

## ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

HLC DATE: July 6, 2022  
September 27, 2022; October 11, 2022

PC DATE: August 9, 2022; August 23, 2022;

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2022-0073

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1122 Colorado Street

APPLICANT: Brian Evans, Westgate Condominium Association

HISTORIC NAME: Westgate Tower

WATERSHED: Lady Bird Lake

ZONING CHANGE: CBD to CBD-H

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 9

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from Central Business District (CBD) zoning to Central Business District – Historic Landmark (CBD-H) combining district zoning.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION: Architecture and historical associations: The Westgate Tower is an excellent example of New Formalism, is the only building in Austin designed by architect Edward Durell Stone, and has served as a model for mixed-use building.<sup>1</sup>

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: 2012 – recommend historic zoning; 2022 – recommend historic zoning

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: August 9, 2022 – postpone to August 23, 2022 per neighborhood request. August 23, 2022 – postpone to September 27. September 27, 2022 – postpone to October 11 per staff request.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: N/A

ACTION: N/A

ORDINANCE READINGS: N/A

ORDINANCE NUMBER: N/A

CASE MANAGER: Kalan Contreras, 974-2727

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS: Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Central Austin Community Development Corporation, City of Austin Downtown Commission, Downtown Austin Alliance, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn. (DANA), Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Preservation Austin, SEL Texas, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2010. Land Development Code §25-2-352(A)(3)(a) states that City Council may designate a historic landmark if it retains integrity, is over 50 years old, and is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Historic Landmark Commission recommended historic zoning in 2012; however, the application was withdrawn by the applicant prior to Planning Commission hearing.

### BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

*§25-2-352(A)(3)(a) The property is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places; or is designated as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, State Archeological Landmark, or National Historic Landmark.*

The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2010.

*§25-2-352(A)(3)(b)(i) Architecture. The property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a recognized architectural style, type, or method of construction; exemplifies technological innovation in design or construction; displays high artistic value in representing ethnic or folk art, architecture, or construction; represents a rare example of an architectural style in the city; serves as an outstanding example of the work of an architect, builder, or artisan who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation; possesses cultural, historical, or architectural value as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian or vernacular structure; or represents an architectural curiosity or one-of-a-kind building.*

<sup>1</sup> Sadowsky, Steve. "Zoning Change Review Sheet: C14H-2012-0089." 2012.  
<https://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=176342>

*A property located within a local historic district is ineligible to be nominated for landmark designation under the criterion for architecture, unless it possesses exceptional significance or is representative of a separate period of significance.*

The Westgate Tower was designed by New York architect Edward Durell Stone in 1962 and completed under the supervision of prominent local architects Fehr and Granger in 1966. It is an excellent example of New Formalism in the Modern movement as espoused by Stone, who was known worldwide for high-rise buildings that combined verticality with the monumental scale, refinement, and ornamentation of Classical building styles. The Westgate, named for its location just west of the State Capitol grounds, also served Stone's philosophy of building upscale residential buildings in park-like settings in or near downtown areas, luring wealthy residents away from the suburbs. Stone was concerned that most high-rise architecture of the era was the sole solution to overdevelopment, where going up was the only way to develop an already overbuilt site. The location of the Westgate Tower allowed Stone to express the ideals of downtown living with a green setting. It was innovative in providing a model for future central city development by combining residential and commercial uses along with an integral parking garage that formed a significant part of the entire composition rather than as an auxiliary structure.

The Westgate is a 26-story point-block tower, rising squarely out of a cruciform platform. It is constructed of poured-in-place concrete with a brick veneer. Its verticality is emphasized by brick columns which rise symmetrically above the more horizontal and cruciform-shaped parking garage, with each spandrel containing a metal-framed full-height glass window and a balconette, allowing access to fresh air from individual units. Brick solar screens, one of Stone's trademark architectural details, cover the spandrel openings of the parking garage as well as the top two floors of the building. The Westgate embodies the modern goals of accommodating mixed uses and modern facilities in a single building. The Westgate was designed to contain commercial space on the ground floors, a 5-story parking garage, residential units ranging from efficiencies to two-bedroom apartments, and a social club and restaurant on top of the building. It is contemporary to the Cambridge Tower at 1801 Lavaca Street and the Penthouse Apartments at 13th and Guadalupe Streets, all representing the 1960s trend toward high-rise residential living in the central city. However, only the Westgate possesses the refinement of the New Formalism ideals of monumental architecture and Edward Durell Stone's ideal of a residential tower in a park-like setting downtown.<sup>2</sup>

§25-2-352(A)(3)(b)(ii) Historical Associations. *The property has long-standing significant associations with persons, groups, institutions, businesses, or events of historic importance which contributed significantly to the history of the city, state, or nation; or represents a significant portrayal of the cultural practices or the way of life of a definable group of people in a historic time.*

Growing out of an association of Texas lumber dealers in the late 19th century, the Lumbermans' Investment Association planned and built several high-rise residential buildings in Austin, Houston, and Kansas City in the late 1950s and mid-1960s. Julian Zimmerman, who headed the organization during that time, apparently knew New York architect Edward Durell Stone from his work in Washington, including the National Geographic Society Building and the building that would later become the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In 1962, Zimmerman contracted Stone to design the Westgate Tower, a mixed-use residential tower located just west of the Texas State Capitol.

Edward Durell Stone was a native of Arkansas who received his architectural training at Harvard and at MIT. Stone went on to practice in New York City and taught at the Yale School of Architecture. He became well-known for his sleek buildings of the 1930s, and after World War II, he became dissatisfied with the sterility of modern architecture and fascinated by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. His work in the 1950s and 1960s reflected greater verticality, such as in the International Trade Mart in New Orleans, and the General Motors Building in New York City. His trademark was a solar screen, which provided architectural interest as well as privacy and shade. Stone used the solar screen on the Josephine Graf House in Dallas in the 1950s, and continued to employ it, as seen on the Westgate Tower. Stone hired prominent local architectural firm Fehr and Granger to oversee the building's construction. Fehr and Granger were known for their mid-century modern residential designs, and although Stone designed the exterior, Fehr and Granger were responsible for the details.

The Westgate was the first high-rise building that was significantly taller than anything else in Austin, except the Capitol Dome. High-rise buildings in Austin of the 1940s and 1950s were no taller than the buildings of the 1910s and 1920s, including the Scarbrough and Littlefield Buildings and the Norwood Tower. The Westgate, at 26 stories, would be much taller than either of its contemporaries, the Cambridge Tower and the Penthouse Apartments. The height of the Westgate caused some controversy, stemming from concerns that high-rise buildings would overshadow the State Capitol, and resulted in the creation of the Capitol View Corridors by the State of Texas.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

The Westgate was also the second home of the Headliners Club, the most prestigious social club in the city. Founded in 1954 by Charles Green, publisher of the American-Statesman, Everett Looney, a local attorney and judge, and Paul Bolton, a television and radio commentator and news editor, the Headliners Club began at the Driskill Hotel. Members included politicians and intellectuals, several former Texas governors, and President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Club moved into the Westgate in 1966 and remained there until relocating to a more central location. In addition to the Headliners Club, the Westgate Tower has also been the home of many leaders in state government.<sup>3</sup>

PARCEL NO.: 0208011906

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: ORIGINAL CITY BLOCK 135 0.5 OF LOTS 1, 2, & 3

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: Will be determined per owner depending on the proportion of the total area and ownership of common areas ascribed to each condominium apartment. See backup for estimate provided by applicant.

APPRAISED VALUE: Each condominium in the building is individually appraised and valued by the Travis Central Appraisal District. See backup for estimate provided by TCAD and applicant.

DATE BUILT/PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1962-66

INTEGRITY: High

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: Over the years, failing materials have been replaced in-kind. In 1984, the original wood entry doors were replaced with new metal and glass doors, and in 1998, fine black netting was installed over the brick solar screens to discourage bird infiltration and nesting.<sup>4</sup>

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Lumbermans' Investment Corporation of Austin (1962)

PRESENT USE: Mixed use

PRESENT OWNERS: Westgate Condominium Association

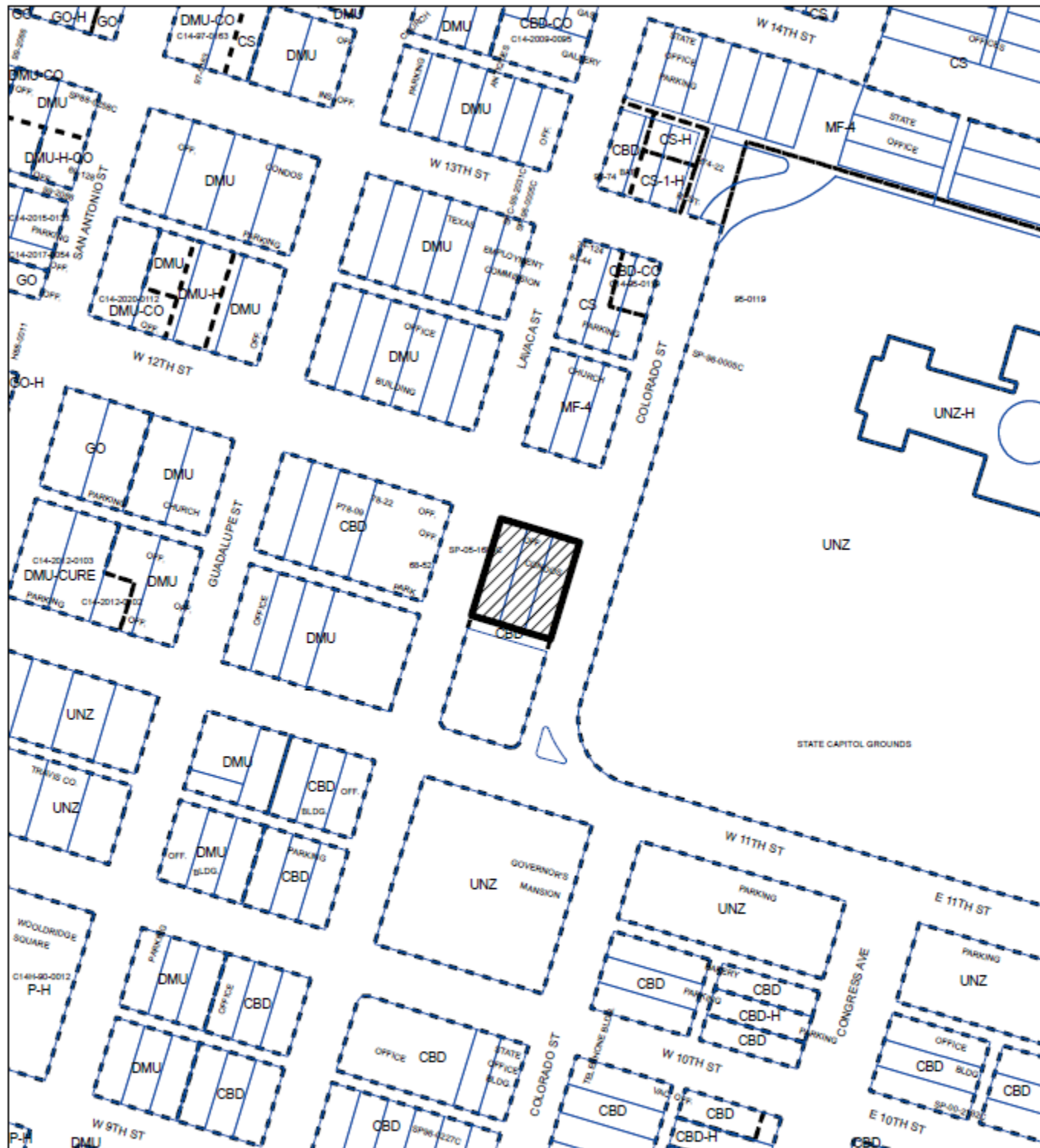
OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: Individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

## HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2022-0073

1" = 200'

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by the Housing and Planning Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or







## General Information

Location: **1122 COLORADO ST**  
Parcel ID: **0208011906**  
Grid: **MJ23**

## Planning & Zoning

\*Right click [hyperlinks](#) to open in a new window.

Future Land Use (FLUM): **No Future Land Use Map**

Regulating Plan: **No Regulating Plan**

Zoning: **CBD**

Zoning Cases: [C14H-2012-0078](#)

Zoning Ordinances: **None:**

Zoning Overlays: **Capitol Dominance Overlay**  
**Capitol View Corridors: BARTON CREEK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE, ZILKER CLUBHOUSE, MOPAC BRIDGE - SDCC, BARTON CREEK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE - SDCC, WOOLRIDGE PARK, MOPAC BRIDGE**  
**Downtown Austin Plan Districts: Uptown / Capital**  
**Downtown Density Bonus: FAR - 15 | Max Hgt - 400**  
**Green Building Mandatory: Central Business District/Downtown Mixed Use**  
**Residential Design Standards: LDC/25-2-Subchapter F**  
**Selected Sign Ordinances**

Infill Options: **--**

Neighborhood Restricted Parking Areas: **--**

Mobile Food Vendors: **--**

Historic Landmark: **--**

Urban Roadways: **Yes**

## Zoning Guide

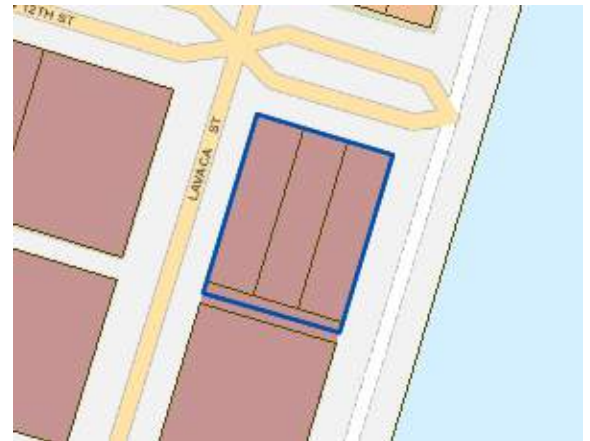
The [Guide to Zoning](#) provides a quick explanation of the above Zoning codes, however, the [Development Assistance Center](#) provides general zoning assistance and can advise you on the type of development allowed on a property. Visit [Zoning](#) for the description of each Base Zoning District. For official verification of the zoning of a property, please order a [Zoning Verification Letter](#). General information on the [Neighborhood Planning Areas](#) is available from Neighborhood Planning.

## Environmental

Fully Developed Floodplain: **No**  
FEMA Floodplain: **No**  
Austin Watershed Regulation Areas: **URBAN**  
Watershed Boudaries: **Lady Bird Lake**  
Creek Buffers: **No**  
Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone: **No**  
Edwards Aquifer Recharge Verification Zone: **No**  
Erosion Hazard Zone Review Buffer: **No**

## Political Boundaries

Jurisdiction: **AUSTIN FULL PURPOSE**  
Council District: **9**  
County: **TRAVIS**  
School District: **Austin ISD**  
Community Registry: **Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Central Austin Community Development Corporation, City of Austin Downtown Commission, Downtown Austin Alliance, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn. (DANA), Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group**



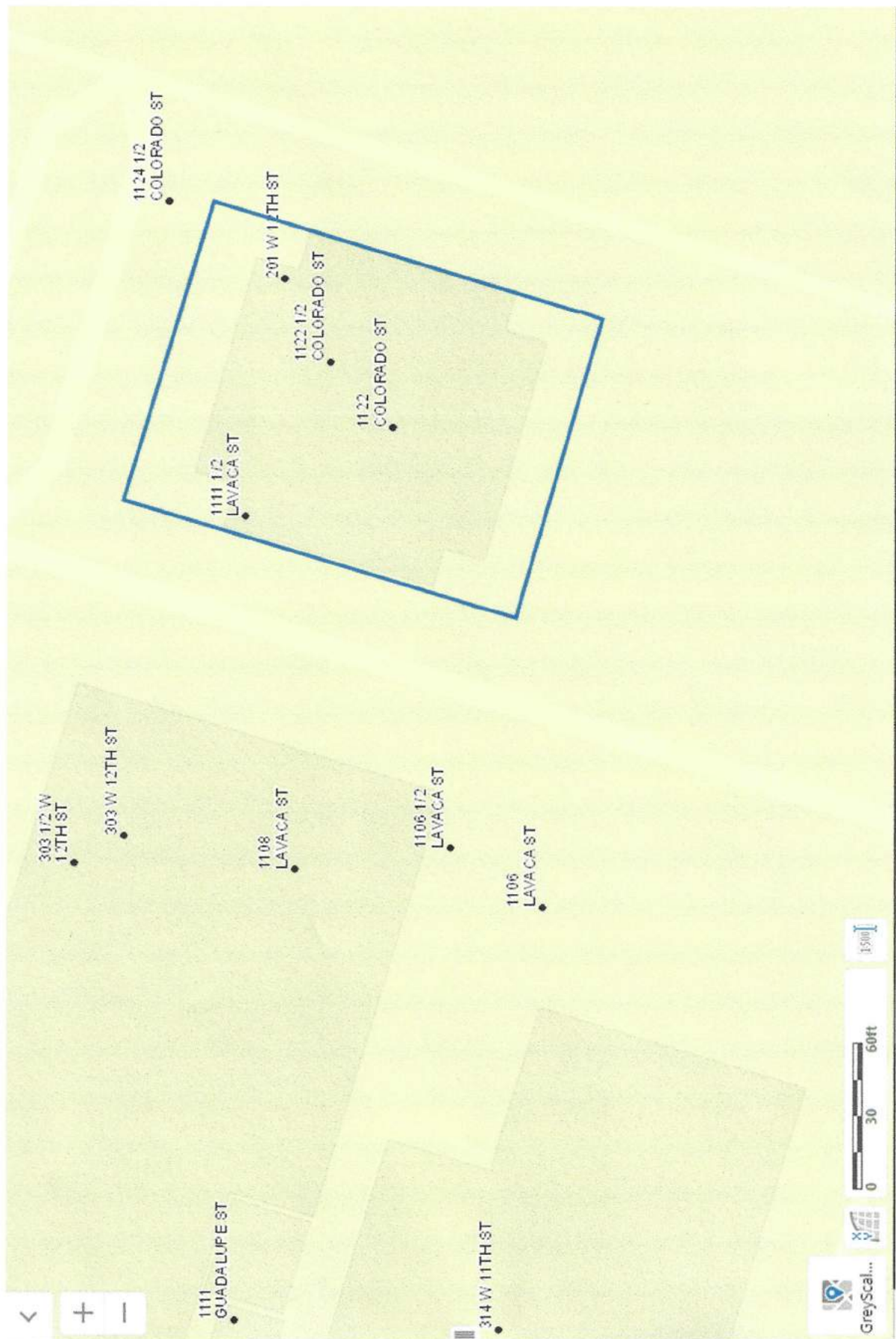
Zoning Map



Current Imagery



Vicinity Map



OK



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Registration Form**



**1. NAME OF PROPERTY**

HISTORIC NAME: Westgate Tower  
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

**2. LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER: 1122 Colorado Street  
CITY OR TOWN: Austin  
STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: Travis  
☐ NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
☐ VICINITY  
CODE: 453 ZIP CODE: 78701

**3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

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

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer  
Signature of certifying official / Title

Date

Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

**4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined eligible for the National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
☐ removed from the National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ other, explain  
☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

James H. Cleveland

10/12/10

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Westgate Tower, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**5. CLASSIFICATION****OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

**CATEGORY OF PROPERTY**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY**

contributing	noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

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

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

**HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:** DOMESTIC = Multiple dwelling  
 COMMERCE / TRADE = Business: office building  
 SOCIAL = Clubhouse

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS:** DOMESTIC = Multiple dwelling  
 COMMERCE / TRADE = Business: office building

**7. DESCRIPTION****ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:** MODERN MOVEMENT: skyscraper

**MATERIALS:** FOUNDATION CONCRETE  
 WALLS CONCRETE, BRICK  
 ROOF ASPHALT  
 OTHER

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-8)



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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

In 1962 the internationally-acclaimed architect Edward Durell Stone designed the Westgate Tower, named for its proximity to the west gate of the Texas State Capitol. The first residential high-rise to be planned in Austin, the building occupies the block directly north of the Texas Governor's Mansion and to the west of the Capitol grounds. The mixed-use building is of poured-in-place, monolithic reinforced concrete clad in brown brick from the locally-based Butler Brick Company, with full-length windows and individual balconettes between brick-faced columns. A decorative brick solar screen—one of Stone's signatures—allows light to enter the parking garage (Levels 3-9) and the top two floors while offering privacy and shade from the hot Texas sun. The 26-story building is 261 feet tall and rises from an extended basement (Level 1) that appears as a wide cubic base, the corners of which are subtracted on levels 2-9, so that in plan they are cross-shaped. A set-back tower looms above these nine floors, its verticality emphasized by structural columns that are broken by the horizontal pattern of floors and balconies on all four elevations, creating a rhythmic, subdued exterior. The tower is arranged around a central core of elevators and a staircase, and all residential units open to expansive views of the Capitol grounds and the city of Austin. The interior provides commercial space in the lower three floors and two upper two floors, a parking garage on floors 4-9, fifteen floors of residential condominiums, and a pool and solarium on the top two floors. The Westgate Tower retains a high degree of integrity and is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A for Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C for Architecture. The only building in Austin designed by Edward Durell Stone, the Westgate also meets Criteria Consideration G for properties less than 50 years old.

### Setting

Situated on the north half of Block 135 in the original Austin neighborhood mapped out by Edwin Waller in 1839, the Westgate Tower faces the Texas State Capitol and its grounds. The parking lot on the south half of the block is owned by the state, and the Governor's Mansion occupies the full block to the south, across Eleventh Street. The building is bounded by Lavaca and Colorado streets on the west and east, Eleventh and Twelfth streets to the south and north. To the west across Lavaca Street is a contemporary office building; on the northwest corner of Lavaca and Twelfth streets is the Texas State Teachers Association Building; the 1921 Neoclassical-style First Methodist Church, the second oldest Protestant congregation in Austin, is to the north across Twelfth Street, where a "Memorial to the Builders of the Great State of Texas" was erected in the median in 1938. Because the Capitol is immediately adjacent to the east, the Westgate is known for housing government representatives, lobbyists, and attorneys; the nominated property is also within two blocks of the Travis County Courthouse and the Texas Supreme Court Building.

The lot slopes from west to east, such that Level 2 and its primary pedestrian entries are at grade on Colorado Street, with a single pedestrian entry at Level 3 on Lavaca Street. Architect Edward Durell Stone preferred to conceal automobiles and often placed parking for them below the base platform of his buildings; therefore, automobiles enter the building at Level 3 on Lavaca. Landscape plantings are minimal. A concrete walk surrounds the building, featuring a pattern of wide Butler brick pavers extending from the base of each pier out to the street on the east and west sides, and to the Level 2 terrace walls on the north and south. Fencing around two trees on the



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**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

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Westgate Tower  
 Austin, Travis County, Texas

east walk is original to the Capitol grounds. At the northeast and southeast corners of the lower cross floor plan are open spaces between the supporting brick walls, offering spaces for trees in square planters. Two large, square planters are at the northeast and southeast corners of the building. At the northwest and southwest corners of Level 3 are small concrete plazas protected by low walls, used primarily for mechanical equipment.

### **Exterior<sup>1</sup>**

The four elevations of the Westgate Tower are similar, with ten bays of brick piers alternating with glass or brick screens. The footprint of Levels 2-9 is cross-shaped, with an open screen of Butler brick at the garage levels and the Level 3 office space. Levels 10-26 are set back from the lower floors and form a monolithic, squared tower rising up from the garage and office-level cube. Residential levels 10-22, and Levels 23-24—formerly occupied by the private Headliners Club and a restaurant—all feature balconies with iron railings between each brick-faced pier. Where the setback begins on Level 10 are wide terraces, which originally featured planters (now capped) on the surrounding low walls. Housing the pool, solarium, and mechanical rooms, Levels 25-26 are screened with brick like the garage levels; the solarium features glass jalousie windows inside the brick screens.

The east or front elevation on Colorado Street faces the Capitol, with the primary pedestrian entry, through glass doors, here at Level 2. Full length, two-story windows and glass doors compose the entire east face of Levels 2 and 3. Nine freestanding two-story piers—hexagonal in form and faced with Butler brick—and the two end piers attached to side walls, support the upper ten bays. The north elevation on Twelfth Street faces the Methodist Church. There are no entries on this side or on the similar south façade. Level 2 on these façades continues the full-length windows between fixed brick piers, whose faces jut out slightly in a half-hexagonal shape onto wide concrete plazas north and south, resulting from the fact that Level 2 is at street level on Colorado while Level 3 is at street level on Lavaca. The west façade on Lavaca Street, at Level 3, is identical in design to the north and south façades, but features two wide bays for vehicle entry and exit, leaving seven freestanding piers on the street level. The left bay leads to the delivery entry on the basement level. The adjacent right bay leads to the parking garage. The Lavaca Street level also features full-length glass windows and a glass door leading pedestrians to the offices on Level 3.

Due to the stepped-back nature of the building, there are three different roof areas and two plaza/terrace deck areas. Apartment terrace decks are located at the tenth floor in the stepped-back area of the building, above portions of the garage levels below. Two small areas of plaza deck are located at the northwest and southwest corners of the building at the ground level, with occupied areas of the basement Level 1 beneath these. The raised pool area at Level 26 is open. The original roof over the adjacent terrace/solarium on Level 25 is a combination of plexiglass skylights and a modified membrane system, which appears to have an emulsified protective coating placed over a metal roof deck. A coal-tar three-ply built-up upper roof system serves as the roof over the mechanical room on this floor. A similar lower roof (flood coat with gravel) at the top of the 24th floor lies beneath the cooling tower. Primary drainage is by interior roof drains. The foundation is concrete with concrete piers.

<sup>1</sup> A complete 82-page set of the original architectural, structural, and mechanical/electrical plans (October 1964) is on file with the Texas Historical Commission, Austin.



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**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 7

Westgate Tower  
 Austin, Travis County, Texas

The subdued appearance of the building largely stems from the brown color of the locally-made bricks. Hal Jensen, one of the developers behind the Westgate Tower, explained the selection of building materials:

...[It] seemed to us that if Westgate were going to be successful, it shouldn't stand fresh and shining in the Texas sun; it shouldn't be a cold metallic intruder in a neighborhood already softened with the patina of time. Westgate shouldn't in any way detract from its environment. It should have a sense of tradition, a timeless quality about it. To achieve the sense that the building had always belonged there...we worked very closely with the people at Elgin Butler Brick Company. Since it was impossible to get enough old brick to achieve this character, it was necessary for them to experiment with many samples before they achieved the desired tone. They were finally able to do this by using a beige clay from Elgin [Bastrop County, Texas], heavily seasoned with manganese powder. The joints between the bricks are of conventional mortar, but colored to match the brick. The frames of all the exterior doors and windows, as well as the railings on all of the balconies, are of Duranodic aluminum in the color of antique bronze. The glass is solar bronze plate. This special heat absorbing, glare reducing glass, will not only make the apartments and offices more comfortable, but its color will complement the soft tones of the brick and aluminum.<sup>2</sup>

### **Interior**

The floors of the Westgate are organized in a cross plan at Levels 2-9 and a square plan at Levels 10-26. The building's available space is currently 35% commercial and 65% residential; nearly 38,050 square feet of commercial space is contained on levels 1-3 and levels 23-24, all served by a lobby and elevator facilities that are separate from those for residential floors. The basement at Level 1 is fully finished to offer 19,000 square feet of office space, as compared to only 9,000 square feet of office space on levels 2 and 3. The basement does not have windows and is not visible from any viewpoint. Level 23 originally was designed as a public restaurant with a private clubroom; Level 24 was the Headliners Club and Presidential Room, which retain much of their original finishes. Commercial tenants and their visitors enter the building at Lavaca Street on the west side of Level 3.

Levels 4-9 contain a garage for parking 231 cars. There are two adjacent vehicle entrances: one which rises to Level 4 and the garage, and a delivery entrance that descends to Level 3 to provide access to a garbage incinerator (since removed). A service and delivery elevator at the basement level opened to the incinerator on Level 3 and serviced the Headliners Club and restaurant on levels 23-24. Two additional elevators service the residential floors from a separate entrance on Level 2, and a fourth elevator services the garage and commercial levels 1-3. The building has two scissor stairwells located to the west of the elevator shaft in the central core.

The ground floor at Level 2 contains the reception area and management offices. Residents and their guests enter the building at Colorado Street on the east side of Level 2, through a pair of glass doors into a lobby paneled with teak. The residences are compactly organized around a central service core of four elevator shafts, keeping corridors to a minimum. Four luxury residential units are on Level 10, while Levels 11-22 originally offered as

<sup>2</sup> Hal Jensen, "Philosophy Behind a Landmark," *Austin in Action* (March 1966), 34-35.



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## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

many as 10 residential units per floor; over the years, some owners have combined units. Today the 93 residential condominium units range from 400-square-foot efficiencies to homes of nearly 4,800 square feet; one owner has combined two units into a single two-story residence. The two-story solarium on Level 25 includes skylights and glass jalousie windows screened with brick, as well as a chandelier that originally hung outside the main entrance. The rooftop pool on Level 26 was once the highest in the city.

Residential units on the north and east side of the building have views of the Capitol grounds, while on the west side residents enjoy views of the surrounding hills, and those on the south overlook downtown Austin toward the Colorado River. Floor-to-ceiling windows lead to individual balconies, each 2½ feet deep by 5 feet wide, with a 40-inch railing of aluminum finished in bronze. Level 10 is terraced and originally featured a large residential unit with a grand two-story entrance and a spiral stair to the upper level, where sliding glass doors opened to a wide terrace surrounding a stone fountain; the stair and fountain were removed in 1996 and the residence converted to two separate units.

### **Architectural Integrity**

Over the years, failing materials have been replaced in the building. In 1984 the original wood entry doors were replaced with new metal and glass doors, and remodeling to the interior hallways was completed in 1985 that included new paint, carpet, and decorative moldings. During 1998 the garbage incinerator was removed, and fine black netting was installed over the brick solar screens to discourage birds. Throughout the building, chlorinated polyvinyl chloride (CPVC) pipe was installed in 1999 and hidden by new crown molding; to avoid the costs of asbestos abatement, the original metal plumbing and insulation remained in place. On the tenth floor terraces, leaking planters were capped with limestone in 2006 but left in place. On the garage levels, where lintels had rusted and bricks had fallen, the brise soleils were reconstructed in 2008, using new bricks from the Butler Brick Company made to match the originals.

Despite these changes to the building, the Westgate Tower retains a good deal of architectural integrity overall, and a very high level of integrity to its exterior. The building's setting and location—in relationship to the Capitol to the east, the Governor's Mansion to the south, and to the First Methodist Church to the north—are little changed since the time of construction. The Westgate is an important local example of a modernist, mixed-use high-rise building and the only work of internationally-acclaimed architect Edward Durell Stone in the city, completed under the supervision of the prominent Austin-based architecture firm of Fehr & Granger. A significant visual landmark in the city for nearly a half-century, the Westgate Tower is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture; the building meets Criteria Consideration G for resources less than fifty years old.

## USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Westgate Tower, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE****APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA**

Property:

- ☒ **A** is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** 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** has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS**

Property is:

- 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 of age or has achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** 1962-1966

**SIGNIFICANT DATES:** 1962-1966

**SIGNIFICANT PERSON:** N/A

**CULTURAL AFFILIATION:** N/A

**ARCHITECT / BUILDER:** Edward Durell Stone, architect;  
Arthur Fehr and Charles Granger, associate architect

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** (see continuation sheets 8-9 through 8-28)

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (see continuation sheets 9-29 through 9-30)

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

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

**PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:**

- ☒ State historic preservation office Texas Historical Commission, Austin
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:



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## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Westgate Tower—a 26-story mixed-use building containing commercial space, apartments, a parking garage, and originally a restaurant and social club—is named for its location adjoining the west edge of the Capitol grounds in downtown Austin, Texas. At 261 feet in height, the Westgate Tower was the tallest building constructed in Austin during the 1960s, although it deferred in height to the Capitol (311 feet) and the tower of the Main Building of the University of Texas at Austin (307 feet). The Westgate is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with a wave of high-rise residential construction in Texas cities during the period 1962-1966. Additionally, it is nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its association with the architects Edward Durell Stone of New York and Fehr & Granger of Austin; its masonry solar screens embody the distinctive characteristics of Stone's mid-twentieth-century modern architecture. As the model for mixed-use, residential high-rise development in downtown Austin, the Westgate Tower meets Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved historical significance within the past fifty years.

### **The Texas Capitol Complex and Downtown Austin**

Under the direction of Edwin Waller, L.J. Pilié and Charles Schoolfield surveyed the city of Austin in 1839 to serve as the capital of the Republic of Texas. The city was named for Stephen F. Austin (1793-1836), the first Anglo-American empresario to settle immigrants from the U.S. in the Mexican state of Coahuila y Tejas. Laid out on the north bank of the Colorado River between two creeks—Lamar Creek to the west (named for the president of the republic in 1839, Mirabeau B. Lamar) and Waller Creek (named for surveyor Waller) to the east—the city plan was based on the Broad Street model, with a central, 120-foot-wide, north-to-south thoroughfare—Congress Avenue—running ten blocks from the river to a four block reserve designated as Capitol Square, which occupied the highest point of the original townsite. North-to-south streets parallel to Congress Avenue were named for the rivers of Texas; east-to-west cross streets were initially named for native Texas trees but subsequently were renamed with numerals.

After Texas was annexed to the United States in 1845, Austin became the state capital, and Congress Avenue was the major artery for commerce. Capitol Square was the site of two successive state Capitols: a building completed in 1853 and destroyed by fire in 1881, and its replacement, the present Capitol of Texas, designed in 1882 and completed in 1888. Other public buildings were constructed along Eleventh Street (the south boundary of Capitol Square), including the Governor's Mansion (1854-1856), which occupies an entire city block bounded by West Eleventh, Colorado, West Tenth, and Lavaca streets. To the north of the Governor's Mansion, along the west side of Capitol Square, Colorado Street was realigned between 1889 and 1894, reducing the city blocks between Colorado and Lavaca streets to half-blocks to accommodate a westward extension of the Capitol grounds. This neighborhood remained predominantly residential for the first half of the twentieth century, although such imposing structures as the First United Methodist Church was constructed on one of the half-blocks between Lavaca and Colorado, at its intersection with West Twelfth Street, in 1922-1928. After World War II, houses in this West Capitol neighborhood began to be replaced incrementally by low-rise office buildings and surface parking lots.



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Unlike the urban business centers of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Texas—San Antonio, Galveston, Dallas, Houston, and Fort Worth, all of which benefited from wholesale trade and shipping, and the production of cotton, cattle, timber, and oil—the city of Austin was tied economically to the state government and to public institutions, especially to the University of Texas, whose campus north of the Capitol was opened for instruction in 1883. In the early twentieth century, the first multi-story elevator buildings were constructed in Austin on or near Congress Avenue downtown: the 7- (eventually 9-) story Littlefield Building (1910, 1915); the 8-story Scarbrough Building (1910); the 10- (eventually 15-) story Stephen F. Austin Hotel (1925, 1928); the 15-story Norwood Building (1929); and the 12-story Driskill Tower (1930). In 1934 the State of Texas constructed the 8-story State Highway Building on East Eleventh Street facing Capitol Square. Austin's first mid-rise apartment building, the 4- and 5-story Normandie Arms, was constructed in the West Capitol neighborhood in 1939 (demolished), and the 12-story Tribune Building was built on the city block just south of the Governor's Mansion in 1941.

During the 1950s, new tall buildings in Austin did not exceed the heights of those built in the 1910s and 1920s: the 11-story Commodore Perry Hotel (1950, 1957) and the 12-story Perry-Brooks Building (1952), both on East Eighth Street. The State of Texas constructed the 10-story Stephen F. Austin State Office Building (1959) and 5-story Texas Employment Commission Building (1960) north of Capitol Square. In the West Capitol neighborhood, several 4- and 5-story office buildings were constructed during the course of the 1950s. However, by the early 1960s, Austin's skyline was still dominated by the dome of the Capitol of Texas (1888) and the tower of the Main Building (1937) at the University of Texas.

### **A Brief Historical Background of the Property**

In 1852 Samuel Garner Haynie (1806-1877), a practicing physician who was elected Austin's mayor four times—1850, 1851, 1863 and 1864—hired Austin architect Abner Cook (1814-1884), a specialist in Federal and Greek Revival-style buildings, to build a home on Block 135, directly west of the site where Cook simultaneously was building the (first) Capitol. The frame house featured a two-story portico with a pair of fluted Ionic columns flanked by outer Doric piers. Haynie also opened a mercantile business that same year, and he quickly spiraled into financial difficulties; the doctor was compelled to sell the relatively new house to Cook. The builder purchased the entire block for \$10,000 shortly after the house was finished, and he and his family lived there until his death.<sup>3</sup> Cook's widow Eliza sold the property on July 2, 1885, to former Austin mayor Leander Brown, who occupied the home until he subdivided the block and sold Lots 1-3 to Mason C. Miller, a cashier at City National Bank, in 1889. The Haynie-Cook House was moved to the southern half of the block around the turn of the century, and Fanny Andrews used the building as a shop from 1910 until 1953, when it was demolished.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Hafertepe, *Abner Cook: Master Builder on the Texas Frontier* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992), 74-76; Travis County Deed Records, Volume G, page 413; and "Haynie, Samuel G.," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed on April 28, 2009, at: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/HH/fhabn.html>.



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### The Lumbermen's Investment Corporation and the Westgate Tower

The Westgate Tower was designed and constructed for the Lumbermen's Investment Corporation of Austin. The Lumber Dealers' Association in Texas was formed in Houston at the Millet Opera House in 1886, and in 1889 the organization changed its name to the Lumbermen's Association of Texas. After more than fifty years in Houston, the Lumbermen's headquarters moved to Austin in 1954, and it was there in 1962 that the organization, under the leadership of Julian H. Zimmerman, began to plan the Westgate.

Zimmerman, an attorney and former newspaper editor from Wichita, Kansas, was the director of the South Pine Lumber Company of East Texas. In the mid-1950s Zimmerman had worked for Kansas governor Edward Arn before being appointed to President Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration during his second term. Zimmerman was appointed Deputy General Counsel, then General Counsel, of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (1957-59), and he assumed the role of Commissioner of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1959. As the end of Eisenhower's presidency approached, in 1960 Zimmerman became the president of the Lumbermen's Investment Corporation (LIC) of Austin, an affiliate of the Lumbermen's Association specializing in home financing. As the LIC's leader, Zimmerman launched ambitious development schemes focused on high-rise downtown living and planned mixed-use suburban development in Austin and Houston, Texas, as well as in Kansas City, Missouri.<sup>4</sup>

Planning for the Westgate began in 1962, and the architect Edward Durell Stone signed a contract with the Lumbermen's Company, a subsidiary of the LIC, in July of that year. It is believed that Zimmerman became familiar with Stone's design work during his tenure with the FHA in Washington, DC, between 1957 and 1960; during these years, Stone was commissioned to design the headquarters for the National Geographic Society and the building that later would be named the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

### Design and Construction of the Westgate Tower

In a memorandum to architect Edward Durell Stone in July 1962, his business manager William Bailey Smith wrote in regard to the Westgate project: "Our contract has been returned for minor revisions, which I am having made—it will be ready for your signature Monday or Tuesday. They called me and gave us a verbal 'proceed.' Tony [Anthony DeSantis, project architect] has the program."<sup>5</sup> Construction plans for the high-rise building were formally announced in the *Austin Statesman* on November 10, 1962. Stone was in Austin for the announcement and wrote the following statement about the Westgate:

For several decades, architects have envisioned the "city of the future" as a series of high rise buildings, widely spaced in park-like settings.

<sup>4</sup> Austin History Center vertical files: Lumbermen's Association, Zimmerman.

<sup>5</sup> William Bailey Smith memorandum to Edward Durell Stone, July 6, 1962. Edward Durell Stone Papers. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. Box 69, folder 14.



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Unfortunately, however, high-rise buildings have always been built at the wrong time; that is, when the land is all used up and there is no way left to build but vertically. Then, to our belated sorrow, we often find that our natural treasures have been squandered; light, air and views are gone forever.

In the Westgate building, one might foresee some future directions and possibilities for this city. Because it faces a beautiful open space, affording vistas of a perpetual park on the State House grounds, the building will never lose its splendid outlook. From an architect's point of view therefore, this setting is idyllic. And, hopefully, the Westgate may serve as a prototype for other apartments and office towers in Austin.

Another problem that plagues most building in the 20th Century, is the automobile...where to put it when it is not being used? Car-parking is a controlling factor in the planning of nearly every building today. And—in this combustion-engine society—the ubiquitous automobile simply must be accounted for. We are all too familiar with street side parking, its consequent obstruction of the traffic flow and its boundless capacity for igniting the tempers of the tenants who must struggle to find a free space. In the Westgate, the problem is solved by providing several levels of parking within the building itself. This is an expense, of course. But throughout the life of the building it will be a convenience and a relief. Here, the tenant may park his car under cover and ascend by elevator directly to the apartments above.

A small detail perhaps but another frustration of the apartment dweller, has been his inability to step into the out-doors, for an occasional breath of the open air. In this building, all of our windows have balconies, and the windows themselves slide open to either side. During those seasons when fresh air does not require air conditioning, our system makes it possible to open the entire window area. This window treatment is somewhat reminiscent of that used in Paris town houses. There, the long casements open to the floor and balconies are provided for vistas of the attractive boulevards.

So, with all these amenities, plus an attractive dining club on the roof, I believe—with appropriate humility—that the city of Austin will be enhanced by this structure.

It may be heresy to say this here, but I have long been distressed by the parceling off of the land into 50 x 100 lots, and the placement of so-called "private" wooden dwellings on each plot. Actually there is very little privacy in these building groups, for each owner, under the disciplinary eye of his neighbors, becomes a slave to his janitorial duties and his children are left free to run about on dangerous streets.

I believe that, as the U.S. countryside is increasingly sprinkled with millions of these little boxes, we will see, not more suburban paradises, but more "urban sprawl." And, inasmuch as one important mission of planning and architecture is to relieve people of unnecessary burdens and



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inconveniences, it seems entirely possible that such houses, instead of being comfortable, liveable homes, will become devices to trap their owners into years of care and worry.<sup>6</sup>

The Austin-based team collaborating with Stone's New York office was comprised of associate architects Arthur Fehr and Charles Granger, structural engineer W. Clark Craig, and mechanical and electrical engineer B. Segall, Jr. Final plans were submitted to the city in July 1964, and a permit was issued in late August.<sup>7</sup> Excavation for the 270,000 square foot building began in October 1964, with images of the Capitol's iron gate on the traffic barriers surrounding the site.<sup>8</sup>

The design called for approximately 115,000 square feet of apartments on floors 10 through 22, ranging from efficiencies to two bedrooms. Parking was to occupy about 100,000 square feet on levels four through nine, with room for approximately 300 cars. Another 35,000 square feet was for offices, including the office of the Lumbermen's Company.<sup>9</sup> Lumbermen's president, Julian H. Zimmerman, was the first occupant of apartment #2106, but he moved out the following year. Joe M. Teague, a founder of the Central Texas Equipment Company, was the first occupant of one of the luxury apartments on the terraced tenth floor, which featured custom designed furnishings and details by Austin-based interior designer E.J. "Jack" Revell. His design firm, Revell & Associates, collaborated with Stone's office on the design of the Westgate's public interior spaces. Page Southerland Page served as architect of the Headliners Club, which occupied the 24th floor from 1965 until 1975. Revell & Associates were responsible for the interior design of the Headliners Club, and the Austin-based architect R. Gommel Rossner designed the club's Presidential Room, which paid tribute to Texan Lyndon B. Johnson, President of the United States at the time of the Westgate's construction. Other notable interior projects completed by Revell & Associates included the restoration of the Sam Houston Room in the Governor's Mansion; offices and apartments for the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor in the State Capitol Building; and the Austin Club. His Revell Galleries featured fine English and French furniture and antiques, chandeliers, mirrors, fabrics, and accessories.

Regarding the associate role performed by the architecture firm of Fehr & Granger on the Westgate project, Arthur Fehr's son John has stated, "E.D. Stone did the gross programming [design] and the exterior. F&G did the detail programming [the bulk of the working drawings, based upon preliminaries by Stone's office] and all of the common-space interiors and the apartment partition layouts, except for the Headliners Club and the restaurant on the floor below the club." According to Arthur Fehr's son Grant, "John Griffin, who had a reputation as an ace draftsman, served as the firm's point man on the Westgate project. Fehr & Granger also reworked the parking structure, because they discovered that Stone's design was a tight fit for big cars. Some of those lobbyists, legislators, and their, er, 'assistants' drove some grand metal in those days: Cadillac DeVilles and Lincoln Continentals, and probably a Rolls at some point, with lots of chrome and sheet steel to negotiate around those columns." To his brother's comments, John Fehr added: "The ramps, the curvature, and a few structural columns were slightly modified and/or slightly relocated and valet parking became *de rigueur* in lieu of self-parking because

<sup>6</sup> Edward Durell Stone, "Statement," July 9, 1964. Edward Durell Stone Papers. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. Box 69, folder 14. Emphasis in the text is Stone's.

<sup>7</sup> "View of Capitol Already Blocked," *Austin Statesman*, March 29, 1965.

<sup>8</sup> "Office-Apartment Excavation Begins," *Austin Statesman*, November 1, 1964.

<sup>9</sup> As of 2008, Lumberman's is now the Four-Star Real Estate Group.



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the management was fearful of liability issues."<sup>10</sup> Structural engineer Craig, who regularly worked on projects with Fehr & Granger and occupied an adjacent office to the firm, handled the needed modifications to the parking structure.

## **Edward Durell Stone, Architect**

Edward Durell Stone (1902-1978) was one of the foremost modern architects in the United States from the 1930s through the 1960s. In the mid 1950s he emerged as a protagonist of the New Formalism, which sought to invest modern architecture with the monumental scale, symmetry, and decorative refinement ascribed to classical architecture. Born in Fayetteville, Arkansas, Stone studied architecture at Harvard University (1925-26) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1926-27). In 1927 he won the Rotch Travelling Scholarship, which enabled him to travel in Europe and North Africa (1927-29). Stone worked for the New York architects Schulze & Weaver on the design of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and for Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray, Reinhardt & Hoffmeister, and Hood & Fouilhoux, the three New York architectural firms collaborating on the design of Rockefeller Center. Beginning with the design of the Richard Mandel House in Mount Kisco, New York (1933-34), Stone produced a series of dramatic, high profile projects that reflected the impact of the Modern Movement in architecture on him. A country house outside Moncks Corner, South Carolina for Clare Boothe and Henry R. Luce (1936-37), the A. Conger Goodyear House in Old Westbury, Long Island (1938-39), and, most important, the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1936-39), on which he collaborated with Philip L. Goodwin, made Stone one of the best-known modern architects in the U.S. before he reached the age of forty.

After military service during World War II, Stone taught at the School of Architecture at Yale University (1946-52) and continued to practice in New York. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, he designed the Hotel El Panamá in Panamá City, Panamá (1951), the University of Arkansas Fine Arts Center in Fayetteville (1948-50), the Lima General Hospital in Lima, Perú (1952, with A.L. Aydelotte), and his first project in Texas, a house for Mr. and Mrs. I. H. Kempner, Jr., in Houston (1950-52; demolished). Stone's postwar buildings retained some of the sleekness of his celebrated buildings of the 1930s. But they also demonstrated his dissatisfaction with what he came to regard as the sterility of mainstream modern architecture as well as his fascination with the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. In the mid-1950s, Stone experienced an architectural breakthrough while designing the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India (1954-59). The symmetrical chancellery building was raised on a podium. Slender gold plated columns supported a flat-lidded roof and formed a portico encircling the pavilion-like building. The embassy's two-story walls were faced with solar screens of polished marble terrazzo blocks. The formally composed, dazzlingly white building, offset with reflecting pools and fountains, possessed a delicacy that evoked Oriental fantasy without relying on historical precedent.

The solar screen became Stone's trademark, appearing on his most famous house, the Josephine Graf House in Dallas (1956-58), as well as the Stuart Pharmaceuticals Company Building in Pasadena, California (1956-58), the Hotel Phoenixia Intercontinental in Beirut, Lebanon (1956-61; destroyed), Baker and Burney Halls at the

<sup>10</sup> Quotations and details from telephone and e-mail communications between Phoebe Allen and brothers Grant and John Fehr, May 2009.



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University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina (1956-58), and the circular U.S. Pavilion at Expo '58 in Brussels, Belgium (1957-58; demolished). The circular Beckman Auditorium at Cal Tech in Pasadena, California (1960-63) was configured as exotic pavilions. Some of Stone's buildings re-interpreted elements of Frank Lloyd Wright's work, among them the Stanford University Medical Center, Palo Alto, California (1955-59), Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, California (1959-61), the North Carolina Legislative Building in Raleigh, North Carolina (1960-63), the National Geographic Society Building in Washington, D. C. (1960-64), and the Ponce Museum of Art in Ponce, Puerto Rico (1961-65).

In the late 1950s, Stone began to receive commissions for high-rise buildings, on which he typically emphasized verticality, as in the 12-story Huntington Hartford Gallery of Modern Art in New York (1957-64; defaced), the 33-story International Trade Mart in New Orleans (1959-67), the 8-story Perpetual Savings & Loan Association Building in Beverly Hills, California (1960-62), four 22-story dormitory towers at the University of Albany, State University of New York, in Albany, New York (1962-64, -65, -67, -72), the 50-story General Motors Building in New York (1964-68), the 83-story Standard Oil Building in Chicago (1970-73), and the 25-story Florida Capitol Center in Tallahassee, Florida (1973-77). Stone was commissioned in 1959 to design what became the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. (1971). He also designed the U.S. Department of Transportation Building in Washington (1969). In 1961, Stone was recruited by the government of Pakistan to design many of the most important public buildings in the new capital city of Islamabad, including the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (1961-65, 1974), the Presidential Estate (1967), the National Assembly (1970-86), and Quaid-i-Azam University (1966). Stone's office was responsible for a number of additional projects in Texas, including the 8-story First National Bank Building facing Travis Park in downtown San Antonio (1970), the Fort Worth Municipal Building in downtown Fort Worth (1968-71), the Amarillo Museum of Art in Amarillo (1969-72), and The Woodland Inn and Conference Center in The Woodlands (1973-74).

Stone's standing among U.S. architects was at its peak between 1958, when he was the subject of a cover story in the March 31 issue of *Time* magazine, and the mid-1960s. His reputation declined after 1965, and his architecture was criticized as repetitive and frivolous. Stone nevertheless continued to receive substantial commissions, such as the corporate headquarters of Pepsico in Harrison, New York (1967-70), until his retirement in 1974. It is a testament to the influence of Stone's buildings of the late 1950s and early '60s that masonry or anodized aluminum solar screens, slender columns bearing decorative arches, and gold anodized aluminum trim on symmetrical pavilion-like buildings instantly identify the time period when such buildings were built. These were characteristic features of the trend that architectural critics in the early 1960s began to call the New Formalism. Stone and the architects Eero Saarinen (1910-61), Minoru Yamasaki (1912-86), and Philip Johnson (1906-2005) were the leading proponents of the New Formalism.

**Fehr & Granger, Associate Architects**

Stone's associate architect for the Westgate Tower was the Austin architectural firm of Fehr & Granger, organized by Arthur K. Fehr and Charles T. Granger, Jr. in 1946. Fehr and Granger were natives of Austin and graduates of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas. Granger worked for the Los Angeles modern architect Richard Neutra from 1936 to 1938 and then for Eliel and Eero Saarinen between 1944 and 1946 while studying at the



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Cranbrook Institute in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Fehr & Granger were the most publicized modern architects in Austin in the 1950s. They designed houses, schools, and small institutional buildings. Their largest building, the terminal of Robert Mueller Municipal Airport in Austin (1961), registered the impact of the New Formalism in its undulating roof plate and the reverse taper profile of its control tower. J.R. Weiershausen, an architect with the firm between 1956 and 1972, has said, "At one time Fehr & Granger was probably the most progressive firm in the state of Texas."<sup>11</sup>

Arthur Kilian Fehr (1904-1969) completed Austin High School in 1921, received his bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Texas in 1925, and studied at the graduate level from 1926 to 1929 at Columbia University, New York University, and the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design in New York City. He worked with Kenneth M. Murchison in New York City (1926-1933) and traveled in Europe in 1927, notably to Fontainebleau, France, before returning to Texas.

Fehr opened his Austin office in 1937, when the city's population was 83,000, with a commission for the First English Lutheran Church (1937) in Austin and was one of the earliest architects to become licensed with Texas Registered Architect License #26 in 1917. He served as the first president of the Central Texas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1938.

Fehr had been strongly influenced by the Mission and Rustic styles during his work restoring Spanish missions in San Antonio with architect Harvey P. Smith as draftsman (1925) and chief draftsman and designer (1929-1934), and with the National Park Service as the project architect for Bastrop State Park (1934-37). Grant Fehr says of his father's work:

I suspect Charlie Granger was the one who led him to modernism, but my father's hero was always Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus school (from which came many of the later modernists, most notably Mies van der Rohe, and thence Neutra). I think this is because the Bauhaus ethic of not only designing absolutely clutterless space, but actually making things with your own hands, appealed to him. From his experience in the Park Service, where he had a stable of craftsmen (mostly old Germans) to help him design and make not only buildings but furniture, windows and doors, iron goods, etc., Bauhaus was an approach for which he later had almost no time but always wanted to take. The Bauhaus influence was most evident in his churches around town, from the St. Stephen's Chapel (a basic "Mission" village church stripped to its "Modern" bones, dressed with "Rustic" local stonework and centered on a rough wood cross, a true synthesis of his influences, the last being his deeply Lutheran upbringing) to the chapel at the Episcopal Seminary, as well as, of course in the pre-F&G Bastrop State Park buildings and furnishings (albeit with a heavy Rustic touch).... He was really an artist first, and a "businessman" only by default and necessity, even if he didn't know it (or admit it). Whereas Charlie was the "pure design" kind of guy.

<sup>11</sup> Sources for this section on Fehr & Granger include 2009 phone and e-mail communications between author Phoebe Allen and Grant and John Fehr (sons of Arthur Fehr), Laurie Hall (daughter of Charles Granger), Don Emerson, and J.R. Weiershausen.



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Charles Thompson Granger, Jr., (1913-1966) was a native of Austin; his father, Charles Granger, Sr., was the bookkeeper of Nelson Davis & Son Wholesale Grocers and was active in real estate. The younger Granger graduated from Austin High School in 1931, received his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas in 1936, and from 1936 through 1938 worked with the celebrated modernist architect Richard J. Neutra in Los Angeles. Few native Austin architects could claim the modernist credentials of Granger. Neutra's influence is seen in much of the firm's Texas work, notably in their residential projects. Granger was an architectural student when Fehr hired him to be his summer assistant and draftsman on the Bastrop State Park project for the National Park Service.

In January of 1939 Granger commenced full time work in Fehr's office,<sup>12</sup> which had opened in May 1937 with a single drafting board in the back of woodcarver Peter Mansbendel's studio at 109 West Ninth Street. Mansbendel and Fehr were both in the *Saengerrunde* and both spoke German; Fehr's parents were native Texans with German as their household language. During World War II, both Fehr and Granger worked for the War Department in Fort Worth as architectural engineers at Consolidated-Vultee Aircraft Corporation (known locally as "the Bomber Plant"). Granger's wartime work included planning coordination on Atomic Energy (AE) contracts and work in the Engineering Division of Consolidated-Vultee.

Granger was awarded a fellowship at the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan in 1944. He received a Master of Arts degree in Architecture and Urban Design in 1946 while working as a designer in the office of Saarinen and Swanson on the \$80 million General Motors Technical Center, where he came in close contact with father-and-son architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen. Fehr returned to the Austin office in 1945. He and Granger again pooled their talents in their partnership in 1946, renting the upper floor of an old stone "railroad hotel" at 502 East Fifth Street.

In 1938 Granger had designed "the Perch" at 805 West Sixteenth Street in Austin, a garage apartment on a lot owned by his parents; after his father's death, his mother gave the lot to him as a wedding gift, the deed being filed July 17, 1950. It likely was constructed just after the war. Grant Fehr commented:

The Perch was sort of an experiment and "model home" (as well as a standard garage apartment/studio/whatever) that Arthur and Charlie put up to advertise this new "modern" thing and also, I think, to try out some stuff. Fehr & Granger were successful not just because they were "cool," but because they knew how to build cheap—the schools in particular. They used industrial and commercial components and materials—aluminum, asbestos siding (yep), structural clay tile, etc., in ways other than intended. In later years this sort of thing was called "high tech" or "urban." I can't say they were pioneers at that, but around here it got them a lot of work.<sup>13</sup>

The Fehr family rented the main house on the West Sixteenth Street property from 1946 to 1949. Granger built a new house in its place in 1951 for his growing family of four children, and the garage apartment became his studio. He lived until 1963 at the Granger House, recently a City of Austin Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Properties. Granger served as president of the Central Texas Chapter AIA in 1955, and in 1956

<sup>12</sup> Granger received his architectural license, #774, in 1939.

<sup>13</sup> Both quotes are from Grant Fehr via phone and email communication on April 30, 2009.



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became a member of the National AIA Committee on School Buildings and Educational Facilities; he was elected as the chair of that committee in 1959.

By 1958 the firm of Fehr & Granger was featured in *Progressive Architecture* and occupied its own air-conditioned office building (now vacant) at 403 East Fifteenth Street with four associates—Herbert Crume, Lankford Griffin, Thomas Shefelman, and George Zapalac—and a total staff of twenty, nine of whom were registered architects.<sup>14</sup> Fehr focused on administration while Granger was in charge of the drafting room and the four associates served as project managers following initial design by the two principals.

Granger died in a tragic automobile accident in 1966, along with his wife and 14-year-old son; he posthumously was named a fellow of the AIA in 1967. Fehr had been named a fellow of the AIA in 1957 for his work in design. He served as the local AIA president again in 1959 and had a long history in various offices of the Texas Society of Architects (TSA) including director, secretary-treasurer, vice-president, and in 1963, president. Both Fehr and Granger served on the Austin Chamber of Commerce and were City of Austin Plan Consultants. Until Fehr's sudden death in 1969, the firm produced an award-winning body of work. Don Emerson (b. 1933) joined the firm in 1959. He and one of Fehr's three sons, architect Kilian Fehr (1942-1995), who joined the firm in the 1960s, continued the practice as Emerson Fehr Architects & Planners until Kilian's death, at which point Emerson sold the firm and donated Fehr and Granger's Austin drawings and photographs to the Austin History Center.

Four Fehr & Granger projects were cited in the prestigious national design award competition sponsored each year by *Progressive Architecture* magazine: the Cleveland Clinic (1947) on Parkway, the Brooking Memorial Nurses' Home (1954) in Wharton, Austin's award-winning Robert Mueller Municipal Airport and Tower (1958-1961), and the Hillview Unit of Brown Schools (1958) in San Marcos. Other projects cited in state or local competitions include the Joseph T. Sneed Residence (1953), O. Henry Junior High School (1954), St. Stephen's Episcopal School Chapel (1954), Westwood Country Club (1960), and the chapel at Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest (1965). Additional projects include the State Insurance Building, Medical Park Tower, Texas School for the Deaf, and many buildings on the Texas Lutheran College campus in Seguin.<sup>15</sup>

### Headliners Club and Notable Occupants of the Westgate Tower

The Headliners Club was organized in August 1954 by Charles E. Green, publisher of the *Austin American-Statesman*; Paul Bolton, veteran Austin television and radio commentator and news editor; and prominent Austin attorney Everett L. Looney. By 1965 the club had swelled to 826 members, among them "some of the principal scholars in the state, and the bulk of the state's ranking political leaders," including four Texas governors and President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Headliners had occupied permanent quarters on the first floor of the historic

<sup>14</sup> Architect George A. Walling (1901-) served as a principal in the firm prior to 1958, beginning in 1949.

<sup>15</sup> Hank Todd Smith, editor, *Austin: Its Architects and Architecture (1836-1986)*. Austin Chapter AIA, 1986, pages 15-16. Austin History Center vertical files: Charles Granger, Arthur Fehr, Fehr & Granger. "Fehr & Granger," *Texas Architect*, Nov. 12, 1989. "The Architect and His Community: Fehr & Granger," *Progressive Architecture*, August 1958.



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Driskill Hotel on Sixth Street since February 1955, but in January 1965 the club announced its plans to leave its home of eleven years for new quarters at the top of the Westgate Tower, then just barely under construction.<sup>16</sup>

Green, the chairman of the board of trustees for the Headliners Club, explained the organization's decision to relocate to the new space of 7,635 square feet—more than double its space in the Driskill—to his own newspaper: "We already have a statewide complexion. The expansion will give us a rosier hue without making the Headliners a state club. This fits the original purpose for which the club was formed, and why a number of us devote so much personal time to these projects: To make people over the state—those who count in business, the arts and sciences, journalism and all communication outlets, and the professions—to make those people like and understand Austin as we who live here and have come to love and understand our city."<sup>17</sup>

The architect for the club's new Westgate location was the Austin firm of Page Southerland Page, with interiors designed by Revell & Associates; the contractor was H.A. Lott, Inc., with George E. Maxwell, construction manager.<sup>18</sup> The club's board spent \$220,000 to decorate and furnish the space, and the Headliners' former bar—including its brass rail, dark oak paneling, and mesquite floors—was removed from the Driskill and reinstalled in the Westgate, where it was renamed the "Press Box." R. Gommel Roessner, Professor of Architecture at the University of Texas, designed the Presidential Room at the club's southeast corner, which has commanding views of the Capitol and its grounds. Dedicated to President Lyndon B. Johnson, whose portrait hung above the marble fireplace, and made available at his convenience, the room's carpet featured the presidential seal woven into its center, with a chandelier suspended directly above it.<sup>19</sup> Today the Presidential Room appears much as it did in the 1960s, with the exception of a new carpet without the seal; the Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC) agency currently occupies the entire 24th floor.

A north-side room of the club, with massively proportioned decorative moldings, was named for renowned historian Walter Prescott Webb, a charter member of the Headliners. Another room was set aside for women's meetings. The main dining room, with polished walnut leafed in gold, featured a small dance floor of white marble; food from Norman Eaton's Polonaise Restaurant, on the 23rd floor, was brought to club members after a quick preparation in a warming kitchen. A ladies' dining room with Japanese décor was to the south of the main dining room. The "Fisherman's Cove," a conversation area, was decorated with a collage of mid-century Austin history clippings, magazine cutouts, and photos on a background of Austin scenes painted by celebrated Texas modernist Michael Frary (1918-2005), a professor of art at the University of Texas from 1952 to 1986. The Headliners Club left the Westgate Tower in 1975, and Frary's mural was removed and installed at the new location. The Westgate's 24th floor then became office space for law firms. The 23rd floor, which had been home to the Polonaise Restaurant, briefly became the "Top of the Westgate" restaurant in 1976, but soon was converted to law offices.

Other notable occupants of the Westgate over the years include A.R. "Babe" Schwartz, State Representative from 1955-1959 and State Senator from 1960-1981; Billy Clayton, Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives from 1975-1983; Robert Rowland, Assistant Attorney General of Texas from 1958-1962; political activist and lobbyist

<sup>16</sup> "Moving Up: Austin Headliners Club Switching to New Home," *Austin American-Statesman*, January 17, 1965.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Hal Jensen. "Philosophy Behind a Landmark," *Austin in Action*. March 1966, 34-35.

<sup>19</sup> It is not known if the present chandelier in this room is original.



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Bettie Naylor; lobbyist Jack Wheeler; Camille and John Butler of the Elgin Butler Brick Company, whose brown brick covers the building; Ethel "Sunny" Clift, mother of actor Montgomery Clift; and actress Amanda Blake, who played the character of "Miss Kitty" on the television series *Gunsmoke*. Frank Cimino, a builder and contractor, and his wife Susan led the Westgate Tower's transition from leased apartments to condominiums in 1984.

### **Criterion A: Significance in Community Planning and Development**

The Westgate Tower is significant for its association with trends that contributed to broad patterns in the history of urban planning and real estate development in Texas cities during the twentieth century. Constructed in a downtown setting rather than a residential neighborhood, the Westgate Tower is a high-rise, mixed-use building that combined leased residential apartments with commercial space, quarters for a restaurant and social club, and a parking garage. Although other tall, mixed-use buildings preceded the development of the Westgate in Austin, it was the first building in the city—the state capital—to exceed the height restrictions for new construction in the area of the Capitol, and the first skyscraper to compete with the Capitol's dome for viewers' attention among the city's skyline.

#### Association with the Widespread Development of an Urban Building Type

As a distinct building type, the apartment building was introduced to Texas cities around 1900. The first multi-story residential apartment buildings in Texas, tall enough to require the installation of elevators, were built between 1904 and 1912: the 5- and 6-story Majestic Apartments at 1312 South Ervay Avenue, Dallas (c. 1904); and in Houston, the 7½-story Savoy Apartments at 1612 Main Street (1906; demolished), the 8½-story Beaconsfield at 1700 Main Street (1911), and the 7½-story Rossonian at 913-917 Fannin Street (1911; demolished). At the time of their construction, all of these buildings were located in or adjacent to established elite residential neighborhoods.

The next episode of tall apartment building construction in Texas occurred during the 1920s, featuring a new composite building type—the residential hotel, which combined transient and residential accommodations. In the Oak Lawn section of Dallas, north of downtown, the 8½-story Melrose Hotel at 3105 Oak Lawn Avenue (1925), the 11-story Stoneleigh Court at 2927 Maple Avenue (1924), and the 7½-story Maple Terrace at 3001 Maple Avenue (1925) were constructed. Similarly, the 8½-story Plaza Apartment Hotel at 5020 Montrose Boulevard (1926) and the 11½-story Warwick at 5701 Main Boulevard (1926) were built in residential areas of Houston. San Antonio saw the construction of the 7-story Bushnell Apartments at 240 Bushnell Avenue (1926) and the 11-story Aurora Apartment Hotel at 509 Howard Avenue (1930), and Fort Worth was home to the 12-story Forest Park Apartments at 2306 Park Place Avenue (1928). The Melrose, Stoneleigh Court, Plaza, Warwick, and Aurora were apartment hotels.

Despite the recovery of the construction economy in Texas cities during the second half of the 1930s, multi-story apartment buildings were not built, making the Normandie Arms Apartments in Austin (1939) an exception. The next episode of high-rise apartment construction occurred in Texas during the 1950s. The 12-story Westchester House Apartments at 554 South Summit Avenue in Fort Worth (1950) was built near Harris Hospital, while in Houston, several apartment buildings were constructed near the Texas Medical Center: the 15-story Park Tower at



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1700 Holcombe Boulevard (1955; demolished), the 14-story Mayfair at 1600 Holcombe Boulevard (1956; demolished), and the 16-story 1400 Hermann Drive (1957). The most architecturally significant high-rise apartment building constructed in Texas in the 1950s was the 22-story 3525 Turtle Creek Boulevard in Dallas (1957; NRHP 2008). Designed by Howard R. Meyer—Dallas' foremost modern architect—3525 Turtle Creek displayed the impact of Edward Durell Stone's use of solar screens in its network of precast concrete solar screens, which gave the slender, cruciform-plan tower its architectural identity. Like 1400 Hermann Drive in Houston and the Aurora Apartment Hotel in San Antonio, 3525 Turtle Creek also featured exterior balconies.

The decade of the 1960s introduced new development patterns that affected high-rise residential construction in Texas. In 1963 the Texas Legislature passed the Condominium Act, enabling the conversion of existing rental apartment buildings as well as the construction of new apartment buildings for condominium ownership. High-rise apartments were built in greater numbers, in or near downtown as well as in residential neighborhoods; they were built in smaller cities that had not participated in earlier episodes of construction; and they were built for a diversified clientele.

Fourteen high-rise apartment buildings were constructed between 1962 and 1966 in Houston, of which six were built near River Oaks, the city's most elite residential neighborhood. The two tallest—the 27-story 2016 Main (1965) and the 33-story Houston House at 1617 Fannin Street (1966)—were built downtown. In Austin, where the population increased from 187,000 in 1960 to 252,000 in 1970, the 15-story Cambridge Tower (1962-64) was constructed at 1801 Lavaca Street, seven blocks north of the Westgate's site. In Corpus Christi, a city of just under 200,000 people during the mid-1960s, four multi-story apartment buildings were completed between 1965 and 1967, of which three were located in or on the edge of downtown. In Waco, with a population of approximately 95,000 at the time, the 10-story Lake Air Tower at 4924 Cobbs Drive was built in 1966. With a population of only 35,000 in the mid-1960s, the 6-story Fairway Apartments was constructed at 600 Wichita Avenue in the city of McAllen, in the Rio Grande Valley. Beginning around 1960, multi-story apartment buildings were also constructed as housing for the elderly, either as public housing or as housing developed and managed by non-profit corporations. The 9-story Victoria Plaza in San Antonio at 411 Barrera Street (1960) became a model for other high-rise elderly housing built in Texas in the 1960s, such as the 11-story Gulf Breeze Apartments at 1211 Twenty-first Street in Galveston (1969) and the 14-story Villa del Sol at 700 East St. Charles Street in Brownsville (1971).

Planned in the early 1960s—when high-rise residential construction, in its fourth historical cycle in Texas, began to spread beyond the state's largest cities and was promoted as appropriate for an expanded array of tenant markets—the Westgate Tower was built in downtown Austin, overlooking the Capitol grounds, rather than adjacent to an established residential neighborhood. Although major cities in Texas had limited involvement with federally subsidized urban renewal programs during the 1960s, the vision of high-rise urban living embodied in the Westgate Tower was linked to the planning and development practices associated with urban renewal, which sought to entice affluent residents to choose downtown or near-town locations in high-rise apartment buildings as alternatives to single-family housing in the suburbs. The Lumbermen's Investment Corporation constructed both the Westgate in Austin and the Houston House in Houston, disclosing a pattern of real estate investments by developers seeking to profit on an emerging market trend.



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The Westgate Tower is additionally significant in Austin for initiating the real estate practice of mixing residential and commercial uses in a single building. Although predominantly residential (floors 10-22), the building contained commercial space for lease on Level 2 (the ground floor entry from Colorado Street) and Level 3 (at Lavaca Street). Level 23 was designed to be a restaurant and level 24 a private club; these initially were occupied by the Polonaise Restaurant and, from 1965 until 1975, the Headliners Club, and they were converted to office space after 1976. The inclusion of a parking garage on levels 3 through 9 was a pattern visible at Houston House and at 2016 Main Street in downtown Houston; this is in contrast to other high-rise apartments built in suburban settings in Texas cities, which consolidated cars in underground or structurally separate, above-grade garages and in surface parking lots.

### Association with the Capitol View Corridors Controversy

Perhaps the Westgate Tower's most important contribution to the broad historical patterns of planning and development in Austin is its instigation of a contentious, and ongoing, political debate over the feasibility of limits to growth in the state capital, especially as such development could adversely affect the view corridor of the Capitol dome.

Citing the height and visual prominence of the Capitol, in 1931 the City of Austin established a zoning ordinance limiting building height to 200 feet, with an exception allowing for additional height with an increased setback of one foot for every three feet in height. Only the Main Building ("the Tower") on the University of Texas campus, completed in 1937 at 29 stories (307 feet), exceeded this limit. The Westgate Tower was the first to shatter the city's height restrictions around the Capitol when its developers utilized this exception.

In 1962 the Austin City Council granted an amendment to the zoning regulations to authorize construction of a high-rise building on the Colorado Street site directly opposite the Capitol, for which the Lumbermen's Investment Corporation held an option to purchase. An Austin newspaper alluded to the potential for controversy to arise when it reported in July: "Austin's costliest and perhaps biggest building...is due a pre-announcement showing next week, when Sid Jaggar, president of The Lumbermen's Corporation, gets back from New York with architect's drawings... Jaggar and Julian Zimmerman, president of LIC, currently decline comment on scale and cost of the structure, but it is slated to be tall enough to bump into a state-city agreement on an informal height limit for near-Capitol structures."<sup>20</sup>

Governor Price Daniel, in his final address to the state legislature in January 1963, announced his opposition to the project, urging lawmakers to protect the Capitol by passing a resolution to condemn the site across Colorado Street and obtain it as part of the Capitol campus. Some believed that this was a political move by Daniel specifically to prevent his adversary, former governor Allan Shivers, from making a profit on the real estate transaction; Shivers's company, SouthTex Land Sales, owned the site and was poised to sell it to Lumbermen's. In defending Lumbermen's plans, Jaggar articulated the need for proximity in the Capitol complex in order to facilitate access between private business and social elites and the state government. He pointed to the 1956 Capitol Area Master Plan, claiming that just such a building was part of the plan's recommendations:

<sup>20</sup> "Biggest Building Due," *Austin American*, July 20, 1962.



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Jaggar says the proposed Lumbermen's Company building is based on the idea that private citizens, business, and government all are represented in Austin and that each should use every opportunity to "facilitate their working together. The ease with which they can meet to discuss their problems and interests will contribute to the overall effectiveness of government, and, in a sense, measure Austin's response to its obligation as the Capital of Texas."

Jaggar makes a point of what he might term an "omission of concept" in the Capital Campus area. Until now, some have used the Campus term to define only governmental buildings. But Jaggar points to a quotation from a recommendation in the Capitol Area Master Plan, adopted by the State Building Commission in 1956:

*Areas surrounding the Capitol should be utilized for: Headquarters of state organizations desiring locations near the Capitol; offices which are functionally related to state government (i.e., law offices); multi-family housing for employees working in the area; and only such limited commercial development as is required to provide convenience goods to those persons living and working in the area.*

Jaggar contends the proposed Lumbermen's building is specifically designed to accommodate these recommended uses, for the building will include apartments, rental office areas, small retail shops and ample underground parking facilities.

"You might say," says Jaggar, "we planned the building for the area."

The master plan, continues Jaggar, recommends architectural and zoning controls to keep the dignity and function of the area and preserve the best view of the Capitol.

"Lumbermen's Company recognizes these added responsibilities of being a neighbor to the Capitol and accepted an unusual sense of responsibility in developing the project. For example, we retained as architect world-renowned Edward Durrell [sic] Stone. This selection was based not only on Stone's reputation, but also his previous experience with major structures in other capital cities where architectural integrity is always of vital concern."

Jaggar contends the State Architectural Advisory Committee, after Daniel's request to review and analyze effect of the building on the Capitol, answered that the project would be a desirable addition, not detrimental to the Capitol.<sup>21</sup>

The outgoing governor, however, did not interpret the committee's position in the same manner, and Daniel continued to press in the issue in the media. He released a press statement claiming that the advisory committee had asked for no further action on the Lumbermen's property until a new building commission was appointed after

<sup>21</sup> Dave Shanks, "The Lumbermen's Answer: 'Everybody Knew About It,'" *Austin American-Statesman*, Saturday, January 12, 1963. It is worth noting that at this point the Westgate was planned with underground parking.



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the inauguration of incoming governor John Connally. The developers nevertheless continued to forge ahead with their plans to purchase the property from former governor Shivers, telling the media that Lumbermen's had proceeded "in an orderly and legal fashion to obtain the rezoning—to which no opposition developed—in good faith," and had coordinated "in a responsible manner with both the state and city of Austin."<sup>22</sup>

Lumbermen's had invited Governor Daniel and other members of state government to a tony reception for Stone on November 9, 1962, and had observed that notices were sent, as required, for three public hearings before the Austin City Planning Commission and City Council on November 13 and 20, and on December 6, 1962. "Despite these announcements, plus ample publicity on radio, television, and in the newspapers, no comment was offered by the State Building Commission," Jaggar told the *Austin American-Statesman*.<sup>23</sup>

The state legislature did not respond to the outgoing governor's request to acquire the property, and after the regular session had adjourned without action on it, Lumbermen's exercised its option and purchased the land from SouthTex on June 10, 1963, for the sum of \$83,150.<sup>24</sup> Stone continued to work on his design for the Westgate Tower, and changed the parking from an underground structure to a less-costly, above-ground podium. Because the apartment tower recedes at the tenth floor as it transitions from the lower parking garage block, the City of Austin found the Westgate to be in compliance with the 1931 setback requirement and granted the developers a building permit in 1964. The controversy did not end with the issuance of the permit, however; it flared up again during the winter of 1964-65, as the building's concrete foundation was completed and its steel frame was under construction.

Continuing to claim that the height of the Westgate would detract from the Capitol's setting, in February 1965 Representative Henry C. Grover of Houston introduced a resolution (HCR36) to the Texas Legislature to condemn and acquire the property for the state; these efforts, however, were not successful. At the time there were other buildings—already built or under construction—that limited views of the 311-foot, four-story Capitol, but all were under the height restriction of 200 feet: the 1924 Stephen F. Austin Hotel (15 stories, 181 feet); the 1929 Norwood Tower (15 stories, 189 feet); the 1964 Penthouse Apartments at Thirteenth and Guadalupe streets (11 stories, 176 feet); and the Cambridge Tower (12 stories, 181 feet) and the J.J. Pickle Federal Building (10 stories, 160 feet), both constructed in 1965. The Westgate Tower's final height would be 261 feet, exceeding them all.<sup>25</sup>

Grover's resolution stated that, if the trend toward high-rise buildings near the Capitol and the University of Texas were to continue unchecked, "the Capitol will be obliterated from view, unnecessarily destroying much of the beauty and charm of the city of Austin and of the Capitol grounds." The state representative told the *Austin American* that the legislature should have stopped the Lumbermen's project much earlier, and that immediate action was essential; the developer would be appropriately compensated for its losses.<sup>26</sup> Sounding a battle cry in

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> "Building Step Nearer," *Austin Statesman*, July 2, 1963; Sam Wood, "Before House Panel, Westgate is Debated," *Austin American-Statesman*, March 23, 1965.

<sup>25</sup> See Carol McMurtry, "View of Capitol Already Blocked; Westgate a Late Comer," *Austin Statesman*, March 29, 1965.

<sup>26</sup> "Construction Halt Sought," *Austin American*, February 11, 1965; "Condemnation of Apartment near Capitol Sought," *Houston Chronicle*, February 11, 1965; and "Grover Seeks to Block Building near Capitol," *Houston Post*, February 11, 1965.



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the year before the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966—federal law passed during the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson, a Texan well familiar with Austin and the Capitol complex—Grover's resolution also stated that "the importance of preserving the beauty of the historical landmarks in this state from the encroachment of commercialism forced upon us as a result of living in the 20th century is becoming increasingly evident."<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the resolution was defeated by a vote of only two, 66-64, in session on March 23, 1965.<sup>28</sup>

This controversy recurred as Austin's economy began to expand further during the late 1960s and into the 1970s. The Westgate remained the tallest high-rise building in the Capitol area for only a few short years; in 1968 the exception to the ordinance was again employed for the construction of the Dobie Center (29 stories, 299 feet, completed in 1972), a shopping mall and private student housing tower adjacent to the University of Texas campus, and more exceptions soon followed. The City National Bank Building at 823 Congress (16 stories, 229 feet) was the tallest commercial building in downtown Austin from 1971 until 1974, when the American National Bank Tower was built (21 stories, 325 feet) at 221 West Sixth Street. Two more buildings followed at Congress Avenue and Sixth Street—the 1975 Austin National Bank Building at 515 Congress Avenue (25 stories, 329 feet), and the 1984 One American Center (32 stories, 395 feet).

The successful completion of these skyscrapers demonstrates that Austin's city government preferred robust urban development to preserving the visual dominance of the Capitol dome. In 1983, legal protections for Capitol View Corridors were established to protect the remaining views of the Capitol; however, in 2001 and again in 2003, the Legislature amended these provisions to address development needs, including the revitalization of Eleventh Street, the redevelopment of Mueller Airport, and an addition to Memorial Stadium at the University of Texas.

The Westgate still appears on the current list of the two dozen tallest high-rise buildings in Austin, but just barely, ranked at twenty-first place.<sup>29</sup> By the first decade of the twenty-first century, the heights of new buildings in downtown Austin exceeded the height of the Capitol by a factor of two. With the exception of 1972's mixed-use Dobie Center, all subsequent high-rise construction had been dedicated for commercial use until 2006, when new residential and mixed-use high-rises began to pierce Austin's skyline. The Westgate, however, was the first of these mixed-use, high-rise buildings.

## **Criterion C: Architectural Significance**

The Westgate Tower is significant in the area of Architecture because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period: the point-block type of high-rise apartment tower of the mid-twentieth-century period set atop a podium. It is also locally significant as the work of a master in the art of architecture—Edward Durell Stone—as it is his only built work in Austin, the capital of Texas.

<sup>27</sup> "Grover Seeks to Block Building near Capitol."

<sup>28</sup> David Hearne, "Westgate Foes Barely Beaten," *Austin Statesman*, March 24, 1965.

<sup>29</sup> *Austin American Statesman*, September 18, 2009, B7.



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### Distinctive Characteristics of a Type and Period

The Westgate is an example of the point-block tower high-rise building, a type especially favored for high-rise apartments in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. It is significant for its spatial organization, with the square-plan residential tower stacked atop the cruciform-plan garage podium; this organization provided for 231 cars to be parked on the compact site, allowing the Lumbermen's Investment Corporation to avoid the costly acquisition of additional real estate for parking. This organization also facilitated the Westgate's construction as a cast-in-place, reinforced concrete structural frame supporting both the sloping ramps of the garage floors and the horizontal plates of the tower floors. The combination of cruciform podium and high-rise tower enabled the Westgate to comply with the City of Austin's condition for granting a variance to the 200-foot height limit in effect at that time: the wider footprint of the podium satisfied the city's setback formula and enabled the Westgate to exceed the city's height limit by 61 feet. The Westgate is significant for combining parking, commercial space, and an upper level restaurant and social club, with apartments and a swimming pool and solarium for residents' private use. This made the Westgate Tower especially attractive to tenants who might not be full-time residents of Austin, but whose business with various offices and agencies of the state government made it desirable to have convenient access to space for offices, residences, and entertainment in the capital.

The point-block tower was one of the two most characteristic high-rise apartment building types of the postwar period—the other being the slab type, represented in Austin by the Cambridge Tower with its elongated rectangular plan. The point-block tower was the obvious alternative for the Westgate because it occupied the building's half-block site so efficiently. The Parisian architect Le Corbusier had introduced the arrangement of a high-rise tower or slab stacked atop a horizontal podium in unbuilt projects of the 1930s. In such important and widely publicized mid-century buildings as the Ministry of Education Building in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, by a team of Brazilian architects influenced by Le Corbusier (1936-45); the United Nations headquarters in New York (1947-53), on whose design Le Corbusier and one of the Brazilian architects, Oscar Niemeyer, collaborated with one of Stone's former employers, Wallace K. Harrison; and the Lever House office building in New York by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (1952), this type of organization was translated into influential built examples. The Republic National Bank Building in Dallas by Harrison's firm, Harrison & Abramovitz (1954), the Medical Towers Building in Houston by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill with Golemon & Rolfe (1956), and the Southland Center mixed-use complex in Dallas (1958) introduced the tower (or slab)-on-podium type of high-rise buildings to Texas. At the Medical Towers, the podium was used as a parking garage, as it was at the 2016 Main and Houston House apartment buildings in Houston.

### Represents the work of a master

The Westgate Tower represents the work of one of the foremost architects practicing in the U.S. in the mid-twentieth century, Edward Durell Stone. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of Stone's high-rise buildings in its vertical emphasis, its architectural refinements, and its solar screens. It stands out among Stone's buildings of the 1960s by virtue of its brick facing and dark coloration.



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Although Stone's Hotel El Panamá derived its architectural identity from its sleek, superimposed horizontal balcony corridors, he came to favor an emphasis on the vertical in his designs for both mid-rise and high-rise buildings after the late 1950s. Stone's General Motors Building in New York and Standard Oil Building in Chicago make his fascination with verticality quite evident. It is also visible in the four dormitory towers at the uptown campus of the State University of New York in Albany, which Stone designed at the same time as the Westgate. The Albany dormitory towers do not have balconies, but they exhibit a characteristic division of the exterior elevations with major vertical piers supplemented by recessed secondary vertical mullions. At the Westgate, Stone enhanced the sensation of verticality by doubling the number of brick piers: odd-numbered piers encase structural concrete columns, while even-numbered piers are non-structural and contain vertical chases for services and plumbing.

The Westgate Tower derives architectural significance from its refinements. The proportional relationship between the cruciform podium and the point-block tower, and the visual coding of the non-residential portions of the building (the garage and the swimming pool deck) with masonry solar screens demonstrate how Stone sought to produce variations in the details that would distinguish different functions occurring within the building—a modernist precept. The chamfered profiles of the vertical brick piers, the chamfered profiles of the projecting balcony plates, and the subtle but consistent differentiation between the dark brick verticals, the exposed concrete horizontal floor plates, and the recessed sliding glass doors are refinements that give the Westgate its visual distinction.

Masonry solar screens—constructed of the special brown Elgin Butler brick with which the building is faced—cover the parking garage podium and the top-level solarium and swimming pool deck. The solar screens visually conceal the garage and solarium from surrounding streets without eliminating airflow and light penetration into, and views out of, those portions of the building. Like the recessed sliding glass doors, the solar screens impart proportional variation and staged depth to the building's curtain walls, animating the exterior surface of the building while performing functional tasks in compliance with modernist practice.

Stone tended to favor light-toned, reflective materials, especially polished marble, for the exterior surfaces of his buildings. The Westgate belongs to a subset of Stone buildings with darker coloration. Stone's buildings at the SUNY campus in Albany and those at the University of Southern California's University Park campus in Los Angeles, especially Waite Phillips Hall (1968), another vertically articulated tower, are faced with dark masonry. The Amarillo Museum of Art on the campus of Amarillo College in Texas is also faced with buff brown brick. Within Stone's body of work, however, the Westgate stands out because it was faced with dark brown brick in order to recede visually when seen alongside the pink granite contours of the Capitol of Texas.

In Dallas, Houston, and Fort Worth during the 1950s and '60s, such nationally known modernist architects as Herbert Bayer, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and Louis I. Kahn were commissioned to design major commercial and cultural buildings. Although occasional examples of buildings by well-known, out-of-state architects had been completed in Austin before the 1960s—the Rather House (1910) by Brigham, Coveney & Bisbee of Boston; Battle Hall (1912) and Sutton Hall (1918) at the University of Texas by Cass Gilbert of New York; and the University Baptist Church (1918) by Albert Kelsey of Philadelphia—the major exception to the use of local or regional architects was the master plan for the University of Texas campus and multiple buildings carried out between 1930 and 1950 by the Philadelphia architect Paul Cret



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## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

and his successors. The Westgate Tower initiated the practice of retaining celebrated modern architects to design major buildings in Austin. The Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (1970) was the next significant building complex in Austin to be designed by a nationally known architect.

Only with the growth of the local business economy during the 1990s did this practice, well established in other large Texas cities, become common in Austin. The Hilltop House (1996) and 6D Ranch House (2007) by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates, New York; Austin City Hall (2004) by Antoine Predock, Albuquerque; the Lange-Wesner House (2005) by Peter L. Gluck, New York; the Green House (2006) by Gluckman Mayner, New York; the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas (2006-08) by Kallmann, McKinnell & Wood, Boston; the Mexican Cultural Center (2007) by Teodoro González de León, México D.F.; and dormitories at St. Edward's University by Alejandro Aravena of Santiago, Chile (2009) all reflect both the economic good fortune and cultural assurance of Austin clients, stemming from the example set by the Lumbermen's Investment Corporation in its hiring of Stone in 1962.

### **Summary**

Conceived as a mixed-use building in which commercial and social functions would complement its primary use as an exclusive residence adjacent to the Capitol, the Westgate was in the vanguard of new construction projects in Texas cities during the late 1950s and into the mid-1960s; it introduced the real estate pattern of high-rise downtown living to the state capital. The Westgate also is significant as the instigator of what would become a perennial controversy in Austin from the 1960s forward: an often bitter debate on limits to urban growth and development, especially as the increasingly dense construction of new skyscrapers obstructs views of Austin's most iconic public landmarks—the dome of the Capitol and the Tower of the University of Texas. A pioneer of mixed-use downtown development, the Westgate Tower is therefore nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A for its association with important trends in the history of Community Planning and Development in the capital.

The Westgate Tower is additionally significant because it is the only residential tower constructed in Austin during the 1960s to have been designed by an architect of national prominence, and it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and a period and represents the work of a master. As an example of the high-rise residential building type especially characteristic of modernism during the 1950s and '60s—the point-block tower set on a podium—the Westgate's identity as a residence was made evident by its towering façades of sliding glass doors and balconies. The only high-rise building in Texas designed by the distinguished mid-twentieth-century architect Edward Durell Stone, the Westgate Tower embodies such distinctive characteristics of his work as emphatic verticality and liberal use of masonry solar screens, yet it stands out in the context of Stone's work due to its dark coloration and relative austerity. The Westgate Tower is therefore nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The nominated resource meets Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved their significance within the past fifty years.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Westgate Tower, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Page 4

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA****ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** less than one acre

<b>UTM REFERENCES</b>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
	14	620917	3349825

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** The site is bounded on the west by Lavaca Street, on the north by Twelfth Street, on the east by Colorado Street, and on the south by a property line shared with the State of Texas, whose property extends to Eleventh Street. The legal description reads: "All of that certain tract or parcel of land being the north 1/2 of Block 135 of the Original City of Austin, according to a map on file in the General Land Office, State of Texas, being all of Lots 1, 2, and 3 of Block 135, and the north 1/2 of a vacated alley as conveyed to Lumbermen's Investment Corporation by deeds recorded in volume 2638, page 506, and volume 2638, page 508 of the deed records of Travis County, Texas."

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

**11. FORM PREPARED BY** (with assistance from Rachel Leibowitz, Texas Historical Commission staff)

<b>NAME / TITLE:</b>	Phoebe Allen, consulting historian; Stephen Fox, consulting architectural historian		
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	N/A	<b>DATE:</b>	August 12, 2010 (October 9, 2009)
<b>STREET &amp; NUMBER:</b>	2510 Cedarview Drive	<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	(512) 444-1326
<b>CITY OR TOWN:</b>	Austin	<b>STATE:</b> Texas	<b>ZIP CODE:</b> 78704

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION****CONTINUATION SHEETS**

<b>MAPS</b>	(see continuation sheet Map-31 through Map-33)
<b>PHOTOGRAPHS</b>	(see continuation sheet Photo-54 through Photo-55)
<b>ADDITIONAL ITEMS</b>	(see continuation sheets Figure-34 through Figure-53)

**PROPERTY OWNER**

<b>NAME:</b>	Multiple owners on file with the Texas Historical Commission, represented by the Westgate Condominium Association (Ann Johnston Dolce, President, Board of Directors; Dorothy Evans, Manager)		
<b>STREET &amp; NUMBER:</b>	1122 Colorado Street	<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	(512) 477-9751
<b>CITY OR TOWN:</b>	Austin	<b>STATE:</b> Texas	<b>ZIP CODE:</b> 78701



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Map 1.** Current aerial photo map of Austin, Texas, showing the relationship of the Westgate Tower, circled, to the southwest of the Texas State Capitol grounds.

Taken from Bing Maps website, accessed on July 14, 2010.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Map 2.** Current aerial photo map of Austin, Texas, showing the relationship of the Westgate Tower—between Eleventh and Twelfth streets, and Colorado and Lavaca streets—to the southwest of the Texas State Capitol grounds.

Taken from Bing Maps website, accessed on July 14, 2010.



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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Map 3.** Current bird's eye view of Austin, Texas, showing the relationship of the Westgate Tower—between Eleventh and Twelfth streets, and Colorado and Lavaca streets—to the southwest of the Texas State Capitol grounds, and to the north of the Governor's Mansion.

Taken from Bing Maps website, accessed on July 14, 2010.

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 1.** Edward Durell Stone on the cover of TIME magazine, March 31, 1958.



**Figure 2.** Associate architects Charles Granger and Arthur Fehr.



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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 3.** National Geographic Building (1960-64), Washington, DC, by Edward Durell Stone.

Stone's first drawing of the Westgate Tower featured many similar design elements (see Figure 6).

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 4.** Edward Durell Stone's first drawing of the Westgate Tower (1963).  
View from Twelfth and Colorado streets.

This first design idea features many similarities to the National Geographic Building in Washington, DC, including a terraced garden above the commercial levels.

Important differences between this schematic design for the Westgate and the completed building include underground parking; the lack of a setback to comply with height restrictions for the Capitol area; the presence of the overhanging solar screen at the roofline, creating a column capital effect; and the light coloration of the building.



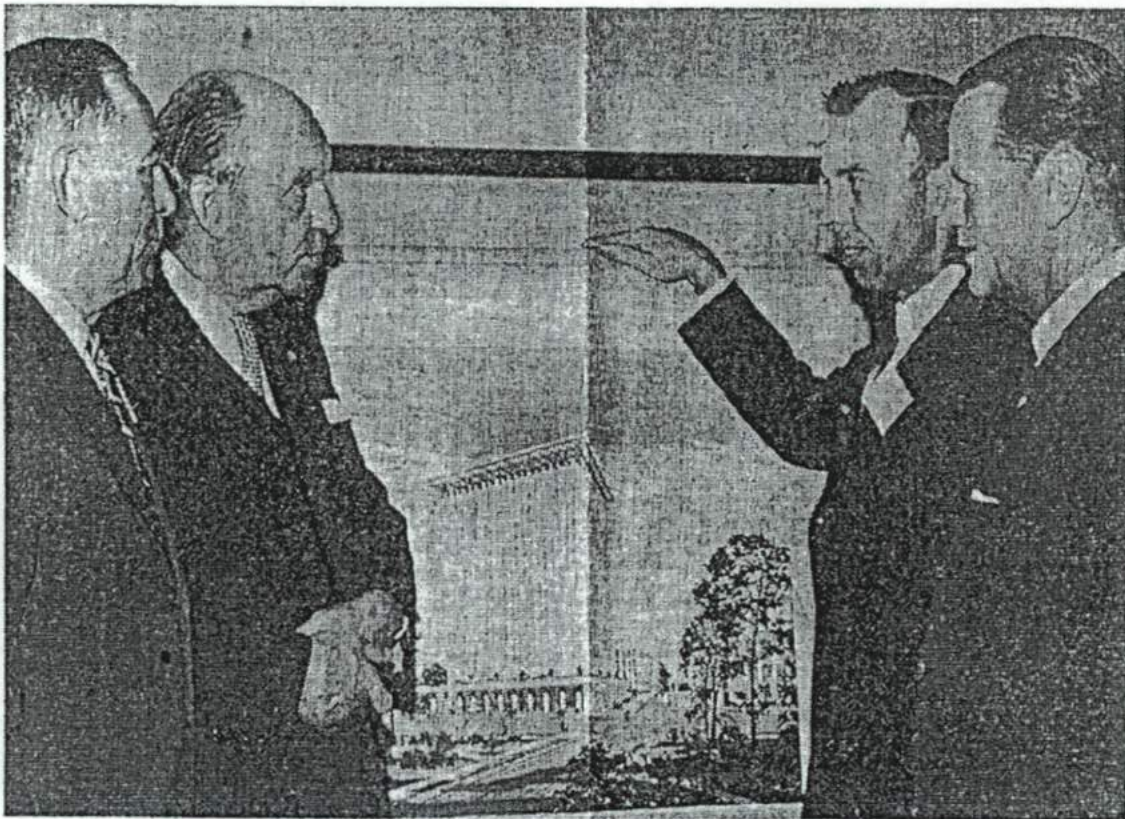
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Austin, Texas — Page A5



American-Slate.com/UPI

**TO RISE**—World-famous architect Edward Stone unveils his design for a \$4,-000,000 building to be added to Austin's downtown skyline. Construction of the multi-storied luxury apartment-office building on 12th Street between Colorado and Lavaca has been formally an-

nounced by Lumbermen's Company, a subsidiary of Austin-based Lumbermen's Investment Company. Viewing a color drawing of the proposed structure from left to right are W. S. Drake, Jr., Stone, Lumbermen's president Sid Jagger and Mayor Lester Palmer.

**Figure 5.** Stone unveiling his first design for the Westgate Tower in Austin, 1963.

The drawing on display is that shown in Figure 6.

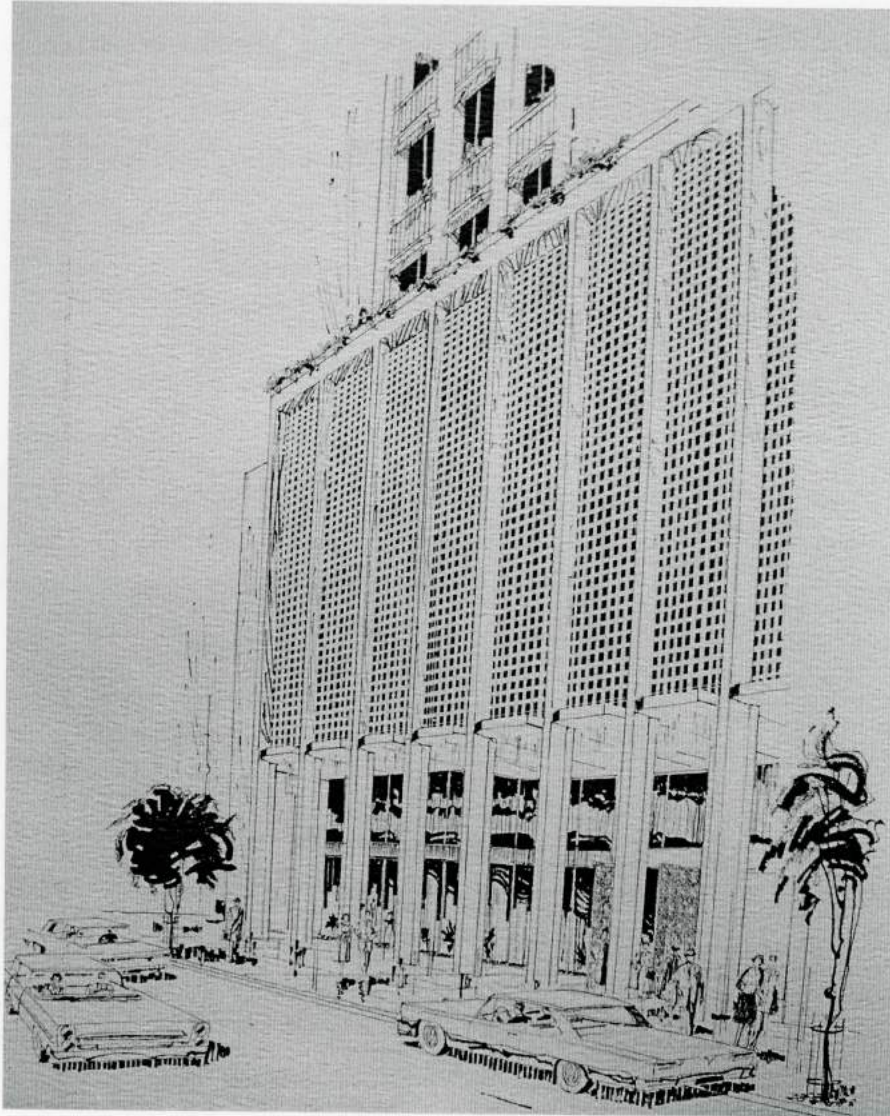
*Austin American*, 1963.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 6.** Early marketing brochure for the Westgate Tower.



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Section FIGURE Page 39

Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

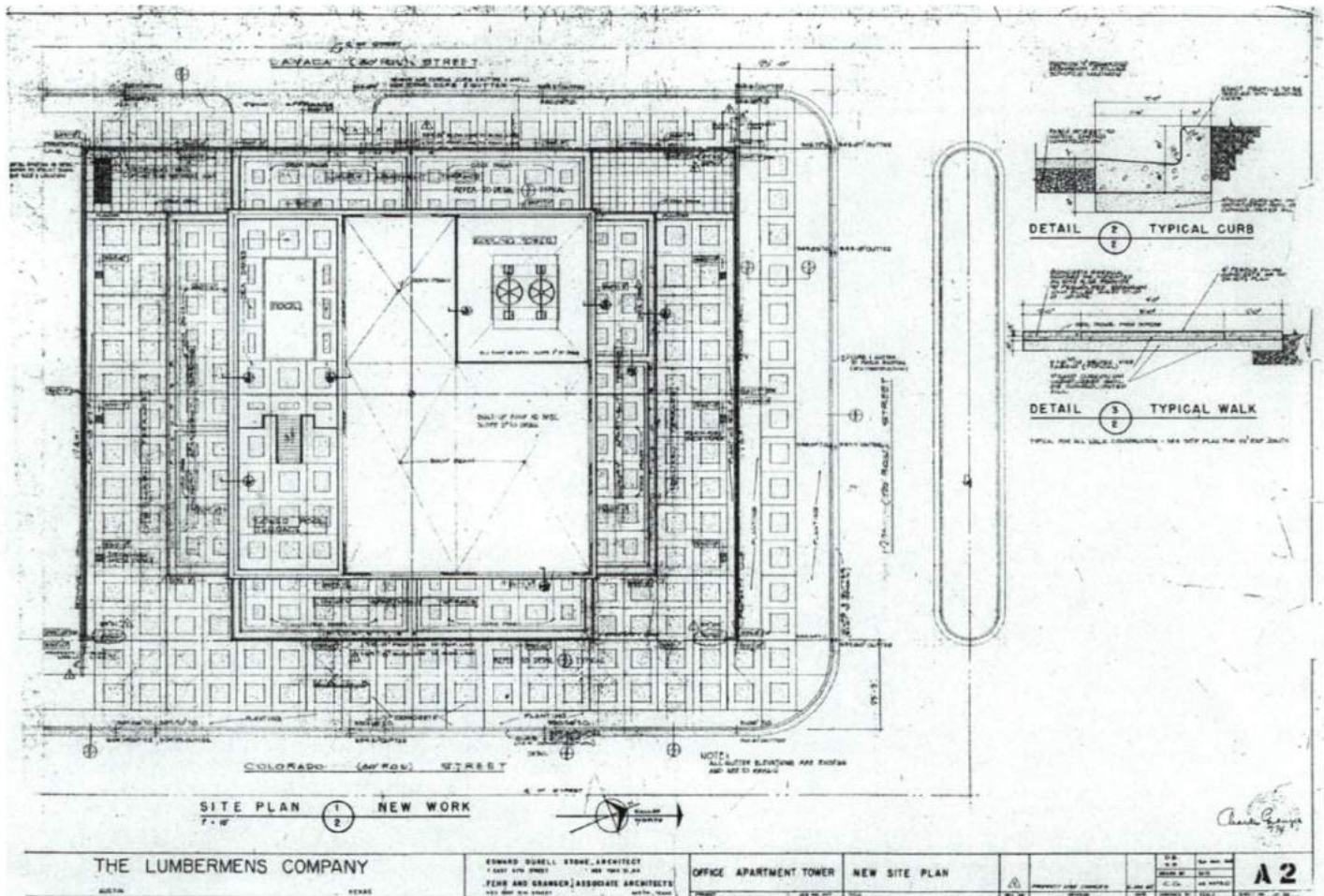


Figure 7. Site plan for the Westgate Tower, showing the patterned concrete at grade and at the Level 10 terraces.

**Figure 8.** Plan for Level 2, commercial leased spaces.



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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

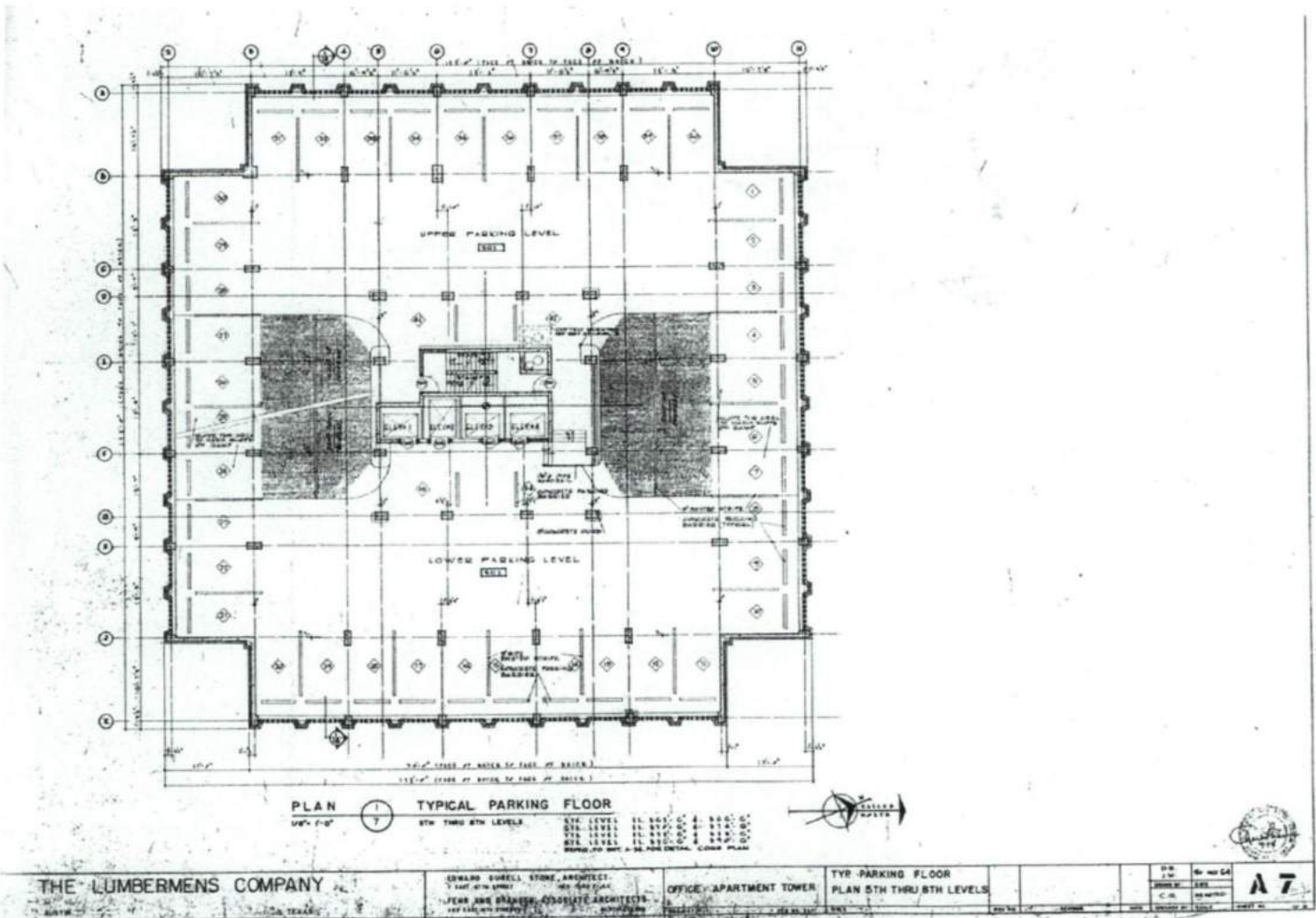


Figure 9. Plan for first and typical parking levels.

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Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

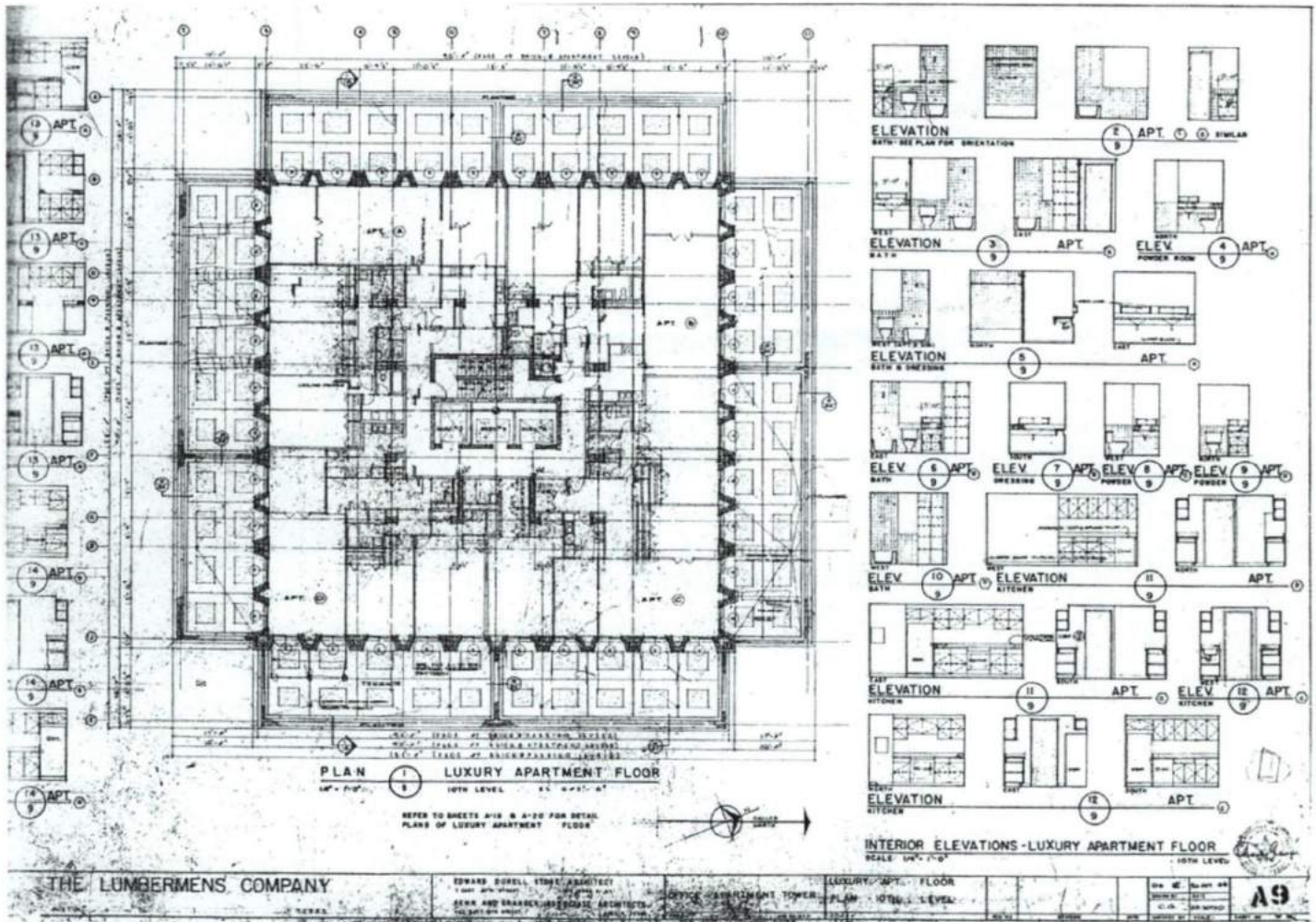
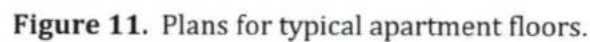


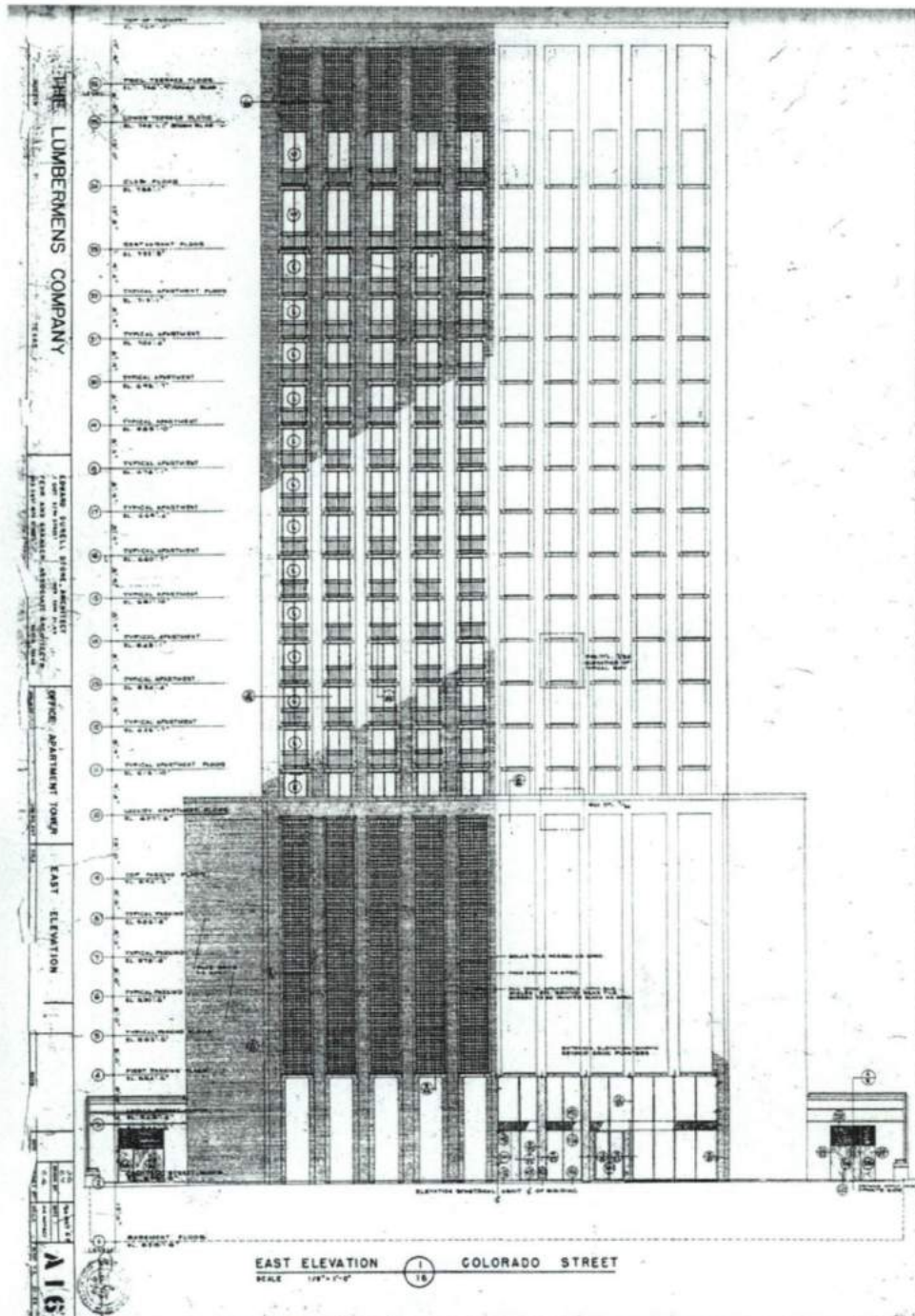
Figure 10. Plan for Level 10, luxury apartment floor with terraces.



Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 12.** East elevation.



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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

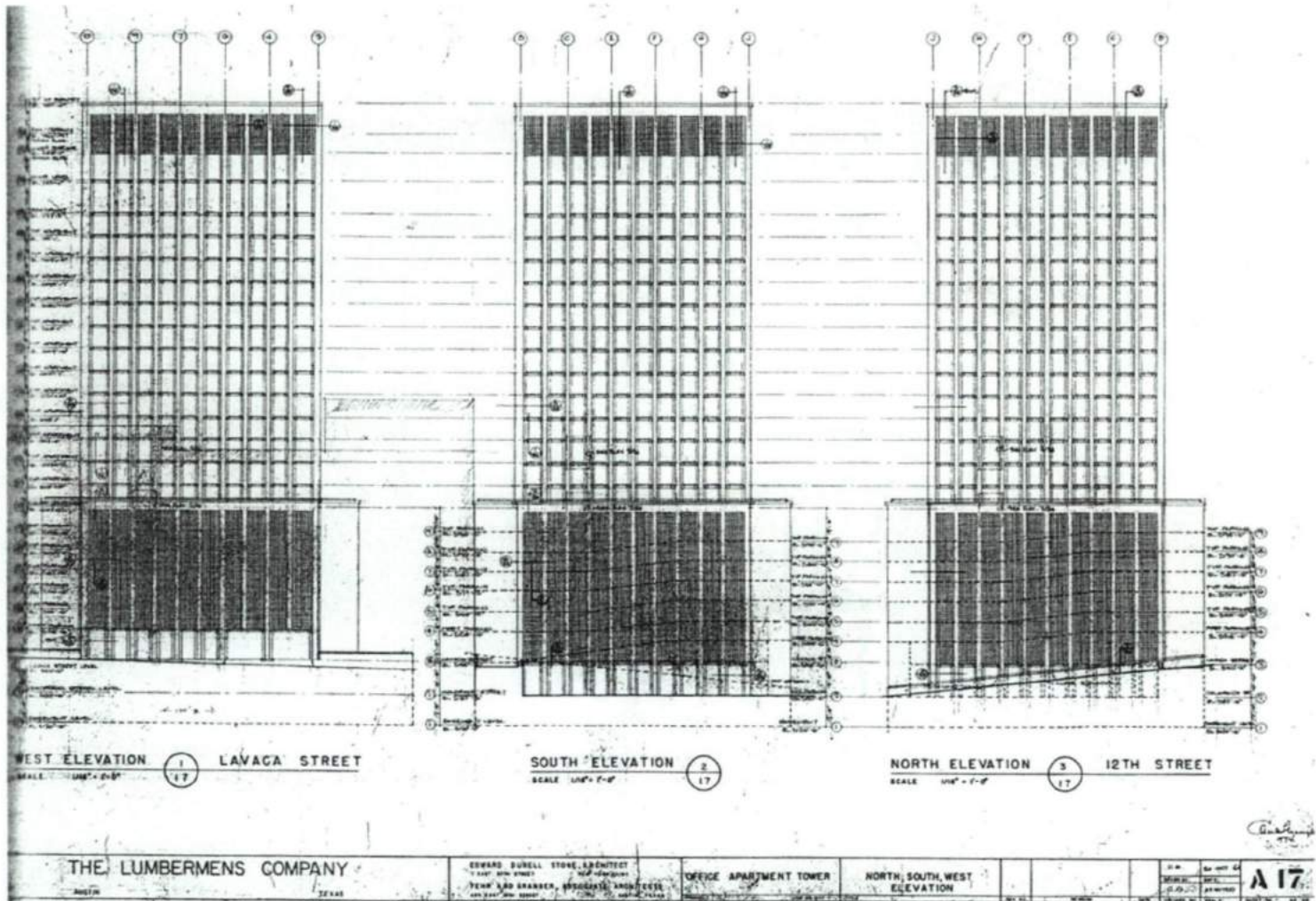


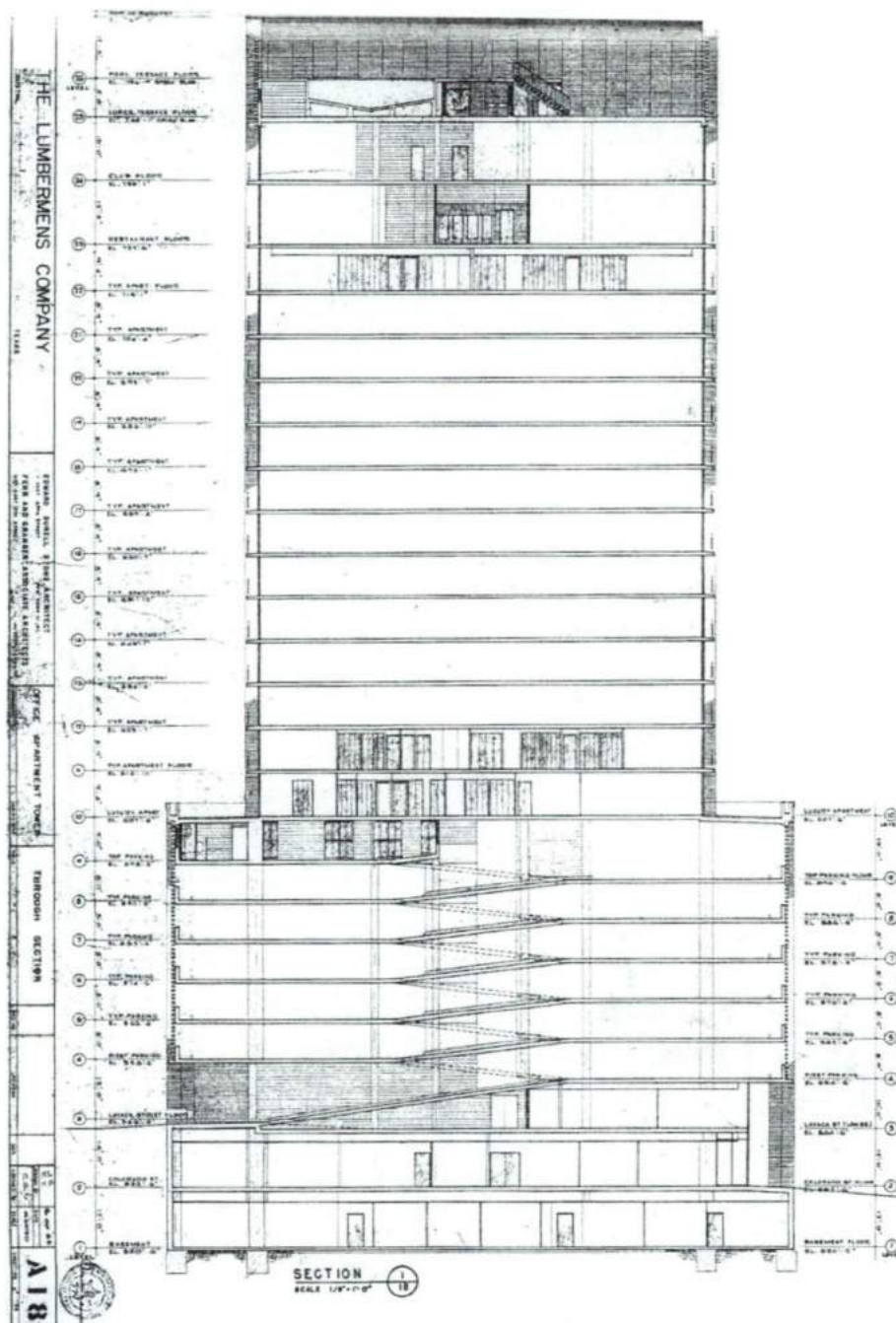
Figure 13. Elevation drawings.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 14.** Section drawing (typical)



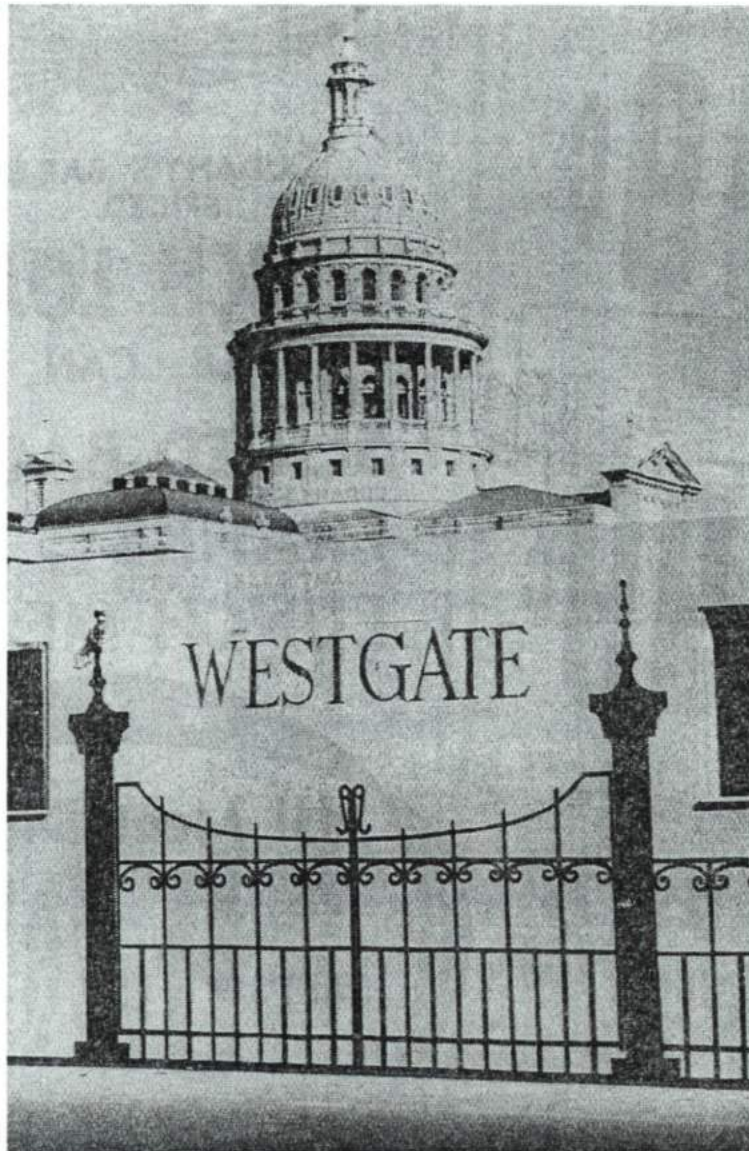
**Figure 15.** Detail plans for typical apartment floors, levels 11-22.

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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



**Figure 16.**

"The iron fence which surrounds the Capitol grounds is still visible from Lavaca Street even though excavation for a 24-story building has begun next to the Capitol site. The fence has been painted in silhouette on traffic barriers surrounding the work at 12th Street between Colorado and Lavaca Streets [sic]. 'Westgate' is the name of the apartment-office building to be completed around the end of 1965."

*Austin American-Statesman*, November 1, 1964.

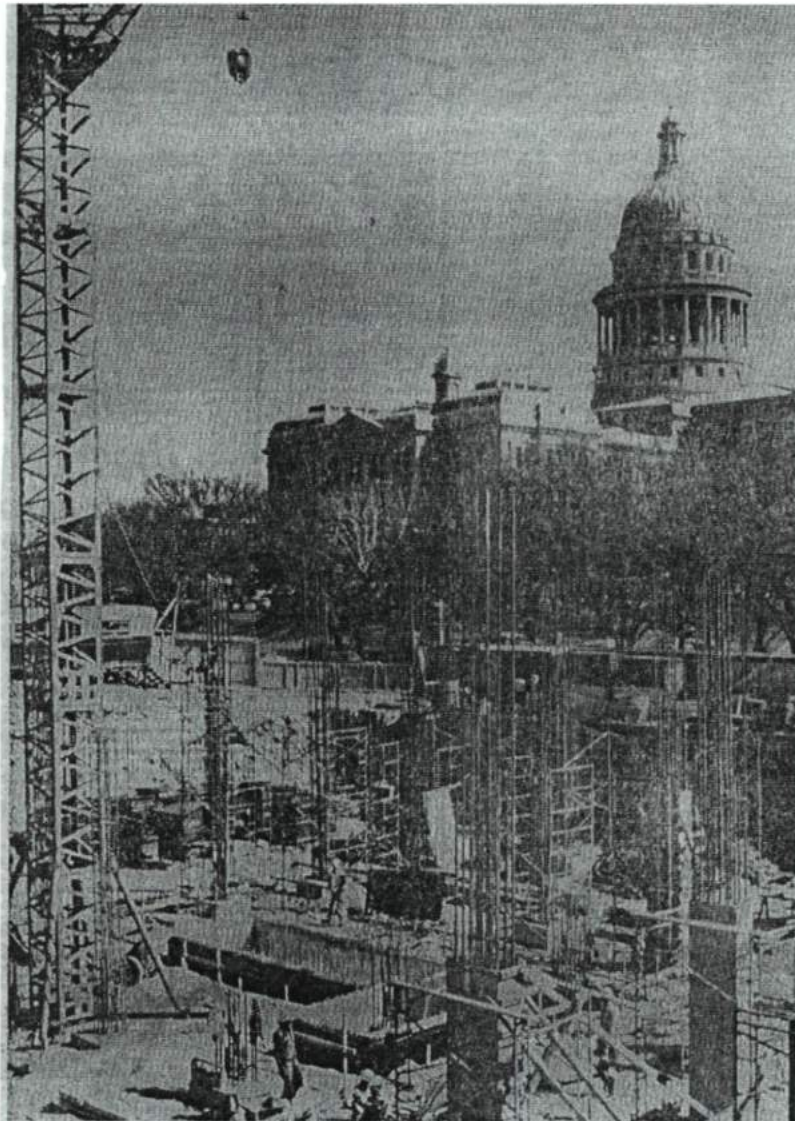


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Westgate Tower  
Austin, Travis County, Texas



American-Statesman/UPI

## CONSTRUCTION HALT SOUGHT

Associated Press

Construction of a 24-story apartment-office building should be stopped and the state should buy the land and the foundation before the view of the Capitol is eclipsed, Rep. Henry Grover of Houston proposed Wednesday.

The building is located on land

bordering the Capitol grounds and near the governor's mansion.

In a resolution (HCR36), Grover directed the state building commission to buy the land. If the trend toward high-rise buildings near the Capitol and The University of Texas continues, he said "the Capitol will

be obliterated from view, unnecessarily destroying much of the beauty and charm of the city of Austin and of the Capitol grounds."

He said the last Legislature should have stopped the project but action should be taken now with property owners paid damages.

Figure 17. Austin American, February 11, 1965.

## ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2012-0089

**HLC DATE:**

September 24, 2012

**PC DATE:**

**APPLICANT:** Westgate Condominium Association

**HISTORIC NAME:** The Westgate Tower

**WATERSHED:** Lady Bird Lake

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 1122 Colorado Street

**ZONING FROM:** CBD to CBD-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from Central Business District (CBD) zoning to Central Business District – Historic Landmark (CBD-H) combining district zoning.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

The Westgate Tower is an excellent example of the New Formalism approach to modern architecture, is the only building in Austin designed by internationally-known architect Edward Durell Stone, and has served as a model for continued mixed-use growth in the city, combining residential, commercial, and social uses in the same building.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:**

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The building is not listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) because of its age.

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

The Westgate Tower was designed by internationally-known New York architect Edward Durell Stone in 1962; the building was completed under the supervision of prominent local architects Fehr and Granger in 1966. It is an excellent example of the New Formalism in the modern movement of architecture in the 1960s, as espoused by Stone, who was known throughout the world for his high-rise buildings that combined verticality with the monumental scale, refinement, and ornamentation of Classical building styles. The Westgate, named for its location just west of the State Capitol grounds, also served Stone's philosophy of building up-scale residential buildings in park-like settings in or near downtown areas, luring wealthy residents away from single-family houses in the suburbs. Stone was concerned that most high-rise architecture of the era was sole solution to



overdevelopment where going up was the only way to develop a site that was otherwise overbuilt already. The location of the Westgate Tower provided Stone the opportunity to express the ideals of downtown living with a green setting. The Westgate was also innovative in several other ways, providing a model for future central city development – combining residential and commercial uses, and a necessary amenity in the modern era – an integral parking garage that formed a significant part of the entire composition rather than as an auxiliary, utilitarian structure.

The Westgate is a 26-story point-block tower, rising squarely out of a cruciform platform. It is constructed of poured-in-place concrete with a brick veneer and rises 26 stories. The verticality of the building is emphasized by brick columns which rise symmetrically above the more horizontal and cruciform-shaped parking garage, with each spandrel containing a metal-framed full-height glass window and a balconette, allowing the residents access to fresh air from their individual units. Brick solar screens, one of Stone's trademark architectural details, cover the spandrel openings of the parking garage as well as the top two floors of the building.

The Westgate embodies the modern goals of accommodating mixed uses and modern facilities in a single building. The Westgate was designed to contain commercial space on the ground floors, a 5-story parking garage, residential units ranging from efficiencies to two-bedroom apartments, and a social club and restaurant on top of the building. It is contemporary to the Cambridge Tower at 1801 Lavaca Street and the Penthouse Apartments at 13<sup>th</sup> and Guadalupe Streets, all representing the 1960s trend toward high-rise residential living in the central part of the city. However, only the Westgate possesses the refinement of the New Formalism ideals of monumental architecture and Edward Durell Stone's ideal of a residential tower in a park-like setting downtown.

#### **Historical Associations:**

Construction of the Westgate Tower was the work of Julian Zimmerman, who headed the Lumbermans' Investment Association of Austin. Growing out of an association of Texas lumber dealers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Lumbermans' Investment Association planned and built several high-rise residential buildings in Austin, Houston, and Kansas City in the late 1950s and mid-1960s. Julian Zimmerman, who headed the organization during that time, apparently knew the work of New York architect Edward Durell Stone from his work in Washington, including the National Geographic Society Building and the building that would later become the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In 1962, Zimmerman contracted with Stone to design the Westgate Tower, envisioned to be a mixed-use residential tower, located just west of the Texas State Capitol grounds.

Edward Durell Stone, the architect for the building, was a native of Arkansas who received his architectural training at Harvard and at MIT. Stone went on to practice in New York City, and taught at the School of Architecture at Yale. He became well-known for his sleek buildings of the 1930s, and after World War II, he became more dissatisfied with what he viewed as the sterility of modern architecture and well as more fascinated by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. His work in the 1950s and 1960s reflected greater verticality, such as in the International Trade Mart in New Orleans, and the General Motors Building in New York City. His trademark was a solar screen, which provided architectural interest as well as privacy and shade. Stone used the solar screen on the Josephine Graf House in Dallas in the 1950s, and continued to employ it, as seen on the Westgate Tower.

Stone hired the prominent local architectural firm of Fehr and Granger to oversee the construction of the building. Fehr and Granger were locally known for their mid-century modern residential designs, and although Stone designed the exterior, Fehr and Granger were responsible for the details.

The Westgate was prominent in Austin history as the first high-rise building that was significantly taller than anything else in Austin, except the Capitol Dome. High-rise buildings in Austin of the 1940s and 1950s were no taller than the buildings of the 1910s and 1920s, including the Scarbrough and Littlefield Buildings and the Norwood Tower. The Westgate, at 26 stories, would be significantly taller than either of its contemporaries, the Cambridge Tower and the Penthouse Apartments, both residential buildings completed in the 1960s. The height of the Westgate caused some controversy in Austin, stemming from concerns that high-rise buildings would overshadow the State Capitol, and resulted in the creation of the Capitol View Corridors by the State of Texas.

The Westgate was also the second home of the Headliners Club, the most prestigious and prominent social club in the city. Founded in 1954 by Charles Green, publisher of the American-Statesman, Everett Looney, a prominent local attorney and judge, and Paul Bolton, a local television and radio commentator and news editor, the Headliners Club began at the Driskill Hotel, and included the most prominent politicians and intellectuals in the state, including several former Texas governors, and President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Club moved into the Westgate in 1966 and remained there until moving to a more central location downtown. In addition to housing the Headliners Club for many years, the Westgate Tower has also, because of its location and prestige, been the home of many of the city's and state's most prominent leaders in state government, who either live here full-time, or as the State Legislature is in session.

**PARCEL NO.:** 02080119060000

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Amended Plat, Westgate Condominium

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** Will be determined per owner depending on the proportion of the total area and ownership of common areas ascribed to each condominium apartment.

**APPRAISED VALUE:** Each condominium in the building is individually appraised and valued by the Travis Central Appraisal District.

**PRESENT USE:** Mixed use.

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNERS:** Westgate Condominium Association

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1962-66

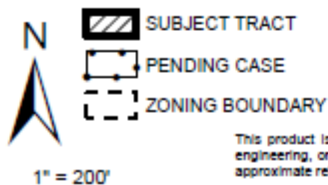
**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** Over the years, failing materials have been replaced in-kind. In 1984, the original wood entry doors were replaced with new metal and glass doors, and in 1998, fine black netting was installed over the brick solar screens to discourage bird infiltration and nesting.

However, at several junctures in the history of the building, there have been attempts to modify the building and change its architectural character and details. These attempts have not seen fruition due to active reactions by many residents, but the future of the building rests with the protections offered by historical designations.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Lumbermans' Investment Corporation of Austin (1962)



## LOCATION MAP



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

