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# 1555 N Grant Street

## Landmark Designation Application

Community Planning and Housing Committee

Kara Hahn, Landmark Planning & Regulatory Supervisor

December 2, 2025

# 1555 North Grant St.

## Location

- Council District # 10
- North Capitol Hill neighborhood

## Zoning

- CM-X-12
- D0-1

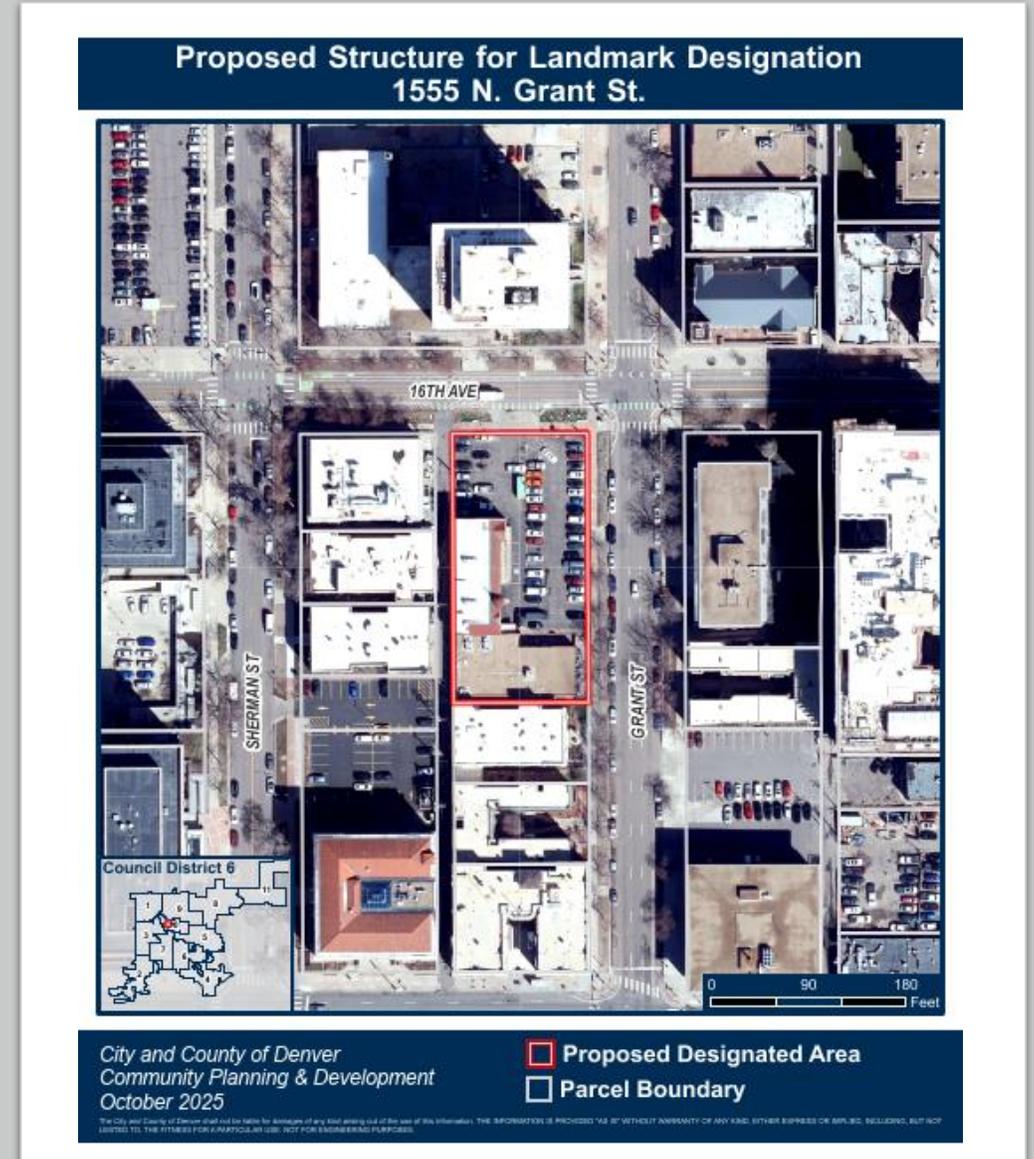
## Owner and Applicant

- Owners – Knights of Columbus, District 539
- Applicants – Knights of Columbus, District 539



# Proposed Boundary

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# Landmark Designation Criteria

## Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code

# Who Can Apply for Designation?

## Community-driven process

- Property owners
- Community Planning & Development manager
- City Council Member
- Three residents of Denver





# Landmark Designation Eligibility

Structure(s) must meet following \*:

1. Maintains integrity
2. More than 30 years old, or is exceptionally important
3. Meets at least three of ten criteria
4. LPC considers historic context

\*Per Landmark Ordinance (Chapter 30, DRMC)

# Designation Criteria: Meet 3 out of 10

## History

A. Historic event or development of city

**B. Recognized person(s) who had influence on society**

**C. Visible characteristics of architectural style**

## Architecture

**D. Significant example of recognized architect or master builder**

**E. Significant innovation or technical achievement**

## Geography

F. Familiar feature of neighborhood, due to prominent location or physical character

G. Understanding of urban environment through physical characteristics or rarity

## Culture

H. Cultural understanding of how the site was used by past generations

I. Physical attribute that is source of pride or cultural understanding

J. Social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth that contributed to culture of neighborhood, city, state, or nation

# Historic Context: Site Development



## B. Direct & substantial association with a group of persons who had influence on society

- Knights of Columbus
  - District 539 served
    - Denver’s Catholic community
    - General public
- Use of Space
  - Fraternal organization
  - Cathedral
  - Conferences & conventions

### **CATHOLIC WOMEN TO CONVENE JAN. 16-17**

The Denver Diocesan Council of Catholic Women will hold its third annual convention at the Knights of Columbus hall, Jan. 16 and 17, open at the cathedral. Luncheons will be served at the end of the convention.

### **Luncheon Club To Hear FBI Agent**

John J. Dunn, special agent of the federal bureau of investigation, will address the Friday Luncheon Club this week on the subject, "Your FBI in criminal activity and national security." Chairman Jim Peri said Thursday.

## B. Direct & substantial association with a group of persons who had influence on society

- World War II
  - 1928 Event Hall
  - United Service Organization (U.S.O.)
  - National Catholic Community Service
  - Half million service men & women



## B. Direct & substantial association with a group of persons who had influence on society

- Post-War population growth
  - Nationwide increase fraternal orders
  - Need more space – new hall
- Post-War car culture
  - Personal automobile central
  - Location off Colfax, near cathedral
  - Downtown “blight”
  - Development of parking lots



## C. Embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;

- Mid-century Modern
  - Clean lines
  - Simple flat roof
  - Smooth exterior
  - Lack of embellishment



## D. Significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder

- John F. Milan
  - 700 design projects – varied work
    - Single family and multi-unit residential, small retail, shopping centers, office buildings, schools, motels, and warehouses
- Catholic Archdiocese of Denver
  - Designed numerous churches & parish halls
  - Event Hall - prestressed double tee concrete
    - Early usage nationwide
    - Likely first in Denver
    - Makes it significant example of work



## E. Contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement

- Material & Interstates
  - Post-War material shortage
    - Different options
  - Concrete industry growth
    - Interstate development
- Prestressed concrete double tee framing members
  - Ubiquitous today
  - Cutting edge in 1962/3
  - First known use in buildings 1961 (FL)





**Integrity:** Would prior residents recognize the property today?



# Integrity

- Minimal changes
  - Replace windows w glass block
  - Add porch
- Retains seven aspects of integrity



## Historic context

- History and of Knights of Columbus
- Evolution of the property
- Changes to neighborhood
- Development of car culture



## Period of Significance

- Construction of Event Hall
  - Major changes to barn
  - Changed to school
  - 1928 Event Hall
- 100-year anniversary
  - Covers most active time of use
  - Council 539's social & cultural influence in Denver



THE HONORABLE  
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November 6, 2025

Denver Landmark Preservation Commission  
Community Planning & Development  
201 W. Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80202

Re: Support for Landmark Designation — 1555 N. Grant Street

Dear Members of the Landmark Preservation Commission,

Councilman Chris Hinds supports the local landmark designation of 1555 N. Grant Street, encompassing the full parcel, including the 1928 Buell Hall, the 1963 Milan Hall, and the adjoining L-shaped resource to the community in Council District 10. The central location of this property is a historic resource for the community, including Denver Catholics and the general population, to access services and make social connections for over 95 years.

It is important to the community to preserve this property. Knights of Columbus 539 established in the west and remains the oldest council in Colorado. Few residents 539 opened its doors to the public during times of need, such as during the Great Depression, when the site became a United Service Organizations (U.S.O.) center that served members in just three years. This property's significance to the community is the same as much as the site's specific physical attributes.

The existing buildings on the site are the work of two noted local architects. Temple Buell's designs tell the story of the property's evolution from a late 19<sup>th</sup> Century estate to a modern structure to accommodate changing community needs and public policy. Buell's adaptive reuse of the site's original buildings while Milan, as a Mid-Century Modern architect, designed concrete framing members (double tees) first developed and fabricated in Denver by his company.



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Re: Support for Landmark Designation — 1555 N. Grant Street

Dear Members of the Landmark Preservation Commission,

Historic Denver supports the local landmark designation of 1555 N. Grant Street, encompassing the full parcel—including the 1928 Buell Hall, the 1963 Milan Hall, and the adjoining L-shaped parking lot—as a unified historic resource that reflects multiple layers of Denver's architectural, social, and urban development history.

Designed by noted Denver architect Temple Buell, the 1928 French Renaissance Revival hall adapted and reused portions of the site's earlier carriage complex, blending original stone and brick fabric with refined new construction. The result is a rare composition that visibly expresses the site's evolution across decades. The 1963 addition by architect John F. Milan contributes to this story through its Mid-Century Modern form and technical innovation. Its use of locally produced prestressed concrete double-tee members—employed not only in the roof and floor but as the building's exterior walls—represents an early and significant example of this Colorado-born construction method.

Socially, the property holds deep associations with the Knights of Columbus Denver Council 539, one of the city's oldest and most active service organizations. During World War II, the Council transformed the site into a United Service Organizations (U.S.O.) center that served an estimated half million service members in just three years. This extraordinary level of wartime activity contributed to the deterioration of the former Fletcher Mansion and ultimately informed the site's redevelopment. The nomination also highlights the organization's broader history in Denver, including its response to anti-Catholic sentiment through civic engagement and visible patriotism—important social themes that remain embodied in this property.

# Public Comment

# Landmark Designation Review Criteria

- Over 30 years of age
- Application meets at least three criteria
  - B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;
  - C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;
  - D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;
  - E. It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;
- Retains Integrity
- LPC considers the historic context

Based on ordinance designation criteria and on the findings of the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) that the application meets the criteria for designation of a structure, staff recommends the application is forward to full council.