

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Colburn Hotel

Other names/site number: 5DV.3916

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 980 Grant Street

City or town: Denver State: Colorado County: Denver

Not For Publication:  n/a Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<p><u><i>Shelley K. Norton</i></u></p> <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>History Colorado</u></p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p><u>2 June 2020</u></p> <p><b>Date</b></p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Hotel  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup>

CENTURY REVIVALS/

Georgian Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Cast Stone

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Colburn Hotel is located at 980 Grant Street near the center of Denver's Capitol Hill neighborhood, approximately six-tenths of a mile southeast of the Denver Civic Center National Historic Landmark District (5DV.161/5DV. 5DV.11336; NRIS.12001017/NRIS.74002348). The immediate area is predominantly residential, including apartment buildings and single-family homes, as well as some office and retail use. The building is currently used for transitional housing. The Colburn Hotel stands facing west on an approximately 25,000-square-foot, or 0.57-acre parcel. The parcel runs approximately 200' north-south, fronting Grant Street, and 125' east-west, fronting E. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The building is located at the center-north of the parcel. The building is ten stories with an attic and full basement. The building has a reinforced concrete frame. The building is clad in tan and red brick and was completed in the Georgian Revival style. All four sides are similar. The first floor has a central lobby with a bar at the north and a tenant space at the south. The upper floors are similar in configuration with a central, double-loaded, north-south corridor. There are typically eleven units per floor. The units range in size from 250 to 300 square feet. The building was renovated in 1983 and has had some alterations, but overall retains the integrity necessary to convey its architectural significance.

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## Narrative Description

### SETTING

The property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Grant Street and E. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Across 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the north is a ca. 1960s, 16-story apartment building and associated parking garage. To the northwest, at the northwest corner of 10<sup>th</sup> and Grant Street, is a ca. 1920s apartment building that has been adaptively reused for offices. Across Grant to the west is the 1913 Henry Porter House designed by Maurice Biscoe (5DV.946; Denver Local Landmark listed 6/29/1990). To the south of the Porter House is an approximately 50,000 square foot surface parking lot.

The Colburn Hotel is at the northwest corner of the block bounded by Grant Street on the west, E. 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue at the south, Logan Street at the east, and E. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue at the north. To the south on the Colburn Hotel is the 1937 Colburn Apartments. Continuing south, at the intersection of Grant Street and E. 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a seven-story, modern office building.

The block is 166' east-west and 500' north-south. The block is divided in half by a 16'-wide alley that connects E. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and E. 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The other side of the block has several apartment buildings of varying heights and styles.

### SITE

At the west, there is a U-shaped drive leading to the building's main entrance from Grant Street. The southern and eastern portions of the lot are fully paved and used for surface parking. At the northwest is a covered dining patio. The property is lined at the north and west with a brick knee wall which was installed c. the 1980s. The parcel has a slight incline; it slopes up approximately 5' from the sidewalk at the west to the base of the building. As a result of this incline, when the brick knee wall at the west wraps around to the north it blends into the patio structure for the existing restaurant's patio dining.. The patio abuts the public sidewalk along E 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Between the sidewalk and the street are several large trees.

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## EXTERIOR

Generally, each side is best understood as a vertical tripartite configuration. The base consists of the first and second floors. This section is clad in tan brick. At the first floor the brick is laid in a stretcher bond. Every six rows there is a row that projects forward slightly, creating the illusion of rustication. At the first floor there are large, arched window openings. Each window is surrounded with a row of header bricks, and each window is topped with an arch composed of two rows of header bricks and a cast stone keystone at the center. On either side of the keystone is a decorative tile. Between the first and second floor is a cast stone string course set proud of the wall. At the second floor, the brick pattern includes one row of a stack brick bond and six rows of a stretcher brick bond. There are three stack brick bond rows, the lowest one is tan brick and the upper two are red brick. Between the second and third floor is a cast stone string course.

The shaft of the tripartite design consists of the third through ninth floors. This section is clad in red brick in a stretcher bond. The window openings have a soldier brick header and gauged brick sill, also in red brick. The top half of the ninth floor is clad in tan and red bricks mimicking the pattern at the second floor; from the bottom, there is a row of stack bond tan brick, two rows of stretcher red bricks, five rows of stretcher tan brick, two rows of stretcher bond red brick and a row of tan stack bond brick. Separating the ninth and tenth floor is projecting cast stone cornice.

The capital of the tripartite design consists of the tenth floor and attic. This section is clad in tan brick. At the first, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, and ninth bays from the north the windows are topped with a honeycomb header and a slightly projecting brick pediment. At the remaining three bays, there is a rectangular projecting brick design that spans the two window openings. The parapet is delineated with a row of projecting, stacked bond, tan bricks. At the first, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, and ninth bays from the north, the corresponding portion of the parapet wall is a recessed brick design resembling a balustrade.

The windows are modern aluminum throughout installed c. the 1980s. At the ground floor there are large, arched window openings; these windows vary from modern storefronts and multi-light windows with half-moon transom. On floors two through nine the window is either paired, four-over-one, with an applied mullion, or a single, one-over-one. On the tenth floor, the windows are single, eight-over-one rather than paired.

The building's primary facade is the west side that fronts Grant Street. This side is nine bays across. At the ground floor there are three small modern additions constructed between 1992 and 2002, each projecting approximately 10' from the building to the west. At the north and south the addition is three bays across. A third addition is a single bay at the center which houses the building's entry vestibule. The additions at the north and south are clad in red brick with large arched window openings. The window openings have a semicircular brick arch header, a cast stone keystone and decorative tile on either side. At the height of the semi-circular window, a single-stack bricked course wraps around the addition. Above the entry is a semi-circular, vinyl canopy. The ninth floor has balconettes at the outer bay windows. At the center of the parapet on this side is a cast stone cartouche with a cast stone urn on either side.

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The north and south sides are similar to each other. The north side fronts E. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the south side fronts the adjacent surface parking lot. Each side is three bays across. At the north side, the central window opening at the ground floor was expanded to create an entry. The entry has an awning that extends approximately 6' from the building. There is a raised patio with an iron fence and brick balustrade. On the south side, on floors three through ten, the window openings are infilled with brick, presumably ca. 1980.

The rear (east) side fronts the alley and varies slightly from the other sides. On this side the cornice is truncated to a single bay at the north and south corners. At the ground floor is a single-story projection, four bays across and three bays deep, which houses a kitchen. On the remainder of the first floor, the arched window openings have been infilled and painted white. A full height, modern fire escape is located at the fourth bay from the north. Between the third and fourth bays from the south is a projecting masonry flue stack that rises above the roof. Also, on this side there is no balustrade, cartouche, or balconettes.

## **INTERIOR**

There is a passenger elevator and service elevator located at the center-east which runs the full height of the building. An interior stair tower is located at the center-north and a recessed fire stair is located at the center-east.

The entrance has a small vestibule leading to the 755 square foot lobby. The lobby features an original coffered plaster ceiling. The lobby has two square columns and pilasters following the building's structural bays. The columns have a simple base and capital. Along the wall at the east, from north to south, is a stair with access to the basement and second floor, an elevator at the center, and a reception desk at the south. At the north and south ends of the lobby are a series of modern mirrored French doors. The lobby has modern finishes including wall-to-wall carpeting, and a mix of plaster and gypsum walls. To the north and south of the lobby are tenant spaces. The restaurant at the north and the chiropractor practice at the south have similar modern finishes along with columns and beams articulating the structural grid. These spaces were historically the lounge and dining room, respectively. An additional feature of the restaurant is a large detailed wood bar with wood paneling around the columns, brass rails, and decorative display cabinets. This was likely added at some point after the lounge received its liquor license in 1947.

The upper floors have a similar layout. There is a central, double-loaded, north-south corridor that provides access to the tenant spaces. The corridor has wall-to-wall carpet, plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling. In the corridors the conduit and sprinkler systems are exposed. The apartment entry doors are historic and have been painted white, and the transoms have been painted.

Typically there are eleven apartments per floor. The units range in size from 250 to 300 square feet. Two of the apartments on each floor are paired with an adjoining bathroom. The remaining units have en suite bathrooms accessed through a small dressing area. The units have a baseboard, picture rail, and wood mounts at the windows where curtain rods once were, which

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are historic. Each unit has an exposed radiator. The bathrooms have historic honeycomb tile floors, and white tile from the floor to chair rail. The only exception to the typical upper floor layout is the second floor. At the northeast corner of the second floor is a lounge for the residents and the northwest corner has offices for the building management. Also, the second floor corridor has a historic chair rail and non-historic wall paper.

The attic is an unfinished crawl space. The building was reroofed in the early 2000s following a large snow storm. The flat roof is finished with a rubber membrane. The elevator overrun is located at the center-east. The basement has back-of-house space, laundry, mechanicals, and storage. The finishes are utilitarian in nature.

### ALTERATIONS

As the hotel aged and went into periods of underuse in the late 1970s and early 1980s, various windows and/or entries were boarded up, including the porches. In 1983, the Colburn Hotel underwent an \$800,000 renovation that returned the hotel dining room, now chiropractor's office, to its original configuration, restoring the 14' ceilings, as well as reopening any boarded windows and the porches.<sup>1</sup> In December 1989 the building ceased its use as a hotel and currently houses apartments and first floor tenants including a restaurant/bar and a chiropractor's office. The exact date of the window replacements is unknown; they likely date to the 1980s. The exact date of the modern additions to the ground floor at the west is unknown; based on aerial photographs, they were constructed between 1990 and 2002.

In 2018-2019, the Colburn Hotel underwent renovation using Federal Historic Tax Credits, with construction costs estimated at \$8,000,000. The renovation retained the use of the Colburn as affordable housing. In general terms, the renovation involved no physical alterations, but did upgrade kitchenettes and bathrooms. Specifically, the lobby, corridors, and floor plans remain intact. The renovation brought the property up to current code standards for fire and life safety.

### INTEGRITY

The Colburn Hotel retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical and architectural significance. It is nominated for listing in the National Register under Criterion C for Architecture, specifically as a building type: a residential hotel. In this instance, certain aspects of integrity are more germane to convey its significance as a building type. These are the ones that embody its design as a residential hotel, including design, materials, and workmanship. As described below, the Colburn Hotel generally fulfills each of these integrity aspects. Additionally, the Colburn also meets the more secondary aspects of setting, location, feeling, and association. Specific to the seven aspects:

*Design:* Alterations to the building over time have been limited, and those alterations that have occurred do not detract from the building's design as a residential hotel in the Georgian Revival

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<sup>1</sup> Katie Rudolph, "The Hotel with a Personality:" Denver's Colburn Hotel," <https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/denvers-colburn-hotel>, accessed February 2, 2018.

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style. Designed as a residential hotel, the interior corridor and room configurations which express this design are intact, as is the lobby and interior circulation patterns of the building. The building generally retains its interior and exterior form and original floor plan. As a Georgian Revival style building, it retains its design integrity with its symmetry, red brick and masonry detailing, as well as decorative cornice. Despite alterations, the building retains the distinctive characteristics of a residential hotel and integrity of design as a residential hotel.

*Materials and Workmanship:* Materials and workmanship both relate to the presence of historic fabric, and for purposes of this evaluation are similar. The building retains integrity in terms of material and workmanship. On the exterior, the building features historic cladding with corbelled, multi-colored, and ornately coursed brickwork, including the brickwork that frames the windows. The exterior also features original cast stone string courses, cast stone cornice, faux balustrade, and roof finials. In the 1980s, the windows were replaced with modern aluminum. On the interior, the lobby features original plaster ceiling. The upper floor corridors have original plaster ceilings and walls which delineate the original configuration of the residential hotel. These elements of material and workmanship help convey the property's significance as a residential hotel.

*Location:* The Colburn Hotel is in its original location and therefore retains integrity of location.

*Association:* The building was originally residential hotel with a lobby and dining spaces. The property was in continual use as a hotel until 1989, when it was renovated as an apartment building. Today, the building is used as transitional housing. Although the building has been adapted over time, it retains its association as a high-density multi-unit residential building, primarily through its interior configuration, including upper floor units, and hallways, as well as ground floor lobby and dining space. As such, the building retains its association with the area of significance for which it is nominated, for architecture as a residential hotel.

*Feeling:* To the casual observer, the building today looks essentially the same as when the property was built in 1925. Its exterior cladding, fenestration pattern, set back from the street, and interior configuration help convey its feeling as a residential hotel.

*Setting:* The surrounding neighborhood has evolved but the character of the setting has not fundamentally changed. The building across Grant to the West, the Henry Porter House, and to the northwest, a ca. 1920s apartment building, were extant when the Colburn Hotel was built and remain today. These low-rise buildings contribute to the semi-urban setting of the Colburn Hotel from its time of construction.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our 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 or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1925  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1925  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Bowman, William N., Architect  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Colburn Hotel is locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture as a residential hotel building type in Denver, Colorado. During the early twentieth century, residential hotels were a popular housing option for middle income Americans. Shortly after opening, it was touted as one of the leading residential hotels in the city. Though there were several residential hotels in Denver built during the early twentieth century, nearly all have been demolished. The period of significance for the property is the year of construction, 1925. The property was in continuous use as a residential hotel until the 1950s and 60s, when the first floor tenant amenity spaces were adapted to retail spaces open to the public. Today, the upper floors serve as public housing, employing its original design as a residential hotel to a new use that is well-suited to the history of the building, residential hotels, and the population of Denver. The Colburn Hotel retains more than sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Designed by noted local architect William N. Bowman in the Georgian Revival style and completed in 1925, the Colburn Hotel is locally significant as an excellent example of the residential hotel building type as constructed in Denver, Colorado during the early twentieth century. Popular options for urban housing for middle income Americans from the 1920s to the post-World War II era, residential hotels provided additional benefits over apartment buildings with the provision of social areas, including lounge and dining rooms rather than commercial spaces. Individual rooms were modest in size and design, whereas the public spaces were more ornately decorated. Residential hotels gave middle income city dwellers an affordable alternative to the palace hotels of the rich and remained popular until the post-World War II housing boom. As residential hotels fell out of favor, many became dilapidated and were prime candidates for demolition under urban renewal.

Today, very few examples of this housing type remain, and the Colburn Hotel is a particularly good example in Denver. It embodies several distinct characteristics of an early twentieth century residential hotel, including high-end ground floor public areas in the lounge and dining room, as well as austere and efficient upper floor units. Stylistically, with its emphasis on Georgian Revival architecture, it is evocative of its era of construction. Its development, history, and design by William Bowman are also fundamental characteristics of the building type. As it retains a high degree of integrity in terms of design, material, and workmanship, and exists largely as it was originally constructed, it embodies the significance and conveys the values of an early twentieth century residential hotel.

## **HISTORY OF THE RESOURCE**

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Judge Ernest A. Colburn acquired parcels 1 through 8 on Block 4 of the First Addition to Arlington Heights in 1924. The construction of the Colburn Hotel was announced in the *Rocky Mountain News* on June 21, 1924. The article states, "It is promised that the Colburn will be one of the most luxurious family hotels in the United States... the idea being to make it an exclusive family hotel for those families wanting all the comforts, conveniences and luxuries of the highest grade hotel. It is not proposed to take in transients."<sup>2</sup> This article also estimated the building's construction would cost \$550,000 and be open by March 1925.<sup>3</sup> According to another advertisement, "It will contain 100 rooms, each with bath, furnishings and equipment, and there will be erected in connection with the building a two-story, fireproof garage for 60 cars," though it does not appear that this garage was ever built.<sup>4</sup>

In 1928 the property ownership changed to Colburn Hotel, Inc. Because the Colburn Hotel proved so successful after its opening, a twin luxury apartment building was constructed in 1931 by Judge Colburn, called Colburn Apartments. Parcels 1 through 8 and parcels 9 to 12 were owned by Colburn Hotel and Apartments, Inc.<sup>5</sup> In 1935, the properties were separated again into the Colburn Hotel Company and Colburn Apartments Co., respectively.<sup>6</sup> Due to financial troubles, the interior of Colburn Apartments was not completed until 1937. The two buildings are also under separate ownership today.

In 1944 the property was acquired by E. L. Carter, William Turner, and Mattie Turner. From 1945 until August 1946, the hotel was in an 18-month battle with the city to acquire a liquor license. Several residents of the hotel testified to city council in favor of establishing a bar on the first floor of the building.<sup>7</sup> When the bar was added, the hotel's room count was reduced from 99 to 90 rooms.<sup>8</sup> In 1964, the piano lounge and bar became known as "Charlie Brown's," which is still in operation today. The bar is said to have been visited by many famous people who came through Denver: "Although the hotel hosted lawmakers, foreign dignitaries and stars of the stage, its most noted visitors were Neal Cassady and Allen Ginsberg, who spent time at the hotel in the summer of 1947. It has been reported that they, along with Jack Kerouac, were frequent customers at the hotel's bar."<sup>9</sup> During the 1950s and 60s, what had been public tenant amenity spaces on the first floor were adapted to retail spaces open to the public such as Charlie Brown's. During this period, the hotel transitioned from housing primarily long term tenants in the residential hotel manner to more short term transitional housing.

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2 "Ten-Story Hotel to be Erected in Denver at Cost of \$550,000," *Rocky Mountain News*, 6/21/1924.

3 "Ten-Story Hotel to be Erected in Denver at Cost of \$550,000," *Rocky Mountain News*, 6/21/1924.

4 "Bond Issue of \$320,00 for New Denver Hotel," *The St. Louis Star and Times*, July 12, 1924, p. 11.

5 Denver County Assessor Records Index Map, Block 4 of the First Addition to Arlington Heights.

<https://history.denverlibrary.org/assessor-map>, accessed February 2, 2018.

6 Denver County Assessor Records Index Map, Block 4 of the First Addition to Arlington Heights.

<https://history.denverlibrary.org/assessor-map>, accessed February 2, 2018.

7 Dan Cronin, "Council Awards Hotel City Liquor License," *Rocky Mountain News*, 8/27/1946.

8 "Colburn Foreclosed," *Cervi's Business Journal*, 1/4/1967.

9 Katie Rudolph, "The Hotel with a Personality:" Denver's Colburn Hotel,"

<https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/denvers-colburn-hotel>, accessed February 2, 2018.

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The building was owned by Carter and the Turners until 1964 when the property was put up for auction.<sup>10</sup> The hotel then was acquired by local investor James A. Savage. The new owner updated the lobby and dining room, and began work on the upper floors before he lost the building to foreclosure three years later. At the time the hotel was carrying about \$65,000 in debts in addition to the mortgage. The land was worth \$225,000.<sup>11</sup> The hotel was purchased in August, 1967, by Albert A. Riede and Alden H. Brown. Prior to acquiring the building, Riede and Brown had already purchased the personal property of the hotel at a tax sale.<sup>12</sup>

In 1981, both the hotel and apartment building were acquired by James N. Athanasiou. He announced that he intended to continue operating the Colburn Hotel in its existing form, including keeping the tenant in what was historically the lounge, Charlie Brown's Bar & Grill.<sup>13</sup>

In 1983, the Colburn Hotel received an \$800,000 renovation. The hotel room rates started at \$36 per night. According to Athanasiou, he wanted the hotel "to attract families and salesmen, legislators – people who have fixed traveling 'per diems' such as the military, the government." During the renovation, the dining room was returned to the original configuration. An enclosed porch was reconnected with the dining room, and the windows at the south were reopened after being boarded up for decades. Across the lobby at the north, the lounge, again with enclosed porch, was reinstated. The dining room offered a lunch and dinner menu, and the lounge served breakfast, lunch, and dinner.<sup>14</sup>

The Colburn Hotel ended its 64-year-old history operating as a hotel on December 2, 1989.<sup>15</sup> In 1992 the Colburn Hotel contracted with the Denver Housing Authority to participate in a federal program designed to help homeless individuals get back on their feet.<sup>16</sup> The program included job training and other social services. Prior to reopening, the owners, the Riede family, renovated the building at a cost of approximately \$3,000 per room. Most rooms included a private bathroom, walk-in closet, and provided furniture.

Today, the Colburn Hotel operates as a mixed-use development including apartments, with a chiropractor office and a restaurant/bar on the first floor.

#### **ARCHITECT: WILLIAM N. BOWMAN**

William N. Bowman was born in Carthage, New York, in 1868. Bowman quit school at age 11 to work in a wool mill and help support his family. During the evenings he was tutored in math and drawing; this was enough to qualify him for employment at an architect's office in Jackson,

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10 "Colburn Hotel to Be Sold at Auction," *Rocky Mountain News*, 1/28/1964.

11 "Colburn Foreclosed," *Cervi's Business Journal*, 1/4/1967.

12 "Riede and Brown Buy Colburn Hotel," *Cervi's Business Journal*, 8/23/1967.

13 "Colburn Hotel In \$4,125,000 Exchange," *Denver Business World*, 2/23/1981.

14 Marjorie Barrett, "Aging Hotel Gets New Lease: Colburn Escapes Denver Demolition Derby," *Rocky Mountain News Sunday*, 5/29/1983.

15 Paul Hutchinson, "Colburn Hotel closes after 64 years – Movers, Shakers, even Red Fenwick's Horse Pranced at Landmark," *Denver Post*, 12/1/1989.

16 Richard Coe, "Hotel Will Offer Rooms to Homeless," *Rocky Mountain News*, 2/13/1992.

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Michigan. Soon after, a prominent Detroit architect, Elijah E. Myers, suggested Bowman become a carpenter's apprentice, which Bowman did. Following his apprenticeship Bowman worked at several architecture firms in Detroit, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati. In 1899 Bowman married Alice May Kniffin. In 1910, at age of 42, he and his wife moved to Denver.

Bowman designed over 30 buildings in Colorado, ranging from apartment buildings to schools, courthouses, churches, and office buildings.<sup>17</sup> He designed in many styles, including Art Deco, Neoclassical, Spanish Colonial, and others. Many of his buildings are individually listed on the National Register for Architecture, including the Mountain States Telephone Building in Denver (NRIS.04001555/5DV.522), a 15-story Gothic Revival style building built in 1929, the Weld County Courthouse in Greeley, a Classical Revival style building built in 1913 (NRIS.78000886/5WL.567), the Montrose County Courthouse in Montrose, another Classical Revival style building built in 1922 (NRIS.9400040/5MN.1813), and the Greeley Masonic Temple in Greeley in 1927 (NRIS.04000663/5WL.315). In 1924 Bowman designed the Norman Apartments at 99 S. Downing Street, which were referred to as the "Aristocrat of Apartments."<sup>18</sup> He and his wife moved into the building shortly after it was completed.<sup>19</sup> That building is listed on the National Register (NRIS.83003509/5DV.1707). Many of these National Register listed buildings are monumental in scale and are full embodiments of their architectural style as well as other community and civic development trends during their periods of significance.

Bowman is also credited with designing the Continental Oil Building (since demolished), the Cosmopolitan Hotel (since demolished), the Park Hill United Methodist Church, the Denver Theater (5DV.503), and Byers and Cole junior high schools (5DV.2099 and 5DV.2088, respectively) as well as the Denver School Administration Building on 14<sup>th</sup> Street (5DV.1723).<sup>20</sup> From 1917 to 1919, Bowman was the president of the Colorado's chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In 1927, Bowman was appointed to a four-year term on the State Board of Architectural Examiners. Bowman also participated as one of the thirty-nine architects in the Allied Architects Association that together designed the Denver City and County Building (NRIS. 74002348; 5DV.5989).<sup>21</sup> Bowman was a member of the Masonic Lodge, the Knights Templar, Colorado Consistory No. 1, and El Jebel Shrine. He died on August 28, 1944.

Many of William Bowman's works, as discussed above, have been individually listed on the National Register under Criterion C for architecture. Typically, these are of superb design with a

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17 Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, "William N. Bowman," *Architects of Colorado*, [http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects\\_bowman.pdf](http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects_bowman.pdf), accessed February 2, 2018.

18 Barbara Norgren, Norman Apartments National Register Nomination, September 1, 1983, NRIS.83003509, accessed March 14, 2019.

19 Jack K. Naber, William Norman Bowman House/"Yamicila"/Savio House National Register Nomination, May 10, 1990, accessed March 14, 2019.

20 Beverly Abell, Greeley Masonic Temple National Register Nomination, February 11, 2004, NRIS.04000663, accessed March 14, 2019.

21 Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, "William N. Bowman," *Architects of Colorado*, [http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects\\_bowman.pdf](http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects_bowman.pdf), accessed February 2, 2018.

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high degree of integrity of materials. Though the Colburn Hotel may be considered representative of Bowman's work, it is more significant as a residential hotel and with qualities of integrity which reflect its significance as such, as addressed in Section 7.

### THE COLBURN HOTEL AS A LOCAL EXAMPLE OF A RESIDENTIAL HOTEL

The Colburn Hotel is significant as an increasingly rare example of the middle-class residential hotel type as built in Denver.

The rise of the residential hotel parallels the rise of the apartment building, but represents a distinctly different, if rarified form. Whereas the apartment building asserted individual living units which had an isolating effect on residents, the residential hotel offered a more communal living arrangement. In the narrowest of visions, the difference was seen at mealtimes where each apartment had its own food preparation and eating areas, compared to the residential hotel where occupants took their prepared meals in a common dining room. Typically, the residential hotel also had gathering locations for social activities.

Apartment living by choice appeared among society's well-to-do in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. World War I expanded the popularity of apartments by offering greater independence to middle class bachelors of both sexes who found apartments an acceptable, if temporary, solution.

Author Paul Groth, in *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*, describes the phenomenon, both in the rise of the apartment building and the rise of its variant, the residential hotel. The most prominent form of residential hotel was the palace hotel where residents could have a luxury lifestyle without the headache of managing a household. For the nouveau rich, it offered the opportunity to rub shoulders with like families. As Groth writes, "At the palace hotels the truly wealthy enjoyed perfected personal service, superior dining, sociability as well as privacy, physical luxury and instant status – all at a cost lower than keeping a mansion or a large house."<sup>22</sup>

One step down, according to Groth, were mid-priced residential hotels. These hotels attempted to offer the same services and atmosphere, but in a less affluent setting. In design terms, primary public spaces, such as the lobby and dining room, would feature striking design, while hallways and guest rooms would be austere. Similarly, whereas a palace hotel might offer maid and bell services, the residential hotel for the middle class was more of a family affair. Palace hotels offered suites of five or more rooms, while in comparison mid-priced hotels offered either single or paired rooms. Alternatives to the purposefully built mid-priced hotels included back halls of palace hotels, formerly grand hostelries, converted houses, and residence clubs. In time, a fifth option arose, the apartment hotel that included a kitchenette in an efficiency unit.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Groth, Paul. *Living Downtown*. (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1994) p. 26-55.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

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The residential hotel was a common form in many large cities. In Chicago, at its peak in the 1920s, nearly one of every twelve professional households lived in hotels. In Denver, the Colburn Hotel was a classic example: in design, it was restrained and introverted. In location, it was in a largely residential neighborhood, and conceptually its tone was more of a quiet oasis than an extroverted grand hotel. Attractive, yet efficient, it featured a decorative lobby, but not one too large or ornate. Similarly, the dining room, located where the chiropractor's office is now, offered distinctive design touches but with austerity. The corridors and rooms were plain. In a word, detail was extremely strategic. And yet, while apartment-looking from the outside, functionally—with smaller rooms, a dining room, social room, and a larger lobby—the interior spatial arrangement was vastly different from an apartment building.

The design of a residential hotel is characterized by the division of public and private space. The public spaces within these buildings include a common dining room and lounge. These rooms are typically large and located on the first floor. These spaces offered a location for social gatherings and were the main dining spaces for the residents. The larger size of these common spaces balanced with the small size of the hotel rooms. On the upper floors, the hotel rooms typically were a modest size with a shared bathroom between rooms or a common bathroom off of the hall. Higher class residential hotels offered en suite bathroom. The Colburn Hotel was created with the intention to serve the higher end of middle class residential hotel dwellers; this is reflected in the design, as all but two rooms per floor have an en suite bathroom.

In the 1929 Denver City Directory, the Colburn Hotel was listed as a “leading residential hotel.” Only one other hotel in the directory had a similar reference, the Lancaster Hotel at 1765 Sherman Street, which is now demolished. Three other hotels referenced transient and permanent accommodations: the Alamo Hotel at 1411 17<sup>th</sup> Street (ca.1880-1975), the Lincoln Hotel at 1629 Tremont Place (dates unknown), and the Illinois Hotel at 1820 Stout Street (dates unknown). All three of these buildings have been demolished. Though other hotels referenced weekly rates, these were not referenced as residential, transient, or permanent. Additionally, all five such hotels listed in the directory have been demolished.<sup>24</sup>

There was a distinct lack of residential hotels, transient options, single room occupancy (SRO), and other affordable downtown housing options in Denver evident at the time the Colburn Hotel was converted for homeless housing in 1992. When the hotel was reopened to provide housing for the homeless, the then property owner said, “there is definitely a need for this in this town. Most of the single-room occupancy hotels in Denver have been demolished or closed down.”<sup>25</sup>

The distinct characteristics of the residential hotel can be seen when comparing the Colburn Hotel to the Colburn Apartments. Colburn originally built the twin building to the south with the intent to create luxury apartments. From the exterior, the buildings look very similar. The differences were apparent in interior design, as the apartment building contains only residential

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24 Burwood Hotel (1627 Stout), Gillroy Hotel (1742 Curtis), Haddon Hall Hotel (618 14<sup>th</sup>), Oakes Hotel (908 18<sup>th</sup>), and Paxton Hotel (1862 Curtis).

25 Richard Coe, “Hotel Will Offer Rooms to Homeless,” *Rocky Mountain News*, 2/13/1992.

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units with no communal spaces on the first floor. The Colburn Apartments have since been upgraded with modern finishes and market rate apartment units from studios to two-bedrooms.

World War II was the high point for the residential hotel, as millions of people shifted around the country living and working far from home. After WWII, urban populations declined across the board as people moved to the suburbs; this coupled with pursuing the dream of home ownership meant the end of the urban residential hotel. As they fell into disuse, cities began to demolish them under urban renewal. The Colburn is one of the few, if not the only, remaining residential hotels near Denver's city center.

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[http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects\\_bowman.pdf](http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects_bowman.pdf). Accessed February 2, 2018.

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"Ten-Story Hotel to be Erected in Denver at Cost of \$550,000." *Rocky Mountain News*, June 21, 1924.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency

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Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 5DV.3916

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** less than one

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 39.731747 | Longitude: -104.983154 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:             |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:             |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:             |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is located at 980 Grant Street, Denver, Denver County, Colorado, specifically, the parcel identified by the Denver County Assessor as Schedule #0503814151151.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated property include the parcel of land historically associated with the resource.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: John M. Tess, President (for property owner)  
organization: Heritage Consulting Group  
street & number: 1120 NW Northrup Street  
city or town: Portland state: Oregon zip code: 97209-2852  
e-mail jmtess@heritage-consulting.com  
telephone: (503) 228-0272  
date: March 15, 2019

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### **Additional Documentation**

- 1 of 9. Site Map
- 2 of 9. 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
- 3 of 9. 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
- 4 of 9. 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
- 5 of 9. Circa 1928 Photograph, North and West Sides
- 6 of 9. Circa 1928 Photograph, West and South Sides
- 7 of 9. Circa 1928 Photograph, Lobby
- 8 of 9. Circa 1928 Photograph, Dining Room
- 9 of 9. 1930 Advertisement (Source: Greeley Daily Tribune, 2/7/1930)

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Colburn Hotel  
City or Vicinity: Denver  
County: Denver State: Colorado  
Photographer: Heritage Consulting Group  
Date Photographed: January 2018

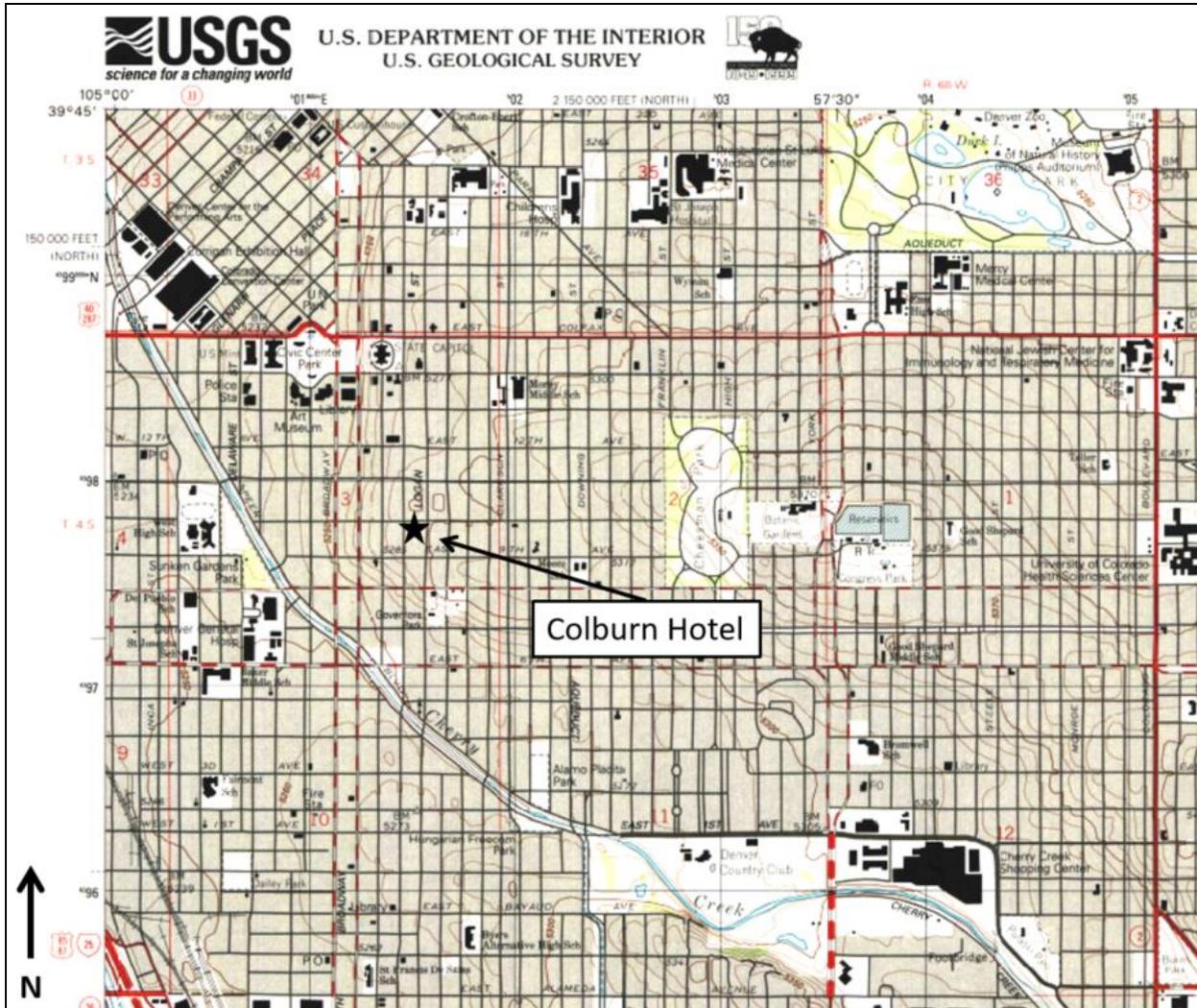
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1. Exterior View, Looking Northeast at West and South Sides
- Photo 2. Exterior View, Looking Southeast at North and West Sides
- Photo 3. Exterior View, Looking South at North Side
- Photo 4. Exterior View, Looking Northwest at South and East Sides
- Photo 5. Interior View, First Floor at Center, Lobby, Looking Northeast
- Photo 6. Interior View, First Floor at North, Bar, Looking Northeast
- Photo 7. Interior View, First Floor at South, Tenant Space, Looking Southwest
- Photo 8. Interior View, Typical Upper Floor Corridor
- Photo 9. Interior View, Typical Unit
- Photo 10. Interior View, Typical Unit

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USGS Map



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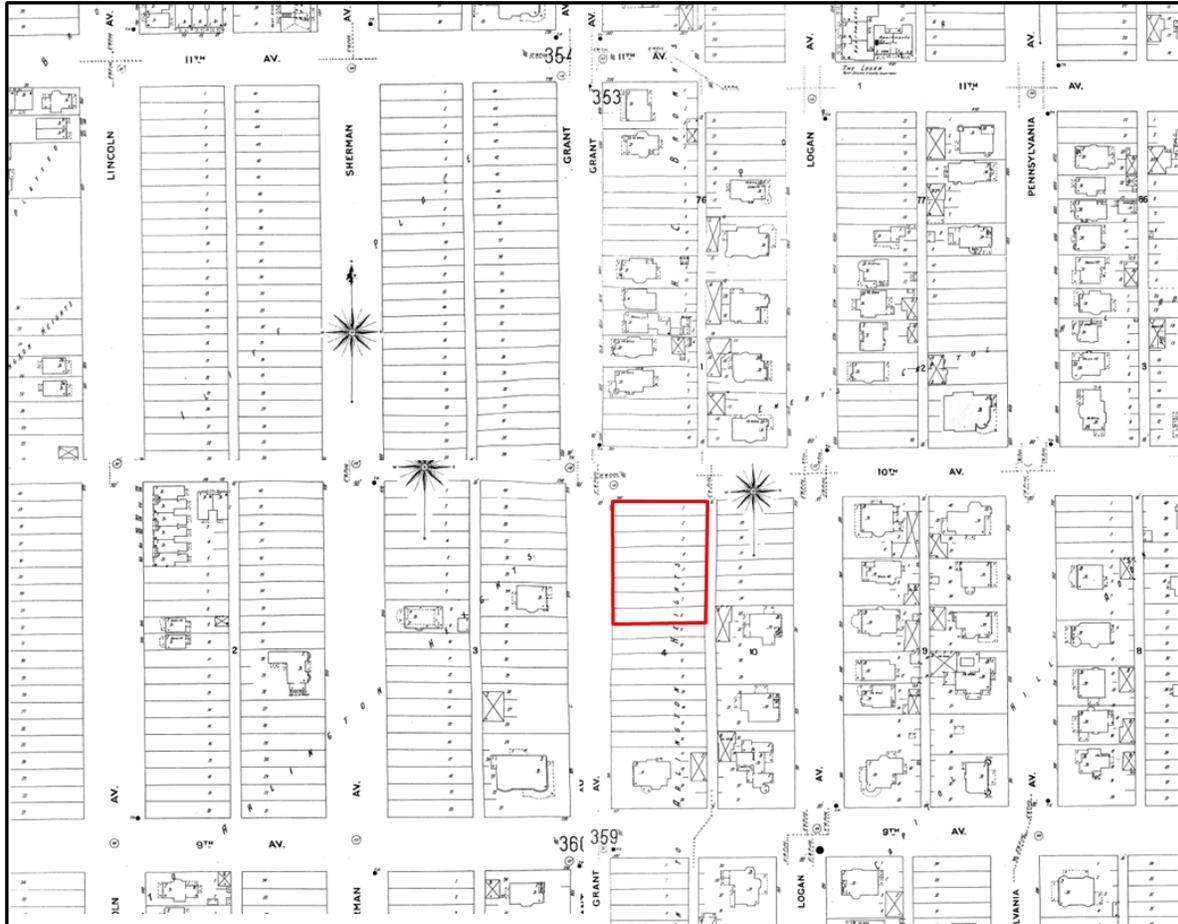
**Additional Document 1. Site Map**



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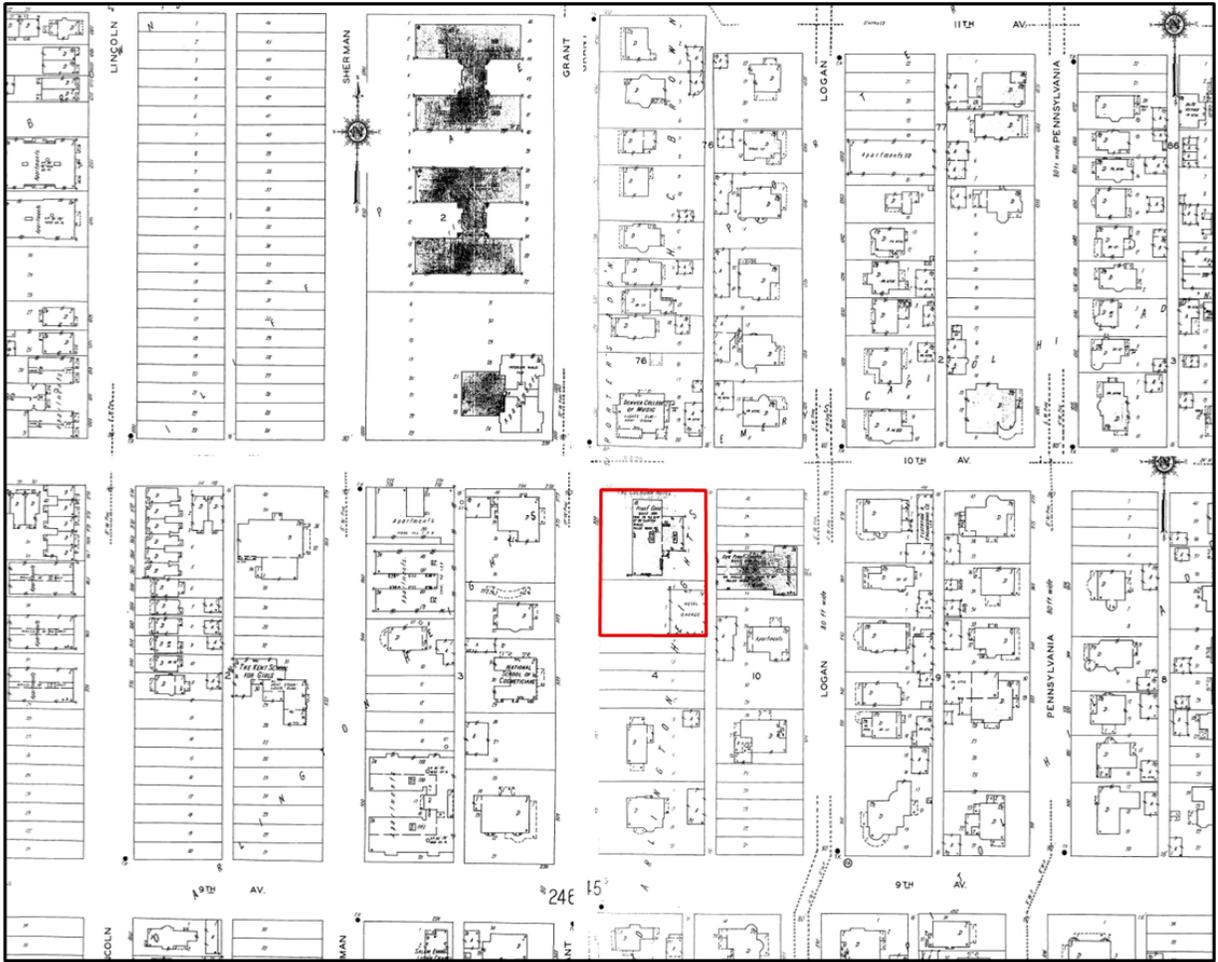
**Additional Document 2. 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map**



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**Additional Document 3. 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map**



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**Additional Document 4. 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map**



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**Additional Document 5.** Circa 1928 Photograph, North and West Sides (Source: Denver Public Library)



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**Additional Document 6.** Circa 1928 Photograph, West and South Sides (Source: Denver Public Library)



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**Additional Document 7.** 1930 Advertisement (Source: Greeley Daily Tribune, 2/7/1930)



**▲ Room at  
The Colburn**

Denver's Fine New Hotel, has the charm and comfort of a fine home • Rooms all have outside exposure—Sunshine • Full-tiled bath • One finds in each of the large rooms a bed that promises untroubled sleep, sturdy Colonial desk, Windsor chair and rocker, overstuffed Divan, end table, large easy chair, gate-leg table, floor lamp, desk telephone & decorations harmoniously pleasing.

The garage is steam heated.



*Outside Room, Private Bath*  
One Person, 2.50, 3.00, 3.50  
Two Persons, 3.50 to 5.00  
*Special Weekly and Monthly Rates*

**THE  
COLBURN  
HOTEL**

Tenth Avenue at Grant Street  
Ten Minute Walk to the Heart of the City

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**Exterior Photo Key**

