

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

FEB 8 1994

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Douglas City Hall

other names/site number: 48C01927

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2. Location

=====

street & number: 130 South Third Street not for publication: N/A
city or town: Douglas vicinity: N/A
state: Wyoming code: WY county: Converse code: 009 zip code: 82633

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John I Keck 1/28/94
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register Greg M. Lapley 3/17/94 Entered in the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register

___ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====

5. Classification

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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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Government Sub: City Hall

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade Sub: Specialty store

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Georgian Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>concrete</u>
roof	<u>terra cotta tile</u>
walls	<u>brick</u>
other	<u>terra cotta</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
Politics/Government

Period of Significance 1916-1943

Significant Dates N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Bowman, William Norman, architect
Reavill, Edward A., builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)
Douglas, Wyo. 7.5 USGS Quadrangle. Photorevised 1974.

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>468580</u>	<u>4733820</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

_____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Sandra Shelley, Historic Preservation Specialist
=====

organization State Historic Preservation Office date June 25, 1993

street & number 410 S. Third Street telephone (307) 766-5324

city or town Laramie state WY zip code 82070
=====

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Douglas
=====

street & number 101 North Fourth Street telephone (307) 358-3462

city or town Douglas state WY zip code 82633
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Section 7 Page 1

Douglas City Hall NATIONAL REGISTER
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The Douglas City Hall is located on a quiet side street just half a block from the heart of the current commercial district. The main entrance and two sides of the building are surrounded by green lawn and mature shade trees. The evolution of Center Street into the current State Highway 59, with subsequent widening to four lanes and the installation of traffic lights, has separated the City Hall from the still busy commercial core of Douglas. This separation between commercial district and the quiet tree shaded location of the City Hall is more noticeable now than it would have been during the building's period of significance. It is a two story brick Georgian Revival building which exhibits many hallmarks of the Georgian style. The building is rectangular in shape with a symmetrical facade and a moderate hip clay tile roof. It has an elaborate front door with a broken pediment supported by pilasters; windows are aligned horizontally and vertically as much as possible within the constraints of the design requirements. During the period of significance it served the City of Douglas as a City Hall, fire station and city jail and these multiple uses are reflected in its design. A perfectly symmetrical Georgian facade would normally have been designed, but the city wanted a multipurpose building. This resulted in the design of the front facade with two wooden center opening garage doors providing space where fire engines could be kept on the ground floor in the south half of the building. When the city moved to a new fire station the opening was enclosed with siding and a cedar shingle mansard style overhang. Prominent in the rear of the building is a three story brick tower with a round window which was formerly used for drying the cloth hoses from the fire station. The main facade features a prominent entrance with a broken pediment and an elaborate medallion incorporating a ram's head. The central window above the medallion has decorative scrollwork unifying it with the entrance which still signals the original intention that the building be symmetrical. The main alteration to the exterior has been the enclosure of the fire doors with non-compatible materials including the addition of the cedar shingle overhang. The interior still retains the original woodwork around the doors, and the original wooden staircase, handrail and newel post, although all the woodwork has subsequently been painted brown. Aside from that, the building retains a high degree of integrity. The exterior and interior have only been modified in localized areas and with materials that are reversible. The building still possesses strong qualities of integrity of location, design, and setting. The materials and workmanship all date to the period of significance except in a few areas. The City Hall still retains the feeling and association of its period of significance.

The City Hall is built of load bearing brick masonry with a concrete foundation. The bricks are laid up in common bond with a prominent string course of soldier bricks just below the level of the second floor windows. The ground floor windows have prominent surrounds with sills of header bricks and a flat arch with a prominent terra cotta keystone above. All windows are double hung with original woodwork. The windows on the ground floor are eight lights over one, and the second floor are eight over two. The roof is a moderate hip with clay tile roof and exposed rafters. The building has a partial basement, half of which was used for the jail. The windows in the basement on the north, or jail side are set in window wells and have steel bars on the outside for security.

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Douglas City Hall
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The City Hall has a poured concrete foundation which rises as a water table for three feet on the east, or front, facade. This facade was always asymmetrical because of the fire doors on the south side of the building. On the ground floor there are two windows on the north side, each window containing eight lights over one. They have brick surrounds with a flat arch and an exaggerated terra cotta keystone. On the south side of the building the two original doors for the fire station were slightly over eight feet wide and twelve feet two inches tall, as opposed to the windows on the north side which are six and a half feet wide and seven feet one inch tall. These were garage style doors typical of the time of construction; center opening wooden panel doors with a small rectangular eight light window on the top of each panel. Despite the discrepancy in size the architect made an attempt to create the illusion of symmetry by making the tops of the doors and the tops of the windows the same height and using the same detailing of brick surrounds and terra cotta keystone. The water table was carried between the doors and around the corner, but the doors themselves opened flush with ground level, giving them the extra feet of clearance necessary for the engines. When the new fire hall was built the opening was enclosed with non-compatible wooden paneling and a modern glass store front door was installed. Over the opening an applied cedar shingled overhang was created which conceals the original brick surrounds and arch.

The second story of the east elevation is symmetrical. There are four identical windows each consisting of eight lights over one with a radiating arch and keystone of terra cotta. The two on the north side are centered over the windows on the ground floor and the two on the south side were centered over the fire station doors. There is a central window situated over the front entrance which has three panels; a central panel of four lights over one and two side panels of two lights over one. This central window has decorative terra cotta quoins and scrollwork and columns between the two side panels and the central panel.

The centerpiece of the east elevation is the main entrance to the building. The door is framed with terra cotta columns with Ionic capitals. Over the door is a broken pediment containing a central medallion featuring a ram's head with a full curled set of horns and infilled with decorative scrollwork, leaves, and vines. The words 'CITY HALL' are inscribed at the bottom of the pediment and supported by a bracket. The original architect's plan showed a simpler medallion and instead of a bracket there was a keystone and radiating arch of terra cotta similar to the second floor windows.

The south elevation has two windows on the ground floor and three on the second floor. The windows on the ground floor have twelve over twelve lights and the second story windows originally had eight over one, but have been modified to eight over two. The second story windows are arranged symmetrically and the two ground floor windows are centered beneath the easternmost windows. The exterior window treatments are identical to those on the east elevation, with a flat arch and terra cotta keystone on the ground floor windows and a radiating arch and keystone of terra cotta on the second story. A third window to balance the symmetry of this elevation was not planned, perhaps because the fire station equipment occupied this side of the building.

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On the ground floor of the west, or rear, elevation there are three doors, one from the fire station, one from the hallway of the main floor offices and one from the jail area below ground level with stairs leading up to the surface. The hose drying tower dominates this elevation. It is offset five and a half feet to the south of the centerline of the building. This elevation has mixed fenestration. On the ground floor there are three windows, each four over one lights and at the same level a much smaller one over one light window in the base of the hose tower. The original doors have been replaced and a screen has been added around the center door to block the wind. The second story has five windows arranged for the convenience of the interior offices, three windows are four over one lights, one is six over one lights and one is eight over one lights. The hose tower also has a set of windows at the third story level. On the south, and west elevations, they are narrow one over one light windows similar to, but narrower, than the one on the ground level, but on the east elevation there is a round window with a radial brick arch and four terra cotta keystones. The upper four feet of the hose tower has louvered panels on all four sides to increase air circulation for drying the hoses. The tower has a hipped roof which has subsequently been modified with the addition of a low rail and a multidirectional fire siren.

The north elevation presents a symmetrical appearance with windows regularly spaced and matched in size. All the windows are eight over one lights with surrounds duplicating the east elevation; on the ground floor they have flat arches and a terra cotta keystone, on the second floor they have a radiating terra cotta arch and keystone. The second floor windows have been modified from the architect's drawings to eight over two lights.

The interior was segregated by uses. The basement level has a large unexcavated portion beneath the area of the fire hall. The central area of the basement is occupied with a large fuel room which formerly held coal for the boiler. On the north side of the basement are the two small jail cells, each one opening out into an exercise corridor. The remainder of the basement was taken up with hallways and storage spaces. The main floor was divided into office space for the treasurer and police judge on the north side and the fire hall on the south side with corridors and rest rooms occupying the remainder of the floor space. The plans show the council chamber, a committee room, and a janitor's room on the north side of the second floor, a large club room and a room for the firemen on the south side.

The interior on the second story has received the most alteration. The club room was changed over to the council chamber with the addition of a dias and theater style seating and the old council chamber was partitioned into offices for city services.

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Douglas City Hall
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The Douglas City Hall is eligible under Criterion A because of the vital role it played in the development of the city of Douglas, serving its civic needs in the form of fire station and jail, as well as City Hall. It was designed by the well known Denver architect William Norman Bowman in 1915 and construction was completed in August of 1916. The building indicates the community's structure, organization, spirit and community pride. It represents the growing optimism on the "lingering frontier" at the transition from the 19th century frontier to the 20th century. The City Hall, and its companion building the County Courthouse, (demolished in 1978) were symbols of the hopes and aspirations the inhabitants had for Douglas as it turned from a collection of tents and rude shacks along the banks of the Platte River into a modern city at the dawn of the 20th century.

Prior to the establishment of Douglas, Ft. Fetterman near the mouth of La Prele Creek, was the only settlement in the area that was to become Converse County. The fort was established in 1867 to protect travelers on the Oregon and Bozeman trails and was abandoned in 1882. After its abandonment it was taken over by civilians and served as a supply center and entertainment focus for ranches in the area. Pioneering cattle ranches were being established by the late 1870's, but they often had to deal with marauding bands of Indians. The area became attractive to increasing settlement with the confinement to reservations of the Native American tribes who had formerly lived and hunted in the vicinity. A focus for settlement was the ongoing construction of the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri railroad as it built westward from Nebraska. Settlers moved to the former location of the fort waiting for the announcement of the new terminus. This influx more than doubled the resident population. A twenty-four block townsite was laid out by the railroad and named in honor of renowned Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas, but they refused to allow anyone to build within the limits of the townsite until the tracks were completed to that point and the lots were auctioned. As a result, a temporary town grew up at the mouth of Antelope Creek one mile north of Douglas. By the time the first passenger train arrived on August 29, 1886 the temporary townsite had four streets lined with tents and shacks housing a population of at least 1600. For four days lots were auctioned and total sales amounted to \$70,405 for 242 lots. The shacks and tents were immediately moved from the temporary town, set on lots, and permanent structures were completed as soon as possible. Within ninety days Douglas could boast of three newspapers, two banks, twelve general stores, twenty smaller stores, hotels, restaurants, lumber yards, drug and jewelry stores, two dance halls, and twenty-one saloons. Local hand pressed kiln-fired brick was made east of Douglas. By fall a school was organized for the local children. Unfortunately in October a typhoid epidemic hit the fledgling town, and one of the three people who died was the new schoolteacher. After such a boom town start, the disastrous winter of 1886-1887 hit Douglas hard. The destruction of a large percentage of the cattle on the range caused great hardship and even bankrupted some ranches. Douglas' existence as a supply point was severely jeopardized and this coupled with the onward extension of the railroad resulted in the population shrinking to less than 300 people. Those who were left carried on with the intention that Douglas would be their home. Several new buildings were constructed including a small brick school, two town wells were dug, and a volunteer fire department was established.

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Douglas City Hall
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In 1888 when Converse County was created from parts of Albany and Laramie Counties there were only twenty-seven rural households who were attempting to "prove up" and acquire land under the Homestead Act. Included in this figure were those people who were homesteading in a large area that was eventually to split off and become Niobrara County. This was shortly to change as homesteading and sheep ranching began to assume importance for the growth of Douglas. Sheep began to be introduced in significant numbers in 1889. The expansion of the sheep business brought more people into the area to take advantage of economic opportunities. Between 1890 and 1900 the population of Douglas doubled. Part of this growth can also be attributed to the increase in homesteading in the area making Douglas the hub of an area with a radius of twenty to fifty miles.

The area north of the Platte River within the northern part of present day Converse County is primarily short grass and sage with a scarcity of water making it much more suitable for sheep ranching. Sheep were able to subsist and even thrive on areas that were only marginal for cattle. When another severe winter struck in 1898-1899 only 10% of the sheep were lost in the area around Douglas as compared to the serious losses incurred by the cattle ranches a decade previously. The increase in sheep ranching caused growing resentment among cattle ranchers. There were incidents of violence throughout Wyoming that continued until the climactic events of the Tensleep Raid in 1909. In the Douglas area however, hostilities against sheep ranchers started winding down by 1897 as sheep profits encouraged more and more people to take up sheep ranching and made many men wealthy. In 1890 the total number of sheep assessed was 10,733 at \$17,187. This had grown in 1906 to 287,581 head with an assessed valuation of \$607,282. The wool clip in Converse County in 1906 was worth over \$735,000 of which two-thirds came from the Douglas area. Sheep were the dominant industry in the area by 1909. In 1907 the Douglas Budget stated that it was "...due largely to the sheep business that Douglas was resurrected from a 'busted boomlet' in 1888 to a wealthy, thriving, prosperous modern improved city...". Even in 1921 a train leaving Douglas for Denver contained 51 stock cars; of which 31 contained sheep, 19 cattle, and one carload of horses. When you consider that many more sheep than cattle will fit in a boxcar, the greater numbers of sheep being sold are even more apparent.

Wool and mutton prices dropped between 1909 and 1912, but irrigation had insured a new source of revenue for Douglas. Everywhere in Wyoming people were excited about irrigation from in-stream flow supplemented with construction of reservoirs. The Carey Act of 1894 provided that the state would receive title to federal lands which were developed with irrigation, and the Newlands Act of 1902 authorized the federal government to undertake reclamation projects with money obtained from the sale of public land. Both gave federal impetus to the irrigation fervor, although neither of them was particularly successful in Wyoming. In 1906 there was sufficient capital in Douglas for several prominent citizens to organize the LaPrele Ditch and Reservoir Company to irrigate 36,000 acres of land west of Douglas and across the Platte River. There were to be fifty-two miles of canal and lateral, and a reservoir for late season irrigation. Homesteading in the area began to turn toward farming and even dryland farmers were making excellent returns. Prices for crops were enough for people to not only make a living, but prosper.

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By 1915 Douglas was in a position to look at making several civic improvements. In February of that year the County Commissioners reviewed submitted plans for a new County Courthouse and chose William Norman Bowman of Denver, Colorado as their architect. Apparently they were pleased with his work for the following year he was chosen by the City Council to design the new City Hall. William Norman Bowman had come to Denver and opened his architectural office in 1910. He went on to design many notable buildings in Denver, but in 1916 he was still amenable to taking contracts in the far off city of Douglas. He was president of the Colorado Chapter of the A.I.A. from 1917 to 1919 and a prominent member of the City Beautiful Movement in Denver. He was a strong proponent of superior designs even for those with modest means as is shown in his joining with nine other architects in the early 1920's to open the Mountain Division of the Architects Small House Bureau. Construction of the County Courthouse and City Hall overlapped. In early April 1915 bonds were voted for the erection of the City Hall, while in late April the contract was let for the construction of the courthouse. Ground was broken for the courthouse on May 4th 1915. Two days later the city was notified that it would no longer be able to house its prisoners in the county jail and it would have to plan facilities of its own. In early February 1916 the County Courthouse was dedicated, and on August 7, 1916 the city council formally accepted the new City Hall building and were ready to move in as soon as furniture could be installed.

Douglas was ready to make a statement of civic pride with its new courthouse and city hall. It had become a prosperous city of 2,000 on a solid base of agriculture and stockraising. The City Hall was designed to be a central feature in the life of the town in addition to its civic functions. Included in the design was a large meeting room on the second floor where the Douglas Good Roads Club and other civic organizations could meet. The Douglas Good Roads Club was incorporated in 1910 with one hundred and fifteen members who bought shares worth \$50,000. Their purpose was to get together a group of people who enjoyed automobile travel and this developed into an interest in improving and promoting the Converse County road system. In 1911 they remodeled the second floor above the Douglas garage into a club room. The Douglas newspaper touted the expensive furniture and the quality of the rugs. After five years, however, they were induced to abandon this location in favor of the new City Hall. On Saturday August 26, 1916 less than three weeks after the city council accepted the building, the Good Roads and Commercial Club moved into their new quarters on the second floor of the City Hall. In 1918 they voted to become the Chamber of Commerce, which was entirely appropriate since they comprised the leading citizens of Douglas, the boosters who tirelessly promoted the advantages of Douglas. Other groups to use the rooms on the second floor were the American Legion and Auxiliary, the Women's Club, and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. The Douglas City Hall continued to serve the City of Douglas until 1989 at which time the city government moved into another building. After standing vacant for a time, a charity based second hand clothing store was opened on the ground floor of the City Hall in 1991 and is still occupying that portion of the building.

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Section 9 Page 1

Douglas City Hall
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Primary Sources

Original blueprints. William Norman Bowman, Architect. Filed at Douglas City Hall.

Bill Barlow's Budget. Twenty-first Anniversary Edition 1907.

The Douglas Budget and Converse County Review. 8 April; 6 May 1915

The Douglas Budget and Converse County Review. 24 February; 10, 31 August; 14 December 1916.

Douglas Budget. Centennial Edition 3 July 1986.

The Midwest Review. 7 No. 8 (August 1926).

Works Projects Administration Writers Project. Subject file 1403.

Secondary Sources

Heritage Book Committee, Wyoming Pioneer Association. Converse County, Douglas, Wyoming. Pages from Converse County's Past. Casper: Wyoming Historical Press.

Larson, T. A. History of Wyoming. 2nd Ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978.

Lebovich, William L. and Historic American Buildings Survey. America's City Halls. Washington, D.C: The Preservation Press.

Noel, Thomas J. and Barbara S. Norgren. Denver the City Beautiful and its Architects, 1893-1941. Denver, Colorado: Historic Denver, Inc., 1987.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nominated property is all of Lots 18 through 22, Block 15, Original Town Plat, City of Douglas, Wyoming. This boundary is visually demarcated by the alley on the rear (west) of the building, and includes the lawn and sidewalk up to the curb and gutter on the street.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundaries of the property define the area included in Lots 18 through 22, Block 15, and constitutes the entire parcel of land that has historically been associated with the Douglas City Hall. Formerly the entire area around the City Hall was grass and plantings with trees around the edge. The area at the rear of the building was later converted to a parking area for city employees.