

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Civic Center Historic District other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Des Moines River, Center Street Dam to Scott Avenue not for publication city, town Dam, including both banks. vicinity state Iowa code 019-IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50309

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal, building(s), district, site, structure, object, and counts for Contributing and Noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: City Beautiful Movement and City Planning in Des Moines, Iowa, 1892-1938 Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 3

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] OSNPO Date: July 1, 1988 State or Federal agency and bureau: Chief Bureau of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Iowa

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:) Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education-Library

Transportation-Rail Related, Road Related

Landscape-Park

Government-city hall, post office, correct-

ional facility, court, armory

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Same as Historic Functions

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th-20th Century Revivals: Beaux Arts

Modern Movement: Art Deco

foundation stone

walls stone

roof composition/built-up

other concrete retaining walls

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Refer to Continuation Sheet 7-1+

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1892-1938

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Multiple

Architect/Builder

Multiple

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet 9-2+

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 93 acres

**UTM References**

A 

1	5
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4	4	9	0	8	0
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4	6	0	3	1	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	5
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4	4	8	5	2	0
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4	6	0	4	4	2	0
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B 

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

D 

1	5
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4	4	8	3	9	0
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4	6	0	2	7	9	0
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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

See continuation sheet 10.2

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the minimal number of intrusive structures while it includes all significant resources, visual perspectives, and design components.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By** Research and text by Ms. Barbara Beving Long, Midwest Research.

name/title James E. Jacobsen, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Historic Preservation

organization Cultural Affairs, State Hist. Soc. of Iowa date July 1, 1988

street & number 600 E. Locust telephone 515-281-5111

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50309

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RESOURCES

The resources that comprise the Civic Center district are examples of the Property Type: Buildings, Structures and Land Forms of the City Beautiful Movement and City Planning in Des Moines, Iowa, 1892-1938.

**Noncontributing Structure (5)**

- ✓ Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Bridge
- Des Moines Union Railway Company Bridge
- Grand Avenue Bridge
- ✓ Locust Street Bridge
- ✓ Walnut Street Bridge

**Contributing Structure (7)**

- Center Street Dam
- West River Front Park
- East River Front Park
- River Walls<sup>1</sup>
- Scott Avenue Bridge and Dam<sup>1</sup>
- Court Avenue Bridge<sup>1</sup>
- Riverside Drive Bridge

**Contributing Building (6)**

- Armory and World War Memorial Building<sup>1</sup>
- United States Post Office<sup>1, 2</sup>
- United States Courthouse.
- Municipal Building<sup>1, 2</sup>
- Municipal Court and Public Safety Building<sup>1</sup>
- Public Library of Des Moines<sup>1, 2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Individually eligible for the National Register.  
<sup>2</sup> Listed in the National Register

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## Public Library of Des Moines

## Description

As a stone-faced public building featuring classical detail, the Library is a prime example of the property type described in this document. Its appearance and siting add markedly to the unified appearance of the Civic Center district. The Library contributes strongly to the uniformity of height, placement, and style that characterize the Civic Center. The Public Library of Des Moines is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Public Library of Des Moines is a good example of the restrained use of Beaux-Arts Style. Important elements include the symmetrical three-staged elevation, varied window treatment (including two rows of small functional ones at the book stacks), use of classical details, and the distinctive pink stone. The semi-circular arched windows of the rusticated first floor are particularly pleasing, especially in contrast to the smooth stone and Corinthian capitals above.

Since the Library was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, major restoration work has occurred on the interior. Original multi-colored stenciled patterns--including gilt--again adorn the central rotunda on two floors. Lights appropriate to the period have replaced fluorescent fixtures in the Reference Room. And the west entry steps, including a drive-through for dropping off books, have been rebuilt in a manner sympathetic to the original design. Creation of a small park area just west of the library, including a concrete fountain similar to its removed river front fountain and modern sculpture, carries on suggestions dating from the early years of Civic Center development and also provides an attractive setting for the Library.

The three-story building is an unusual salmon pink Minnesota stone with terra cotta detail and granite at the base. The central five-bay block (slightly raised and projecting) is flanked by two three-bay sections. The Library is seven bays deep, making a compact rectangular shape.

The elevation has three stages beginning with a smooth-faced ashlar basement having deeply recessed six-light windows. The second stage is rusticated and features large semi-circular windows on the east, west, and north. South facade windows light the book stacks and are therefore narrow and rectangular to accommodate the book shelving. Notable features of the top stage are Corinthian pilasters and engaged columns, a simple parapet, and a small colonnaded loggia. The full but simple entablature includes pediments above two windows of the central bay.

The east or river front facade was intended to be the main entrance for the library and originally had a stone staircase with double entries. The staircase, acroterion atop the central bay, and river front fountain were removed in 1955 or 1956, and the building was also sandblasted.

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Inside, library functions emanate symmetrically from the large central rotunda and the impressive stained glass in the dome. On the main floor the Reference Room on the north balances with the book stacks on the south. A small reading room faces the river on the east; stairs are on the west. On the second floor, office, meeting, and storage space are arranged around the rotunda. Oak is used throughout, for wainscoting and other woodwork.

Alterations reflect changes in library function over the years. In 1928 an elevator was added and the basement space rearranged. The main floor is essentially unaltered, except for periodic rearrangement of shelving and counters. WPA murals were added in the 1930's to the new children's department in the basement.

**Significance.**

The Des Moines Public Library was the first public building to grace the Des Moines river front. Its location was part of the conscious planning and development of a civic center following City Beautiful Movement principles. The library embraced its river front site; the main entrance was originally located along the river, although there was also a west side entrance. An artesian well attracted thousands seeking the healthful properties of the mineral water. The area in front of the library was the first to be landscaped along the river and the first attempts to build river walls (not altogether successfully) also occurred here. Nelson and Sons, a Chicago landscape architectural firm, prepared plans for landscaping. The plans appear in the 1908 Park Board report and appear to have been followed.

The provision of a library in Des Moines dated from 1866 when Hiram Y. Smith, a lawyer, circulated a petition to organize a library. Like most early libraries, the first one in Des Moines was not publicly financed. Patrons paid a membership fee, ranging from \$50 for a life membership down to \$4 for one year. Incorporated in 1866, the Des Moines Library Association rented rooms at Fourth Street and Court Avenue and opened for readers in September 1867.

Until construction of the present library building, the library rented quarters in a series of buildings. Among them were the Youngerman Building in 1876 and the YMCA and also a building at Eighth and Locust in the 1890's. By the 1870's the library's holdings totaled 3,527 volumes, not an insignificant number to pack and tote to new quarters.

With a growing city and increasing municipal responsibility for public welfare, the Library Board of Trustees turned over responsibility for a free and public library to the City of Des Moines in 1882. A building specifically designed to be a library was not immediately achieved, however. It was not until 1896 that the Library Board asked the City Council to levy a three-mill tax in order to buy a library site, and two more years passed before the site was selected.

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Choosing a library site revolved around the State's plans to build a historical building and also a new arsenal. If the City bought the Civil War-era Arsenal site on the river, the State would use the money to buy a site for a proposed historical building. A previously purchased historical building site would, in turn, be used for a new Arsenal. Thus, Des Moines stood to gain three new buildings by placing the library on the river front.

The river front site was not unanimously received. Some businessmen felt it was too far from the downtown. Members of the Women's Club opposed the seemingly distant location and also used the controversy to urge the City to provide river front improvements. (The Women's Club and the Park Board had favored river front improvements beginning in the 1890's.)

The library trustees cast their vote for the old Arsenal site on April 29, 1898. The cornerstone was laid on May 19, 1900, and the library opened its doors in October of 1903. An additional three-mill levy was authorized in 1906 in order to finish construction. Even with the additional monies, the original exterior dome was eliminated from the plans.

Frank Gutterson and Oliver O. Smith were architects for the library. The firm was responsible for other important public buildings in Des Moines, notable the State Historical Building, Mercy Hospital, and buildings at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Gutterson (1872-1902) attended the University of Minnesota and the Boston School of Technology, and studied in Paris. He also worked with the Ernest Flagg firm in New York City and H.M. Colburn in Mason City, Iowa before joining Smith in partnership in Des Moines in 1897. Oliver O. Smith (1868-1916) apparently received most of his training and experience in Des Moines, although he studied briefly in Boston and St. Louis.

The Library remains the main library in the Des Moines library system, but there are also five branch libraries throughout the city. Throughout its history, the main Library has housed more than books. A feature of the original Library was the Cumming School of Art which leased the top floor. In 1909 the Fortnightly Musical Club was founded, which led to the present large collection of recordings and sheet music. The club gave \$120 toward establishing the collection. During the Depression of the 1930's, the library opened a men's reading room. Termed "Waterfront University," the room had books, newspapers, and magazines of interest to the many unemployed men--and a place to spend the day.

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## Municipal Building

### Description.

As a stone-faced public building featuring classical detail, the Municipal Building is a prime example of the property type described in this document. Its appearance and siting adds markedly to the unified appearance of the Civic Center district. The Municipal Building contributes strongly to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterize the Civic Center. In addition, it was designed to accommodate the new, more open style of government, the nationally known Des Moines Plan of government. The Municipal Building (City Hall) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Designed in 1908-09 and built in 1909-10, the building is an excellent, well-preserved example of the classical revival. A notable feature is the Counting Room, a soaring space having elaborate garlands across the basket-arched ceiling and great semi-circular arched windows.

The Municipal Building is located on the east bank of the Des Moines River between East Grand and East Locust Street. Pete Crivaro Park and the Armory are north of it, and green space, the narrow East River Front Park, is south. A large parking lot is just east of this park, east of East First Street. The Municipal Building faces the river and across from it is the former Coliseum site. The YMCA, a recent building, occupies the former Coliseum location.

The three-story stone Municipal Building has a rusticated ground floor for the base. Above the base is a nine-bay central (slightly projecting) block flanked by two-bay wings. A shallow hipped roof unobtrusively tops the building; solid and balustraded parapets mask the roofline.

The building measures 230' x 80' and is rectangular. On the street level or ground floor, entrances and vestibules at the center of the longer east and west sides are connected at the central north-south hallway. Part of the west vestibule has been walled off to form a conference room, and a portable ramp added over some of the stairs. In addition to offices and rest rooms, there originally was space at the south end of the ground floor for the Board of Health, "Bertillon Room," and a dormitory. The City Manager's office is now in this space. The north end was intended to be the Engineering Department, but other City offices now occupy the space.

The east and west elevations are nearly identical, featuring a series of prominent two story windows. These 15' high semi-circular arched windows light the first floor Counting Room. Ten smooth columns separate these windows and with the simple moulded cornice create an effect similar to those of other Civic Center buildings, especially the Municipal Court and Public Safety Building, U.S. Courthouse, and former Post Office.

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Large mutules further unite the cornice line and provide a horizontal emphasis. This design element serves to join the cornice just as the rusticated base anchors the main portion with the wings. The balustraded parapet tops the offset north and south wings and carries on the line of the main, solid parapet. The balustrade pattern--bannisters separated by solid panels--was later used for the river walls and the Court Avenue bridge in the Civic Center district.

Small ornate balustraded balconies are centered on the first floor of the north, south, and west elevations. Elaborate carved brackets support them. Door surrounds are large carved convex mouldings of garlands. The stone carved detail provides a visual richness carried on in the interior.

The garland motif on large convex mouldings is especially notable in the massive Counting Room. Garlands run across the plaster panels of the broadly arched ceiling at the windows. Elaborate hanging lights at the ceiling center are highlighted by fancy plaster rosettes and continue the vegetal motifs of the garlands. Walls are kesota marble. Sylvan green marble was used for shallow decorative niches and floorboards. The marble floor is executed in geometric patterns of different colors.

On the first floor, the Council Room at the south end was originally only 34' x 26' and had two offices off the east and west sides. The east offices have been removed, but large beams with decorative moulding (including the egg-and-dart pattern) and oak woodwork remain. The former Record Room at the south end of the first floor now houses part of Engineering Department.

The Counting Room, with its openness behind waist-high counters, was intended to symbolize the new openness of city government under the Des Moines Plan of government. The space, which dominates the first floor, remains open and much as it was originally. Second floor offices in the north and south wings overlook the Counting Room. Space in the north wing has been expanded slightly into a stairwell.

In 1979 the City renovated significant portions of the building, especially the Counting Room. Originally the rectangular panels at the Counting Room windows were unadorned. But when the room was renovated and the original detail repainted in appropriate multiple color schemes, trompe l'oeil decoration was added to these panels. Eighteen large windows were replaced with metal frames because the original wood frames had deteriorated. These and other replaced windows are similar to the mullion patterns of the originals. When ceilings were lowered in some areas, some transoms were masked with dark unobtrusive panels.

Originally there were steps toward the river, the characteristic balustrades, and landscaping (including two small circular fountains) around a small centered open space at the entrance. Solid river walls approximately the same height have replaced the open balustrade as part of flood control measures, and the steps have been removed. However, the land form remains similar to the original, two gentle curves to the river and river walls.

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## Significance.

The Municipal Building, still in use as Des Moines' City Hall, was the fourth of seven public buildings to grace the river front Civic Center (six are extant). The Municipal Building, U.S. Post Office, and Coliseum (not extant) were built at approximately the same time. It contributes strongly to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterizes the Civic Center. The Municipal Building was the first public building on the east bank of the Civic Center. Its location and construction marked a tangible step in uniting the competing east and west sides of town. As the first (and probably only) building in the nation specifically designed to house the Des Moines Plan of government, the Municipal Building symbolizes the change to the commission form of government and calls attention to the progressive reform impetus that characterized turn-of-the-century Des Moines.

Des Moines residents celebrated the beginning of construction of the Municipal Building with "Municipal Day," June 14, 1910. A June 12, 1910 newspaper article pointed out that with the cornerstone:

"the official start on the monument to the Commission form of Government will have been made. The building will be the first concrete, tangible proof that Des Moines believes in its system of municipal administration to such an extent that it is willing to use it as the foundation for its great future City . . . the building . . . has been planned with the one thought in mind of making it convenient for government by Commission . . ."

And "The architects have so planned the building that all City affairs will be transacted in the open - in one large counting room." Four Des Moines architectural firms (Liebbe, Nourse & Rasmussen, Hallett & Rawson, Wetherell & Gage, and Proudfoot & Bird) successfully forced the City to spread the commission for the building among them, a practice repeated for the Municipal Court and Public Safety Building.<sup>1</sup>

In the same election where Des Moines voters approved adoption of the Des Moines Plan of government they also approved bonds for construction of the Municipal Building. Bonds were issued for \$350,000, and the building was "erected and furnished complete, from vacuum cleaner to inkwells, for the sum estimated, within the amount appropriated, and within the time provided," boasted John MacVicar, then head of the Department of Public Safety. MacVicar felt that, in a graft-ridden city, the same building would have cost \$1,000,000 and would not have been completed in a timely manner.

<sup>1</sup>In John MacVicar's version in The American City another architectural firm offered \$2,500 to the councilman to get them the contract, prompting creation of the team (the Associate Board of Architects) and eliminating the wayward architectural firm from consideration.

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## United States Post Office

## Description.

As a stone-faced public building featuring classical detail, it is a prime example of the property type described in this document. In addition, its appearance contributes markedly to the unified appearance of the Civic Center district. The former Post Office contributes strongly to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterizes the Civic Center. The former United States Post Office is listed in the National Register.

Built in 1909-10, the building features a restrained, and sometimes free, use of the classical vocabulary. Facade treatment is similar to the Municipal Court Building, especially the large semi-circular arched windows, tall smooth columns, simple entablature, massing, materials, and classical detail. (Both were designed in 1908-09 and built in 1909-10.)

The Post Office is situated on the west river front; First Street runs between it and the river bank. To the north is the Public Library. Across the river is the U.S. Court House. On the Post Office block, a county parking lot extends between the building and Court Avenue to the south.

The building's principal (north) facade runs along Walnut Street. Ten massive round engaged columns punctuate the nine bays of its mid-section. The capitals are a variation on the Corinthian Order and have rosettes (reminiscent of sunflowers) atop the acanthus leaves. Large semi-circular windows having large consoles at the keystone occur between the smooth columns. These windows (and probably those above them) have their original frames, which feature simple mouldings and a band of dentils. Above the semi-circular windows are smaller three-part rectangular windows separated by simple squared pilasters. Because of the size of the engaged columns, north facade windows are recessed slightly.

Two more engaged columns flank entrances which are located in slightly projecting bays at the east and west ends of the main facade. These entrances are matched with similar ones around the corner, on the east and west facades. All have decorative surrounds featuring acanthus, raised circles, and rope patterns. Above the doorway is a carved panel (with acorns and leaves), then dentil and egg-and-dart bands. Carved consoles support the pediment. Unlike the other upper windows, the pediments over entrances have carved decorative panels.

Pairs of immense lanterns of acanthus leaves supporting light globes flank the four entrances. The metal has achieved a fine patina which enriches the acanthus patterns and the strapwork around the single translucent globes.

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The east and west facades of the original part of the Post Office are seven bays long. Five of these bays have the semi-circular windows found on the main facade. However, squared smooth pilasters are used rather than the massive engaged columns. Pedimented openings occur in the projecting end bays. The south bay has a window rather than a doorway.

A relatively uncomplicated entablature tops the composition and unites the three sides of the original building. It features simple moulding, a plain frieze, bands of dentils and the egg-and-dart pattern, and mutules along the cornice. The original building is actually a series of hipped roofs ranged around a flat-roofed section with mechanical equipment, but this is not apparent from the street. The present flat-roofed section was originally a skylight. Total dimensions are 247' x 212'.

The Post Office is faced with limestone and has an unobtrusive granite base. A subtle feature of the limestone treatment is a series of small vertical striations cut into the seemingly smooth stone blocks. At close range these striations resemble the pattern and texture of a fluted column.

As early as 1925 Des Moines boosters proposed an addition to meet the increasing postal needs of the growing populace. Local architects (Wetherell & Harrison) prepared plans for a large addition to the south as part of federal programs during the 1930's Depression. But funding was not forthcoming. In 1934 a revised, less ambitious plan was drawn up and construction proceeded the following year. One of the features of the plan was provision for yet another addition to the south in the future (never built).

The addition, as built, continues the massing, restrained design, and materials of the original, although in a simplified manner consistent with 1930's design concepts. Like the original, the addition is light-colored limestone. The blocks are smooth, lacking the striations of the original section. However, the pilaster-like panels between the simple rectangular windows are fluted, perhaps in conscious reflection of the tiny "fluted" pattern of the stone of the original section. Above the seven bays of the addition is a very simple entablature. One band of dentils continues that of the original cornice line.

Like the original, the addition has deeply recessed small square basement windows. On both sides of the addition are garage doors and a ramp which allow vehicular access to the basement. The west side of the addition is virtually a copy of the east side except that a low section with mechanical equipment is located west of the addition and there is a stone-faced polygonal chimney. Also, on the west side the addition is more deeply recessed (about 12') than on the east (about 6').

The south facade of the 1935 addition was originally buff brick. An aerial photograph (c. 1975) shows a subsequent addition (now removed). It was rectangular and was connected at the southeast end of the 1935 addition by a narrow canopy. When Polk County converted the former Post Office into county office space in c. 1978, they removed this later

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addition. The county also added a dramatic new south entrance. Three full-height trapezoidal columns or shafts are placed diagonally on either side of a raised unadorned center section of smooth stone. There are two sets of double doors between and behind each of the sets of columns. The center portion frames three flag poles. The cornice is a further simplification of the 1935 addition, which was, in turn, a streamlined version of the original. Here there are mouldings, but no dentils. The Des Moines architectural firm of Woodburn & O'Neil designed the changes the county instituted.

Both the original Post Office and 1935 addition have structural steel frames and concrete flooring. Skylights over the original postal work space were closed when a mechanical equipment room was added on the southwest corner sometime before the 1970's. When the county took over the building, much of the interior was completely changed, including the insertion of a floor in formerly open space (the former principal work space). Offices for the City and County Assessors, Auditor, Board of Supervisors, Recorder, Treasurer, General Service, Personnel, and the Weed Commissioner are located in three floors of the former Post Office.

The exception to the wholesale interior conversion by the county was the former main lobby for the Post Office, which now houses the Heritage Gallery. Traveling exhibits are displayed in the former lobby space. Noteworthy interior finishing in the gallery includes marble columns, a series of plaster groined vaults and with gilded rosettes, egg-and-dart and acanthus patterns, terrazzo floors with marble borders, and marble steps with iron balusters, newel posts featuring large fanciful acanthus patterns, and polished brass handrails. An elevator has been added near the east entrance, and a wood information desk has been placed near the west entrance. The former postal windows--semi-circular archways that echo the exterior windows--have been enclosed to provide exhibit space and room for offices. The additional floor that was added begins at this point.

**Significance.**

The former Post Office was the second building constructed on the Des Moines river front as part of the Civic Center of public buildings. As such, it represents the first commitment of the federal government to participating in this City Beautiful Movement project in Des Moines. This public building contributes strongly to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterizes the Civic Center. The large 1935 addition illustrates the continuing federal participation in Civic Center development, one accelerated during the 1930's Depression.

In 1902 Des Moines' elected representatives secured legislation authorizing \$150,000 for a new post office site in Des Moines. In 1904 more money was appropriated for a site, and in 1906 came the first of three acts appropriating funds for the building.

Treasury Department staff under the direction of architect James Knox Taylor designed the Des Moines Post Office in 1908. Construction began by 1909 and continued through 1910. The building was completed during the term of Postmaster Joseph I. Myerly, 1907-1911, at a cost of \$488,016.67.

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In the spring of 1910 the river front post office opened. It was the first federally-sponsored post office in Des Moines specifically designed for only that purpose. Postal operations had previously been on the first floor of the "Old Federal Building" at Fifth and Court Avenue (built 1870, razed 1968) beginning in 1870.

Postal operations remained at the Walnut Street building until 1971 when the Post Office moved to a much larger facility at Second and University Avenues. The former Post Office stood vacant until c. 1978-79 when Polk County purchased and remodeled it for county offices.

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Municipal Court and Public Safety Building

Description.

As a stone-faced public building featuring classical detail, the Municipal Court and Public Safety Building is a prime example of the property type described in this document. In addition, its appearance and location add markedly to the unified appearance of the Civic Center district. The building contributes strongly to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterizes the Civic Center.

The Municipal Court Building is located at the southeast corner of East First Street and Court Avenue. Its main facade faces the Des Moines River; East First Street runs along this facade. It is the southernmost building of the Civic Center district.

Ten massive smooth stone Tuscan columns dominate the west and principal facade of the Municipal Court Building. The absence of a prominent main entrance reinforces the dominance of the columns. The entablature, which has the words "Municipal Court and Public Safety Building" incised upon the architrave, is relatively simple, featuring dentils and molding. Also simple and massive are panels between the second and third stories: large smooth shields flanked by simplified torch motifs.

Commonly called the Police Station, the building consists of three stories on a raised basement. The building is L-shaped but gives the appearance of a narrow rectangle facing the river. (Note the ten columns on the west but only four on the north or Court Avenue facade). The jail forms one arm of the ell, extending east along the south facade. A recently added stairway (enclosed in matching stone) is located in the intersection of the two arms of the ell, on the east or rear facade. The main rectangle measures 192' x 84' (north) and 144' (south).

On the Court Avenue side, a set of double steps are steep in order to allow (originally) vehicular access to the basement. Policemen drove into the garage and parked vehicles there as late as the 1960's; the opening has been enclosed with matching stone.

The original broad main hallways, including decorative plaster ceilings, have been preserved in the interior. Hallway 16' wide on the first and second floors are divided into up to eight 15' long bays. The decorative plasterwork begins with four patterns of moulding on the wall, then moves to a row of inset panels on the ceiling. These coffers are followed by more moulding. The large center portion of these bays is unadorned and large light globes (not original) are suspended from the center. Between the bays a projecting beam or soffit is ornamented with large rosettes, moulding, and other detail. A recent three-color scheme--two shades of blue and pink--highlights the plasterwork.

Fine durable materials are used throughout. Large panels of grey marble line most major hallways; marble is also used for some floorboards and interior sills. Terrazzo floors are also in evidence; on the first floor, red tile strips separate the terrazzo into approximately four-foot squares. Transoms with frosted glass remain in some offices. A less ornamental but original feature are the "St. Louis" cells (one person to a cell) in first and second floor jail areas.

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According to the blueprints, Bedford limestone veneer over brick infill is the principal wall covering, although Carthage stone is also used. (Alternate plans called for veneers of either brick with stone trim or travertine stone.)

Like the Municipal Building, this building resulted from the combined effort of Des Moines architectural firms: Sawyer & Watrous, Kraetsch & Kraetsch, Keffer & Jones, and Norman T. Vorse. It has not been determined who was responsible for what portions of the design, but there is a certain lack of coordination evident in the choice of decorative details employed. Arthur H. Neumann & Company was the general contractor.

The cornerstone is dated 1918, and it appears that construction continued until 1920, the date of a commemorative plaque on the building's interior. When the building opened, the first floor was the only space for police officers. Also on the first floor was an assembly room accommodating up to 100, barber shop, police surgeon's suite of rooms, and jail. The second floor contained more jail cells, four courtrooms, and ancillary office space. On the third floor was the women's department, detention rooms for boys and girls, kitchen, dining space, tailor shop, emergency hospital, and a gymnasium. The latter was first redecorated in 1934.

Space is now at a premium, especially since federal cutbacks eliminated plans to expand operations into a nearby building. To accommodate the increased work force and changes in police practices, considerable interior modifications have occurred and are continuing. As is often the case, dropped ceilings, fluorescent lights, and partitions have been added over the years to provide office space. The southwest part of the interior was remodeled in 1970 after a bomb exploded causing considerable damage. The original central stairway has been eliminated and two smaller ones added. The new south staircase will allow for safe but controlled prisoner evacuation in case of fire.

In 1983 the State of Iowa changed the judicial system by eliminating municipal judges--and the need for four courtrooms in the Municipal Building. Except for holidays and weekends, most men and all women are now arraigned at the Polk County Courthouse. At the Municipal Building, former courtroom space has been converted to office or laboratory use. In many cases, decorative beams and ceramic wall tile have simply been covered over, not removed. However, judge's benches and witness and jury boxes which were also covered with the enameled tile have been removed.

The basement, formerly the garage, is now used for lockers for officers, a large roll call room, and offices for the three patrol watches. Changes and remodeling--including separate bath, showers, and lockers for women officers--contemplated in the near future will also provide more controlled access to this area.

During the energy crisis of the 1970's, original windows were replaced; it appears that similar mullion patterns were used. However, the original windows were double hung, and the transom mullion pattern consisted of small multiple squares. The bars originally on the third floor main facade windows have been removed. Entry steps have been changed slightly with the addition of metal hand rails and large planters.

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**Significance.**

The Municipal Court Building was the fifth public building constructed in the Des Moines river front Civic Center (only the Coliseum is not extant). The Building carries on the uniformity of color, height, placement, and classical styles that define the Civic Center district. Construction of the Municipal Court Building symbolized the commitment to reform in early twentieth century Des Moines. It replaced a district of notorious taverns, brothels, and gambling dens.

Following adoption of the Des Moines Plan of government in 1907, local reformers seized upon the general reform impetus that characterized local government during this period. They launched a highly vocal campaign to clean up vice in the city--in such places as the East Court Avenue district. The Municipal Court and Public Safety Building literally replaced vice on Court Avenue.

The building featured the latest in modern police practice and sanitary facilities (such as white tile walls in the inebriates room). But it went beyond mere provision for incarceration. There were special rooms for emergency medical care, sleeping quarters (at times used by soldiers), and a gymnasium for police officers. In 1911 there were eighty-one policemen and two matrons serving the City.

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United States Court House

Description.

The U.S. Court House is a well-preserved late (1928) example of the Classical Revival. As a stone-faced public building featuring classical detail, it is an excellent example of the property type described in this document. In addition, its appearance and location add markedly to the unified appearance of the Civic Center district. The building contributes to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterizes the Civic Center.

Among the prominent features are massive engaged columns along the main East Walnut Street facade. The effect is similar to that of the Municipal Court Building, Municipal Building, and the U.S. Post Office in the river front Civic Center district. Other common, unifying elements among some Civic Center buildings are rusticated stonework, round-arched windows, a cornice with mutules, use of limestone, and Corinthian capitals.

Fourteen smooth engaged columns having Corinthian capitals call attention to the slightly recessed body of the main (north) facade. Smooth rusticated stone along the ground floor anchors the composition and unites the projecting wings with the main body.

Motifs explored on the main facade continue on both narrower (east and west) sides of the building. But here the round engaged columns have become four squared pilasters, centrally located on the wall surface. Below them are three narrow round-arched openings (with keystones and consoles). Metal (perhaps bronze) striated panels separate ground floor and basement lights of the round-arched openings. The center rounded opening provides access, by a series of steps, to the basement level.

Unlike the earlier Civic Center buildings, a considerable number of rectangular, square, and round-arched windows provide ample light for the interior. Other notable features include attic windows, a cornice with mutules, and a series of semi-circular arched windows on the main floor. On the facades are original metal and glass light fixtures.

The four-story stone building (plus raised basement) is roughly E-shaped, although the effect is rectangular. Smaller hipped roof portions--where the ends of the "E" project slightly--flank the larger hipped roof body of the building. And at the rear (south), which is faced with tan brick, a center section, also hipped roofed, projects from the main shaft of the "E".

Like the U.S. Post Office, massive lights mark entrances on the east, north, and west sides. Metal urns with a large metal and glass canister above are placed on large simple pedestals. On the small grounds are an ornamented flagpole, benches, and recent landscaping.

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Significant portions of the interior, especially in public hallways, retain original details. Elaborate metal balustrades extend up with the divided staircase. A mural above the lower stairs (possibly a WPA project) depicts pioneers and a blacksmith. Fluted columns with ornate capitals march down the second floor hallway to courtrooms. Pilasters have capitals consisting of three bands of ornament.

Most offices have original doors (with paired windows having starred mullions) and wood surrounds (moulded and eared). At least one judge's chamber retains what appears to be original frosted glass in myriad small panels and dark woodwork. Dropped ceilings or acoustical tile have been added throughout the building. The courtroom for U.S. District Court is currently being renovated.

Entry steps have been altered with balustrades removed. On the east and west facades access is now to the basement level rather than the first floor, probably for security reasons. Windows are not original, but their configuration appears original. Six windows at the rear have been enclosed with brick.

**Significance.**

The U.S. Court House was the sixth of seven buildings constructed on the river front Civic Center in Des Moines (six are extant). It contributes strongly to the uniformity of color, height, placement, and style that characterizes the Civic Center. In addition, it illustrates the continuing role of the federal government in development of the Des Moines river front.

Completed in 1928, the building and its location had been a topic of discussion as far back as 1914. Local residents convinced the federal government of the advisability of the site--despite high lot prices. When the Treasury Department notified Congressman C. C. Dowell of its river front selection in 1917, it was hailed as a "big gain to civic center" and an "important advance in the work of the Town Planning Board." The building contains courtrooms and judge's chambers for the U.S. District Court.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 17**Armory and World War Memorial Building****Description.**

Like other public buildings along the river front, the Argonne Armory (termed the "Armory and World War Memorial Building" on the blueprints) displays a smooth grey stone facade. However, having been built during the 1930's Depression, it was designed using a style current during that period. The Armory, one of the best examples of the Art Deco Style in Des Moines, marks the demise of the Beaux-Arts influence on public buildings in general and on the Des Moines Civic Center in particular. Yet the use of similar materials, color, shape, and siting render the Armory a significant element along the river front. Construction began in 1934, making the Armory the last of the seven public buildings (six remain) to grace the river front and comprise the Civic Center.

The Armory displays typical features of the Art Deco Style. Stone laid with narrow, unobtrusive joints provides a hard-edged, smooth surface. Vertical lines (actually groups of rounded vertical moulding) in panels at the windows and on the pilasters provide a vertical emphasis. Another Art Deco element are the raised parapets at the two east entries which give a stepped effect and emphasize the geometric form of the building.

East entrances of the main facade and some west window groupings are inset slightly, giving a faceted effect, also an Art Deco trait. Hard-edged low-relief detail and sculpture, notably eagles above the entries, highlight these areas, and, with the "striped" details, are the principle decoration. Light fixtures flank the doors and consist of moulded pedestals for smooth tapered shafts from which now one light (originally three) are affixed. Above the doors are patriotic phrases ("For the Service of the People" and "For God and Country" on the east, "In Memory of Comrades and Their Achievements" on the south, and "A Fit Soldiery is the Guaranty of Liberty" on the west). The south entrance projects from the main facade, providing a vestibule (originally the Legion Hall entrance).

The 240' x 112' building is roughly rectangular in outline, with the exception of the projecting (16') ends of the west elevation. Between these projecting ends are seven large openings with curved tops. Originally six windows and a centered entry with a double ramp leading to it, these openings lighted the two-story drill hall. Now all function as windows. The tall windows offer an inviting view of the river front.

The Armory consists of two stories resting upon a slightly raised basement. The basement has deeply inset rectangular windows (not unlike the Library and Post Office) while the upper floors originally had paired casement windows topped with a transom. A moulded course occurs between the basement and the first floor. The north or service facade is tan brick. It does not rise the full two stories of the rest of the building because it was the location for the boiler system.

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The Armory originally had a dining room, kitchen, club room, storage, and rifle range in the basement. Club rooms and offices were dotted throughout the first and second floors as well. The dominant room was the two-story drill hall. The interior has been completely modified to accommodate city and county offices, including insertion of another floor in order to use all the drill hall space. The Argonne Post of the American Legion retains space in the basement. As late as the 1960's, the drill hall was intact, but was used for municipal recreation purposes.

Several windows at the southwest corner have been shortened and panels added with concrete "striped" effects designed to resemble the stone panels. The original groups of three lights on the east facade have been replaced by single, similar ones. Windows have been replaced (except for some in the basement) with energy-efficient versions; however, their configuration is similar to that of the originals. A concrete ramp allowing access for the handicapped has been placed at the south entrance.

The Armory is located on the east bank of the Des Moines River north of the Municipal Building and Grand Avenue. An expanse of green space, named Pete Crivaro Park in 1987 after a former mayor, is situated between Grand Avenue and the building. Two modern wood and metal benches (probably from the 1970's) are located there on a small concrete pad with modern landscaping around them. A low hedge outlines two sides of the park. There is also a boulder with a plaque commemorating "the first licensed ferry at the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, 1847, the first pontoon bridge at Sycamore Street (now Grand Avenue), 1856, the first toll bridge at Court Avenue, 1856". The Abigail Adams Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected the boulder in 1933. It has not been determined if the boulder was placed at this site in 1933.

### Significance.

The Armory was the seventh and last building constructed in the river front Civic Center in Des Moines (six are extant). It contributes to the uniformity of color, height, and placement that characterizes the Civic Center. The Armory also calls attention to the role of the federal government in funding long-held local plans for Civic Center development.

The Des Moines architectural firm of Tinsley, McBroom & Higgins designed the Armory. Blueprints are dated September 1933 with interior revisions in December 1934 and June 1935. The basic design remained unchanged, although slate was specified for the "striped" panels at the windows instead of the stone which was used. Also, small decorative pedestals with tapered monoliths (similar to the present east facade light fixtures) were apparently not constructed on the west side.

The cornerstone at the northeast corner is dated 1934, and a 1939 newspaper article also gives 1934 for the construction date. It appears that interior work continued into 1935, since blueprint revisions for interior work were dated 1934 and 1935.

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The present site of the Armory was long set aside for a Natatorium, but the facility was not built. There was ample precedent for provision of an armory and/or soldier's memorial as part of the Civic Center. In 1900 it was announced that a 110' x 150' armory would be built there south and west of the Grand Avenue bridge. The Robinson plan of 1909 also called for an armory on the river front. And in 1911 the Chamber of Commerce was behind efforts to gain a river front armory.

In 1919 plans were announced for a \$500,000 Memorial Auditorium and Art Museum on the river front. Brainchild of the Des Moines Ad Club, the idea had the blessing of the Town Planning Commission, the American Legion, the Equality League, and the Des Moines Association of Fine Arts. The favored site was the block south of the Municipal Building, across from the Library.

In 1921 the Planning Commission recommended construction of a memorial building "for the boys from Polk county who served in the army and navy during the world war." However, it soon became clear that the legal status of the additional tax levy to underwrite construction was in question, and no progress was made. None of these plans were implemented.

With the 1930's Depression and federal relief programs came renewed calls for a river front armory. Problems with financing immediately surfaced, especially concerning the type of bonds to use. One of the results was that the City obtained ownership of the Armory building, and the State leased space for the Argonne Post of the American Legion. The federal government paid for a portion of the labor and materials, which totaled approximately \$200,000, through the Public Works Administration.

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Court Avenue Bridge

Description.

The Court Avenue bridge is the oldest vehicular bridge along the river front Civic Center district to retain its original ornamentation. Built in 1917 and rebuilt in 1982, it consists of five spans and extends 496' across the Des Moines River.

Just north of the Court Avenue bridge are three similar reinforced concrete arch bridges at Walnut Street, Locust Street, and Grand Avenue. Immediately south of it are two metal railroad bridges.

Sets of six bannisters separated by a paneled post form the balustrade--a recurring motif also seen on the extensive river walls (c. 1934-36) and the Municipal Building (1909-10). Before they were rebuilt, the other vehicular bridges had similar balustrades. At the east and west ends of the bridge, massive barrel-shaped piers anchor the spans to land. They are rusticated (as are panels between the spans) and ornamented with classical detail, including mutules--other recurring motifs in the district. Spandrels are unadorned beyond simple panels. Small projecting squares (recalling rustication) outline the arches which culminate in an elegant pastiche of vegetal and classical detail.

Unlike the Walnut, Locust, and Grand bridges located nearby, the Court Avenue Bridge underwent extensive renovation in 1982, and its distinctive ornamentation was preserved and in fact enhanced. Although the deck was removed, the supporting spans were preserved and rehabilitated through repair of existing materials where possible and limited replacement of deteriorated steel and concrete with the latter matching the original in color and texture as closely as possible. The stone handrail was carefully removed, repaired, cleaned, and broken members replaced before reinstallation. The stone facing on the exterior spandrel walls and at the abutments was cleaned with high pressure water jets and completely repaired and tuckpointed. In 1986, street lamps with round globes and metal work appropriate to the 1910's were added to the bridge. The lamps were part of a \$1.8 million project to revamp Court Avenue from the bridge west to the courthouse.

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CFN-259-1116

**Significance.**

The only remaining bridge in the Civic Center retaining its original ornamentation, the Court Avenue Bridge physically unites the east and west banks of the Civic Center. Unification of these competing sides of town was one of the often repeated goals of river front improvement. Planning for urban improvement using City Beautiful Movement and city planning principles thus carried the additional hope of social change. The ornate appearance of the bridge clearly illustrates the concept of combined beautification with utility, a hallmark of early twentieth century planning.

The Court Avenue Bridge was built in 1917. By then, the Public Library, Coliseum (not extant), U.S. Post Office, and Municipal Building were in place. The Municipal Court and Public Safety Building, at the east end of the Court Avenue bridge, was undoubtedly contemplated by 1917.

The Court Avenue bridge was the third of the six bridges in the Civic Center. The Walnut Street (1911), Locust Street (1907), and Grand Avenue (1918) bridges all were reconstructed in the 1960's; original detail was removed, although the original shape of the spans and the piers remain. Essentially unaltered are the Riverside Park Drive bridge (1937) and the Scott Avenue bridge (1937).

Unlike the Walnut, Locust, and Grand bridges located nearby, the Court Avenue Bridge underwent what might best be described as rehabilitation when it underwent extensive renovation in 1982, and its distinctive ornamentation was preserved and in fact enhanced. Although the deck was removed, the supporting spans were preserved and rehabilitated through repair of existing materials where possible and limited replacement of deteriorated steel and concrete with the latter matching the original in color and texture as closely as possible. The stone handrail was carefully removed, repaired, cleaned, and broken members replaced before reinstallation. The stone facing on the exterior spandrel walls and at the abutments was cleaned with high pressure water jets and completely repaired and tuckpointed. In 1986, street lamps with round globes and metal work appropriated to the 1910's were added to the bridge. The lamps were part of a \$1.8 million project to revamp Court Avenue from the bridge west to the courthouse.

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The first Court avenue bridge was a toll bridge built in 1857-58 under the direction of architect U.B. White. The first legislators to meet in Des Moines in 1858 were issued passes for crossing. The first permanent bridge over Des Moines River in the city (a pontoon bridge at Grand Avenue in 1856 and a short-lived trestle bridge at Market Street in 1857 preceded it), it had four spans with double trusses and double arches. The original bridge was replaced in 1870 with a post truss bridge. The 1870 bridge remained in place as late as 1898, and this 1917 bridge probably was its replacement.

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## River Walls

## Description.

The river walls are concrete and topped with an ornamental balustrade throughout. Similar balustrades are found on the Municipal Building and also on the Court Avenue bridge in the Civic Center district. They extend on both banks from the Center Street dam of the Des Moines River through the Civic Center to the confluence of the rivers and beyond along the Raccoon River to the S.W. 5th Street bridge and along the Des Moines River to the Scott Avenue bridge and dam. Thus the river walls visually unite the district. The river walls combine beauty with utility, hallmarks of the City Beautiful Movement and early city planning.

A simple moulding carries on the line of the walls. Rusticated squared posts, also with moulding, are placed at regular intervals and relieve any potential monotony. Sets of double steps from the bank to the water level occur before the Library and former Post Office and at East River Front Park.

The river walls are continuous in the Civic Center district, except at the north bank of the Raccoon River at Sec Taylor Stadium. There, the river wall collapsed around 1976; unlike other river walls whose pilings are 5' apart, the damaged section's were placed at 10' intervals. John Tippee was City Engineer when the 5' spacing was used, but another engineer was responsible for the north wall. Due to high costs, riprapping replaced the river walls by 1978, under an Army Corps of Engineers contract.

Changing the course of the Raccoon River was another facet of the river wall project. By adding fill behind the river walls at the "Point," the juncture of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, the confluence was changed from a divergent course to a convergent one, a flood control measure. Dredging for the new channel may have begun as early as 1914; work was completed in the 1930's. Filling continued at the former city dump at the "Point" until approximately 1945 when the area was graded. Construction began in 1947 on Pioneer Memorial Stadium (now Sec Taylor Stadium), a minor league baseball park.

The intercepting sewer system which is part of the river walls was an integral part of the project, combining beauty and utility. Placed parallel to the walls is a concrete walk; beneath it (not visible) is the box sewer of the interceptor system. Depending on the water level, the little-used walk and portions of the river wall may be submerged.

The interceptor sewers are intended to handle storm run-off, notably from Bird's Run (at Keosauqua Way on the west side of downtown). But during heavy rains, water enters the interceptor sewers with tremendous force. Photographs, probably from the late 1930's show damage to the box sewers. Ingemar Clausen, a Danish civil engineer with the Corps of Engineers, realized the problem was a question of hydraulics: when air mixed with water from Bird's Run, pressure increased. The solution was installation of relief plates north of the Locust Street bridge, west side, which pop open as needed.

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**Significance.**

The present river walls, which replaced incomplete sections of earlier attempts to confine the river, date from Civil Works Administration and Works Project Administration projects of the 1930's. But the City Engineer had complete plans to divert the Raccoon River channel and build river walls and other flood relief measures as early as 1908. Their construction illustrates the culmination of long-sought plans, one related to the City Beautiful Movement, early city planning, engineering, and federal relief programs.

By 1934 river walls built with federal funds were complete from at least Walnut Street south to Court Avenue. The north river wall on the Raccoon River was built in 1937-38 under the Works Project Administration. By 1937 or 1938 the project was completed and the river walls were essentially as they appear today.

The concept of an interceptor sewer to dump sewage from downtown into the river dated from the 1890's in Des Moines. Between 1890 and 1910 brick sewers (no longer operational) were built.

There was serious flooding in 1902 and 1903. On July 9, 1902 the Des Moines River reached 13'6" at the Locust Street bridge, the highest mark since 1895. Two days later it reached the highest known mark since the disastrous flood of 1851. The area from Elm Street south to the Raccoon River was under water, and an estimated 1,000 families sought high ground. The following spring flood waters extended along the main streets of downtown and stood two feet deep in places.

Heavy rains also occurred in 1947, but levees held in most places. In 1954, the Des Moines River again reached flood stage. By 1960, levees begun by Des Moines city manager Leonard Howe in the 1950's protected areas previously prey to flooding, including park land north of the downtown area. And in 1965 both the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers were above flood stage. Flooding has been a continual problem for Des Moines.

High waters have regularly threatened, despite construction of Saylorville Lake north of Des Moines, a Corps of Engineers project. In the mid- to late-1960's the Corps augmented Howe's levees. The new levees and the short flood wall on the banks along the Des Moines River are a continuation of the Saylorville plan.

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## Scott Avenue Bridge and Dam

## Description.

The bridge is an open-spandrel reinforced concrete arch type having a 36' wide roadway and flanking 5' sidewalks. The Scott Avenue bridge has eight 86.5' spans totaling 747'. Concrete stairs at each abutment provide access to the river banks for fishermen.

Riverside Park Drive bridge spans the Raccoon River, and the nearby Scott Avenue bridge crosses the Des Moines River. Both are near the confluence of these rivers.

The dam built in conjunction with the Scott Avenue bridge is a concrete overflow dam. Designed in 1936, it was built between the bridge piers. The dam consists of eight bays, and the two end bays have an overflow section and a gate structure of three small vertical slide gates. Timber piles were used.

A unique feature of the dam is the presence of sanitary and storm sewer lines. Two sanitary sewer siphons (42" square and 30" square) run through the dam. The sewer lines enter the dam at Bay No. 5 and then pass through the body of the dam, heading toward the east abutment. The sanitary sewer lines are cast in concrete at the dam as part of the box culvert. This feature was included during the original design phase in anticipation of construction of a sewage treatment plant south and east of the dam.

The storm sewer passes through the dam and discharges near the foot of the overflow dam. Timber piles support it. The box sewer is part of the east abutment gate structure. It carries overflow from the interceptor storm sewer system that runs along both banks of the Des Moines River. The concrete box culvert at the dam is 14.67' wide and 7' high and has three vertical wood and steel slide gates. These gates are only operated when it is necessary to draw down upstream water level for inspections or maintenance, or to increase discharge capacity during floods.

The foundation of the Scott Avenue dam consists of about 30' of sand and gravel, then a thick layer of shale. It appears that the timber piles extend down to the shale bedrock.

Investigations of the dam in the late summer of 1976 revealed no serious deterioration. The Scott Avenue bridge was rebuilt in the 1980's, and the deck and railings are not original.

## Significance.

Construction of the Scott Avenue bridge and dam was completed in 1937 and represents the continuing federal commitment to Civic Center improvements. Provision for a dam to maintain constant water level along the Civic Center was a constant goal of early planners of river front improvements. Its design is an integral part of the river walls and sewer interceptor system.

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The Scott Avenue bridge and dam were constructed using Works Progress Administration funding. They were completed in 1937. The bridge cost \$358,899. Their construction is the culmination of engineering efforts (river walls and interceptor sewers) to control and improve the river front. It also calls attention to the federal role in Civic Center improvements and visually marks a boundary of the district.

Scott Avenue is, virtually without exception, referred to in Des Moines as Scott Street. Even the engineering reports cited below lapsed into that familiar moniker on occasion.

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**Riverside Park Drive Bridge**

**Description.**

The bridge is an open-spandrel reinforced concrete arch type having a 36' wide roadway and flanking 5' sidewalks. The five 86.5' spans of Riverside Park Drive bridge total 487'.

The Riverside Park Drive bridge spans the Raccoon River near the Scott Avenue bridge and dam on the Des Moines River. Both are near the confluence of these rivers. The decks and railing are not original.

**Significance.**

Construction of the Riverside Park Drive Bridge was completed in 1937 at a cost of \$224,312 and represents the continuing federal commitment to Civic Center improvements. The Riverside Park Drive bridge was constructed using Works Progress Administration funding.

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**Locust Street Bridge**

**Description.**

The Locust Street bridge consists of five reinforced concrete arches which support a concrete slab. The spandrels were originally filled with gravel or cinders. The bridge is 502' long.

Directly north of the Locust Street bridge is the Grand Avenue bridge. To the south are the Walnut Street and Court Avenue bridges. All retain the characteristic arches used on the City of Des Moines flag to symbolize Des Moines.

Bridges at Grand Avenue, Locust Street, and Walnut Street were reconstructed in the 1960's. Original ornamentation was removed on all but the Court Avenue bridge (reconstructed 1982). These three bridges originally resembled the Court Avenue bridge but were somewhat less ornate. Spandrel panels now consist of tannish pebbled panels, which contrast with the concrete of the spans and piers. The Locust Street bridge was reconstructed in 1967.

The bridge originally had the characteristic balustrade of the Civic Center district. At the piers were unusual small columns that connected an expanded pier with the balustrade above. The space held pairs of street lights.

**Significance.**

The Locust Street bridge was the first of the six bridges in the Civic Center. The Walnut Street (1911), Locust Street (1907), and Grand Avenue (1918) bridges all were reconstructed in the 1960's. The Court Avenue bridge (1917) retains its ornate original decoration. Also essentially unaltered are the Riverside Park Drive bridge (1937) and the Scott Avenue bridge (1937).

Inappropriate alterations have diminished the historical significance of the bridge, making it a noncontributing structure in the Civic Center district.

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Walnut Street Bridge

Description.

The Walnut Street bridge consists of six reinforced concrete arches which support a concrete slab. The spandrels were originally filled with gravel or cinders. The bridge is 450' long. Sidewalks 13'9" wide flank either side of the 59' wide roadway. The end spans bridge the interceptor sewers which run parallel along both sides of the river.

Directly north of the Walnut Street bridge are the Locust Street and Grand Avenue bridges. To the south is the Court Avenue bridge. All retain the characteristic arches used on the City of Des Moines flag to symbolize Des Moines.

Bridges at Grand Avenue, Locust Street, and Walnut Street were reconstructed in the 1960s. Original ornamentation was removed on all but the Court Avenue bridge (reconstructed 1982). These three bridges originally resembled the Court Avenue bridge. The Walnut Street bridge had the simplest ornamentation, although it too had the characteristic balustrades of the Civic Center. Plain panels marked the piers, and there were street lamps above them.

Spandrel panels now consist of tannish pebbled panels, which contrast with the lighter-colored concrete of the spans and piers. Before its reconstruction in 1966, the only modifications to the Walnut Street bridge had been asphalt resurfacing of the deck, removal of streetcar tracks, and patching the sidewalk.

Significance.

The Walnut Street bridge was the second of the six bridges in the Civic Center. The Walnut Street (1911), Locust Street (1907), and Grand Avenue (1918) bridges all were reconstructed in the 1960's; the original shape of the spans and piers remains. The Court Avenue bridge (1917), Riverside Park Drive bridge (1937) and the Scott Avenue bridge (1937) are essentially unaltered.

Inappropriate alterations have diminished the historical significance of the bridge, making it a noncontributing structure in the Civic Center district.

The John Wheeler Construction company built the Walnut Street bridge in 1911 for \$139,000. John W. Budd, City Engineer, and W. D. Maxwell were responsible for the design, according to the 1910 Specifications, and Professor A. Marston of Ames (probably Iowa State College) was the consulting engineer.

Construction of the bridge in 1911 coincided with that of the new Municipal Building (1910) on the east bank. It replaced a 1891 three-span steel Pratt truss bridge.

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**Grand Avenue Bridge**

**Description.**

The Grand Avenue bridge consists of six reinforced concrete arches which support a concrete slab. The spandrels were originally filled with gravel or cinders. The bridge is 495' long. Sidewalks flank either side of the roadway.

Directly south of the Grand Avenue bridge are the Locust Street, Walnut Street and Court Avenue bridges. All retain the characteristic arches used on the City of Des Moines flag to symbolize Des Moines.

Bridges at Grand Avenue, Locust Street, and Walnut Street were reconstructed in the 1960's. Original ornamentation was removed on all but the Court Avenue bridge (reconstructed 1982). These three bridges originally resembled the Court Avenue bridge. The Grand Avenue bridge, like that of Court Avenue, had rusticated stone, the Civic Center balustrades, and street lights. Attractive steps led down to the river. Spandrel panels now consist of tannish pebbled panels, which contrast with the lighter colored concrete of the spans and piers. The Grand Avenue bridge reconstruction occurred in 1968.

**Significance.**

The Grand Avenue bridge was the fourth of the sixth bridges in the Civic Center. The Walnut Street (1911), Locust Street (1907), and Grand Avenue (1918) bridges all were reconstructed in the 1960's; original detail was removed, although the original shape of the spans and the piers remain. The Court Avenue bridge (1917) retains its ornate original decoration. Also essentially unaltered are the Riverside Park Drive bridge (1937) and the Scott Avenue bridge (1937).

Inappropriate alterations have diminished the historical significance of the bridge, making it a noncontributing structure in the Civic Center district.

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East River Front Park and West River Front Park

Description.

West River Front Park runs along the Des Moines River from Grand Avenue south to Elm Street. It extends west to First Street or to that location if the street if it were extended. Riverside Drive between the river and First Street begins at Court Avenue and continues south to the confluence of the rivers and Riverside Park. (This park is not part of the Civic Center district.) There it becomes the Riverside Drive bridge, crosses the Raccoon River and joins with S. E. First Street and Scott Avenue.

On the other side of the river East River Front Park begins at East Locust Street and runs south along the Des Moines River to the Des Moines Union Railway Bridge in the middle of the block south of East Court Avenue. It extends east from the river to East First Street.

(Triangular-shaped Riverside Park is located at the confluence of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers and extending to S. W. Fifth Street. For the most part it is filled land--river dredgings and an old city dump. Sec Taylor Stadium (1947) is located on this fill ground, much of which is covered with asphalt for parking. Adjacent to Riverside Park on the north is a small piece of land termed "Public Ground." Neither are part of this nomination.)

The river front has always consisted of steep banks. Despite the several plans for river front improvements, actual landscaping and other changes were variable. Two buildings in particular enjoyed landscaping which tied them visually to the river front. The Public Library (1900-1903), which originally had a set of double steps on its riverside, was also the first to have river front amenities. In 1902 an artesian well was drilled, and a rather formal and symmetric small park between the Locust and Walnut Street bridges developed. Paths radiated from the centered fountain and steps led up to the library. There were small flower beds. These improvements have been removed.

The riverbank before the Municipal Building (1910-11) was treated similarly, although there was no artesian fountain. Contemporary photographs show a two-tiered river front landscaped with small benches, plantings in semi-circular arrangements, evergreens, potted plants, and two small round pools or fountains.

A 1925 aerial photograph shows flower beds and paths in East River Front Park directly south of the Municipal Buildings. This area was acquired later and landscaped after the Library and Municipal Building parks. Shown are sets of steps on the two tiers of grassy expanse leading to the river. Parkland south of Walnut Street on both banks and was shown as grass.

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In front of the Coliseum (not extant) on the west bank in 1925 was a single path leading to a central focal point as well as long simple benches for viewing the river front. A wonderful set of vine-covered pergolas were located perpendicular to the Coliseum. The YMCA, a modern building now occupies the Coliseum site; it is not part of this nomination. However, the grassy verge of West River Front Park is located directly in front of the YMCA. A remnant (a curved concrete curbing) of the landscaping visible on the 1925 aerial photograph is extant.

As a flood control measure, the city began in the 1950's to construct levees along the River Front Parks, using fill taken from construction of Veterans Memorial Auditorium. Army Corps of Engineers projects augmented these levees in the 1960's and added a short flood control wall in portions. The present land form consists of two rather steeply sloping curves to the river walls.

**Significance.**

Despite flood control alterations, East River Front Park and West River Front Park call attention to the role of the first Board of Park Commissioners in Des Moines and their efforts to improve the river front using City Beautiful Movement principles. Because of changes in topography and landscaping and the addition of levees and flood walls, the parks play a contributing rather than key role in the Civic Center district.

The Des Moines Park Board obtained title to all or part of the two River Front Parks in 1901. This early ownership reflects the early commitment to river front improvements and the development of the Civic Center of public buildings.

Because of recalcitrant property owners, there were delays in acquiring and improving portions of East River Front Park. Owner disapproval also probably accounted for exclusion of land north of Locust Street. Although the City later acquired these sites, they were not formally made part of East River Front Park.

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Center Street Dam

Description.

Constructed in 1917, the Center Street dam is a concrete, multiple arch and buttress type dam. It consists of a free overflow section divided into eleven 32' bays and a gate section of three vertical slide gates. Each gate opening is 10' high and 13' wide. Metal bridge decking is overlapped along the crest to form straight flashboard sections. Water spills over these flashboards at the crest of the dam and falls onto a sloping concrete rollway slab, then is deflected onto a concrete apron.

Timber piles support the dam buttresses and rollway. The tenth and eleventh bays rest on timber cribs from a previous dam at the site. Foundation for the dam consists of some 15' of sand, silts, and gravel followed by a stratum of hard clay or rock. It is possible that the piles extend to the clay stratum, based on requirements in the original design drawings. Remnants of concrete foundations from a former powerhouse were in place west of the gate structure as late as 1977.

When it became apparent that air drawn through the gate section caused damage, vibrations, and noise, the air vent chamber was covered with a metal plate sometime before 1977. More recently, there has been visible damage to the three westernmost buttresses and elsewhere. Repairs costing \$175,000 were undertaken in 1976.

Significance.

The Center Street dam forms the northern boundary of the Civic Center district. As such, it acts as a visual barrier, a clear line of demarcation in the Des Moines River, and the end point for the balustraded river walls. The dam is one of a number of improvements on the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers in Des Moines.

The dam, which remains in operation, was built in 1917 and replaced a much older one. The City Engineer was probably involved with its design.

The first dam at the site was constructed in 1849-50 to power Edward and Edwin Hall's saw mill. By 1857 the early crude dam was gone, but in 1860 the Williams family bought the site and rebuilt the dam for a flour mill, which extended into the river. The mill operated under several owners until 1889 when the mill was razed and replaced with a powerhouse.

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### Des Moines Union Railway Company Bridge

#### Description.

The metal Des Moines Union Railway bridge crosses the Des Moines River midway in the block between Court Avenue and Vine Street. Just south of it is the metal Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad bridge. Neither bridge was ever considered a positive addition to the river front Civic Center. In his report in the 1920's, Harland Bartholomew recommended that the lines be relocated when the bridges needed replacement. Neither bridge contributes to the appearance of the river front Civic Center district.

Three piers, which are barrel shaped, support two metal trusses. The Des Moines Union Railway Company continues to use the bridge.

#### Significance.

The bridge is a non-contributing element in the Civic Center district, although it may carry significance in other areas (such as engineering or transportation). Its presence (and also the Rock Island bridge) was considered a detriment to proper Civic Center development. Their location recalled the days when railroad service was of paramount importance. In contrast, City Beautiful planners recommended that railroad tracks be located farther from commercial areas.

On December 20, 1884, officials of three railroads organized the Des Moines Union Railway Company. They represented the Des Moines & St. Louis Railroad, the Des Moines Northwestern Railway Company, and the St. Louis, Des Moines & Northern Railway Company. Grenville M. Dodge was the first President of the company, James F. How was the Vice President, and F. M. Hubbell was Secretary and Treasurer. The new company was formed to provide a union depot in Des Moines for these (and other) railroads and to operate in and around the city.

Des Moines Union Railway bought rights-of-way, track, and franchises over four miles of east-west track in the city. By 1911 the company had expanded their tracks considerably. The date of construction for the present bridge has not been determined.

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### Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Bridge

#### Description.

The metal Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad bridge crosses the Des Moines River at Vine Street. Just north of it is the metal Des Moines Union Railway bridge. Neither bridge was ever considered a positive addition to the river front Civic Center. In his report in the 1920's, Harland Bartholomew recommended that the lines be relocated when the bridges needed replacement. Neither bridge contributes to the appearance of the river front Civic Center district.

The bridge consists of seven piers--five of them in the water. Rough hewn stone block piers alternate with concrete piers. There is a double track and metal walls extending about eight feet high. The bridge is no longer in use.

#### Significance.

The bridge is a non-contributing element in the Civic Center district, although it may carry significance in other areas (such as engineering or transportation). Its presence (and also the Union Railway bridge) was considered a detriment to proper Civic Center development. Their location recalled the days when railroad service was of paramount importance. In contrast, City Beautiful planners recommended that railroad tracks be located farther from the commercial areas.

The Rock Island was the second railroad to reach Des Moines, in the 1860's, but it was the first to bridge the Des Moines River, in 1868. The date of construction for the present bridge has not been determined. There is no mention in county histories of 1876, 1898, and 1911 of a replacement bridge.

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**Civic Center District**

The Civic Center District of river front buildings, structures, and land forms is unique in the city. No other group of buildings and landscape combine to illustrate as strongly and directly the important themes outlined in the Multiple Properties Cover Document, the City Beautiful Movement and City Planning in Des Moines, Iowa, 1892-1938.

Civic Center buildings and structures are distinguished by their river front location and by their harmonious design, style, scale, use, siting, and materials. River front improvements--river walls, bridges, dams, specialized sewer systems--marry environmental and manmade considerations. They show the effect of a major, flood-prone river upon urban development and the steps taken to diminish flood damage.

The Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers are the principal topographical delineators for the city; indeed, their presence accounts for the city's origins in 1843 as a fort site. Environmental influences were, of course, a determining factor in creation of the river front Civic Center in its present configuration. (Without a river, by definition, there can be no river front Civic Center.) And interest in stabilizing and beautifying the river banks as well as the river bed were early and important considerations.

The present district consists of six public buildings, eight bridges, 11,617 linear feet of river walls (which includes a system of interceptor sewers), two small dams, Riverside Drive, and West River Front Park and East River Front Park. Along the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers.

Significant properties well represent the stylistic period in which they were constructed. Five properties built between 1900 and 1928 (Public Library, former Post Office, Municipal Building, Municipal Court Building, U.S. Court House) display similar variations of the classical vocabulary. Unifying elements include use of stone, rustication, full-height stone columns, balustrades, relatively simple cornices, round-arched openings, and other details from the classical lexicon. Most examples display a restrained version of Beaux-Arts Style classicism.

All six public buildings display a uniformity of color, height, and placement. Even the Art Deco Style Armory conforms and blends harmoniously with the overall design. With the exception of the Armory at the north end of the district, all reflect the influence of the White City of Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exposition, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and European urban design in general on public building design.

Buildings for City Beautiful plans were intended to blend together, to work as a planned unit, rather than to stand apart as individual monumnets to one architect's design. The Civic Center buildings were located along the river as part of conscious plans for river front development. Due regard for placement with respect to existing buildings (and political realities) was exercised. The federal government cooperated by selecting river front sites, but placed the main facades of the Post Office and the U.S. Court House on streets rather than the river.

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Properties in the Civic Center district date from the City Beautiful/City Planning era in Des Moines; known extant examples date from 1900 to 1938. Construction plans date from the progressive period in Des Moines and are directly related to efforts to bring about orderly change. Their locations reflect the contributions of such noted national planning experts as Warren Manning and Charles Mulford Robinson whose plans and reports influenced Civic Center development.

Dams and river walls had been part of the earliest river front improvement plans. The high cost of dam construction delayed building of a dam south of Court Avenue (the Scott Avenue dam) until the Depression, although the City Engineer maintained (and updated) plans from at least 1906. Changing the channel so that the Raccoon River no longer emptied improperly into the Des Moines River was another long-sought improvement. These plans carried additional urgency following major flooding in 1902 and again in 1903. The changes involved adding perhaps six feet of fill over the former city dump (not part of this proposed district) at the river's confluence and creating a manmade land extension. Although there was mention of building a stadium for this site as early as 1937 using WPA funds, the present Sec Taylor Stadium dates from 1947 and is not part of this nomination.

Portions of river walls had been built in the early years of the Park Board, and construction continued as money was available into the 1920's. However, these river walls were rebuilt using federal CWA and WPA funds in the 1930's. Reconstruction included provision for a major interceptor sewer system to channel rain water, especially from Bird's Run, into the river. The Depression-era plans thus combined beauty and utility. The river walls were designed to be both ornamental (carrying the balustrade motif seen on several of the public buildings and bridges) and functional. These improvements occurred from 1933 to 1938.

The river front buildings have sustained remarkably few exterior alterations. All have energy-efficient windows and doors. There have been periodic interior modifications over the years. Entry steps and entrances have been changed on the U.S. Court House, although its monumental character remains. With the recent interest in historic preservation, Des Moines officials renovated the impressive Counting Room of the Municipal Building, ornate gilded borders and other details have been restored to the Public Library, and the main courtroom in the U.S. Court House is undergoing what appears to be thoughtful renovation. The Municipal Court Building, also undergoing renovation, has retained the large and rather ornate main halls while providing for modern law enforcement requirements.

River walls appear to be unaltered; one section (1,600 linear feet at Sec Taylor Stadium) collapsed in c. 1976, and high costs precluded replacement, although there are plans for its reconstruction. The Locust and Walnut Streets and Grand Avenue bridges were all reconstructed in the late 1960's; original ornamentation was removed and the decks rebuilt. However, the original shape of the spans and piers remains. The Court Avenue bridge was reconstructed in the 1980's, but great care was taken to retain original

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detail. In a recent nod to preservation of the Court Avenue area west of the bridge, street lights of a design appropriate to the early 1900's have been installed in the four blocks from the Court House to and across the bridge.

In addition to the Locust and Walnut Streets and Grand Avenue bridges, two metal railroad bridges are also noncontributing elements in the Civic Center district. (However, it is possible that they have merit outside the themes discussed here for their engineering design or advanced age.) Also noncontributing are Army Corps of Engineers flood controls, including levees (continuations of levees dating from the 1950's) and short smooth concrete flood walls atop them dating from the 1970's. However, the basic configuration of the land forms is not markedly altered. A bicycle or jogger's path runs along some of the levees. Although the latter is in keeping with the park uses envisioned for the river front, the path is recent as is some landscaping.

Changing environmental influences--notably a series of disastrous floods--prompted added interest in controlling flooding in Des Moines as early as 1902. These interests crested in the 1930's with federal assistance programs. Federal participation in river front and flood control projects has continued under Army Corps of Engineers plans, such as the short flood walls and levees.

The current physical condition of buildings in the district is relatively stable and all are in use. With changing public uses, some interiors have been altered. But with the recent interest in historic preservation, portions of interiors, especially the most public areas, have been renovated or restored.

Bridges for vehicular traffic typically deteriorate over time, especially the decks, and require reconstruction. Dams and interceptor sewer systems also deteriorate, especially from the effects of water, and require periodic improvement. Land forms, such as steep river banks, may erode. Changing philosophies and preferences for landscaping affect choices of plant material. And one of the inherent characteristics of living materials is that they grow and die.

The Army Corps of Engineers continues to plan projects that could affect the river front Civic Center. The Des Moines Recreational River and Greenbelt was funded and conditionally authorized in 1985. The project calls for the "development, operation, and maintenance of a recreation and greenbelt area" including the Civic Center.

Possible projects include building recreational facilities and stabilization structures for banks, operating and maintaining existing structures, and "environmental enhancement for recreational purposes," such as tree planting. Plans remain just that at this point. Specific proposals developed by City staff include projects that would significantly alter or improve the Civic Center, such as dam removal, river front private development sites (north of Grand Avenue), downtown marina for 250 boats (north of Grand Avenue), dredging channels, construction of a promenade in the district, and repairing and reconstructing river wall ornamentation. Also, restoring appropriate decoration to three

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bridges in the proposed district, creation of a "riverfront plaza" in the proposed district, removing levees, construction of a visitor center near the proposed district, redesign of Pete Crivaro Park, restore deteriorating balustrades on parts of the river walls, and construction of marina for rowboats and sculls between Grand and Locust.

Listing the Civic Center district on the National Register may afford several benefits to the community. Its special status as one of the nation's important cultural properties may help preserve significant features of the district. And the district may qualify for additional federal funds related to the Greenbelt.

For significance summaries relative to the contributing resources located within the district, please refer to Section 7, pages 3-4, 7, 10-11, 14, 16, 18-19, 20-21, 23, 24-25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32 and 33.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The northern boundary of the Civic Center historic district is the Center Street dam. The boundary line then turns southerly along the river to just north of the Armory where it turns east to East First Street, then continues along that street past the Armory, Pete Crivaro Park, East Grand Avenue, the Municipal Building, and East Locust Street. At East Locust East First Street jogs several feet west and then continues south. The district line follows this jog and runs along East River Front Park, crossing East Walnut Street. There the line turns east along Walnut to include the United States Court House and grounds. The boundary line returns to East First Street and continues to East Court Avenue where it again turns east to encompass the Municipal Court and Public Safety Building before returning to East First Street.

The line continues along East River Front Park, crossing the Des Moines Union Railway tracks, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad tracks, East Market Street, and East Elm Street (the end of East River Front Park). East First Street becomes S.E. First Street at Vine Street.

The line continues along the river front on City-owned right-of-way, passing Raccoon, Dean, and Allen Streets and terminating at the Scott Avenue Bridge and Dam. Here the line turns southward and crosses this bridge and dam. Then it continues to follow the right-of-way along the south bank of the Raccoon River until it reaches the S.W. 5th Street Bridge (also known as the Jackson Avenue Bridge). This part of the district ends just easterly of this bridge where the river walls end.

The boundary line continues along the right-of-way of the north bank of the Raccoon River until it reaches the confluence of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. There it expands slightly to include Riverside Drive as it continues north along the Des Moines River. The line follows West River Front Park, crossing the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad tracks, the Des Moines Union Railway tracks, and Court Avenue. It continues along First Street, turning west at Second Avenue to include the United States Post Office, then jogging east across Walnut Street to include the Public Library of Des Moines. On the north side of the library, at Locust Street, the line returns to West River Front Park (in front of the YMCA), crosses Grand Avenue, then follows the river walls north to the Center Street Dam.

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LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR CIVIC CENTER DISTRICT

Note that the River Walls are not described separately when they occur as part of a park or larger tract of ground in the district.

**Center Street Dam**

The Center Street dam across the Des Moines River.

**Public Library of Des Moines**

Lots 5, 6, 7, and 8 of Block 33 in the Town of Fort Des Moines and a vacated alley between lots 6 and 7 of Block 33 together with a vacated street along the east side of said Block 33.

**West River Front Park**

A tract of land south of Locust Street, east of the street vacated along the east side of Block 33 in the Town of Fort Des Moines, north of Walnut Street, and west of the west bank of the Des Moines River, including the river walls.

That part of West River Front Park extending from Walnut Street to Court Avenue and from 1st Street to the west bank of the Des Moines River, including the river walls.

That part of West River Front Park extending from Court Avenue to the south line of Vine Street extended easterly.

That part of West River Front Park between Vine Street on the north and the southern boundary of Elm Street on the south.

A strip of land extending southeasterly from the south line of Elm Street between the west line of Riverside Drive and the Des Moines River down to the north bank of the Raccoon River, including Riverside Drive Bridge across the Raccoon River.

**U.S. Post Office**

Block 34 of the Town of Fort Des Moines, including a vacated street.

**Des Moines Union Railway Company**

Property of the Des Moines Union Railway including the Des Moines Union Railway Bridge across the Des Moines River located in the tract of West River Front Park south of Court Avenue and the south boundary of Vine Street extended easterly, then the railroad right-of-way for the Des Moines Union Railway on the east bank of the Des Moines River in the tract of East River Front Park south of Court Avenue and north of the north boundary of Vine Street extended westerly.

**Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad**

Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad property situated in West River Front Park between Court Avenue and the south line of Vine

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Street extended easterly together with the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad bridge across the Des Moines to that part of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad right-of-way in Vine Street between the east line of East First Street and the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad bridge.

**Armory**

That part of Block 1 of East Fort Des Moines containing the Armory and Pete Crivaro Park between a line 150' northerly from the north line of Des Moines Street extended westerly extending south to the north line of East Grand Avenue and that strip of land between Block 1 of East Fort Des Moines and the east bank of the Des Moines River south of the north line of lot 1 of said Block 1 and extended south to the north line of East Grand Avenue, included vacated streets and alleys.

**Municipal Building**

Lot 3 of the NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 4, Township 78, Range 24 west of the 5th P.M. containing the Municipal Building, otherwise described as a tract bounded on the north by East Grand Avenue, on the east by East 1st Street, on the south by East Locust Street, and on the west by East River Front Park.

**East River Front Park**

The tract bounded on the north by East Grand Avenue, on the east by the tract containing the Municipal Building, on the south by East Locust Street, and on the west by the east bank of the Des Moines River, including the river wall.

A tract of ground bounded on the north by East Locust Street, on the east by East 1st Street, on the south by East Walnut Street, and on the west by the east bank of the Des Moines River, including the river wall.

A tract of ground bounded on the north by East Walnut Street, on the east by East First Street, on the south by Court Avenue, and on the west by the east bank of the Des Moines River, including the river wall.

A tract of ground bounded on the north by Court Avenue, on the east by the west line of East 1st Street, on the south by the south line of Vine Street, and on the west by the east bank of the Des Moines River, including the river wall.

A tract of land bounded on the north by the south line of Vine Street, on the east by the west line of S.E. 1st Street, on the south by the south line of Market Street, and on the west by the east bank of the Des Moines River, including the river wall.

The river wall along the east bank of the Des Moines River extending from the south line of Market Street to the north line of Scott Avenue.

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### **Scott Avenue Bridge and Dam**

The Scott Avenue bridge and dam across the Des Moines River.

### **U.S. Court House**

Lots 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 in Block E, including a vacated alley in Block E, of Scott & Dean's Addition to Des Moines, Iowa.

### **Municipal Court and Public Safety Building**

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, the north 8' of lot 5, 17, 16, and the west 8' of lot 15 including the vacated alley between lot 4 and lots 3 and 17 and including the alley between lots 16 and 17, all in Block D of Scott & Dean's Addition to Des Moines, Iowa.

### **River Walls**

A strip of ground between River Hills Plat 2 and the west bank of the Des Moines River extending 500.94' northward from Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa.

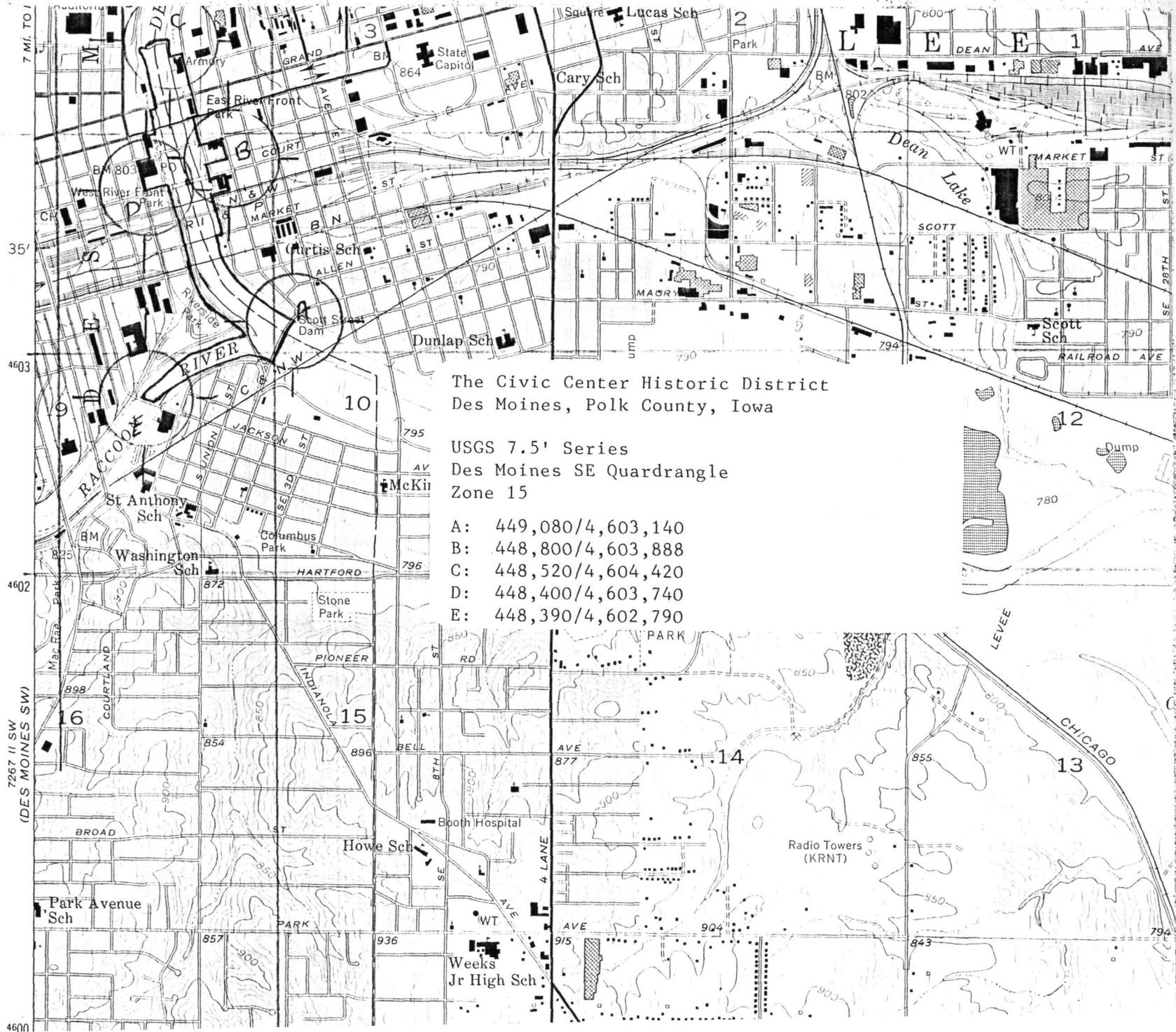
A strip of land in Riverside Park extending southwesterly from the west line of Riverside Drive along the northern bank of the Raccoon River, including the river wall, to the northeastern line of S.W. 5th Street.

A strip of land between the east boundary of the river wall and the east bank of the Des Moines River from the south line of Center Street extended eastward to the east side of the river wall along the east side of the Des Moines River south to East Grand Avenue.

### **River Walls and Open Space**

Lot 2, Coliseum Place and a strip of land between Lot 2, Coliseum Place and the west bank of the Des Moines River extending from Grand Avenue to Locust Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

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MUNICIPAL COURT

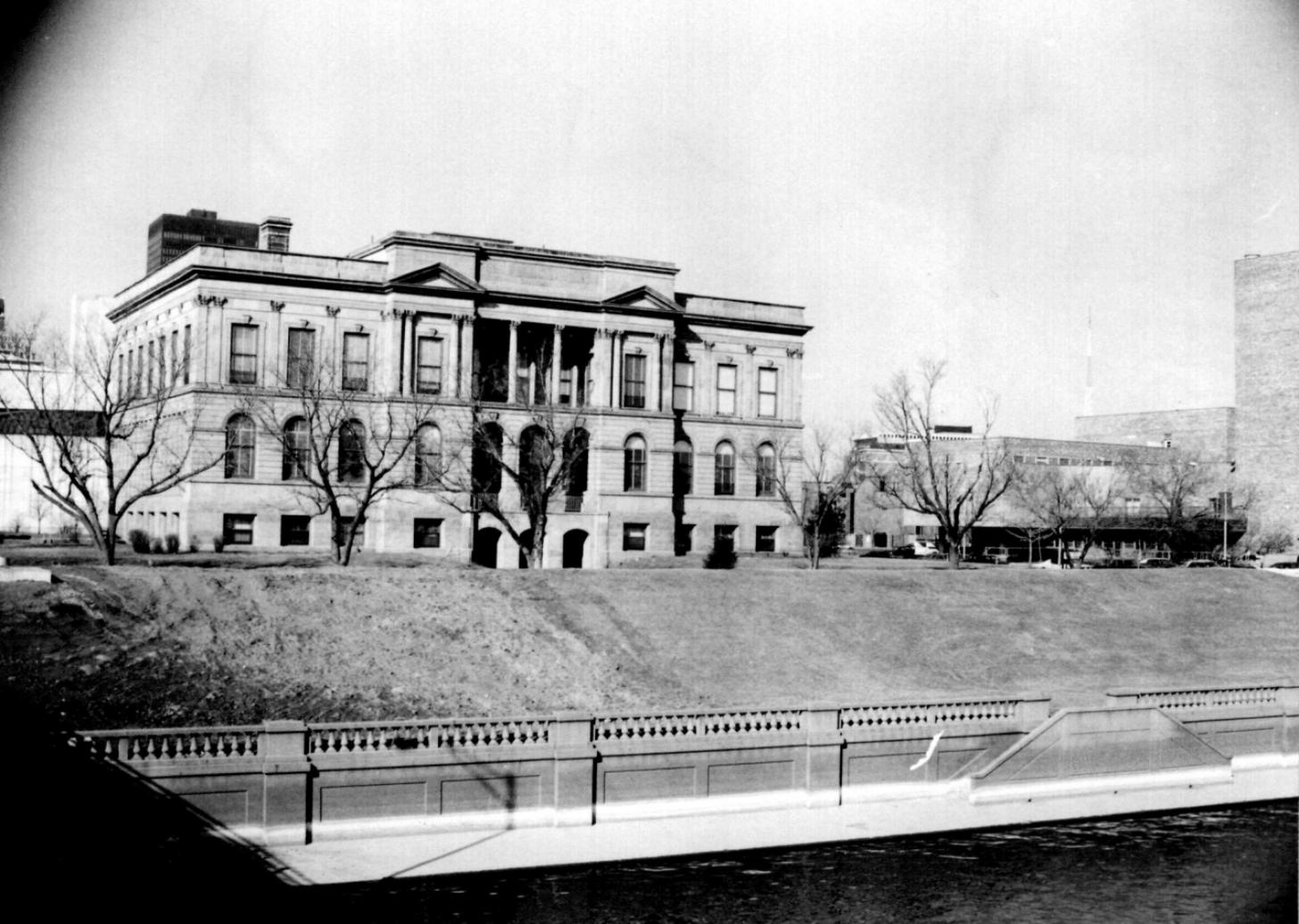










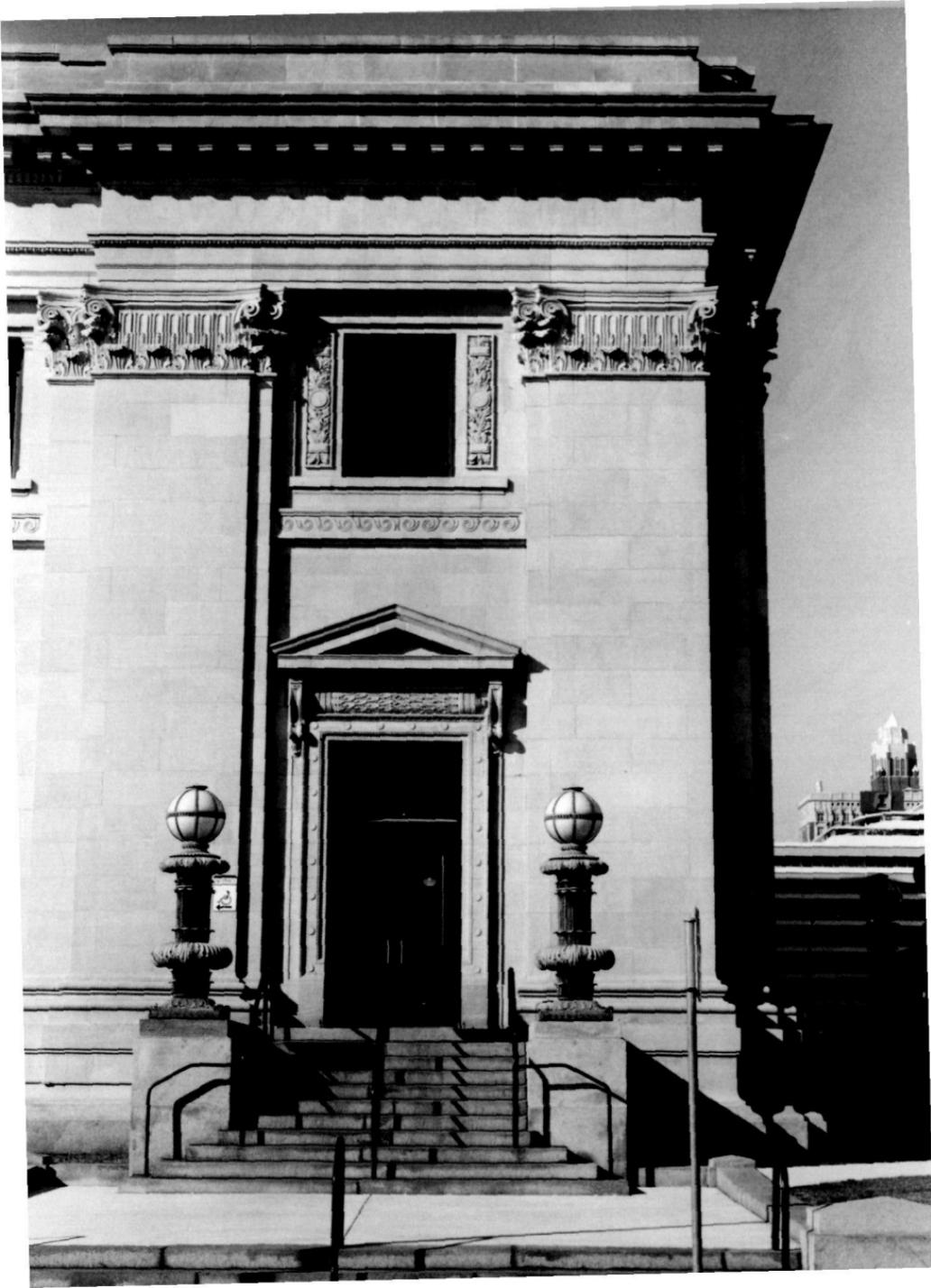




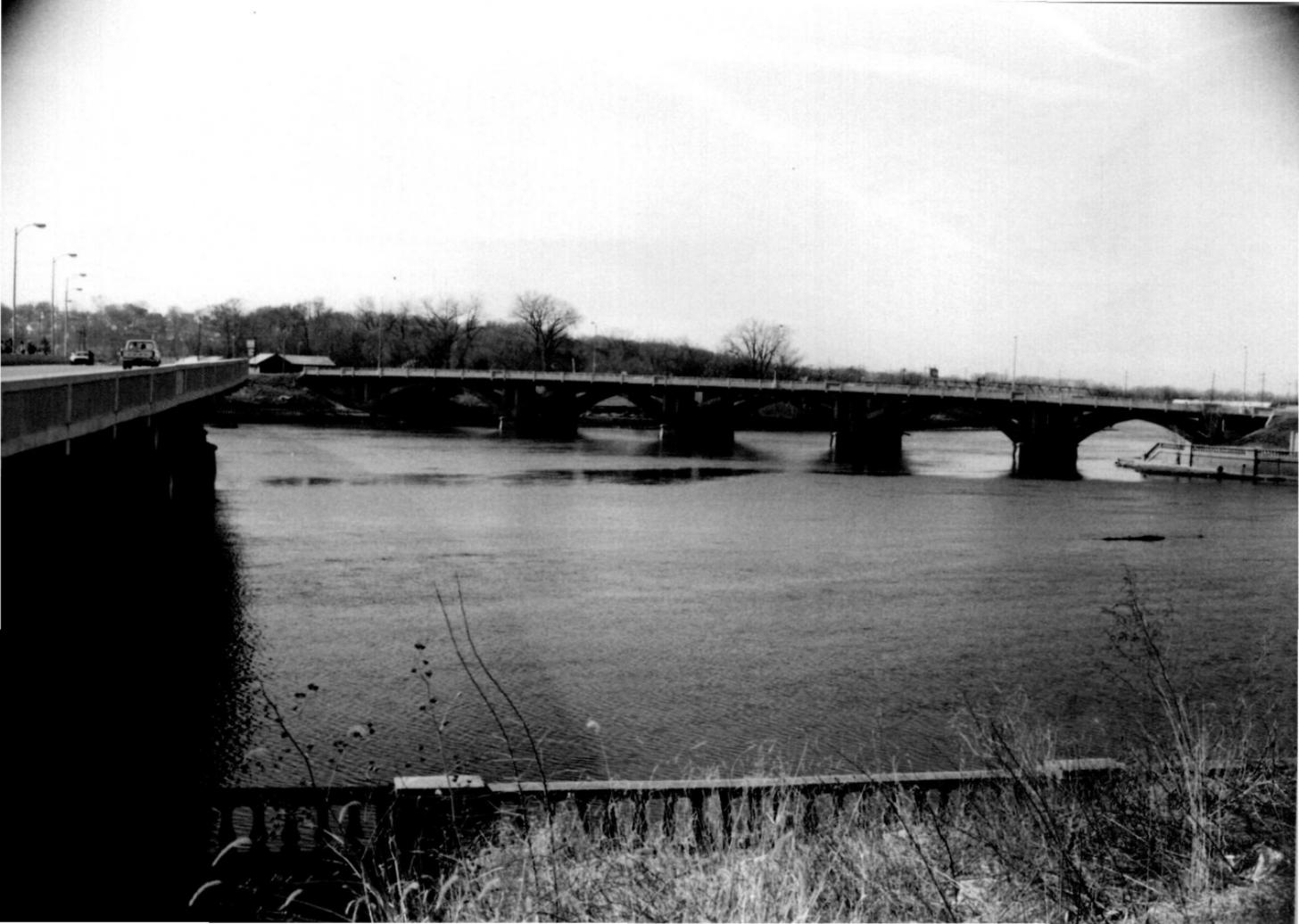
















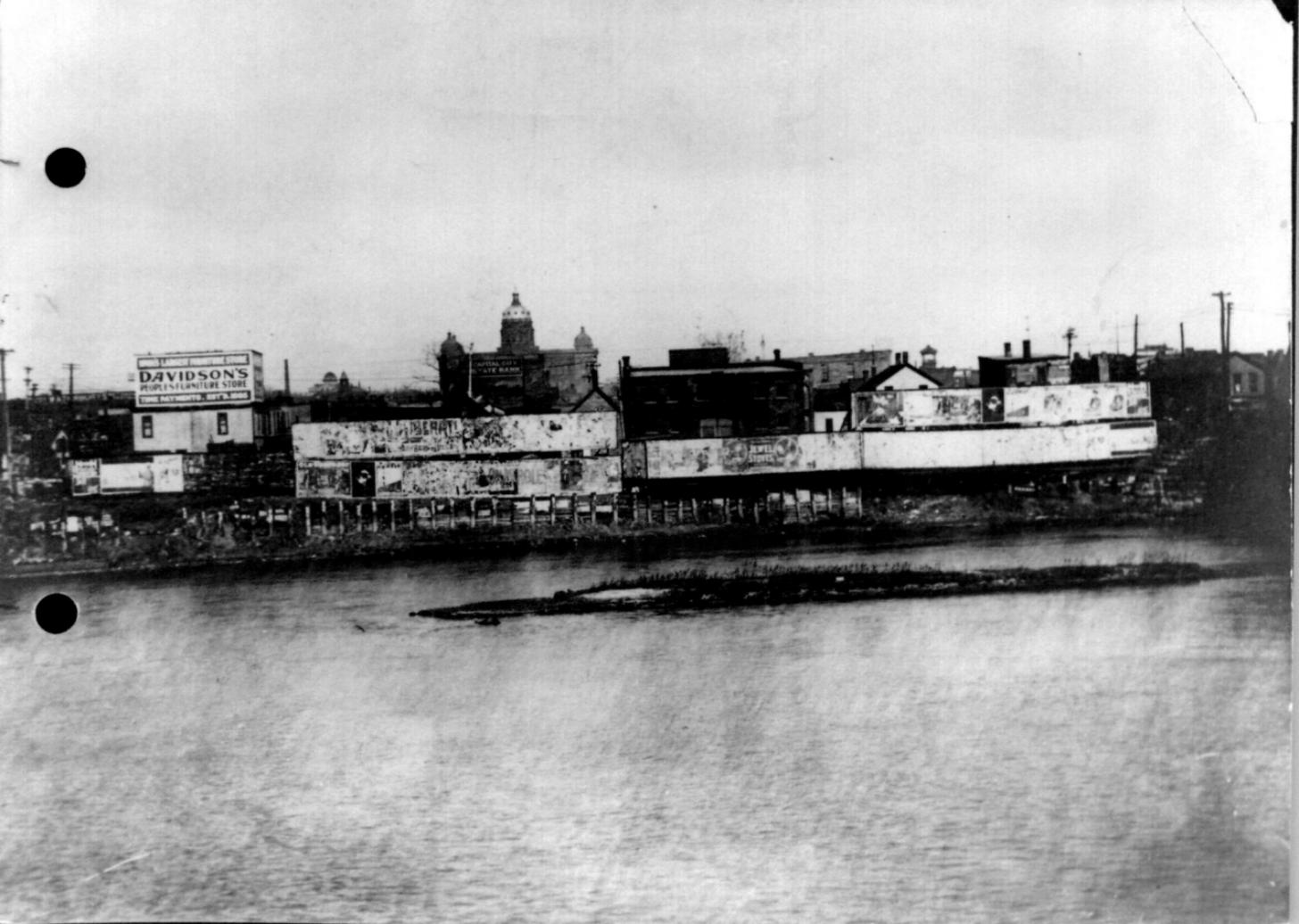








BARNETT  
'25 PHOTO



DAVIDSON'S  
FURNITURE STORE  
HOME DEPARTMENT, GUY'S BROS.

LIBERTY

MAY BEAN



ERAL DISTIE  
EYES FATIGUE  
OLD - HERE 5¢

SARDHOI  
LAXATI  
TEA TABI  
MONEY REFUND





MUNICIPAL COURT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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