

Eller Wagon Works-Pittsburgh Plate Glass Building and Western Electric Company Building Given Protected Historic Status

On November 14, 2012, Houston City Council designated the following two commercial buildings as Protected Historic Landmarks.

The Western Electric Company Building at the corner of Jackson Street and Commerce Avenue is a three-story brick warehouse building built circa 1917. The building is located in Houston's Warehouse District on the east side of downtown south of Buffalo Bayou. The Warehouse District largely developed from 1890 through the 1930s to accommodate Houston's rapid economic expansion in those decades. The building's namesake and original tenant, Western Electric, got its start in Chicago in the 1870s as a manufacturer of telegraph equipment for Western Union, and by 1882, had been acquired by Bell Telephone (later AT&T) as its manufacturing arm. After Western Electric vacated the building in the mid-1920s, the warehouse was occupied by a variety of businesses such as International Harvester, Pee-Gee Paints, Wilson Stationery & Printing, and the Arling D. Smith Co. Today, the renovated building appears much as it did when built, and is home to architectural offices, art studios, and loft spaces.



The Eller Wagon Works-Pittsburgh Plate Glass Building is an historic three-story brick warehouse building in Houston's Warehouse District. The Eller Wagon Works Building, at the corner of Crawford and Commerce, was constructed in 1909 to manufacture horse-drawn wagons just as the automobile industry was getting under way. The building, like its occupant, was anachronistic, using earlier construction techniques and decorative devices, such as segmentally-arched windows. In 1920, the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company acquired the building and added a second structure designed by Alfred C. Finn to the south side of the original Wagon Works Building. The newer building features an exposed concrete frame and stylized neoclassical decoration.

