

**Historic Property** Rockway-Leland Building  
**Inventory Report for** 119-123 North Washington Olympia, Thurston, 98501

**LOCATION SECTION**

**Historic Name:** Rockway-Leland Building **Field Site No.:** 821  
**Common Name:** (#34-657) **OAHP No.:**  
**Property Address:** 119-123 North Washington Olympia, Thurston, 98501  
**Comments:** OLYMPIA

**County** **Township/Range/EW** **Section** **1/4 Sec** **1/4 1/4 Sec** **Quadrangle**  
T18R02W 14 SW TUMWATER

**UTM Reference**

**Zone:** 10 **Spatial Type:** Point **Acquisition Code:** TopoZone.com  
**Sequence:** 0 **Easting:** 507650 **Northing:** 5210020

**Tax No./Parcel No.** **Plat/Block/Lot**  
78501300401 Sylvester L4 Blk 13

**Supplemental Map(s)** **Acreage**  
City of Olympia Planning Department .11

**IDENTIFICATION SECTION**

**Field Recorder:** Shanna Stevenson/Tom C. **Date Recorded:** 10/11/1985 **Survey Name:** OLYMPIA

**Owner's Name:** Howard Building Associates LLC **Owner Address:** 109 Maple Park Avenue SE **City/State/Zip:** Olympia, WA 98501

**Classification:** Building **Resource Status** **Comments**  
**Within a District?** Yes Survey/Inventory

**Contributing?**

**National Register Nomination:** 0

**Local District:**

**National Register District/Thematic Nomination Name:** OLYMPIA DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

**DESCRIPTION SECTION**

**Historic Use:** Commerce/Trade - Business  
**Current Use:** Commerce/Trade - Business

**Plan:** L-Shape **No. of Stories:** 2

**Structural System:** Concrete - Block

**Changes to plan:** Intact **Changes to interior:** Moderate  
**Changes to original cladding:** Intact **Changes to other:**  
**Changes to windows:** Slight **Other (specify):**

**Cladding** Concrete **Foundation** Concrete - Poured  
Stucco

**Style** Art Deco - Streamlined Moderne **Form/Type**  
**Roof Material** Asphalt / Composition - Rolled **Roof Type** Unknown

## NARRATIVE SECTION

Study Unit

Other

Date Of Construction: 1941

Architecture/Landscape Architecture

Architect: Joseph Wohleb

Commerce

Builder:

Communications

Engineer:

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places:

No

Property is located in a historic district (National and/or local):

No

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local):

### Statement of Significance

The Rockway-Leland Building was constructed in 1941 in a design by Joseph Wohleb. An older building 1927 building just north of the Rockway-Leland building was remodeled on the facade to resemble the new structure. The building is unique art deco contribution to downtown. The firm began in 1928 when O. R. Rockway of Seattle started a business to dispose of the slab wood, hog fuel and other waste wood from area mills. This was the Rockway Mill Wood Company founded in 1928. The market developed rapidly and Rockway decided to expand to include Texas oil products. In 1929 the Olympia Oil and Wood Products Company was formed and the wood yard moved to Port of Olympia. Rockway added coal, diesel, stove oil and heavy burner oils to his products. He served such areas as Fort Lewis, McChord Air Force Base and enlarged his service delivery to Mason, Pierce, King and Lewis Counties. C. H. Leland was manger of offices and secretary-treasurer of the firm for many years. The building was also home to KGY radio whose studios were located on the second floor. One of the oldest radio stations in the United States, it was begun in 1922 by Father Sebastian Ruth of St. Martins before becoming a commercial operation. Specially designed, acoustically perfect studios housed the station with a 150 foot tall tower on the roof of the building. The roof also had an air raid siren which proclaimed the raid on Pearl Harbor to Olympia residents.

### Description of Physical Appearance

This is an L-shaped, two-story concrete structure built in Art Moderne style. Its flat roof is bordered by a flat parapet; walls are ornamented by a projecting belt course below the second-story windows, and a tiered band above them topped by two parallel grooved bands below the parapet. Centered on the front (east) facade, the main entry has two glass doors with Moderne-style metal handles and glass block sidelights, separated by a rounded protrusion with letters reading "ROCKWAY-LEALAND BUILDING - 1941. " Above the doors, a flat-roofed metal canopy with rounded corners is topped by vertical bands rising to the roof line. The window between the fins is set in a vertical band of fluted concrete. To the left of the entry is a storefront with plate glass windows and a recessed door with a similar Moderne-style handle, topped by a modern rounded awning. To the right of the entry is a wide plate glass window with a transom with horizontal mullions. Similar windows continue around the corner and along the recessed portion of the facade extending to the north. In the corner of the "L" is another flat metal canopy sheltering two entry doors. The north end wall has a wide storefront with a recessed entry. Second-story fenestration is double-hung sash with horizontal mullions, glass block windows on the north end wall, and later plate glass windows on the left half of the front facade. The building is maintained in good condition.

### Major Bibliographic References

Cities-Olympia-Industries File at Washington Room of the Washington State Library, n.d. on clipping.

Stevenson, Shanna, Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater: A Pictorial History, Donning, 1985.

Stevenson, Shanna, "60 Years of Radio," Washington Commission for the Humanities, 1982.

## PHOTOS

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**View of** SE corner, NE corner  
**taken** 10/11/1985  
**Photography Neg. No. (Roll No./Frame No.):**  
25-2A, 3A

**Comments:**

