

# LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



## QUINCY ELEVATED STATION

220 SOUTH WELLS STREET

Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, September 7, 2017



CITY OF CHICAGO  
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development  
David Reifman, Commissioner



The Quincy Elevated Station in 1971, photographed by Jack Boucher, for the Historic American Engineering Record, Library of Congress.

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# **QUINCY ELEVATED STATION**

**220 SOUTH WELLS STREET**

**BUILT: 1895-1897**

**ARCHITECT: ALFRED M. HEDLEY**

**ENGINEER: JOHN ALEXANDER LOW WADDELL**

Since 1897, the Quincy Elevated Station has served generations of Chicagoans and visitors to the city. The station is located at the intersection of Quincy and Wells Streets in the heart of Chicago's central business district and is a representative example of an original Loop Elevated station.

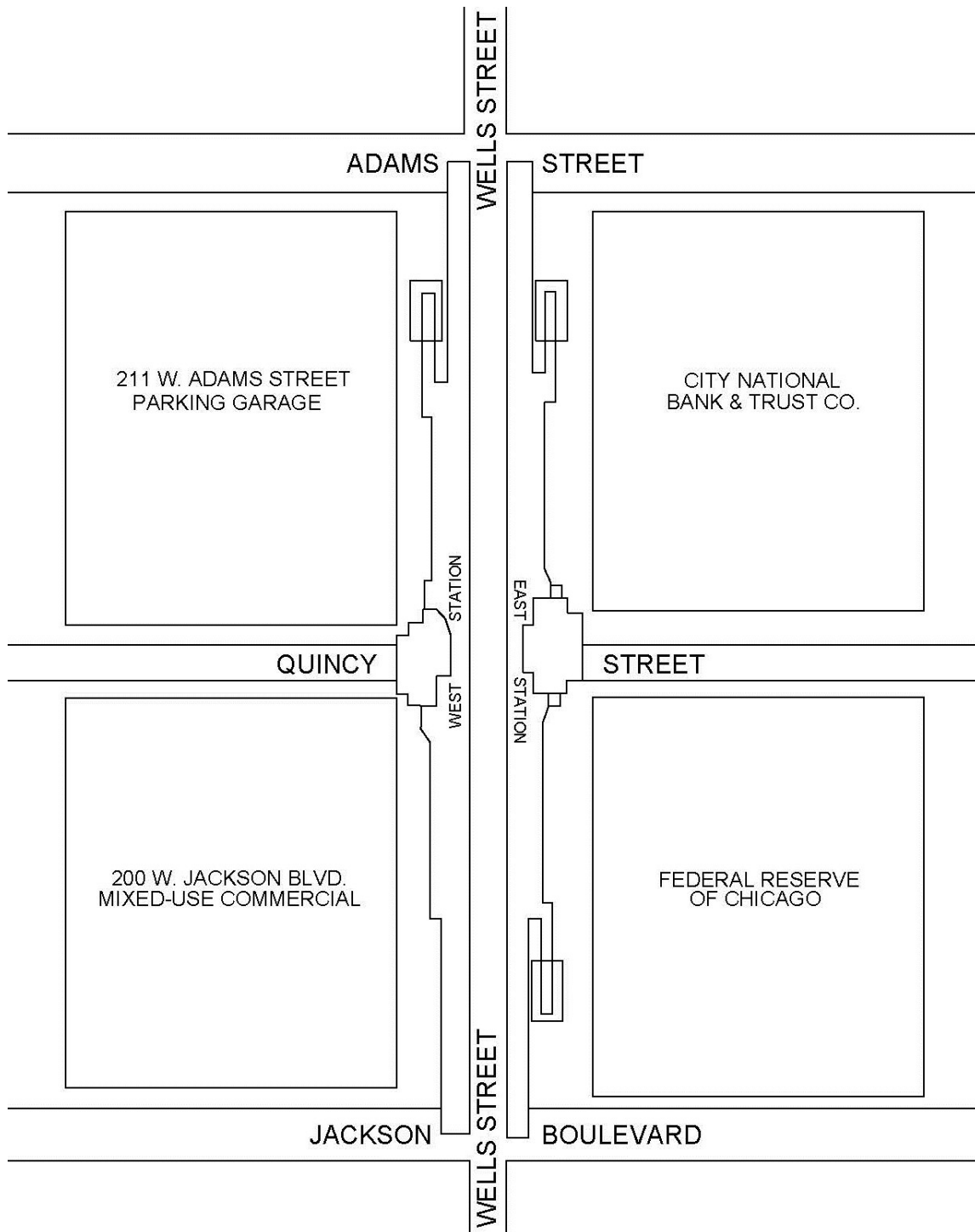
The Quincy Elevated Station is a component of the larger Loop Elevated, or 'L,' which has served as the heart of Chicago's rapid transit system for over a century. The massive riveted steel elevated structure is a tangible symbol of the Industrial Revolution which involved major changes in construction and transportation. Designed by prominent bridge engineer John Alexander Low Waddell, the Loop Elevated has become an iconic feature of the city. Its encircling perimeter so clearly defines the central business district that it gave downtown Chicago its famous nickname, the Loop.

In addition to easing access to downtown stores, jobs and services, the elevated lines that radiate from the Loop Elevated helped make possible the rapid development of the city's outlying neighborhoods during one of the greatest boom periods in the history of Chicago.

## **EARLY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN CHICAGO**

In the early decades of public transportation in Chicago, private companies received franchise agreements to operate horse-drawn omnibuses, horse-drawn streetcars, cable cars, electric streetcars, elevated railroads, and motorized buses within the city's borders. Granted by the City of Chicago, franchise agreements enabled companies to operate transit routes for a finite time period, typically 25, 50, or, in some cases, 100 years. Each franchise had unique requirements including station locations, fares, and deadlines for when routes and/or lines had to be completed.

Chicago's earliest transit companies used the horse-bus or omnibus, an enclosed four-wheeled coach carrying up to 30 people and pulled by a team of two horses, to move passengers primarily between downtown's hotels and railroad stations. Frank Parmelee established the city's first



**The Quincy Elevated Station consists of an east stationhouse and platform, a west stationhouse and platform, a sub-track mezzanine level which allows for passengers to transfer between in-bound and out-bound trains, and seven street level stairways.**



**The street-facing elevation of the west stationhouse of the Quincy Elevated Station. The station is located at the intersection Quincy and Wells Streets in Chicago's Loop. The station was designed in the Neoclassical style with Palladian influences between 1896-1897. (McGuire Iglesias & Associates, Inc.)**



**Top: The stationhouse interiors are embellished with pressed-metal wall and ceiling panels and varnished oak floors, wainscoting, and trim. Pictured is an interior view of west stationhouse at the Quincy Elevated Station.**

**Bottom: The design of the mezzanine level is simple, but references the design of the stationhouse above. The ceiling of the mezzanine level is pressed tin with an ornate floral pattern. The flooring is a wood deck. Cast iron columns with Corinthian capitals carry the staircases which lead to the stationhouse level. (McGuire Iglesias & Associates, Inc.)**

omnibus line in 1853 which consisted of six omnibuses, 30 horses, and a staff of twelve. In the 1850s, he operated lines on Madison, State, and Clark Streets as well as Cottage Grove Avenue. By the end of the 1850s, the omnibus had improved into the horse-drawn streetcar, which had flanged wheels that ran on steel rails laid in the street. In 1859, Parmelee proposed his own streetcar franchise to City Council, which was granted under the name of the Chicago City Railways Company.

By the 1880s, Chicago's expanding geographic area and surging population strained the horse-drawn streetcar system. Horse-drawn cars were slow and undependable, limited by the speed and stamina of the horses themselves. The cars also were heavy polluters, leaving manure—and often the bodies of horses worked to death—to foul city streets. A new way to propel the streetcars was needed. A solution arrived in 1873 when Andrew S. Halladie, a California wire manufacturer, invented the cable car as a replacement for the horse cars on San Francisco's notoriously steep streets.

After an 1880 visit to San Francisco convinced him of the technology's viability, Charles B. Holmes, president of Chicago City Railways Company, introduced cable cars along Chicago's State Street in 1882. During the late 1880s, entrepreneur Charles Tyson Yerkes bought the city's primary West and North Side transit companies and began consolidating them, amassing a vast network of routes and associated infrastructure. At its peak, Chicago's adoption of cable car technology was touted as the most extensive in the United States, far exceeding that of San Francisco where the technology had originated.

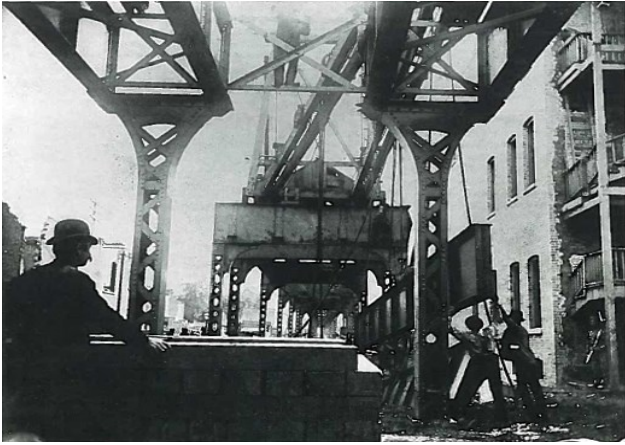
Chicago's cable car era was short lived and soon surpassed by another innovation, the electric streetcar. By the early 1890s, city ordinances enabling electrification led to the installation of miles of electric streetcars and soon enough the city's streets supported an array of transit options, including horse-drawn cars, cable cars, electric streetcars, steam- and, later, electric-powered, elevated railroads.

In 1906, the last of the city's cable car lines, along with the few remaining horse-drawn cars were converted to electric streetcar routes. Chicago had one of the largest street railway systems in the world and streetcars continued to be predominant in Chicago until the early 1930s. Motorized buses, which began operating in the city in 1927, would overtake the electric streetcar system. In the ensuing years, the city's streetcars had a slow decades-long decline and the last streetcar was retired in 1958.

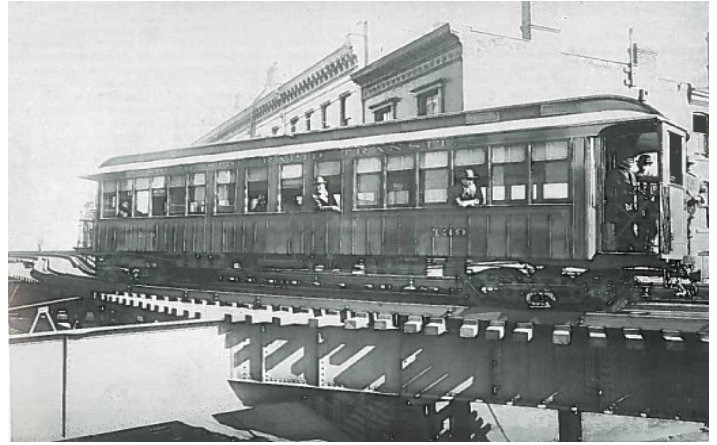
## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHICAGO'S ELEVATED RAIL SYSTEM**

An elevated railroad was proposed in Chicago as early as 1869 but it did not receive City Council approval. Between 1872 and 1900, over 70 private elevated railroad companies incorporated in Chicago with six companies successfully constructing elevated railroads for passenger use. These companies, each maintaining independent systems of lines and terminals under their franchise agreements, built much of Chicago's 'L' system between 1892 and 1908.

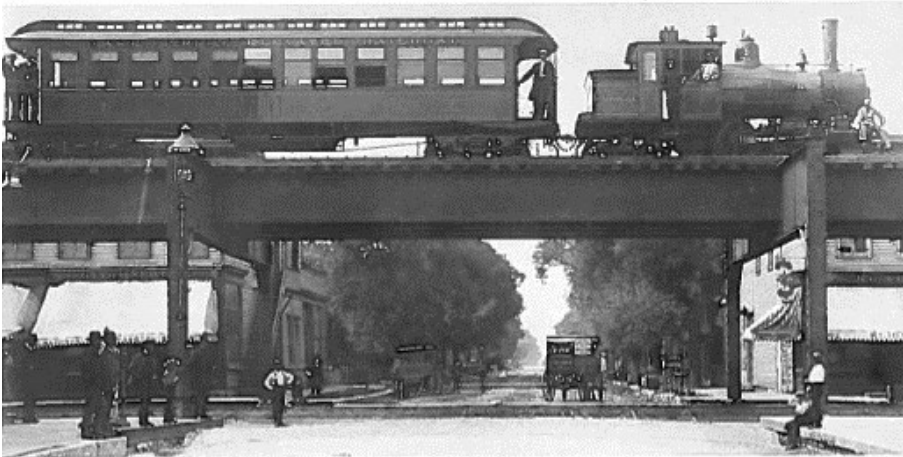




**A steam-powered crane raises a girder into position at 35th Street for the Chicago & South Side Rapid Transit Railroad Company, the city's first elevated railroad company established in 1888. This first elevated railroad ran along city-owned alleys earning the line its first nickname of the "Alley L". (Chicago Transit Authority Collection)**



**Car No. 139 of the Chicago and South Side Rapid Transit Line on a test run April 16, 1898, heading southbound at the Harrison Street curve (Chicago Transit Authority Collection)**



**Steam Locomotive No. 10 of the Lake Street Elevated Railroad on an inspection trip at Oakley Avenue during the summer of 1893. The Lake Street 'L' was Chicago's second elevated railroad, extending transportation from downtown, west to California Avenue and later to Oak Park. (Chicago Transit Authority Collection)**



**Before the Loop Elevated, the Lake Street 'L' originally terminated on Wacker Drive near Madison Street. Pictured is construction of the Lake Street Elevated Railroad on Wacker Drive. (Chicago Transit Authority Collection)**

The oldest of Chicago's elevated railroad companies was the Chicago & South Side Rapid Transit Railroad Company, incorporated in 1888 with a 50-year franchise from the City of Chicago. In 1892, the company's elevated line ran from Congress Street to 39th Street. The line gained its moniker, the Alley 'L,' as it had purchased its own right-of-way along back lots adjacent to the public alley. In 1893, the line was extended to Jackson Park to facilitate easy access from downtown to the World's Columbian Exposition. By 1908, additional branches served Englewood, Kenwood, and Chicago's Union Stock Yards. The Alley 'L' was powered by steam locomotives until the company adopted electric traction in 1898.

To serve customers to the west of downtown, the Lake Street Elevated Railroad Company was incorporated in 1888 by political powerhouse Michael McDonald. Built above its namesake street, the Lake Street 'L' as it became known officially opened for passenger traffic in 1893 with the line extending from North Wacker Drive (then Market Street) west to California Avenue. By 1910, the line reached suburban Forest Park. Like the Alley 'L,' the Lake Street 'L' began its service with steam locomotives. In 1895, the company awarded a contract to General Electric to convert its line to electric traction and achieved line electrification in 1896.

The Metropolitan West Side Elevated Railroad Company, known as the "Met," was the third of the city's elevated railroads, incorporating on March 9, 1892. The Met was given a 50-year franchise to connect downtown with the West and Northwest Sides of the city via a main line that split into three branches: Garfield Park, Douglas Park and Logan Square/Humboldt Park. The Met commenced service on May 6, 1895 and was the first transit line to utilize electric traction technology from its inception.

These early elevated railroads each operated separate downtown terminals that were rather far from the city's center. Transit passengers often preferred the city's surface lines, which brought them closer to their destinations. The new elevated railroads also competed directly with downtown's well established cable car network, which already included a loop route around the city's central business district.

While the need for a shared downtown terminal for the city's elevated lines was acute, its realization was deemed nearly impossible within the political and fiscal constraints in Chicago during this period. Charles Tyson Yerkes was captivated by the idea of integrating the city's existing elevated lines through a shared elevated structure that encircled the center of downtown Chicago. In 1894 Yerkes gained controlling interest in the Lake Street Elevated which would form the north leg of the Loop. Over the next three years Yerkes became the driving force behind the creation of the Loop Elevated by garnering political support and funding. In addition to his great personal wealth, which he invested heavily in the project, Yerkes had an exceptional ability at raising capital, forming companies and obtaining allies for the project, sometimes by fraudulent means. Yerkes did not control the South Side Elevated Railroad and the Met, though in order to build the Loop Elevated the city required that he allow those companies to share the track.

On October 3, 1897, the Loop Elevated officially opened for service. In 1900 a fourth railway company was added to the system: Northwestern Elevated Railroad. Financed by Yerkes, the

Northwestern ‘L’ extended north from downtown along the Loop Elevated to Wilson Avenue. The line reached the City of Evanston in 1908 and the Village of Wilmette in 1912.

While the Loop Elevated provided shared track and stationhouses, its individual rail companies still retained their own separate facilities with no free passenger interchanges. During this era, stations typically had multiple ticket agents and physical barriers to separate the paying customers of each transit line. Nevertheless, the public readily adopted the new elevated service, which resulted in substantial revenue increases for its participating companies. The Met, for example, had a 50% ridership increase after adding Loop Elevated service. The Loop Elevated soon defined the core of Chicago’s business district and generated considerable cachet for those businesses located inside the “Loop,” the nickname for the area encircled by the elevated.

#### *TRANSIT CONSOLIDATION AND MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION: 1911-1947*

In 1901 Yerkes left Chicago and sold his railway holdings. Over the succeeding years Samuel Insull, Chairman of Commonwealth Edison, began gaining control of the railways. In 1924 Insull and his associates developed a plan to unify the elevated companies into a new corporation called the Chicago Rapid Transit Company (CRT). Operations under CRT began on January 9, 1924, though there were no route or schedule changes.

The Great Depression and the rise of the automobile led to declining ridership for the CRT in the 1940s. In addition, the original franchises granted by the City of Chicago to the early elevated rail companies were set to expire. The Illinois General Assembly passed an act in 1945 to create the Chicago Transit Authority, empowering the new entity with the right to acquire, own, and operate the transportation systems in the Cook County metropolitan area. On October 1, 1947, CTA assumed control of elevated and streetcar operations within the City of Chicago including the Loop Elevated and its stations.

## **QUINCY ELEVATED STATION CONSTRUCTION AND DESCRIPTION**

The Quincy Elevated Station opened for service on October 3, 1897, with the formal opening of the Loop Elevated. The station is located at the intersection of Wells and Quincy Streets on the west leg of the Loop. The station consists of covered stairways from sidewalk level, two station houses connected by a mezzanine, and passenger platforms covered with canopies.

Seven street-level stairways provide access to the station. The stairways each have pedimented entrances and canopy roofs fabricated from corrugated sheet metal. Ogee patterned metal railings topped by wood handrails, which are painted black, enclose the stairways. This railing pattern is used repeatedly throughout the station and provides visual continuity.

The station’s two near-identical Neoclassical style stationhouses are oriented parallel with Wells Street and positioned above the intersection with Quincy Street. The exteriors are clad in sheet metal decorated with Classical ornament including window surrounds, fluted Corinthian pilasters, and a frieze ornamented by acanthus leaf wreaths. Each station house is topped with a sheet-metal-clad hipped roof with scrolled finial decoration. The interiors of each house contain open passenger circulation areas and an enclosed ticket booth. The ceilings and walls are



The west elevation of the west stationhouse (above) with the mezzanine level below it. The stationhouse exteriors are decorated with Neoclassical details (bottom left) rendered in pressed metal. Below right is one of the covered stairways which provide access to the Quincy Elevated Station.



finished with pressed tin panels with intricate floral motifs. Trim and woodwork throughout each interior is varnished oak trim. Below the track level an open mezzanine provides access between the two station houses. The mezzanine has a utilitarian design with wood plank flooring, a pressed metal ceiling and metal guardrails topped with wood handrails.

The station's platforms are composed of wood decking. The platform's canopies consist of curved gull-wing supports with brackets and latticework topped by corrugated metal canopy roofs that match the corrugated metal roofs found on the stationhouses.

The Quincy Elevated Station is supported by the steel structure, or trestle, that carries the elevated trains. The trestle is constructed from steel plates, I-beams, and angles joined by structural steel rivets. Between the 1840s and 1940s, riveted connections were a primary fastening method via a method called hot riveting. The resulting distinctive rivet heads from this labor-intensive technique are evident today on older portions of the structure. The Loop Elevated is supported by concrete foundations that support a series of columns, or bents, spaced roughly between 30 and 50 feet apart that rise from street level to a height of two stories. The bents carry transverse plate girders, spanning the street below, which, in turn, support longitudinal trusses, also known as track stringers. At Quincy Station, as at all Loop Elevated stations, the elevated structure widens to accommodate passenger platforms and stationhouses.

The steady need for increased capacity in downtown Chicago resulted in a series of station modifications at the Quincy Elevated Station in the years following its construction. In 1903, the station received a platform extension that was followed in 1913 by another platform extension and the construction of an additional exit stairway.<sup>1,2</sup> During the 1920s, Quincy had multiple platform extensions to accommodate eight-car trains.<sup>3</sup> In 1941, Chicago Rapid Transit Company designed simple canopy extensions that remain extant today at the outskirts of the platform.<sup>4</sup> The 1950s and 1960s brought numerous changes to the Loop Elevated with upgrades that included the removal of continuous platforms along Wells Street and the 1955 demolition of the Met's former Wells Street Terminal.<sup>5</sup> The station received an extensive renovation during the 1980s.

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<sup>1</sup> Northwestern Elevated Rail Road, Loop Division. "Details of Metal Work for Platform Extension, Quincy St. and Fifth Ave. Station." Plan set dated July 22, 1903, on file at Chicago Transit Authority.

<sup>2</sup> Northwestern Elevated Rail Road, Loop Division, Sec. A. "Layout of Platform Extension and Additional Exit Stair at Quincy St. and 5th Ave. Station." Plan set dated July 1913, on file at Chicago Transit Authority.

<sup>3</sup> Northwestern Elevated Rail Road, Loop Division. "Quincy & Wells Layout to Addition of Platforms." Miscellaneous plans, dated 1921, 1954, 1925, and 1929, on file at Chicago Transit Authority.

<sup>4</sup> Chicago Rapid Transit Company, Loop Division. "Quincy and Wells St. Station, Steel Details of Canopy Extension." Miscellaneous plans, 1941, on file at Chicago Transit Authority.

<sup>5</sup> National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: West Loop-La Salle Street Historic District. Prepared by City of Chicago, June 1, 2013. On file at City of Chicago, Department of Planning and Development, 33 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois.

**The mezzanine level, suspended beneath the Loop Elevated structure, connects the two station houses. The ogee patterned guardrails are used throughout the station.**



**Restored to their original appearance in the 1980s, the interiors of the stationhouses have pressed metal walls and ceilings and varnished oak millwork.**



**The wood-decked passenger platforms are protected from the elements by a canopy with a corrugated sheet metal roof. The taller hipped roof of the station house is visible behind the canopy.**



**The canopy over the platforms is carried by curved supports which are built-up from steel members riveted together.**



Today, the Quincy Elevated Station serves CTA's Brown, Orange, Purple and Pink Lines. The station's contemporary setting consists primarily of parking structures, mixed-use office buildings, and some of the city's most architecturally significant bank buildings, including the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and the former City National Bank & Trust Company designed by D.H. Burnham & Co.

## **THE ENGINEER AND ARCHITECT**

Engineer John Alexander Low Waddell and architect Alfred M. Hedley both contributed to the design of the Quincy Elevated Station. In 1896, Waddell designed the Loop Elevated structure and developed concepts for its stations. Hedley refined Waddell's conceptual designs for six of the stations that were installed on the Loop in 1897.

### *JOHN ALEXANDER LOW WADDELL*

While serving as consulting engineer to the Northwestern Elevated Railroad and Union Elevated Railroad, Waddell designed the Loop Elevated structure and prepared concepts for stationhouses along the line, including the Quincy Elevated Station. Waddell's exact design for Quincy's stationhouses was modified yet the steel elevated structure and his concepts for the station's mezzanine and platforms were carried forward per his original plans.

Waddell was born in 1854 in Ontario, Canada. During his lifetime, Waddell built a reputation as one of the 20th century's best known and highly respected bridge builders. After receiving his civil engineering degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York in 1875, Waddell traveled to Canada to work with Canada's Marine Department of the Dominion before working with the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In the late 1870s, Waddell returned to the United States where he designed coal mine structures in West Virginia. He then returned to his studies, obtaining a Bachelor of Applied Science in early 1882 and the degree of Master of Engineering in June of 1882 from McGill University in Montreal.

In 1887, Waddell founded his own engineering design company in Kansas City, Missouri. He subsequently founded five other companies until his death in 1938. His firms include: J.A.L. Waddell (1887-1898), Waddell & Hedrick (1899-1907), Waddell & Harrington (1907-1915), Waddell & Son (1915-1920), J.A.L. Waddell (1921 -1926), Waddell & Hardesty (1927- 1945). Waddell designed over 1,000 bridges in the U.S. and Canada, as well as Mexico, Russia, China, Japan, and New Zealand. His clients included dozens of major railroads, municipalities and governments worldwide. As consulting engineer to the Northwestern Elevated Railroad, Waddell had a leading role in designing the ca. 1899 portions of the company's elevated structure, which would later be incorporated into CTA's Brown, Red, and Purple Lines.

Waddell also created design standards for elevated rail structures and helped identify materials suitable for long-span bridges. He made important advances in vertical-lift bridge designs. The Waddell-designed Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge (1914) over the South Branch of the Chicago

River as well as the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway Bridges (1912-15) over the Calumet River are designated Chicago Landmarks.

Waddell was also an advocate of quality training of engineers and the professionalization of the field of engineering. In 1878, Waddell taught periodically at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and chaired the civil engineering department at the Imperial University of Tokyo, Japan. In 1882, Waddell was hired as a foreign advisor by the Meiji government of the Empire of Japan. He wrote several books on the design of bridges, including *The Designing of Ordinary Iron Highway Bridges*, which became the seminal text at major engineering schools throughout the world.

### *ALFRED M. HEDLEY*

Alfred M. Hedley was the consulting architect for the Union Elevated Railroad Company in 1897 and the design of the Quincy Elevated Station is largely his, though it appears he furthered concept plans first developed by Waddell in 1896. Hedley's set of drawings simplified Waddell's original vision for more ornate stationhouses. In addition to the Quincy Elevated Station, Hedley designed five other Loop Elevated Stations: LaSalle/Van Buren, Dearborn/Van Buren, State/Van Buren, Madison/Wells and Randolph/Wells.

Very little is known about Hedley's life. Based on the available United States Census Bureau records, he was born in England circa 1870 to James and Emily Hedley. Hedley immigrated with his family to New York City around 1880.

The Hedley family had a long transportation tradition, with William Hedley, grandfather of Alfred, inventing one of the first steam locomotives in England; before immigrating to the U.S., his father James was the general superintendent of the Great Northern Railroad in England; and his nephew Sidney H. Bingham served as executive director of the New York Transit Authority. Alfred Hedley's brother, Frank S. Hedley, was general manager of the Lake Street 'L' at the time of the construction of the Quincy Elevated Station. The extent of Hedley's time in Chicago is unknown. Hedley appears to have practiced architecture primarily in New York City, where he served as treasurer of the Architectural Draftsmen's Club of New York.

## **THE DEBATE TO DEMOLISH THE LOOP ELEVATED: 1968-1981**

In 1965, work began on a comprehensive study of the public transit system in downtown known as the Chicago Central Area Transit Project (CCATP). When completed in 1968, the study called for the replacement of the Loop Elevated with a new \$1.6 billion subway system in the Loop. The new subways would connect to the elevated lines outside the Loop and the Loop Elevated would therefore no longer be needed and could be demolished.

Proponents of the new subway system argued that the Loop Elevated compromised the environmental and aesthetic quality of the Loop, impeded adoption of new advances in transportation technology, and was a safety hazard. Some argued that the Loop Elevated hindered appreciation of designated Chicago Landmarks in its vicinity.



A campaign to preserve the Loop Elevated was led by Chicago architect Harry Weese who praised the Loop Elevated as an example of a “historic structure of an engineering type singularly characteristic of the dawn of urban industrial technology whose labor-intensive craftsmanship cannot be duplicated today.” Weese was supported by numerous organizations such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Chicago Historical Society, the Society for Industrial Archeology, and the National Association of Railroad Passengers. In addition to the loss of transit service if the Loop Elevated was demolished, preservationists argued that the structure defined the historic urban core of the city. Preservationists also asserted that the Loop ‘L’ was an efficient transportation network that, with minimal upgrades, could continue to serve the city for another century.

In 1979, the City of Chicago and State of Illinois finalized policy recommendations to retain and rehabilitate the Loop Elevated in lieu of construction of a new subway system. Governor James R. Thompson and Mayor Jane Byrne agreed to use funds earmarked for the subway project toward substitute transportation capital improvements including the rehabilitation of the elevated structure. In 1981, the City of Chicago and CTA published a *Master Plan for the Loop Elevated Rehabilitation and Historic Preservation*, which outlined future plans for the property and identified one station, Quincy, for restoration.

## **STATION RESTORATION: 1985-1988**

The 1981 *Master Plan for the Loop Elevated* identified Quincy Station as the best example of an original ‘L’ station among the surviving Loop Elevated stations of the time. As a result, Quincy Station was selected to be maintained in an “early 1900s” condition.<sup>6</sup> From 1985 to 1988, the station received an extensive renovation that restored the property to its historical appearance. A 1985 Sun-Times article succinctly described the project,

*...workmen largely will have to take the 450-foot long station apart down to its steel trestles and wood beams, and then put it back together, making it serviceable for another 40 years.<sup>7</sup>*

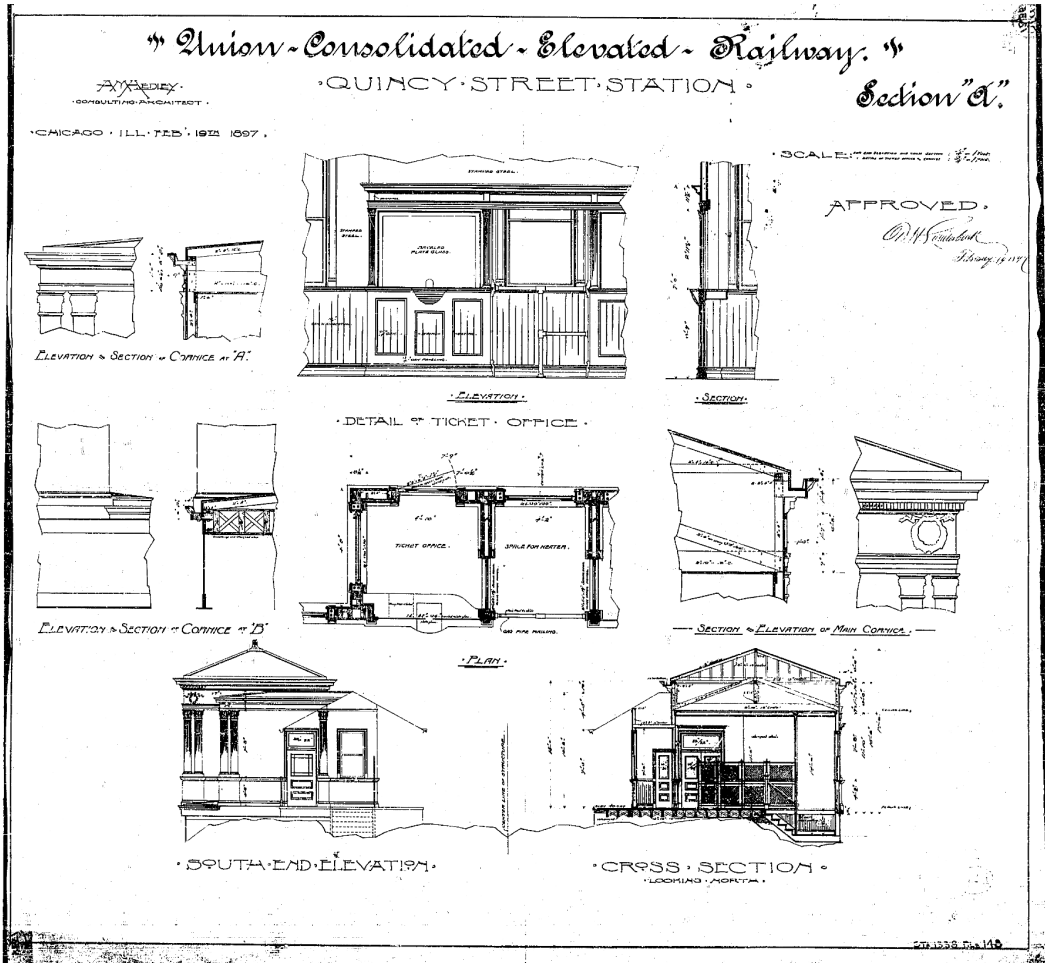
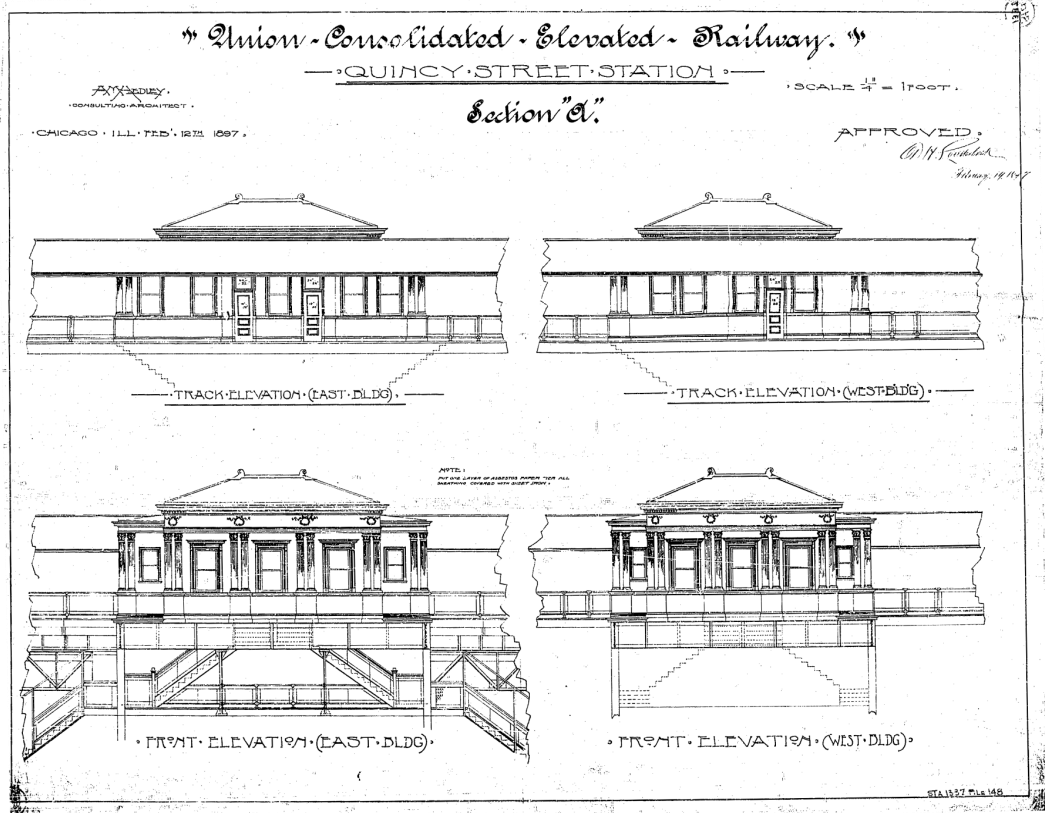
A review of surviving architectural drawings reveals that the project left only limited examples of ca. 1897 framing, wood trusses, beams, and bracing intact at the property with some original metal architectural details (e.g., wreaths, pilasters, and window frames) reinstalled on the rebuilt stationhouses. Circa 1940s canopy extensions and guardrails were retained at the platform’s outskirts. During the 1980s project, much the remainder of the station was recreated in kind with new materials. As described in an account of the station’s improvements upon its 1988 reopening,

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<sup>6</sup> City of Chicago and Chicago Transit Authority. “Master Plan for the Loop Elevated: Rehabilitation and Historic Preservation.” September 1981. On file at Chicago Transit Authority, 567 W. Lake Street, Chicago, IL 60661.

<sup>7</sup> Bob Olmstead, “Loop L Stop to Rise Again in 1897 Glory.” *Chicago Sun-Times*, November 20, 1985.

Original drawings of the Quincy Elevated Station like these allowed for the faithful restoration of the station in the 1980s. (Chicago Transit Authority collection)



*Although the old pressed tin walls and ceiling coverings had suffered much mutilation, enough was salvaged to be used as templates to custom make replacements. Copies of turn-of-the-century posters will be displayed rather than modern advertising. Ornate railings and grillwork have been replaced. Signage has been designed to match that of the period. Agent's booths, turnstiles, and other 1988 necessities have also been given an 1890s look.<sup>8</sup>*

With a project slogan of “moving towards the future while respecting the past,” the restoration thoughtfully recreated the station to the greatest extent feasible. To provide a faithful reinterpretation, CTA copied existing wood trim profiles from salvaged examples and carried forward many existing proportions and materials into the new design. CTA also introduced other elements to enhance the station’s historic character, for example, new wood frames that were installed along the platform to house reproductions of vintage posters.<sup>9, 10</sup>

The goal of the restoration was to bring the station as close to its original appearance as possible, while maintaining capacity for current and projected ridership and incorporating contemporary standards for transit facilities. The stationhouses were constructed with relatively lightweight materials including sheet metal and wood, which, after over 90 years, required substantial attention. The scope of work restored existing materials where possible. Materials deemed beyond repair were replaced in kind with new materials that were carefully replicated to match the originals. The restoration included the installation of historic-style lighting, and period historic-style typography that was intended to emulate what could have been installed at the station in 1897. The restoration effort, led by Vinci Hamp Architects, Inc., began in November 1985. The station was closed for the duration of the project which continued for over two years. On February 8, 1988, the station re-opened for service.

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<sup>8</sup> Chicago Transit Authority News Release, “Restored Quincy/Wells Station to Reopen Monday.” February 5, 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Bob Olmstead, “Loop L Stop to Rise Again in 1897 Glory.” *Chicago Sun-Times*, November 20, 1985.

<sup>10</sup> “Mayor Takes a Ride.” *Chicago Tribune*, February 9, 1988, p. 3.

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sections 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a final recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object with the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated “criteria for designation,” as well as possesses a significant degree of historic integrity to convey its significance. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Quincy Elevated Station be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

### ***Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State or National Heritage***

*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.*

- The Quincy Elevated Station was built in 1897 and is one of the Loop 'L's original stations and it remains the best example of the Loop's original station designs.
- With the exception of a hiatus for a restoration in the 1980s, the Quincy Elevated Station has served Chicago commuters and visitors for well over a century.
- Quincy Elevated Station, and its related Loop Elevated stations, have long contributed to the economy and culture of the City of Chicago by providing convenient access to jobs, cultural and government institutions and commercial activities that are concentrated in the central business district.
- Portions of the Quincy Elevated Station display hot-riveted steel construction that exemplifies the influence of the Industrial Revolution on Chicago's architecture in the late-nineteenth century.

### ***Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture***

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

- The Quincy Elevated Station is an excellent and rare example of an original Loop Elevated station, a very distinctive and specialized historic building type in the City of Chicago.
- Elevated railways and their stations, like Quincy Elevated Station, were innovations in urban planning and public transportation adopted by Chicago in the late nineteenth century to relieve street congestion and improve mobility.
- The twin stationhouses at the Quincy Elevated Station exhibit fine architectural design and detailing, including Neoclassical-style pressed-metal ornamentation on their exteriors, and on their interiors pressed metal ceiling and wall panels and extensive varnished oak mill-

work.

- The Quincy Elevated Station exhibits a high degree of craftsmanship in traditional building materials and construction methods.

### ***Criterion 5: Work of Significant Architect or Designer***

*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, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- John Alexander Low Waddell, the designer of the Loop Elevated structure as well the conceptual design for Quincy Elevated Station, is a significant engineer in the history of Chicago and internationally as a specialist in bridges and elevated rail structures.
- Waddell wrote seminal texts on iron and steel bridge design and he was influential in improving professional education for engineers in the United States.
- Throughout his career, Waddell designed thousands of structures throughout the world, many of which many remain in use today. Other examples of Waddell's work in Chicago include the Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge (1914) and the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway bridges (1912-1915), both designated Chicago Landmarks.

### ***Integrity Criterion***

*The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value.*

The Quincy Elevated Station has retained its original location and use since 1897. Similarly, its immediate setting along the Loop Elevated has remained consistent over the decades. Necessary upgrades to maintain the property in a state of good repair and meet contemporary standards have prioritized the preservation of existing materials, compatible repair, and in-kind replacement, when required, using original architectural drawings as reference. The station's overall design intent is intact and, as a result, the station continues to express its historic associations and features.

## **SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES**

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the “significant historical and architectural features” of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of the Quincy Elevated Station, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as follows:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Quincy Elevated Station including the stationhouses, passenger platforms and canopies, the open-air mezzanine level, and stairways from street-level.
- The publicly accessible interiors of the two stationhouses at the Quincy Elevated Station.



**Stationhouse interior.** (Tony Coppoletta, ChicagoL.org)

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 Chicago Transit Authority Archives  
 Vinci Hamp Architects, Inc. Archives  
 Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Archives  
 Historic American Engineering Record  
 United States Census Records



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, Planning, Design & Historic Preservation Division, City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 1006, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-9140) fax, web site: [www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks](http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks)*

*This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*

## **COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

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