PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS IN SEPTEMBER 2020

ILLINOIS BELL BUILDING

225 W. RANDOLPH STREET

CITY OF CHICAGO
Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Maurice D. Cox. Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designations process begins with a staff study and preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

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ILLINOIS BELL BUILDING
225 W. RANDOLPH STREET

Date of Construction: 1966
Architect: Holabird & Root

INTRODUCTION

The Illinois Bell Building (the "Bell Building"), at 225 W. Randolph Street, is a 31-story skyscraper located in the Loop community area of downtown Chicago, Illinois. It is located two blocks west of City Hall and two blocks east of the Chicago River. The building is in downtown Chicago's commercial core, an area densely built-up with historic skyscrapers and high-rise commercial buildings, spanning the late-19th century and the modern era. The building is on a site of approximately one acre, set back and cantilevered above the marble columns along the street-facing elevations of Randolph and Franklin streets.

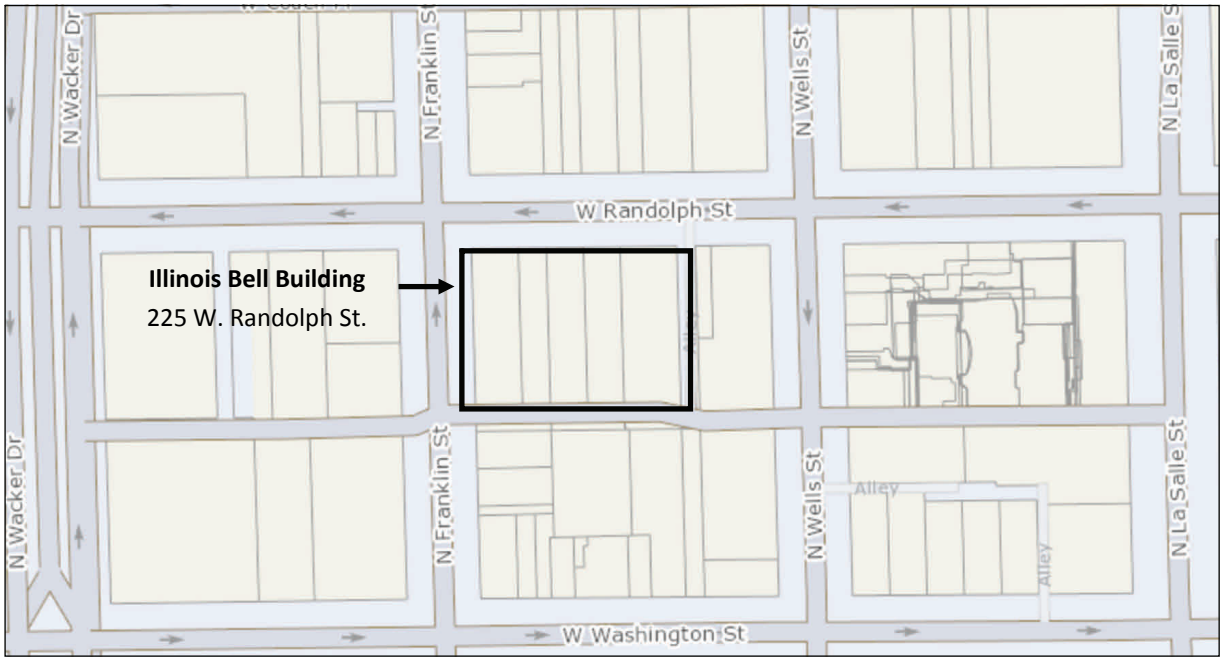
The Illinois Bell Building after completion, circa 1966, looking southeast at Randolph and Franklin Streets. (Source: University of Toledo Digital Collections)

Completed in 1966, the Bell Building was designed by the Chicago architecture firm Holabird & Root. Holabird & Root is a well-known Chicago architecture firm, having designed some of Chicago's most famous landmark buildings. The Bell Building has a glass and marble curtain wall on all four elevations, cantilevered above a recessed first floor lobby. The Bell Building is an excellent example of a New Formalist skyscraper, and a rare example of New Formalism applied to a commercial skyscraper in Chicago.

Illinois Bell Telephone Company ("Illinois Bell") was the regional Bell Operating Company that served Illinois as part of the Bell Telephone Company. The Bell Telephone Company was the largest telephone company in the United States for over 100 years, and Illinois in particular played a major role in the advancement of telephone technology.

Illinois Bell Building

225 W. Randolph St.



The Illinois Bell Building is located at 225 W. Randolph Street at the southeast corner of N. Franklin Street and W. Randolph Street in the Loop Community Area.

BUILDING HISTORY AND DESIGN

In the late 1960s, when many urban centers were experiencing a lack of investment as businesses and city residents fled to the suburbs, the Loop was unusual in experiencing a boom of real estate development. Large corporations were building skyscrapers so employees could work in the heart of downtown, largely thanks to efforts of Mayor Daley's administration, the Chicago Plan Commission, and local government groups and committees, such as the Chicago Central Area Committee.[1] By 1966, the same year that the Bell Building was completed, 18 other high-rise or skyscraper buildings were either under construction or had been completed since 1960.

Aerial shot of the building circa 1970. The sky bridges on the south elevation at the sixth through 20th floors connecting it to the other Illinois Bell office building on W. Washington Street (located far right) are visible in this photo. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

The 225 W. Randolph site was a logical choice for a new general office building to consolidate the offices of Illinois Bell in 1966, which had its Chicago division employees in eight locations scattered downtown at the time.[2] The company occupied approximately 80% of the block bounded by W. Randolph Street at the north, N. Wells Street at the east, W. Washington Street at the south, and N. Franklin Street at the west, including a two building complex on the Washington Street side and a building located on the 225 W. Randolph site itself - an 8-story office building completed in 1907, known as the Clock Building (demolished).[3] In July of 1969, Illinois Bell constructed Vail Court, a large courtyard, at the corner of Franklin and Washington streets (no longer extant). Described as a "Loop-area oasis", this open plaza was frequented by employees of the surrounding Bell buildings.[4]

1 "Building Boom Revives Downtown Area of Chicago", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), December 24, 1961, p. 6.
2 "Building Takes Shape", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), March 4, 1966, p 71.
3 Frank Alfred Randall, Frank Hall Randall, John D. Randall, *History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago,* University of Illinois Press, p. 266.
4 "Dedicated by Bell", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), July 25, 1969, p. 69.

The Bell Building was designed to share some building systems with the pre-existing Bell building at 212 W. Washington Street (this building was converted to residential condominiums in the late 1990s). Constructed in 1911, the 20-story building had been designed by Holabird & Root, the architectural firm that Bell would turn to again in 1966. Plans for the new Illinois Bell Building at 225 W. Randolph included a connecting first floor concourse and sky bridges between the existing 1911 Bell building and the new building at the eastern portion of the south elevation. The sky bridges, 8 feet in width, would be located on floors 6-20 and serve as connectors for both people and building systems.

The ground-breaking for the Bell Building took place on December 10, 1963, and was attended by Bernard H. Bradley, a partner at Holabird & Root, O. G. Smith, Assistant Vice President of Illinois Bell and John deButts, President of Illinois Bell, as well as the building engineer for Illinois Bell, Frank Henderson, and A.L. Jackson, president of A.L. Jackson, and Paul Keim, Executive Vice President of A.L. Jackson, the general contracting company. The building was scheduled to be completed in March 1966.[5]

Street view of N. Franklin Street at the intersection of W. Randolph, looking south, circa 1970. The Illinois Bell Building is visible on the left in the foreground. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

The Bell Building was the first of its size to use low-alloy steel for the structural frame, allowing for both cost-savings and larger column-free open spaces on the interior floors, due to the higher strength of low-alloy steel compared to conventional carbon steel. In addition to column-free interior offices, the stronger structural frame allowed the exterior columns to carry heavy marble and granite cladding on their exteriors. According to the chief structural engineer of Holabird & Root, William Cohen, the use of this type of steel saved $300,000 from the Bell Building's construction budget. [6]

5 "Start 30-Story Illinois Bell Offices", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), December 10, 1963, p. 65.
6 "Illinois Bell Builds" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), August 22, 1965, p. 87.

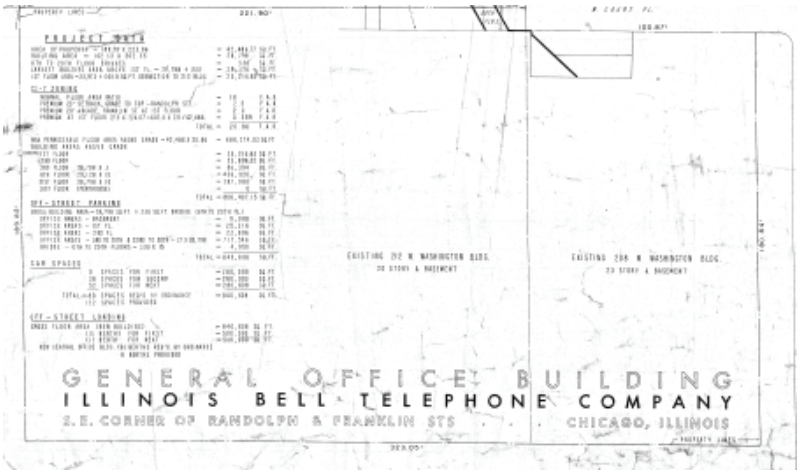
Photo of the northwest corner of the building circa 1966. The building's design features elements of the New Formalist style including the modern envisioning of the colonnade –like plaza at the street level and the use of rich materials like marble and granite on the exterior. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

The Bell Building is 31 stories with a two-story mechanical penthouse on the roof, a basement, and sub-basement. At street level, the Bell Building is set back from the property lines approximately 25 feet at the north along Randolph Street and 22 feet at the west along Franklin Street. This set-back provided site space for a row of large square planters of black granite, approximately 10 feet by 10 feet, spaced evenly between the columns. The columns are further accented by a grid of exposed aggregate concrete paving in a dark color to match the building which extends from the column base. The east elevation faces an alley and the west elevation faces a ramped driveway leading to a loading dock and parking at the basement levels. The alley elevation has a paneled aluminum screen with a circular design between the columns closest to the street.

All four elevations are similar, featuring a glass curtain wall of black glass with black Vitrolux spandrel panels, and projecting white marble-clad columns that divide the east and west elevations into five equal bays and the north and south elevations into seven equal bays.

The white marble columns have a dark granite base two feet high, with columns on the east elevation (along the alley) clad with a steel plate at the base. The Bell Building terminates at the roofline with a prominent horizontal marble slab that resembles a cornice, a character defining feature of the New Formalist style of architecture. The roof penthouse is clad in porcelain-enameled aluminum.

Holabird & Root's original plans for the Illinois Bell Telephone Company's building, 1966.



The recessed first floor features oversized plate glass windows. The Randolph Street (north) elevation has two sets of revolving doors, one at the east and one at the west. The Franklin Street (west) elevation originally had three double-leaf doors at the south, and a similar entry has been added to provide access to the retail space at the northwest. Finishes in the lobby were updated in a 1989 renovation, including the addition of wood paneling on interior lobby walls and the division of the northwest and southwest spaces into ground-floor retail.

On the interior, the main lobby on the first floor wrapped the elevator core with a circular telephone area at the east. The south area was slightly reduced by partitioned office space, and featured granite walls, a gray terrazzo floor, and gypsum board ceilings.

The building's elevator lobby as originally designed by Holabird & Root circa 1966. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

The 1989 remodel of the main lobby and elevator lobbies included the re-cladding of the original granite walls with marble and wood paneling and the original floors with a gray and black terrazzo. The lobby ceiling is modern gypsum board, with modern floating gypsum board ceilings in the elevator lobbies. The lobby was subsequently partitioned at the northwest and southwest corner, now used as retail space.

The general layout of most upper floors repeated the layout of the lobby, with a central elevator and stair core that opens to an elevator lobby and north and south east-west corridor and expansive open office space. The original plans include provisions for future changes to the layout, including demountable partition walls in the corner offices and planned egress corridors, should open space be partitioned.

As built, exceptions to the general layout of the office floors included the second, 20th, 21st, 28th, and 30th floors. The second floor, 21st floor, and 31st floor held mechanical and electrical equipment, as did the roof penthouse. Today the 20th floor houses tenant office space, but originally the 20th floor had two large dining rooms complete with waitress service stations, a kitchen, a private dining space, and a foyer. Originally, the 28th floor was the executive floor with private offices with attached restrooms lining the perimeter curtain wall. The president's office was in the northeast corner and the vice president's office in the southeast corner, separated by a large board room with attached board reception room. This floor also contained corporate records and filing rooms. Over time tenant changes and improvements have altered the original layout of many of the office floors.

The building's lobby as originally designed by Holabird & Root c. 1966. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

After its opening, portions of the Bell Building contributed to the civic life of the Loop. The building consistently offered public access to the lobby during business hours, which often showcased rotating art exhibits[7] and featured a display with buttons that would state the upcoming weather when pushed to the delight of visitors.[8] The upper floors also housed a small telephone museum which had displays featuring Alexander Graham Bell and over 80 vintage telephone models, also free and open to the public during business hours.[9]

7 "Art Note" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), June 12, 1967, p. 56.
8 "Feminique" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), August 28, 1967, p. 39.
9 "Telephone Museum" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), April 29, 1979, p. 245.

NEW FORMALISM

The Bell Building exemplifies New Formalism, a style of architecture that emerged late in the Modern Movement between 1955 and 1975 as a response to the rigidity of other forms of Modernist architecture. Building forms of the Classical past were updated with new forms only possible due to advances in building technology used in Modernist styles. New technologies in the mid-20th century, particularly concrete innovations, allowed for fresh interpretations of past architectural styles. Classicism was re-interpreted by architects like Edward Durrell Stone and William Pereira, who were among some of the earliest practitioners of New Formalism. New Formalist buildings exhibited classical forms, proportions, and elements, yet were identifiably modern.

The United of America Building at 1 East Wacker Drive, designed by Shaw, Metz, and Associates in 1962, is another example of a New Formalist skyscraper in downtown Chicago. (Source: Chuckman's Collection (Chicago Postcards), Vol. 7)

As part of the embrace of Classical elements, the use of traditionally rich materials such as marble or granite was common, as were forms like arches, colonnades, and columns. The use of more expensive materials is also a character-defining feature of New Formalism which reflected the increasing affluence of American society at the time.[10] New Formalism was popular for both its references to the past and its modern adaption of traditional forms. It was not a common style for residential or commercial buildings because of the higher cost materials and its sometimes inefficient floor layouts. Most commonly, the style was applied to institutional buildings like libraries, and government buildings as well as commercial buildings commissioned by more affluent businesses like banks and corporations.

10 Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles,* The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1969, p. 260.

The Illinois Bell Building at 225 W. Randolph Street was completed in 1966. Like many other Illinois Bell buildings across the state, it was designed by Chicago architecture firm Holabird & Root. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

Buildings of the New Formalist style are typically free-standing blocks with symmetrical elevations and level roofs. The building is often defined at the roofline with a projecting roof slab. The use of colonnades, repeating arches, or other formal elements, frequently wrapping around all elevations, is typical. Façade surfaces range greatly but are almost always smooth, and of rich material such as marble, granite, or cast stone. Formalist buildings are often set in formal landscapes or upon a plinth.

A key difference from International and Miesian styles is the strong articulation of vertical columns on the exterior, which is drawn from Classical traditions in architecture. In addition, New Formalism often embraced limited architectural ornament, in contrast to most International or Miesian style buildings which rejected ornament.[11]

11 Whiffen, 257.

Examples of New Formalist are rare in Chicago. Shaw, Metz, & Associates designed a few examples in Chicago throughout the 1960s, though they do not strongly exemplify key style attributes. The United of America Building (1962), 1550 Lake Shore Drive Apartments (1960), and 3550 Lake Shore Drive Apartments (1962) all had similar vertical columnar elements, however the designs and materials were not as refined as the Bell Building , and the vertical emphasis was not as strong.

The 1974 Standard Oil Building at 200 E. Randolph Street was designed by Edward Durell Stone and Perkins and Will. Originally clad in marble, the entire exterior cladding of the building was replaced with granite between 1990 and 1992. (Source: www.chicagoarchitecture.info)

Examples of New Formalist skyscraper buildings by other architects in Chicago include the 23-story American Dental Association Building designed by Graham, Anderson, Probst & White (1965), and the 60-story First National Bank building by C.F. Murphy Associates (1969). Both feature similar vertical emphasis on all four elevations, though they lack the projecting roof slab and colonnade at the first story. Examples of the style applied to other building types include the 12-story C.F. Murphy Associates' Mercy Hospital (1967), and the three-story New Graduate Residence Hall on the University of Chicago's campus, designed by Edward Durrell Stone (1962). A later example is the Standard Oil Building (1974), designed by Edward Durrell Stone in association with Perkins & Will. At the time of construction it was the world's tallest marble clad structure at 83 stories. The building was reclad and modernized in the 1990s.

ILLINOIS BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY

Telephone operators in Springfield, Illinois in 1917 (above), and at a large Bell System international switchboard in 1943 (below). (Sources: Chicago History Museum)

Illinois has a long history in the forefront of the development of telephone technology. Chicago had telephones by 1877, just one year after Alexander Graham Bell patented his version of the telephone.[12] The first Bell telephone exchange in Chicago opened on June 26, 1878, with 75 telephones. Competing telephone companies in Chicago eventually merged in 1881 as the Chicago Telephone Company. Growth came rapidly, with Chicago Telephone owning 2,610 telephones in the city by 1882, 26,661 in 1900, and 239,083 by 1910.[13] In 1920, the Chicago Telephone Company bought out more competitors and became Illinois Bell, one of the many regional companies that made up the Bell Telephone system and handled local and regional calling for the national company.

The Bell system, colloquially referred to as Ma Bell and the Baby Bells, had several technological breakthroughs, including touch-tone dialing, microwave transmission systems, and the first trans-Pacific cable in the 1960s and 1970s. Illinois Bell in particular was the first to introduce services such as call waiting, speed calling, call forwarding, and three-way calling in 1971. The early 1970s also saw the peak employment Illinois Bell which numbered approximately 36,000 employees.

On April 5, 1974, American Telephone & Telegraph Co. ("AT&T") bought 100% of Illinois Bell stock by purchasing the remaining publically-available shares. Dating back almost a century, AT&T had owned close to 99% of Illinois Bell and many other so-called "Baby Bells", but the remaining 1% of shares were available for public purchase.[14] The same year Illinois Bell was fully acquired by AT&T, the Justice Department and competitor MCI Communications Corporation filed an anti-trust suit against AT&T, which would completely restructure the corporation.

12 Herbert Newton Casson, *The History of the Telephone*, A.C. McClurg and Company, 1910, pg 46.
13 "3 Vast Utility Systems Serve Chicago's Users", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), March 2, 1952. p. 49.
14 "Illinois Bell Puts Stock on Dividend Basis", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), November 29, 1934, p. 51.

The Bell System logo evolved over time but typically featured the recognizable bell in the center of a circle.

Simultaneously, technology was advancing at a remarkable speed and changes were coming to the telephone industry. The transition to computer-based operating and switching systems began in earnest in the mid-1970s. Operators were no longer needed to complete calls and more often served in informational capacities. In 1977, Bell operators stopped voicing weather reports when the customer dialed the "weather number" as they had done for nearly 40 years. Instead, new computer equipment recorded (primarily male) meteorologists announcing the weather to the general dissatisfaction of customers.[15] However, these changes generally did not reduce the Illinois Bell workforce. The company focused on programming to retrain workers in other capacities. For example, former weather operators directed their attention to directory assistance calls.

Further changes came in 1982 when, on January 8th, AT&T announced it would be divesting itself of Illinois Bell and its 21 other operating companies in an out-of-court settlement to the anti-trust suit. Illinois Bell employees were faced with the decision between staying with the company or moving to AT&T. Bell companies had a reputation of being both good to employees and having plentiful opportunities for advancement; many employees stayed with the company for a lifetime. The divesture would change the trajectory for many of them.[16]

The break-up with Ma Ball, coupled with ever-changing telephone technology, proved to be the death knell for Illinois Bell and many other Bell companies in the Ma Bell system. AT&T, which retained its long-distance services in the divesture and had long branched into advancing mobile and telecommunications, would be the future of the company.

15 "Phone weather reports taking on a deeper tone", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), September 11, 1977. P. 20.
16 "Ma Bell is moving out: Workers face change, choice", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), January 29, 1982, p.33.

ARCHITECTS: HOLABIRD & ROOT

William Holabird (left) and Martin Roche (right), the original founders of the prolific architecture firm which became Holabird & Root. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

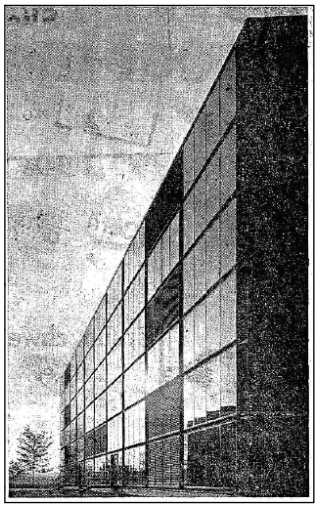
The Chicago-based architecture firm Holabird & Root was founded in 1882 as Holabird & Roche by William Holabird and Martin Roche. Following the death of the two founders in 1923 and 1927, respectively, the firm was headed by William's son, John A. Holabird, and John W. Root, son of John Root of Burnham and Root.[17] The younger Holabird and Root had met during the 1910s, while studying at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris where they received not only the benefits of the classical Beaux-Arts training but exposure to the most contemporary art trends. They worked briefly at Holabird & Roche before World War I, and returned to the firm after serving in the war. In 1928, the firm became known as Holabird & Root.

In its early days, the firm was known for designing some of the earliest and most notable Chicago-School and Art Deco style skyscrapers in Chicago. Examples of these which have been named Chicago landmarks include 333 North Michigan Avenue, the Chicago Motor Club, the Chicago Board of Trade, and the Palmolive Building. All of these buildings reflect the progressive character of their work and are widely renowned for the quality of their design and planning.

17 "Holabird & Root Leaves Imprint on City's Architecture" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), June 26, 1966., p. 91
18 "Holabird & Root Leaves Imprint on City's Architecture" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), June 26, 1966, p. 91..

By the time of the construction of the Bell Building at 225 W. Randolph in 1966, the firm had completed over ten thousand projects totaling over $2 billion of construction in the United States and internationally.[18] In the 1960s, Holabird & Root was led by three partners: a grandson of the original founder, William Holabird, Harry F. Manning, and Bernard Bradley. The firm was busy redefining itself as a current leader in innovative design.

Holabird & Root had been the architects of choice for Illinois Bell for decades, designing facilities for the company beginning as early as the 1910s.[19] In 1973, the firm was awarded Chicago's "highest architectural honor" for another office building designed for Illinois Bell in the Chicago suburb of Northbrook. The building was the only one of over 100 entries given the "honor" distinction in a competition co-sponsored by the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry.[20] The firm is still a privately-held partnership today, and provides architectural, engineering, interior design, and planning services.



The c. 1911 Illinois Bell building on the other side of the block from the 1966 building site (above), the 1927 Palmer House (middle), and the 1974 Illinois Bell building (right), also designed by the architectural firm. (Source: Chicago History Museum)

19 "Describe New Plan for Riverfront Community" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), September 20, 1970, p. 104.
20 "Architects laud Bell unit design" *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), September 13, 1973. p. 19.

POTENTIAL FOR CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to recommend landmark designation for a building, structure, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated criteria for landmark designation as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Bell Building be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of City's Heritage

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The Bell Building is a representation of the reinvestment in downtown Chicago, the Loop area in particular, by corporations in the 1960s. In contrast to many other American cities, Chicago saw a significant increase in downtown development by private entities during this time period.

- The Illinois Bell company was a major employer in Chicago, and Illinois as a whole. At its zenith in the early 1970s, the company employed roughly 36,000 people in the Chicago area alone and made important contributions to the advancement of technology in the telephone industry.

- Chicago, and Illinois as a whole, has been on the forefront of telephone technology since the invention of the telephone. Chicago was one of the first major cities to have telephones, just one year after Alexander Graham Bell's invention.

- Illinois Bell's research and development arm was critical in developing systems that are still used today, such as call waiting, speed calling, call forwarding, and three-way calling.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Bell Building is one of very few known examples of New Formalism as applied to a skyscraper in Chicago.

- The marble and granite façade materials are unique and key elements of the New Formalist style, which embraced the use of rich building materials as part of the nod to Classical architecture.

- The building is distinguished from other New Formalist examples by its strong vertical columns, projecting level roof slab, and cantilevered first-story colonnade, which creates a street-level plaza.

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The building was designed by one of Chicago's oldest and most influential architecture firms, Holabird & Root (previously Holabird & Roche).

- Under its original partners, William Holabird and Martin Roche, Holabird and Roche was an important architectural firm associated with the development and refinement of the Chicago style, a significant development in the history of world architecture.

- John Holabird and John Wellborn Root, Jr., second-generation partners of Holabird and Roche and the successor firm of Holabird and Root, are significant for their sophisticated and intricately planned buildings, whether Classical Revival designs such as the Palmer House or Art Deco skyscrapers such as the Chicago Board of Trade and Palmolive Building.

- At the time the firm designed the Bell Building, Holabird & Root was in the process of redefining itself as an innovative powerhouse a generation after designing some of Chicago's most ground-breaking buildings. In 1974, the firm received Chicago's highest architectural honor for the design for an Illinois Bell building in Northbrook, Illinois.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

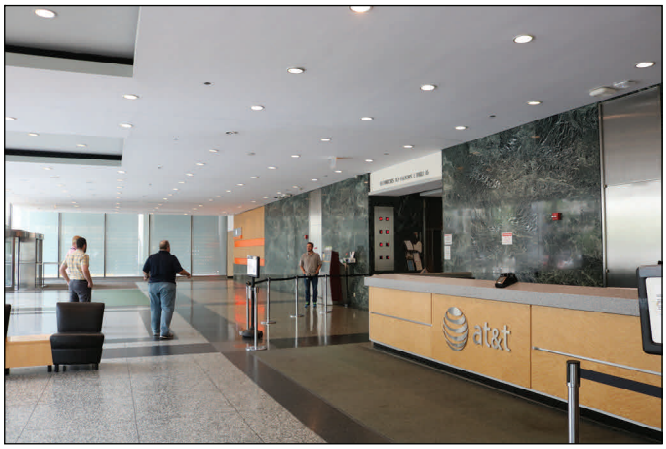
The building's exterior possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity. The siting, scale, overall design, and relationship to the surrounding area remain largely unchanged. Changes to the Bell Building are limited. The sky bridges that once connected the building to its neighboring Illinois Bell building on Washington Street on floors six through 20 were removed, likely in the 1980s. Similarly, the connecting concourse between the buildings has also been removed. A renovation in 1989 altered the main lobby, lowering the ceilings in some areas and adding wood paneling to some walls. Retail tenant spaces were constructed at the northwest and southwest corners of the lobby, likely at the time of the lobby remodeling in the 1980s. On the office floors, the elevator lobbies on each floor were also modernized in the 1980s, with the addition of wood paneling and upholstered wall panels.

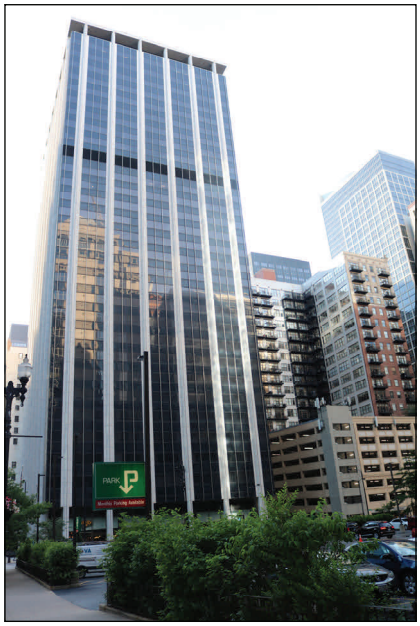
SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

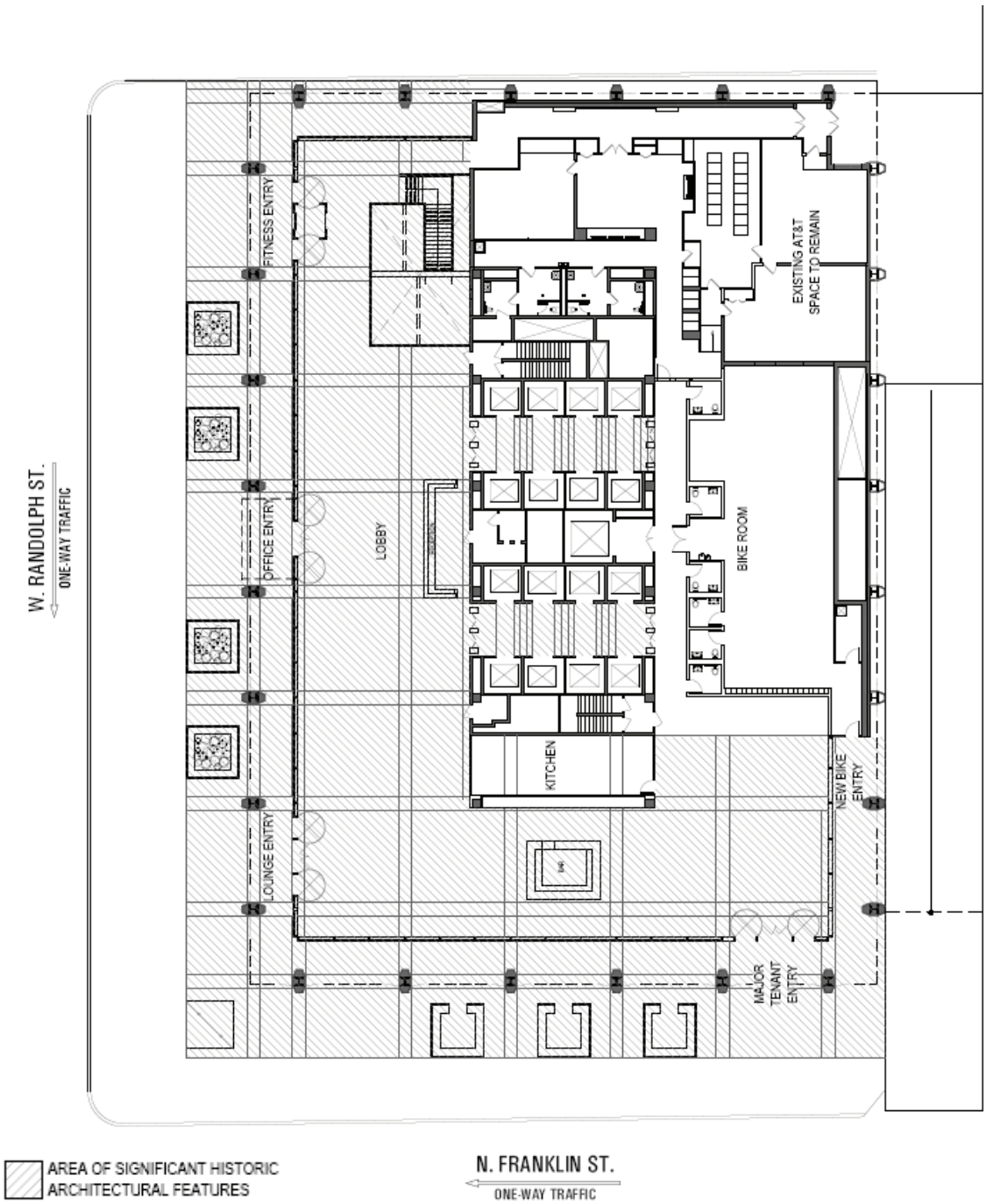
Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its preliminary evaluation of the Illinois Bell Building at 225 W. Randolph Street, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building; and
- The first floor lobby; and
- The surrounding plazas of the building including the granite planters on the Franklin and Randolph Street elevations.







The significant historical and architectural features of the Illinois Bell Building include the first floor lobby and the surrounding plazas of the Building including the granite planters on the Franklin Street and Randolph Street elevations

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