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Continuation sheet Downtown Wabash
Historic District

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The ownership and tenancy has been complicated since the building's completion. The first National Bank was located in the rooms at the intersection of Market and Wabash Streets; it also owned the two northernmost storefronts on Wabash and the floors above. Collins owned the storefront on Market Street, the southernmost storefront on Wabash (which, for over 20 years, was occupied by a bookstore), and all rooms above these. One of the earliest building tenants was Albert L. Rohbock (1847-1916), a druggist, who operated his pharmacy on Market Street from 1877 to 1890. A drugstore continued to be located here through the 1920s. Initially, a third-story room directly over the bank was rented to the City for the use of the fire department. A large part of the third floor was owned by the Wabash County Medical Society from 1878 to 1899, followed by the Royal Arcanum Lodge and the Phi Psi fraternal order from 1899 to 1902. In February, 1910, the First National Bank and the Wabash National Bank (organized in 1888) consolidated under the latter name. This merger brought about a remodeling, but the bank remained here only three years. In July, 1913, the Citizens Savings and Trust Company, organized in April of that year, opened here. Although this bank moved to another location in 1927, the building continued to be known as the Citizens Bank Building until the 1940s.

The three-story National Block is rectangular in plan, extending 40 feet (five bays) along Market Street and 132 feet (15 bays) along Wabash Street. The diagonal entrance bay at the corner appears to be the first use of this type of plan in Wabash. The main building material is brick; the foundation is of rubble stone; and all trim stone (the quoins of the corner bay, the watertable, the window sills) is Monroe County limestone. The multi-colored, slate-covered Mansard roof with its eight dormers and two towers is typical of the Second Empire style which was at the zenith of its popularity, nationally. The tower over the entrance bay features a triple, stilted arch window and a tall, domical roof with bull's eye windows. The other tower (over the southernmost storefront on Wabash Street) rises from a bellcast base with triple windows and features a truncated pyramid, also with bull's eye windows. The main roof line and the towers formerly sported elaborate iron cresting. The windows of the second story are double-hung rectangular units; those of the third are of segmental arch form. They all feature galvanized iron window hoods that were originally painted and sanded in imitation of stone. The continuous bracketed cornice is also of galvanized iron and was treated in the same manner. One of the most interesting features of the building is the door in the third floor of the entrance bay, above which are the letters, "NATIONAL BLOCK." A three-sided balcony with iron railings was formerly supported by brackets here. The date, 1876, was worked into the unique door cap. Another balcony existed at the second floor directly above the Market Street storefront.

Major alterations have occurred at the ground floor level. One of the first changes was the total rebuilding of the Market Street storefront circa 1900, when the floor level was lowered to grade level and a flight of five steps was eliminated. The new storefront then

featured large plate-glass windows and four rectangular windows above. All traces of this storefront have been removed by the current one, to which most recently was added the shake-covered overhanging roof. In 1910 the newly-consolidated bank also lowered its floor level to grade level, eliminating its steps and completely changing its entry. The current classical door enframing of stone columns, a broken pediment of inverse volutes, and the clock frame all date to the 1910 remodeling, as do the rectangular windows in the flanking bays. None of the three storefronts along Wabash Street retains its original configuration, the southernmost one having been completely rebuilt by the bank in 1910. In 1982, the north half of the building was sympathetically cleaned and repainted, which has furthered the myth that the northern seven bays were a later addition to the 1876 structure.