

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 1 1986
date entered NOV 6 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Duluth Civic Center Historic District

and/or common Duluth Civic Center Historic District

2. Location

street & number 5th Avenue West and 1st Street N/A not for publication

city, town Duluth N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota code 22 county St. Louis code 137

3. 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	N/A <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:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple - see continuation sheet

street & number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis County Courthouse

street & number 5th Avenue West and 1st Street

city, town Duluth state Minnesota 55802

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Duluth Historic Resources Survey (see continuation sheet)
has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Northeast Minnesota Historical Center - Univ. of Minnesota-Duluth

city, town Duluth state Minnesota 55812

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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Duluth Civic Center Historic District consists of four government buildings and one monument situated around a mall and public square at the corner of Fifth Avenue West and First Street in downtown Duluth. The design plan of the mall, square, and St. Louis County Courthouse were completed by Daniel H. Burnham and Company in 1909.

The county courthouse is the focal point of the complex, set in the direct top-center of the mall complex facing down the Fifth Avenue mall toward the Duluth harbor. As with many other Burnham-designed public buildings, the courthouse is of Neo-Classical/Renaissance design. The ground floor, with its round-arched windows and rusticated stonework, was inspired by early Renaissance Italian palace architecture. Above this is a floor with a simple series of nine paired windows (above each of the nine arched windows on the first floor). The wide mullions separating these paired windows are in turn surmounted by an imposing portico of eight Ionic columns which supports a frieze with an inscription from a text written by ex-president Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University. A broad classic cornice with acanthuses spans the entire structure and conceals a brown-shingled, hipped roof. Between each of the columns are plain, rectangular windows with brown transoms and mullions. The front entrance is located beneath the middle arched window with lion's-head stone detailing directly above.

On the non-principal facades of the building Doric columns replace the Ionic motif. Circular carved stone designs are uniformly placed along the frieze. Small, one story wings are located to each side.

The interior is noted for its exceptional marble and granite floors, and oak woodwork. The first floor contains the lobby while court rooms and county offices are housed in the remainder of the five story buildings. Construction costs totaled nearly \$1,000,000.

The Duluth City Hall is at the east side of the Civic Center mall, slightly downhill from the courthouse. Constructed in 1928 by the Duluth architectural firm of Shefchik and Olsen, its design is in keeping with Burnham's overall plan; structural similarities between it and the courthouse are not coincidental. The first floor consists of a series of round-arched windows, paired windows above them on the second, then Doric columns elevating four stories to a plain frieze, modest classical cornice, and flat roof, with rusticated stonework the structural norm. This is the pattern throughout the building except at the rear (north) side, where it is only two stories high (the building takes on a U-shaped form from the third to fourth floors), and in the front (south) side where the basement floor has been exposed. Construction costs totaled slightly over \$1,000,000. In 1937, \$80,000 was spent to construct a stone retaining wall and concrete approaches. In 1983 a skywalk was connected from City Hall to the new Government Services Building across Fourth Avenue West.

The City Police Department has its offices on the basement level, a lobby is located on the first floor with some office around it, and the second, third, and fourth floors house the remaining city offices.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1909-1929	Builder/Architect	See below
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

1909, St. Louis County Courthouse
 ca.1921, Soldiers and Sailors Monument
 1923, St. Louis County Jail
 1928, Duluth City Hall
 1929, Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse
 and Custom House

Daniel Burnham & Co. - Courthouse
 Shefchick & Olsen - City Hall
 U.S. Government Architect - Federal Building
 Cass Gilbert - Monument

The Duluth Civic Center Historic District is significant for its architectural and community planning links with Daniel H. Burnham and the "City Beautiful Movement" of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Burnham was one of the pioneers of city planning and was one of the first American architects to emphasize the relationship between buildings and their sites. Burnham developed some of the first comprehensive plans for such major cities as San Francisco (1905) and Chicago (1906). Although he gained national recognition for these projects, he also worked in many smaller communities as well. His plan for the Duluth Civic Center selected Fifth Avenue West as its axis because that avenue served as a gateway to the city from both the railroad depots and the (then operating) passenger ship docks at the waterfront approximately 3½ blocks down the hill from the St. Louis County Courthouse. The formal arrangement of his plan for the Civic Center site and the classical elegance of his design for the St. Louis County Courthouse represent Burnham's concept to provide Duluth with well-executed monumental buildings, tied into the heart of the city by broad promenades, thereby linking them directly with the city's residents.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Sommer, Lawrence, Landmark Structures of Duluth: Their History and Architecture, 1971.
 Scott, James A., National Architects: Their Image Upon Duluth, 1879-1916, 1967.
 St. Louis County Historical Society Archives.
 Scott, James Allen. Duluth's Legacy, 1974. Dept. of Research and Planning, City of Duluth.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 10.5 acres

Quadrangle name Duluth

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5
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5	6	8	1	2	0
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5	1	8	1	3	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

1	5
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5	6	8	3	0	0
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5	1	8	1	4	0	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

1	5
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5	6	8	3	8	0
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5	1	8	1	3	0	0
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D

1	5
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5	6	8	1	8	0
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5	1	8	1	1	0	0
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E

1	5
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5	6	8	1	0	0
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5	1	8	1	1	8	0
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F

1	5
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5	6	8	0	8	0
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5	1	8	1	3	2	0
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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The boundary of the Duluth Civic Center Historic nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled, "Duluth Civic Center Historic District, 1964" and drawn at a scale of 300 feet to the inch.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jay Baago and Lawrence Sommer

organization St. Louis County Historical Society

date February 1985

street & number 506 West Michigan Street

telephone 218-722-8011

city or town Duluth

state Minnesota 55802

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Russell W. Fridley
 title Russell W. Fridley
State Historic Preservation Officer

date

9/23/86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date

11-6-86

Frances Byers
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
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Duluth Civic Center Historic District

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Continuation sheet Ownership Item number 4 Page 1

St. Louis County Courthouse

St. Louis County Board of Commissioners
Courthouse
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

St. Louis County Jail

St. Louis County Board of Commissioners
Courthouse
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Duluth City Hall

City of Duluth
Attn: Mayor John Fedo
City Hall
Fifth Avenue West and First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Federal Building-U. S. Courthouse
and Custom House

General Services Administration
Attn: Jack Bradley
Room 266
Federal Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55111

General Services Administration
Attn: J. David Hood
Chief, Planning Staff
Region 5
230 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

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Continuation sheet Representation in Surveys Item number 6

Page 1

The Duluth City Hall was Determined Eligible for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places on 18 August 1980.

The St. Louis County Courthouse was Determined Eligible for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places on 5 July 1984

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National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 2

The Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse and Custom House is located at the west side of the Civic Center mall, balancing the City Hall. Structural characteristics are, again, very similar to the other two buildings. Round-arched windows on the first floor, plain parged windows on the second, Doric columns leading up to the fifth, with plain frieze, classical cornice, and flat roof at the top. Similar to City Hall, the basement floor is exposed on the front (West First Street) side. The scale of the Federal Building is 163' by 177', the other two buildings being very similar in size.

The building was designed by federal architects in 1929 and the cost was \$1,200,000. On the first floor is a post office and lobby, with the remainder being used for federal offices.

Constructed in 1923 according to designs by architects Holstead and Sullivan, the Saint Louis County Jail is situated directly across Second Street from the Civic Center main complex. It is similarly constructed of gray granite and executed in a Neo-classical style. The Jail is four stories in height on a high, battered basement. Corners are highlighted by quoins and bays defined by shallow pilasters. The upper portion of the corner bears a sculptured cartouche or shield, above which is an animal head and roundel. An inscription in bold letters occupies the frieze. The cornice consists of closely spaced modillions supporting a projecting roofline embellished with acroteria. Windows have been modified by glass-block infill.

Completing the Civic Center Historic District is the Soldiers and Sailors Monument which is situated directly in the center of the public square. It was designed by Minnesota architect Cass Gilbert. The monument commemorates Duluth veterans who died while serving their country overseas. A descending fountain, constructed during the late 1960s, gravitates down the embankment in front of the monument.

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Continuation sheet Resource Count Item number 7

Page 3

The Duluth Civic Center Historic District Nomination contains 4 contributing buildings.

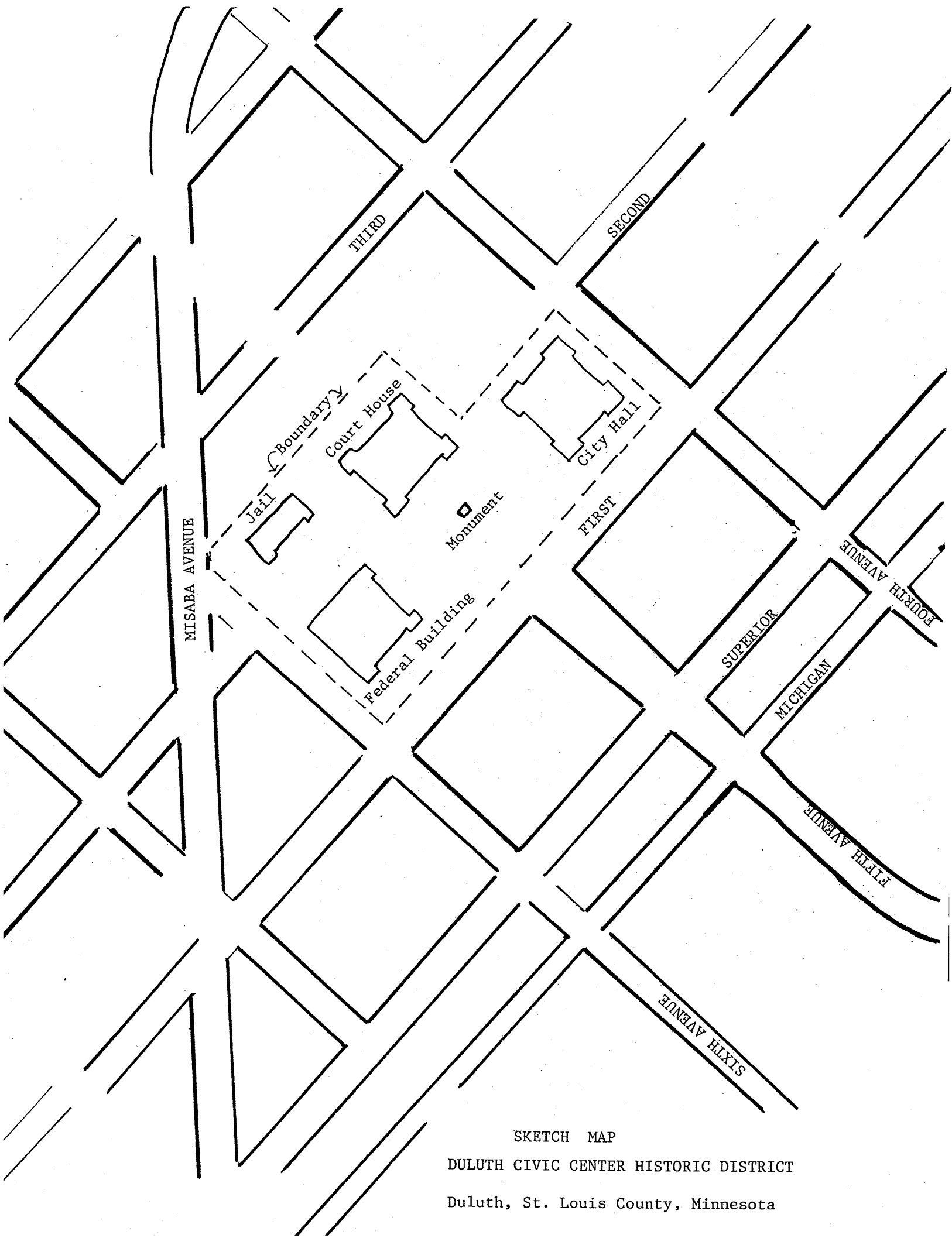
St. Louis County Courthouse
St. Louis County Jail
Duluth City Hall
Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse and Customs House

The Nominations also contains 1 contributing object.

Soldiers and Sailors Monument

The Nomination contains 1 non contributing object.

Fountain (1960s)



SKETCH MAP
DULUTH CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
Duluth, St. Louis County, Minnesota

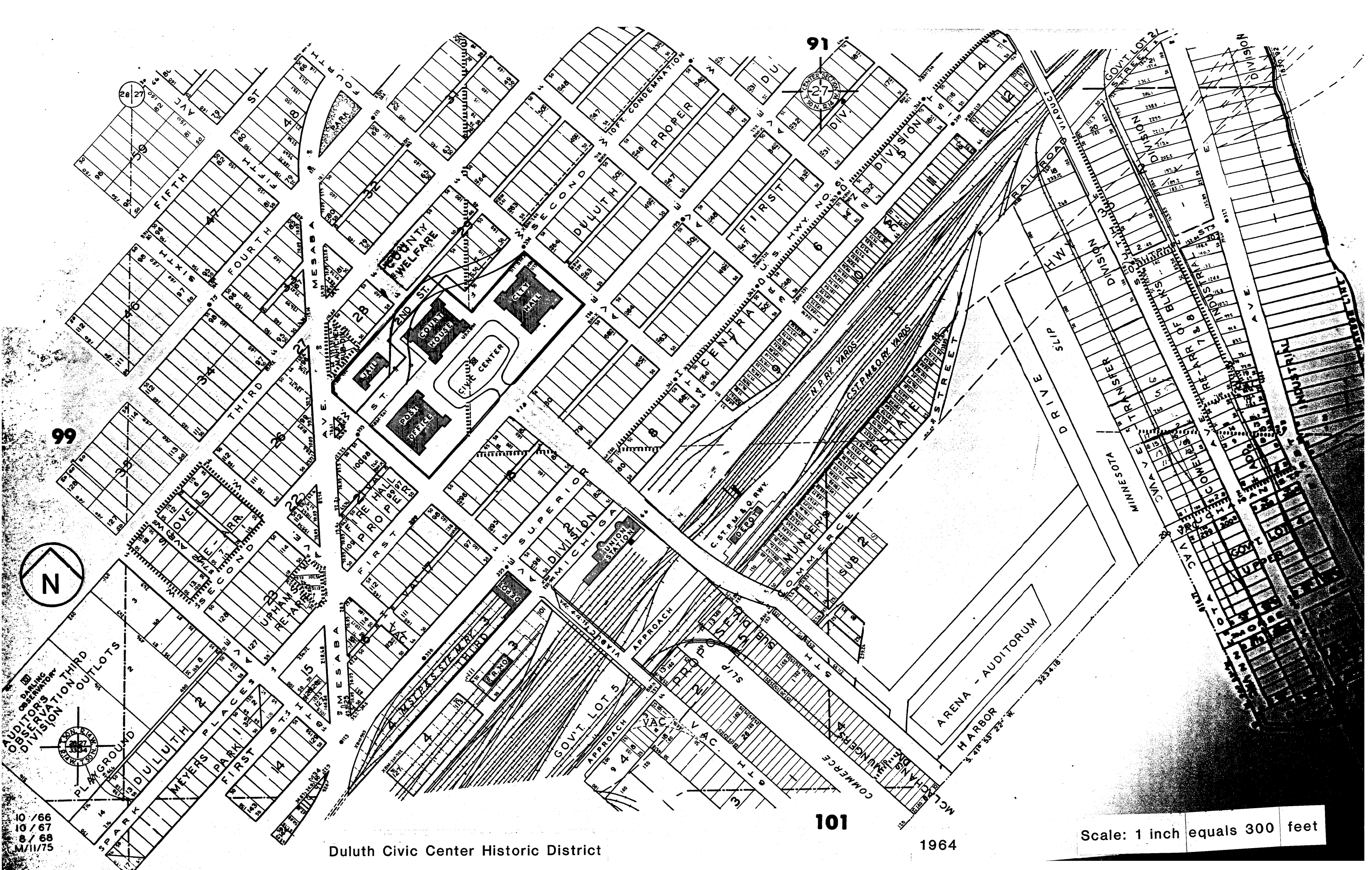
Duluth Civic Center Historic District

Duluth, Minnesota
St. Louis County

UTM References

- A. 15 / 568120 / 5181340
- B. 15 / 568300 / 5181400
- C. 15 / 568380 / 5181300
- D. 15 / 568180 / 5181100
- E. 15 / 568100 / 5181180
- F. 15 / 568080 / 5181320





99

91



AUDITORS
 OBSERVATORY
 DIVISION
 THIRD
 OUTLOTS
 PL BACKGROUND
 10 / 66
 10 / 67
 8 / 68
 M / 11 / 75

Duluth Civic Center Historic District

101

1964

Scale: 1 inch equals 300 feet