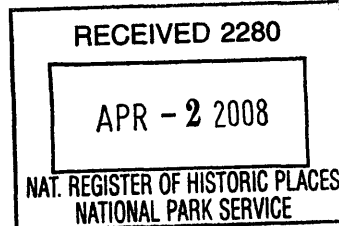


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name First National Bank-Soo Line Building

other names/site number Soo Line Building

2. Location

street & number 101 South Fifth Street N/A not for publication

city or town Minneapolis vicinity

state Minnesota code MN county Hennepin code 053 zip code 55402

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Britta L. Bloomberg

3/28/08

Signature of certifying official Britta Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

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

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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 the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

5.12.08

First National Bank-Soo Line Building
Name of Property

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County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structure
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE / business
COMMERCE/TRADE / financial institution

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE / business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS / Italian
Renaissance

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls TERRA COTTA
STONE / Granite
roof SYNTHETICS / Rubber
other

Narrative Description

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

First National Bank-Soo Line Building
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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)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.
- Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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

Property is:

- 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)

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1914-1958

Significant Dates

1914-1915

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Gibson, Robert

Hewitt, Edwin, H. and Brown, Edwin H.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): Primary location of additional data:

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part One Certified: 8-28-07
- 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 # _____
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Minneapolis Public Library
Minnesota Historical Society Library

First National Bank-Soo Line Building
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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.375 acre

Minneapolis South, Minn.
1967, Revised 1993

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

NAD27

1.	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/> <input type="text" value="7"/> <input type="text" value="8"/> <input type="text" value="8"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/> <input type="text" value="9"/> <input type="text" value="8"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="7"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Elizabeth A. Gales</u>		
organization	<u>Hess, Roise and Company</u>	date	<u>12/20/07</u>
street and number	<u>The Foster House, 100 North First Street</u>	telephone	<u>612-338-1987</u>
city or town	<u>Minneapolis</u>	state	<u>MN</u>
		zip code	<u>55401</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name	<u>Tony Kuechle, Deanovic Soo Line, LLC, c/o Hempel Properties</u>		
street & number	<u>9700 63rd Avenue North, Suite 200</u>	telephone	<u>763-383-1100</u>
city or town	<u>Maple Grove</u>	state	<u>MN</u>
		zip code	<u>55369</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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Description

Exterior

The First National Bank-Soo Line Building is located on the southeast corner of South Fifth Street and Marquette Avenue, facing Fifth Street. The nineteen-story building is Italian Renaissance in style. The design for the building was based on the tripartite column form used for New York skyscrapers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The first three stories, which are rectangular in plan, form the base of the column and are clad in light-gray granite. At the fourth story, the building divides into a U-shape that continues to the top. The fourth through fifteenth stories form the shaft, and the sixteenth through nineteenth stories are the capital. These stories are clad in white terracotta on the building's north, east, and west facades. The upper stories of the south facade are clad in brick. Below the seventh story, that facade abuts a parking garage.

The building's fenestration pattern is consistent on the primary facades. The base has modern storefronts and window units along the first floor. Large windows once lighted the building's tall second and third stories. The openings are now filled with louvered panels and ribbons of aluminum-frame windows. On the fourth through eighteenth stories, the end bays are marked by paired windows, with groups of three windows in the bays in between. On the eighteenth story, round-arched window openings top off the bays. On the north, east, and west facades, the original windows have been replaced with aluminum-frame units. Most of the windows on the south facade are the original rectangular three-over-three double-hung-sash. Towards the east and west ends, the windows have been replaced with the newer aluminum-frame units.

The building's entrances have been altered. Historically, several revolving doors were located on the primary facades. Three doorways in the center of the Fifth Street facade originally held revolving and swing doors, which have been replaced by newer swing doors. Another entry is near the south end of the Marquette facade. A skyway bridge, added to the middle of the second story of the north facade over the main entrance to the building, provides another entrance to the building.

The detailing of the stone and terracotta is identical on the north, east, and west facades. The stone on the first through fourth stories is carved into engaged columns, consoles, balusters, balconies, and a pediment. White terracotta forms a flat wall surface on the fifth through fourteenth stories, with a quoin motif of grooved terracotta trimming the corners. The top of the building is divided by wide terracotta cornices with more consoles. At the eighteenth story,

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terracotta Ionic capitals top engaged columns. The wide cornice that projects from the roof has block modillions on the underside. There is no decoration on the brick wall of the south facade.

The building has two roofs, one above the third story and one above the nineteenth story. The third-story roof is flat and taken up by a gable-roofed skylight that has been covered with a rubber membrane roof. A roof hatch allows access to the skylight, which is made of steel with small, square glass lights. The bottom of the skylight has been enclosed with plaster that forms the ceiling for the third-floor offices. The nineteenth-story roof is also flat and covered with a rubber membrane. A large brick and concrete-block penthouse is located along the south (rear) edge of the roof. The penthouse houses the elevator equipment and what appears to be telecommunications equipment. Four large chiller units are located along the east edge of the roof.

Interior

The building's interior was dramatically altered from its original condition beginning in 1960. The public spaces on the first through third floors were the most affected. The large banking hall, which occupied the second and third floors, has been subdivided for retail and skyway uses. The third floor, which wrapped around the banking hall as a mezzanine, was enclosed and now holds offices. The rest of the building was designed for office use and had relatively open floor plans that could be built out as needed. These floors have been reconfigured several times and are currently offices. The building's central service core is intact, including seven of the eight original elevator shafts and the two staircases that serve the sub-basement through nineteenth floors. In the staircases, the original iron banisters and marble floors and treads are extant and in good condition. A central mail system, which is still in use, is located next to the western staircase from the eighteenth floor to the basement.

There were historic hallway configurations on the fourth through eighteenth floors and in the sub-basement and basement. On all of these floors, a hallway ran east-west in front of the elevators for most of the building's width. Historically, corridors branched off of the main hall to the north to access the building wings. All of the hallways in front of the elevators are extant. Some of the corridors that branched off of the hallways are intact, and some have been removed for new office layouts.

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Statement of Significance

The First National Bank–Soo Line Building was one of Minneapolis’s early tall buildings, built for the corporate offices of two important Minneapolis business institutions. The building reflects the historical patterns identified by the Minnesota Statewide Context “Urban Centers, 1870-1940.” It also relates to the Minneapolis historic contexts “Business and Industry, 1821-1990” and sub-context “Service,” and the context “Railroads, 1857-1948.”¹ It is eligible at the local level for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the First National Bank of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Sault Sainte Marie Railway Company. Its period of significance extends from 1915 to 1958.²

Minneapolis’s First National Bank

First National Bank of Minneapolis was founded in 1857 as the private banking house Sidle, Wolford and Company. The principals, Jacob K. Sidle and Peter Wolford, were from York, Pennsylvania. The bank set up an office on Hennepin Avenue near Bridge Square. Jacob’s brother, Henry G. Sidle, came to Minneapolis in 1863 to work in the bank. The next year, the bank underwent several important transformations: Peter Wolford withdrew his interest from the bank, the Sidles received a state charter and renamed the bank Minneapolis Bank, and they applied for the first national bank charter in Minneapolis. In January 1865, National Charter No. 710 was granted and the bank became the First National Bank of Minneapolis, with Jacob as president and Henry as cashier. The bank continued to expand during the coming decades, and by 1885, its initial capitalization of \$50,000 had grown to \$1 million. As its fortune increased, the bank moved its offices away from the river into Minneapolis’s growing downtown. By the 1880s, the bank occupied part of an office building on the corner of Washington and Nicollet Avenues.³

¹ The building also relates to “Section III. Establishment of the Twentieth-Century City Center, 1910-1945,” in “Downtown Minneapolis: An Historic Context,” by Marjorie Pearson and Charlene K. Roise, prepared for the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, August 2000.

² Although the building represents a rare architectural style in Minneapolis, alterations to the building have affected its architectural integrity and it is not eligible under Criterion C. These alterations include the replacement of most of the original windows (particularly the original three-story round-arched windows on the second through fourth stories with louvered vents), the insertion of a skyway bridge through the center of the front facade, and alterations to the first-story storefronts and entrances. On the interior, almost nothing remains of the original design beyond the basic structure.

³ G. E. Warner and C. M. Foote, *History of Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis* (1881; repr., Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth, 1977), 426; Charles Sterling Popple, *Development of Two Bank Groups in the Central Northwest* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1944), 23, 30.

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In the 1870s, First National Bank began to face competition from several new banks, in part because some prominent businessmen were not happy with the service that First National provided. Local lumbermen and flour millers pooled their resources to create Northwestern National Bank in 1872. In 1874, many of the founders of Northwestern chartered a mutual savings bank, Farmers and Mechanics Savings Bank, for working-class patrons. Another private bank, Security Bank, was opened by the Harrison family in early 1878. In addition, two trust companies, Minnesota Loan and Trust Company and Minneapolis Trust Company, were also part of the Minneapolis banking community.⁴

First National Bank was restructured in 1894 when Henry Sidle, who had taken over the presidency after his brother died, was ousted from the position. After his removal, the bank came under the management of Frank Moody Prince and Clive Talbot Jaffray, who had been working for other banks in the city. The leadership of Prince and Jaffray put the bank on solid footing as the country entered a period of banking turmoil that lasted most of the 1890s.⁵

Beginning in 1900, the banking community in the Twin Cities went through a period of mergers and acquisitions that created four large, powerful banks. Northwestern National Bank grew thanks to a merger with the National Bank of Commerce and the Swedish American National Bank in 1908 and the Minnesota Loan and Trust Company in the following year. In Saint Paul, the Merchants National Bank of Saint Paul merged with the National German-American Bank in 1912. The First and Second National Banks of Saint Paul consolidated in 1913. First National Bank of Minneapolis kept up with the trend by absorbing Nicollet National Bank in 1900. The growing institution moved its offices in 1906 to a new building on the southeast corner of Marquette Avenue and South Fifth Street, an address it would claim for many decades. Expansion continued in 1913 when it became affiliated with the Minneapolis Trust Company, which later moved to its own building next door on Fifth Street. The bank maintained the name First National Bank of Minneapolis during this expansion.⁶

The North Pole Railroad

The Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company (Soo Line) was created to give the Minneapolis millers shipping routes independent of Chicago railroads, releasing the millers from the price-gouging that threatened the very viability of their industry. While

⁴ Popple, *Development of Two Bank Groups*, 32, 36, 41, 49.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 47-48.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 25, 29, 33, 35, 54-55.

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Minneapolis had claimed the title of flour-milling capital of the world earlier in the decade, the milling industry was risky and often unprofitable, and the millers could not afford to be at the mercy of Chicago railroad barons. Nor did the millers relish the thought of being beholden to James J. Hill, the empire builder in rival Saint Paul.

The railroad was formed in June 1888 from the consolidation of four railroads: the Minneapolis and Saint Croix Railway Company, the Minneapolis and Pacific Railway Company, the Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie, and Atlantic Railway Company, and the Aberdeen, Bismarck, and Northwestern Railway Company. Minneapolis businessmen, lead by William D. Washburn and Thomas Lowry, created the predecessor railroads in 1883-1884 to ship flour to the East Coast by going north of Chicago.⁷

The economical transportation of flour became more important to Minneapolis millers as flour production increased in the 1880s. The industry had existed for thirty years, since Richard Rogers had established a small grist mill at Saint Anthony Falls in 1852. Up until that time, the waterpower at the falls had been used for lumber milling. The industry around the falls transitioned from lumber to flour in the 1860s as the sawmills increasingly adopted steam power. The grain millers faced a problem in transporting the flour out of the area, especially to the East Coast where it could be shipped to lucrative markets abroad. Without an affordable way to distribute the flour, the fledgling industry would never succeed. Minneapolis and Saint Paul did not have railroads, and navigation on the Mississippi was treacherous upriver from Saint Paul. For the first few years, the millers carted the flour to Saint Paul and shipped it south on steamships to Iowa and Missouri, which had railroad lines.⁸

As flour production increased, the millers faced steep shipping rates to move tons of flour. They wanted more control over rates and more direct routes from Minneapolis to the East. Even after Chicago- and Milwaukee-based railroads made it to the Twin Cities in 1867, the millers continued to court the steamship operators, hoping to lure steamboats to the falls despite the river's shallow and rocky course. They hoped that having the option to ship to Saint Louis via the river would give them leverage to bargain for better rates with the Chicago railroads. The steamship operators and the railroads, though, had worked out a deal to control rates, so the

⁷ Richard S. Prosser, *Rails to the North Star* (Minneapolis: Dillon Press, 1966), 28; Charles B. Kuhlmann, "The Influence of the Minneapolis Flour Mills Upon the Economic Development of Minnesota and the Northwest," *Minnesota History* 6 (June 1925): 144-145; John A. Gjevre, *Saga of the Soo, West from Shoreham*, 2nd ed. (Moorhead, Minn.: Gjevre Books, 1990), 13-14.

⁸ Kuhlmann, "Influence of the Flour Mills," 141-143.

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millers came up with another plan: build a railroad to Duluth and ship flour across Lake Superior. Duluth was long valued as a shipping port and featured in plans for many Minnesota railroads. In 1870, the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad was completed from Saint Paul to Duluth. Two years later, the Minneapolis and Duluth Railroad Company built a short line from Minneapolis to White Bear Lake, north of Saint Paul, to connect the mills to the Duluth road. The millers welcomed the railroad options in warm weather, but they were still at the mercy of the Chicago railroads when Lake Superior froze in the winter.⁹

In 1873, Maine Governor Israel Washburn promoted a solution in a speech before the Minneapolis Board of Trade, the precursor to the Grain Exchange. Governor Washburn encouraged the Minneapolis business community to fund a railroad from Minneapolis through Wisconsin and Michigan to Sault Ste. Marie on the border with Canada. From there flour could be shipped via railroad through New England or via ship through the lower Great Lakes to the Atlantic coast. The *Northwestern Miller* belittled Governor Washburn's idea, calling it "The North Pole Railway." Despite the criticism, the governor's brother William took up the idea. William ran the Minneapolis Washburn mills with his brother Cadwallader. William had been instrumental in building the Minneapolis and Duluth Railroad. In 1871, he and other Minneapolis millers had also established the Minneapolis and Saint Louis Railway, which eventually ran from Saint Louis, Missouri, through Minneapolis to Duluth. Except for a brief period when the road was owned by Jay Cooke and the Northern Pacific, William served as its president until 1882. In that year, the Minneapolis millers were forced to sell their interests in the railroad to raise capital to convert their mills from traditional millstones to new roller technology. The railroad's new owners sided with Chicago interests and Minneapolis was again locked into undesirable shipping rates.¹⁰

This situation made it easier for William to rally the Minneapolis business community in 1883-1884 to create the four railroads that would become the Soo Line. Two lines went east. The Minneapolis and Saint Croix Railway would build a line from Minneapolis to Turtle Lake, Wisconsin, and the Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie and Atlantic Railroad would continue the line to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. The other two lines, the Minneapolis and Pacific Railway and the Aberdeen, Bismarck, and Northwestern Railway, extended to western Minnesota and the Dakota Territory. This was to provide an alternative to the Chicago railroads and James J. Hill's Saint

⁹ Ibid., 144.

¹⁰ Kuhlmann, "Influence of the Flour Mills," 145; Gjevre, *Saga of the Soo*, 13-14; James E. Vance Jr., *The North American Railroad: Its Origin, Evolution, and Geography* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 247-249.

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Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway, which had been buying the wheat supplies out from under the Minneapolis millers and controlling both the price of the wheat and shipping rates.¹¹

Building the new railroads proved very costly. Even after raising millions of dollars through English investors, the Minneapolis syndicate had run out of money by 1887. They had completed track to Sault Ste. Marie and to the Minnesota-Dakota border. The route for the Aberdeen, Bismarck, and Northwestern within North Dakota was only graded. They had limited rolling stock and could not afford to buy more equipment. In 1888, they approached George Stephen and Donald Smith of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CP).¹²

Stephen and Smith were Hill's original partners in the Saint Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway. Stephen made his fortune importing wool and was president of the Bank of Montreal when the CP was created in 1881. Smith rose through the ranks of the Hudson's Bay Company and was eventually in charge of the company's land sales and railroad development, including the CP. Hill's brief involvement in the CP ended when the company would not build its main line through Sault Ste. Marie and Minneapolis using Hill's Saint Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway, which continued from Minneapolis to Winnipeg. The international route south of Lake Superior was the more economical route to build, but the Canadian government wanted the CP's main line to run north of Lake Superior, in Canada. When the Canadian government granted the CP the right to be the sole railroad across Canada to the Pacific in 1881, the company had agreed to not have foreign interests, including routes outside the country. By 1888, the CP was overextended largely because of capitalizing for the track laid north of Lake Superior. The CP negotiated an end to the monopoly agreement and began to pursue foreign routes.

Stephen and Smith jumped at the opportunity offered by the Minneapolis millers in 1888 to finance the roads south of Lake Superior. As part of the financing deal, the four railroads were consolidated into a single company, the Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company—better known as the Soo Line—and 1,000 shares were sold to the CP, making it the majority shareholder. The Canadians gained a more economical route with promised traffic from the Minneapolis mills, and they could pressure Hill and the Chicago railroads. It was a new era for the Minneapolis millers. William Washburn had served as president of two of the Soo Line's

¹¹ Gjevre, *Saga of the Soo*, 13-18.

¹² *Ibid.*

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predecessors, but stepped down at the time of consolidation. Thomas Lowry became the first president of the Soo Line.¹³

The Soo Line had over 700 miles of track at the time of the consolidation. The railroad connected to the CP line at Sault Ste. Marie. From that point, flour was carried by rail to the East Coast and shipped to Europe. In 1893, Soo Line track was completed to Portal, North Dakota, where it connected to the CP. Wheat from the Dakotas and Canada was shipped east into Minneapolis, and flour from the mills was shipped west to the Pacific Coast and Asia. The Soo Line, with the CP's patronage, provided the Minneapolis mills with secure and economical lines for moving wheat and flour. This stability contributed to the mills' massive success in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁴

A Palatial Building

In 1913, First National Bank and the Soo Line announced plans for construction of a sixteen- to twenty-story skyscraper on the site of the existing First National Bank. The building would house the corporate offices of both companies, which shared members on their respective boards of directors. Clive Jaffray described the decision to cohabitate: "One day, while talking to Mr. Pennington, President of the Soo Road, I learned that he was considering enlarging his buildings on Second Avenue South. When I made the suggestion that we join together to build a larger building on First Avenue [present-day Marquette] and Fifth Street for the bank and the Soo Road, he was agreeable to the idea."¹⁵

An architect from New York City, Robert Gibson, was hired to design the building. Minneapolis architects Edwin H. Hewitt and Edwin H. Brown were the local supervisors. Gibson had designed the 1906 First National Bank, which was a two- to three-story Beaux Arts building. The fact that First National Bank was constructing a new structure only seven years after moving into

¹³ Ibid., 13-14, 18; Harold A. Innis, *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (London: P. S. King and Son, 1923), 97-98; T. D. Regehr, *The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies, 1895-1918* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1976), 3-4, 13-14.

¹⁴ Patrick Dorin, *The Soo Line* (Seattle: Superior Publishing, 1979), 11-12.

¹⁵ "Skyscraper of 16 to 20 Stories Planned for Soo Line and First National Bank," *Minneapolis Journal*, March 21, 1913; "Tallest Building in Minneapolis to Be a Distinctive Ornament in Architecture," *Minneapolis Journal*, July 27, 1913; "Clive T. Jaffray Reminiscences," 1956 interview with Lucille Kane of the Minnesota Historical Society, 29-30.

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a new building surprised many people. After the plans were announced, many bank officers were critical of the size of the banking hall, comparing it to a train station.¹⁶

There was, as it turned out, something going on behind the scenes that justified construction of the new edifice. As one banking historian noted, "The more reflective [officers] commenced to wonder and to look about for two and two. After all, Mr. Prince and Mr. Jaffray were not given to doing foolish things. They always objected to spending money ostentatiously, especially for such luxuries as bank buildings."¹⁷ Prince and Jaffray were, in fact, planning the company's biggest merger ever—with Security National Bank, one of the largest banks in Minneapolis. The new bank would be the fourteenth largest bank in the country and the largest bank west of Chicago. The announcement of the merger was kept secret, though, until after the new building was ready, a project completed in record time. Only a year after demolition of the old structure began in April 1914, the bank and the railroad started moving into the new building on March 28, 1915. The next day, First National Bank and Security National Bank were officially merged as First and Security National Bank. The new entity did not come as a complete surprise to the banking community. Rumors of a merger had been occurring for months and were encouraged by the new skyscraper.¹⁸

Meanwhile in 1914, Minneapolis was named as the site of the Ninth District Federal Reserve Bank. As a bank for bankers, the Federal Reserve had shareholders, namely the regional national banks, who were its members. The Ninth District issued 40,064 shares of stock. Northwestern National Bank of Minneapolis and First National Bank of Saint Paul, with 3,000 shares apiece, appeared to be the largest stockholders. First National Bank of Minneapolis ranked third with 2,700 shares, and Security National Bank with 1,800 shares was in fifth place. With the merger, the largest shareholder was First and Security National Bank with 4,500 shares.¹⁹

¹⁶ Minneapolis Building Permit A9340, February 26, 1906; "First National Bank, Fifth and Marquette, Minneapolis," Charles J. Hibbard, photographer, located in the Photograph Collection of the Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul.

¹⁷ Pople, *Development of Two Bank Groups*, 55.

¹⁸ "Old First National Goes for \$12,000," *Minneapolis Journal*, April 1, 1914; "Wreckers Find Old First National Bank Building Hard to Raze; Was Good for 1,000 Years, They Say," *Minneapolis Journal*, April 12, 1914; "Last Word in Skyscrapers Is Occupied by Tenants Today," *Minneapolis Tribune*, March 28, 1915; Pople, *Development of Two Bank Groups*, 55; "Minneapolis Acquires Largest Bank West of Chicago," *Minneapolis Journal*, March 20, 1915; "Bank Merger Result of Federal Reserve Branch Coming Here; Big Institution for Minneapolis," *Minneapolis Journal*, March 21, 1915.

¹⁹ "Reserve Bank to Have Over 40,000 Shares at Start," *Minneapolis Journal*, May 17, 1914.

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The executive structure of the new bank included Frank Prince and Clive Jaffray from First National Bank as the chairman of the board and senior vice president, respectively, and Francis A. Chamberlain of Security National Bank as president. In 1917, Jaffray became president of the bank, and in 1920, the word "security" was dropped from the bank's name. Jaffray held the position until 1924, when he moved to the presidency of the Soo Line railroad. At that time, Chamberlain again took over the presidency of the bank.²⁰

For the railroad, the building also represented a period of transition. In a highly competitive industry, particularly with Hill's Great Northern empire based in neighboring Saint Paul, the Soo Line had gradually expanded its system by laying new track, acquiring existing railroads, and establishing strategic alliances. An example of the latter, initiated by the CP, occurred in 1912 when the CP reached an agreement with the Milwaukee Road to share lines in the West. The *New York Times* reported that "the Canadian road will reach Puget Sound and Montana over the Milwaukee tracks and the latter will enter Western Canada over the Canadian Pacific." The significance of this arrangement was provided in the article's next sentence: "Both roads can now meet the competition of the Hill roads." It was also highlighted in the article's headline, "In Alliance against Hill." Although forged by the CP, the pact benefited the Soo Line, which did not have an outlet to the Pacific. The Soo Line was closely involved in implementing the plan, as the newspaper reported: "W. L. Martin, Vice President of the Soo road, spent two weeks in June at Tacoma negotiating for a large depot and for water terminals adjoining those of the Milwaukee road."²¹

In 1915, as the Soo Line moved into its new headquarters, it was energetically pursuing a direct connection to the CP/Milwaukee Road network. "The invasion of Montana forms the most salient feature of the present plans of the Soo in the West," the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune* explained. "It has already crossed the North Dakota boundary into that state." At the same time, it was also strengthening its position to the east: "The new freight terminals at Chicago, recently completed, mark another gigantic step forward in the history of the road," which claimed 4,000 miles of track.²²

The new building was a testament to both the railroad's optimistic outlook for its future and its strong commitment to the city. "It may be doubted whether in the entire country there is a

²⁰ Popple, *Development of Two Bank Groups, 55-56; Seventy-Five Years of Service* (Minneapolis: First National Bank, 1939), 9-17.

²¹ "In Alliance against Hill," *New York Times*, July 1, 1912.

²² "Railway's History Is Story of Minnesota Business Romance," *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, March 28, 1915.

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railroad of the first magnitude so closely identified with any one city as is the Soo with Minneapolis," the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune* wrote in 1915. The company's office was initially in its first station at Fourth Avenue North and Second Street. The offices moved to the corner of Washington Avenue South and First (now Marquette) Avenue in 1886. In 1890, the line began a five-year tenancy in the Guaranty Loan Building (latter known as the Metropolitan Life Building). From there, it erected a new facility 315-321 Second Avenue South. Originally six stories tall, the building received two additional floors in 1909 to accommodate the company's growth.²³

The Building and Its Occupants Evolve

The new building housed the bank during the prosperity of the 1920s, the economic depression of the 1930s, and the wartime turmoil of the 1940s. The bank remained successful through it all, modifying its facilities in response to changing conditions. It expanded its presence with branches around the city in the 1920s. A six-story Egyptianate addition was made to the rear of the building in 1923. In 1929-1930, the interior of the First National Bank-Soo Line Building was altered, but most of the alterations did not adversely affect the exterior or the public spaces on the first through third floors. In the post-World War II boom, however, the bank found its early twentieth-century building inadequate. It broke ground for a new building in 1958 at Second Avenue South between South Fifth and Sixth Streets, on an adjoining lot east of the existing building. The bank moved into that building, now One Financial Plaza, in 1960.²⁴

The Soo Line remained in the older building. It, too, had survived the financial rollercoaster of the first half of the twentieth century, but less successfully than the bank. Its plans to expand in the West died about the time it moved into its new headquarters; an extension to Whitefish, Montana, in 1913 was part of its last major construction campaign. The automobile and truck were making substantial inroads on the railroad industry, which grew even more cutthroat. A

²³ "Railway's History Is Story of Minnesota Business Romance." Of the building that the Soo Line vacated in 1915, the newspaper reported: "What use will be made of this building, said to be one of the best built in the city, has not been decided. A hotel has been mentioned as a possible occupant."

²⁴ The Egyptianate addition was demolished, along with the neighboring Marquette Bank, to make way for a parking garage in 1999. The facade of Marquette Bank, also Egyptianate in style, was built into the parking garage. Gordon M. Malen, "Firstory: Biography of a Bank Attuned to Tomorrow," prepared for First National Bank of Minneapolis, 1982; Minneapolis Building Permits A16412, dated May 16, 1923, A16508, dated July 31, 1923, A19692, dated October 14, 1929, A19724, dated November 5, 1929, A19831, dated January 15, 1930, A33971, dated January 26, 1960, A33991, dated February 11, 1960, and A34232, dated September 19, 1960; Northwest Architectural Archives at the Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota-Minneapolis, has eighteen blueprints plus a booklet of specifications for the 1929-1930 project.

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host of problems, including the insolvency of an affiliate, the Wisconsin Central, forced the Soo Line into bankruptcy in 1938. It emerged from bankruptcy in 1944, and was strengthened by a merger with two smaller lines in 1961.²⁵

At about this time, with the departure of the bank, the Soo Line extensively altered the building. The round-arched windows on the third story were removed, including the masonry that formed the round openings. New rectangular windows and metal louvers were installed. The banking hall was stripped of its teller cages, guard turret, light fixtures, and marble wall panels. Eventually, a skyway bridge was attached to the front of the building, directly over the main entrance. The skyway also cut through the former banking hall. The banking hall was subdivided into retail space and the ceiling was lower to accommodate new air conditioning and ventilation equipment. Only the building's exterior retained the character of the grand skyscraper from 1915.²⁶

The First National Bank-Soo Line Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the First National Bank of Minneapolis, one of the oldest and largest banks in the city of Minneapolis, and the Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Sault Sainte Marie Railway Company, an important transportation carrier for the city. The Soo Line Railroad, in giving millers an independent means to get the output from their flour mills to market, gave them control over the final step of their production cycle. Having an economical means to ship flour to the East Coast was essential to the millers' financial viability. The Soo Line grew to be one of the country's leading flour shippers. As one of the few railroads based in Minneapolis and one of the strongest railroads in the Midwest, it survived the instability of the railroad industry in the mid-twentieth century, all the while headquartered at the First National Bank-Soo Line Building. The building's other major occupant, First National Bank of Minneapolis, was the largest bank in the Ninth Federal Reserve District, and one of the four major banks in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, a regional financial center. The bank's headquarters were in the First National Bank-Soo Line Building, a landmark befitting the image of this well-established institution, until it moved to a new International Style building on the same block in 1960. The year 1958, when the bank began constructing its new headquarters, serves as the end of the period of significance. The period begins in 1915 when the building was completed and occupied by First National Bank and the

²⁵ Dorin, *Soo Line*, 11-13.

²⁶ "A Guide to the New Home of First National Bank of Minneapolis," 1960, pamphlet from Minnesota Historical Society Collections; Ralph Mason, "Million-dollar Face Lifting Begun on 'Soo Line Building,'" *Minneapolis Star*, June 11, 1960; Richard Saunders, "Soo Line Building Is Renovated," *Minneapolis Tribune*, March 13, 1960.

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Soo Line. The period of significance ends in 1958 when First National Bank, one of the principal occupants, moved out of the building and the building's facades and interior were substantively altered.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The northeasterly ninety-nine feet of the northwesterly half of Lot 8, and the northeasterly ninety-nine feet of Lots 9 and 10 of Block 88, Town of Minneapolis.

Boundary Justification

This boundary contains the property historically associated with the First National Bank-Soo Line Building.

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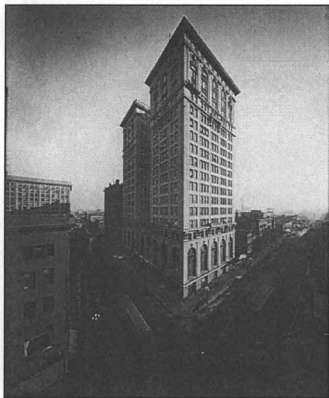
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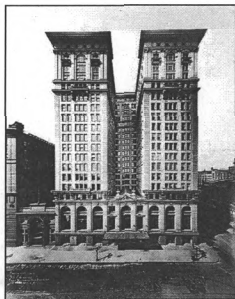
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First National Bank-Soo Line Building,
ca. 1915
(Charles J. Hibbard, Minnesota Historical Society)



First National Bank-Soo Line Building,
ca. 1923
(Charles J. Hibbard, Minnesota Historical Society)



First National Bank-Soo Line
Building, ca. 1915
(Norton and Peel, Minnesota Historical Society)

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Photographer: Elizabeth A. Gales

Date: December 7, 2007

Negatives: Hess, Roise and Company, Minneapolis

1. The building and its setting. View to the southeast.
2. The north and west facades. View to the southeast.
3. The east and north facades. View to the west-southwest.
4. The south (rear) facade. View to the north.

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