

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



**1. Name**

historic Security Bank Building

and/or common Security Building

**2. Location**

street & number 101 South Main Ave. NA not for publication

city, town Sioux Falls NA vicinity of congressional district First

state South Dakota code 46 county Minnehaha code 099

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>NA</u> being considered	<input 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 Ernest G. Carlsen and Kenneth C. Hanson (C & H Investments)

street & number 101 S. Main

city, town Sioux Falls NA vicinity of state South Dakota 57102

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Minnehaha County Courthouse

street & number 415 N. Dakota Avenue

city, town Sioux Falls state South Dakota 57102

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historic Sites of Sioux Falls Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Summer 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historical Preservation Center

city, town Vermillion state South Dakota 57069

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Security Building, an office building, occupies the southwest corner of Main Avenue and Ninth Street with the original structure fronting 66 feet on Main Avenue and extending 88 feet along Ninth Street toward the alley.

The original building stands 130 feet above the sidewalk and consists of seven stories and a basement. Its shape is a simple rectangle with a 16 by 34.5 foot recess or indentation at the southwest corner above the second floor. This recess narrows the upper floors on the west side from 66 to 50 feet.

Constructed of structural steel with brick curtain walls and concrete floors, the structure has a shed type roof, which slopes toward the west, hidden by a substantial parapet. The exterior is finished with Bedford limestone on the first two floors of the north and east facades while a gray brick with limestone trim is used above the second floor. The west and south facades are finished in a red brick with flush joints.

Designed in the Classical Revival style employed by more conservative 20th Century commercial institutions, the building has the three tradition separations of facade: A base unit consisting of the first two stories; a shaft unit comprising floors three through six with a strong vertical emphasis; and a crown or cap unit consisting in this instance of the seventh story, a projecting cornice, and a parapet.

On the day of the Security Building's official opening, January 2, 1917, the SIOUX FALLS ARGUS LEADER described the exterior as "so designed as to present an artistic blend of materials forming an architectural treatment classic and dignified in appearance." It is difficult to improve on this brief description. The main entrance is flanked by four, two-story, massive, fluted columns with Ionic capitals. Vertical piers dividing the two-story windows of the base of the building are treated as pilasters by the use of capital-like trim at their tops. Consequently, the overall visual effect is that of a heavy horizontal band supported by columns in the classical motif. Windows and spandrels of the facade above this base unit are recessed, leaving the intervening brick piers as vertical surfaces creating a pilaster, an effect that is heightened by the limestone capital-like decoration at the top of each pier. These pilaster-like piers support a second horizontal band that separates the shaft of the building from the crown or cap unit. The building is topped by the windows of the seventh story, a heavy projecting cornice above, and finally, by a low pediment-shaped parapet that hides the slightly sloping shed roof.

The Northwest Security National Bank, the original and long term tenant of the building, needed additional space as its business expanded. In 1951 it added a two-story, 22 foot addition along the south side of the original building, and in 1957 another 22 foot addition was constructed along the south side of the first. The second addition was also two stories in height with a ramp on the roof for drive up banking facilities. The facades of both additions form a continuation of the base unit of the original building in both height and facade treatment. Consequently, the additions do not degrade or detract from the visual effect of the original structure.

The additions also include extensive interior renovations. The banking lobby of the first floor was expanded into each new addition in turn. When the first addition was constructed in 1951 the main entrance was moved one column south to open into a foyer rather than directly into the bank lobby. And since the bank tenant vacated the building, further

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alterations have been made to accomodate the investment firm and other new tenants on the first three floors. For example, the mezzanine of the bank lobby has been converted into a partial but separate second floor. The upgrading of office facilities on the upper floors of the building has occurred intermittently since the building was constructed, and the present owners of the building have undertaken extensive renovation in the past few years. Consequently, few features of the interior are original. It is a well maintained and functional business and professional office building

# 8. Significance

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		
<b>Specific dates</b>	Original 1915-16	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	E. Jackson Casse Company		site of historic event.	
	Additions 1951 and 1957		Chicago, Illinois.			

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Security Building is significant for its method of construction, its architectural design, its role in Sioux Falls' commercial history, and as the site of a famous event in local history. On the day of the building's grand opening, January 2, 1917, the SIOUX FALLS ARGUS LEADER hailed it as "one of the finest and most modern structures in the middle west. "It is," proclaimed the writer, "the first steel skeleton office building in this state." Today the Security Building is one of the few surviving examples of the large number of commercial buildings constructed in downtown Sioux Falls during the second decade of this century. It is of particular significance to the architectural heritage of this community as the last good example of the Classic Revival style employed in commercial structures. Finally, the building is the site of the armed robbery of the Security Bank by the John Dillinger gang in March of 1934.

Late in 1914 the Security National Bank announced its plans to construct a new building. Organized in 1890, the Security National Bank had prospered in the early years of the Twentieth Century and thus required larger quarters. The projected building, however, was also to provide office space for the rapidly expanding professional and business community of Sioux Falls. Indeed, the Security Bank's building project was part of a whole wave of commercial construction in downtown Sioux Falls occurring in the second decade of the new century. These included two new hotels, three multi-storied department stores, a five-story retail and office building, and a nine-story bank and office building. In 1917 the new Security Bank Building joined two other banks at the intersection of Main Avenue and Ninth Street to form the banking hub of the community. (Map of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Sanborn Map Company, New York, 1916).

The bank's building committee selected the Chicago architectural firm of E. Jackson Casse Company (building blue prints) to design the building. It was probably the choice of a Chicago architect and seven-story height of the building that resulted in the building's steel skeletal structural design. It was the first application of this modern construction method in South Dakota. While this design usually facilitates construction progress, in this instance it resulted in considerable delay. An article in the December 15, 1915, issue of the SIOUX FALLS ARGUS LEADER noted that the 'failure of arrival of certain pieces of steel' was causing a 'perplexing delay' in the building's completion. Undoubtedly the demands of the European war were causing steel shortages even before the United States joined the conflict. It was another full year before the building was completed.

The Security Building is singular not only for being the first steel skeletal building in the state, but also for its architectural design. It is a handsome and excellent example of the Classical Revival commercial style executed in a restrained yet effective manner.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

MAP OF SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA, Sanborn Map Company, New York, 1916.  
SIOUX FALLS ARGUS LEADER, 2 Jan 17, 12 Dec 15, 6 Mar 34  
Charles A. Smith, A COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF MINNEHAHA COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA, privately published, 1949.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Sioux Falls East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

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

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The building is located on Lots 16, 17, and 18 of Block 9 of the J. L. Phillips Addition to the City of Sioux Falls. The lot lines of the property form the boundaries of the site.

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

state	NA	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Gary Olson Technical editing: Carolyn Torma  
Historical Preservation Center  
USD, Vermillion, SD 57069

organization Center for Western Studies, Augustana date 11 Nov 80  
College

street & number 29th St. and S. Summit Avenue telephone (605) 336-5324

city or town Sioux Falls state South Dakota 57197

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *John F. ...*

title Director, Office of Cultural Preservation

date 1/16/84

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date

2/23/84

*John F. ...*  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Today the environment of the Security Building is markedly different from when it replaced an old theater at the corner of Main Avenue and Ninth Street in 1915-16. The other three buildings at that intersection are all less than thirty-five years old, and the oldest, a two-story department store across the street to the east, is slated for demolition as part of a major redevelopment of an entire block at the center of the downtown district. Today there are no banks at this intersection. When the Northwest Security National Bank vacated the Security Building in 1975 it joined two other banks at the intersection of Phillips Avenue and Ninth Street to form the new financial hub of the city. Thus, the Security Building is the sole reminder of where the community's banking district was once focused.

Finally, the Security Building was the site of an exciting episode of local history from the gangster era of the nineteen thirties. On the morning of March 6, 1934, six men armed with machine guns entered the Security National Bank and robbed it of 46,000 dollars. Several shots were fired by the bandits during the holdup and policeman, Hale Keith, was critically wounded when he approached the bank to investigate. The robbers abducted four women employees of the bank and a male teller, forcing them to stand on the running board of the large dark green getaway car until they were safely out of town. Although police pursued them and local air craft kept them in sight for some time, the robbers escaped. Eye witnesses identified members of John Dillinger's gang as the robbers although Dillinger himself was apparently not present. (SIOUX FALLS ARGUS LEADER, March 6, 1934.)

The Security Building has been a respected part of the Sioux Falls downtown district for sixty-five years. During that time additions and renovations have maintained the functional quality of the building without damaging its exterior architectural integrity. The new owners of the building are in the midst of a comprehensive renovation of the interior in order to sustain its role as a major office facility of the city. Today, as throughout its existence, the building provides office space for a wide variety of professions and businesses. Historically and currently its most numerous tenants have been attorneys, physicians, dentists, and insurance firms.

Representing its spirit of commercial enterprise, its architectural heritage, and its past experience, the Security Building is indeed a significant historical resource to Sioux Falls and the state.