

PH0500615

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 6 1977  
DATE ENTERED JAN 5 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON The Tramway Building

The University of Colorado - Denver Center

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1100 14th Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Denver

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

Colorado

VICINITY OF

CODE

08

COUNTY

Denver

CODE

031

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

University of Colorado

STREET & NUMBER

1100 14th Street

CITY, TOWN

Denver

VICINITY OF

STATE

Colorado

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Clerk and Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER

City and County Building 14th and Bannock Street

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Colorado State Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE

The Denver Inventory

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Colorado 200 E. 14th Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE  
Colorado

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR  
 DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Tramway Building, located at the southwest corner of 14th and Arapahoe Streets, consists of the eight story office building and the car barn building, covering the half block of Arapahoe Street between 14th and 13th Streets. The exterior is finished with brick of a rich color, laid with wide joints of black mortar and ornamental white terra cotta.

The architectural style of the Tramway Building shows influence of both the Renaissance and the Chicago School of architecture. As evidence of its Renaissance character, it has a strong, heavy horizontal cornice with an adaptation of acritaria on its edge. Another characteristic is the contrasts in masonry. While the Chicago School is indicated by the strong vertical thrust of the brick column of support with triple windows filling the complete space from column to column, the building's verticality is further emphasized by the lack of ornamentation on the corners of the building which may be described as accent by omission. The windows, and the spandrels between them, create a contrasting column, white in color, compared to the brick support columns.

With its base, shaft, capital approach to form a classic column, the Tramway Building represents an early attitude in skyscraper design. A terra cotta belt course on the third floor, and another on the second, separate the base of the column which is on the ground floor from the shaft or main body of the building.

There are three white terra cotta belt courses on the main office building. One is a sill course on the third floor, another is a lintel course on the second floor. These separate the base of the column from the shaft. A third belt course, below the eighth floor, serves as a transition between the shaft of the column and the capital, represented by the eighth floor and projecting cornice.

The first floor of the corner office building is faced with rusticated terra cotta blocks. Each first floor opening is a curved flat arch on both the 14th and Arapahoe Street facades. The main entrance is centered on 14th Street flanked by the original light fixtures.

The main entrance lobby is furnished with Tennessee marble flooring, of a light pink shade, and a veined white Arizona marble wainscot to a height of four feet with a base of green Vermont marble.

Throughout the building the floors were originally of structural terra cotta combined with reinforced concrete. The interior partitions were of hollow tile. Each floor was generously supplied with vaults and wall safes. The offices of the treasurer, general manager, and auditor were connected by a pneumatic tube system. The building had its own light, heating and power plants. The car barn was equipped with an automatic sprinkler system.

The car barn, originally two stories high, extends the length of Arapahoe Street between 14th and 13th Streets and is constructed of the same materials as the office building. The windows in this portion of the building are arranged in groups of three beneath curved flat arches with white terra cotta keystones.

A partial third floor was built above the car barn, next to the office building, which contained an auditorium, gymnasium, shower baths, reading room, barber shop, and bowling alleys, all for the use of the tramway operators. The bowling alleys were converted to a training area in 1920.

Virtually no alterations were made on the building until the Tramway Company sold it to the University of Colorado for \$687,500 in 1956. Most of the changes have been in the interior, where extensive work has been done for more classroom space. Yet the marble foyer and many of the safes in the building remain today.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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The few changes that have been made to the exterior were done about 1972. At that time the remaining third story was added to the car barn to tie in the earlier addition adjacent to the office building. It was designed by John B. McMorran and the contractor was H.W. Hammond, Co. The tramway garage doors were filled in to make the entries of a humanized scale. One door was made into a fixed window. Overall the building has been well maintained and all of the exterior changes have been strictly in keeping with the character of the building.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

W. E. and A. A. Fisher

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Tramway Building is significant in the areas of commerce, transportation, community planning, education, and architecture. The Denver Tramway Company, the original owners of the building, had tremendous influence in shaping the physical growth of the city of Denver. The building has architectural significance in its design by the prominent architectural firm of Fisher and Fisher. The building presently serves to facilitate higher education in Colorado, housing classrooms and administrative activities of the University of Colorado.

The Tramway Building has been associated with two major institutions during its life. Its original purpose was to serve the momentous Denver City Tramway Company. Then, in 1956, the building was sold to the University of Colorado for its Denver Center.

The history of the Denver Tramway Company begins with the advent of public transportation in Denver. In 1871 horse drawn cars on tracks were used for transportation in the downtown area. Electric cable cars were introduced in 1885, and in 1886 two companies were consolidated to form the Denver Tramway Company. After fierce competition during the next thirteen years, more companies were consolidated in 1899 to form the major public transit system of Denver called the the Denver City Tramway Company. With one later name change, back to Denver Tramway Company, this organization was to be the key to public transportation in the Denver area until 1971, when operations were taken over by Denver Metro Transit.

It would not be exaggerating to say that the Denver Tramway Company played an important role in forming the map of Denver as we see it today. At the turn of the century, real estate investors bought vacant land in Denver. If they were of influence, they had the Tramway Company install their rails, which would send the land prices up with tidy profits for the investors. Where the Denver Tramway Company's tracks were laid, housing and streets sprung about them. As noted in a 1909 newspaper article, "The Denver City Tramway Co. . . . is the most reliable barometer for Denver's growth." I-70, a major interstate highway of today, is located on what was once part of the Tramway Company's rail system.

The Denver Tramway Company came to power, in part, through the well-known and influential Evans family. Territorial Governor John Evans was involved in much of the first rail transportation in Colorado. Governor Evans was one of the founders of Northwestern University and a physician in the Chicago area before he was appointed by President Lincoln to be the second Territorial Governor of Colorado from 1862 to 1865. During that time he was very involved in the territory's long struggle for statehood.

Governor Evans's son, William Gray Evans, was more directly involved in the Denver Tramway Company. He was a chief planner and owner of the two companies that, consolidated in 1886 to form the Denver Tramway Company, and later he was president of the Denver City Tramway Company. He was popularly known as "Tramway Bill" or

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Breck, Allen du Pont, John Evans of Denver, The Pruett Publishing Co., Boulder, 1972  
 "Campaign of Construction by Tramway", The Denver Reporter, Sept. 17, 1909.  
 Evans, John, "Tramway Office Building and Car Barn", The Tramway Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 8, May 1911.  
 Forest Kenton, personal interview, January 29, 1977.  
 Jones, Wagner & McKeever, Forrest, Mile High Trolleys, The International Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc., 1975.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Under 10 acres  
 UTM REFERENCES

*1.0056 acres*  
*Braham 12.8.77*

A | 113 | 500150 | 4399320 |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C | | | | |

B | | | | |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Stephanie Chapman

ORGANIZATION

Historic Denver

DATE

March 7, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

770 Pennsylvania Street

TELEPHONE

837-1858

CITY OR TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*[Signature]*

TITLE Color SHPO

DATE 6/8/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*[Signature]*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST: *[Signature]*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 1.5.78  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 DATE 1.4.78

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" Napoleon Bill" because of his strict rule of the company. William Gray Evans was president of the Denver City Tramway Company at the time the Tramway Building was built. His son, John Evans, II, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was the chief engineer of the company.

John Evans, II, also has many credits to his name. From 1916 to 1952 he served Denver and the nation in a number of ways: As a member of the staff of the Provost Marshal General, president of the board of trustees of the University of Denver, president of the International Trust Company and of the First National Bank, participation in the reorganization of the Rio Grande Railroad; he also served the Colorado Museum of Natural History and the State Historical Society at crucial periods in their history. In addition, he was a member of the Federal Reserve Board, on the boards of Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation, Holly Sugar, Colorado Interstate Gas, Colorado Milling and Elevator, and other companies in Colorado. He also served as a director of the Denver Tramway Company from 1925 to 1967.

Due to the expansion of the company, the old offices were no longer adequate, and in 1910 the Denver Tramway Company chose W.E. and A.A. Fisher, prominent Denver architects, to design their new office building. Well known Denver buildings done by this firm include: Colorado National Bank, Railway Exchange Building, Ideal Building (remodeling), Guaranty Bank Building, Security Building, Neusteter's Store Building, South High School, and the A.C. Foster Building (University Building).

The consulting engineers for the Tramway Building were Crocker and Ketchum; the general contractors were Whitney-Steen Co.; and the building was planned and erected under the supervision of John Evans, II, chief engineer of the engineering department of the Tramway Company.

The building, ready for occupancy in May of 1911, allowed the company to concentrate, in a central location, its somewhat scattered departments. When the building was designed, the Tramway Company recognized the need to plan for growth and they initially occupied five floors of the eight story structure and rented out the remaining three until the need for them arose.

In 1956, the building was sold to the University of Colorado which has kept the building in immaculate condition while using it for class room and administrative space. The only noticeable changes are to the interior to help it conform to its new function. The marble foyer remains as a historic reminder to all who enter.

With careful attention paid to the building's character, the large garage doors on the car barn were changed to human scaled entrances, and an addition was made to complete the third floor over the car barn. These are changes that most people would not notice and this building is in full spirit with its original characterization on the urban Denver setting.