National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property				
historic name 1524 Grand Avenue Building				·····
other names/site number N/A				
2. Location				
street & number <u>1524 Grand Boulevard</u>			[N/A	not for publication
city or town Kansas City			[1	N/A] vicinity
state Missouri code MO county				
3. State/Federal Agency Certification				
As the designated authority under the National Historic [x] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility (National Register of Historic Places and meets the process of property [x] meets [] does not meet the considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [x] local (See continuation sheet for additional comments [].) Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A Milester (National Comments I).	Preservation Act, as a meets the documenta edural and profession National Register critically.	mended, I he tion standard al requireme eria. I recom	ereby certify that is for registering this set forth in second that this	at this properties in the 66 CFR Part 60. In property be
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Mil	es/Deputy SHPO	<i></i> . Date	2/26/04	<u> </u>
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	os Dopaty of III o	Dato		
State or Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet to see continuation sheet for additional comments [].)	he National Register (criteria.		
Signature of certifying official/Title		. <u> </u>		
State or Federal agency and bureau				
4. National Park Service Certification		. <u>.</u> .		
hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of th	e Keeper		Date
] entered in the National Register See continuation sheet [].				
See continuation sheet [].] determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet [].] determined not eligible for the National Register.] removed from the				
determined not eligible for the National Register.	-	<u>-</u> .		
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] other, explain See continuation sheet [].	 			

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

Ownership of Property	hip of Property Category of Property		Number of Resources within Property Contributing Noncontributing			
[X] private [] public-local	[X] building(s) [] district	1	buildings			
[] public-State [] public-Federal	[] site [] structure [] object		sites			
	[] object		structures			
			objects			
		1	Total			
Name of related multiple p	roperty	Number of contr previously listed Register.	ibuting resources I in the National			
N/A		N/A				
6. Function or Use						
Historic Function COMMERCE/Specialty Store		Current Functions COMMERCE/profession	nal			
7. Description						
Architectural Classification	•	Materials				
Late 19 th and Early 20 th Century Movements/Commercial Style		foundation <u>STONE/lim</u> walls BRICK	estone			
		TERRA COTTA				
		roofASPHALT				
	(other				

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

8. Statement of Significance	
Applicable National Register Criteria	Areas of Significance
[] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history	Architecture
[] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	
[X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.	Periods of Significance 1928
[] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates
Criteria Considerations	Claude and Daman(a)
Property is:	Significant Person(s)
[] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	N/A
[] B removed from its original location.	Cultural Affiliation
[] C a birthplace or grave.	<u>N/A</u>
[]D a cemetery.	Architect/Builder
[] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Droke Herry Alexander architect
[] F a commemorative property.	Drake, Harry Alexander, architect
[] ${f G}$ less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Minor, John A., builder
Narrative Statement of Significance	
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation)	n sheets.)
9. Major Bibliographic References	
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this for	m on one or more continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:
[] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested	[] State Historic Preservation Office
[] previously listed in the National Register	[] Other State Agency
[] previously determined eligible by the National Register	[] Federal Agency
[] designated a National Historic Landmark	[X] Local Government
[] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	[] University
#	[X] Other:
[] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record	Name of repository: Kansas City Public Library
#	

USDI/NPS NI	RHP Registration F	Form				
1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO 10. Geographical Data				Page		
•		less than 1 acre				
UTM Refe	rences					
A. Zone 15	Easting 363240	Northing 4328530	B. Zone	Easting	Northing	
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing	
			[]See c	ontinuation s	heet	
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	Justification he boundaries we	l re selected on a continuation	sheet.)			
11. Form F	repared By		<u> </u>			····
name/title_	Elizabeth Ro	sin, Partner and Kriste	en Ottesen, Archite	ctural Historia	an	
organizatio	n <u>Historic Pr</u>	eservation Services, L	LC	dateNo	vember 18, 200	3
street & number 323 West 8th Street, Suite 112 t		telephone	telephone 816-221-5133			
city or town	or townKansas Citystate_MO		zip code64105			
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Continuati	on Sheets					
Maps						
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		districts and properties having	large acreage or numero	ous resources.		
Photograp	hs					
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Additional (Check w	Items ith the SHPO or F	PO for any additional items)				
Property O (Complete this	Wner item at the reques	st of SHPO or FPO.)				

street & number 1526 Grand Boulevard telephone 816-472-1448

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

name Grand Historic Developers, L.P.

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION STATEMENT

The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard, located in Kansas City, Jackson County, is a two-story, reinforced concrete, two-part commercial block with a terra cotta façade that measures approximately 117 feet in depth and 25 feet in width. The building is part of a commercial corridor a few blocks south of the Central Business District. It exhibits the general form and configuration of two-part block construction found throughout American commercial districts in the early twentieth century. The use of modern materials, including a concrete structure and structural steel windows, is typical of commercial buildings of the era. The rectangular building rests on a limestone foundation. Reinforced concrete columns and beams support the brick walls and allow clear spans from front to back and side to side on the interior. The floors and roof deck are also of concrete. A steel beam supports the second story above the storefront. The building retains integrity of location and setting, a high degree of its character-defining stylistic ornaments, and exterior materials dating from the period of historic significance.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

SETTING

The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard is a commercial structure on a street of several similar structures that vary in number of stories and use of material. Flanking the building is a two-story brick commercial structure on the south and a four-story brick commercial structure on the north. The building directly abuts a concrete sidewalk in the front and an asphalt alley in the back.

GRAND BOULEVARD AND WEST FACADES

The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard is situated between two adjacent commercial buildings, with which it shares brick party walls on the north and south. As a result, the building features two visible façades: the front (east) façade, which faces Grand Boulevard; and the rear (west) façade, which faces an alley. The elegant front façade has bright terra cotta walls, steel windows, and retains its original storefront. The rear façade is unadorned. Punctuating the brick walls on the first and second floors of this elevation are large steel windows with pivoted sashes. Doors are in the center of the wall at the first-story and basement levels.

The cream-colored terra cotta veneer on the front (east) elevation is punctuated by a traditional storefront on the first floor and by a band of four steel windows on the second floor. Flat, unadorned terra cotta panels decorate the lower areas of the façade. The terra cotta at the top of the building features elements of neo-classical styling, including an engaged balustrade at the parapet, foliated cornice, modified guilloche with square rosettes, and a foliated calves' tongue cyma. The cyma frames the storefront and second-story windows, separating the ornamental terra cotta from the unadorned units.

With the exception of one door, the storefront retains the majority of its original features and is in excellent condition. It includes a center display area enclosed by plate glass and flanked by recessed entrances with single full-length glazed doors (north and south). In the south entry, an aluminum-framed door replaces the original wood door, which is the only original storefront feature that is no longer in place. The north entry retains its original door. Terra cotta clads the walls of the recessed entrances and

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

the base of the storefront. The single-glazed plate glass windows surrounding the display area are set in bronze frames and are flush with the façade in the center and recessed on the sides. A single-glazed, steel-framed transom spans the width of the building above the storefront. The two center sections feature operable hopper sashes to provide ventilation. The base of the storefront display area has four window openings on the front and two on each recessed side to illuminate the basement. Boards currently cover these original window openings, all of which are still in place. White, gray, and black square mosaic tiles cover the floors of the recessed entrances. Wood cornices and a paneled wood ceiling in the entrances provide a finished appearance. Decorative trim applied around the door frames matches the design of the escutcheons on the interior doors. The north door on the front façade leads to the stairhall that provides access to the second floor; the south door leads directly into the first-floor retail space.

Above the storefront on the second floor, the four symmetrical steel windows illuminate the interior. Each single-glazed, eight-light window (in a two-by-four-pane configuration) is rectangular and has four sashes. The lower sash is an operable hopper, the middle two sashes are operable awnings, and the upper sash is fixed.

The large, steel-framed, single-glazed windows on the alley elevation essentially create a window wall on the first and second floors. The first-floor fenestration features multi-light steel windows flanking a central double-leaf door. The two side windows match the center window on the second floor. A wood panel covers the top two rows of lights on the north window. A small fixed transom window above the door has eight lights (in a two-by-four-pane configuration). Brick fills the basement windows. Steel mullions separate the three windows on the second floor. The two square windows in the end bays each have thirty lights (in a five-by-six-pane configuration) with operable center pivot sashes in the center. The middle window on the second floor has twenty-five lights (in a five-by-five-pane configuration) with an operable center pivot sash in the center.

INTERIOR

All three levels (basement, first, and second floors) retain their original interior floor plan and design and are open with the exception of non-historic office partitions on the first floor (a mid-century addition). On the south wall near the west end, on both the first and second floors, two single-use bathrooms flank a freight elevator. The bathrooms and elevator are all original to the building. The bathrooms retain their original sinks, toilets, toilet partitions, and medicine cabinets. In the northeast corner, concrete stairs lead from the basement to the first floor. The concrete stairs that lead from the first floor to the second floor are enclosed. The exterior walls and the walls enclosing the bathrooms, elevator, and the stairhall are plaster. A variety of non-original tile products cover the concrete floors throughout the first and second floors. The concrete ceilings in the basement and first floor are exposed; perforated acoustical tiles cover the second-floor ceiling.

INTEGRITY

The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard retains its original location and the setting continues to reflect commercial usage. The building retains its original form, plan, proportion, scale, and massing and continues to convey its historic function. In particular, all of the historic character-defining elements of the building remain intact, including both the exterior decorative elements and the interior arrangement of

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

spaces. All of the original materials on the exterior, including the terra cotta veneer and steel windows, are in good condition overall and the storefront configuration is original. The only original feature that is no longer in place is a wood door that occupied the south end of the storefront.

The interior retains its original configuration, with wide-open spaces provided by the reinforced concrete structure. The storefront and transom across the first floor, the band of large windows on the second floor, and the large steel windows on the rear allow abundant light into the interior spaces to facilitate the tasks of the building's occupants.

Overall, the building retains a high degree of integrity and clearly conveys its original design and commercial function.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

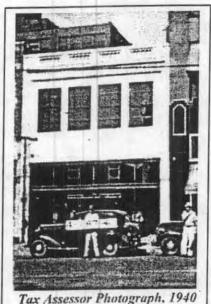
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard is significant under National Register Criterion C for the area of ARCHITECTURE. Constructed in 1928 along a commercial corridor a few blocks south of the Central Business District, it is a pristine surviving example of a terra cotta-clad two-part commercial block in Kansas City. While the two-part commercial block is a ubiquitous building type found throughout the country in various configurations and materials, the elegant terra cotta veneer of 1524 Grand Boulevard is unique because it remains essentially unaltered in spite of the long succession of tenants and owners throughout its history. The storefront design and interior configuration clearly demonstrate the building's use for commercial endeavors. Representative of his work on other buildings, H. A. Drake's design of this building skillfully combines a functional property type with a graceful "high style" façade. As such, it is a significant example of a particular type and method of construction popular in commercial



architecture in the first decades of the twentieth century. In addition, due to the artistry in use of materials and design, the building displays high artistic values. The building's period of significance dates from its completion in 1928.

ELABORATION

By the late nineteenth century, American commercial architecture developed a prototypical form and appearance. The construction of attached masonry buildings, usually between one and four stories in height, created uniform street walls along commercial corridors across the country. Architectural embellishment was most pronounced at the cornice, which conveyed sometimes elaborate but usually simple elements of the building's style. As businesses became increasingly specialized, commercial architecture evolved correspondingly. Mass production of building materials and ornament, as well as the advancement of construction technology, coincided with the construction of increasingly elaborate building façades.1

The patterns of commercial development in place by the end of the nineteenth century continued into the first quarter of the twentieth century. The defining feature was the street — typically a primary artery. Buildings flanked the street and abutted the sidewalk and neighboring buildings, creating a dense urban fabric. Voids in this pattern reflected economic decline or fire rather than a desire for open space. Residential areas became increasingly separated from commercial districts, and the buildings lining the commercial corridor were designed for specific commercial or social/institutional functions.

Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture, updated ed. (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 13.

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

Grand Avenue² and the surrounding commercial district developed as the downtown central business district gradually expanded to the south. The transition from a mostly residential neighborhood to a commercial area began in 1899 and continued steadily into the first decades of the twentieth century. The emphasis in this commercial area was not on offices and retail shopping (as in the Central Business District located a few blocks north), but on warehouses, smaller light industrial businesses, and retail services. Certain business interests tended to group together. During the 1920s, many of the newly constructed buildings in the area housed businesses for machinery, tool trade, and supply, including the Markle Machinery Company at 1727-33 Walnut Street; The Goldblatt Tool Company at 1522 Walnut Street; the Townsend Printing Company at 1524-26 Walnut Street; and the Crane Company, a plumbing supply firm, at 1532 Grand Avenue.⁴ A sampling of businesses located in the 1500 block of Grand Avenue listed in the 1929 city directory represents refrigeration, machinery and tool, paint, furniture, and automotive industries.

The two-part commercial block was the most common Main Street commercial building form nationwide.⁵ Most structures in the blocks adjacent to 1524 Grand Boulevard represent this style. Between two and four stories in height, they feature the defining horizontal division that reflects two distinct uses on the interior. Typically, the single-story lower zone housed public uses such as retail sales and services, offices, or hotel lobbies. By the late nineteenth century, plate glass display windows defined the lower-zone storefronts. Rooms for more private functions filled the upper stories and included offices, residential quarters, hotel rooms, and social meeting halls. The façade styling of the two-part commercial block evoked the popular architecture of the day. In the late nineteenth century, common Victorian embellishments included cast iron storefronts, cornices with brackets or shaped parapets, and arched windows with molded hoods. Ornamental brickwork also highlighted the cornice or window openings. In the early twentieth century, architectural styling became more restrained. Columns and pilasters with classical capitals were common, as were façades of textured brick or patterned brickwork highlighted by stone or cast stone medallions, banding, or other details. Terra cotta ornament and cast concrete structural systems were also adapted to Main Street buildings before World War I.

Architect Harry A. Drake took advantage of twentieth century technological innovations in construction and designed with reinforced concrete, which allowed for large spans without the use of columns that would interfere with displays, placement of machinery and equipment, or office arrangements. Steel windows offered large thin frames that admitted the most light possible.

While the building's style and configuration are representative of smaller commercial structures built throughout the country during the late 1920s, the use of terra cotta on the entire front façade is a more unique variation. Most two-part commercial blocks of this era were brick with limited limestone or terra cotta ornament. "Terra cotta, which could be cast into any form and fired in almost any color, was

² Grand Avenue was renamed Grand Boulevard in the 1990s.

³ Walnut Street is one block west of Grand Boulevard.

⁴ Architectural and Historical Research, LLC, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, "Walnut Street Warehouse and Commercial Historic District," March 1999, City of Kansas City, Missouri Landmarks Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

⁵ Longstreth, 24.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

considered an elegant substitute veneer and became widely used." The variety of possible designs and styling enabled building owners to create a unique façade that distinguished their building, and hopefully their business, from competing enterprises. Terra cotta was also a cost-effective building material and many terra cotta-clad commercial buildings were built throughout Kansas City. While some can be found in the vicinity of 1524 Grand Boulevard – on Main and Walnut streets and Grand Boulevard – very few terra cotta-clad storefronts survive in this business district. There is a two-part commercial block structure with a similarly configured façade at 1317 Grand Boulevard that was built in 1916 and continues to retain its integrity. The only other terra cotta-clad structures in the immediate vicinity include the building at 1512-14 Grand Boulevard, which has synthetic stucco (EIFS) covering its window openings, compromising its integrity; the building at 1600 Grand Boulevard, which is a combination of brick and terra cotta; and the building at 1518 Walnut Street, which is also brick and terra cotta. A terra cotta-clad, two-part commercial block structure that was visible two buildings south of 1524 Grand Boulevard in 1940s tax assessor photographs has been demolished.

The façade of 1524 Grand Boulevard is unusual because it incorporates the modern materials of steel windows and terra cotta with neo-classical design elements. The use of metal windows did not become popular until after 1890; and by 1928, steel windows were widely used for commercial and light industrial structures. Mass production of rolled steel made the windows as affordable as wood windows and they were fireproof. The strong metal frame also allowed for larger windows and windows in series, resulting in increased natural illumination and ventilation. Steel windows became widely utilized in all types of buildings and were available in many operable configurations, including casement, double-hung, pivot, projecting, and austral. Double-hung wood or Chicago-style windows, or even steel casement sashes would have been a more typical approach to compliment the neo-classical, terra cotta facade. The hopper and pivoting sashes of the windows on both the east and west sides of 1524 Grand Boulevard have a very industrial appearance, which is uniquely juxtaposed with the façade's neo-classical styling.

By the 1920s, many designers and architects incorporated modern Art Deco and streamlined motifs in a variety of colors for building exteriors. The terra cotta on 1524 Grand Boulevard is a late example of the classical motif, with its highly decorative formal ornament and light cream-colored glaze. The Historic Resources Survey Plan of Kansas City singles out 1524 Grand Boulevard as an ideal example of a "terra cotta clad" structure. The Plan states that terra cotta-clad buildings were constructed in the Kansas City area between circa 1900 and circa 1930. Built in 1928, the building is a late example of the terra cotta-clad structure in Kansas City.

PROPERTY HISTORY

⁶ Ibid., 41.

⁷ Ibid., 24-41.

⁸ Sharon C. Park, Preservation Brief 13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows [document online]; available from Preservation Services, Heritage Preservation Services Division, National Park Service at http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief13.htm; Internet; accessed 18 October 2003.

City of Kansas City, Missouri Landmarks Commission, Historic Resources Survey Plan of Kansas City, September 1992, p.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard was built in 1928, at the end of the 1920s building boom, just before the stock market crash of 1929. A previous structure existed on the site, but there is no building permit for this building and its date of construction is unknown. It appears from city directories that the earlier building housed businesses related to the automotive industry. In 1917, tenants included John V. Cowles, a physician, and the Pennsylvania Rubber Company. In 1927, the Cut Rate Tire Corp is shown as the occupant. The 1928 city directory does not list 1524 Grand Boulevard, so it is assumed that the previous building perished in 1927 or 1928.

The 1928 Western Contractor lists the architect and general contractor of 1524 Grand Boulevard as H. A. Drake and the owner as J. A. Minor. Completed in 1928 at a cost of \$15,000, it is likely that they constructed the current reinforced concrete building on the original limestone foundation of the previous structure. Polk's 1928 Kansas City Directory lists J. A. Minor's profession as "real estate." It appears that Drake, the architect, and Minor, a real estate investor, designed and constructed the building as a commercial real estate venture. The history of the building's occupancy supports this theory since there was neither a prominent nor a permanent tenant at the time of its construction.

The building housed a variety of businesses throughout its history. The first tenant, listed in the 1929 City Directory, was Automatic Merchandising Corporation of America, whose business was vending machines. In 1931, the Copeland Refrigeration Company occupied 1524 Grand Boulevard. By 1936, the building hosted two tenants: Superior Wines & Liquors on the first floor and the Automotive Trades Association on the second floor. Three years later, the building was vacant. The 1941 directory again listed two tenants: Arrow Blue Print & Supply Company on the ground floor and Norris Louise Company (a cosmetics manufacturer) on the second floor. In 1942, the Singer Sewing Machine Company began a twenty-year tenancy that lasted until 1965. The building's longest tenant, the Central Card Company, occupied the building for thirty-seven years, from 1966 until 2003, when the current owner acquired the building.

ARCHITECT

The building permit and Western Contractor identify the architect of the building at 1524 Grand Boulevard as H. A. Drake. The 1928 Polk Kansas City Directory lists the architect H. Alex Drake at 315 Reliance Building. Later city directories list him as Harry A. Drake. At the turn of the century, Drake worked at the architecture firm of Howe, Hoit and Cutler, which was the successor firm to Van Brundt and Howe — a prolific Kansas City firm with national commissions. By 1909, it appears Drake had his own practice, as he is listed as an architect at 414 Reliance Building in the city directory. By 1934, Drake is listed as an architect at his home address. In 1945, he is listed as an engineer for Pratt & Whitney. Though Drake's date of death is unknown, it is likely that he passed away in 1947 or 1948, as his wife is listed alone in the 1949 directory.

¹⁰ Sherry Piland, Early Kansas City Architects: Van Brunt and Howe, Historic Kansas City Foundation News, December 1978, p. 10.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

Drake designed a number of buildings in Kansas City. According to records at the Kansas City Landmarks Commission and the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri – Kansas City, his work includes the following: 2101-07 Broadway (National Register property listed in the Crossroads Historic Freight District for which he designed a third-story addition in 1926); 1012 Locust; 815 East 39th Street (a two-story dwelling built in 1910); 108 Garfield; the Mercantile Building & Theatre (Newman Theatre) at 10th and Main streets; and an alteration and addition for a manufacturing building at 706 Baltimore. Drake designed a wide range of building types from industrial and commercial to institutional and entertainment (theatres). The building at 1524 Grand Boulevard is an elegant blend of functional property type and artistic veneer that is representative of Drake's work, little of which remains standing in the Kansas City today.

DEVELOPER

The building permit and Western Contractor identify J. A. Minor as the builder of 1524 Grand Boulevard. Minor had an established twenty-four-year-old real estate business when he became involved in the construction of 1524 Grand Boulevard in 1928. His real estate dealings included both renting and making loans for the improvement of farm and city properties. He was a member of the Real Estate Board and others often sought his advice when purchasing, investing, speculating, or disposing of real estate. He was in charge of the Minor and Reliance buildings and maintained his offices in the Reliance Building. 11

¹¹ Pen and Sunlight Sketches of Greater Kansas City (Kansas City: The American Illustrating Company, 1911), p. 108.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 9

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 10

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 11

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United States Department of the Interior **National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Photograph Documentation Page 12

1524 Grand Boulevard Building Jackson County, MO

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The North 24.75 feet of lot 259, block 18, McGee's Addition, a subdivision in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This nomination includes the parcel of land historically associated with the resource.

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

Photographer:

Brad Finch

F-stop Photography

Date of Photographs: October 2003

Location of Negatives: Grand Historic Developers, L.P.

Photograph

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Number	Description and Camera View
1)	East Elevation, view looking west.
2)	East Elevation, view looking northwest.
3)	Storefront, view looking northwest.
4)	Detail of second floor east windows and parapet, view looking west.
5)	West Elevation, view looking northeast.
6)	First-floor interior, view looking east.
7)	Storefront from interior, view looking east.
8)	Stairwell in northeast corner, view looking down from the second floor to the first
	floor.
9)	Elevator and restrooms on first floor, view looking southwest.
10)	Basement interior, view looking northwest.
11)	Detail of basement windows under storefront from interior, view looking east.
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