

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number SLR Page

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property
Cook County, IL
County and State
N.A.
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 14001063

Property Name: Polish National Alliance Headquarters

County: Cook County State: IL

Multiple Name: N.A.

=====
This property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Barbara Wypall 2-10-15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

=====
Amended Item in Nomination

This SLR is issued to correct the following point:

Section 1, Name of Property

The reference to the multiple property listing "Ethnic (European) Historic Settlement in the City of Chicago (1860-1930)" is removed from the nomination, because the period of significance extends beyond the dates covered by the multiple property nomination form. The period of significance for the Polish National Alliance Headquarters in 1938-1964.

The State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

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Distribution

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

Ethnic (European) Historic Settlement in the City of Chicago (1860-1930)

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 1514-1520 West Division Street

City or town: Chicago State: IL County: Cook

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

	<u>IL DSHPO</u>	<u>10-29-14</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Illinois Historic Preservation Agency</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

by Barbara Wypall
Signature of the Keeper

12-23-14
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
-

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

STONE: Limestone

BRICK

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Completed in 1938, the Polish National Alliance (PNA) Headquarters is located on the northwest side of Chicago in the Noble Square neighborhood at the heart of the city's once-flourishing "Polish Downtown." The building is three-stories tall with a rectangular footprint that extends to the lot line along the two street-facing elevations (south and west). The primary south and west elevations are clad in grey ashlar limestone. The secondary north and east elevations, facing the alley and a vacant lot respectively, are clad in common brick. The building's interiors retain much of their original historic fabric including an Art Deco entrance lobby, wood paneled offices, and an open monumental stair that runs the full height of the building.

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Narrative Description

Site Description

The PNA Headquarters is located on the northwest side of Chicago just west of the North Branch of the Chicago River and Interstate 90/94. The building's primary south façade faces West Division Street with an equally important west elevation along North Bosworth Avenue. The north elevation of the PNA Headquarters faces an alley and surface parking lot beyond. The building's east elevation fronts onto a vacant lot. The surrounding area along West Division Street is primarily commercial with residential properties off the main commercial strip.

Exterior Description

The PNA Headquarters is a two-story, raised basement institutional office building that is rigorous in composition and sharply rectilinear and cubic in form, typical of 1930s Art Deco architecture. The building is clad in ashlar Indiana limestone with carved limestone detailing on the two street-facing elevations along West Division Street (south) and North Bosworth Avenue (west) with the east and north (alley) elevations clad with unornamented common brick. The south and west elevations feature a large center section flanked by slightly projecting end bays. The raised basement forms a high water table of ashlar limestone. Above this base, paired fluted piers separate the stepped inset window bays. Ornamented metal spandrel panels between the first and second floor windows provide further vertical emphasis. Carved Art Deco detailing including chevrons, sunbursts, and abstracted floral motifs form a continuous bas relief band above the second story windows, accentuating the stepped parapet.

The south elevation is completely symmetrical with the main entrance set in a deeply-recessed rectangular opening in the center of the limestone façade reaching up to the second story. This differs slightly from the balanced, but asymmetrical west elevation, which features a secondary building entrance on the building's northwest corner off-set by a window on the southwest corner. The original main entrance remains intact with its white metal and glass double doors surmounted by a large transom overlaid with a decorative metal screen. The simple vertical pattern of the decorative metal screen is interspersed with geometric square elements. The top of the screen features a stylized organic design combining organic forms with machine age rudiment. A medallion above the door, made of inlaid white metal, is inscribed with the letters ZNP for "*Zwiazek Narodowy Polski*" (Polish National Alliance in Polish). The emblem of the PNA—a shield with an eagle, a knight riding on horseback, and the Archangel Michael, symbolizing the three main regions of the old Polish commonwealth—is carved into the limestone parapet above the entrance bay. Shields are also carved into the parapet at each end bay. A secondary entrance with a set of painted metal double doors is located at the north end of the west elevation.

On the two street-facing elevations, second- and third-floor windows in each of the three center window bays are placed within deeply-recessed openings grouped in sets of three (west elevation) and sets of two (south elevation). Each outer flanking bay features one window similar in size and shape. Decorative-metal spandrels with Art Deco-style geometric ornament separate windows in each recessed opening. Paired, fluted piers separate each inset window bay emphasizing the building's vertical elements. Carved Art Deco-style detailing, including chevrons, sunbursts, and

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Cook Co., IL

Name of Property

County and State

abstracted floral motifs, form a continuous band above second-story windows, accentuating a stepped parapet. Windows located on the first story, or raised basement level, retain the same fenestration pattern as those above with the exception of a secondary entrance located in the northwestern most bay. First floor windows, located at grade, are simply adorned with original decorative metal grilles. Window sash on the building's primary (south and west) elevations are one-over-one replacement windows within original openings.

The secondary north and east elevations are clad in common brick and are unornamented. These elevations are regularly fenestrated with single window openings that house original steel sash windows.

The building features a flat roof, with a masonry head house and chimney at the northeast corner. Original flag poles remain on the roof.

A large sign with armature cantilevering over the sidewalk at the southwest corner of the building was installed by the previous owner in the mid-1990s.

South Entrance Lobby

The PNA Headquarter's three-story interior retains many of its original Art Deco-style features and finishes, particularly in the building's primary public space, the south entrance lobby. Located at street level and accessed from the street by the south (West Division Street) entrance, the small but highly ornamented south entrance lobby features original black and gray checkered terrazzo flooring, marble wainscoting, ornamental metal radiator screens, one-and-a-half-story high decorative plaster ceilings, and original decorative light fixtures. A recessed elevator door is located along the west wall.

South Stair

The entrance lobby is dominated by a monumental stair that provides access down to the basement and up to the two upper floors. This monumental south stair located at the center of the south end of the building is an Art Deco Style turn on a more traditional "imperial" or "Baroque" staircase, and is the building's primary means of vertical conveyance and its primary decorative feature. The south stair's main 1st floor flight with terrazzo treads and risers, marble-clad newel posts, decorative metal railing pickets, and wood railings connects the south entrance lobby up to the 1st floor stair landing. The 1st floor stair landing is clad in red and black asbestos tile, marble wainscoting with plaster walls above, and a plaster ceiling with two original metal and glass pendant light fixtures. The north wall of the 1st floor stair landing has original steel frame glass windows flanking a set of original steel and glass double doors providing access to the 1st floor open office to the north.

Another double flight of steps connects the 1st floor stair landing with a mid-flight stair landing and finally up to the 2nd floor stair landing where the south stair terminates. The south stair's 2nd floor flight displays similar original decorative features including terrazzo treads and risers, wall-anchored wood railings, and free-standing center wood railings with decorative metal pickets. The mid-flight landing between the 1st and 2nd floors display original terrazzo floors, marble clad

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Cook Co., IL

Name of Property

County and State

wainscoting with plaster walls above, a double height plaster ceiling, and two original metal and glass pendant light fixtures.

1st Floor

The PNA Headquarters 1st floor retains its historic configuration, with a large open space in the center of the floor and enclosed offices along the perimeter walls. The largest space in the building, the open office is lined non-historic linoleum flooring and red and black asphalt asbestos tile flooring, plaster walls, and original 1x1 acoustical ceiling tiles. A small enclosed former telephone room with an original wood and glass door is located just west of the 1st floor south stair landing. Several original storage vaults are also located within the open office.

The PNA's original 1st floor north library and southwest conference room remain intact. Along with the south entrance lobby, these two spaces are the building's primary decorative spaces and retain their original wood paneled walls, ornamental plaster crown moldings, and acoustical ceiling tiles. The original library along the north side of the building was divided into two separate spaces by previous owners though the room's finishes are not substantially damaged. The southwest conference room retains its original spatial layout including its own dedicated bathroom.

The 1st floor's perimeter offices retain their original interior wood and glass office partitions and original office doors. A pair of restrooms are located in the northeast corner of the 1st floor. A small elevator lobby just south of the open office and west of the south entrance lobby connects the center south elevator with a closet and restrooms.

2nd Floor

The PNA Headquarters 2nd floor retains its original south corridor and south offices. The 2nd floor's highly ornamented southwest office displays original wood-paneled walls, ornamented plaster crown moldings, acoustical ceiling tiles, and a small dedicated bathroom. An elevator lobby and narrow connecting corridor along the south end of the building connect the southwest office with what were originally three separate southeast offices, combined into one large space a previous owner. This large southeast office features wood base trim and chair rails, painted window sills and aprons, decorative plaster ceiling trim, and acoustical ceiling tiles. The large southeast office also retains its own dedicated bathroom. The corridor just north of the southeast classroom displays a fragment of original wood wainscoting with chrome trim.

The remaining 2nd floor spaces are utilitarian in character and were renovated by the previous owner who altered the 2nd floor spatial layout for College of Office Technology classrooms, administrative, and faculty offices. A pair of restrooms are located at the northeast corner of the building.

Basement

Accessed from two flights of steps down from south entrance lobby, the PNA Headquarter's raised basement is utilitarian in character and was heavily renovated by the previous owner who altered the basement's spatial layout for classrooms, administrative, and faculty offices for the College of Office Technology, a later building tenant. Existing restrooms refurbished by later building owners, are located at the southeast corner of the basement.

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Additional Stairs

Two original stairs exist along the north end of the building. The northeast stair connects the basement up to the rooftop penthouse. The northwest stair connects the basement up to the 2nd floor. Both stairs are utilitarian in character.

Integrity

The PNA Headquarters building retains good exterior and interior integrity, with no major alterations or additions. The exterior remains essentially as it was when the building was constructed; the only noticeable alteration is the replacement of the original windows on the south and west elevations. The new windows are one-over-one aluminum sash set within the original openings.

On the interior, the historic floor plan is evident on all levels and many of the historic details are intact. Changes to the layouts of the first and second floor to accommodate the most recent tenant—the College of Office Technology—are primarily additive and reversible, such as dropped ceilings and partial and full-height partition walls. The building retains sufficient integrity to qualify for individual listing under the Multiple Property Listing Ethnic (European) Settlement in the City of Chicago (1860-1930).

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage (Polish)

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

Period of Significance

1938-1964

Significant Dates

1938 (date of construction)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Joseph A. Slupkowski

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

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

The Polish National Alliance (PNA) Headquarters at 1514-1520 West Division Street meets the registration requirements for individual listing outlined in the Multiple Property Listing (MPL) for Ethnic (European) Historic Settlement in the City of Chicago (1860-1930). The PNA Headquarters is an excellent and well-preserved example of an ethnic fraternal building as outlined in the MPL and is specifically referenced as an example of the property type on page 102 of the report. Per the registration requirements under the MPL, the building retains architectural integrity including the retention of principal interior spaces that were utilized for the specific operations of the organization.

The PNA Headquarters is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with “events that have made an important contribution to the broad patterns of our history,” namely the important role ethnic fraternal organizations played in the social, cultural, and political development of Chicago’s immigrant communities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Located at the geographical center of Chicago’s largest and oldest Polish settlement, known as “Polish Downtown,” the building served as the headquarters for the nation’s largest Polish fraternal organization from its completion in 1938 until 1976. The period of significance spans from 1938, the year the building was completed, to 1964, the fifty-year cut off for National Register properties.

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

The Polish National Alliance Headquarters meets the MPL registration requirements for listing under Criterion A as an ethnic fraternal building. According to the MPL, in order to be eligible for listing in the National Register as an ethnic fraternal building in Chicago, the building “should have been constructed, owned, or occupied by an established ethnic association during its period of significance. Incorporation and other association documents and/or membership lists should confirm the ethnic association. Buildings should also retain architectural integrity, including principal interior spaces utilized for club functions.”

The PNA Headquarters is referenced specifically in the MPL as an example of an ethnic fraternal building. Designed by Polish architect Joseph A. Slupkowski and completed in 1938, the building was purpose-built by the Polish National Alliance to serve as the organization’s national headquarters. The years that the PNA occupied the building at 1514-1520 West Division between 1938 and 1976 were among the most important in the organization’s history. The PNA’s first year in the building coincided with the end of the Second Polish Republic and the Nazi invasion of Poland, when the organization emerged as a leading advocate and financial supporter for Polish refugees and the cause of Polish independence. Over the course of the war, the PNA raised \$25

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

million in U.S. war bonds and established a Polish relief center for collecting and shipping food, clothing, and medical supplies to Polish refugees in Europe.

In 1944, the PNA played a critical role in the creation and development of the Polish American Congress (PAC), a federation of Polish American ethnic fraternal and cultural organizations, veterans groups, and religious congregations that was established to lobby the U.S. and European nations to aid in the cause of Polish independence. PNA President Charles Rozmarek (1897-1973) served as head of the PAC between 1944 and 1967, becoming one of the most recognized Polish American figures in the country. In the decades following World War II, the organization's membership soared to over 300,000 members with \$100 million in assets.

Because the Polish National Alliance was a mutual benefit society and not a meeting hall, club house, or recreational facility, the interiors of the building are more in keeping with a financial institution, containing offices, a library and board room, and numerous vaults. The PNA also operated a small museum out of the space. The interiors are well-preserved and clearly reflect the functions of the organization.

Chicago Polonia and the Development of Chicago's Polish Downtown

Old-World poverty, often combined with political upheaval and religious or ethnic oppression, fueled the desire for a better life on the part of countless European immigrants to the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Polish immigration epitomized this history by with its close ties to struggles in Poland to establish an independent state and to defend it from foreign powers. The autonomous Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, created in 1569 and a source of much pride by later generations, was toppled in 1795 after a series of invasions by the neighboring empires of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The region remained subjugated and split between competing powers through the 19th and early 20th centuries, until Poland emerged from World War I as an independent republic established in 1918.

This short-lived Second Polish Republic was crushed by the invasion of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939. Although Poland was reestablished as a country at the end of World War II, it was swiftly swept behind the "Iron Curtain" as a satellite state of the Soviet Union. It remained under de facto Soviet control until 1989, when Poland rejected Communism and elected the Solidarity government. This helped to trigger the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

This history of political repression accompanied by harsh economic deprivation, drove millions of Poles to seek their fortunes in the New World. Between 1850 and 1914, an estimated three million Poles fled their homeland. A majority became Americans, entering the United States by way of New York's emigration processing center at Ellis Island, and then settling in predominantly Polish communities in growing American industrial cities such as New York, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Chicago.

Since the mid-1800s, when the first substantial number of Poles migrated to the American Midwest, Chicago has been the center of "American Polonia," a collective name for the country's Polish and Polish American community. Among Chicago's first Polish settlers were exiled Polish

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

nobles who fled the Polish-Russian War of 1830-1831, arriving in 1834 seeking to build a “New Poland” in the Illinois wilderness. The first substantial wave of Polish immigration to Chicago, beginning in the 1850s and ebbing in the 1920s, included a mass migration of predominantly Catholic peasants to the United States in search of “*za chlebem*” (“for bread”). Polish immigrants of the late nineteenth century quickly settled in city neighborhoods that soon became closely identified with these immigrants.

Arriving Poles soon established Chicago’s most populous Polish-concentrated community along the west bank of the Chicago River’s North Branch, approximately two miles northwest of the city’s downtown business district. Polish immigrants first settled in this part of the Northwest Side in the 1860s near two new Roman Catholic parishes: St. Stanislaus Kostka, founded in 1867 at Noble and Bradley Streets, and eventually the largest Polish Catholic congregation in the city; and nearby Holy Trinity, founded in 1872 at Noble and Chapin Streets. In addition, older Catholic parishes grew and new ones were formed including St. Hedwig at Hoyne and Webster Avenues in 1888; St. John Cantius at Chicago and Milwaukee Avenues in 1893; St. Mary of the Angels at Wood Street and Bloomingdale Avenue in 1897; and Holy Innocents at Superior Street and Armour Avenue in 1905. Throughout this period of growth, Polish Chicagoans established and grew over forty Roman Catholic parishes throughout the city.

By 1900, the Northwest Side Polish American community centered on Milwaukee Avenue near Division Street, was known to local residents as “Stanislawo-Trojcowo” (after the area’s two earliest Polish Catholic parishes) and to the rest of Chicago as “Polish Downtown.” It was home to tens of thousands of Chicago Poles who lived, worked, learned, and worshipped within a one-square-mile area of the intersection of Division Street, Ashland Avenue, and Milwaukee Avenue, a busy traffic crossing commonly known as the “Polish Triangle.”

Between 1890 and 1937, the city’s Polish population grew more than ten-fold to over 500,000, and Polish Downtown became the economic and cultural heart of Chicago Polonia. Polish Downtown’s main commercial streets—Noble Street, Division Street, Ashland Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue—were lined with Polish-owned businesses serving both Polish-speaking neighborhood residents and far-flung Polish Chicagoans visiting from other parts of the metropolitan area. Polish business ventures were funded by Polish-run and Polish-friendly banks and building and loan associations established in the community, including the Polish Crown, the Pulaski Building & Loan, the Bank Polski, the Home Bank and Trust Company Building, and the Northwestern Trust and Savings Bank.

Polish-language theatrical and musical performances were first held in local school auditoriums, then later housed in large new theaters and music halls near the Polish Triangle, including the Crown Theater (1605 W. Division St., completed 1909, demolished) and the Chopin Theater (built 1918, 1541 W. Division St., extant). Polish Downtown was the heart of the city’s Polish press, home to publications read in Chicago and across Polish-speaking America: the *Gazeta Polska* (*Polish Gazette*); the *Gazeta Polska Katolika* (*Polish Catholic Gazette*); the *Dziennik Chicagoski* (*Polish Daily News*); the *Dziennik Zjednoczenia* (*Union Daily News*) and *Narod Polski* (*Polish Nation*), both published by the Polish Roman Catholic Union; and the *Zgoda* (*Harmony*) and

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Dziennik Zwiazkowy (Alliance Daily News), both published by the Polish National Alliance. Among the tens of thousands of Chicago Poles who called Polish Downtown home was August J. Kowalski, who in 1888 became the city's first Polish American alderman. Pulaski Park, located west across Noble Street from St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church and named for the Polish-born hero of the American Revolutionary War, became a centerpiece of Polish Downtown at its completion in 1914.

After a development peak in the 1940s and 1950s, post-World War II changes to the community, including the 1960 completion of the Northwest Expressway (today's Kennedy Expressway) and the settlement of new ethnic groups in the area, caused many of Polish Downtown's older Polish residents to relocate out of the community into outer Chicago neighborhoods and suburbs. Though the ethnic and business makeup of Polish Downtown is no longer predominantly Polish, the large Roman Catholic parishes of St. Stanislaus Kostka and Holy Trinity remain important Chicago Polonia institutions.

Ethnic Mutual Benefit Societies and Fraternal Organizations in Chicago

Along with several Polish American churches and businesses, Chicago's Polish Downtown was home to several influential Polish American member-supported benevolent organizations, including the Polish National Alliance, which gave financial support to the city's new arrivals and encouraged nationalist pride among the city's Polish community. These Polish ethnic mutual benefit societies and fraternal organizations were part of a larger historic movement of immigrants to Chicago banding together to support each other financially, socially and culturally.

During the many waves of European immigration between 1850 and 1960, tens of thousands of foreign arrivals to Chicago relied on member-supported ethnic mutual benefit societies and fraternal organizations to assist them in their first years in America. Almost all of Chicago's foreign-born populations—Germans, Italians, Slovaks, Czechs, Poles, Romanians, Lithuanians, and many others—were served by these ethnic-focused voluntary social associations, often with male- or female-exclusive membership, formed to foster immigrant community cohesion and prosperity. Often founded by small groups of socially-conscious local citizens, many ethnic fraternal organizations like Chicago's Polish National Alliance expanded over time to include large nationwide member rosters and to offer wide varieties of financial and social services.

Most Chicago immigrants hailed from politically and economically unstable European states; poverty remained a pressing problem for immigrant families after their settlement in Chicago. In response, ethnic mutual benefit societies offered Chicago's immigrant families low-cost insurance policies that provided income in the event of the insured's death or injury. Many of these societies also offered their members loans and home mortgages administered by friendly officers of like ancestry and language.

Ethnic fraternal organizations often sought to inform their members on the politics and culture of their members' home countries by publishing foreign-language newspapers with both local and international news. These organizations often raised funds for the relief of the poor and displaced

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

back home, and sometimes even actively campaigning for foreign political causes. Fraternal organizations also raised money for local needy and charitable institutions like hospitals and orphanages serving their fellow immigrants. Most organizations fostered ethnic pride and identity and attracted outside press and larger memberships by sponsoring adult and youth cultural programs that celebrated ethnic history, language, literature, theater, music, dance, and sport. Chicago's fraternal organizations also sponsored public celebrations and parades on political and religious holidays, asserting both their spiritual and cultural ties to their old homes and their sense of belonging to their new ones.

Though proud to celebrate their unique heritage, many Chicago ethnic fraternal organizations also encouraged and helped to facilitate immigrant assimilation into mainstream American culture. Groups such as the PNA acted as unofficial liaisons between federal immigration officials and local immigrant communities, assisting newcomers as they came through ports of entry and helping them find local housing, training, and employment. Even as they supported the continued use of their home languages, ethnic fraternal organizations often offered English-language lessons to new Chicagoans, helping them effectively adopt American speech and customs.

Large ethnic fraternal organizations often owned dedicated meeting halls, recreational facilities, club houses or other fraternal buildings within their community's commercial district. Often these buildings displayed elaborate architectural designs including decorative motifs and signage that celebrated the organization and the ethnicity they represented. These organization facilities were fully funded by membership dues and often contained small lodge halls, offices, libraries, and classrooms for small assemblies and auditoriums, gymnasiums, museums, bars, and dining rooms for large public events. Examples of ethnic fraternal organization buildings in Chicago include the Germania Club Building at 110-114 W. Germania Pl. (designed by Addison & Fiedler, completed 1889) and the On Leong Merchant Association at 2216 S. Wentworth Ave. (designed by Michaelsen & Rognstad, completed 1927), and the Polish National Alliance Headquarters. The makeup and associations of these organizations gradually transformed over the twentieth century from first- to second- to third-generation Americans. Over the years, original organization facilities usually did not survive such changes in membership, and many early fraternal structures have either been lost or repurposed.

Chicago's Polish Fraternal Organizations

Chicago's Polish fraternal organizations played an enormous role in the city's immigrant Polish community. Second in importance and membership only to local Roman Catholic parishes, Polish fraternal organizations in Chicago attracted tens of thousands of local and nationwide members. As not only the economic and cultural heart of Chicago Polonia, but also among the most populated and prosperous Polish American communities in the country, the Polish Downtown was the birthplace and home of the majority of Chicago's Polish fraternal organizations. There were the Polish Falcons (or *Sokol*), later expanded into the Polish Falcons of America, founded in Chicago in 1887 and dedicated to the link between physical fitness and moral and spiritual purity; Nest #2 of the Polish Falcons was later headquartered at a large masonry facility at 1062 N. Ashland Ave. (extant). Additionally, the Polish Women's Alliance (PWA), founded in 1898 as a counterpart to the Polish National Alliance, was dedicated to the relief of Polish immigrants and the liberation of

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

their Polish motherland; and the PWA was housed for decades in a Georgian Revival-style structure at 1309 N. Ashland Ave. (extant). The longtime home of the Polish Welfare Association, founded in Chicago in 1922, was an Art Deco-style storefront building at 1303 N. Ashland Ave., just south of the Polish Women's Alliance. There was also the Polish Alma Mater, the Polish Businessmen's Association, the Polish Union Printers Association of Chicago, the Polish Journalists Association, the Pulaski Legion of America (formerly the Polish Military Alliance), the Polish American Democratic Organization, and dozens of other religious and social associations dedicated to fostering their own unique Polish-American identities. Almost all of these organizations were located in Chicago's Polish Downtown.

The nation's two largest and most respected Polish fraternal organizations were both based in Chicago's Polish Downtown: the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) and the Polish National Alliance (PNA). The PRCUA, the country's oldest Polish fraternal organization, was founded in Detroit in 1873 to preserve both the ethnic cultural identities and devotion to the Roman Catholic faith of Polish immigrants to America. Initially a structurally loose association of small local groups, the PRCUA (in response to the growing stature of the strictly secular Polish National Alliance) soon centralized its organizational structure and relocated in 1913 to a new four-story structure at 984 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's Polish Downtown where the organization still remains today (its longtime headquarters building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places). As Victoria Granacki describes in *Chicago's Polish Downtown*, the ongoing rivalry between these two organizations reflected the tension between Chicago's "Polish Catholics, who placed religion above all else, and Catholic Poles, whose ethnicity directed their actions."

The Polish National Alliance (PNA)

The size and reach of the PRCUA was matched only by that of the Polish National Alliance (known also by its Polish name, *Zwiazek Narodowy Polski*, or simply the PNA). Inspired by the call of Polish revolutionary Agaton Giller (1831-1837) to build a Polish American confederation "[l]oyal to the flag of our Fatherland [and] loyal to the traditions and faith of your fathers," the PNA was founded in Philadelphia on August 10, 1880. The new Alliance soon established its home in Chicago, occupying a building at Division and Noble streets in the Polish Downtown. The inaugural male-only membership of nine local groups and 109 individual members soon grew by 1899 to 15,000 male members of Polish extraction. By the 1910s, the PNA had over 20,000 members including women.

Like other ethnic fraternal organizations, the PNA was dedicated to building stability and prosperity among Polish newcomers and others in need. Immediately upon its founding, the PNA established agreements with federal immigration officials to protect Polish immigrants and to ease their transition into American life. The PNA offered low-cost insurance to its members, soon becoming one of the largest fraternal insurers in the country. From 1880 to 1937 alone, the PNA paid over \$30 million in death benefits, among the highest fraternal benefits issued in the United States at the time. The Alliance was also a substantial benefactor to local charitable organizations and supported important causes across the country and the world. The PNA offered English-language lessons, awarded scholarships to Polish youth, and even established its own institution for higher learning—the Polish National Alliance High School and Technical Institute in

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania. Later called Alliance College, this school opened in 1912 and educated thousands of Polish-American students until it closed in 1987.

While the PNA played a key role in helping newcomers fit into their new American life, the organization also hosted programs to help Polish-Americans retain and rediscover their Polish heritage. The PNA established the first Polish Constitution Day Parade on May 3, 1891, to celebrate the centennial of Poland's short-lived 1791 constitution. The PNA was best known for sponsoring Chicago's first Polish language "supplementary schools," which were weekend courses for Polish-American children to ensure that the stories, folk songs, traditional dances, and most importantly, the language of their mother country would not disappear. Beginning in 1908, the PNA established a number of supplementary or Saturday schools in Polish communities across the city, including Polish Downtown's Eckhart Park at Chicago Avenue and Noble Street. The PNA today continues to sponsor traditional Polish Saturday schools in Chicago and across the country.

The majority of PNA's early members, however, believed the organization's primary mission was to inform all Americans of the plight of occupied Poland and to support with words and funds the establishment of a free and independent Polish Republic. The PNA's primary tool for activism was its Polish-language weekly newspaper, *Zgoda* (Harmony). By 1905, *Zgoda* maintained a nationwide circulation of 40,000 and had a substantial impact on the national discourse surrounding the future of Poland and America's proper role in its liberation. The PNA also maintained a "National Treasury" to fund political and humanitarian efforts in Poland through which members donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to aid their stricken countrymen.

Increasing its national stature before World War I, the PNA often voiced support for American political figures while urging them to action on the issue of Poland. In 1910, the PNA assembled a "Polish Congress" of thousands of members of the PNA and other Polish American groups to travel to Washington, D.C. under the auspice of unveiling statues of American Revolutionary War heroes, Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski. The unveiling ceremony led by the PNA was attended by President William Howard Taft and other government officials. Following the ceremony, the assembled Polish Congress issued a statement asserting that "Poles have a right to a separate independent existence, and we consider it our sacred duty to strive to attain the political independence of our native land—Poland." The Polish Congress of 1910 prompted a national discussion of Poland's political future, and elicited passionate protests from Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary.

In the years before World War I, PNA's devotion to the liberation of a foreign land was seen by some Americans as a betrayal of the country in which its members had resettled and prospered. At the close of World War I, the efforts of the PNA and other activist groups were rewarded in President Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points," his proposal for a post-war peace in Europe. Wilson's thirteenth "point" called for "an independent Polish state . . . whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant." With the establishment of Poland's Second Republic (1918-1939), support for the PNA soared. Membership reached 280,000 in 1937, including over 66,000 *harcerstwo*, or children's groups, and circulation of the weekly *Zgoda* reached 200,000.

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

History of the Polish National Alliance Headquarters

The PNA's explosive post-World War I growth reenergized efforts to construct a new headquarters in Polish Downtown. The completion of the new headquarters at 1514-1520 W. Division ended a decade-long effort to move the PNA from its four-story facility at 1406 W. Division St., the organization's home since 1896, to a larger, modern structure that more clearly expressed the PNA's importance to the Polish community.

In 1922, the PNA purchased property at the northeast corner of Division and Dickson (now Bosworth) Streets, just east of the Polish Triangle, and hosted a well-publicized competition in 1924 to select an architect for the new building. The winner was Raymond M. Hood of New York, already familiar to Chicagoans as the winning architect in the Chicago Tribune Tower competition in 1922. Hood's proposed design for the new PNA Headquarters was an imposing eight-story office block in the Classical Revival style clad in black granite and ashlar Bedford limestone and housing an auditorium, lodge halls, a library, a printing plant for the daily *Zgoda* newspaper, first floor retail spaces, and upper floor offices. Leadership disputes within the PNA and the onset of the Great Depression postponed the plan's execution, and Hood's ambitious and costly design was subsequently abandoned.

After a temporary move in 1935 to the third floor of the Home Trust Bank and Trust Company Building at 1200 N. Ashland Ave., the PNA finally moved forward with plans for a new headquarters facility on its property at Division and Bosworth. Architect Joseph A. Slupkowski's two-story Art Deco-style design was substantially smaller than Hood's earlier design, containing offices, a library, a reading room, a small museum, and vaults, all fully air conditioned but with no large auditorium or lodge hall. Anticipating the potential need for additional office space, the foundations of Slupkowski's PNA Headquarters were built to accommodate two more stories, though such an addition was never built. The building was completed in 1938 for a cost of \$200,000.

The PNA's first year in their new headquarters coincided with the end of the Second Polish Republic and the Nazi invasion of Poland in September of 1939. Throughout the Nazi occupation of Poland and later the Soviet occupation, the PNA remained a passionate advocate for, and financial supporter of, Polish independence efforts and Polish refugees across Europe, particularly the thousands of Poles who came to America in the decade following World War II.

In its new Division Street headquarters, the PNA was a fervent supporter of Allied forces in World War II. The PNA alone raised \$25 million in war bonds, warranting the U.S. War Department to name one of its bombers the "Polish National Alliance." The PNA also raised millions to support Polish refugees in Europe, converting their former headquarters at 1406 W. Division into a Polish relief center for collecting and shipping food, clothing, and medical supplies overseas. After the war, PNA membership surged, reaching over 320,000 in 1950 and over 335,000 in 1960, with over \$100 million in organization assets.

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

The PNA's most significant achievement in its years at 1514-1520 W. Division was its critical role in the creation of the Polish American Congress (PAC) in 1944. Established and led for its first two decades by PNA President Charles Rozmarek (1897-1973), the PAC was formed as a federation of Polish American ethnic fraternal and cultural organizations, veterans groups, and religious congregations unified to lobby for U.S. and international intervention for Polish independence. The PAC remains today a powerful group active on issues important to Poland's political independence. Rozmarek simultaneously led both the PNA and the PAC until 1967, becoming the nation's most recognized Polish-American organizer and a formidable representative of Polish-American political and economic interests both at home and abroad. In 1944, Rozmarek along with other PNA and PAC leaders met with President Franklin Roosevelt in Washington to counsel him on the need for Polish independence. After the war, Rozmarek and the PNA were instrumental in the passage of federal legislation allowing 150,000 Polish refugees to resettle in the United States, many of them in Chicago. Many of these new citizens became active PNA members and were key to maintaining the PNA's viability in the post-war period, when many second- and third-generation Polish Americans were leaving traditionally Polish neighborhoods such as Chicago's Polish Downtown.

The PNA's building at 1514-1520 W. Division served as the PNA's national headquarters until 1976, when the organization moved to 6100 N. Cicero Ave., where it remains today. Today, the PNA continues its role as the largest Polish fraternal organization in the nation and one of the United States' strongest supporters of Polish statehood and culture.

After its sale by the PNA, the building became first a Social Security Administration facility, and was more recently occupied by the College of Office Technology. The building is currently vacant. It was color-coded "orange" in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey. The PNA Headquarters was designated a Chicago Landmark in 2014.

Architect Joseph A. Slupkowski

Architect Joseph A. Slupkowski (1884-1951) was born in Chicago in 1884 to Polish-American parents. Slupkowski attended the Holy Trinity parish school, then studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Armour Institute (later the Illinois Institute of Technology), and the Association Institute. After graduation, Slupkowski worked with the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad as an architect and engineer. He received his architectural license in 1917 and established his own firm with fellow architect Clement L. Piontek, best known for his earlier work with Chicago architects Worthmann & Steinbach.

Slupkowski & Piontek's office was located at 1263 N. Paulina St., in "Polish Downtown," the area on Chicago's Northwest Side historically the center of the city's Polish-American community, and the firm catered primarily to Polish-American individuals and institutions. Many of Chicago's largest Polish social and religious institutions were counted among the firm's clients. Slupkowski & Piontek's best known works include the St. Joseph Home of Chicago (2650 N. Ridgeway, 1928, demolished); a large facility for Holy Trinity School (1443 W. Division St., 1928, extant); and Weber High School's Francis Gordon Gymnasium (1521-1525 W. Haddon St., 1920s, extant).

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Slupkowski & Piontek also designed several single-family bungalows in Chicago's West Town community area.

The firm of Slupkowski & Piontek dissolved sometime after 1928. Slupkowski's most prominent work of the 1930s includes the Spanish Colonial Revival-style St. Francis Friary in Burlington, Wisconsin, and the Polish National Alliance Building. In addition to serving as architect for the new headquarters, Slupkowski was a longtime member of the PNA's Chicago Society and a supporter of the group's youth programs. He also served on the Chicago Plan Commission from 1941 through the late 1940s.

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

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Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

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Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
Name of repository: Chicago History Museum

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RA-SPC-0455

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 41.903667 | Longitude: -87.665848 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

Or
UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The Polish National Alliance Headquarters Building is located on the northeast corner of West Division Street and North Bosworth Avenue in Chicago's Noble Square neighborhood. The property is bound by an alley and parking lot to the north and a vacant lot to the east.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The site boundary consists of the property historically associated with the Polish National Alliance Headquarters Building at 1514-1520 West Division Street in Chicago, Illinois.

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: John Cramer and Megan Lydon
organization: MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC
street & number: 53 West Jackson Blvd, Suite 1323
city or town: Chicago state: IL zip code: 60604
e-mail: jrcramer@mac-ha.com
telephone: 312-786-1700
date:

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Polish National Alliance Headquarters

City or Vicinity: Chicago

County: Cook

State: IL

Photographer: Emily Ramsey

Date Photographed: February 2014

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

Image 1 of 12

South elevation, looking north

Image 2 of 12

South elevation detail, looking north

Image 3 of 12

West elevation, looking northeast

Image 4 of 12

West elevation, window detail

Image 5 of 12

North elevation, looking south

Image 6 of 12

East elevation, looking west

Image 7 of 12

South entrance lobby, looking south

Image 8 of 12

South entrance lobby, looking north

Image 9 of 12

2nd floor southwest office with original historic wood paneling

Image 10 of 12

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

Typical upper floor offices

Image 11 of 12

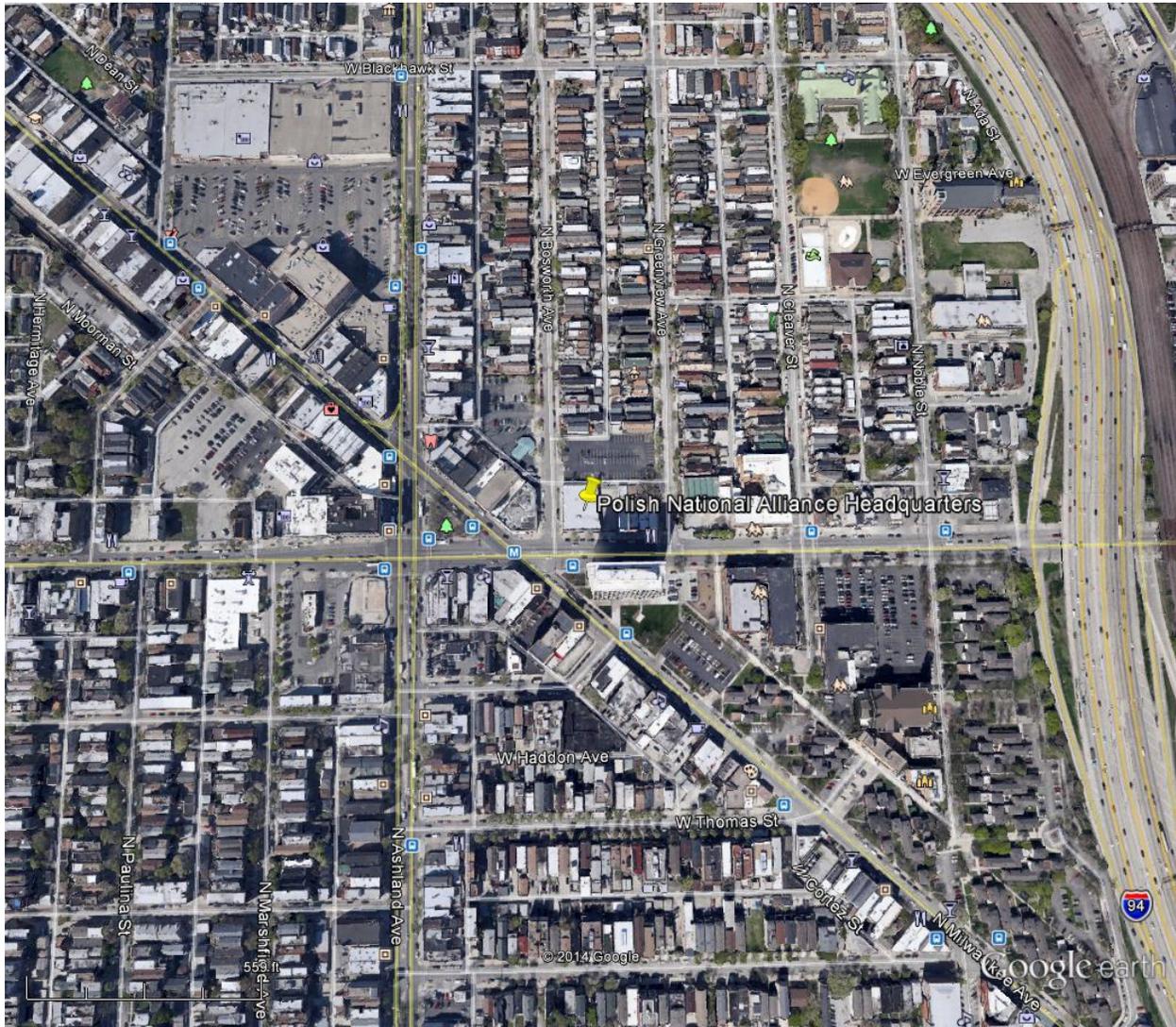
Typical upper floor offices

Image 12 of 12

Northeast stair

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State



Polish National Alliance Headquarters



1514 -1520 W. Division, Chicago
Cook County, IL
LAT: 41.903667°
LONG: -87.665848°

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

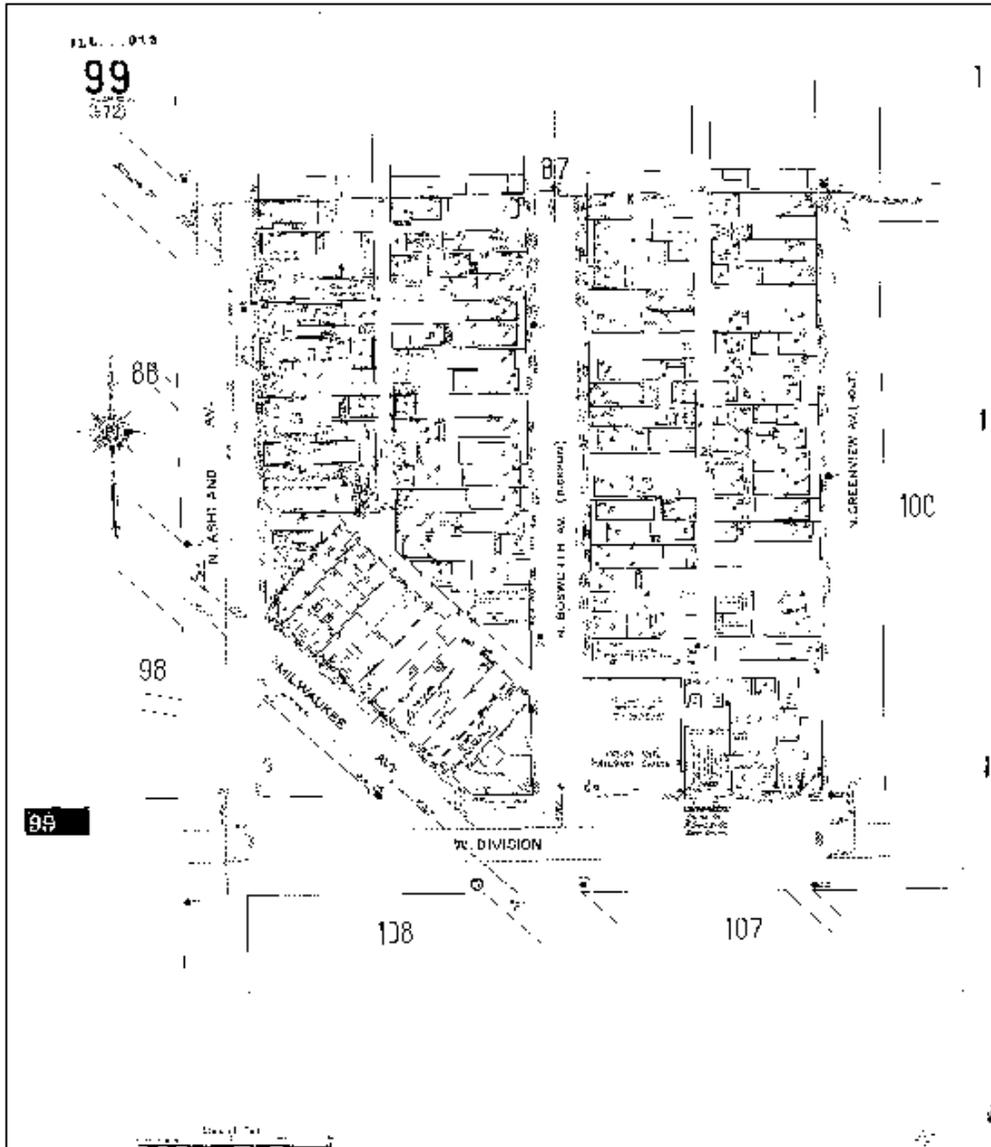


Figure 01. Chicago, Illinois Sanborn Map, 1951

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State

**POLISH ALLIANCE
PLANS \$200,000
HEADQUARTERS**

Bids are now being taken by the Polish National alliance for the erection of a two story headquarters building at the northeast corner of Division and Dickson streets, at a cost of approximately \$200,000.

According to Joseph Slupkowski, architect, the structure will be faced with stone on three sides and will have foundations capable of carrying two additional stories. It will be completely air conditioned.

In addition to the general offices of the alliance, now at 1200 North Ashland avenue, the new building will have a library, reading room, and museum, vaults, and a directors' room. The site is 96 by 116 feet.

Figure 02. "Polish Alliance Plans \$200,000 Headquarters," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 11, 1937



Figure 03. Home Office Building of the Polish National Alliance, historic postcard, looking northeast along West Division Street (chuckmanchicagonostalgia.wordpress.com)

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State



Figure 04. South elevation circa 1976, looking northeast along West Division Street



Figure 05. Opening dedication circa 1938, south elevation looking northeast along West Division Street (photo courtesy of the Polish National Alliance)

Polish National Alliance Headquarters

Name of Property

Cook Co., IL

County and State



Figure 06. South and east elevations circa 1976, looking northwest along West Division Street (photo courtesy of the Polish National Alliance)



Figure 07. Main entrance circa 1976, looking north (photo courtesy of the Polish National Alliance)

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

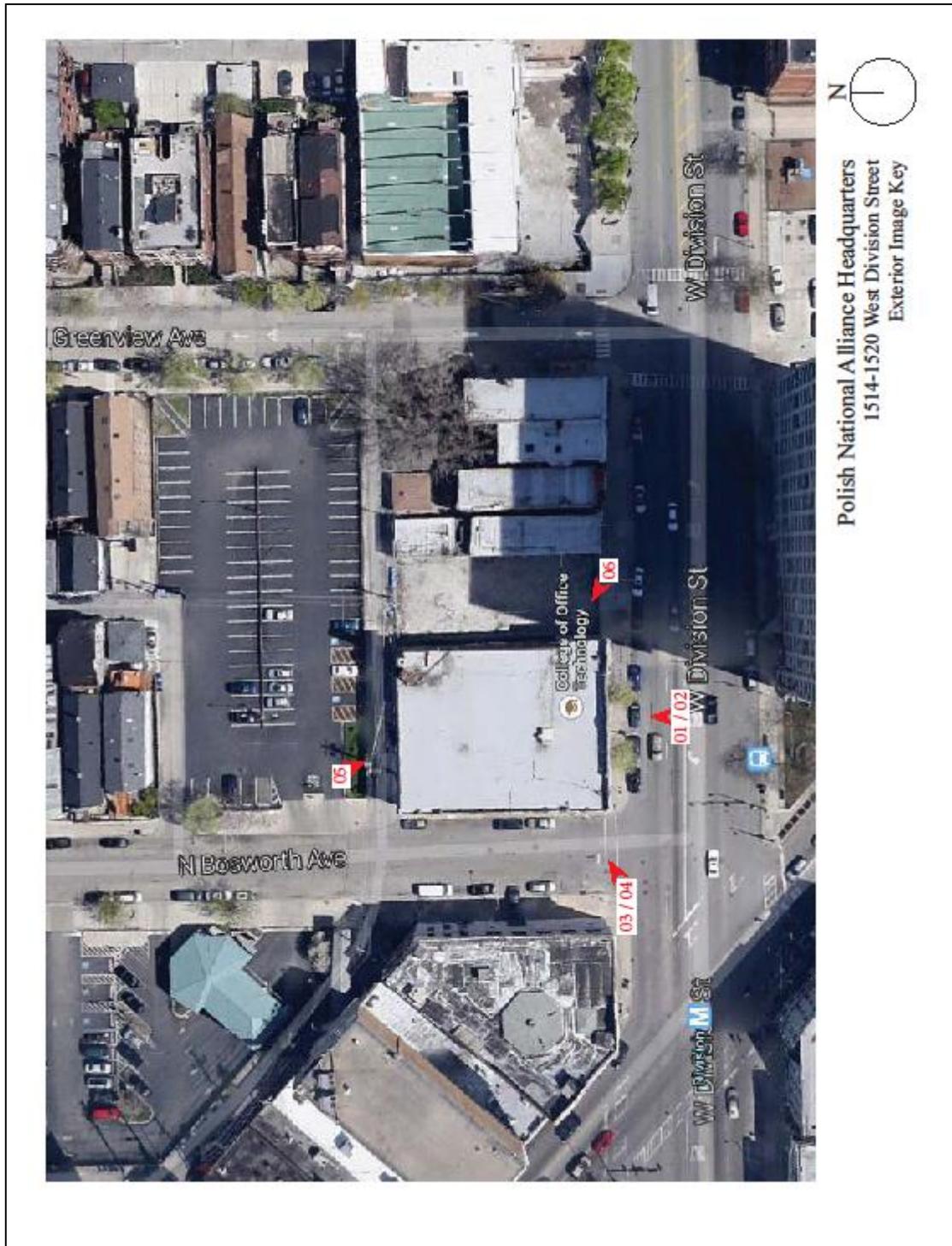


Figure 08. Site map and photo key

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

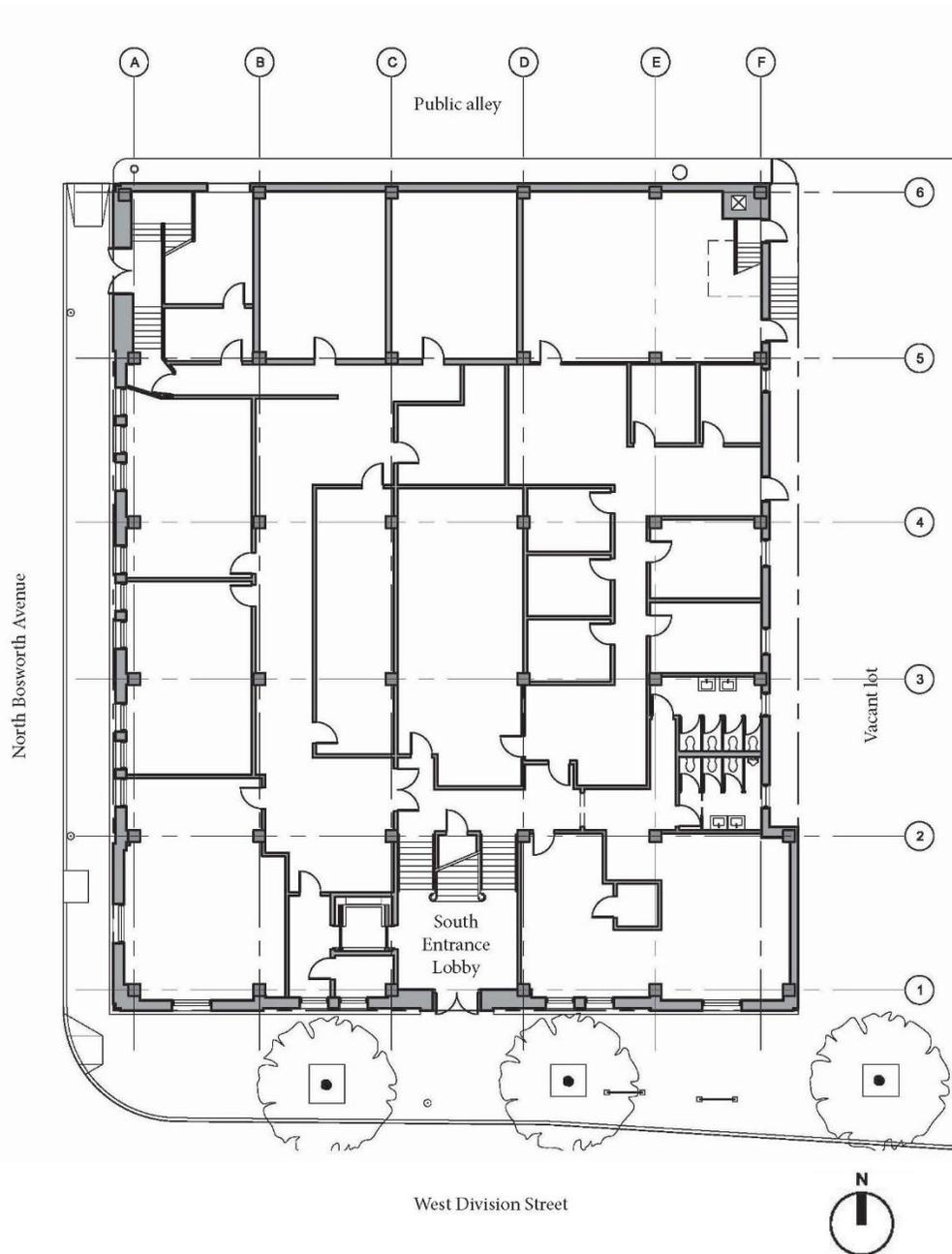


Figure 09. Basement and ground floor plan

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

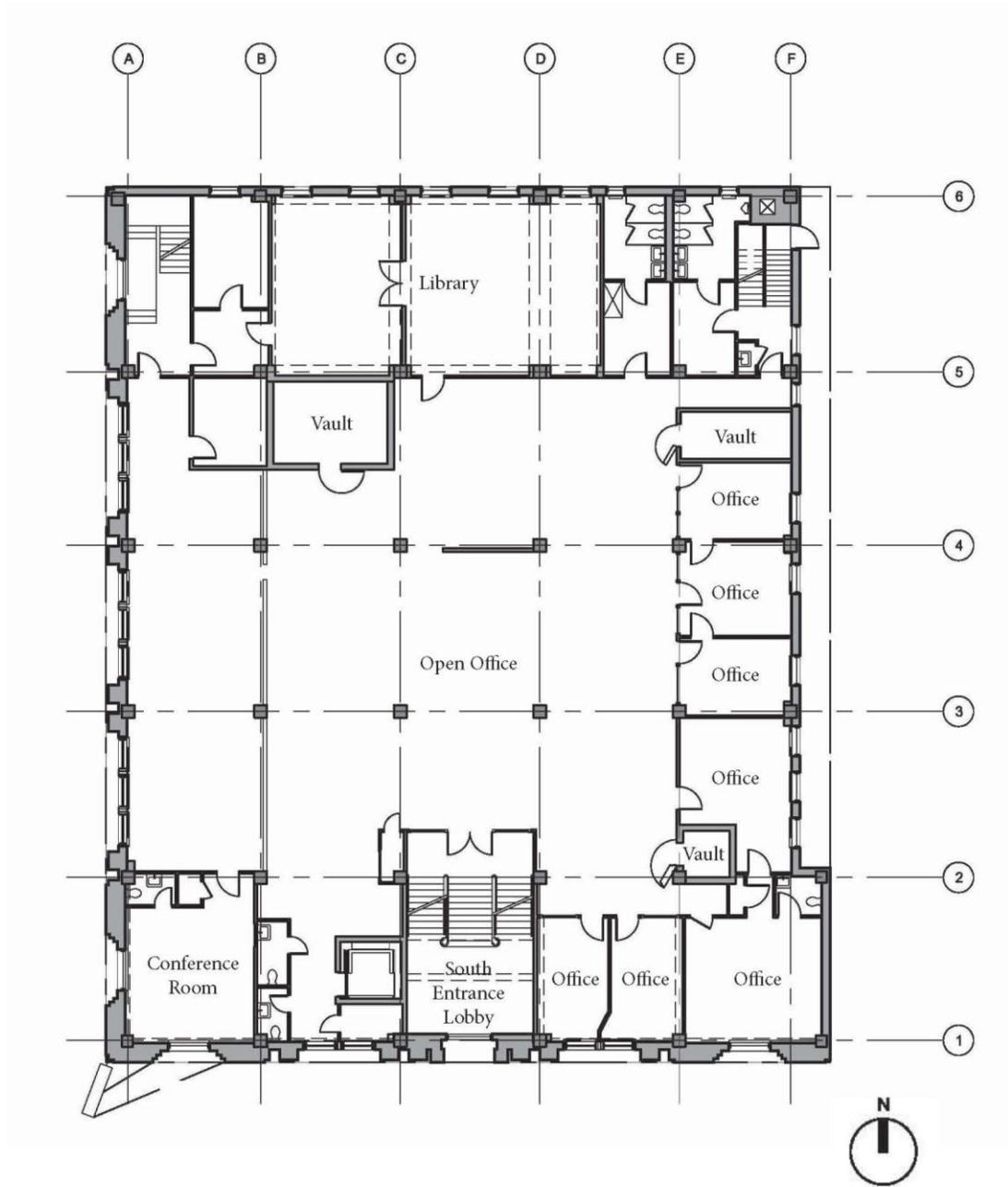


Figure 10. 1st floor plan

Polish National Alliance Headquarters
Name of Property

Cook Co., IL
County and State

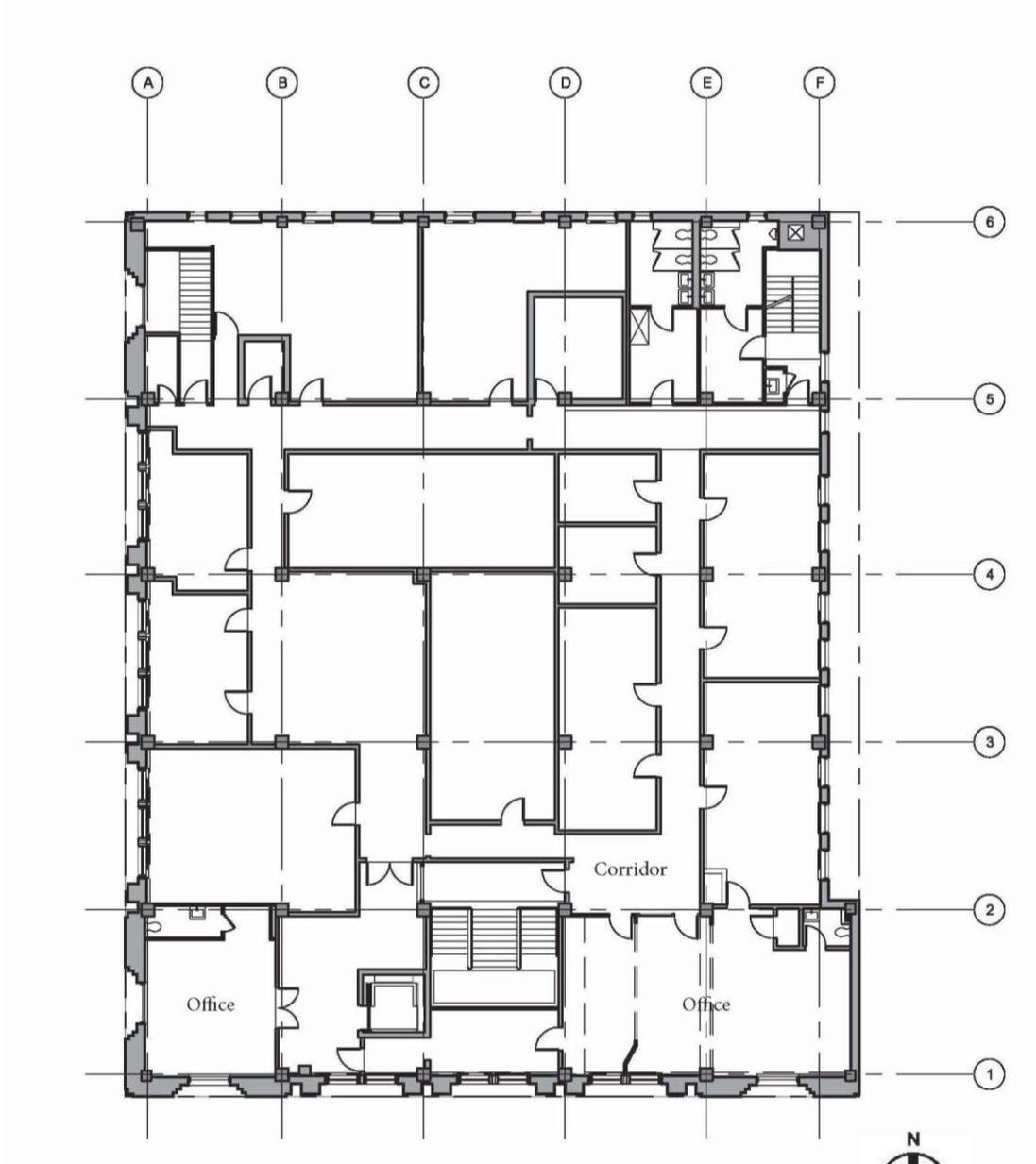


Figure 11. 2nd floor plan



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Handwritten graffiti on a chain-link fence, appearing to be the word 'BUBBLES' in a stylized, bubbly font.





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IF YOU'RE OFF HERE
YOU'RE NOT IN HERE

A bulletin board with a white border, containing several colorful notices (yellow, pink, green) and a collage of small photographs.





2A

2B



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