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**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

Weld County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Weld County Courthouse

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

9th and 9th

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Greeley

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4

STATE

Colorado

VICINITY OF

CODE

08

COUNTY

Weld

CODE

043

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Citizens of Weld County

STREET & NUMBER

3/4 Board of Weld County Commissioners, P.O. Box 758

CITY, TOWN

Greeley

STATE

Colorado 80631

VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Weld County Clerk & Recorder, Recording Office, Court-
house

STREET & NUMBER

9th and 9th

CITY, TOWN

Greeley

STATE

Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE

Ongoing

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Colorado, 200 East 14th Avenue,

CITY, TOWN

Denver,

STATE

Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Weld County Courthouse, designed by architect W. N. Bowman and completed in 1917, stands majestically, strong in its simplicity of line and excellence of detail. It is of Neo-Classic Style with Ionic capitals, grand columns and triangular pediments. The building, containing 25,000 square feet, houses four full stories plus a basement and an attic which can be converted into office space.

The exterior walls and columns are of Indiana limestone and terra cotta. A second floor balcony faces east and overlooks the approach and porch to the main entrance of the courthouse. At the front of the balcony and rising to the fourth floor are eight large columns with Ionic capitals and triangular pediments; eight more such columns are at the back of the balcony and flush with the building. Beneath large triangles under the cornices on the eastern face of the building are four columns with Doric capitals, two on either side of the eight Ionic columns.

There are four Ionic columns above the entrances on the north side and the south side, but those columns are flush with the building. At street level, arched openings are at each door and window on the east and north sides, including seven arched openings sheltering part of the porch at the main entrance below the eight large columns.

The main entrance has large detailed bronze and glass doors; also large bronze and glass doors open to the north, south and west. Thirty-five windows are on the east side; seven on each of three floors behind the eight main columns; one between the Doric columns indented in the building on each side of the eight main Ionic columns, one on each of the top floors, and eight arched windows at street level. Nineteen windows are on the north side and twenty-seven on the south, nine of which are located on each end between the four Ionic columns flush with the building and three at each of the top three floors. On the back or west side of the courthouse are nine large leaded stained glass windows plus thirty-four other windows.

At the top center of the eastern exterior wall is a large round clock in a half ellipsoid of Indiana limestone with a slightly protruding, simple design framing the top half of the clock's face. This is topped by a flagpole. In Gothic lettering below the clock and just above six of the eight main Ionic columns on the east side is printed "Weld County Court House", all in capitals.

The interior lobby is dominated by a staircase, notable for its elaborate ironwork which is carried to all floors. White marble from the quarry near Marble, Colorado, comprises not only the main staircase, but interior columns, floors on the first three stories, and, in one courtroom, wainscotting, floor, and judge's bench.

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Each landing of the main white marble staircase features three large and skillfully wrought stained glass windows. The colors range from subtle to vivid, and the designs incorporate such subjects as flowers, color patterns and the Colorado seal.

A circular opening surrounded by an intricately wrought bronze balustrade in the center of the corridors of the third and fourth floors allows one to see to the floors below, lending an airiness to the dignity of the building.

No wood was used in the construction of the courthouse except the handrails on the main marble stairway and circular balustrades. An elevator with heavily detailed bronze doors runs from the basement to the attic. One of the courthouse vaults has a narrow spiral staircase connecting the first and second floors. All clocks in the courthouse are operated by a master pneumatic large grandfather clock. The lamps throughout the building are of solid bronze and feature intricate designs. Highlighting the interior are figures and designs molded in plaster or carved in marble that symbolize many of the activities that engage the government. Above the door in one courtroom, for example, is a replica of a woman representing the law. A jewel in the center of her forehead represents knowledge, and below the head are carved scales representing balanced law. Fruits on each side of this represent the fruits of justice. At the top of the judge's bench is a ball which depicts universal law; being above the judge, it signifies universal law above man-made law represented by the judge.

The clock in this courtroom is ringed by a green wreath which represents justice; on each side of the clock and its surrounding wreath are two white, winged dragon-like beasts with open, sinister, red mouths symbolizing the evil genie of Babylonian times who incited evil and criminal instincts in man. The clock represents time, and since the judge sits at the opposite end of the room, his eyes often fall upon the clock; the judge "spends his time bringing evil to justice."

Marble, cement and steel were principal materials used, so the building is classified as absolutely fireproof. Foundations forming the basement are of solid concrete with hardburned brick in cement forming the partition walls. All interior doors are of hollow steel enclosed in steel frames, and their frames as well as baseboards are of steel; yet all are finished in a beautiful mahogany tone and look exactly like rich mahogany wood.

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In the 1930's WPA crews repainted the interior of the courthouse, obliterating the carefully chosen shades of paint and excellent coloring of details in the courtrooms, on ceilings, in friezes and on symbols. However, the courthouse interior has been completely restored; delicacy of hues and emphasis of detail through shading and gilding have returned the splendid stateliness emphasized by the highly polished marble and bronze. The final act of restoration was the dedication of the new courthouse chimes on November 7, 1973.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1917 BUILDER/ARCHITECT W. N. Bowman

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Weld County Courthouse is significant for its architectural style, which is unique in the Greeley area, and because it is both the center of and a visible focal point for county government.

Constructed of Indiana limestone and marble in the Neo-Classic architectural style, the Weld County Courthouse is a unique and majestic symbol of government activity in the county seat of Greeley. There is a great integrity and dignity in the total design. This, plus its careful detailing and lavish use of classical details and motifs, has combined to produce a county courthouse virtually unparalleled in most of Colorado's county seats.

Like many counties, there was a good deal of controversy in the early years as to where the county seat was to be located. The original county seat was in St. Vrain from 1861 to 1868. This was moved to Latham, a small town three miles east and one mile south of Greeley, for the years 1869-1870.

Then developed the feuding between Greeley and Evans, a small town to the immediate south of Greeley, for the right to be the seat of Weld County government. Due to a combination of office space and land availabilities, various petitions, ballot box battles, and the kidnaping of records, the county officially and successively sat in: Evans 1870-1874 (at which time the county population was approximately 1500), Greeley 1874-1875, Evans 1875-1877 and finally and permanently in Greeley in 1877. The first courthouse actually owned by the county was built in 1883. By 1914, however, the first courthouse was crowded to capacity, and people were agitating for a courthouse that was "big enough" for growing Weld County; but in that year, when the Board of County Commissioners decided to build a new courthouse at an estimated cost of \$400,000, people were aghast: the cost and size seemed colossal. The Commissioners stood firm, feeling that all too soon even the proposed building would be insufficient.

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Courthouse construction just preceded war time prices, so building costs were kept low for a final total expenditure of \$414,000. The new courthouse was built on the same block in downtown Greeley as was the first courthouse, and the building was completely paid for in cash by its dedication on July 4, 1917. By 1938 it was estimated the courthouse could not be replaced for less than \$1,000,000. Today, due to the employment of irreplaceable materials, fine workmanship, and handwrought details, the building could not be built again at any price.

From 1917 until 1974, the courthouse housed numerous county government offices plus the County and District Courts; through those years, it became increasingly crowded. On April 17, 1974, the Chief Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial District issued an order to the Board of Weld County Commissioners that all county government offices were to immediately vacate the courthouse which was henceforth to be occupied only by County and District Courts. And, today, careful renovation is underway within the building to turn the entire structure into courtrooms and needed support facilities.

The county continues to recognize the important role this building has played and is playing as a symbol and focal point of government. A primary concern in the design of the ten million dollar County Services and Law Enforcement complex now under construction, which will border the courthouse on the south and west sides, is that the new building will compliment and highlight the 1917 edifice.

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Major Bibliographical

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Honorable Donald A. Carpenter, Chief Judge, 19th Judicial District,
Weld County Courthouse, discussions: 1973-76.