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  Fire Station #19
and/or common  Fire Station #19

2. Location

street & number  2001 University Avenue S.E.
not for publication
city, town  Minneapolis
vicinity of congressional district  5th
state  Minnesota  code  22  county  Hennepin  code  053

3. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>agriculture</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>structure</td>
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4. Owner of Property

name  Fire Station #19, A Minnesota Partnership
street & number  2001 University Avenue S.E.
city, town  Minneapolis
vicinity of state  Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  Hennepin County Government Center
street & number  5th Street at 3rd Avenue South
city, town  Minneapolis  state  Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title  None
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  X no
date  federal  state  county  local
depository for survey records

city, town  state
Fire Station #19 is situated on the northeast corner of University Avenue and Oak Street. The two story brick building is typical of many of the fire stations built in Minneapolis during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The building is rectangular in plan and measures approximately 100' by 45'. Approximately two thirds of the ground floor is occupied by a single open space for the fire fighting equipment. The rear third of the building was originally used as stables, and more recently was used for storage, a kitchen, and a hose drying tower. A few original finishes, most notably the heavy plank floor, remain. The second floor was used as recreational space, toilet facilities, locker rooms, and sleeping areas for the firefighters; these areas have been somewhat altered.

The building employs a typical turn-of-the-century technique to create the large open space required for the fire fighting equipment. Large trusses, averaging over ten feet deep, span the entire building above the second floor ceiling. These trusses support a series of steel suspension rods which, in turn, support the second floor. This construction technique is a good illustration of the level of engineering design and building technology available eighty five years ago.

The primary architectural feature of the building is its exterior elevation. Although designed as a utilitarian building, Fire Station #19 incorporates many design elements frequently found in more elegant structures. This special attention is reserved for the main facade on the south, however, with the other three facades being simple brick walls with little decorative treatment; in fact, the north and east facades, which were not intended for general view, are constructed of common buff colored bricks rather than the red face bricks of the two street facades.

The principal facade is two stories high and four bays wide. There originally was a third story bell tower at the southwest corner of the building. The two central bays are the most highly decorative portions of the building. On the first floor are the two large doors for the fire equipment, which are recessed from the main plane of the building and from the floor above. A second floor balcony provides weather protection to the main doors as well as decoration and an outdoor space for the personnel. There are large round-headed windows which extend nearly the full width of the central bays on the second floor. The upper portions of these windows are filled with wood rather than glass, but the radial divisions create the impression of glass to the casual observer. A heavy corbeled cornice gives added emphasis to this central section of the building.

The outer two bays of the south facade and the entire west facade have a much simpler treatment, with plain brick walls and regularly spaced rectangular window openings. Decoration is limited to two belt courses, one stone and one brick, and a simple cornice; there are also two stone panels on the upper portions of the south facade which indicate the station number and date of construction.
8. Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
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Specific dates 1893
Builder/Architect Minneapolis Building Inspections Office

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Station #19 is an excellent example of firehouse design from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although the bell tower was removed many years ago, the remainder of the exterior is essentially as it was originally constructed. Fire Station #19 is historically significant for the important fire protection service it rendered the citizens of Minneapolis for eighty three years. In addition, the building is significant as one of the city's few surviving technological links with the horsedrawn era. One of the last Minneapolis firehouses to become fully motorized, Fire Station #19 was apparently using horse-drawn equipment as late as 1922. Fire Station #19 is historically significant as the birthplace of a major variant of American softball known as "kittenball." The inventor and organizer of kittenball was Louis Rober, a lieutenant with the Minneapolis Fire Department who was stationed at Fire Station #19 from 1896 through 1906. During this period, Rober adapted the rules of baseball to create a sport requiring less space, time, and equipment than the traditional ball game. Although the Amateur Softball Association, established in 1933, changed some of Rober's original rules, modern softball still closely resembles the game which the firemen at Station #19 played at the turn of the century. The building has successfully been adapted for use as architects offices and a restaurant.
9. Major Bibliographical References


10. Geographical Data

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

<table>
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<th>state</th>
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert G. Mack, Partner
organization: MacDonald and Mack Partnership
date: July 16, 1979
street & number: 750 Grain Exchange Building
telephone: (612) 341-4051
city or town: Minneapolis
state: Minnesota

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

- national
- state X 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: Russell W. Fridley
date: 12/8/80

declaration: For HCRS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
date: 11/4/82
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Russ McCullough
date: 11/3/82
Chief of Registration
Major Bibliographical References


Gove, Charles L. to City of Minneapolis. Warranty Deed, October 17, 1892. Book 375 of Deeds, p.3.

"Half a Million Minneapolitans to Watch 10,000 Diamond Ball Players This Year." *Minneapolis Tribune*, May 24, 1936.

Hallinan, T.G. "'Let's Play Ball.'" *American City*, XXXVII (November, 1927), p. 634.


Minneapolis Fire Department. *Annual Reports* 1890-1914; 1930-1950. (Title, place of publication, and publisher vary)

Minneapolis Inspections Department. Building Permits.


Seventh Biennial Report of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota... for the Fiscal Years 1891 and 1892... Minneapolis: Harrison & Smith, State Printers, 1892.
Fire Station #19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTINUATION SHEET</th>
<th>ITEM NUMBER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Bibliographical References</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legal Description:

Lot 10, and that part of Lot 9 lying northeasterly of southwesterly 20 ft. thereof, Block 14, Regents Addition.

Less than one acre