

**DENVER LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION
INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE LANDMARK DESIGNATION
APPLICATION**

07.30.2024

This form is for use in nominating individual structures and districts in the City and County of Denver. To qualify as a Landmark, a property must be at least 30 years old, retain its historic integrity and meet at least three significance criteria. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." When filling out this application, please refer to the Customer Guide for Individual Landmark Applications, available at www.denvergov.org/landmark. Questions about the application or designation process can be directed to Denver Landmark Preservation staff at landmark@denvergov.org or (303) 865-2709.

Property Address: 1555 N. Grant Street, Denver

The following are required for the application to be considered complete:

- ☒ Property Information
- ☒ Applicant Information and Signatures
- ☒ Criteria for Significance
- ☒ Statement of Significance
- ☒ Period of Significance
- ☒ Property Description
- ☒ Statement of Integrity
- ☒ Historic Context
- ☒ Bibliography
- ☒ Boundary Map
- ☒ Photographs
- ☐ Application Fee

1. Property Information

Name of Property

Historic Name: Fletcher Mansion/ Knights of Columbus Denver Hall

Proposed Name: Home of Denver, Council 539

Location

Address: 1555 N. Grant Street, Denver CO 80203

Legal Description: Lots 31-40, inclusive, Block 37, H.C. Brown's Addition

Resources:

For an individual property designation, please list the number contributing or non-contributing primary and accessory structures.

Primary Structures

# Contributing	<u>2</u>
# Non-contributing	<u>0</u>

Accessory Structures

# Contributing	<u>1</u>
# Non-contributing	<u> </u>

Contributing and Non-contributing Resources

Describe how the property's contributing and non-contributing resources were determined.

Each of Knights of Columbus (KofC) Council 539's two event halls reflect the history of the KofC in Denver. The contributing 1928 Buell Event Hall was a reuse of an existing building and redesigned to allow greater usage of the space by Council 539 and the community. It's was also designed to complement the 1890 Fletcher Mansion to which the event hall was originally attached.

The 1963 Milan Event Hall is also a contributing resource as it embodies distinctive visible characteristics of the Mid-Century Modern style by its clean simple lines of the flat roof, smooth exterior red brick surfaces with the lack of embellishments, and vertical fenestrations providing a connection to the outside. Additionally, its siting perpendicular to the street subordinates it to the older more visibly dominant 1928 Event Hall. The second hall reflects the growth of the KofC in the post-war era.

Lastly, the L-shaped parking lot that was paved in 1963 is also a contributing resource to this property for its visible representation of large-scale societal changes in transportation and car usage, particularly in the post-war era. The shift to an auto-centric mode led to a significant decrease in the use of the transit system of trolleys. With the increased use of automobiles there



was a need for additional parking throughout the downtown. This parking lot reflects these changes and is an example of numerous private property owners and Denver's own Urban Renewal demolished hundreds of late 19th Century buildings to pave more parking lots and build skyscrapers.

General Property Data

Date of construction: 1928

Architect (if known): Temple Buell

Builder (if known): Frank M Kenney

Original Use: Hall

Current Use: Hall

Date of construction: 1963

Architect (if known): John F. Milan, AIA , Emeritus

Builder (if known): Robertson Construction Company

Original Use: Hall

Current Use: Hall

Date of construction: 1963

Architect (if known): John Milan

Builder (if known): Robertson Construction Company

Original Use: Front lawn and dwelling footprint

Current Use: Parking lot

2. Owner/Applicant Information

An application for designation may be submitted by:

- ☒ Owner(s) of the property or properties, or
- ☐ Member(s) of City Council, or
- ☐ Manager of Community Planning and Development, or
- ☐ Three residents of Denver, if they are not owners of the property or properties

Owner Information

Name: Home of Denver, Inc., c/o Tom Vyles

Address: 1555 N. Grant Street, Denver CO 80203

Phone: 720-657-1044



Email: reddinexec@gmail.com

Primary Applicant (if not owner)

Name: Sean Espy

Address: 682 Stage Station Way,
Lafayette, CO 80026

Phone: 303-862-0789

Email: spespy27@yahoo.com

Prepared by

Name: Fairhill & Co.

Address: 374 S. Clarkson St., Denver CO 80209

Phone: 303-204-8722

Email: fairhillso@msn.com

Owner Applicant:

I / We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of the property described in this application for landmark designation do, hereby, give my consent to the designation of this structure as a structure for preservation.

I understand that this designation transfers with the title of the property should the property be sold, or if legal or beneficial title is otherwise transferred.

Owner(s): _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Owner(s) Signature: _____

For individual designations, if the owner does not support the designation, the applicants must conduct outreach to the owner. Describe below the efforts to contact the owner to discuss designation and other possible preservation alternatives. Please provide dates and details of any communications or meetings with the property owner, or the property owner's representatives below.

Other Applicant(s):

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____

(please print)

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____

(please print)

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____

(please print)

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Address: _____

3. Significance

Criteria for Significance

To qualify as a Landmark, a property must be at least 30 years old, retain its historic integrity and meet at least three significance criteria. Check the applicable criteria from the following list.

- ☐ A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;
- ☒ 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;
- ☐ F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;
- ☐ G. It promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;
- ☐ H. It represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations;
- ☐ I. It is a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural understanding;
- ☐ J. It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

Statement of Significance

Originally the site of a large private residence with a carriage house/barn, 1555 N. Grant Street is now owned and occupied by the Knights of Columbus (KofC) Denver Council 539. Constructed in 1889 for Donald Fletcher and purchased by KofC in 1919, the site has undergone multiple large-scale changes over the years.

1555 N. Grant Street's central location, with its proximity to Denver's political, religious and commercial power centers, has allowed Knights of Columbus Denver Council 539 to play a significant role in Denver's historical development into the mid-20th Century. The site is equally important for what is done there as for what are its physical contributing features. Council members' steadfast and resilient engagement in good works has made visible the Council's core principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism and thereby, benefited hundreds of thousands in the Denver Catholic community and the general public.

Property Evolution

This parcel is located in the block immediately northeast of the Colorado State Capitol that saw its first development in the 1880s. Its development has evolved from a highly regarded mansion to a highly valued event space used privately and for general public use. In December 1889, Donald Fletcher was issued a permit to construct a stone dwelling and barn on Block 37, H.C. Brown's Addition. By 1897, city maps show this specific property consisted of a dwelling at the corner of 16th Avenue and Grant Street and a detached stable and carriage house with a water tower, sited along the alley south of the dwelling.



[1575 Grant Street, ca. 1891-1900, DPL]

In 1919, the Knights of Columbus Denver Council 539 purchased the entire 10-lot property. In early 1920, a permit was issued for a two-story brick addition that incorporated and connected the stable/carriage house, including the tower originally used as a water tank, to the western end of the dwelling's south façade, for use as a school.



[1575 Grant Street, ca. 1920-1930, Rocky Mt. Photo Co.]

In 1928, a new permit was issued to remodel the 1920 stone and brick addition as an event hall. The adaptive reuse was an early design by Temple Buell that repurposed portions of the stable and water tower as well as reusing both stone and brick from the earlier structures.



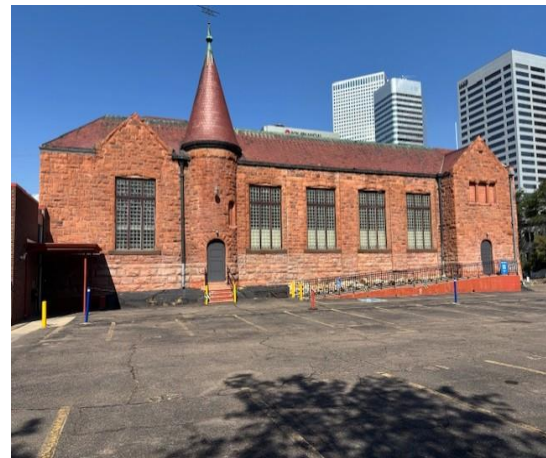
[1575 Grant Street, 1948, DPL]

A 1962 groundbreaking ceremony was held for another event hall to be constructed that attached to the south façade of the 1928 hall. Then, in 1963, the extensively-used original 1890 dwelling was demolished and its area, along with the raised front lawn, were leveled and paved for use as a parking lot. The 1928 and 1962 halls remain in use (as does the parking lot) after more than 95 and 60 years respectively.



1963 Hall, August 2025

[1555 N. Grant Street]



1928 Hall, July 2025

Criterion B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;

The property at 1555 N. Grant Street is significant for its association with KofC District 539. The KofC served both Denver's Catholic community as well as the greater community at-large. As a fraternal order, they supported the men in the Catholic community with a space for comradeship and fellowship and a central location for Catholics outside of Denver to meet. Council 539 also welcomed other community groups to use the space and often hosted or sponsored events that benefited the larger community.

From serving members and veterans of the armed services to defending religious liberty to championing interracial justice in the 1960s, the Knights of Columbus has continuously addressed the religious, social, and material needs of Catholics and others since its founding in 1882 (The Knights of Columbus, Handbook for Councils Using Home Corporation Facilities, 2015, p.3). Since 1919, East 16th Avenue and N. Grant Street has been the HOME for Denver Council 539, which was organized in 1900. Since it was established, this Council's members comprised some of Denver's esteemed businessmen who have been generous sources of Denver's medical and social giving. Members of this Council helped to establish Catholic Charities, orphanages, and a home for the aged among other endeavors. One of the better-known Council 539 members was J.K. Mullen. This group's collective actions in 20th Century Denver significantly improved Denver residents' quality of life. These halls have been used for educational purposes such as lecture series and conferences or simply to provide services to those in need, for job placement, as in the 1930s, as well as for celebrating.

An extraordinary time of service by Denver Council 539 began in November 1941, in response to hundreds of men in training at the new Army Air Corps Technical School established on what became Lowry Air Force Base in 1937 (The Army Air Forces in World War II, Vol. VI, Men and Planes, 1955). During World War II, this site became an official United Service Organization (U.S.O.) and as National Catholic Community Service (NCCS) host where more than one-half million, armed services men and women were fed, sheltered or entertained by a cadre of more than 600 KofC volunteers. Between 1931 and 1965, the number of Catholics in Colorado tripled (Noel, Colorado Catholicism, 1931-1967). By the 1950s and 1960s, the Knights of Columbus counted 7,000 Colorado members statewide.

Council 539's enviable central location one block from the State Capitol and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception provides members the continuing opportunity to offer their facilities to Catholics from around the state and the public at large. Various organizations have been able to use this site for conferences and conventions, while elected officials hosted luncheons and other public events. To accommodate the mid- 20th Century growth in membership and the community's changing needs as well, Council 539 reconfigured their property in the early 1960s adding a new event hall and providing onsite parking. Located about a block off of Colfax Avenue and near both the state capitol and the cathedral, the parking lot was used by the KofC as well as renting spaces to the general public. Council 539 supported their organization and paid for much of their work via funds from the parking lot. This site shows the evolution of Denver's driving culture changing from grass lawn to a large-scale parking lot, which served as a primary source of income for the KofC allowing for continued charitable acts within the community.

The 50 years between 1928 and 1982 were among the most active for Council 539 members. Their steadfast and resilient engagement in good works continues to represent the Council's core principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism to benefit the Denver Catholic community and the general public.

Criterion C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type

The Knights of Columbus Denver Hall constructed in 1963 embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of the Mid-century Modern architectural style. The newer event hall (John H. Milan, Architect) is a good example of the Mid-century Modern architectural style and is defined as a low one-story building sited perpendicular to the street. It is subordinated to the older, more visibly dominant 1928 event hall. The Mid-century Modern architectural style's characteristics are embodied by its clean, simple lines of the flat roof, smooth exterior red brick surfaces, lack of embellishment, and vertical fenestration. The importance of a connection to the exterior environs in Modern architecture can also be seen here through the large windows allowing an abundance of light to flood the hall's two-level interior.

Criterion D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;

The Knights of Columbus 1963 Denver Hall is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect, John F. Milan, AIA. The 1963 hall is a unique example of Milan's work for its inventive Mid-century Modern architectural style's incorporation of its structural form as design elements not typically found in early 1960s Denver. At the time of construction, using prestressed concrete vertical framing members for the exterior walls was an inventive element.

Milan's body of work exemplifies a pragmatic, marketplace-driven approach. He designed an extensive variety of buildings based on the need and work available at the time. When times were good for retail, Milan designed retail buildings. When times were good to build warehouses, Milan designed warehouses. Milan's 700 projects range from single family and multi-unit residential, to small retail and shopping centers, low- and hi-rise office buildings, schools, churches, parish halls, motels, and warehouses among other building types. However, over Milan's 50-year career, he was often hired by parishes throughout the Catholic Archdiocese of Denver. Milan is credited with designing dozens of major churches, schools, rectories, or parish halls in metropolitan Denver, in Colorado Springs, and as far south as Trinidad Colorado.

An innovative designer, Milan incorporated new types of concrete typically used only as structural elements for use also as architectural elements. Milan designed multiple projects that needed large open spaces and a structural form that could minimize the number of columns or pillars needed, such as trucking facilities or gymnasiums. In response, he used a folded plate technique, or lift-slab construction or, as seen on the 1963 Event Hall, pre-stressed concrete double-tee framing members. This use of prestressed concrete double tee in an event hall is unique and likely Denver's earliest example of the use of these framing members to build the floor, the roof, and exterior walls. As such this is a significant example of Milan's work.

Criterion E. It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;

The Knights of Columbus Council 539's 1963 Event Hall contains elements of design, engineering, and materials, that represent a significant innovation or technical achievement. Needing open interior event space without pillars prompted Buell in 1928 to add pilasters to support the roof to his adaptive remodel of a 1920 KofC school building. In the early 1950s, an aftereffect of World War II was the ongoing shortage of traditional building materials that continued into the 1960s. Furthermore, the buildout of the interstate highway system in the 1950s, by necessity, spawned development of new building techniques using multiple types of concrete materials, which were developed to compensate for long construction delays.

Engineers for Prestressed Concrete of Colorado, Inc., a firm, owned and operated by the Perlmutter Family, are credited as the first in the world to develop and fabricate a new concrete structural form -- prestressed double tee framing members in 1953 (PCI Journal, July-August 2015, page 49). "The double tee is (now) one of the most widely used structural precast concrete building products in North America" (ibid).

In 1963, Milan used the strength of the double tees as his design choice for a new event hall for Denver Council 539. Use of prestressed concrete double tee framing members for an event hall was unique and innovative for the time, and, like Buell in 1928, allowed for a large open event space while minimizing the need for pillars. The double tee is typically used for floor or roof framing, functioning as a beam while also providing the floor or roof surface. As seen in the 1963 event hall, the double tee member can also be used vertically as a wall element, functioning as a load-bearing column or wall and resisting wall lateral forces from wind or earthquakes, which was an innovative use of the concrete materials.

Exposure of the double tee framing members offers provides both the form and the function for this architecturally simple rectangular building's walls, roof, and main level floor. Extending the double tee stems above the parapet uses the visible construction materials as architectural features, forming crenelations.

The first office building in the U.S. credited with using all prestressed concrete and double tee members is a two-story structure built in 1961 in Florida (Wikipedia, accessed August 7, 2025). Milan began his design of Denver's Knights of Columbus' new hall beginning in 1962. Double tee members are now the predominant component in parking structures but also used to roof sporting facilities, or construct auditoriums, schools, pedestrian bridges, and warehouses among number of other building types. Double tees have become one of the most efficient and cost effective precast concrete products, resulting in faster construction time and reduced labor costs, as no formwork is needed. At this time his use of prestressed concrete double tee framing members was an innovative design approach.

Period of Significance

Period of Significance: 1928-1982

This time period represents 50 of the most active years of use of the two event halls, cementing Council 539's social and cultural influence in Denver. The greatest use of these halls occurred during World War II when more than 500,000 men and women used Council 539's event space

for food, shelter and entertainment. Also, during this timeframe, the number of Catholics in Colorado tripled and Denver Council 539 initiated its largest classes of members.

The beginning year of the period of significance has been selected because it is the construction year of the older extant event hall. The end year of the period honors the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the Knights of Columbus. A community-wide recognition with a parade, speeches, and a banquet were held in Denver to honor this centennial.

4. Property Description

Briefly describe the property's setting, architectural and character-defining features. Provide a list of any site features or major alterations and their estimated date of construction.

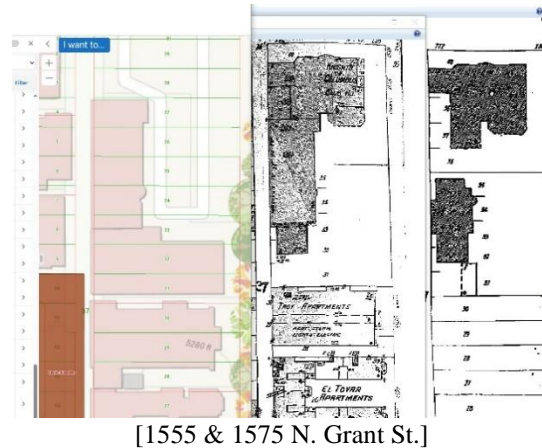
In December 1889, Donald Fletcher was issued a permit to construct a \$30,000 stone dwelling and barn on ten lots sited near at the southwest corner of 16th Avenue and Grant Street. Unfortunately, Fletcher only briefly occupied this home before his fortune failed in the Silver Crash of 1893. He later declared bankruptcy.

Until 1899, the property was in the hands of the court when J.W. Springer, son-in-law of the President of the Continental Cattle Company W.E. Hughes purchased the property. In 1906, Hughes sold the property to Frank E. Hearne, who had been selected to head CF&I (Colorado Fuel & Iron Company). Hearne's estate sold the parcel in 1919 to the Knights of Columbus Council 539. Although more than 25 years had passed since Donald Fletcher had lived here for less than two years, the property was then, and still is, routinely referred to as the Fletcher Mansion.

Shortly after the Knights of Columbus's 1919 purchase, a two-story brick addition (70x30) was constructed in March 1920 that joined the mansion to the carriage house/stable sited north and south along the alley to accommodate a vocational school for World War I ex-servicemen and women. Eight years later, a permit to "remodel" the stone and brick buildings was issued creating a large (40x120 foot) event hall. Temple Buell was hired to design an adaptive renovation reusing stone masonry walling from the original late 19th Century carriage house wing of the now-demolished Fletcher Mansion. The event hall opened in the late fall of 1928. This hall is sited north and south along the alley. Brick, stone gabled elements, and the slate roofed water tower were incorporated from the stable/carriage house and school building. The challenge for Buell was to make the remodel look like one building.

In 1963, the mansion, after use by as many as 600,000 people, was demolished and the site regraded to accommodate parking. A new event hall was constructed also in 1963, which is sited perpendicular to the street sited along the south property line of the parcel. The 9,500 square foot event hall is connected to the south façade of the 1928 Event Hall. This building is the design of architect, John F. Milan, AIA, in a Mid-century Modern architectural style innovatively using prestressed double tee framing members as both structure and architectural elements. The double tee structural members utilized for the project were developed and produced by Colorado Prestress Concrete of Colorado, Inc. These members form the structure for the roof, walls and floor. The term "prestressed double tee" describes the proprietary distinctively shaped concrete members that provides strength to a structure. On the 1963 event hall, the components of the double tee form are also used as architectural elements on both the interior and the exterior of the building.

Current site features include the 1928 Event Hall adjoined to the 1963 Event Hall that are adjacent to parking spaces and now addressed as 1555 N. Grant Street, Denver. See site map below, left to right, from 2025, 1929, 1904:



The 1928 Event Hall is side-gabled and sited along the alley. The east façade is patterned red Manitou sandstone of varying shades on a stone foundation with front facing gables at the north and south ends of the building. The north gable extends east from the façade and has a partial cross gable roof. The wing facing the street has two off-center doorways, and an asymmetrical façade incorporating its conical roofed water tower. The reuse of the mixed stone and brick materials characterize the architectural style of the wing that was once attached to the Fletcher Mansion. The building used red sandstone masonry massing, coursed ashlar to the window sills and random ashlar to the eaves and within the asymmetrical facade pavilions. At the south eave, adjacent to the tower entrance, and the north eave there are plane gable ends with a narrow stone coursing extending above the roof ridges. There is flat arched blind arcade of the north pavilion, above a secondary entrance and a semicircular doorway voussoir arches, including the small blind arched window, placed asymmetrically above the doorway.

Window openings in the north pavilion and the interspaced windows between the pavilions have stone enframements. That of the south pavilion is nearly flush with the tripartite window openings. Similar window openings of the central walling are enframed by shallow pseudo pilasters extending from below their wooden sills each with a recessed panel within the foundation coursed ashlar. The pilasters extend to the unornamented roof eaves with a shallow fascia behind gutters. Within each of the five facade window openings, one on the north pavilion and four within the walling between the pavilions, are tall tripartite window frames having vertical mullions extending through a horizontal transom bar. The glazing of the lower openings and within the transoms are small panes set into metal frames.

The west façade has a red sandstone foundation and water table brick walls installed above. The five window openings have brick sills and are in-filled with horizontal wood boards and are separated by brick pilasters. The gabled roof north facade has no openings and is painted parged brick.

The 1963 Event Hall is a rectangular one-story structure with a garden level set perpendicular to the 1928 event hall and the street. The new hall abuts the 1928 event hall's south façade, forming an L-shaped building set back from Grant Street.

The Mid-century Modern architectural style's characteristics are embodied by its clean, simple lines of the flat roof, smooth exterior red brick surfaces contrasting to vertical fenestration, and the lack of embellishment. The importance of a connection to the exterior environs in Modern architecture can also be seen here through the large windows allowing an abundance of light to flood the hall's two-level interior. The prestressed concrete is used for the roof and floor structures also is used inventively for the exterior walling, separated by vertical glazing units. Each prestressed unit's central tee section extends above the roof line, forming crenelations.

The event hall is constructed with premanufactured, "prestressed concrete double tee" load bearing spans that comprise the roof, floor, and two of the four walls (east and north) of the club house. Concrete block comprises the west façade and the western half of the south façade. The double tee spans, also called stems, are also used as vertical extended components of the building's exterior Mid-century Modern architecture. The foundation is standard cast-in-place concrete that extends to the main level as part of the support structure for the main level's floor double tee framing members.

The roof and floor structure are comprised of eight feet wide double tee members running north and south. The main level floor double tee spans extend beyond the concrete foundation on the south and north facades creating a cantilever overhang of the first floor. The north façade cantilever also serves as an eave for the garden level patio below grade. The western-most roof double tee spans are longer than the other roof spans creating the two-level foyer and stairwell located at the main entrance and also serve as architectural elements.

The hall's walls' double tee frames rise above the parapet on three elevations (north, east and south). On the east façade, the double tees are taller than the other facades to allow for natural light into the garden level on that elevation. These serve as distinctive architectural elements in addition their structural role. Portions of the south and north facades are faced in red wire cut brick in a running bond rising above the parapet that masks the tops of the double tee stems. In contrast to the facing brick, on the east façade and the western portion of the north façade, the double tee spans and flange remain exposed as architectural elements in addition to their structural purpose. Painted metal cap and fascia of galvanized metal in a contrasting red color from double tee stems and flange appear to be a nod to the rusticated red sandstone on the 1928 event hall.

In an effort to reduce visual clutter associated with the Minimalist architectural style, the club house's main entrance is set back from the street adjacent to the 1928 event hall. It also faces north and is located at the elbow where the two buildings meet. It consists of extruded aluminum storefront frame windows with clear fixed glazing. A simple steel frame canopy supported by steel pipe columns shelters the main entrance.

Windows located on two facades (north and east) are placed vertically between the flanges and are fastened to the edge of the double tee flange. All windows are aluminum frame storefront style with clear glazing. The main level windows are divided into three sections with the upper two sections fixed while the lower section has an operable awning style sash. Windows on the lower

level are single fixed glazing. The eastern façade of the foyer and stairwell is a tri-part fixed clear glazing in an aluminum storefront frame with a single door opening to access the garden level patio. The glazing allows natural light to flood the stairwell and foyer that is an architectural element of the Mid-century Modern architectural style. Wrought iron fencing and gates surround the club house on the east and west ends of the building and along the north façade, enclosing the lower-level patio.

Character-defining features of Mid-century Modern architectural style, as identified by the Washington State Commercial Architectural Style Guide (2021) include:

- Rectilinear or square plan
- Low-pitched or flat roof
- Wide overhangs or eaves
- Simplified façade omitting most of the traditional detailing
- New industrial materials for commercial buildings
- Progressive new structural forms
- Reduced visual clutter; lack of ornamental features
- Windows often in aluminum frame
- Materials used in an unadorned and exposed form, such as steel, masonry, concrete, and glass

The Parking Lot

This L-shaped parking area created in 1963 encompasses all of lots 38-40, the eastern 60% of lots 34-37, and a small area of lot 33. The former front lawn of the site and lots 38-40, the footprint area of the Fletcher Mansion, were regraded and leveled to create the parking spaces. The area has been paved with asphalt and lines painted on top of the surface to create separate spaces.

Alterations

The 1928 event hall windows have been altered and the stone sills have been coated with coursed ashlar, date unknown. On east façade: the clear glazing in the 9x3 true divided-light fixed wood windows and 3x3 transom wood windows were replaced with glass block in a 13x3 pattern for the fixed windows and a 4x3 pattern in the transom windows while retaining the wood mullions. On west façade: all the window openings have been in-filled with horizontal wood slats.

The 1963 event hall has added an outdoor patio at the lower level along the north façade, date unknown.

In 1989, a concrete ramp with wrought iron railing was added to the event hall on its east façade accessing the north entrance.

5. Integrity

Describe the structure's integrity, using the seven qualities that define integrity: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The continued use and maintenance of the Denver Council 539, Home of Denver at 1555 N. Grant Street helps it retain strong integrity. It serves as the home for members' steadfast and resilient community engagement following the Council's core principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. One event hall has been in use since 1928 and a newer event hall was opened in 1963 that has allowed Council 539 to host conventions, lecture series, and other community gatherings for the Denver Catholic Diocese and the general public.

The location is still one block north of the State Capitol and one block west of the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception retaining integrity of location. While there have been some changes in the surrounding area since the end of the period of significance, the setting maintains its proximity to the state capitol and the cathedral.

The integrity of design is evidenced by the visible characteristics the 1928 Event Hall and the Mid-century Modern style of the 1963 Event Hall. While the windows of the 1928 Event Hall were replaced at an unknown date, the size of the openings were unchanged, retaining the solid to void ratio of the building. The property retains the integrity of its workmanship, as reflected in the visible quality of the stone masonry on the 1928 event hall as well as the resilience of the prestressed concrete used in the newer 1963 event hall. Additionally, the reuse of the stone masonry in the 1928 event hall is an early example of sustainability of the preexisting masonry materials. The availability and use of these halls during 50 of Council 539's most active years in the mid-20th Century show their integrity of feeling and association as a familiar, enduring Capitol Hill hub for Denver's Catholic community and the community at-large.

6. Historic Context / Historical Narrative

Describe the history of the structure, including events, activities and associations that **relate the structure** to its historic, architectural, geographic, or **cultural significance**.

Knights of Columbus

A new fraternal organization was created in the 1880s when a local assistant pastor in Connecticut saw growth in fraternal benefit societies, anti-Catholic prejudice and dangerous factory working conditions. He proposed establishing a lay fraternal society to prevent Catholic men from entering other secret societies antithetical to Church teachings and uniting Catholic men to help families of deceased church members (<https://www.kofc.org/en/who-we-are/our-history/founding-and-early-acts>). It was named the Knights of Columbus to provide good works informed by four core principles: Charity, Unity, Fraternity, Patriotism.

In 1900, 40-50 Denver Catholic men requested a lodge be created here "to unite men in a society through which they could advance the ideals of their faith and perform charitable, educational and patriotic works" (RMN August 6, 1961, v103, n10). Denver Council 539 was the first Knights of Columbus council dedicated in the west. At that time, the national organization was characterized as the "oldest and strongest of secret Catholic organizations in the East" (Denver Post, September 19, 1900). In 2016, Denver Council 539 became an independent corporate entity with its legal name changed to Home of Denver, Inc.

At their inaugural meeting on November 18, 1900, 58 members were initiated who then elected John H. Reddin the first Grand Knight in Colorado. Reddin was an attorney who moved to Denver in 1880. He was also the first to head the Colorado council and went on to form five other councils

in western states: Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. In 1903, Reddin became the founder of and composed the Ritual for the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus. A Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Columbus has chosen to embrace the Order's fourth principle of patriotism, the men who lead the efforts to reach out to veterans and active military and to embody the fact that one can be a faithful Catholic and also be a faithful citizen (kofc.org/en/news-room/articles/who-are-the-4th-degree-knights).

In 1905, Reddin also promoted to other councils that they establish permanent homes where members could gather because of "the added spirit of proprietorship, the feeling one has who lives with those near and dear to him in his own home, bought and paid for with his own money" (John H. Reddin, "How a Council Can Acquire a Home or Building," *The Columbiad*, October 1905).

Beginning in 1907, Reddin became influential in the national organization after he was elected to the national board, officially known as the Supreme Council. At the time of his death in 1940, Reddin held the longest record of service on the Supreme Council as well as having continued as the Supreme Master of the Fourth Degree (kofc539denver.org/our-history). In addition to his leadership with the Knights of Columbus, Reddin was a long-time active leader in the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (B.P.O.E.), and fostered the Big Brother movement soon after it was organized in New York City. Reddin originated a free public lecture program and in 1925, founded the national essay contest on American patriotic subjects for high school students, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus (DPL Special Collections, from obituary, December 31, 1940).

Initially, Council 539 meetings were held in rented spaces until, following Reddin's advice, they established their first permanent home. J.K. Mullen and John H. Reddin negotiated the purchase of four lots at 14th and Glenarm Streets on which they constructed a four-story corner building. The first and second floors were reserved for retail while the third and fourth floors were available for lodge offices and a large hall, including a stage (RMN, December 20, 1909, p.12).

This building at 14th and Glenarm was their home until 1919 when the ten-lot property at the southwest corner of 16th Avenue and Grant Street was purchased (Denver Post, September 17, 1919). This site gave the Council more room to accommodate their-then 1500 members and placed its member facilities closer to the cluster of other Catholic-related properties, particularly the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception one block away, as well as near a number of influential Council members who had purchased homes on Capitol Hill.

This corner parcel included a three-story mansion and stable/carriage house built for Donald Fletcher in 1890 which included a 30-foot pool, a gymnasium and even a roller skating rink on the third floor. "No house in Denver can surpass it in beauty of exterior or quiet elegance of interior" (RMN, November 13, 1955). Soon after building his mansion, Donald Fletcher incorporated what has become the city of Aurora. It was reported that Fletcher, "cut a fine figure on Denver's "Gold Row" living in his three-story home (Aurora Advocate, August 22, 1963). According to Hall's History of Colorado, Fletcher arrived in Colorado practically penniless in 1879. Twenty years later he would declare bankruptcy after suffering substantial losses in the Silver Panic of 1893. Unfortunately, Fletcher lived only briefly in his Denver mansion. He gave up the house and eventually moved to Seattle (RMN, November 13, 1955).

The property stood vacant while in the hands of the court until 1899 when J.W. Springer handed the court a check to acquire the property. Springer was the son-in-law of the President of the Continental Cattle Company, W.E. Hughes. In 1906, the property was sold to Frank E. Hearne, who briefly headed CF&I (Colorado Fuel & Iron Company). Hearne's estate sold the parcel in 1919 to the Knights of Columbus Council 539. Although more than 25 years had passed since Donald Fletcher had lived here, the property was then, and often still is, referred to as the Fletcher Mansion.

Coinciding with Council 539's purchase of 1575 Grant Street, the national Knights of Columbus was establishing vocational training schools across the country. In Denver, Council 539's home was chosen to offer day and night classes (Denver Post, October 20, 1919). It is likely that John Reddin's status on the Supreme Council influenced Denver's selection for the new vocational school. In February 1920, a building permit was issued for repairs and construction of a two-story "addition," for vocational training of 1,000 ex-servicemen and women, open to all creeds from all 50 states. This school offered courses not found in others according to Joseph Emerson Smith in a 1920 article (Denver Post, *Melting Pot Works Overtime At Ex-Service Men's School*, December 12, 1920). Students here were learning the three Rs in addition to instructors "teaching Americanism." The school's slogan was "Capitalize on Your Spare Time," with John Reddin credited for the school's success and "high degree of efficiency" (Denver Post, December 12, 1920).

As membership numbers continued to increase, by 1928 Council 539 needed a spacious meeting hall (kofc539denver.org/our-history). Temple Buell was hired to design a major renovation to adaptively remodel the former school building for council meetings but also to be available for use for concerts, banquets, plays, public meetings and socials (The Brown & Gold, Regis University, December 1, 1928). In the 1930s, this event hall was used for conventions. For example, the space was used for community members working on amendments to Colorado child labor and school attendance laws (Denver Post, January 21, 1933, p.12). Later that same month, 500 attended the Order's supreme knight speech describing its extensive civic work underway to alleviate suffering of poverty-stricken communities, including the placement of 100,000 in jobs due to members' efforts across the country (RMN, January 30, 1933, Vol. 74, No. 30). Council 539's home was also routinely the site of fundraising carnivals that devoted the proceeds to non-sectarian institutions (RMN, September 11, 1936, Vol. 77, No. 255).

In the 1930s, as part of its ongoing concern for marginalized communities, Council members were documenting the exploitation and discrimination against Spanish-speaking beet field laborers (Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class and Gender on an Anglo Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940*, 1987). From its inception, the Knights of Columbus has fostered the "broadest spirit of fraternity" (RMN, January 30, 1933), including being the only U.S. fraternal organization not to prohibit Black community members joining (Columbia staff, *The Knights of Columbus and Racial Equality*, July 1 2020).

As war was being fought in Europe in 1940, new service clubs were being formed in the U.S. Under the direction of a board of trustees associated with the Administrative Board of the American's Bishops' Conference, the National Catholic Community Service club (NCCS) was established to serve the spiritual, social, educational, and recreational needs of the military and defense workers and their families (<https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/religious/national->

catholic-community-service/). Also in 1940, the United Service Organization (USO) was formed to provide live entertainment to U.S. military personnel.

In late 1941 before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Denver Catholics saw the local need for recreational facilities for service men who were arriving in the area for training at the new Army Air Corps Technical School, established on what became Lowry Air Force Base. The school was planned to train 3,200 men as pilots as well as plane mechanics and other related air force base-related services (The Army Air Forces in World War II, Vol. VI, Men and Planes, 1955). Denver Catholics opened their facilities at 16th Avenue and Grant Street to service men training at Fitzsimons Hospital, Lowry Field, and Fort Logan (Catholic Register, February 3, 1944, p.1-3).

When community-wide demand overtaxed Denver's initial USO facilities, Council 539 opened its doors to provide these war relief services, like they had during World War I. NCCS joined forces with the USO and moved here in March 1943. These facilities were known as one of the more distinctive USO operations in the country. Six hundred volunteers assisted club personnel in providing services that included using the event hall as a nightly dormitory hosting 40,000 service men per month. One year later, in February 1944, Denver Council 539 expected to serve its 500,000th individual (Catholic Register, February 3, 1944). Other USO clubs in the Denver area included the YMCA, three blocks from the Council 539's buildings, and YWCA clubs, the National Travelers' Aid association lounge at Union Station, and the NCCS, women's division.

After World War II, Council 539 membership continued to grow. The largest class of men initiated in Council 539 of 75 members occurred in May 1951 (RMN, May 1, 1951). Also in 1951, Council members demonstrated their ongoing concern for international affairs when they attended a luncheon to hear a Report on the Crusade for Freedom and view a short film on the dedication of the Freedom Bell in Munich, Germany (Denver Post, September 20, 1951). In 1962, Council 539 sponsored a family of six from Cuba during an exodus when Fidel Castro took power (RMN, December 22, 1962).

During the 1950s and 1960s, Council 539 had become the largest in the west and the 11th largest council in the U.S. (RMN, February 13, 1963). Nationally, under the leadership of Luke E. Hart, the Supreme Knight of the Knights' Supreme Council, the fraternity's influence continued growing as evidenced by Hart's 1954 successful petition to the U.S. Congress to amend the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag to add "Under God" in 1954 (RMN, August 6, 1961).

Regular use of Council 539's home on Grant Street by the general public continued into the 1950s and 1960s, such as for lectures on the Polish underground or reports from Denver's elected officials such as Congressman Chenoweth (Denver Post, March 15, 1953 and October 17, 1957). Dances and other celebratory events were also held here, for example, by the Czechoslovak Social Club and the Polish Dance Club of Denver (Denver Post, October 12, 1958 and April 20, 1960). In 1961, this was the host site for the Knights of Columbus' international convention drawing 5,000 people to Denver (RMN, August 14, 1961).

This Council used its stature and influence in 1963 when it joined the Colorado Council of Churches and the Urban League of Colorado appearing as a "Friend of Court" in the Colorado Supreme Court case testing the constitutionality of the state's Fair Housing Act of 1959. The court affirmed (6-1) the basic right of all citizens to acquire property free from racial or religious discrimination (The Denver Blade, January 10, 1963, v3, n2).

During the period of significance, the number of Catholics in Colorado tripled (Noel, Thomas J., *Colorado Catholicism*, "Vehr: The Flowering of Catholicism, 1931-1967, August 21, 2008). To accommodate the continuing mid- 20th Century growth in membership and adjust to the community's changing needs as well, Council 539 reconfigured their property in the early 1960s adding a new event hall and providing onsite parking. No major changes to this new configuration have occurred since 1963.

Since 1928, Council 539 has sponsored its own celebrations and other events, many times involving a luncheon after a march from their home on Grant Street. (RMN, March 16, 1953). In 1982, a large celebration was organized in honor of the Knights of Columbus' centennial. The celebration included a parade from Civic Center with floats, musical bands various veteran groups, vintage car groups, representation from El Jebel Shrine among others, and even Miss Colorado (Dusty Hutton from Longmont) (Denver Post, October 6, 1982).

The 50 years between 1928 and 1982 were among the most active for Council 539 members and their event halls. Their steadfast and resilient engagement in good works continues to make visible the Council's core principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism and thereby, continue to benefit the Denver Catholic community and the general public.

Catholicism in Denver

In the first days of Denver's development, the predominant civic leaders were Protestants. When the first Catholic Mass was celebrated in Denver by Father Joseph P. Machebeuf on Christmas Eve 1860, it was before only one dozen families and some unmarried individuals, too transient to be counted (The Pinnacled Glory of the West, Rev. Hugh L. McMenamin, 1912). St. Mary's Parish was soon formed located at F (15th) and Stout Streets on land donated by the Denver Town Company (<https://www.denvercathedral.org/architecture-history>). At the time, jurisdiction for Catholics in Denver was consigned to the Bishop of Santa Fe. Many of the first priests serving Denver area Catholics spoke only French but, because Mass was performed in Latin, the faithful were served.

In 1887, the Diocese of Denver was first established and encompassed the entire state of Colorado. In 1912, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was dedicated located at Logan Street and Colfax Avenue. By 1931, 135,000 Catholics lived in the Denver Diocese. In 1941, Denver was elevated to an Archdiocese when the southern counties around Pueblo were separated to create a new diocese. During the period of significance, the number of Catholics in Colorado tripled (Noel, Thomas J., *Colorado Catholicism*, "Vehr: The Flowering of Catholicism, 1931-1967, August 21, 2008).

Anti-Catholicism in Denver

In Denver's history, its residents have held and shared ethnocentric, nativist, and racist sentiments against others, including Catholics. Anti-Catholicism in Denver, like elsewhere in the U.S., stems from a concern or fear that Catholics are/would be more beholden to the dictates of the Pope in Rome than to the general public (Joseph G. Mannard, *American Anti-Catholicism and its Literature*, 1981). Like elsewhere in the U.S., Denver anti-Catholic rhetoric has waxed and waned. Two of the more visible episodes of anti-Catholicism were in the mid-1890s and in the mid-1920s (Safire, William (2008), *Safire's Political Dictionary*, New York, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 375–76).

In the mid-west, including Denver, the American Protective Association (APA) grew in the 1890s to exert powerful political influence spreading anti-Catholic information that “the Roman Catholic Church was making inroads into the government of the United States with the goal of controlling it” (Humphrey J. Desmond, “The American Protective Association,” Catholic Encyclopedia, New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1911). The APA was the focus of an 1893 The Daily News article that described the “ostensible purpose of the order is to make secret war on the Roman Catholic Church, to foster suspicion and hatred of the aims of that religious body, and to ostracize its following from public office of any kind whatever...and seeks to destroy our public school system” (The Daily News Denver, October 3, 1893, p. 4). The APA movement felt threatened by the “growing social and industrial strength of Catholic Americans (Humphrey J. Desmond, The A.P.A. Movement, 1912) and particularly scapegoated prominent Irish Catholics. It was during this time that stores or rooming houses would post “No Irish Need Apply,” in an assumption that they were Catholic.

J.K. Mullen, a founder of and generous donor to Council 539, was singled out by the APA due to unease at the growing social and industrial strength (Wm. J. Convery, *Pride of the Rockies*, 2000). Even some politicians questioned if Catholics could be loyal Americans (When America Hated Catholics, Politico Magazine, Josh Zeitz, September 23, 2015). Despite many thousands of members in the mid-1890s, by 1898 the APA had virtually collapsed.

The issue became more complicated in the 1920s when attempts to define “whiteness” became more prevalent. Difficulty in separating racial and religious components fed the anti-Catholic sentiment. A resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), adding to the backlash against Catholic and Jewish immigrants. The KKK grew in urban areas as an “agent of resistance” to expanding Catholic political influence (Josh Zeitz, Politico, When America Hated Catholics, September 23, 2015). This occurred in Denver too, when J.K. Mullen was again targeted, but he chose to “turn the other cheek” (Wm. J. Convery, *Pride of the Rockies*, 2000).

The 1920 census estimated that 30,000 of Denver’s 107,000 population were members of the KKK. This data became available only in 2021 when History Colorado released membership ledgers. In the 1920s, Colorado’s Governor and a majority of the Colorado legislators were members. In Denver, the names of the Mayor, police chief, fire chief, and judges were found on the membership ledger. When an active Knights of Columbus member was abducted in 1923 two blocks from his shop, the police downplayed the incident suggesting it was bootleggers; no one was charged. A few weeks later, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants, was also abducted by masked men and beaten. Again, the police “scoffed at the victim’s charges” (History Colorado, *Fighting the Invisible Empire*, March 17, 2023).

The 1928 U.S. Presidential election between a Catholic candidate and a Protestant continued the centuries-long skepticism of Catholics and Catholic politicians in the U.S., which seems to rise with increasing waves of Catholic immigrants (Joseph G. Mannard, *American Anti-Catholicism and its Literature*, 1981). Protestant soldiers in World War II had close contact with Catholic soldiers that led to a greater level of ethnic and religious tolerance for Catholics (Thomas A. Bruscino, [*A Nation Forged in War: How World War II Taught Americans to Get Along*](#), 2010, pp. 214–215). As in 1928, skepticism of Catholics as elected officials returned during the 1960 presidential election between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. After Kennedy’s election, anti-Catholic sentiment declined (Phillip Jenkins. *The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice*, 2003).

Denver Becomes Auto-Centric

As noted in the Cadillac Lofts Denver Landmark application, “when the horseless carriage arrived in Denver in the late 1890s, it quickly captured the imagination of several would-be entrepreneurs and customers.... The first all-automobile show in Colorado was held in Denver’s Coliseum Hall in 1902, and it was apparently the first such show held west of Chicago.... Once it caught on, though, vehicle ownership in Denver and Colorado grew at a fast pace. Some speculate this was partially due to the scenic beauty of the state and tourists wanting to access areas that were easy to travel to from Denver. The estimated number of automobiles in the state in 1900 was 90; by 1910 the number of registered vehicles reached 5,220 in Denver alone” (1090 Cherokee St. Landmark Designation application, Kristi Miniello p.10-11, 2021).

The car industry in Denver slowed during the Great Depression and World War II; however, post-war there was a massive increase in car ownership nationwide, which Denver mirrored. The booming postwar economy provided a boost to the middle class and suburban development. Because these new suburban developments were typically outside of local transit lines, the personal automobile became essential to the new suburban population. As Americans became dependent on the automobile, it created a new car culture that shaped urban development. This included new automotive-centric leisure activities such as drive-in movie theaters and fast food stands as well as businesses to service automobiles, including parking lots.

The dependency on automobiles, rather than mass transit, increased the need for parking in central Denver and elsewhere. Hundreds of local property owners chose to demolish older buildings to create spaces for parking cars. Denver created a specific urban renewal authority to clear “blight” and make way for “progress” through demolition and displacement (Alfredo Luis Calvo, The Hole in the Heart of the City, The Story of Denver’s Urban Renewal, April 20, 2018). The Denver Urban Renewal Authority was created in 1958. Its Skyline Urban Renewal Project demolished 27 blocks of late 19th Century buildings in lower downtown to make way for skyscraper projects promoted by the private sector (Alfredo Luis Calvo, The Hole in the Heart of the City, The Story of Denver’s Urban Renewal, April 20, 2018).

Within this public atmosphere, Denver Council 539 made the difficult decision to demolish the time worn Fletcher Mansion that had accommodated their needs for 40 years. One-half million people had crossed its threshold in a three-year period during World War II. The cost benefit analysis told them that a new building with a smaller footprint could better accommodate their future needs. A newer, less elaborate building would require less maintenance expense over the next forty years. Given the proximity of Council 539’s home to the Cathedral and Catholic High School, moving to another location was not a viable option. In 1963, the mansion was demolished while the new event hall was being constructed. The property was then leveled and regraded to create a large parking lot where the mansion once stood and that extends south in front of the 1928 event hall.

Prestressed Concrete/Double Tee Spans

World War II had made steel scarce, prompting engineers to experiment on the potential to build more structures using prestressed concrete. In addition, the demand for longer spans also increased, particularly for bridges. In 1953, engineers for Prestressed Concrete of Colorado, Inc., would develop and produce the first prestressed double tee spans used. The term “prestressed

double tee” describes the proprietary distinctively shaped concrete members that provides strength to a structure.

This structural form is now commonplace for bridges, walls, roofing, parking structures and long-span building frames such as sports arenas, or shopping centers. A technology in its infancy in the 1950s and early 1960s has become ubiquitous. Construction material and labor cost were reduced when using this structural form. Colorado’s Perlmutter Family owned and operated Prestress Concrete of Colorado, Inc., for many years at 58th and Pecos Street, in Denver. They were the industry leader in the use and fabrication of these cost-saving spans. They initially referred to double tee spans as “Twin- Tee.”

A little over a year before Council 539’s new 1963 event hall was designed, the first known office building in the U.S. using prestressed concrete double tee spans was built in Florida (Wikipedia, accessed August 7, 2025). The Milan designed club house may be among the very first buildings of this innovative type in Denver or in Colorado. The build out of the interstate highway system prompted demand for longer spans, which increased the need for prestressed concrete components. Double tees have become one of the most efficient and cost effective precast concrete products, resulting in faster construction time and reduced labor costs, as no formwork is needed.

Temple Buell

Buell had come to Denver in 1921 to recuperate from being gassed during World War I. He launched his firm, Temple H. Buell, Architect in 1923, specializing in the design and construction of commercial, public and residential buildings. Among his many noted commissions was the 1929 Paramount Theater in downtown Denver. The year before, Buell designed the adaptive remodel of Council 539’s 1920 school as an event hall. He is credited with completing the first modern shopping mall with a central pedestrian plaza in 1950 (historycolorado.org/sites/architects/Buell, 2017). Under T.H. Buell and Company, Buell employed 50 architects, engineers, draftsmen and construction supervisors until 1989. Buell died in 1990.

John F. Milan

John F. Milan, AIA Emeritus, is a prime example of a Denver area pragmatic, marketplace-driven, modern architect who, during his 5-decade career (1953 – 2015), designed an extensive array of types of buildings based on the need and work available at the time. Besides being pragmatic, Milan was also an innovative designer who incorporated new structural forms and materials when cost effective and where appropriate. His array of 700 projects ranges from single family and multi-unit residential, to small retail and shopping centers, low- and hi-rise office buildings, schools, churches, parish halls, nursing homes, motels, warehouses and tenant finish among other building types.

A Denver South High graduate, Milan served with the Navy in World War II on the USS Holton in both the European and Pacific Theaters. The Navy sent him to precommissioning engineering school that trained him to ensure a ship’s systems and components met operational requirements. Milan then returned to University of Denver’s (DU) School of Engineering before graduating from DU with a degree in Architecture and Engineering. After becoming a licensed architect in 1953, Milan joined Henry Caldwell Toll forming a partnership. He opened his own firm, John F. Milan,

Architect and Planner, in 1958. Twenty years later, he expanded this firm to *Milan Architects, A.I.A., P.C.*, when his daughter and two sons, all licensed architects, joined the firm.

Early in Milan's career, when building activities were virtually halted due to the Korean War, he took a position with Stearns-Roger Engineering and Construction Company, Inc., where he designed large industrial projects, including the National Bureau of Standards complex in Boulder. An aftereffect of World War II was the ongoing shortage of traditional building materials that continued into the 1960s. Furthermore, the buildout of the interstate highway system, by necessity, spawned development of new building techniques using multiple types of concrete materials, which were developed to compensate for long construction delays.

An innovative designer, Milan incorporated new types of structural forms using concrete typically used only as structural elements, which Milan featured as architectural elements as well. Many of his projects needed large open spaces and that minimized columns or pillars. In response, he might choose a folded plate technique, or lift-slab construction or, as seen on the 1963 Event Hall, pre-stressed concrete double-tee framing members. Milan incorporated several types of concrete processing for use in the construction of his designs, including precast concrete, prestressed concrete, and cast in place.

At times Milan chose the folded-plate assembly system for a project. Among his work, he designed school buildings, gymnasiums and truck facilities using a folded plate structural form. This form consists of flat planes rigidly connected along their edges so that the structural system could carry loads without the need for additional supporting beams ([Slideshare.net/slideshow/folded-plates/81894321](https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/folded-plates/81894321)). Two types found among Milan designs are V-type or arched (prismatic).



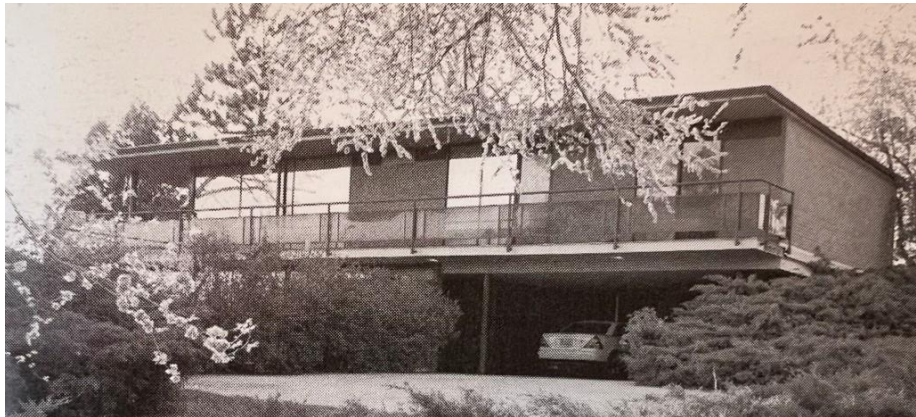
[Arrupe Jesuit High School, 1952, Denver]
CO]

[Formerly Holy Family High School]



[Holy Trinity Gym, 1957, Trinidad

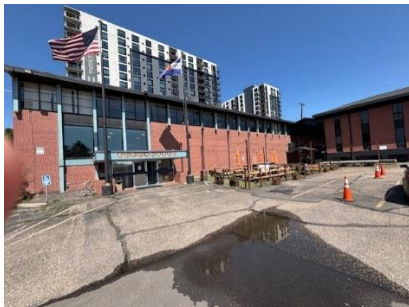
Several of Milan's designs used a lift slab technique, a precast method of construction where the floor and roof slabs are cast at or near the ground and then lifted into their final position (theconstructor.org, lift-slab construction). Two Catholic schools in Colorado Springs are designed using this structural form as well as Milan's own Lakewood residence featured in Historic Denver's Mid-century Modern brochure:



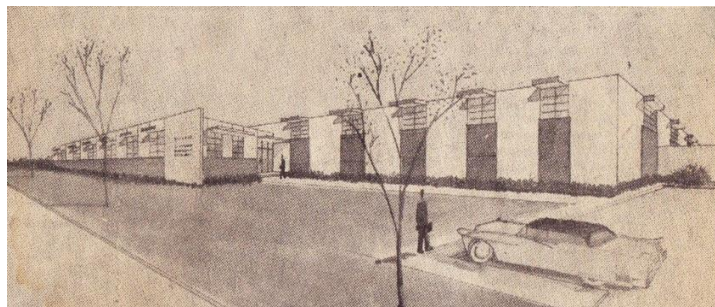
[John H. Milan Residence, 1955, 1775 Lee Lane, Lakewood CO]

In addition to the above design types of construction, Milan might specify the pre-stressed double-tee framing members. In Denver, the 1963 event hall is unique and likely among the earliest building examples constructed using this type of framing members. Over the years, Milan worked on various projects with the Perlmutter Family companies, whose engineers developed this technique. The creative use of new technology and forms, as both structural and architectural elements, demonstrates Milan's engineering skills and his design expertise.

A review of Milan's designs shows another design characteristic -- L-shaped buildings. Milan's 1960 Country Club Gardens Apartment Building in Lakewood is one example of an L-shaped design that is listed on the Colorado State Register of Historic Places. Two other examples are the Elks Lodge #17 on West 26th Avenue, Denver and the 1955 Heiland Division, Minneapolis-Honeywell building on East Evans Avenue that has been converted to a storage facility:



[Elks Lodge #17, 1974, E. 26th Avenue]



[Heiland Division, Minneapolis-Honeywell, 1955, 5200 E. Evans Avenue]

The 1963 event hall, sited perpendicular to the street, attached and subordinated to the more visibly dominant 1928 event hall, forms an L-shape configuration as seen in other Milan projects.

Although Milan is remembered as the architect for the Catholic Archdiocese of Denver, designing schools and churches over a 50-year span, these buildings, however, represent a small percentage of more than 700 work products across the Denver metro area, across Colorado and elsewhere in the U.S. and Canada. Please see list below of other significant Milan projects.

7. Additional Information

John F. Milan, AIA Emeritus

Select Projects

DENVER

Carbone Medical Offices
 Park Hill Shopping Center
 Denver-Chicago Trucking
 George Washington Carver Day Care Center

1952 846 E. 18th Avenue, Denver
 1955 E. 33rd Avenue betw Dahlia & Elm
 1956 3888 E. 45th Avenue, Denver
 1964 22nd & Humboldt, Denver

NOTES

Demolished
 Toll & Milan
 1st integrated nursery in Denver

DENVER METRO

National Bureau of Standards
 Country Club Garden Apartments
 St. Mary's Academy
 Our Lady of Fatima
 General American Life Building
 Crown Hill Cemetery, Ravillion of Reflections

1959 Boulder CO
 1960 1160 Pierce, Lakewood
 1963 4545 South University Blvd., Cherry Hills
 1977 1985 Miller Street, Lakewood
 1980 West 6th Avenue at Indiana St., Golden
 2006 7777 W. 2nd Avenue, Wheat Ridge

Colorado State Register of Historic Places
 Addition
 Designed church, rectory, & parish center
 High rise office building
 Last significant project

OTHER

Holy Trinity High School Gymnasium
 Cheyenne Missile Base, Site A, Warren AFB
 U.S. Atomic Energy Biology Lab

1957 Trinidad CO
 1958 Cheyenne WY
 1965 Oak Ridge, TN

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Designation Boundary



Photographs

Attach at least four digital photographs showing the views of the property from the public right of way and any important features or details. If available, include historic photographs of the structure.



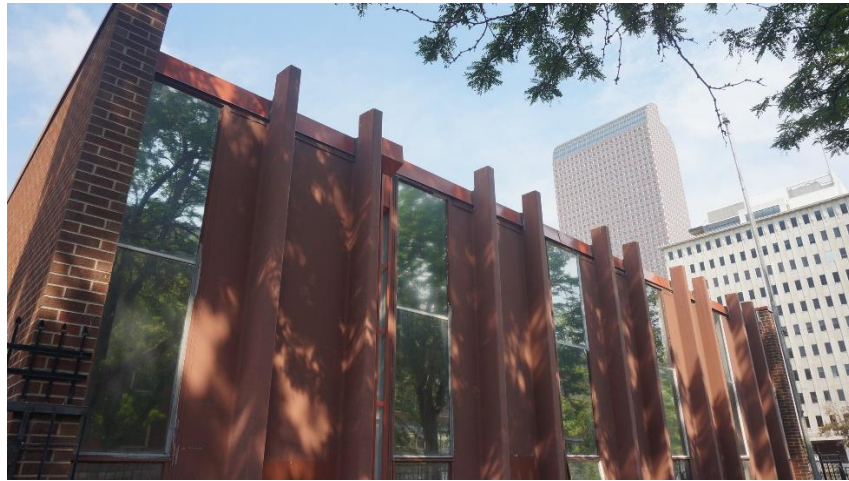
[1555 N. Grant, 1963 Event Hall, north façade, view north. August 2025, J. Mark Milan]



[1555 N. Grant, 1928 Event Hall, east façade, view west, August 2025]



[1555 N. Grant, 1963 Event Hall, north façade, view sw, August 2025]



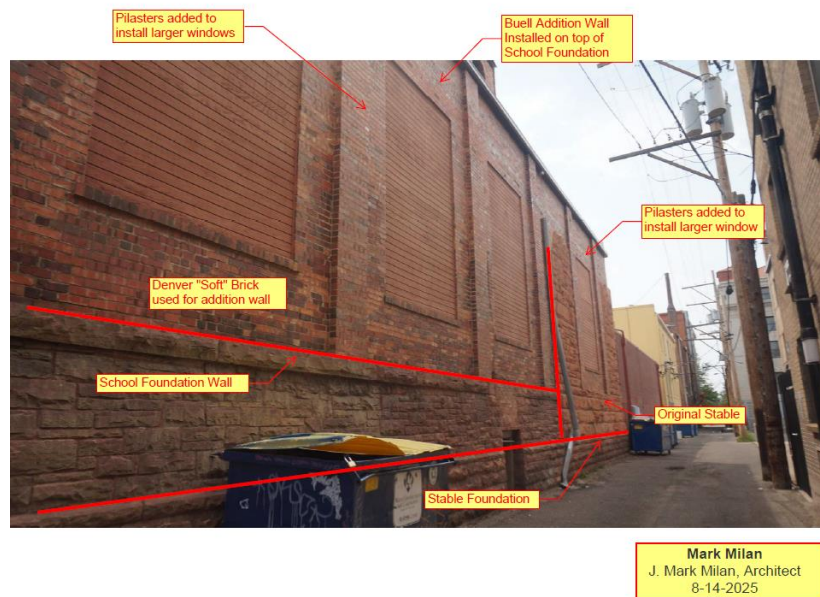
[1555 N. Grant, 1963 Event Hall, east façade, view nw, August 2025



[1555 N. Grant, 1963 Event Hall north & east facades with south portion of 1928 Event Hall east façade, August 2025



[Historic photo of mansion, connection, and Buell addition]



[1928 Event Hall, west façade, along alley, view se]

Application Fee

Find the correct fee from the below table. (Make check payable to Denver Manager of Finance).

- Application for designation of a structure for preservation (owner applicant) — \$250