

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

Official Eligibility Determination (OAHp use only)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Initials \_\_\_\_\_

- Determined Eligible – National Register
- Determined Not Eligible – National Register
- Determined Eligible – State Register
- Determine Not Eligible – State Register
- Need Data
- Contributes to eligible National Register District
- Noncontributing to eligible National Register District

I. IDENTIFICATION

- 1. Resource number: **5RT.236** Parcel number(s): **145018001**
- 2. Temporary resource number: **N/A**
- 3. County: **Routt**
- 4. City: **Steamboat Springs**
- 5. Historic Building Name: **Routt County Courthouse**
- 6. Current Building Name: **Routt County Courthouse**
- 7. Building Address: **522 Lincoln Avenue**
- 8. Owner Name: **Routt County**
- Owner Organization:
- Owner Address: **P.O. Box 773210**  
**Steamboat Springs, CO 80477**



44. National Register eligibility field assessment:	<b>Eligible</b>
Local landmark eligibility field assessment:	<b>Eligible</b>

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 2 of 10

### II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **6th** Township: **6N** Range: **84W**  
**NW ¼ of SE ¼ of NW ¼ of NE ¼ of Section 17**
10. UTM reference (Datum: NAD27)  
 Zone: **13** **344799 mE** **4482951 mN**
11. USGS quad name: **Steamboat Springs, Colorado**  
 Year: **1969** Map scale: **7.5**
12. Lot(s): **All of Block 18**  
 Addition: **Original Addition of Steamboat Springs** Year of addition: **1884**
13. Boundary description and justification:  
**This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.**  
 Metes and bounds?: Describe:

### III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Rectangular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **Length: 116 feet x Width: 65 feet**
16. Number of stories: **3**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Brick**
18. Roof configuration: **Flat Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Asphalt Roof/Composition Roof**
20. Special features: **Ornamentation/Decorative Terra Cotta**

21. General architectural description:

**The following architectural description is taken from the "Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation" prepared in August 2000.**

**The Routt County Courthouse is a symmetrical, rectilinear, flat roofed Renaissance Revival building with Beaux-Arts influences. Divided into nine vertical bays, it has an elaborate arched central entrance with wood doors and glass above, with one engaged Doric order column on each side of the entryway. The rusticated sandstone foundation supports reinforced concrete walls with a blond brick exterior. A white terra cotta belt course separates the ground level from the two floors above. Geometric patterns in the brick separate the second and third stories. A second string course of white terra cotta, wraps the building above the third-story windows. Windows appear in sets of two, are primarily the original one-over-one double hung in wood frames set with brick sills, and are separated into vertical bays with pilasters. Two pilasters appear on each wing of the front façade. The pilasters have white terra cotta capitals and bases. The central columns and entrance are capped with an inscription stone. Above the inscription stone appears an acanthus leaf swag in sculpted stone above and in between two eagle statuary.; The third story windows of the central portion of the front façade have transom windows. The parapet is detailed with bas-relief stone panels in a leaf and shield pattern and capped in white terra cotta. Steps to the entryways are stone.**

**The non-contributing brick addition to the building was added in the 1980s and an enclosed bridge corridor connects the two. A small enclosed entry was added to the building, on the west side, in 1994 in conjunction with the remodel and removal of the original jail that was located in the basement. Several of the ground floor**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 3 of 10

---

windows have been enclosed with brick, while third story windows have been enclosed on the east façade and second and third story windows have been enclosed on the west façade. [1]

An early 1980s restoration completed by Michael Kortas included the replacement of the original inscription stone, removal and replacement of sections of the belt courses, and cleaning of brick. The project was financed completely by the county with a six-week duration. Michael Kortas and his two employees replaced the inscription stone above the main entrance with Indiana limestone, which was engraved by Colorado Stone Co. located in Longmont. He replaced terra cotta belt course pieces that had begun to crack and flake. He subcontracted to a restoration company to complete the exterior brick cleaning. They also placed stone caps on the fish ponds and constructed the flower planters and brick pavers around the flag pole (Kortas, July 8, 2000) [2]

Ron Szerlong, architect for the restoration that began in the early 1990s and [he] continued with slow upgrades thereafter, characterizing the project as "challenging." Respecting the original design and workmanship and maintaining that integrity was of utmost concern. The interior plaster was redone, with care taken to duplicate the existing plaster. The exterior glazed terra cotta was extremely difficult to match. When the ADA compliant addition was made he chose a limestone that is an almost perfect match. Terra cotta in general is not particularly weather resistant and can not hold up to Routt County's climate. The brick for the ADA addition was located at an old brickyard in Denver, after which it had to be cleaned and then used. The older brick is of a different size and color of those used today. Therefore, locating original older bricks was key to the success of the addition. Ron Szerlong then had to match the mortar coursing [sic.] to ensure that the height and brickwork matched the original. When the jail cells were removed to make offices in the downstairs, 18-inch walls were removed. The walls were cut piece-by piece, to make room for the Assessor's Office. The steel bars were removed from the ground floor windows (basement), while the original windows were replaced with Pella Windows which replicated the originals. The original downstairs were "dark and dingy;" however, many of the original features were preserved. The original columns have remained in the Assessor's Office and the safes were preserved. The terrazzo flooring proved challenging when the basement interior walls were removed. The floors, which are granite set in cement, had gaps in them where 18-inch walls previously existed. The architect located a company in Denver that reproduced the march to fill in the spaces. Additionally, hand rails were fashioned of oak for the ground floor by a local trades person, Sandy Swineheart, to match the existing upper level hand rails. The architect also added the elevator at the end of the hallway and built a small entrance for ADA accessibility in his efforts not to construct an exterior lift that would climb the building. (Szerlong, May 2, 2000)

[1] At the time of survey in August 2007 the ground floor windows no longer appeared to be enclosed with brick.

[2] The fish ponds were later removed in 1995 or 1996, according to Albert Winograsky, Routt County Maintenance Supervisor.

22. Architectural style: **Late 19th And 20th Century Revivals/Renaissance Revival**  
 Building type:
23. Landscape or special setting features: **The Routt County Courthouse is centrally-located in Block 18 of the Original Addition of Steamboat Springs. Large expanses of painted grass lawns with mature evergreen trees extend from the original courthouse to Lincoln Avenue to the southwest and to 6th Street to the northwest. An asphalt parking lot is located on the southeast and northeast sides of the courthouse, with vehicular access from 5th Street and Oak Street. The Annex addition is located northeast of the original courthouse, joined by an enclosed bridge.**
24. Associated buildings, features or objects: **Not Applicable**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 4 of 10

### IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Date of construction:      Estimate:                      Actual:      **1923; c. 1985**  
 Source of information:    **"Routt County Courthouse." Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation, August 2000.**
26. Architect:                      **Robert K. Fuller**  
 Source of information:    **"Routt County Courthouse." Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation, August 2000.**
27. Builder:                        **A.E. Danielson and Son**  
 Source of information:    **"Routt County Courthouse." Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation, August 2000.**
28. Original owner:              **Routt County**  
 Source of information:    **"Routt County Courthouse." Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation, August 2000.**
29. Construction history:  
**The Routt County Courthouse was constructed in 1922-1923. It was designed by renowned Colorado architect Robert K. Fuller, while A.E. Danielson and Son of Denver was the primary contractor. In the early 1980s, Michael Kortas led a restoration effort which included replacement of the original inscription stone, removal and replacement of sections of the belt courses, and cleaning of brick. In the early 1990s, architect Ron Szerlong supervised further restoration work, including repairing the original interior plaster. The courthouse annex, joined to the original courthouse by an enclosed elevated bridge, was also erected in the early 1990s.**
30. Original location:       Moved:                      Date of move(s): **N/A**

### V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s):                **Government/Courthouse**
32. Intermediate use(s):         **Government/Courthouse**
33. Current use(s):                **Government/Courthouse**
34. Site type(s):                  **Routt County Courthouse**
35. Historical background:  
**The following Historical Background information was excerpted from the "Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation" prepared in August 2000.**
- Routt County was formed in 1877 through the division of Grand County and was named in honor of Colorado's first state governor, John L. Routt. Routt County included the present boundaries of Moffat and Routt Counties. In 1911, Moffat County was formed from Routt's western boundaries and Routt County achieved its present boundaries.**
- Governor Routt appointed the first County Commissioners, with their first meeting held in Hayden in 1877. The Hayden courthouse was a log structure, 14 by 16 feet, constructed by Albert H. Smart at a cost of \$100 (*Steamboat Pilot*, September 5, 1923). Hayden maintained a temporary county seat until an election moved the seat to Hahn's Peak. Development of Hahn's Peak due to the successes in resource extraction helped create an**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 5 of 10

---

area where businesses flourished and the population grew. The county records were transferred to Hahn's Peak in 1879, where they remained until the election of 1912.

In December of 1912, the county offices were moved to a two-story brick structure at 928 Lincoln Avenue in Steamboat Springs. The county offices remained in this building, originally owned by J.W. Hugus and Co. and then purchased by the county in 1915, for the next decade. (Richards, pages 193 and 195).

In September of 1922, the cornerstone was laid with memorials placed in a sealed copper box for the current courthouse. The cornerstone ceremony was a grand affair, with local dignitaries and "several hundred citizens" present (The *Routt County Sentinel*, September 15, 1922). Members of the Masons marched to the courthouse grounds, while Judge Charles Morning spoke of the history of the county and of a permanent county seat in Steamboat Springs. When completed in 1923, a brochure proclaimed the courthouse construction to be one of "beauty, permanence, and economical construction." The community was justly proud of the new structure and noted the District Court Chamber as the "most beautiful room in Northwest Colorado (Richards, page 196).

Constructed of exterior blond pressed brick and locally quarried sandstone over reinforced concrete, the courthouse was said to be completely fireproof and cost \$122,000 to build, exclusive of furnishings. An article appearing in the October 31, 1923 *Steamboat Pilot* described the construction as follows:

Sandstone ornamentations and exterior steps are from Routt County quarries. The building sets 80 feet back from the street line on Lincoln Avenue and is 58 by 118 feet, three stories. The first floor to be used principally by the sheriff's office has three large fireproof vaults, installed for the storage of county records. The main floor will be given over to other county officials, while the second floor is taken up almost entirely by the courtroom, judge's quarters and clerk's office.

The jail accommodations are sufficient to care for 50 prisoners, with separate sections for juveniles and women. The protective methods are of the latest design to overcome possibility of jail breaks, and the sanitary arrangements are complete. The new building cost \$122,000 and was erected by A.E. Danielson and Son of Denver from plans drawn by Architect Robert K. Fuller. The construction is classified as fireproof.

Robert Kenneth Fuller was born in 1886, the son of Fort Collins' first architect Montezuma Fuller. Robert Fuller graduated from Colorado A and M (now Colorado State University) and worked in his father's office the year following his graduation. He then studied architecture at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Upon returning home, he joined his father at the firm of M.W. Fuller and Son. He spent two years in practice with his father and then came to Denver to work with the prestigious Robert S. Roeschlaub. His first project for Roeschlaub was working on the Greeley High School, followed by the Isis Theater in Denver. When Roeschlaub retired in 1912, Fuller continued the practice with Roeschlaub's son, Frank. The firm was known as Roeschlaub and Fuller until 1917, and then as Robert K. Fuller, Architect. In 1949, Fuller, Fuller, and Fuller, Architects-Engineers formed to include Robert Fuller's two sons, Kenneth and Quentin. Still in operation today [in 2000] as Fuller, Fuller, and Associates, the Roeschlaub-Fuller office is the oldest architectural firm in Colorado and the sixth oldest in the United States.

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 6 of 10

---

A prolific architect, Robert Fuller designed many public buildings and schools. His works include the courthouses in Lamar, Hot Sulphur Springs, Glenwood Springs and Steamboat Springs. He designed schools in Denver, Lafayette, Brighton, Berthoud, Boulder, Loveland, Meeker, Carbondale, Oak Creek, and elsewhere in Colorado. He is credited with a dozen projects at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden and the Boettcher Center at the University of Denver. Robert Fuller served as president of the Allied Architects Association that designed and built Denver's City and County Building from 1924 to 1934 (Noel, pages 200-01 and 217, and *Rocky Mountain News*, April 19, 1966.)

A physical symbol of the permanence of the county seat in Steamboat Springs, the courthouse also serves as a cornerstone, or anchor, for the community. Reflecting the needs and desires of the populace, the courthouse is a tangible representation of the county government and its location in the county. Prominently located on Lincoln Avenue, the courthouse is the community's most recognized building and serves as a local landmark. Its simple, yet elegant, style, with a symmetrical façade and classical columns represents the tastes of the community that built it and their desire for a permanent home for the county government.

36. Sources of information:

Alexandroff, Marty. "Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Architectural Inventory Form." February 1996, on file with the City of Steamboat Springs, and the Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

"The Courthouse." Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum."

Noel, Thomas J. and Barbara S. Norgren. *Denver: The City Beautiful*. Denver: Historic Denver, Inc.

Richards, Dee. "Steamboat Round the Bend." Steamboat Springs: The *Steamboat Pilot*, 1976.

*Rocky Mountain News*, April 19, 1966.

Routt County Assessor, Commercial Property Appraisal Record.

Schaffer, Laureen, "Routt County Courthouse." Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation, August 2000.

Winograsky, Albert. Oral interview with Carl McWilliams, August 2007.





# Architectural Inventory Form

## Sketch Map



# Architectural Inventory Form

## Location Map

