

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Perrine Building

Other names/site number: Cravens Building, First Life Assurance Building, & Robinson Renaissance

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 119 N. Robinson Avenue

City or town: Oklahoma City State: OK County: OK

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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 ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

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

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u></u>	buildings
<u></u>	<u></u>	sites
<u></u>	<u></u>	structures
<u></u>	<u></u>	objects
<u></u>	<u></u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
COMMERCE/TRADE/office building
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
COMMERCE/TRADE/office building
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial
Style

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Perrine Building is a twelve-story office building located at the SW corner of N. Robinson Ave. and Park Ave. central to Oklahoma City's business district. The building was originally designed by the architectural firm of Hawk and Parr and opened to the public on June 1, 1927. The building is well maintained and exhibits many period correct details. The most significant renovation was the 1988 addition of the 12-story atrium and three-story interior arcade central to the original U-shaped building design. The architect of the renovation was HTB Inc. and the building retains multiple aspects of the original design's integrity including: setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building's ground floor has served as a central retail and restaurant node to downtown since its opening. Most notably was Anna Maude's Cafeteria which operated in the basement from 1928 to 1983 (one of the city's longest operating cafeterias). In January of 1961, nine African American demonstrators were arrested for disorderly conduct while trying to obtain service from the Cafeteria as part of Oklahoma City's sit-in movement. This building is the only remaining sit-in location in downtown Oklahoma City due to many being demolished as part of Urban Renewal's downtown revitalization of the 1960's and 70's. In 1977 the Perrine building was targeted for demolition by Urban Renewal for an entry plaza to a proposed 4 block Galleria development. By 1982, Urban Renewal and city leadership opinions towards downtown redevelopment changed and the building was preserved.

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Narrative Description

The Perrine Building is a twelve-story brick and limestone office structure measuring 100' x 125' at the base. This 12-story U-shaped building is a composite of Commercial Style and Simplified Art Deco Style and faces east onto Robinson Avenue and north onto Park Avenue with the primary façade facing east. The two shades of brick disguise the building's structural elements on the upper stories while the first and second floors of the north and east elevations are clad in limestone and granite. The Perrine Building is immediately west of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building (NRIS#100002220) and near other notable buildings including the Skirvin Hotel (NRIS#79003020) and the Colcord Building (NRIS#76001571).

The eastern façade has a symmetrical design. The first two floors are differentiated by both material and design. The first floor has large arched storefronts with recessed center doors, display windows and glass transoms. At the center of the façade is the building's main entrance which is surrounded by large plate glass windows. On either side of the entrance is a large display window with glass transoms. To the north of the central entry area are three storefront windows with EIFS transoms that create shade for the windows. The northern most storefront also has an entry door. To the south of the central entry area are three storefront windows with EIFS transoms that create shade for the windows. The central storefront has an entry door. Each arched area is defined by a column detail with a granite base and limestone columns. The top of each column flares slightly. Atop the column is a diamond shaped metal detail. The second floor has 21, fixed pane windows. Above the windows is a frieze detail with 26 miniature turrets. Above the three center windows of the second floor, within the frieze detail is the building name plate "ROBINSON RENAISSANCE", and an arched cornice detail with elongated turrets and a crest detail in the center. The remaining ten stories extend above the first and second floors at the southeast and northeast corners. These towers are clad with brick. The façade of both towers are identical. Each floor has three bays with a window configuration of two-three-two. All windows are fixed panes. Between each floor is a spandrel panel of terra cotta square blocks. Vertical banding of brick and stone rope details differentiate each bay. The north and south walls of the interior U-shaped towers are identical and similar in material, geometry, and design. The interior U-shape has a window pattern of two-three-three-two out of similar fixed pane windows. A full glass atrium runs at an angle from east to west to enclose the central volume to below creating a large atrium complete with catwalks at each level that step back correspondingly connected the two wings at each floor from 3 to 12. The parapet is constructed of Art Deco period appropriate details and is flat between bays. The parapet steps up atop each vertical brick column a series of 3 steps. Each central bay has cast stone panels from the top of the windows upward consisting of radial geometric patterns creating 3 inverted pointed arches, one above each window.

The north façade is similar to the east in material and design. The first two floors are differentiated by both material and design. The first floor has the same large arched storefronts with EIFS transoms. The transoms in bays 2, 3, 5, & 6 contain mechanical louvres painted to match the adjacent EIFS. The façade is a 7 bay configuration with the five central bays being symmetrical and the two end bays (east and west) being smaller. Doors are located in bay 2 and bay 6. Similarly each bay is flanked by columns that have a slight flare at the top. Atop each

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

column is the same diamond shaped metal detail. The second floor has 19, fixed pane windows. Above the second floor is a frieze detail with 28 miniature turrets. Above the three windows of the second floor, within the frieze detail, located over the fifth bay from the east is the building name, "PERRINE", cast into the stone. The remaining 10 stories extend upward, full width. These towers are clad with brick. Each floor has seven bays with a window configuration of two-three-three-three-three-three-two. All windows are fixed pane. Between each floor is a spandrel panel of terra cotta square blocks. Vertical banding of brick and stone rope (faux torch) details differentiate each bay. The parapet is similar in material and design the east façade with the exception of the panels above bay 4 from the east. This bay has cast stone panels from the top of the windows upward consisting of radial geometric patterns creating 3 inverted pointed arches, one above each window.

The south façade has 4 lower bays starting from the east and going west that are similar in design to the east and north facades. The first of these bays uses the same materials of stone at the first two floors, brick from floors 3 and above with the terra cotta spandrel infills. The next three bays are composed of stucco like finish surface material on the first two floors with brick above with the eastern most bay containing smaller windows into the stair egress tower with an exit door at the ground floor. The terra cotta infill spandrel is changed to the same brick in these locations. Each of these bays has the same storefront with EIFS transoms as the 2 street facing facades and the columns are of similar height and geometry. The remainder of the south façade, heading west, is entirely a smooth faced stucco like finish surface material with simplified detailing to mimic the location and size of the frieze between floors two and three. The furthest west point on this façade is a storefront entry/exit and interior vestibule. The other notable feature on this façade is the connection to the existing skybridge network at floor level two for the first 1.5 bays from the east. Floors 3 and above are entirely brick with punched windows in a two-two-two-three-one-one-three-two configuration running from east to west. The bay containing the last two windows is entirely clad in the same smooth stucco like finish surface material. The parapet on the southern façade is mostly flat with simple sheet metal flashing with the exception of the western most bay which has similar cast stone step details as the northern and eastern facades.

The western façade abuts a pedestrian thoroughway and is entirely clad in a smooth stucco like finish material lacking in ornamentation or detail seen on the other 3 facades. The same simplified frieze detail wraps around from the south façade for the entire length. The southernmost end contains the same storefront entry as the south façade. The remaining façade contain various hollow metal doors and louvres to various utility and mechanical rooms. Floors 3 and above contain similar fixed pane windows in a two-one-one-three configuration running from south to north. The parapet of the southern corner contains a similar parapet of stepped detailing and then transition to a simple flat parapet with simplistic sheet metal flashing.

The ground floor interior consists of a central staircase with openings looking into the basement surrounded by modern stainless-steel handrails and post with cables in the intermediate. The perimeter is flanked by clean white sheetrock walls with punched openings infilled with storefront glazing to create bays for tenant spaces. The ceilings are flat textured sheetrock and paint. The flooring is a monolithic pattern of stone tile of two textures, smooth and honed. The walls terminate at the floors with a rubber base. A large ceremonial stair connects to the

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

walkway around the atrium at level two. Level two is of similar design, geometry and construction.

The lower level (basement) consists of similar geometry with different finishes. The floor is patterned using various colors of smaller 12"x12" ceramic and stone tiles. Similarly, the area is surround by glass storefronts and similar ceilings.

The elevator lobbies on floors basement through 2 are of newer finishes consisting of stainless steel elevator doors and transoms with large format Carrera marble tile walls and led light wall sconces. The ceilings have raised hidden light coves with lay in tiles in the center.

The elevator lobbies on floors 3-12 appear to be more simplistic and older in construction consisting of 12'x12" lighter colored stone tile floors and walls with a floor border of darker stone tiles. The elevator doors and surround are painted steel and appear to be original in nature. The ceiling is flat sheetrock and paint with a raised and hidden light cove with a heavy textured lay in tile center.

In 1988, a renovation was completed on the building, and this is when the central U-shape was enclosed from 3 -12 with the glass and steel space frame to create the full height atrium. During this renovation the finishes were updated on floors basement through three. Subsequent to this renovation, finishes in the public lobbies of the ground floor, second thru twelfth floors were replaced. The only exterior renovations that appear to have taken place during the 1988 renovation was the removal a full length canopy along the east and north facades. It was at this time that the exterior transoms above that canopy were infilled from glass to EIFS.

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE/ BLACK
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1920 - 1982

Significant Dates

Jan 1, 1961

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Black

Architect/Builder

Hawk and Parr

HTB Inc.

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

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

The Perrine Building in Oklahoma City is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for its architectural and historic significance. It is significant under Criterion A in the field of Ethnic Heritage/Black for its association with the Civil Rights movement for the sit-ins in 1961. It is significant under Criterion A in the field of Community Planning and Development for its role in Urban Renewal of Oklahoma City, circa 1965-1982. Finally, it is also significant under Criterion C as a good local example of Commercial Style and a simplified Art Deco Style of architecture.

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

Criterion A – Civil Rights Movement

Historical Background: The Age of Jim Crow

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were a particularly bleak and repressive period for African-Americans in Oklahoma and throughout the South. By the early twentieth century rigid separation of the races (segregation) defined the region. Beginning in the 1880s and continuing into the new century, state after state segregated everything imaginable as statute after statute was passed. These laws were and are known as Jim Crow, a name based upon a derogatory minstrel show routine called "Jump Jim Crow" created in the 1830s.

Oklahoma's first bill, Senate Bill One, was approved on December 18, 1907 joining the Jim Crow chorus with the State's first Jim Crow Law. The bill provided that "every railway company, urban or suburban car company, streetcar or interurban car or railway company . . . shall provide separate coaches or compartments as hereinafter provided for the accommodation of the White and Negro races, which separate coaches or cars shall be equal in all points of comfort and convenience." Law after law followed. In 1910, the "grandfather clause" was added to the Oklahoma constitution as well. This clause made it hard, almost impossible, for African Americans to vote.¹

The U. S. Supreme Court in 1896 upheld legal segregation in the landmark case *Plessy vs. Ferguson*. The majority opinion ruled that segregation was constitutional as long as both races were provided equal facilities - the famous (or infamous) "separate but equal" doctrine. The "equal" rarely was true in practice. The icons of the Jim Crow decades were signs emblazoned everywhere saying "Whites only" or "colored." And insults and violence often accompanied the enforcement of Jim Crow laws. The Age of Jim Crow was the most violent in the history of southern race relations. Between 1882 and 1968, for example, Oklahoma ranked thirteenth in the nation in the number of Black lynchings, usually for trivial or non-existent offenses.

1. *Oklahomahistory.org*: "The African American Civil Rights Movement in Oklahoma – Segregation", Accessed on 1/15/2025

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

2.

Segregation was more pervasive in towns and cities, as opposed to the countryside - simply because rural areas had less to segregate. In places where segregation wasn't practical (for example, banks and stores), Blacks were expected to "know their place." This meant observing certain unwritten rules of behavior like entering the homes of Whites through the back door, stepping off the sidewalk to let Whites pass, waiting until all Whites had been helped before receiving service in stores, avoiding eye contact when speaking with Whites, and addressing Whites as Mister or Miss while themselves being called "boy" or "girl." Eventually, Blacks and Whites were segregated from the cradle to the grave in almost all aspects of their lives.

Despite segregation's grasp, African-Americans began fighting for their rights well before the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s. "With no support from the authorities," Herb Boyd explains in *We Shall Overcome*¹⁹, "Black Americans began finding new ways of getting their message heard." After World War I and even more so after World War II, Blacks began pressing for equal treatment in the military. In 1937 Congressman Arthur L. Mitchell began a lawsuit that would eventually end segregation in Pullman railroad cars after experiencing discrimination during a train trip. Blacks learned that they could pressure the federal government when, writes Boyd², labor activist A. Philip Randolph "threatened President Franklin Delano Roosevelt with a march on Washington in 1941 unless he put an end to discrimination in the defense industry." The tactic worked. Finally, African-Americans organized local, state and national groups such as the NAACP to help with the fight for their rights.

The NAACP chose a policy of challenging segregation through the courts. Easily the most important court case was *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), in which Chief Justice Earl Warren, writing for a unanimous Supreme Court, concluded in the now famous words, "that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place." "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." In what came to be known as *Brown II*, issued in 1955, the Supreme Court ordered schools to desegregate "with all deliberate speed." While *Brown* referred specifically to schools, its larger implications were clear.

The National Sit-in Movement

Lunch counter sit-ins were a type of protest called non-violent direct action. Black students sat down at a lunch counter reserved for Whites and attempted to order, knowing that they would be asked to leave and eventually be taken to jail. As soon as they left, more protestors would take their place. It was important for the students to dress well and behave in a polite, dignified manner. Behavior like this, a signature of sit-ins, impressed friends and enemies alike and did much to build public sympathy.

2. Boyd, Herb. *We Shall Overcome*, The History of Civil Rights Movement as It Happened, Sourcebooks Media Fusion, 2004

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

Scattered sit-ins occurred in the 1940s and '50s, but they never became a major movement. By contrast, the demonstrations that began in early 1960 "spread like wildfire" (NPS study, "*Racial Desegregation of Public Accommodations*"⁷). The first occurred in Greensboro, North Carolina on February 1, when four freshmen from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College attempted to integrate the lunch counter of a Woolworth's store in downtown Greensboro. This store routinely sold merchandise to Black customers but refused them food service. The four young men remained quietly at the counter, without being served, until the store closed at 5:30 p.m. Unsure of their next step, the activists sought help from a prominent local Black dentist, who asked them to wait before taking further action. He, in turn, asked the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) for assistance. One week later a CORE representative arrived and organized more student sit-ins. These targeted Woolworth's, Kress, and a third retail establishment. Once again, personnel manning each store's lunch counter refused to serve the students and, once again, the students remained quietly at the counters after service had been denied.

Although it appeared so at the time, the actions of "the Greensboro four" were not completely spontaneous and did not occur in a vacuum. African-Americans, and especially younger Blacks, had become discouraged over the slowness of change. They felt that the NAACP's policy of challenging segregation in the courts, and then waiting for years while segregationists did everything possible to delay the cases, was simply not working. Students at Nashville's Fisk University were planning their own demonstrations when Greensboro beat them to it. They had weeks of training in nonviolent protest, led by Vanderbilt University graduate theology student James Lawson, under their belt. "By 1960," says Herb Boyd, author of *We Shall Overcome*², "many Black campuses in the South had heard of the nonviolence workshops."

Word of the Greensboro sit-ins spread quickly across the nation, and soon other students joined the protest. The Nashville group first put its training to the test on February 18, when 124 students sat-in at several downtown stores. A "sympathy" sit-in occurred in Tallahassee, Florida. In *Eyes on the Prize, America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*³, author Juan Williams quotes a New York Times editorial stating that by the end of February the movement had moved from North Carolina to Virginia, Florida, South Carolina and Tennessee and involved fifteen cities. Boyd states that over 100 American cities had experienced sit-ins, many of which resulted in arrest of the student demonstrators, by November 1960. According to National Park Service authors in a study of the Civil Rights Movement⁴:

The sociologist Martin Oppenheimer has calculated that in the first year after Greensboro demonstrations took place in 104 communities. In sixty-nine of them, the protests turned out favorably, and in twenty-nine they proved unsuccessful. Overall, he computed a 56.5

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2. Boyd, Herb. *We Shall Overcome, The History of Civil Rights Movement as It Happened*, Sourcebooks Media Fusion, 2004
 3. Williams Juan. *Eyes on the Prize, America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. Penguin Books. ISBN 9780143124740
 4. Garcia, Matt; Hornsby, Alton, Jr.; Lawson, Steven; and Salvatore, Susan Cianci. *Civil Rights in America Theme Study: Racial Desegregation of Public Accommodations*. Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2004

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

percent success rate. In March 1961, CORE reported a higher scorecard of progress. According to the organization's figures, 138 communities had agreed to some measure of integrated facilities since February 1, 1960.

The sit-in movement would continue until the summer of 1962.

Today scholars recognize sit-ins as a distinct and very significant phase of the Civil Rights Movement and a watershed in the history of Black protest in the United States. The students' quiet dignity impressed people across the nation (including many Whites), and their non-violent demonstrations accelerated the pace of social change in America. They proclaimed that Blacks were no longer willing to accept the second-class citizenship imposed by Jim Crow segregation. They showed that a new and younger class of Black leaders had emerged. They inspired other efforts to demand integration through direct action rather than waiting for the outcome of prolonged court battles. They led to the formation of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which attracted some of the nation's best young people (Black and White) to work for integration and voting rights over the next several years. And finally, the sit-ins generated court cases that helped overturn segregation. *Gamer v. Louisiana*, for example, was one of the cases the United States Supreme Court used to affirm the principle that a licensed public business could not discriminate or operate in a segregated fashion.

In the oft-times violent world of Jim Crow segregation, it took great courage to participate in a sit-in or other form of protest. Sit-ins were considered assertive, even radical, with students physically challenging segregation. Sometimes the police quietly hauled them to jail without incident. Other times Whites jeered and pelted protesters with food and police were less than gentle in their approach. The young "foot soldiers" of the sit-ins, who remained non-violent despite physical attacks upon them, exemplified the very best of the civil rights movement - ordinary people taking extraordinary actions (within the context of the times) to effect change.

Oklahoma City Sit-ins

The Oklahoma City sit-in movement was indicative of the border state sit-ins of the 1950's. Since the early 1900's all public accommodations in Oklahoma City outside the Black community were closed to Blacks. Although there were no city ordinances demanding segregated public facilities, White owners could use simple trespass laws to evict any Black who entered. In the late 1940's an attack was launched on Oklahoma's segregation laws and practices, resulting in 1955 the Oklahoma City School Board officially desegregating all public schools. Despite such progress, Blacks in Oklahoma City were still systematically excluded from most of its restaurants.

A young Black history teacher at Dunjee High School in Oklahoma City would prove instrumental in facilitating change throughout the city and state, Clara Luper at a key event within the Perrine Building. Clara Luper began teaching history in 1951 and was influenced so strongly by Dr. Martin Luther King that she wrote a play and was asked to perform this play in NYC with the members of the NAACP Youth Council, of which she was its adult supervisor.

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

It was this trip that helped spur the youth council into action to desegregate OKC's lunch counters after experiencing equal service during their travels, with guidance and advice from Clara Luper.

In May 1957 the NAACP Youth Council, led by Clara Luper, attempted to negotiate with owners and managers of downtown restaurants to serve Blacks on an equal basis. When over a year of unsuccessful negotiations had concluded, the Youth Council staged its first sit-in from August 19-September 1, 1958. The youth chose 5 major lunch counters; John A Brown's, Veazey's Drug, Katch Drug, Kress', and Green's Variety Store. Veazey's and Green's provided integrated service. A sit in at Katz lasted from August 19-21, where the youths occupied most of the soda fountain seats and patiently waited to be served. They were finally served and the following day the youth went to Kress, where they won service, but had to stand up to eat. At Brown's, the Black youth found all seats were taken by White youth before the establishment was opened. As the sit-in movement in OKC was predominantly being carried out by school age children of the NAACP Youth Council the sit-ins had to be suspended in September so that the students could go back to school, and it was deemed a "tactical maneuver" by Luper and the council. This action led to publications about the peaceful sit-ins from papers such as the New York Times, which ran at least 5 stories about these events. During these initial sit-ins 4 of the 5 targeted counters were de-segregated and the atmosphere was relatively tranquil.

At the end of 1959 and through 1960 the Youth Council encouraged a boycott of targeted segregated lunch counters. Over the course of these 2 years various efforts to continue this growth were tested to varying degrees of limited success. In 1960 Oklahoma Governor J. Howard Edmondson announced the creation of a Governor's Committee on Human Relations. Sit-ins ended to allow the governor's group time to act. Then on August 10, 1960, Dr. Charles N. Atkins, a Black physician, stated that a boycott of downtown business would begin if Blacks were not served at lunch counters within 5 days. The adult Black community began to boycott all downtown OKC businesses. During this boycott Luper and various others would take photos of Black people shopping downtown and then telephone committees would call them to discourage this behavior until their goals were reached. The boycott excluded the 9 locations which previously opened their doors to Blacks. This general boycott was successful and at the end of 1960 the NAACP Youth Council files had revealed that over 100 establishments were open to them. On July 6, 1961, Harvey Everest of the Governor's Committee on Human Relations announced an end to the boycott as three major downtown food counters allowed service to Blacks, including Brown's, H. L. Green Store and the Forum Cafeteria. The Oklahoman reported previous policies remained in effect at Anna Maude cafeteria and Bishop's Restaurant.

The eleven-month boycott had been accompanied by the absence of violence. This was in sharp contrast to many Southern cities. For example, a series of sit-ins in Jacksonville, Florida, around the onset of Oklahoma City's boycott, led to a race riot. But three long years of protest lay between the NAACP Youth Council and total victory. The last phase of the demonstrations, which lasted from July 1961, to July 1964, would be marked by surges of direct action followed by periods of inactivity. During these latter times the protesters would try more negotiations, and if they failed, rebuild support for further demonstrations.

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

During the remainder of 1961 Luper led demonstrations at a restaurant called the Pink Kitchen. In this instance the protests led to the arrest of several demonstrators and the filing of an injunction suit which halted further protests there. But negotiations with other Oklahoma City eating places led to the opening of some of them; according to the Youth Council's desegregation progress report, 115 eating establishments were open to Blacks as of December 1961.

During 1962 and the first five months of 1963 the Youth Council conducted almost no sit-ins, presumably devoting their main energies to rebuilding their morale and talking to more store owners. The city government was aware, however, that the lull would not last indefinitely. At Mayor Jack Wilkes' request, the city council created a Community Relations Committee in May to help solve the city's racial problems and head off the renewal of sit-ins by acting as mediators for both sides in a dispute. The committee did not, however, prevent new protests.

There were sit-ins every day from May 31 to June 4 at such places as Bishops and the Skirvin Hotel, resulting in a quick series of victories including Anna Maude Cafeteria. More than twenty businesses began to serve Blacks as a result of these protests. Mayor Wilkes played an important role in the talks during this time by serving as an arbiter between restaurant owners and Blacks. Other people involved in the talks were the NAACP's Jimmie Stewart and Frank Carey of the recently formed city human relations committee.

The Black community was jubilant over the string of sit-in successes. Clara Luper commented that the agreements "pretty well complete" the downtown integration goals and that outlying segregated eating places would be among future targets. But there was to be another year of protests and legal squabbles before the city's eating facilities would be fully integrated.

For nearly six months there were no sit-ins. Then in November Calvin Luper (Clara Luper's son) of the Youth Council issued a call to action at the state NAACP convention. He said that Blacks should "demonstrate, demonstrate, and demonstrate with sit-ins, lay-ins, or smoke-ins to end segregation of public accommodations."

That same day pickets from the city chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), later joined by the veteran Youth Council members, began demonstrations at Ralph's Drug Store." Then followed a period of moves and countermoves. Ralph's owners obtained an injunction halting sit-ins, though a visiting judge dismissed the order in early 1964. The Black protesters chose to negotiate rather than renew the sit-ins at Ralph's. Meanwhile in March, the Community Relations Committee recommended that a public accommodations ordinance be passed, but the city council voted to table the motion.

The demonstrators' resolve, plus the likelihood of changes in national racial policy, pushed the city council to action. On June 2, 1964 it passed a public accommodations ordinance forbidding operators of such establishments from refusing to serve anyone because of race, religion, or color. The law included restaurants, swimming pools, and theaters. Its wording was similar to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which went into effect on July 2, 1964, only two days before Oklahoma City's ordinance did. On July 4 two groups of Oklahoma City Blacks tested four eating facilities

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

which had previously refused them service. They were served at all four locations. The struggle to be served had ended successfully.⁵

Local Significance:

The Perrine building contained the oldest and longest running cafeteria in the city's history, Anna Maude (1928-1988). It was on January 14th of 1961, during a peaceful picketing of this cafeteria, that 9 protesters were arrested for disorderly conduct.⁶ The cafeteria had been a target of demonstrations since July of 1960, but on this day the protestor's humming was too loud and they were blocking access to the building. Clara Luper and 8 were arrested, charged and eventually fined for disorderly conduct. Until this incident, the sit-ins were entirely incident free in Oklahoma and this was the first demonstration that resulted in arrests in the city. Weekly demonstrations continued at the Perrine Building and other locations throughout the city, even before the trial's conclusion on February 9th.^{7 8}

On March 12th, Clara Luper, a priest, and 11 others were again arrested in the lobby of the Perrine building.⁹ The building manager filed the complaint when customers complained the entrance was blocked. On March 17th a temporary injunction was issued against sit-ins and squat-in activities within the Perrine building.¹⁰ Protesting of Anna Maude and injunction continued on the sidewalk outside the building that very weekend of March 19th.¹¹ The injunction was upheld on May 20th, 1961 prohibiting blocking of public lobbies.¹²

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5. Graves, Carl R. *The Right to be Served: Oklahoma City's Lunch Counter Sit-ins*, 1958-1964, article, Summer 1981; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
 6. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Nine in City Arrested On Disorderly Count During Racial March", January 15, 1961
 7. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Race Rally Renewed: No Arrests", January 22, 1961
 8. *Daily Oklahoman*: "8 Given Fines On Integration Rally in Lobby", February 9, 1961
 9. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Priest, 12 Other Sit-In Demonstrators Arrested At Downtown Cafeteria", March 12, 1961
 10. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Court Order Blocks Sit-ins", March 17, 1961
 11. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Racial Picketing Peaceful", March 19, 1961
 12. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Judge Prohibits Lobby Blocking In Race Sit-Ins", May 20, 1961

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Protests continued, with even the famous actor, Charlton Heston, protesting in front of establishments including Anna Maude¹³. On July 7th the final appeal for the injunction was denied, the same week that three prominent establishments changed their policies and protests slowed¹⁴. It wasn't until June 4th of 1963 that the owners of the Anna Maude Cafeteria finally were desegregated.¹⁵ Of the sites mentioned above, the Perrine building and the Skirvin Hotel are the only remaining sites still in existence to serve as a physical reminder of this important historical period in the city.

Criterion A – Urban Renewal of Oklahoma City

Historically the Perrine building has played a central role as a commercial office tower and retail hub in downtown Oklahoma City through its lifespan. Just like author Sam Anderson describes the history of Oklahoma City in his book Boomtown, downtown and the Perrine building has followed similar cycles. The Perrine family owned the building until 1940, when they sold it to the Queen Lodge of the Odd Fellows for in “excess of \$1,000,000”¹⁶. In 1945 the lodge sold the office tower for \$1,225,000 to R. D. Cravens and Ike Hall. In 1950 the name of the building was changed to the Cravens Building. The Cravens family continued leasing the office building throughout the 1950's and 1960's. The building was later purchased in 1976 by the First National Bank and Trust Company to expand their banking business.⁴ At that time the building was renamed the First Life Assurance Building.

In 1964 the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority hired IM Pei to provide a master plan for downtown. During this time hundreds of buildings were demolished throughout downtown to clear space for new developments. In 1973, discussion around the Galleria presented it as the next priority project, as the convention center was recently finished. Plans called for a three-story mall that would overlook a courtyard, have space for theaters, restaurants, clubs, all atop an underground parking structure capable of holding 3,500 vehicles. A bridge was planned across Sheridan to connect the complex to the Myriad Gardens, which by that point were just beginning their decade-plus long construction journey. One change from the original Pei concept would be the addition of two twelve-story office towers on the edges of the property. The expected cost of the project would be over 100 million dollars, and city boosters were actively working to secure funds, which, like with other projects, would be an ongoing concern for this development as well.¹⁷

13. *Daily Oklahoman*: “Film Star to Join City Racial March”, May 27, 1961

14. *Daily Oklahoman*: “Bid for New Trial in Race Sit-In Loses”, July 7, 1961

15. *Daily Oklahoman*,: “Huckins Hotel, 2 Cafes Drop Racial Barrier”, June 4, 1963

16. *Journal Record*: “Landmark Changes Hands”, September 29, 2000.

17. *Daily Oklahoman*: “Retail Galleria Futuristic Step for Downtown”, November 11, 1973.

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

From 1974 thru 1979, specific buildings in the four-block zone were cleared, all awaiting the final plans and the beginning of construction. OCURA named Dallas-based developer Vincent A. Carrozza as the second developer of the downtown Galleria project. In the agreement, Carrozza would be expected to have the entire project either completed or at least fully under construction within five years. The concept of the project described in the agreements included two office towers, a hotel, and of course the shopping center as its centerpiece. It is also worth noting that the city officials and the developer had brought in I.M. Pei and Associates to do the architectural planning for the complex, and said officials expected the plans to be unveiled early in the new year.

Vincent Carrozza, I.M. Pei, and project architect Henry Cobb unveiled a model of Carrozza's plan for the OKC Galleria Project in 1979.¹⁸ The model shown contained plans for 1.5 million square feet of office space, a four hundred room hotel, and 700,000 square feet of retail space, along with parking for 3,300 vehicles. The two-story shopping center itself would be topped with a ninety-foot-tall glass dome. Carrozza planned for three separate phases of construction, the first of which would begin almost immediately, once the site was fully cleared. This phase would include the construction of a 300,000 square foot office tower located along Robinson Avenue, on the east side of the project. In addition, the first phase of construction was also expected to include the hotel and underground parking. Phase two would include the construction of the mall, and the developer believed that work on that would begin in the early 1980s, just a few years out at that point.

At the Galleria site, the last major structure still standing, the Hales Building, met its end on Sunday, April 8, 1979. Built in 1909, the twelve-story structure was the oldest to be sacrificed in order to make way for the promised modern grandeur of the shopping-center-to-be. The day before the demolition charges brought the seventy-year-old building down, a group of preservationists held a mock-funeral for the building – and in honor of other buildings that had met the wrecking ball or explosives. They marched through downtown behind a hearse and at the site of the old building held a ceremony and gave “eulogies” for the Hales and other downtown treasures now lost.¹⁹

18. *Daily Oklahoman*: “Developer Unveils Plans for City Galleria Complex”, January 26, 1979

19. *Daily Oklahoman*: “Hales Hailed in Farewell”, April 6, 1979

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

On July 9, 1979, construction workers broke ground on the northwest corner of Main and Robinson to mark the start of the fourteen-story office tower that would be the first part of the Galleria complex to rise immediately south of the Perrine Building. The original plan included the three separate office towers linking Robinson and Park to the north and east of the shopping center itself, with the Colcord building preserved at the southeast corner at Sheridan and Robinson, and the First Life Assurance building at the northeast corner of Robinson and Park. Phase one was the new office tower, a small plaza where Main Street would soon dead-end at Robinson that would eventually serve as a vehicle drop-off for One Galleria Tower as well as the proposed hotel and the shopping center itself, and the underground parking garage that the mall would eventually be built atop of.

By the end of the year, with construction on One Galleria Tower scheduled to be completed by 1981, Carrozza announced that the next office building on the site, to go up at the southeast corner of Park and Harvey, would be twice the size of the first structure, rising at least thirty-stories and having 600,000 square feet of office space. The Dallas developer told the press that this new tower would start construction in the early 1980s, at the same time as the Galleria hotel, which would now have at least 500 rooms. Throughout spring 1980, discussion focused on the start of the second part of Phase 1, the underground parking garage that would one day be the foundation of the shopping center. With funding secured, that project began in mid-July of that year, with work on Two Galleria Tower beginning in the fall. Ahead of earlier predictions, One Galleria Tower was officially opened on October 2, 1980. Nearly a year later, on September 21, 1981 Two Galleria Tower had its "topping out" ceremony, marking a major milestone for the thirty-one story building. In the meantime, the parking garage that would be the base of the shopping center opened in July 1981, with nearly 2,000 parking spaces available for use.

In December 1981, the Dallas-based developer announced his request for a three-year extension on his retail and hotel deadlines, potentially pushing back the time when work would even begin until 1984. Initially the renewal authority and the city council balked, and only agreed to a six-month extension while negotiations would be ongoing as to the future of the project. Privately and later publicly Carrozza began asking for the demolition of the Perrine building. In 1982 he stated all his retail tenants pointed to the necessity of a major entry portal at the Perrine building site. The owners of the Perrine building, First National Bank, publicly opposed the demolition, but made an agreement for the sake of the development.²⁰ This delay and additional demolition request aligned with the 1982 collapse of Oklahoma City's Penn Square Bank and the subsequent banking crisis.

20. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Center Hinges on Cravens Building", August 26, 1982

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

Frustrated citizens expressed their concern to the press about what a stall in this project might do for future retail development all over downtown, and a candidate for mayor, former district attorney Andrew Coats, even made it part of a campaign issue, pointing to this as a lack of leadership from city hall. "There have been a number of projects that the Chamber of Commerce has taken the leadership on, which City Hall should have taken on," he said in a statement to the *Daily Oklahoman*, "Take downtown, for instance. We've got to do something about the great hole in the middle of downtown. We tore things down before things were ready to go up. There were some buildings that should have been preserved, perhaps. And yet the Galleria is still just sitting there, and Mr. Carrozza has asked for additional time. I'm not sure we have additional time."²¹ Negotiations between the city and the developer continued to drag on. They blew past the original six-month extension in June, and at the end of August negotiations were suspended for six months. In May 1983, OCURA voted unanimously to end Mr. Carrozza's retail contract for the development of the shopping center portion of the Galleria complex. The Galleria, the core piece that I.M. Pei had said would be critical for making downtown OKC a place to live and work was nowhere to be found, and the community he envisioned remained a dream of planners and officials at the OCURA offices.

Ultimately, the Perrine building was not demolished and now contributes to the current fabric and history of Oklahoma City and sits directly across from the First National Center (NRIS#100002220) which is one of the most icon historic buildings in Oklahoma City. In 1987 the Scottsdale, Ariz., firm of National Portfolio Inc. invested in modernizing the building including the addition of the 12-story atrium, while retaining much of the original design.

Criterion C – Commercial and Simplified Art Deco Styles

The Perrine Building is one of the last high-rises built in the 1920's in Oklahoma City's downtown core. The building's original design was innovative for the time, combining an ornate facade with efficiency. Construction was started in 1926 and was designed by the firm Hawk and Parr. The construction employed more than 600 workers and used fittings and materials supplied only by Oklahoma firms. The twelve-story reinforced concrete structure was completed and opened to the public on June 1, 1927.²² The exterior walls facing the street featured a series of arches, an extended canopy (later removed), contrasting colors of brick, and limestone

21. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Ex-County District Attorney Announces He's Candidate for Mayor", Feb 11, 1983

22. *Daily Oklahoman*: "Perrine Building Assumes Place in City's Business", June 12, 1927

Perrine Building

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK

County and State

ornamentation. Utilization of floor space was one of the design's most outstanding features. A U-shape design was proposed to allow each office an outside window, free flow of air, and maximization of natural daylighting. The implementation of these concepts was unique for OKC. The premier architect, Hawk and Parr, were prescient in designing such features into their work. The fact 18 of their buildings are NRHR listed²³ indicates the level of detail this firm put into each of its buildings. It is also worth noting that Hawk and Parr designed what is considered to be the "without a doubt, one of the finest hotels in the post-oil boom days of Oklahoma City, the Biltmore, which was later demolished."²⁴ Of the listed by Hawk and Parr, this is their only remaining example of Commercial Style and only one of two remaining examples of their Art Deco works, the other being the Garfield County courthouse which is located in Enid, OK. Some of the simplified art deco details that exist on the façade of this building such as the ornate cast stone faux torch details are the last remaining example of this style of detailing done by Hawk and Parr.

23. National Register of Historic Places. National Park Service. March 13, 2009.

24. Griffith, Terry L. *Oklahoma City: Statehood to 1930*. Arcadia. November 22, 1999 ISBN 9780738503141

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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“Race Rally Renewed: No Arrests”, January 22, 1961
“8 Given Fines On Integration Rally in Lobby”, February 9, 1961
“Priest, 12 Other Sit-In Demonstrators Arrested At Downtown Cafeteria”, March 12, 1961
“Court Order Blocks Sit-ins”, March 17, 1961
“Racial Picketing Peaceful”, March 19, 1961
“Judge Prohibits Lobby Blocking In Race Sit-Ins”, May 20, 1961
“Film Star to Join City Racial March”, May 27, 1961
“Bid for New Trial in Race Sit-In Loses”, July 7, 1961
“Huckins Hotel, 2 Cafes Drop Racial Barrier”, June 4, 1963, p.1
“Center Hinges on Cravens Building”, August 26, 1982
“Retail Galleria Futuristic Step for Downtown, November 11, 1973.
“Hales Hailed in Farewell”, April 6, 1979
“Developer Unveils Plans for City Galleria Complex”, January 26, 1979
“Ex-County District Attorney Announces He’s Candidate for Mayor”, Feb 11, 1983

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National Register of Historic Places. National Park Service. March 13, 2009

Williams Juan. *Eyes on the Prize, America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. Penguin Books. ISBN 9780143124740

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

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: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.46844 | Longitude: -97.51689 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☒ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Zone: 14 | Easting: 634,620 | Northing: 3,925,830 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

Lots Twenty-eight (28) through Thirty-two (32), inclusive, Block Thirty-five (35), in the Original Plat of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, according to the plat recorded in Book 1 of Plats, Page 2. Located in the Southeast Quarter (SE/4) of Section 33-12N-03 WIM; Street Address: 119 N. Robinson Avenue, Oklahoma City.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the property boundary historically associated with the building.

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Isaac Hines, AIA
organization: Tradesman Architectural Studios
street & number: 500 N. Broadway Ave, Suite 100
city or town: Oklahoma City state: OK zip code: 73102
e-mail isaac@tradesmanstudios.com
telephone: 405.334.1143
date: January 7, 2025

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

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

Perrine Building
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Perrine Building

City or Vicinity: Oklahoma City

County: Oklahoma State: OK

Photographer: Isaac Hines

Date Photographed: 09.23.2024

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

OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0001.JPG	Exterior East Facade - Close up
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0002.JPG	Exterior East Facade - Overall Upper
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0003.JPG	Exterior North Courtyard Facade - Upper Detail
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0004.JPG	Exterior North Facade - Close up
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0005.JPG	Exterior North Facade - Overall
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0006.JPG	Exterior Northeast Facade - Overall
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0007.JPG	Exterior Northeast Facade - Upper Detail
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0008.JPG	Exterior Northwest Courtyard Façade
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0009.JPG	Exterior South Facade - Overall
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0010.JPG	Exterior Southeast Facade - Overall
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0011.JPG	Exterior Southeast Facade - Upper Detail
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0012.JPG	Interior Atrium - Looking up Northwest
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0013.JPG	Interior Basement Floor - Looking East
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0014.JPG	Interior Basement Floor - Looking Southeast
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0015.JPG	Interior Ground Floor - Looking East
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0016.JPG	Interior Ground Floor - Looking West
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0017.JPG	Interior Typical Elevator Lobby - Looking Southwest
OK_Oklahoma County_Perrine_0018.JPG	Interior Typical Elevator Lobby - Looking West

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

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