

**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

82

## 1. Name

historic Colonial Hotel

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 1119 - 1123 First Avenue \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Seattle \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 1st-Joel Pritchard

state Washington code 053 county King code 033

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input 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
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Cornerstone Development Corporation

street & number 1500 Western Avenue - Suite 500

city, town Seattle \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Washington

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. King County Administration Building

street & number Fourth and James

city, town Seattle \_\_\_\_\_ state Washington

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Seattle Inventory of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979 \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county  local

depository for survey records Seattle Office of Urban Conservation

city, town Seattle \_\_\_\_\_ state Washington

## 7. Description

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

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

The Colonial Hotel is a four and seven story brick building that occupies a corner lot with major facades facing First Avenue to the east and Seneca Street to the north. It adjoins the Grand Pacific Hotel at the south. A sharp difference in grade between First Avenue and Post Avenue accounts for the difference in height between the four story First Avenue elevation and the seven story Post Avenue and Seneca Street elevations. A series of reinforced concrete stairs constructed immediately adjacent to the Seneca Street elevation provides a pedestrian route which overcomes the twenty-five foot difference in height between the two elevations.

The existing form and appearance of the hotel are primarily the result of a major 1901 eclectic Federal addition to an earlier and less pretentious four story brick building. This is clearly illustrated in the Seneca Street elevation which includes segmentally arched windows in the lower three stories and bricked-up arched windows at the fourth level which corresponds with the First Avenue storefront. Five Federal style windows with segmented terra cotta flat arches are opened into the older walls at this level. The three stories added in 1901 begin above a terra cotta belt course and are faced in tan colored pressed brick with ivory colored terra cotta detailing. Fenestration includes full length windows with bracketed entablatures and wrought iron balconies at the fifth level, rectangular double hung windows with flat arches at the uppermost stories, and an elliptically arched opening at the center of the facade which incorporates a tripartite window and balcony at the fifth level and a Palladian window at the sixth. Above the cosmetically altered storefronts, the First Avenue elevation continues the same general pattern of fenestration across its narrower facade. Both major facades are terminated with an entablature and a modillion supported cornice. Originally the two facades were crowned with ornate balustrades which have long since been removed.

The seven story Post Avenue elevation is constructed of common red brick with segmentally arched windows spaced at regular intervals at each of the upper five stories. The south walls abuts the adjacent Grand Pacific Hotel.

At the time of this writing, rehabilitation work has begun on the Colonial Hotel. This work was in progress at the time of the review of the nomination, and the completed project will alter the interior and may also alter the appearance of the first floor storefronts. Recent photographs and photographs taken before the initiation of the rehabilitation project are included with the nomination.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1901 **Builder/Architect** Max Umbrecht

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Colonial Hotel is significant as the work of one of Seattle's major early architects and as representative of the working class hotels that once dominated the First Avenue streetscape.

Commercial development along Seattle's First Avenue was restricted largely to the Pioneer Square area until after the fire of 1889. Soon after rebuilding began, the center of the commercial area began to expand northward, and brick commercial buildings steadily replaced the residences formerly located along what were to become the city's major streets. The Holyoke Building (National Register, 1976), started before the fire and completed in 1890, was the first major office building erected on First Avenue north of Madison Street. It was followed in the 1890's by the sporadic development of additional lots and the construction of several other large commercial buildings generally representative of late Victorian architecture.

The pace of development accelerated markedly, however, in 1897 and 1898 when the Klondike gold rush suddenly boosted Seattle's economy and growth, and Seattle became the pre-eminent point of departure for the gold fields. One of the immediate demands created was that for conveniently located and moderately priced hotels and rooming houses to serve transient miners, sailors, and businessmen. Along with others in the First Avenue area, the Colonial Hotel was put up to accommodate that trade.

Outside the tradition of the grand hotel, it catered specifically to men of modest means who favored its inexpensive rooms and easy access to the port. Over the years, the store fronts sharing the First Avenue ground floor with the hotel entry were occupied by a variety of businesses, but all reflected the tenor of the hotel's clientele: restaurants, beer parlors, pawnbrokers, and clothers. The nature of the hotel was thus established from its very beginning, and it is remarkable that the neighborhood changed so little over the years.

The architect of the Colonial Hotel, Max Umbrecht (1872-1955), was born in Syracuse, New York, where his immigrant grandfather was a bridge builder and his father a building contractor. The young Umbrecht learned architectural design through the apprentice system, including a period served with the firm of Merritt and Randall in New York City. His work thereafter was characterized by a preference for formal detail and balance, and a use of large openings for maximum lighting. Umbrecht came to Seattle around 1900, concentrating his practice on private residences. He designed the James W. Clise House (National Register, 1973) and the Caroline Kline Galland House (National Register, 1980), and is also credited with the Hofius House at 1104 Spring Street and the residence at 1729 17th Avenue. He returned to Syracuse in 1922, and was active in architecture until his death.

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Landmark Designation, Seattle Office of Urban Conservation, 1981.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Seattle South

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	0	5	4	9	8	7	5	5	2	7	2	5	1	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

Lot 2, Block C, A.A. Denny's First Addition; Lot 1, Block 184, Seattle Tidelands.

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

state n/a code county code

state n/a code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Based on information supplied by the Office of Urban Conservation

organization date

street & number 400 Yesler Building telephone (206) 625-4501

city or town Seattle state Washington 98104

# 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

title Jack E. Thom date 3/24/82

For HCRS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 4/29/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration