

VIVA ART DECO

The Historic Gulf Oil Building is Getting a Makeover

Today known as the JPMorgan Chase Building, the historic Art Deco structure will soon connect with its neighbor and receive a facelift.

BY [ROXANNA ASGARIAN](#) • 4/14/2016 AT 2:45PM



The 1929 Gulf Oil Building, once Houston's tallest building and now called the JPMorgan Chase building, will join with its neighbor 708 Main.

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Once the former [Gulf Building](#) at 712 Main St. is connected with a nearby even-older building, the combined structure will be getting some major upgrades. But in an unusual move for Houston, preserving the buildings' historic aspects—including beautiful Art Deco flourishes—will be top priority.

What's now the JPMorgan Chase Building was commissioned by Houston businessman and politician Jesse H. Jones in 1927. When [finished in 1929](#), the 37-story building was Houston's tallest for over 30 years. Developers Lionstone Investments and Midway will be connecting the building to the adjacent 708 Main, an older building acquired by Jones in 1908 and now known as the [Great Jones Building](#).

The combined buildings will be dubbed the [Jones on Main](#) in a nod to its roots, and the developers say—or at least hope—the upgrades will make the building “historically hip.” The large lobby of the JPMorgan Chase building will remain largely intact, a relief for preservation-minded Houstonians and anyone who's been awed by bank's soaring gilt ceilings while awaiting the next teller window, while a new two-story co-working lounge will be added, allowing the public to access its event and meeting space.

Developers are also adding a range of retail options on the ground floor, with plans for both white-tablecloth and casual dining in the mix. There will even be a “bike-valet” service for those on two wheels (a service on par with the [”bike repair room”](#) offered to residents at the nearby Aris Market Square highrise), and outdoor patios for those on two feet. Renovations will start this summer and are expected to finish up by early next year.

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