

ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-620 through 690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the Century Building (the "Building"), located at 202 South State Street, Chicago, Illinois, and legally described in **Exhibit 1**, attached hereto, satisfies three (3) criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an outstanding example of a distinct retail building type known as a "tall shops" building. "Tall shops" buildings were the retail equivalent of the speculative office building, using high-rise structures to create interior shopping "streets." Free from the vagaries of outside weather, noise, and bustle, this early vertical version of an indoor mall allowed shoppers to move from one floor to the next as they perused goods and services; and

WHEREAS, "tall shops" buildings like the Building were designed to attract the large numbers of small- and mid-sized merchants and service providers who desired the advantages of being located on State Street but for whom street-level space did not make economic sense. Handsome edifices with lavish entries and lobbies were designed to attract and encourage potential customers to enter and circulate through the building. Elegant display cases on the ground floor allowed upper-floor tenants to advertise their wares. On the upper floors, glass corridor walls of the tenant spaces functioned like shop windows. Tenants enjoyed the advantages of single ownership in terms of scale of operation and building management while amenities such as restaurants doubled as a draw for potential customers; and

WHEREAS, the Building is prominently sited at the southwest corner of State and Adams Streets. Despite occupying only about half of the State Street frontage in the Loop, speculative high-rise "tall shops" and professional office buildings, typically occupying corners, along with major department store buildings, occupying half- or full-block lots, visually dominated the streetscape and created a distinctive streetwall with canyon-like views; and

WHEREAS, the Building manifests in built form the increasing demand for retail space on State Street and the consequent skyrocketing prices for it in the decades before the First World War. Developers exploited advances in building technologies and materials to construct taller buildings by creating skyscrapers on the highly desirable but often narrow parcels they were able to assemble. These purpose-built retail "tall shops" structures contributed to the increasing density of State Street over the course of its evolution as Chicago's primary retail corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Building is a Commercial-style building in the tradition of the Chicago School of architecture. Experiments with building materials and technologies allowed buildings to grow taller, exterior walls to open up to allow in more light, and usable interior space to be maximized with fewer columns. The Building utilized these key elements of the Chicago School of architecture; and

WHEREAS, the Building is located on State Street in Chicago's Loop, home to more buildings from the Chicago School of architecture than anywhere else. The Building represents the final years of this movement, generally considered to end with the onset of the First World War, where emphasis on expression of the steel-frame construction gave way to emphasis on the verticality and sleek, linear geometry seen in much of the following decades' skyscrapers; and

WHEREAS, the Building was one of dozens of Loop structures built in the two decades leading up to the First World War featuring white-glazed-terra-cotta cladding. Taken together, they represented the most extensive use of white-glazed terra cotta in the city; and

WHEREAS, although the Building employs the steel frame, large window openings, and white-glazed terra cotta that characterized Holabird & Roche's State Street commercial buildings since 1900, it also signaled a change. The repeating, narrow, continuous mullions within each bay, the overall height of the structure relative to its width, and the darkening and recessing of spandrel panels so they visually recede relative to the verticals give the façades a striking emphasis on verticality. This new emphasis was central to skyscraper designs of the following decades by Holabird and Roche and its successor firm, Holabird and Root; and

WHEREAS, the Building displays a high level of detailing and craftsmanship in the Late Gothic terra-cotta ornamentation at the Building's exterior; and

WHEREAS, the 1951-1952 remodeling of the Building's exterior at the first and second floors by architect William Sevc for Home Federal Savings reflects the optimism and prosperity of post-war America when new was equated with better. Like other financial institutions of the era, appearing modern and efficient was seen as a way to attract customers. The unadorned, smooth lines of the International Style were used to communicate this message; and

WHEREAS, the wholesale change of storefronts, indeed even entire facades, has been a continuous phenomenon from State Street's earliest days. With the recovery of the economy after the Second World War, modernization of commercial spaces accelerated on State Street. The Building's altered exterior at the first and second floors is especially noteworthy as a rare surviving example of a mid-twentieth-century commercial storefront remodeling on State Street; and

WHEREAS, the storefront of the Building is an excellent example of the translation of the International Style to storefront design. New, "open front" storefronts prioritized views inside such that the interior commercial space became the display. Tall, plate-glass windows were employed as both window and architectural form. The Building's dramatic, floor-to-ceiling, curving-plate-glass storefront trimmed in stainless steel is an example par excellence of these ideas; and

WHEREAS, the Building was designed by Chicago architects William Holabird and Martin Roche, both of whom are recognized as innovative and prolific practitioners of the Chicago School of architecture; and

WHEREAS, the architectural firm of Holabird & Roche was one of the most successful and prolific architectural firms in Chicago between 1883 and 1927. By the time the Building was completed in 1916, the firm was responsible for five to ten percent of the construction in the city. Over a dozen of their buildings are designated as individual Chicago Landmarks including the Old Colony, Marquette, Chicago, and City Hall-County Buildings, the Three Arts Club, and the Palmer House Hotel; and

WHEREAS, Holabird & Roche was one of the firms whose work played a large role in shaping State Street. The Building was one in a series of their steel-frame, white-glazed-terra-cotta buildings for which they became known, including the twelve-story Republic Building (1905,

demolished 1961; 209 South State Street), the nineteen-story North American Building (1912, extant; 2 West Monroe Street), the Rothschild Department Store (1912, extant; 333 South State Street), and the Waterman Building (1919, extant; 127 South State Street); and

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

WHEREAS, on December 7, 2023, the Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council of the City of Chicago (the "City Council") that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

SECTION 3. For purposes of Sections 2-120-740 and 2-120-770 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations of the Building, including rooflines and the first- and second-floor exteriors remodeled in 1951-1952.

In light of the Building's adjacency to the Dirksen U.S. Courthouse and the security vulnerabilities asserted by the federal government, and in order to recognize and provide the flexibility which may be needed to accommodate the fifteen (15) reuse criteria provided by the General Services Administration for the Building which were developed in collaboration with the United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois, and federal law enforcement agencies, and published in the November 1, 2022, Federal Register, the following additional guidelines shall also apply to the Commission's review of permits pursuant to Section 2-120-740:

- The Commission shall have flexibility to allow modifications to the Building to accommodate the GSA's reuse criteria in order that viable reuse of the Building can be achieved.

SECTION 4. The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

SECTION 5. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. All ordinances, resolutions, motions, or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon the date of its passage and approval.