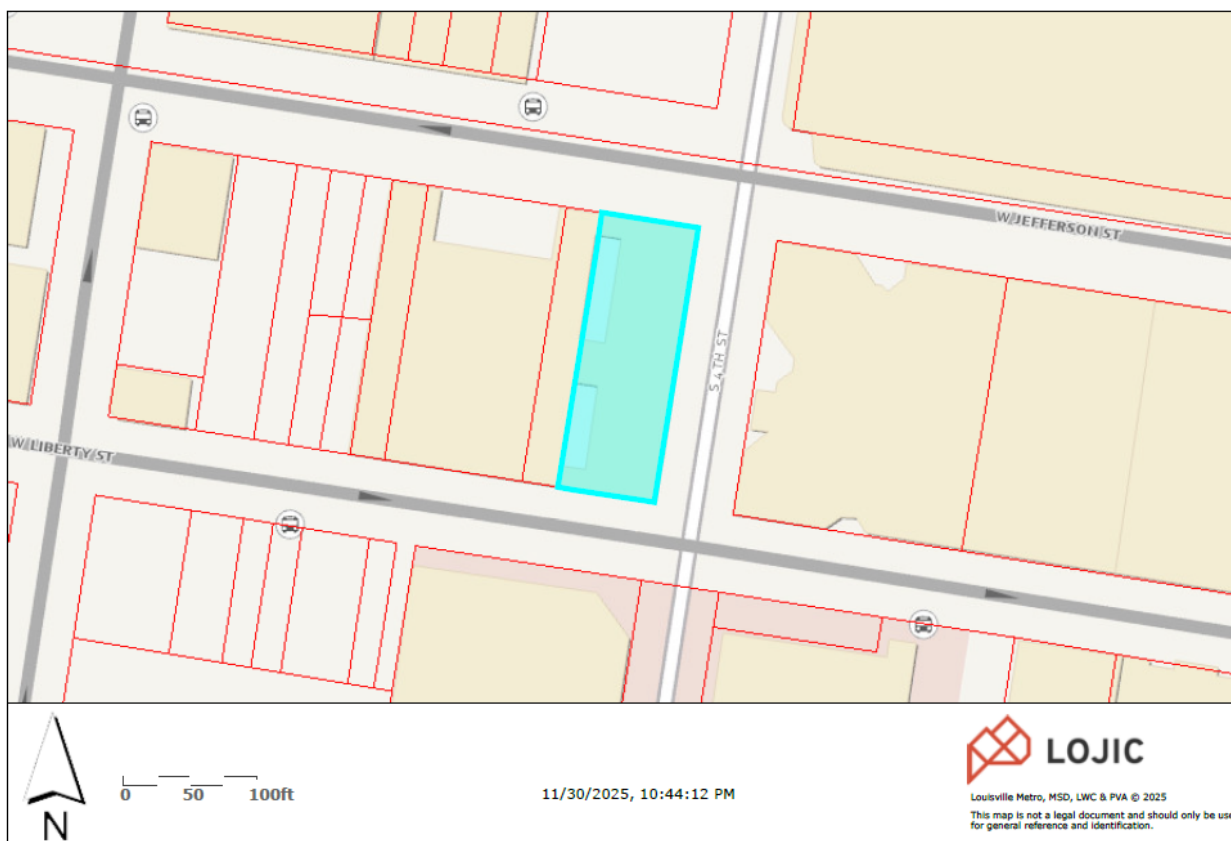
1. Latitude: 38.253436

Longitude: -85.757304

Verbal Boundary Description

(Parcel ID: 014K01120000)

BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF FOURTH AND JEFFERSON STREET; AND RUNNING THENCE WEST WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF JEFFERSON STREET, 75 FEET; THENCE SOUTH, PARALLEL WITH FOURTH STREET, 210 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE NORTH LINE OF LIBERTY STREET (FORMERLY GREEN STREET); THENCE EAST WITH SAID NORTH LINE, 75 FEET TO THE WEST LINE OF FOURTH STREET; THENCE NORTH WITH SAID WEST LINE, 210 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.



Property proposed for listing as depicted on Jefferson County's Property Valuation Administrator Map, LOJIC.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the building and the parcel that has been historically associated with the property, which immediately surrounds it. That property has historic integrity. No other configuration of the property is more appropriate for National Register listing.

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Property Owner:

name Chase MET Buildings, LLC
street & number 180 North Wacker Drive, Suite 401 telephone
city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60606

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jessica Jewell McCarron, MHP / Historic Project Manager
organization: Weyland Ventures
street & number: 815 W. Market St. #110
city or town: Louisville state: KY zip code: 40202
e-mail: Jessica@weylandventures.com
date: Nov. – Dec. 2025

Photographs--Photo Log

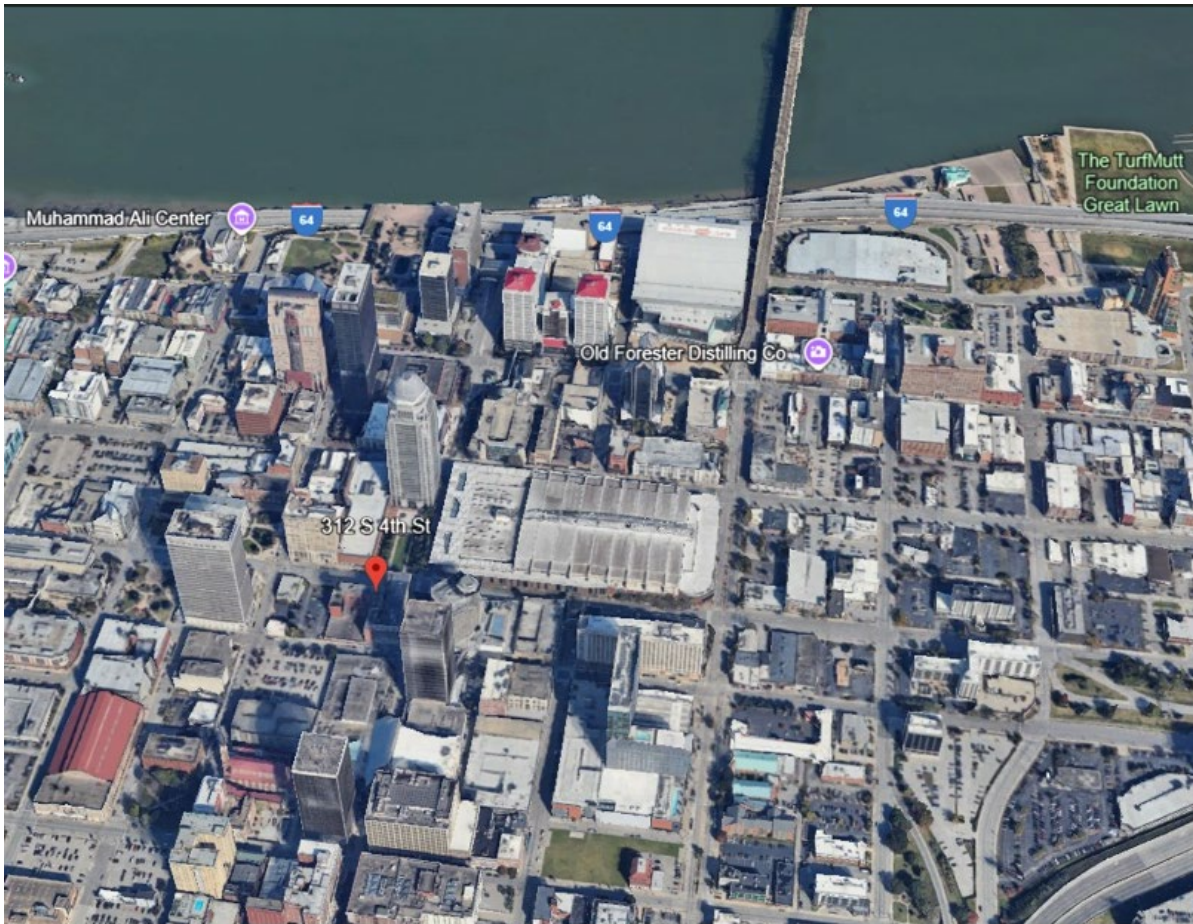
Name of Property: Paul Jones Building / Marion E. Taylor Building
City or Vicinity: Louisville, KY
County: Jefferson
State: Kentucky
Photographer: Jessica Jewell McCarron, MHP
Date Photographed: 2025

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

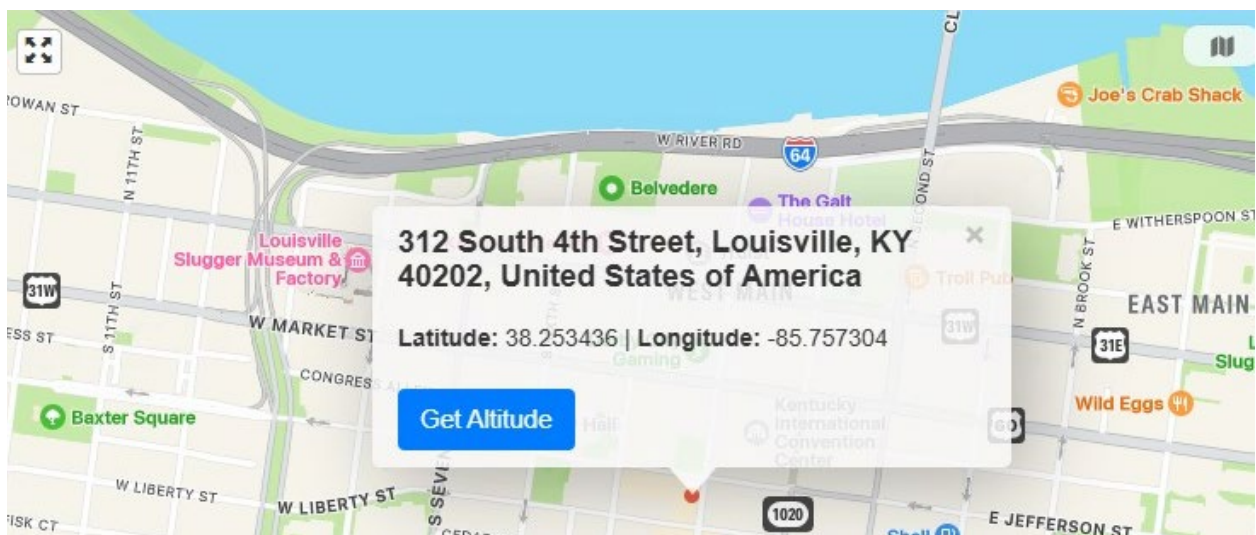
- 1 of 11: Exterior; facing SW across W. Jefferson & S. Fourth Sts.
- 2 of 11: Exterior; facing NW across W. Liberty & S. Fourth Sts.
- 3 of 11: Exterior; facing S, north elevation
- 4 of 11: Exterior; facing NE, south elevation – note proximity of neighboring building
- 5 of 11: Exterior; central entablature entrance
- 6 of 11: Exterior; architectural details on primary façade near entrance
- 7 of 11: Interior; elevator lobby, taken from front entrance
- 8 of 11: Interior; grand central staircase, looking down from an upper floor landing
- 9 of 11: Interior; example of office arrangement on upper floor – note columns
- 10 of 11: Interior; example of office arrangement on upper floor – note large window openings
- 11 of 11: Interior, second floor, NE corner office – note original multi-light transoms

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Location of Paul Jones Building marked by red teardrop, in context of downtown setting



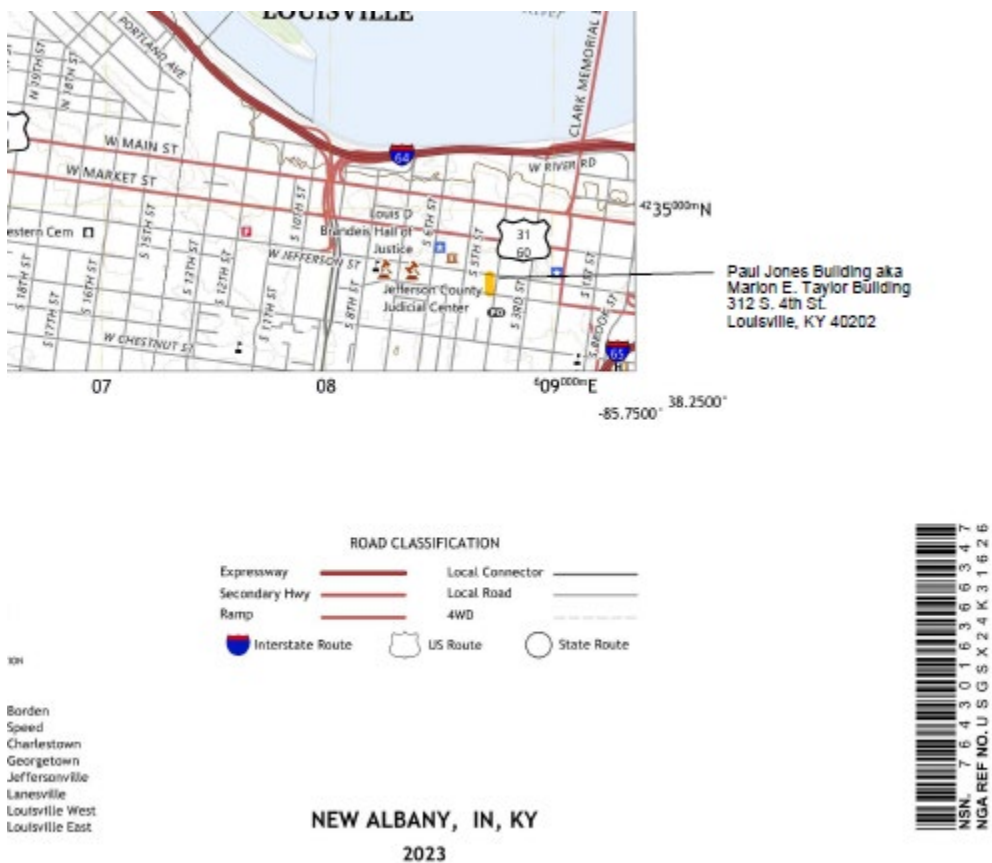
Longitude and Latitude Coordinates obtained via GPS

Paul Jones Building

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Name of Property

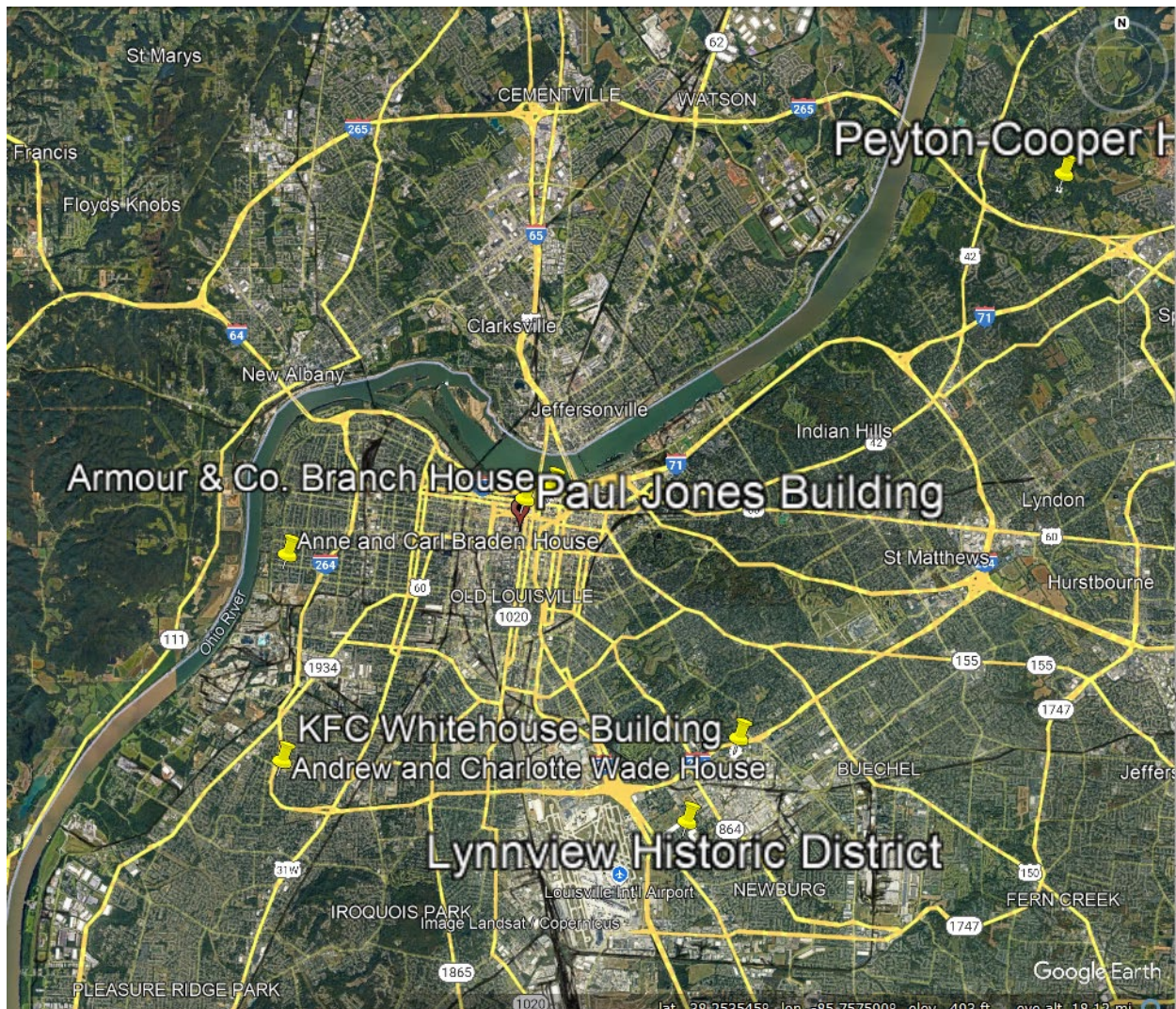
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Detail of USGS Quad map showing location of Paul Jones Building

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Paul Jones Building shown at center of Large Area Context with recent National Register listings, Google Earth