

1 City, Village or Town: Superior		County: Douglas	Surveyor: P. Lusignan	Date: 2/1/85	Tower Avenue 1517-1523
Street Address: 1517-1523 Tower Avenue			USGS Quad and UTM Reference: Superior WI-MINN. . 15 / 568475 / 5174220	Acreage: less than one	
Current Name & Use: Burlington Northern Office			Current Owner: Majorie Stack Tracy		
Film Roll No. DG-10	Affix Contact Prints		Current Owner's Address: 1517-1523 Tower Avenue Superior, Wisconsin 54880		
Negative No. 3			Legal Description: West Superior Sixth Division; Lots 15, 16, 17, and 18, Block 164.		
Facade Orient. East					

2 Original Name & Use: Washington Block	Source A,C	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	49N 14W
Dates of Construction /Alteration 1891	Source A					
Architect and/or Builder: unknown	Source					

3 Architectural Significance <input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master <input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values <input checked="" type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction <input type="radio"/> Engineering <input type="radio"/> None	4 Historical Significance <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events <input checked="" type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of a locality <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input type="radio"/> None Period of significance: _____	22
Architectural Description and Significance: The Washington Block is a three story, 25,000 square foot office and apartment structure. Resting on a sandstone foundation the brick and wood frame structure features a main elevation clad in a light colored LaSalle brick. With a frontage of 100 feet on Tower Avenue, and a depth of 100 feet, the building contains a U-shaped light court to the rear. Detailed in classical tastes, the building's (continued) Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		
Architectural Description and Significance: Historical Background and Significance: The impressively detailed Washington Block was built in 1891 by the Land and River Improvement Company and businessman William Folsom of New York. Started in early 1891 by Folsom, the construction of the 3-story commercial office structure was eventually taken over completely by the Land & River Co. under local manager and businessman W. R. Fanning. The completed building, (continued)		

5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above) A Evening Telegram, Superior, 8/29/1891 B Assessor's Records C Sanborn Insurance Map, Superior, WI 1892 D E F	6 Representation in Previous Surveys <input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> LDMK <input checked="" type="radio"/> WIHP <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> other: _____ 7 Condition <input type="radio"/> excellent <input checked="" type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins 8 District: _____ <input type="radio"/> pivotal <input type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing 9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility date: _____ initials: _____ <input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown <input type="radio"/> national <input type="radio"/> state <input checked="" type="radio"/> local	Map Code G
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Architectural Description (continued)

main elevation features highly ornate terra cotta window surrounds made in imitation of cut limestone. The square, cream-colored surrounds contain rich swag and floral motifs. Denticulated cornices cap the paired windows of the second floor. The window openings consist of paired units with transoms, flanked on the end bays by single sash units. The side and rear elevations contain no significant window details and are simple segmental arch openings. Most of the original double-hung and fixed transom window sash has been modernized with the addition of aluminum or bronzed units. A delicate greek key and dentil band separates the ground floor area from the upper floors and a much more elaborate terra cotta frieze forms a classical, Sullivanesque-inspired cornice at the roofline. A series of brick chimneys and firewall-breaks project from the building's flat roof area.

The ground floor area contains an original terra cotta detailed entry portal. Designed in a Sullivanesque manner, the entry features an oculus window and flat consoles. The remaining first floor detailing has been removed and replaced by concrete and aggregate panels with recessed windows, and a metal transom. The unfortunate remodeling of the ground floor area, which originally contained a dramatic terra cotta framed arcade, serves to detract from the scale of the delicately detailed block.

The interior spaces of the building have been significantly remodeled with only minor wood detailing remaining in some of the upper floor areas. The only site within the thematic group to be located at mid-block (rather than on a prominent corner), the Washington Block contains an open parking area on the north side and shares a party wall with the 1890 Massachusetts Block to the south. An enclosed fire stair is the only new construction appended to the rear of the site.

Historical Background (continued)

erected by the local firm of Noonan and Schmidt Brothers, cost approximately \$60,000.^A Original plans had called for the erection of a building with a 150 foot frontage, occupying the full width of the prominent Tower Avenue lot. The finished block, however, would only measure 100' x 100' and no addition was ever completed.

Owned and managed by the Land and River Improvement Co. for a number of years, the building would house various commercial concerns and contained individual office and residential spaces on the upper floors. Among those commercial tenants would be the Northwest Hanna Coal Co., the Superior Fuel and Ice Co. and a local furniture store. In 1980 the building became the offices for the Burlington Northern Railroad in Superior.

Significance

The Washington Block is a significant representation of the developmental activity of the Land and River Improvement Co. in organizing and creating a major commerce center within West Superior. The Land & River Co. was the major organization responsible for the building and development of the community of Superior during the late 19th century, and the Washington Block clearly represents the land speculating company's attempts and success in bringing eastern architecture, business and capital to Superior in order to create a new trade and commerce center on the western Great Lakes.

(continued)

Significance (continued)

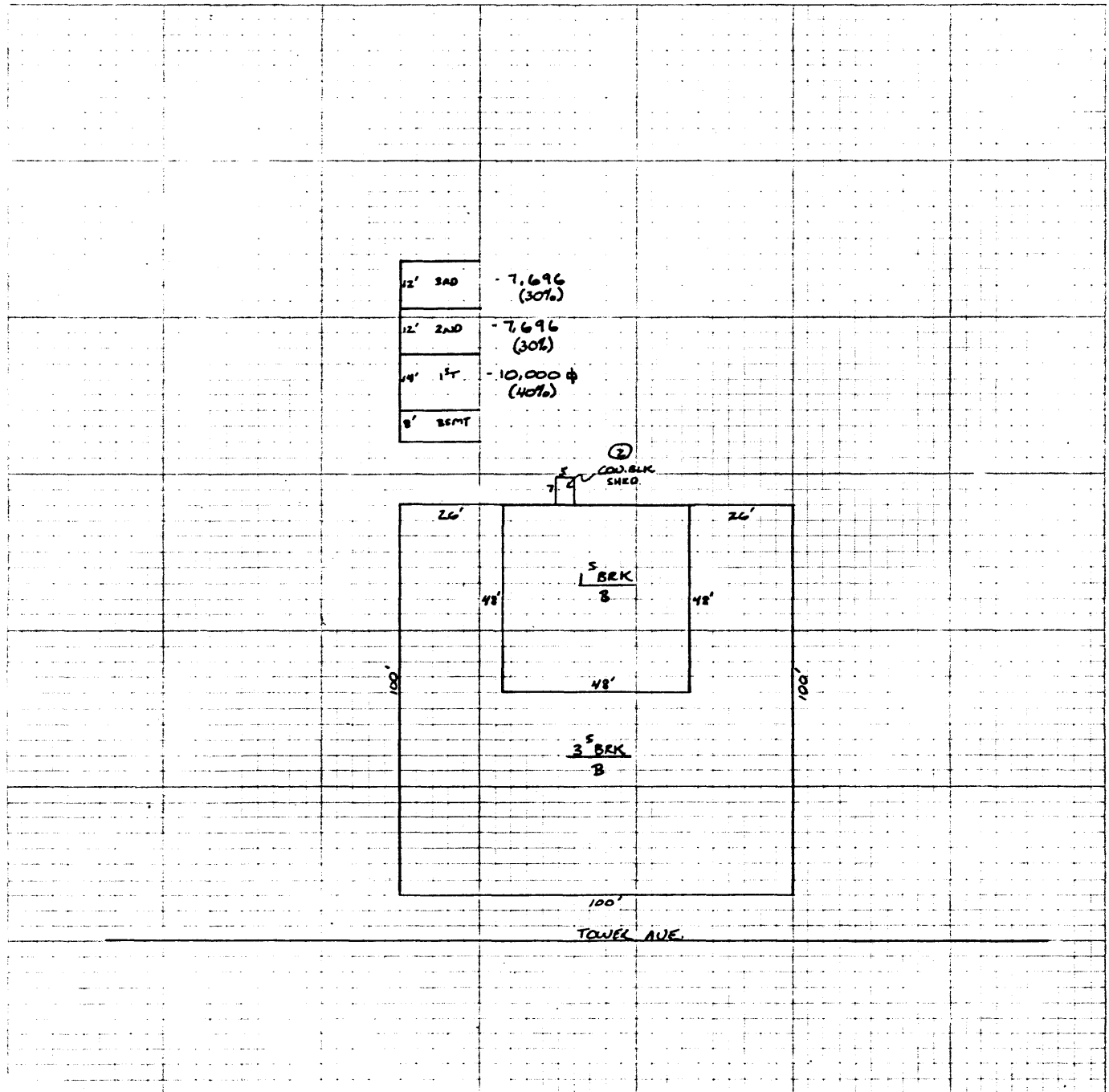
The building is one of several significant Land and River improvement projects located within a concentrated area at the heart of the central business district and served as the home of a number of important financial and business concerns. The Classic Revival influenced block is considered architecturally significant on a local level. An example of **High-style** urban design, the building is one of a number of dramatic late 19th century eclectic designs which typified construction during the community's Boom Period.

Address 1517-23 TOWER AVE District _____

Owner M.S. Tracy Key No. _____

Date of Appraisal 11/80 Made By RG Year of Const. 1891

Indicate on Building Sketch: No. Stories - Story Height - Wall Mat'l & Thickness - Type & Size Windows Scale: 1" = 40 Ft.



Computations & Other Pertinent Data INTERIOR REMODELING IS NOW BEING DONE ON THE 1ST & 2ND FLOOR
OF THIS BLDG. TO SUIT THE NEEDS OF BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD,
THE FUTURE TENANT. THE REMODELING IS EXPECTED TO BE DONE IN MARCH.
AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE ARE 3 APTS. ON THE 2ND FLOOR WITH
RENTS OF \$110, \$165 & \$120. THERE ARE 4 APTS ON THE 3RD FLOOR WITH
RENTS OF \$190, \$150, \$150 & \$115.