



---

---

# ADSW PRESERVATION CASE STUDIES

## UNION TERMINAL, CINCINNATI, OH

ADSW assisted with the actions shown in *Italics*.



**Status:** Restored

*IN 2014, ADSW SUBMITTED A NOMINATION TO ADD UNION TERMINAL TO THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION LIST OF ENDANGERED PLACES. THE TRUST ADDED THIS SIGNIFICANT ART DECO LANDMARK TO THEIR LIST OF THE 11 MOST ENDANGERED PLACES FOR 2015.*

## ARCHITECTURAL & CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Union Terminal, an iconic symbol of Cincinnati and one of the most significant Art Deco structures in the country, was designed by the firm of Alfred Fellheimer and Steward Wagner, with Paul Cret, in 1933. Union Terminal is a National Historic Landmark and one of the country's last remaining grand-scale Art Deco railroad terminals. The massive 180 foot wide and 106 foot tall rotunda, today the second largest half dome in the world, features glass mosaic murals by Winold Reiss depicting the history of Cincinnati and the United States. In the early 2000's, Union Terminal was suffering from deterioration and water damage. The building was facing a critical point in its existence, and was in need of extensive repairs.

## NATIONAL TRUST'S LIST OF ENDANGERED PLACES

In a December 16, 2013 editorial, Cincinnati.com asked the question "Should Union Terminal be saved?" It described the terminal as a 500,000 square foot money pit that needed about \$180 million in repairs and upgrades, including a new roof, new mechanical systems, and repairs to its fountain and nearby streets. County Commissioner Chris Monzel asked the question "Is Union Terminal a building that can be saved, or is there a better, higher utilization for that land?" Cincinnati's Union Terminal is one of the most important Art Deco structures in the country and was then probably the most endangered. Placing Cincinnati Union Terminal on the Most Endangered list helped draw national and international attention because of its stature among the nation's most admired buildings.

## CURRENT STATE AND USE

The building underwent a thorough restoration including critical repairs and upgrades and replacement of building systems. Union Terminal is now owned by the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. As the Cincinnati Museum Center, the largest cultural institution in the city, Union Terminal receives more than 1.4 million visitors a year and houses the Cincinnati History Museum, Cincinnati History Library and Archives, Duke Energy Children's Museum, Museum of Natural History and Science, and the Robert D. Lindner Family OMNIMAX Theater.