

# *A Look Back in Time*

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*The stately structure, formerly known as the “Old Post Office” located at 5608 Tenth Avenue, is currently home to the City of Kenosha’s Dinosaur Discovery Museum. The museum meets the criteria set in Standard No. Six of Section 15.04 of the City’s Zoning Ordinance as a contributing structure in the Civic Center Historic District, a National Register District. The Old Post Office also meets Standard No. One by reflecting “the City’s cultural, social, economic, political, engineering and/or architectural history” by serving the community as an educational and cultural institution for over 60 years and Standard No. Three “Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type of specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.” The Old Post Office exhibits the fine characteristics of the Beaux Arts style of architecture.*

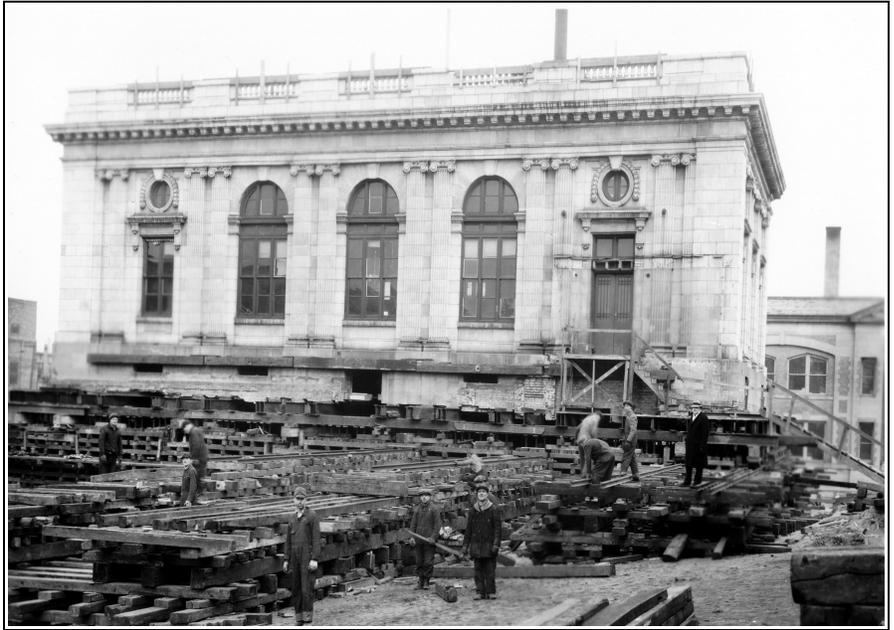
*The Old Post Office is a one-story building, sitting on a raised base faced with granite stone, richly detailed in the Beaux Arts style, a more decorative classical style, but popular at the same time and related to the Neo-Classical Revival style. The building is constructed of gray limestone, but on the four recessed facades of the building is terra-cotta designed to resemble stone blocks. It is*

*an unusual exterior material that covers all the decorative elements of the facades. These decorative elements on the front facade include four groups of attached paired colossal Ionic columns separating recessed window and door openings. Single columns and partial pilasters in the same order appear at the corners of the recessed area. The capitals of the columns feature leaves, rosettes, and darts. The openings are heavily decorated with bracketed hoods over casement windows and topped with oculus windows decorated with*



*cascading wreaths of grapes and grape leaves and keystones. Period light fixtures flank a concrete staircase leading to the main entrance which consists of a wood and glass double door with a transom. The entrance is framed by a frontispiece of pilasters, a broken segmental arched pediment, and an eagle obscures the central oculus window. The side facades of the building are similarly decorated as the front, except that the columns become pilasters. Finally, a cornice molding runs across the top of the building creating an unadorned parapet. A concrete shed sits at the rear of the building and is non-contributing. The building was constructed between 1908 and 1910 and designed by James Knox Taylor, the federal government’s supervising architect.*

*The Dinosaur Discovery Museum was originally the old post office and later the Kenosha Public Museum. It was located behind the current U. S. Post Office building. In 1934, after the new post office was completed, a building moving company from Chicago used timbers and winches (machines for pulling objects by means of a cable that winds around a revolving drum or wheel), to move the building foot-by-foot from the east to the west side of the Civic Center to complete the last side of the Civic Center project. This was a major accomplishment for that time period. It was purchased for \$1.00 by the City and three (3) years later, the building reopened as the new Kenosha Public Museum. It served in that capacity until August 2006 when it was converted to the Dinosaur Discovery Museum.*



*In August 2006 a partnership was formed between the City Museum System and Carthage College's Department of Paleontology. The limestone sign on the southeast corner of the museum property was donated to the museum by Carthage College. The sign is divided into two parts with the left half bearing the "Dinosaur Discovery Museum" logo and the legend "City of Kenosha" and the right half bearing the legend "Institute of Paleontology" with the "Flame and Carthage" logo underneath.*

*As the Dinosaur Discovery Museum, the "Old Post Office" is a great place to visit. As an architectural specimen, this museum is really something to see. While walking the perimeter of the "Old Post Office" think about the amazing feat of moving this building from behind the current U. S. Post Office to its current location. Rather remarkable...*