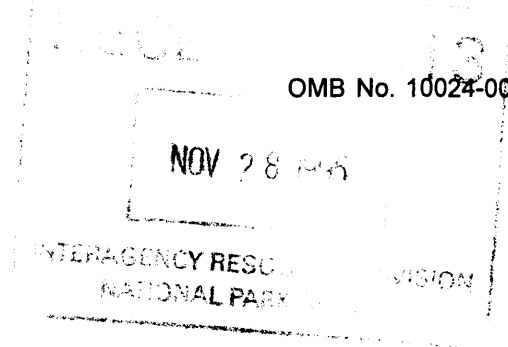


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Austin Building  
other names/site number Austin Apartments; 5DV4688

### 2. Location

street & number 2400-2418 East Colfax and 1742 Josephine Street [N/A] not for publication  
city or town Denver [N/A] vicinity  
state Colorado code CO county Denver code 031 zip code 80206

### 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 [ ]. )

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer November 21, 1991 Date  
Signature of certifying official/Title

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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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  
See continuation sheet [ ].

National Register  
Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date 1-11-90

Austin Building  
**Name of Property**

Denver, CO  
**County/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 count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

3 0 buildings

\_\_\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_\_\_ objects

3 0 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.**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:

Italian Renaissance

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

\_\_\_\_\_

roof ASPHALT

other STONE: sandstone

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Austin Building  
**Name of Property**

Denver, CO  
**County/State**

## 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.)

**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.)

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or 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.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

## 9. Major Bibliographic 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):

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

# \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Commerce

### Periods of Significance

1904 - 1945

### Significant Dates

1904

1908

1910

1918

### Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Reynolds, Audley W.

Hymer & Stool

### Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

Denver Public Library:

Western History Department

Austin Building  
Name of Property

Denver, CO  
County/State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13      503610      4398680  
Zone      Easting      Northing

3.      Zone      Easting      Northing

2.      Zone      Easting      Northing

4.      Zone      Easting      Northing

[ ] 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 Cheryl Spector/Housing Development Dir. & Mary Prinster/Associate

organization Northeast Denver Housing Center date 1/9/95

street & number 1735 Gaylord telephone 303-377-3334

city or town Denver state Colorado zip code 80206

**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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Austin Colfax Corporation

street & number 2424 East Colfax Avenue telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Denver state Colorado zip code 80206

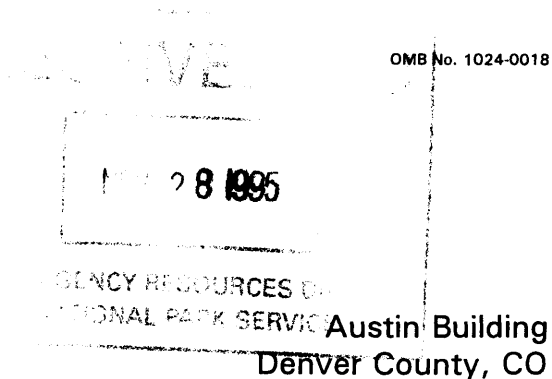
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to 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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1



### DESCRIPTION

The Austin Building occupies the prominent southeast corner at the intersection of East Colfax Avenue and Josephine Street. Constructed in 1904, the three-story brick building exhibits a simple version of the Renaissance Revival style popular in Colorado around 1900. The building combines street level retail space with two upper stories of luxury apartments. In 1908, a three-story apartment addition expanded the Austin along Josephine Street to the south. One story retail additions expanded the structure along East Colfax in 1910 and 1918.

The original 1904 rectangular section of the building occupies the corner and measures approximately 50 feet on the Colfax Avenue (north) facade and 80 feet on the Josephine Street (west) facade. Denver architect Audley W. Reynolds designed the building. The construction consists of a brick foundation and load bearing exterior masonry walls augmented by a center interior load bearing masonry wall. Buff colored brick forms the north and west elevations accented by horizontal bands of rose colored sandstone, now painted white, which separate each of the three stories. Brick pilasters topped by ionic capitals define the building corners, entry points, and balconies. The east and south elevations utilize common red brick. The Colfax Avenue facade forms a typical early 20th century storefront with recessed entrances, large display windows with clearstories, and kickplates. Modern siding covers a few of the clearstories and most of the original wood kickplates are now brick. The main storefront in the corner of the original building retains most of its original characteristics including the large display windows, clearstories, and corner entrance. Modern board-and-batten siding covers the original kickplates and the small windows flanking the entrance.

The wood frame, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows on the second and third story apartments line up vertically and form a largely symmetrical pattern, particularly on the Colfax Avenue facade. Sandstone lintels top the second-story windows and the sandstone belt course forms the sills. The third-story windows are arched with sandstone belt course sills and brick rowlock arches. Windows on the east elevation contain sandstone sills and brick segmental arches. The center of the Austin's 1904 west facade contains a recessed porch on the second and third stories. These porches contain central ionic columns, pressed tin ceilings and walls, and mosaic tile floors. The east elevation of the 1904 section contains a debilitated wood stair and balcony system which spans the building from the southeast corner to its mid-point. A sandstone cornice on the north and west elevations is topped by a brick parapet capped with limestone. Panels above the corner and Josephine Street entrances contain the word "Austin," and a similar panel above the Colfax Avenue entrance contains the date of construction.

Audley Reynolds also designed the 23 by 65 foot 1908 Josephine Street addition. This section is set back with balconies extending to match the plane of the original building. Load bearing buff brick walls form the exterior. The southwest corner contains the same type of pilaster with ionic capitals found in the original section along with a similar cornice and pediment. The first story contains an

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

apartment rather than retail space, in keeping with the residential character of Josephine Street. A raised first-story porch is surrounded by a brick half-wall capped with sandstone. Square brick columns on the first-story support the balconies, and ionic columns support the second and third-story balconies with their turned balusters. A shed roof covers the third-story balcony. Each balcony contains a secondary cornice with dentils. Red brick forms the north, east, and south elevations. Vertically aligned one-over-one windows pierce the west and south elevations. The entire east elevation of the addition is spanned by a debilitated wood stair and balcony system.

The 1910 one-story retail addition abuts the corner structure along Colfax Avenue and measures approximately 58 feet by 85 feet. The north facade uses the same buff brick topped with a simple cornice and parapet. The balustrade and brick pediment which once graced the parapet no longer exists. The facade design continues the architectural pattern established by the corner structure. The storefronts are typical of the early 20th century including recessed entrances and large display windows with clearstories and kickplates. Several of the clearstories are covered and much of the original wood kickplate is now brick. The south elevation of the addition is red brick with wood frame, one-over-one, double hung sash windows.

The final addition was constructed in 1918. This small retail space, measuring 17 feet by 56 feet, adjoins the east wall of the 1910 addition. The Colfax Avenue facade features a similar buff brick exterior but differs somewhat from both the original section and the 1910 addition. The facade contains a central recessed entry flanked by brick kickplates, display windows, and clearstories. The cornice of the adjoining section is not repeated, rather a pedimented parapet capped by rowlocks, brick corbelling, and centered circular brick ornamentation tops the section. The flat roof slopes gently to the south. The rear (south) elevation is of red brick and contains one-over-one wood frame windows.

The interiors of the retail spaces consist of typically large, open spaces with ceiling heights from approximately 15 feet in the corner structure to 12 feet in the additions. The lath and plaster walls retain much of the original hardwood trim as well as the hardwood doors. The corner retail space retains its original pressed tin ceiling.

Entryways on the north and west facades provide access to the apartments. The entry floors are mosaic tile with marble base trim. Oak hardwood staircases lead up to the second and third stories. The hand rails have beautifully detailed hardwood newel posts at each level. Lath and plaster covers the apartment walls and all retain some original oak trim, hardwood flooring and doors. Each apartment offers views of the Rocky Mountains. The creative plan utilizes five light wells to bring natural light and ventilation to the interiors of the apartments. Skylights on the roof permit light to the third floor by means of light wells enclosed with double hung windows with translucent glazing and down to the second floor through flat skylights flush with the ceilings.

The original owner of the Austin considered the complex to be a single building. Due to the lack of interior connections between the original building, the 1910 addition, and the 1918 addition, the complex is considered to be three buildings using National Register standards.

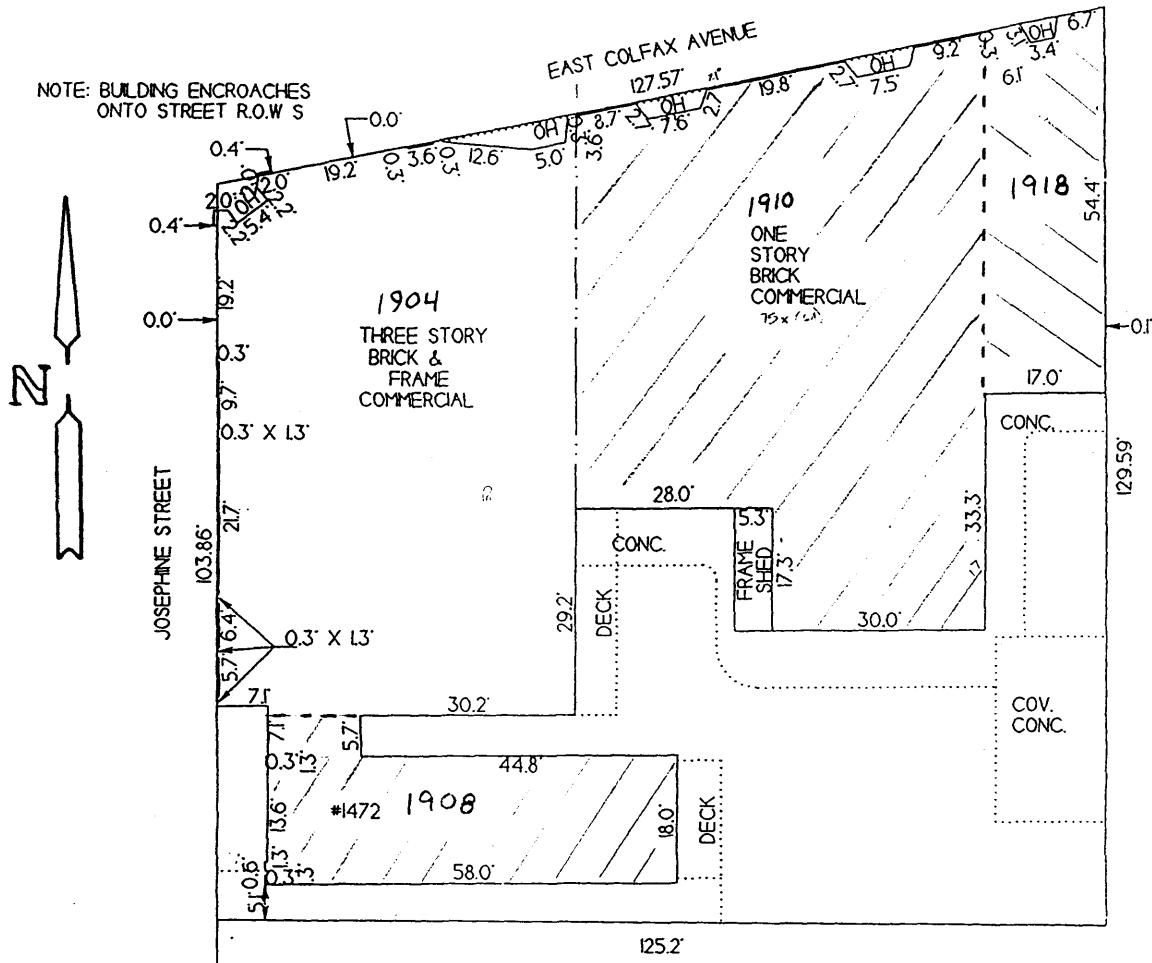
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

LOTS 1 - 5, BLOCK 2  
FARNUM'S SUBDIVISION  
CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER  
STATE OF COLORADO



United States Department of the Interior  
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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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### SIGNIFICANCE

The 1904 Austin Building, with additions in 1908, 1910, and 1918, is eligible for the National Register under criterion A and C. The building is representative of a significant trend in the early 20th century development of Denver. The Austin draws its historical significance from two specific areas: its architectural styling and its association with the development of mixed use commercial buildings along Denver's expanding streetcar routes. The Austin is one of the earliest remaining examples of combined luxury apartment and retail space in the East Colfax corridor. The location of the trolley car lines positively influenced the long term commercial success of the Austin Pharmacy and the succeeding drugstores which occupied the Austin's corner storefront. This pattern of development, linking public transportation with commercial and residential structures, exemplifies the growth and prosperity of Denver during the first decades of the 20th century.

The Austin Building displays the distinguishing characteristics of a simple expression of the Italian Renaissance Revival style typical in Denver. These characteristics include the prominent horizontal divisions defined by belt courses, the differing window treatments in each division, the engaged columns and piers, brick quoins, and the enriched cornice.

### Community Development and Commercial History

At the turn-of-the-century, many expected Denver to become the largest city west of Chicago. It was prosperous and well known for its mansions and aristocratic residents. The Capitol Hill neighborhood epitomized this status. Many of Denver's elite lived in beautiful homes along the then tree-lined East Colfax Avenue and its feeder streets to the south. The prestigious area was close to downtown and its namesake State Capitol building.

Early in the 1900s, a Minneapolis developer, J.H. Holmburg, introduced elegant apartment living to Denver. This concept was immediately lauded as a very profitable class of investment. The construction of luxury apartment buildings in affluent, well established residential neighborhoods was a trend which developers adopted, often to the dismay of adjacent home owners, as the influence of eastern cities pushed west. Apartments provided high rents and a means of dispersing the cost of development. Not only did apartment buildings help meet the high demand for living quarters in the fashionable neighborhoods of Denver, they also afforded residents convenience and economy. Corner lots were considered prime locations for the development of these luxury apartments. In fact, Denver architect W.A. Marean suggested in 1902 that each of the corner lots along Colfax be built up as a fine apartment house.

The development of transportation routes, especially streetcar lines, played a major role in the development of the outlying areas around Denver. The residents of these subdivisions relied heavily on public transportation to travel between their residences, their places of work, and their sources of



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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shopping and entertainment. Neighborhood shops first developed in Denver along streetcar lines, with their combination of high visibility, high traffic, and a local customer base. Residents increasingly sought the convenience of shopping near their homes. Drugstores, grocery stores, bakeries and restaurants were typical examples of neighborhood shops taking advantage of both local clientele and streetcar patrons.

East Colfax began to change in the early 1900s as the growing level of traffic made it less desirable as a single family residential community but more desirable as a multi-use commercial corridor. A number of buildings rose which combined street level retail and office space with upper story residential units.

In 1904, Frank A. Austin, son of one of Denver's early pioneers, Judge W. Austin, purchased the corner lot at 2400 East Colfax. Here in the midst of a burgeoning business section, he built the Austin, a luxury apartment building with his own pharmacy located in the corner storefront. Denver City Directories first listed apartment buildings in 1904 and the initial posting included 42 buildings. Many of these no longer exist and few exemplify the corner lot use like the Austin. The building is a classic early example of a mixed-use structure. The Austin's location immediately adjacent to one of the city's main thoroughfares, which was a streetcar route and a transfer station, provided high visibility retail space plus convenience and accessibility for its apartment residents.

Frank A. Austin had been a clerk at a number of Denver drugstores for several years before he opened his own business in 1895, Austin's Pharmacy. The store was located at 2330 East Colfax until 1904, directly across the street from the future Austin Building site. Mr. Austin moved the Austin Drug Company into the new Austin Building in 1904 and operated the store until 1921. The Strickland Pharmacy, a chain operation, then occupied the space until 1934. J.E. Hankey owned the store in the late 1930s, with Frank Austin employed as a pharmacist. The business operated as the Capitol Drug Co. until its demise in 1950. Frank Austin retired at the same time.

The expansion of the Austin Building in 1908, 1910, and 1918 indicates the commercial success of the property. The fact that the last two additions contained only retail space may be indicative of the growing vehicular traffic on Colfax Ave. which made it an increasingly less desirable residential address. Other commercial enterprises which occupied the Austin Building during the period of significance include a cigar store, a florist, and a painter and wallpaper hanger.

The period of significance for the Austin Building begins with its construction in 1904 and continues until 1945, a point of time at which the Austin continued to play a significant role in the commercial activity along East Colfax Avenue.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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### Architecture

The Austin Building exemplifies the simple form of the Italian Renaissance Revival style which gained popularity in Denver between 1900 and 1930. The building is characterized by the horizontal sandstone belt courses between each of the three stories, the different window treatments on each level, the engaged columns and piers with ionic capitals, brick quoins, and the enriched cornice. The ground floor storefronts are typical of the ca. 1900 period with recessed entries, large display windows, kickplates and clearstories.

The 1908 addition on the south utilizes many of the Renaissance Revival elements found in the original building, such as the brick quoins, but also includes many Neo-classical features such as the Ionic balcony columns, the classically turned balusters, the dentils, and the egg and dart molding below the second-story belt course and raised column bases. The set back, full width porch and balconies, and the elimination of the ground floor retail space are all in keeping with the residential nature of Josephine Street as opposed to the commercial character of Colfax Avenue.

Architect Audley W. Reynolds designed the Austin Building. He moved to Denver in 1904 and formed a short lived partnership with E.M. Camp. Audley practiced in Denver until 1915 and maintained his office in the Majestic Building. From 1904 until 1910 he lived in the Austin Building, perhaps an indication of his pride in the structure. No other known examples of his work exist in Colorado. Hymer and Stool were the general contractors for the original Austin Building construction.

The apartments combined many innovative ideas which added to their aesthetic appeal and timelessness. The living quarters were luxurious, having large open floor plans. The room arrangements provided spectacular views of the city and the Rocky Mountains, access to balconies and natural light, and ventilation in the interiors of the apartments from light wells and skylights. The Austin contained eleven apartments with five to seven rooms in each. All units were thoughtfully arranged around, beside, and below five light wells. The latest technology, including electric lights and steam heat, was used. Careful attention was paid to the selection of the high quality materials used for interior trim and molding details, doors and windows, and the floor treatments. The fact that both the owner and the architect chose to live in the building indicates the level of pride they had in their undertaking. Frank Austin resided in the Austin Building from 1905 to 1912, and again from approximately 1920 until his death in 1966. His parents resided in the apartment building for a few years and his wife remained a resident until 1970.

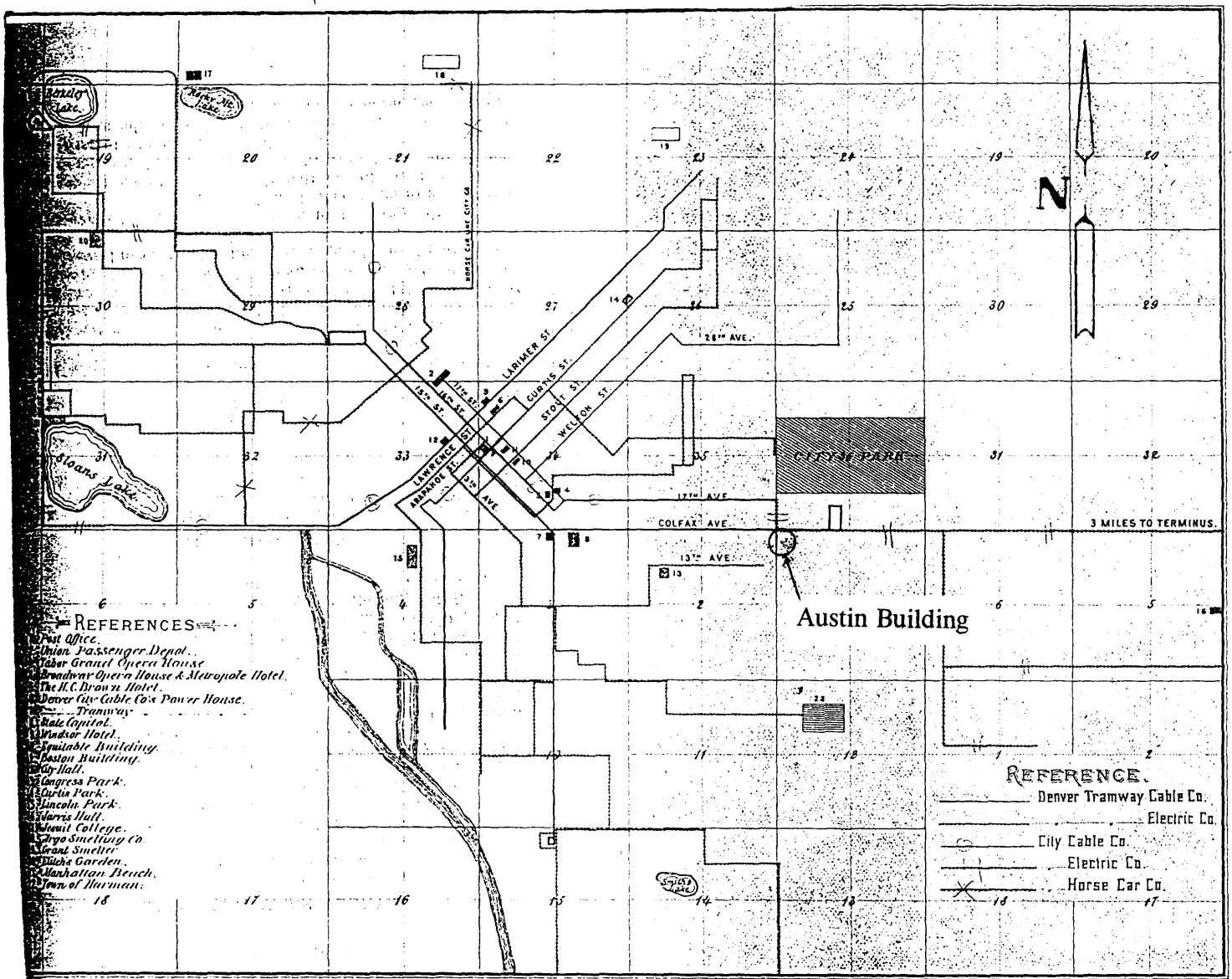
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

Denver Street Car Routes, ca. 1900



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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 8

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### Books

- Noel, Thomas J. and Norgren, Barbara S., *The City Beautiful*, (Denver: Historic Denver, Inc., 1987).  
Pearce, Sarah J., *A Guide to Colorado Architecture*, (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1983).

#### Newspapers

- "Apartment House Boom," *Denver Times*, December 24, 1990, p.9.  
"Apartment Houses are Choice of Builders," *Denver Times*, March 21, 1903, p.7.  
"Car Lines Will Come Slowly," *Denver Times*, March 26, 1902, p.5.  
"Cheap Terraces in Fine Quarters," *Denver Times*, March 2, 1902, p.2.  
"Choice Residence Section of Denver," *Denver Times*, February 19, 1902, p.12.  
"City Pioneer's Widow Dies at Son's Home," *Rocky Mountain News*, November 30, 1939.  
"A Denver Pride: Its Trolley Cars," *Denver republican*, January 1, 1901, p.18.  
"Store Building on Capitol Hill," *Denver Times*, August 27, 1902, p.5.  
"Tenements or the Suburbs," *Denver Times*, April 8, 1902.

#### Other Sources

- Colorado Business Directories.  
Denver Building Permits, Denver Public Library, Western History Department.  
Denver City Directories, 1904-1950.

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9/10 Page 9

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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Master Property Books, Microfilm, Denver Tax Assessors Office.

Photo Files, Denver Public Library, Western History Department.

Polk Directory.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 1-5, Block 2  
Farnum's Subdivision  
City and County of Denver  
State of Colorado

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries of the nomination include all the land historically associated with the building.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 10

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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### PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photographs numbers 1-8 except as indicated:

Name of Property: Austin Building  
Location: Denver County, Colo.  
Photographer: Mary Prinster  
Date of Photographs: December 5, 1994  
Negatives: Northeast Denver Housing Center

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Information</u>
1	North (Colfax Ave.) elevation; view to the south.
2	North and west elevations; view to the southeast.
3	West (Josephine Street) elevation; view to the northeast.
4	Photographer: Dale Heckendorn Date of Photographs: January 20, 1995 Negatives: Colorado Historical Society South elevation of 1908 addition.
5	Photographer: Dale Heckendorn Date of Photographs: January 20, 1995 Negatives: Colorado Historical Society North and east elevations.
6	Photographer: unknown Date of Photographs: ca. 1921-1934 Negatives: Denver Public Library, Western History Department North and west elevations, view to the southeast.
7	Photographer: unknown Date of Photographs: ca. 1921-1934 Negatives: Denver Public Library, Western History Department North and west elevations, view to the southeast.

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Additional Documentation Page 11

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

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Photo No.

Information

8

Photographer: unknown

Date of Photographs: ca. 1921-1934

Negatives: Denver Public Library, Western History Department

North and west elevations, view to the southeast.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 12

Austin Building  
Denver County, CO

**USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**  
Englewood, Colo.  
7.5 Minute Quad  
1965, Photorevised 1980

