

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

*Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Third Floor
808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, Washington 99201-3337*

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Spokane Civic Building

And/Or Common Name: Chamber of Commerce Building

2. Location

Street & Number: 1020 W. Riverside Avenue

City, State, Zip Code: Spokane, WA 99201

Parcel Number: 35183.2230

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public <input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure			<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> residential
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other

4. Owner of Property

Name: The Philanthropy Center, Empire Health Foundation

Street & Number: 1020 W. Riverside Avenue

City, State, Zip Code: Spokane WA 99201

Telephone Number/E-mail: 509-309-3436, Richard@empirehealthfoundation.org

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds Spokane County Courthouse

Street Number: 1116 West Broadway

City, State, Zip Code: Spokane, WA 99260

County: Spokane

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Title: Riverside Avenue Historic District

Date: 1976 Federal State County Local

Depository for Survey Records: Spokane Historic Preservation Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check One

- unaltered
- altered

Check One

- original site
- moved & date _____

Narrative statement of description is found on one or more continuation sheets.

8. Spokane Register Criteria and Statement of Significance

Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places criteria: Mark "x" on one or more for the categories that qualify the property for the Spokane Register listing:

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Spokane history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory history.

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: < 1
Verbal Boundary Description: GLOVERS ADD: LOT 35 BLK 4 EXC W22.5FT & EXC 67.5 FT INC VAC STP S OF & ADJ TO SD PTN LOT 35 SUBJ TO ESMT TO CITY OF SPOKANE
Verbal Boundary Justification: Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title: Stephen Emerson, Director
Organization: Archisto Enterprises
Street, City, State, Zip Code: W. 212 Dawn Avenue, Spokane WA 99218
Telephone Number: 509-466-8654
E-mail Address: semerson@ewu.edu
Date Final Nomination Heard:

13. Signature of Owner(s)

[Handwritten signature]

14. For Official Use Only:

Date nomination application filed: 8/17/15

Date of Landmarks Commission hearing: 9/23/2015

Landmarks Commission decision: 9/23/2015

Date of City Council/Board of County Commissioners' hearing: _____

City Council/Board of County Commissioners' decision: _____

I hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places based upon the action of either the City Council or the Board of County Commissioners as set forth above.

[Handwritten signature]

9/24/15

Megan Duvall
City/County Historic Preservation Officer
City/County Historic Preservation Office
3rd Floor - City Hall, Spokane, WA 99201

Date

Attest:

Approved as to form:

City Clerk

Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Spokane Civic Building, located at 1020 W. Riverside Avenue, was designed by the architectural firm of Whitehouse and Price. It is an outstanding example of the Italian Renaissance Style, an idiom that was popular for both residential and commercial structures in the first half of the 20th century. Diagnostic elements of the style present in this commercial building include the distinctive red Spanish tile roof, the shallow pitch of the roof, the symmetrical arrangement of the fenestration, the Palladian window of the east elevation and, most strikingly, the elaborate front porch, or loggia, with its impressive arcade of round arches mounted on Classical Order columns. These universal classical traits are combined with other ornamentation that give the building a distinctly Inland Empire feeling through the use of motifs based on local products and activities, such as the pine cone, apple, and wheat sheaves designs that are employed in the cornice friezes and in the use of the war bonneted Indian heads. Another remarkable characteristic of the exterior is the skillful use of masonry materials: the brickwork of the walls, the use of ceramic tiles in the roof and the porch floor, as well as the granite of the porch steps and the sandstone of the loggia columns. Durable, and definitive, features of the interior include terrazzo floors in the foyer and main staircases, the cast iron railings of the mezzanine, and the wood trim of the bannisters and crown molding of the foyer.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The Spokane Civic Building is a nearly rectangular structure of reinforced concrete construction. The front (south) wall of the building is slightly canted to make the façade flush with Riverside Avenue. The building is situated on a steep slope, consisting of the two-story portion about street level and two daylight basement levels with windows facing north, over Main Avenue. The foundation is poured concrete. Two side-gabled roofs, with parapets at the gable ends, face to the front (south) and rear. Clad with red Spanish tile, these are the roofs that are visible from the street. The central portion of the roof, not visible from below, is flat and recessed below the crests of the front and rear tile-clad roofs. The upper skylight and large HVAC units are situated on this flat part of the roof, which is sealed with a white waterproof membrane.

The front (south) façade of the Spokane Civic Building is dominated by the arcaded and colonnaded porch, sometimes called a loggia, consisting of five round-arched openings. The arches are supported by sandstone columns which are a composite of several classical orders. The unfluted shafts and the simple bases are reminiscent of the Tuscan order, while the terra cotta capitals are a variation of the Corinthian order, with the typical scroll-work. The porch steps and water table to either side are granite. The floor surface of the porch is clad with square red ceramic tiles.

On each side of the loggia there is a rectangular, metal sash window with two lights. These windows have a terra cotta molding on the sides and in the sills. The lintels consist of an entablature with terra cotta dentils and a frieze featuring pine cone and wheat sheaves motifs. The cornice above the porch is a terra cotta entablature consisting of the

overhanging cymatium and corona, above a row of dentils. Beneath this is a terra cotta frieze displaying the words "The Philanthropy Center" at the center, and flanked by pine cone, apple, and wheat stalk motifs. The brick work of the front employs both common bond and header bond. The arches of the loggia are constructed of a soldier course of stretcher bricks along the inner rim and a course of header bricks along the outer rim. The interior of the porch has a series of plaster vaulted roofs, each above the five round arches. The central front entry is situated beneath a brick and terra cotta arch and contains a double set of steel frame and glass doors, with transom light above. The door is framed in a terra cotta molding featuring fruit and floral motifs. Above the door, within the arch, is a stained glass window portraying the Spokane River falls, the Monroe Street Bridge, and a rainbow. To the left of the entry are two metal sash, two light windows, each facing an arched opening in the loggia, with terra cotta molding and entablature similar to those flanking the exterior arcade. A similar window, situated at the left end of the porch interior, facing east, has been replaced by a steel frame glass door. Another such window is placed directly to the right of the front entry. The next space to the right contains a steel frame glass door, which also replaced an original window. On the right side of the porch interior, facing west, is an incised granite plaque bearing the words "Spokane Civic Building, Home of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, erected in the year 1930 for the citizens of Spokane as a tribute to the city they love, site given by John A. Finch and W.H. Cowles," bordered with decorative scroll work. Finch was a wealthy philanthropist and Cowles was the publisher of the *Spokesman-Review*. In the tympanum of each arch above the windows of the porch interior is a circular ceramic tile mosaic, each depicting scenes of Inland Empire industry, agriculture, and transportation. The scenes include a logging operation, a mine, an oncoming locomotive, an airplane, a pottery kiln, and a tractor. Each circle is bordered by terra cotta featuring pine cone, fruit, and floral motifs. The porch interior is further embellished by terra cotta, war-bonneted Indian heads with scroll work.

The east wall of the Spokane Civic Building is closely encroached upon by the adjacent Spokane Club Building. It is clad with common bond brick and features a Palladian window with terra cotta trim. The west wall of the building abuts the adjacent Masonic Temple Building.

The rear (north) elevation of the Spokane Civic Building is less ornate than the front, but still exhibits some decorative elements. The walls are clad with brick laid in both common bond and header bond. The cornice is similar to that of the front, consisting of a projecting entablature exhibiting pine cone, apple, and wheat stalk motifs, above a row of dentils, and lacking the terra cotta frieze of the front. Instead the frieze employs soldier bricks in this space. The upper level has seven banks of windows, each containing three metal sash, multiple pane windows. The next level down displays the most ornate row of windows of the rear elevation. The three central banks consist of sets of two metal sash, multiple pane windows. These window banks are framed in pilasters and a round arch constructed of stretcher bricks. Each of these three banks is flanked by narrow, vertical metal sash windows. Placed above and between these window banks are two terra cotta medallions, one with a wheat sheave motif, the other with an apple motif. An ornate cast

iron fire escape deck and railing, with extendable ladder, is situated to the front of the three central window banks. To either side of these three central window banks are two banks of windows with soldier brick lintels, each containing two metal sash, multiple pane windows. The next level down contains seven window banks that are identical to those just described. The lowest level of the building is partially below grade, due to the inclined level of Main Avenue. The central four window banks are identical to those of the second level, described above. At the east end of this level are steps that descend to a steel frame glass door, with transom light above. At the west end is a double set of steel frame glass doors with a marble surround. Directly adjacent to the entry, to the right, is a cast iron ventilation grill.

The interior of the Spokane Civic Building consists of two 2-story spaces, one at the street level, and one in the daylight basement level. Each is composed of a 2-level central space, the main floor and mezzanines above, and the former banquet room below, with enclosed former mezzanines. From the front entry, one passes through a short vestibule into a wide foyer. The vestibule is flanked by decorative wood planters, with terrazzo borders around metal flower boxes that rest on cast iron grills. The foyer features high, half-circular ceiling arches above wood crown moldings. The walls and arches of the foyer appear to be clad with plaster. The floors are terrazzo tile. To each side of the entry vestibule, beneath the front windows flanking the entry, are two more wood planters similar to those of the vestibule, but longer. Two wide openings and a marble reception desk are situated along the inside wall of the lobby. At each end of the lobby are doors leading to smaller rooms. The wide openings in the inside wall of the foyer lead into the large central space with a high, 2-story ceiling and open mezzanines on the north and east sides. The former mezzanine of the west side has been walled off and contains windows. The floor is covered with wood plank. The ceiling is supported by square wood pillars that extend from the main floor to the high ceiling. Along the periphery of both the main floor and the mezzanine level are enclosed office spaces, most with glass entry doors. In the northwest corner of the main floor is a dogleg staircase that accesses the mezzanine level. The banisters of this staircase and the railings along the mezzanine feature cast iron newels and balusters, and wood handrails. The central portion of the ceiling of the upper level features skylights, with metal sashes, that allows light from the attic above, which itself has skylights.

The attic is a cramped place with low ceilings, steel trusses, and many utilities. The central floor of the attic contains the skylight described above and another skylight that allows light from the outside. A small room in the southeast corner of the attic is the former boiler room, with partial walls of hollow ceramic K-blocks, containing various supplies, including stacks of spare Spanish roof tiles.

The lower, daylight basement level of the building consists of the central 2-level space, with high ceiling, flanked on the south and west by enclosed former mezzanines. Offices are situated in the former mezzanine spaces. The central space with the high ceiling is the former banquet room. On the east wall is a recessed area with a large curtain, used as a back drop for presentations. The former kitchen space is located beneath the enclosed

former mezzanine on the west. It contains modern appliances, counter, and cupboards. The primary access to the lower daylight basement level is via two quarter-turn staircases situated in the southeast corner. These are wide, and feature terrazzo tile steps and landings, and banisters and railings similar to those of the mezzanines of the upper floor. Other narrow staircases are less ornate and offer alternative passages between floors.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

The Spokane Civic Building has undergone extensive rehabilitations at least twice. Work conducted in the late 1960s cost about \$250,000.00 and consisted of the installation of acoustical tile ceilings, new partitions, and new floor cladding. The more recent rehabilitation also altered floor and wall treatment, as well as room configuration, but did not include the replacement of the original multiple-pane windows, an action which occurred at an earlier date. Despite the several remodeling efforts, the building retains many of the character-defining elements present in the original 1931 construction. On the exterior front façade, the only changes that have been made are the replacement of the original windows and doors, and the removal of the words Spokane Chamber of Commerce in the cornice frieze. Other components, including the brickwork, the terra cotta and ceramic appliques, the sandstone columns, the cornice décor, and the granite steps, are original. The same is true for the rear elevation; the brickwork and terra cotta ornamentation remain. The windows have been mostly replaced and several entrances rebuilt. The roof is mostly intact, as well. The interior has been altered the most, but a number of original features have been retained, including the terrazzo floors of the main staircases and the entry foyer, the terrazzo window boxes of the foyer, the wood trim in the crown molding and the banisters of the mezzanine, and the iron frame of the mezzanine. Except for the reconfiguration of offices spaces, the original two large central areas of the main floor and the auditorium have been retained and, for most of the main floor, the mezzanine also remains.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Spokane Civic Building is eligible for placement on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its contributions to the civic life and the economy of the Spokane area, not just as the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, but also as the home base for many philanthropic, charitable, and promotional organizations. Its upper floors and mezzanine provided space for these diverse activities, while the auditorium and kitchen of the lower floors served as a venue for business presentations, conventions, and social events, such as dances. Furthermore, the building is eligible for placement on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, architecture, as an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance style as designed by the prominent local architectural firm of Whitehouse and Price. Although the integrity of the building has been somewhat compromised by later modifications, it retains many of the features, characteristics, and construction materials that define it.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The origins of Spokane can be traced to two ambitious settlers named J.J. Downing and S.R. Scranton, who arrived in the vicinity in the early 1870s. Recognizing the energy potential of the powerful falls of the Spokane River, they built a saw mill near a channel of the river west of Havermale Island. In 1874 they sold their holdings to a partnership that included James N. Glover, who would in time be hailed as the “Father of Spokane.” Glover profited from the mill and other enterprises, as did other early entrepreneurs such as Fredrick Post, who built the first flourmill, A.M. Cannon, who started the first bank in town, J.J. Browne, who helped develop a new residential neighborhood west of downtown, and Francis Cook, who printed the first local newspaper in Spokane Falls. The Falls part of the name was later dropped. Another important early resident was Henry T. Cowley. Using logs from Glover’s mill, he and carpenter William Pool, built the first school in town, an enterprise that eventually led to the establishment of elementary and high school education in the area.

The town grew rapidly during the 1880s, reaching a population of 2,000 by 1886. Prosperous businesses were amassing bank capital, attracting more investments and commercial enterprise. The construction of railroads through the area turned Spokane into a transportation and commerce hub. The Northern Pacific was the first intercontinental railroad to pass through Spokane, followed by the Great Northern, the Union Pacific and, later the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul. Smaller rail lines that connected with Spokane included the Spokane and Palouse, which built into the rich wheat fields to the south, the Spokane Falls and Idaho, which reached toward Coeur d’Alene Lake and the nearby mining districts, and the Spokane Falls and Northern, which connected with Colville and Canada to the north. All of these lines brought further wealth into Spokane, spurring growth of both the economy and the population. Historian N.W. Durham reports that by 1889:

The banks of the city had risen in number from two to ten, the capital had grown to nearly \$1,000,000, with deposits of over \$2,000,000. Mercantile transactions had swelled in proportion, the material results of the country had been developed, the manufacture of lumber had grown till the output of the mills was valued at \$150,000 per month. The flour mills had been enlarged and new ones built till the manufacture was 300 barrels a day. The manufacture of brick, the production of lime and quarrying of the beautiful gray granite of the country, had taken up large capital. Scores of fine business buildings had been built and occupied. Beautiful residences crowned the hills and points of vantage, where the owners could look out upon the permanent character of their work, and view with pride the thousands of happy homes around them, for in this brief period, the city had grown in population to nearly twenty thousand souls.

Into this scene of bustling prosperity, the threat of fire was occasionally interjected. The danger was great because the majority of structures within the rapidly growing community were built of wood, the cheapest and most easily acquired building material. Several early conflagrations had prompted the establishment of a volunteer fire department in 1884, but neither the volunteers nor the inadequate water supply system could stop flames that raced through downtown on August 4, 1889. As illustrated in a map produced by R.B. Hyslop, between the Northern Pacific tracks to the south and the Spokane River to the north, the fire cut a swath through the center of the main business district. In all, about 300 buildings were destroyed, only about thirty of which were brick or stone. The community rebounded quickly, conducting business on the streets from tents for a time. Several lessons were learned; a professional fire department was created and builders determined that future construction in downtown Spokane would be of masonry - brick, stone and, later, glazed terra cotta.

Among the first to suffer from the Panic of 1893 in Spokane was pioneer A.M. Cannon, who had overextended his investments, some of which subsequently failed. When he was denied funding from local banks to recoup, the bank that Cannon had founded, the Bank of Spokane Falls, closed its doors on June 5, 1893, insolvent. Within just days, a chain reaction of panic closed other major banks and people's savings were snuffed out. Before things leveled out, many formerly rich men had lost their fortunes. But by 1896, the economy was well on its way to recovering. In that year, N.W. Durham wrote: "Spokane stands on the threshold of a new career. It is not a boast to say that the outlook, as we stand in the dawn of a new year, is better than ever for further progress and substantial development. With the planning here of national government interests, the establishment of new productive industries, and the rapid growth of mining interests, Spokane's future is assured."

During the first decade of the Twentieth Century, Spokane underwent a spate of growth unprecedented before or since. The population explosion was largely fueled by great numbers of blue collar workers who found employment in the climate of burgeoning industries and service businesses. This led to a boom in Single Room Occupancy hotels. These, along with new financial, civic, and medical facilities, led to the rapid expansion of the central business district.

With the thriving agricultural, industrial, and commercial enterprises, Spokane's leaders, like those of other towns across the United States, saw the need for an organization that would protect and promote the economic interests of the city. The Spokane Chamber of Commerce was established to do just that. It was initially incorporated in 1891 and located at 519 W. First Avenue. It was subsequently reorganized, and next appears on the second floor of the Old City Hall, located at the northeast corner of Trent Avenue and Howard Street. The Chamber next occupied a number of locations around downtown in rapid succession, finally settling down in the second floor of the Hutton Building in 1907. In 1911, it moved into space vacated in the Metals Building by the Spokane Club. That building, sometimes referred to as the American Legion Building, is located at the northeast corner of Riverside Avenue and Washington Street. The Spokane Chamber of Commerce remained there until the Spokane Civic Building was completed in 1931.

The Spokane Civic Building was designed by the architectural firm of Whitehouse and Price. The builder was F.E. Martin, a local contractor who constructed many Spokane buildings, including Finch Elementary School. Harold C. Whitehouse (1884-1974) arrived in Spokane in 1907, entering a partnership with George Keith doing residential work. He became a member of the All Saints Episcopal Church, which was planning to build a new cathedral in Spokane. This inspired Whitehouse to go back to school, studying architecture at Cornell University. He returned to Spokane and formed a partnership with Ernest V. Price (1881-1975) in 1914, a collaborative effort that lasted until Price's retirement in 1964. Price also studied architecture at Cornell University, arriving in Spokane in 1910. The firm of Whitehouse and Price became one of the most successful and prolific architectural endeavors in the Pacific Northwest. They designed hundreds of buildings, including over 200 schools and 16 fraternity and sorority houses. Many of their projects were churches. Probably the best known of these designs was the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, whose prominent tower rises above the crest of the South Hill. Whitehouse had previously travelled to Europe to view the great churches and cathedrals of the Old World, getting ideas for the design of St. John's. Other prominent designs of the firm include the Lincoln Building, the Farragut Naval Training Station, the Hutton Settlement, the Culmstock Arms Apartments, and the Spokane Coliseum.

The Spokane Civic Building was completed in 1931, and by 1932 had several tenants, according to the Polk City Directory for Spokane. The primary occupant was the Spokane Chamber of Commerce (SCC). The presence of extensive office space allowed for other tenants as well. In 1932 these included the Spokane News Bureau (SNB), the Spokane Manufacturers Association, the Columbia Basin Irrigation League (CBIL), and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The latter two entities were associated with the Grand Coulee Dam Project, a Federal undertaking that was in the planning stages.

In 1933, besides the SCC, only the SNB and the CBIL remained. In 1934, the name of the CBIL was changed to the Columbia Basin Commission (CBC). These three entities remained the building's sole occupants until 1938, when they were joined by the Spokane Junior Chamber of Commerce (SJCC). The next year, 1939, the Knife and Fork Club, a

cafeteria, opened. In 1940, the SCC and the SNB were listed as occupants, along with a newcomer, the Retail Trade Bureau (RTB). In 1941, these three occupants were joined by the offices of *Spokane Affairs*, a trade publication (*SA*). These four entities remained the primary tenants of the building until 1950, when Mrs. Violet Davis managed a catering service, ostensibly from the cafeteria. By 1952, Mrs. Velma Camp was listed as the caterer. By 1954, these four occupants had been joined by the Military Order of the World Wars and the Pacific Northwest Travel Association (PNWTA). By 1955, both the catering service and the Military Order were gone, leaving the SCC, the PNWTA, the RTB, and the *SA* as the sole occupants. These four organizations remained the primary occupants until 1959, when the PNWTA presumably moved to other quarters. The remaining three entities were sole tenants throughout the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. In 1972, the Polk Directory listed the name of the building, for the first time, as the Chamber of Commerce Building. Later, in 1977, the name of the SCC was changed to the Spokane Area Chamber of Commerce (SACC), reflecting the expanding scope of the organization. Two years later, The Spokane Area Development Council, was added to the list of tenants, an organization that changed its name to the Spokane Central Business Association (SCBA), in 1982. The offices of the *SA* were absent by 1987, presumably because that publication was no longer being printed. By 1990, only two tenants occupied the building, the SACC and the SCBA. By the next year, only the SACC remained with offices in the building, a situation that remained until 1998, when three more organizations were listed as tenants, the Spokane Agricultural Expo, the Northwest Natural Resource Institute, and the U.S. Export Assistance Center. The next several years were a time of transition for the SACC, as it transferred its operations to a new location at 801 W. Riverside Avenue, a move that was complete by 2003. In 2000, the primary occupant of the building was the Spokane Agricultural Expo. Over the next dozen years or so, a variety of organizations occupied offices in the building. Among them were the Youth for Christ, broadcasting company KQUP, and the Pacific Northwest Inlander.

For many years the Spokane Civic Building maintained a second address in the western portion of the building, indicated by an historic 1931 photograph that pictured a AAA (American Automobile Association) sign in a window of the building. Its address was listed in the Polk City Directory as 1022 W. Riverside, which was the location of offices for numerous organizations. Until about 1953, these offices were all associated with automobile transportation. Among the primary tenants during this 20-year period were, besides AAA, the Inland Automobile Association, the Eastern Washington Highway Association, the Spokane County Good Roads Association, and the Inter-Mountain Motorist. By 1954, all these travel organizations were gone, replaced at the address by the American National Red Cross. Ten years later, in 1964, the Inland Empire Council of the Boy Scouts of America occupied the address. By 1971, the Boy Scouts had left the building, and the use of the 1022 address was dropped.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As noted above, the Spokane Civic Building is eligible for placement on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category A for its contributions to the civic life and the economy of the Spokane area. An article published in the *Spokesman-Review* in 1931 aptly demonstrates this association: “The beautiful structure is not only perfectly appointed for the transaction of Chamber of Commerce business, but its facilities are being utilized more and more by numerous civic groups. It is selling Spokane and the Inland Empire to all who pass that way all the time.”

Additionally, the building is eligible for placement on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C, architecture, as an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance style as designed by the prominent local architectural firm of Whitehouse and Price. Despite several rehabilitation efforts, the building retains many of its significant architectural components, including the entire front façade, except for the windows and doors, the rear elevation, again except for replaced windows and added doors, and significant features of the interior, including the basic floor plan and some important historic elements, such as terrazzo floors of the foyer and main staircases and much of the wood trim throughout.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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R.L. Polk and Co.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Company

1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, City of Spokane.

Spokesman-Review

1931 Civic Building Has Proved Its Worth. June 21, 1931:4.



SCB-1 Historic photograph of the front (south) façade, Libby Collection, 1931, courtesy of the Eastern Washington Historical Society.



SCB-2 Historic photograph of the front (south) façade, Libby Collection, 1931, courtesy of the Eastern Washington Historical Society.



SCB-3 Historic photograph of the front (south) façade and east elevation, unknown photographer, ca. 1931, courtesy of the Eastern Washington Historical Society.



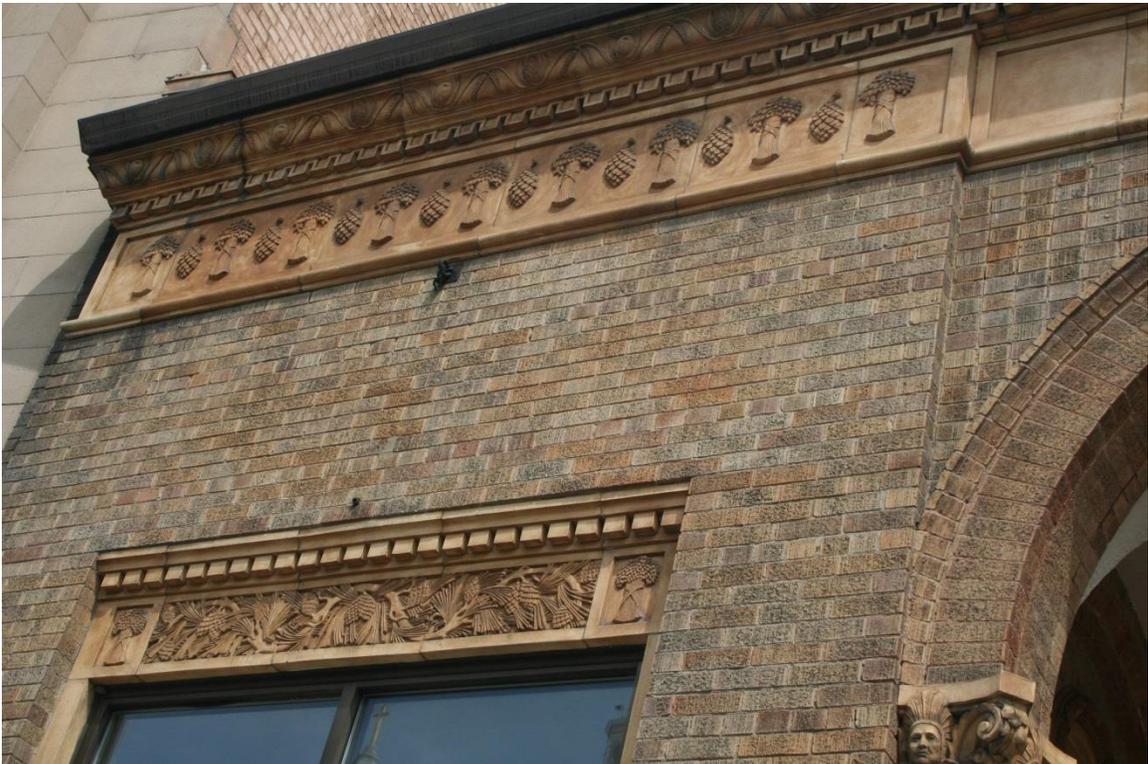
SCB-4 Front (south) façade, view to the northeast.



SCB-5 Front (south) façade, view to the north.



SCB-6 Palladian window on east elevation, view to the northwest.



SCB-7 Window lintel and cornice designs, south (front) elevation, view to the northwest.



SCB-8 Stained glass window above front (south) entry, view to the north.



SCB-9 Indian face capital on porch column, view to the northwest.



SCB-10 Indian face medallion on front façade, view to the north.



SCB-11 Ceramic tile mosaic depicting a tractor, view to the west.



SCB-12 Ceramic tile mosaic depicting a brick kiln, view to the north.



SCB-13 Ceramic tile mosaic depicting a logging operation, view to the north.



SCB-14 Ceramic tile mosaic depicting a mining operation, view to the north.



SCB-14 Ceramic tile mosaic depicting an airplane.



SCB-15 Ceramic tile mosaic depicting a locomotive.



SCB-16 Granite commemorative plaque, view to the east.



SCB-17 Rear (north) elevation, view to the southeast.



SCB-18 Rear cornice, view to the south.



SCB-19 Rear central window bank and terra cotta medallions, view to the southwest.



SCB-20 Skylight on flat roof, view to the northeast.



SCB-21 Roof tile close up, view to the southeast.



SCB-22 Attic space above skylight, view to the northeast.



SCB-23 Foyer ceiling, view to the east.



SCB-24 Window box in foyer alcove, view to the southeast.



SCB-25 Main room, mezzanine, and skylight, view to the northeast.



SCB-26 Main room and mezzanine, view to the southwest.



SCB-27 Mezzanine framework detail, view to the southeast.



SCB-28 Staircase down to lower level, view to the southeast.



SCB-29 Auditorium space in lower level, view to the southwest.



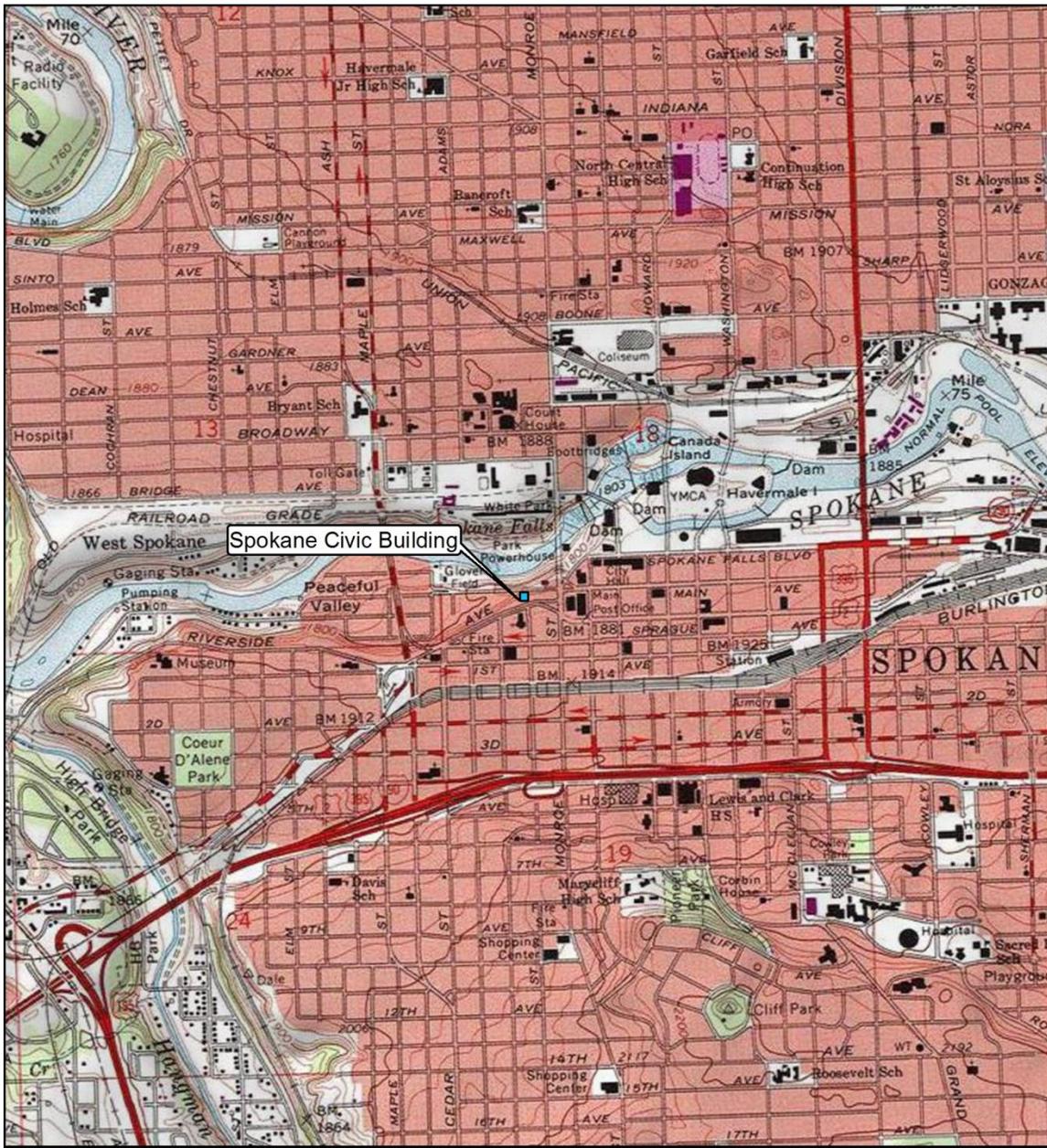
SCB-30 Kitchen space adjacent to auditorium, view to the southwest.



SCB-31 Typical office space, view to the northeast.



SCB-32 W. Riverside overview, view to the northeast.



1:24,000

Spokane Civic Building, 1020 W. Riverside Avenue, Spokane, Washington.