

**CITY OF CHICAGO
COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

April 3, 2025

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT
CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR THE**

HARRIS TRUST & SAVINGS BANK

111 W. MONROE ST.

Docket No. 2025-04

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the “Municipal Code”), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the “Commission”) has determined that the Harris Trust & Savings Bank, which includes the original 1911 Harris Trust & Savings Bank and a 1960 addition known as the East Tower (together the “Building”), is worthy of designation as a Chicago Landmark. On the basis of careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Building, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following three criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

1. *Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*
4. *Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*
5. *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

I. BACKGROUND

The formal landmark designation process for the Building began on September 12, 2024, when the Commission approved a preliminary landmark recommendation (the "Preliminary Recommendation") for the Building as a Chicago Landmark. The Commission found that the Building meets three of the seven criteria for designation, as well as the integrity criterion, identified in the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (Municipal Code, Section 2-120-580 et seq.). As part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission preliminarily identified the “significant historical and architectural features” of the Building as:

- All exterior elevations of the 1911 Harris Trust & Savings Bank and the 1960 East Tower.

- The pair of bas relief bronze lion sculptures on the front façade of the 1911 Harris Trust & Savings Bank.

Also, as part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission adopted a Designation Report, dated September 12, 2024, the most current iteration of which is dated April 3, 2025, incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (the “Designation Report”).

At its regular meeting of October 23, 2024, the Commission received a report incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit B** (the “Department of Planning and Development Report”) from Ciere Boatright Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development, stating that the proposed landmark designation of the Building supports the City’s overall planning goals and is consistent with the City’s governing policies and plans.

On March 14, 2025, the Commission received written consent to landmark designation of the Building in a form dated March 14, 2025, and signed by Michael W. Reschke, representing the owner of the Building.

II. FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code, the Commission has reviewed the entire record of proceedings on the proposed Chicago Landmark designation, including the Designation Report and all of the information on the proposed landmark designation of the Building; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the boom in banking in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that led to Chicago being a prominent American financial center; and

WHEREAS, Harris Trust & Savings Bank and its founder established the idea of buying and selling bonds as a primary business for the bank and sold it to the public; and

WHEREAS, Harris Trust & Savings Bank was a large employer and held major assets in Chicago for the majority of the 20th century. By the 1970s, the bank had amassed over \$4 billion in assets and employed approximately 3,500 people in the Chicago area. In 1984, when it was purchased by the Bank of Montreal, Harris Trust & Savings Bank was the third-largest bank in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the 1911 portion of the Building is an excellent example of Classical Revival architecture as applied to a skyscraper, influenced by the prominent 1893 World’s Fair and the city’s innovative approach to taller buildings. It features a tripartite design, monumental engaged pink granite columns, and applied terra cotta ornament; and

WHEREAS, the East Tower from 1960 is an excellent example of mid-century International Style architecture, influenced by the popularity of modernist architects in the United States. It features a steel structure, glass and metal curtain wall, and an absence of applied ornament; and

WHEREAS, though the 1911 Harris Bank Building and the 1960 East Tower were not designed in the same style, they are visually integrated at the exterior with aligned floor levels and use of columns. They are also fully integrated at the interior; and

WHEREAS, the 1911 portion of the Building was designed by the prominent firm Shepley, Rutan, & Coolidge who were also the architects for other notable works in Chicago including the Art Institute of Chicago (a contributing building to the Historic Michigan Boulevard District) and the Chicago Cultural Center (a Chicago landmark); and

WHEREAS, the 1960 portion of the Building was designed by Chicago-based firm Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill, an internationally important firm known for their skyscraper designs. The firm designed other significant buildings in Chicago including the Willis Tower and 875 N Michigan Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Walter A. Netsch was the supervising designer for the East Tower. Netsch was a noted individual designer who spent his career at SOM, working on projects like the Inland Steel Building (a Chicago Landmark) and the U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel (a National Historic Landmark) for the firm; and

WHEREAS, the Building meets three criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4) and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:

1. Adopts the recitals, findings and statements of fact set forth in the preamble and Sections I and II hereof as the findings of the Commission; and
2. Adopts the Designation Report, as revised, and dated this April 3, 2025; and
3. Finds, based on the Designation Report and the entire record before the Commission, that the Building meets three criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4) and (5) of the Municipal Code; and
4. Finds that the Building satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and
5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as follows:
 - All exterior elevations of the 1911 Harris Trust & Savings Bank and the 1960 East Tower.
 - The pair of bas relief bronze lion sculptures on the front façade of the 1911 Harris Trust & Savings Bank.

6. Recommends designation of the Building a Chicago Landmark.

This recommendation was adopted unanimously (6-0).

Dated: April 3, 2025



Ernest C. Wong, Chair
Commission on Chicago Landmarks