

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: John Doran Building

And/Or Common Name: Buchannan Chevrolet/Evergreen Parking

2. Location

Street & Number: 707 W. 2nd Avenue

City, State, Zip Code: Spokane WA 99201

Parcel Number: 35192.2203

3. Classification

Category

☒ building

☐ site

☐ structure

☐ object

Ownership

☐ public ☐ both

☒ private

Public Acquisition

☐ in process

☐ being considered

Status

☒ occupied

☐ work in progress

Accessible

☒ yes, restricted

☐ yes, unrestricted

☐ no

Present Use

☐ agricultural

☒ commercial

☐ educational

☐ entertainment

☐ government

☐ industrial

☐ military

☐ museum

☐ park

☐ residential

☐ religious

☐ scientific

☐ transportation

☐ other

4. Owner of Property

Name: 707 Partners, LLC

Street & Number: 707 W. 2nd

City, State, Zip Code: Spokane WA 99201

Telephone Number/E-mail: Enter property owner's telephone number and email

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds

Street Number:

City, State, Zip Code:

County:

Spokane County Courthouse

1116 West Broadway

Spokane, WA 99260

Spokane

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Title: Enter previous survey name if applicable

Date: Enter survey date if applicable

Depository for Survey Records:

☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

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: < one
Verbal Boundary Description: RAILROAD ADD L4 B34
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:

12. Additional Documentation

Additional documentation is found on one or more continuation sheets.

13. Signature of Owner(s)

Cony R. Coon
Crd/HG

14. For Official Use Only:

Date nomination application filed: 9/19/16

Date of Landmarks Commission Hearing: 10/19/16

Landmarks Commission decision: approved

Date of City Council/Board of County Commissioners' hearing: 11/7/16

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.

Megan Duvall 10/20/16
Megan Duvall Date

City/County Historic Preservation Officer
City/County Historic Preservation Office
Third Floor – City Hall
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

Attest:

Approved as to form:

Levi H. Hester
City Clerk

Michael J. Piccolo
Assistant City Attorney



SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Doran Building was constructed in 1920, when the age of the automobile was just dawning in earnest. It was designed by early Spokane architect Arthur Cowley and constructed by builder, Abe Houle. The building originally housed one of the earliest and most successful automobile dealerships in Spokane. It continued its association with the automobile industry long after the untimely death of the original owner, John Doran

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The Doran Building is a 2-story commercial building with a rectangular plan, stretching from the south side of W. Second Avenue and back to the alley. It has a poured concrete superstructure, with brick infill and veneer walls. The roof has a shallow slope that conforms to the interior wood beam trusses. It is obscured from ground level by a straight parapet to the front and sides and a single step at the center of the rear parapet. All cornices are capped with simple metal flashing. The front (north) wall has a veneer of brick that has been painted with white paint on the upper half and a dark gray painted brick on the lower half. The ornamentation is simple. Just below the cornice is a stylized stringcourse featuring faux brick modillions below a faux cast concrete cornice with raised triangle-like pediments at each end. The windows below this consist of eight rectangular plate glass units with steel frames, with the windows at each end flanked by narrow windows of similar makeup. These second level windows are given a common sill by a cast concrete stringcourse directly below them. The space between the upper windows and the lower contains brick tapestry creating three panels delineated by soldier bricks and square cast concrete appliques at the corners, with a larger diamond-shaped concrete applique centered in each of the end panels. The panels include one large rectangle centered over the storefront with two smaller panels on each end. The windows and doors of the lower level are symmetrically placed within a framework created by steel I-beams. Double sets of steel frame plate glass windows with transom lights, four in all, are separated by brick pilasters. The front entry is recessed with sidewalls that are not canted. A single metal framed glass door is situated at the center of the entry. Above it is a transom window. It is flanked by glass sidelights, both with transom lights above.

The sidewalls of the entry also contain glass sidelights and transoms lights. The entire entry is surrounded by steel I-beams to ensure stability.

The rear (south) wall is clad with white painted brick in the upper level and dark gray painted brick below. The upper level features painted advertisements: “Mercedes Porsche BMW Jaguar” and “Master Mechanics,” added in the 1990s when the business operated as Master Mechanics. A row of rectangular and square windows is situated on the upper level. These are plate glass units with steel frames and brick header sills. On window opening on the right side has been filled in with brick. The lower level, like the front, has been reinforced with a framework of steel I-beams. Fenestration includes a single-door pedestrian entry, a double-door pedestrian entry, a wide metal vehicle door, a covered window opening, and a ventilation louvre opening.

The west elevation upper level features a row of windows similar to that of the upper rear, while the lower level is obscured by an adjacent building. The east elevation is partially obscured by an adjacent 2-story building. Former rectangular window openings on this side have been filled in with concrete blocks.

The interior spaces of the building have been extensively remodeled, but in such a fashion as to leave many of the structural elements intact and visible. The forward portion of the first floor level is divided into an entry lobby and adjacent office spaces that were recently constructed. The lobby is partially defined by a curved wall that reaches to the ceiling. The other dividing walls rise short of the ceiling, leaving the interior structural framework and utilities installations exposed. The glass windows and doors of two additional spaces on the north side of the building on the first floor, used as a waiting area and a conference room, give the area an open feel. In the offices along the exterior walls the structural brick walls are uncovered. The poured concrete ceiling, as well as the concrete support columns and cross beams are left visible. In the southeast corner of the forward portion is the 2-level space that once contained an elevator that transported vehicles between the two floors. It now encloses an interior dog-leg staircase

constructed of metal rails, lattice, and steps that appear to be suspended in space, reinforcing the airy feeling. Here, again, the brick and concrete walls are left uncovered. The remaining portion of the first floor level is a wide open vehicle parking space, not visible from the lobby and office area at the front of the floor. Again, the poured concrete framework and walls are left uncovered. The concrete support columns and cross beams are visible. Several window spaces on the west wall have been filled in with concrete blocks. On the rear (south) wall are several metal pedestrian doors and a wide metal vehicle entry door.

Like the first-floor, the second floor level is divided into a forward and, larger, rear portion. The interior structural components of the roof are left visible, including the large pre-fabricated wood beam trusses, the network of rafters and purlins that support the roof. All of the wood trusses are in original condition except for the second truss in from the north wall, which has been replaced with a new but similar truss. Several skylights in the roof have original chicken wire glass panes. Again, utility components have been left uncovered. The northern portion of the upper level is an open space that contains lounging, recreational, and kitchen areas. The windows have been replaced by modern plate glass units, but the original openings have been retained, both in size and configuration. The larger, rear space of the upper level contains an open office area with individual work stations that are only nominally divided by short cubical walls, creating an open common space. The original windows in this space have been replaced with modern plate glass panes, but the openings are retained, except for the windows of the partially obscured east wall, and one window of the rear (south) wall. The windows covered on the east are bricked in, while the window of the south wall has only recently been filled with concrete blocks.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

All of the original exterior multiple-pane windows of the front (north) façade's upper level have been replaced with modern single-pane plate glass units, but the original configuration, openings, and brick surrounds have been retained. The street level of the

first floor façade has been rebuilt several times, but it retains some of the characteristics of street front display windows with transoms. However, the configuration has been completely altered when compared to historic photographs.

Originally, the entries were at each end of the building, a double set of pedestrian doors, with multi-pane windows, on the left, and a vehicle entry door on the right. Between these two entries was a long row of large display windows. Above both the entries and the display windows were vertically placed rectangular transom windows. A much more recent reconfiguration of the front retained all of the transom windows, but the entries were changed. At the center was a large vehicle entry door with multiple windows. The pedestrian door was located in the second panel from the left, while the remaining panels appear to contain display windows.

The addition of steel I-beam reinforcements above the front entry and windows were necessitated by seismic safety requirements. On the secondary elevations some windows have been filled in, while others have been replaced with modern plate glass units, although original openings have been retained. On the west elevation there are no windows at the first floor level, due to the presence of an adjacent building. The upper floor window openings of the west side are original but the windows themselves are modern but similar units. On the east elevation, the only two windows of the lower level, and two of the upper level windows, have been recently filled in for fire safety purposes. On the rear (south) elevation, one upper level window has been filled in. Most interior spaces have been reconfigured and original wall claddings have been removed. This, however, revealed many of the original concrete and brick structural features. The original vehicle elevator has been replaced with pedestrian stairs.

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 wntown, 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, father of future Spokane Architect Arthur Cowley. Using logs from Glover’s mill, Cowley 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 were 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.

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 (SRO) hotels. These, along with new financial, civic, and medical facilities, led to the rapid expansion of the central business district.

Serendipitously, the booming Spokane economy of the 1910s coincided with the onset of the automobile age. Rising employment and incomes, juxtaposed with the growing availability and affordability of the motor car, allowed the populace to expend their disposable wealth on machines that were not only convenient, but just so much fun to ride in and drive. The American freedom of the open road was just being launched.

The 1881 construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad through the south portion of downtown Spokane led to the development of all kinds of businesses related to the transportation of people and goods. This was the beginning of the West Spokane Transportation Corridor, centered on First Avenue and stretched east to west between Washington and Jefferson streets. Robert Hyslop's map of Spokane, dated to the time of the 1889 fire, illustrates how the railroad attracted freight depots, small businesses, and SROs. But at this pre-automobile age date, there were many enterprises dedicated to the use of horses for transportation, including liverys, stables, harness shops, and blacksmiths. By the mid-1910s, this had begun to change, slowly at first, but picking up momentum rapidly. The wood framed horse and buggy oriented businesses began to give way to buildings devoted to showing, selling, and servicing automobiles. Many of the new buildings were brick commercial structures with cast stone or terra cotta highlights and glass storefronts designed to attract customers. Many of them were multi-story and often built of poured reinforced concrete to bear the weight of the cars. The use of automobiles even forced the Northern Pacific Railroad to raise its tracks. The 1915 Grade Separation project allowed for smother traffic flow through downtown. By November, 1923 the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* reported that 1,927 automobiles, with an estimated value of more than a million and a half dollars, had been sold by Spokane car dealerships. Fords and Chevrolets led the way. But one dealership, John Doran's Hudson-Essex store was tops among what were described as "medium priced" cars, with total sales of 110 cars in the same five month period.

The development of auto-related businesses and buildings West Spokane Transportation Corridor during the 1920s was never matched again. By the 1950s, spurred by the automobile, people were moving to the suburbs in droves. The service and gas stations, and the dealerships, followed. Many of the downtown auto-row buildings segued into parking garages to serve downtown employees and business customers. Some of these sturdy buildings became mere storage space. Recently, the corridor has been experiencing a revival, with the expansion of huge dealerships, most notably Larry H. Miller. Once more the term *Auto Row* is becoming appropriate.

The Doran/Buchannan Building was constructed in 1920 for John E. Doran, who planned to use it as a dealership for Packard, Hudson, and Essex automobiles. The year 1920 was at the very outset of the auto-related business boom described above. From the 1923 newspaper article noted above, we can see that he succeeded. Doran was president of the John Doran Company. He was married to Genevieve Doran. He opened his first dealership in 1914 at the corner of Wall Street and 3rd Avenue, selling Packards and Studebakers. He moved his business into the new building after its 1920 completion. The Hudson models thrived in the 1920s and so did Doran's business. Unfortunately, Doran died during appendix surgery in 1927. A partner, William Twohy continued the business, keeping the John Doran Company name and switching to used cars instead of new. But the onset of the Depression led to failure.

By 1930 the name had changed to Universal Auto Company, while Twohy continued to sell used cars at the old Wall Street and 3rd Avenue location. The Universal Auto Company remained until 1937, under management of Philip J. Garnett. During the 1940s, ownership changed hands several times between Ernie Majer Autos and Buchannon Chevrolet. After 1950, the place became the body and fender shop for Buchannon Chevrolet Company, which also took over the adjacent building at 715 W. Second Avenue. This situation continued until about 1973, when Buchannon appears to have moved out.

Subsequently, the Empire Lease Company, dealing in automobiles, took over at the 715 W. Second Avenue address, while the Pierce Towing Company, owned by Ron Pierson, moved into the 707 W. Second Avenue location. Between 1985 and 1987, the building was occupied by the Autobahn auto repair and body shop. In 1988, the Master Mechanics auto repair and body shop took over the building, staying for the next 10 years. It seems the building was only marginally used after that, until the Evergreen Parking Company took over, in 2002. Mr. Magic car wash operated in the building at the same time for several years.

In 2015, the building was purchased by DCI Engineers, a private consulting engineering firm that provides structural and civil engineering. The company is based in Seattle but has had a Spokane office since 1998. It currently has about 50 employees in Spokane, and 250 overall. The company understands the benefits of adaptive re-use of old and underutilized buildings in Spokane. After having provided engineering services for many of the renovations of downtown buildings over the past two decades, DCI decided to do the same for a building of their own.

The Doran/Buchanan Building was built by local contractor Abe Houle, and designed by Arthur W. Cowley, Spokane architect and member of a prominent pioneer family. His father, Henry Thomas Cowley, was an early Spokane missionary, who settled among the Spokane Indians at a site now occupied by Cowley Park on Sixth Avenue. Durham's 1912 *Spokane and the Inland Empire* credits the Henry Cowley Family with being "the fourth white family here, those preceding him being A.M. Cannon, J.J. Brown, and James N. Glover." Henry Cowley's only son, Arthur, was born in Spokane on October 9, 1878. He graduated from the Old South Central High School, and later attended Oberlin College and the University of Wisconsin, from which he received a degree in civil engineering in 1903. After returning to Spokane, he was associated with early local architect J.K. Dow, before opening his own office in 1906. In 1912, Arthur Cowley relocated to Edmonton, Alberta, but he came back to Spokane in 1914, where he designed many buildings during a career which lasted nearly until his death on January

18, 1949. Many of his creations were industrial or warehouse structures which have largely disappeared. He also designed a number of apartment and rooming houses, of which many have been demolished or altered. One of these, the old Gandy Hotel building, was razed in 1982, as was the original Crescent Block, to clear the way for expansion of the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper offices.

Today, the finest surviving example of Arthur Cowley's architectural creativity is the Altadena Apartments, located at S. 608 Stevens Street, which cost one hundred and twenty one thousand dollars when it was built in 1909. Cowley is also credited with the design of three Spokane fire stations, including No. 9, at S. 804 Monroe Street, No. 2, at E. 603 Indiana Avenue, and No. 16, at W. 2731 Northwest Boulevard. Other Cowley designs include the Buckman Apartments, at 1828 W. 1st Avenue, the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Store & Warehouse, at 123 E. Sprague Avenue and, with Archibald Rigg, the Willard (Otis) Hotel, at 1101-09 W. 1st Avenue. Cowley also designed a number of Spokane residences.

ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT

The Doran/Buchanan Building, built in 1920, is significant for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category A for its association with the automobile industry in Spokane, including both sales and service. It was constructed in 1920, the first year of a decade of expansion for the auto industry in Spokane. Under John Doran, the building served as one of the early dealers to sell Packards and Hudsons, which were among the most popular cars in the nation during the 1920s, as well as the lesser known Essex. Later it would become one of the more prominent locations of the Buchanan Chevrolet automobile sales and services business. Still later, it would continue its association with the automobile as a parking garage. Although no longer associated with automobile sales and service, the building's appearance continues to exhort the feeling of its past legacy. It remains one of the anchoring properties of an expanded West Spokane Transportation Corridor.

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R.L. Polk and Co.

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Tinsley, Jesse

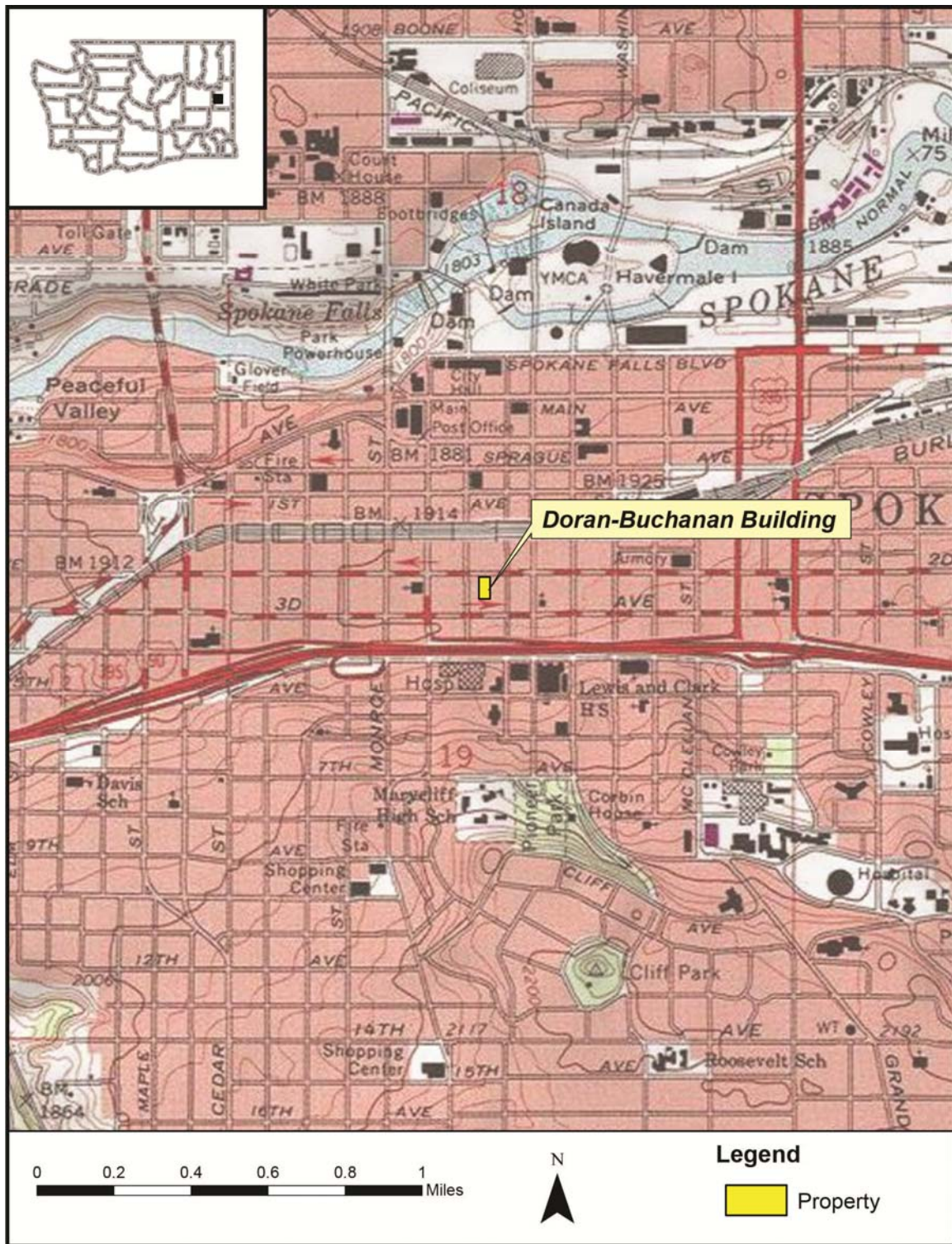
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Spokane Daily Chronicle

1923 Spokane County Purchases 1927 Cars In Five Months. *Spokane Daily
Chronicle* 1927:n.p.

Washington State University History Department

1979 West Downtown Historic Transportation Corridor, National Register of
Historic Places District Nomination.



Doran-Buchanan Building, 707 W. 2nd Avenue



DB-1 North elevation, view to the south.



DB-2 North elevation, view to the southwest.



DB-3 North elevation, upper left side, view to the south.



DB-4 North elevation, street level, view to the southeast.



DB-5 North elevation, right side, window and transom detail, view to the south.



DB-6 North elevation, entry, view to the southwest.



DB-7 South (rear) elevation, view to the northeast.



DB-8 South (rear) elevation, view to the north.



DB-9 First floor, curved wall at entry, view to the southeast.



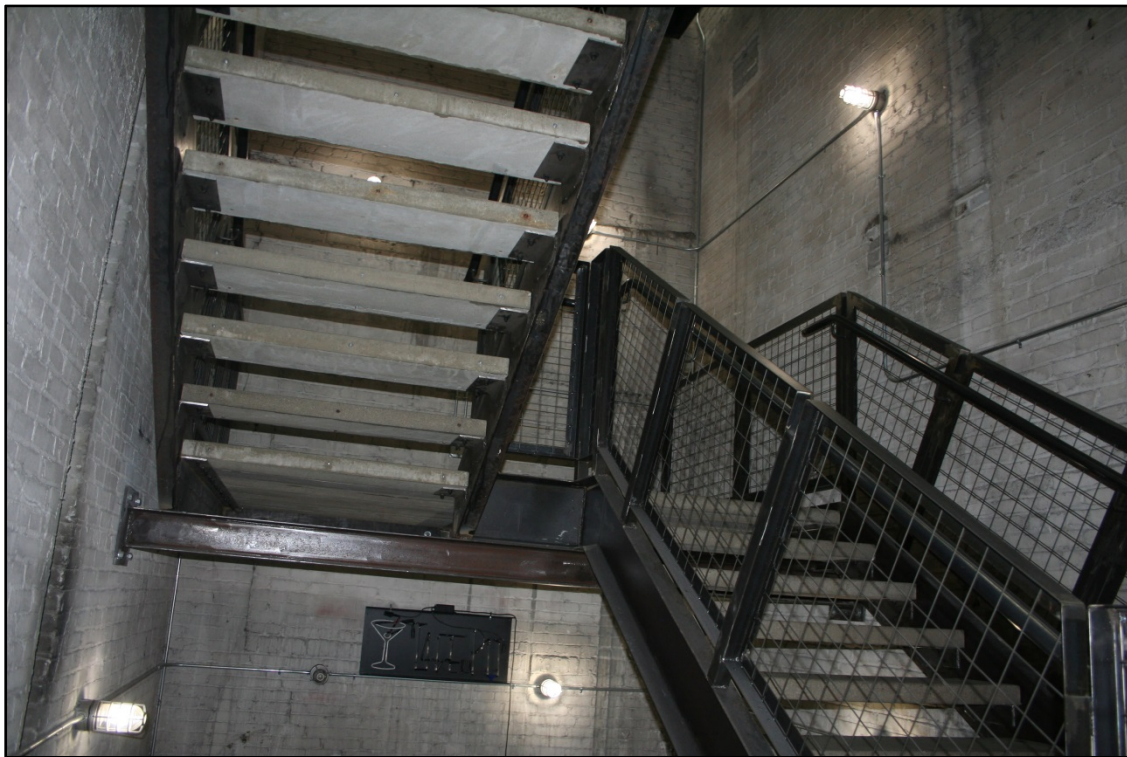
DB-10 First floor, typical office, view to the west.



DB-11 First floor, exposed concrete superstructure and utilities, view to the southwest.



DB-12 First floor, neon sign from front, view to the south.



DB-13 First floor, stairs in former elevator shaft, view to the southeast.



DB-14 First floor, rear parking area, concrete column, view to the southeast.



DB-15 First floor, rear parking area, filled in window, view to the east.



DB-16 Second floor, forward kitchen area, view to the northeast.



DB-17 Second floor, window openings in kitchen/lounge, view to the northeast.



DB-18 Second floor, common office area, trusses, view to the southeast.



DB-19 Second floor, common office area, trusses, view to the southwest.



DB-20 Second floor, filled in window space on south wall, view to the south.



DB-21 Second floor, truss and exposed utilities detail, view to the northwest.



DB-21 Second floor, top of stairs in former elevator shaft, view to the east.



DB-22 Historic photograph of the front (north) façade, Libby Collection, 1931, courtesy of the Eastern Washington Historical Society.