

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth (YWCA)

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 202 West Second Street

not for publication

city or town Duluth

vicinity

state Minnesota code MN county St. Louis code 137

zip code 55806

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy SHPO, Minnesota Historical Society Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic Resources of Duluth's Central Business District, 1872-1933

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/civic

VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/
Second Renaissance Revival

foundation: STONE

walls: BRICK, STONE

roof: COMPOSITION

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth (YWCA), located at 202 West Second Street, is a four-story, Second Renaissance Revival Style building on the southeast corner of West Second Street and Second Avenue. Completed in 1908 and designed by the Duluth architecture firm, German and Lignell, the building was constructed by the local building firm of MacLeod & Smith at a cost of \$170,000. The E-plan structure has steel and concrete framing with poured concrete floor slabs. The corner building rests on a deep red sandstone foundation and has two finished elevations facing Second Avenue West and West Second Street. The original building measures 140 feet along Second Avenue and 74 feet along West Second Street and is 74 feet deep. Trepanier Hall, a two-story brick auditorium, was added at the west elevation in 1970 and is a non-contributing addition.

Narrative Description

Second Avenue West Elevation (north)

Along the north elevation the building slopes down Second Avenue to the east and allows for an additional floor on the eastern portion of the building. The sandstone foundation has a smooth finish and is severely weathered at the sills and entrances. The slope provides a raised basement level pierced with rectangular, double-hung windows, most arranged in pairs. Some of these windows have been infilled with fiberglass panels. Above the sandstone base, the first floor has alternating bands of smoothly finished red terra cotta and red brick. The upper three floors are finished with red brick laid in stretcher bond. The Second Avenue elevation is divided into seven bays with a slightly projecting central entry bay that extends the height of the building. The entry is recessed under a terra cotta and granite-faced round arch. The arch is decorated with brick and terra cotta voussoirs that terminate in a terra cotta keystone with a carved foliate motif. The recessed entry has a stone surround surmounted by a multi-paned fanlight and faced with courses of decorative carved stone moldings including egg and dart and foliate. The original wood double-leaf doors have been replaced, but the tile and marble entry floor remains. The central bay also contains windows with square tops; the third story windows have a brick arch with alternating radiating voussoirs. The two double-hung windows at the central bay of the fourth story are flanked by terra cotta Doric columns. The Doric column between the windows has a projecting light fixture. Windows at the central bay light an interior stair hall at the main entrance. The central bay is flanked by a single double-hung windows at each story and four stone cartouches applied to a terra cotta stringcourse. Each cartouche between the third and fourth stories is embossed with one letter of the YWCA organization. The paired fourth-story windows of this bay are flanked by rusticated brick pilasters. The central bay terminates at the brick parapet and is framed by projecting piers decorated with two terra cotta wreaths.

The arched ground floor windows have polychrome terra cotta and brick voussoirs and prominent keystones, and each is filled with three double-hung sashes with wood-paneled transoms. Here and elsewhere on the upper façade, the wood window sashes have been replaced with aluminum sashes that closely match the original configuration. Window sills are red terra cotta and a red terra cotta stringcourse edges each arched window header. The upper three floors have flat window heads, terra cotta headers with prominent keystones, and terra cotta sills. The keystones at the third story engage with the stringcourse. The paired second and third floor windows have similar treatments, with one-over-one, double-hung sashes surmounted with a wood-paneled transom. A decorative saw tooth brick course surrounds each second and third floor window. The fourth floor windows are placed above a deep terra cotta stringcourse and divided by shallow brick panels in each pier. The flat roof is accented with a brick parapet and a projecting, painted zinc cornice decorated with a dentil course. Original ironwork at this elevation includes decorative square bosses above the entry, and two iron balconies that flank the center bay on the third floor.

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West Second Street Elevation (west)

The West Second Street elevation is divided into four bays. The nearly-identical brick and terra cotta treatment matches the Second Avenue elevation. At the ground floor, the off-center entry has a segmental arch and a heavy overhang with carved terra cotta consoles. A third floor iron balcony over the entrance bay and an iron fire escape at the south bay of windows have been removed.

Secondary Elevations (east and south)

The east and south elevations are faced in cream-colored common brick and have segmental-arched windows with limestone sills. At the east elevation, the brick and terra cotta decorative façade wraps approximately four feet. The slope of the site provides the east elevation with five stories. There are two ground floor service doors on the east elevation. Most windows contain double-hung aluminum sashes. Transoms at the second and third floors have wood panel infill, and at the second floor most are filled with glass block. A painted sign of unknown date near the cornice reads “YWCA TEA ROOM” in upper case white letters against a black background. An iron fire escape is attached to the north bay of the east elevation. The Trepanier Hall addition is situated against the south elevation of the 1908 building and fills two floors of the courtyards in the open E-plan of the south elevation. Windows at the upper three floors of the south elevation have double-hung aluminum sashes.

Interior

The main entries at the north and west open on a large, high-ceilinged lobby that retains much of its historic integrity with wood paneling, built-in benches and decorative plaster molding. The original terrazzo floor is covered with carpet. A wood-paneled reception desk fills the southwest corner opposite a brick fireplace on the north wall. Against the north wall, the original Otis elevator is still in use. The iron cartouche above the cab entrance reads “YWCA.” Three plastered and painted columns in the central lobby are decorated with plaster cartouches also lettered with “YWCA.” Plaster pilasters, spaced along each lobby wall, match the column design. The main staircase on the north wall has marble steps and an iron railing. The lobby ceilings have been lowered in places. Two skylight frames remain, but are no longer externally lit due to the Trepanier Hall addition. The fireplace surround has been removed and portions of the staircase have been enclosed. A section of the south wall has been opened to a hallway between Trepanier Hall and the lobby. Offices remain in the southwest corner of the ground floor but have been remodeled; the original YWCA safe is extant.

The original tea room and cafeteria in the northeast corner of the ground floor have been remodeled and offices added against the north wall. The kitchen remains in its original location at the southeast corner of the ground floor.

The second floor originally contained an assembly hall, two parlors, seven classrooms and a domestic science room. This floor was renovated into additional residential rooms in 1968. The third and fourth floors originally provided single rooms for 75 women. While these floors retain their residential use, they were included in the 1968 remodeling which included metal doors, lowered ceilings, carpeting, shared kitchenettes, and bathrooms.

The original gymnasium is located in the northwestern corner of the basement and extends the height of the two-level basement. The gymnasium is generally intact with wood beadboard and a cantilevered iron balcony. The floor is linoleum-covered and a fire exit door has been added to the west wall. The original tile and marble swimming pool centered against the southeast wall is extant but no longer in use. The bathrooms and locker rooms have been renovated; some original marble stalls remain. The bowling alley, situated along the west wall, was renovated into locker rooms at an unknown date. The sub-basement houses the boiler room and storage.

Trepanier Hall (1970)

The flat-roofed, two-story Trepanier Hall extends 76 feet along West Second Street adjacent to the west elevation of the original building. The addition is 90 feet deep. The addition is clad in variegated tan brick and there is a shallow metal coping at the parapet. The arched entrance has double-leaf doors flanked by glazed panels and surmounted by a glazed transom. There are no windows on the one-story west façade. The sloped site allows for a two-story south elevation that

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has five slender windows and a service entrance. Trepanier Hall includes a four-story brick elevator tower placed against the south elevation of the YWCA building. The addition is an auditorium at the ground floor with a daycare below grade. Trepanier Hall is a non-contributing addition to the YWCA.

Surrounding Context

Much of the surrounding nineteenth and early twentieth-century architectural context of the central business district of Duluth is intact. The neighboring buildings are a mix of commercial and multi-family residential buildings. Second Street is generally perceived as the division between downtown commercial and multi-family residential land use. Arrowhead Place (1926), a four-story apartment building, located across West Second Street, has been converted into office use. A six-story brick commercial building, originally built for the Bayha Furniture Company (1905, Duluth Commercial Historic District, NRHP 2006), is located across Second Avenue to the northeast. It was also designed by YWCA architects, German and Lignell.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1908-1960

Significant Dates

1908

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

GERMAN, FREDERICK AND LIGNELL, ANTON/
MACLEOD & SMITH (builder)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1908 which marks the beginning of the YWCA as an educational, spiritual, and social center for women, and ends in 1960 representing five decades of community service that responded to the growing and changing needs of Duluth's residents.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The headquarters of the Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth (1908) meets NRHP Criterion A under Social History and is locally significant for its contribution to the civic development of Duluth. The building is a contributing resource to the "Historic Resources of Duluth's Central Business District, 1872-1933" Multiple Property Documentation Form for its association with a nineteenth century social organization that significantly enhanced the lives of its members and promoted the welfare of Duluth society as a whole. The well-appointed Second Renaissance Revival, four-story building was built in 1908 to support the programs and activities for young, independent single women in Duluth and particularly the foreign-born (See Figure 1). The headquarters was built at a prominent corner in downtown Duluth and readily accessible to the train station, churches and employment opportunities (See Figure 2). Services in the building closely followed the programs established by the national YWCA and included Bible study, employment assistance, meals and rooms as well as recreational and physical activities. In addition, the YWCA of Duluth provided English lessons and citizenship classes. The headquarters was designed as a comfortable "home away from home" for its clients. The basement houses a gymnasium and swimming pool. The spacious ground floor lobby and reception area provided a homelike welcome complete with a fireplace and decorative millwork and plaster. The ground floor also offered meeting rooms, a cafeteria and tearoom. Upper floors provided 75 residential rooms and residential use expanded to the second floor classroom spaces in the 1960s due to demand. Though built outside the period of significance, 1908-1960, Trepanier Hall was built adjacent to the YWCA of Duluth to provide an auditorium space for YWCA sponsored programs. The YWCA of Duluth at 202 West Second Street provided services to hundreds of thousands of Duluth women before closing in 2008.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The YWCA in America

The Young Women's Christian Association has provided significant contributions to America's urban communities and is an important part of the history of the women's social and labor movements. The roots of the YWCA of Duluth reach to mid-nineteenth century England and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) founded in 1844 by George Williams. The Young Women's Christian Association was also founded in England as a reaction to the effects of the Industrial Revolution on the lives of poor and working-class women. In 1855 Emma Robarts asked the members of her Prayer Union to pray for the plight of young women and wrote, "What can we do for them, how reach and act on them, scattered as they are in every sphere of life?"¹ At the same time, Elizabeth Kinnaird opened the General Female Training Institute in London as a home for working women and nurses. While these two organizations are viewed as the beginnings of the Young Women's Christian Association, it was not until 1877 that Robarts and Kinnaird met and agreed to the title "Young Women's Christian Association" as the female counterpart of the men's organization.²

In the United States, social and housing conditions of the poor and working classes in industrial cities similarly drew the attention of mid-nineteenth-century reformers and settlement houses and social agencies, and other aid organizations were founded in many cities. The goal of the first American organization was to promote Christian values by providing young women with safe lodging and respectable employment opportunities. In 1858, the Young Women's Christian

¹ Elizabeth Wilson, *Fifty Years of Association Work Among Women 1866-1916* (New York: National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association, 1916), p. 10.

² Mary Sims, *The Natural History of a Social Institution: The Young Women's Christian Association* (New York: National Boards of the YWCA of the USA, 1935), p. 3.

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Association began in the United States under the direction of Mrs. Marshall Roberts when she formed the Ladies Christian Association in New York City with thirty-five members and a duty to “seek out especially young women of the operative class, aid them in procuring employment and in obtaining suitable boarding places...surround them with Christian influence and use all practicable means for the increase of true piety in themselves and others.”³ The Boston Young Women’s Christian Association was established in 1866 by Mrs. Henry Durant and a building was obtained in 1868 to help with the “temporal, moral and religious welfare of the young women who are dependent on their own exertions for support.”⁴ The most important duty of the members was to help working girls find suitable housing.⁵ By the late 1860s YWCA branches were organized in many industrial cities along the eastern and central United States including Hartford (1867), Providence (1867), Pittsburgh (1867), Cleveland (1868), Cincinnati (1868), St. Louis (1869), Philadelphia (1870) and Buffalo (1870). By 1875, one-half of the 28 associations maintained boarding homes.⁶

These early organizations were generally founded by native-born, middle-class female leaders who were concerned with education, lodging and job training, but religious education of the working girl was paramount. Unlike the settlement houses with their resident social workers, the leaders or “secretaries” of the early branches were often wives of local business men and staunch members of the Protestant church community. Branches were required to limit the voting and office-holding membership “to young women who are members in good standing in evangelical churches.”⁷ The training brochure distributed to the branches consisted of platform speeches on the philosophy of religion, essentials of the Christian faith and various aspects of biblical history.⁸

Paramount to these programs was a headquarters building for each of the branches and the national organization advocated strongly for building campaigns. While the YWCA emphasized that its mission was accomplished through “members, not buildings,” it recognized that the building “is the embodiment of the loyalty and enthusiasm of the members, that glorifies it as nothing else can adorn it.”⁹ The buildings were usually compatible in design with urban private clubs and the lead donors often chose the architectural styles.¹⁰ At the turn of the century, the YWCA buildings not only provided a domestic atmosphere, but were all inclusive structures with training facilities, assembly halls, libraries, cafeterias, theaters, gymnasiums, swimming pools, bowling alleys and clinics. The character of the residents was easier to oversee if the women chose to recreate within the YWCA facilities.

Cities were challenged with the influx of single-working women in the late nineteenth century. Between 1870 and 1920 the number of wage-earning women in the United States grew from two million to nine million.¹¹ Young women were attracted to urban centers with modern amusements and employment opportunities, but social temptations and “stranger traps” were abundant as single women attempted to assimilate into their new surroundings.¹² Women volunteers used domestic imagery to create places of refuge from such dangers and concentrated on saving a girl’s virtue.¹³

When the branches merged in 1906 under the national organization, Young Women’s Christian Association of the USA, the new mission “to advance the physical, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual interests of young women” downplayed the early Christian influence and placed more emphasis on the social programs.¹⁴ The path to saving a girl’s virtue and preparing her for the changing urban environment required a multi-tiered approach.

³ Elizabeth Wilson, *Fifty Years of Association Work Among Women 1866-1916* (New York: National Board of the Young Women’s Christian Association, 1916), p. 23.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 89.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁷ Mary Sims, *The Natural History of a Social Institution: The Young Women’s Christian Association* (New York: National Boards of the YWCA of the USA, 1935), p. 101.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁹ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 93.

¹⁰ Antoinette Lee, “Supporting Working Women: YWCA Buildings in the National Register of Historic Places,” *OAH Magazine of History*, vol. 12 (Fall 1997), p. 2.

¹¹ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 43.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Nina Mjagkij and Margaret Spratt, *Men and Women Adrift: The YMCA and the YWCA in the City* (New York: New York University Press, 1977), p. 272.

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The early twentieth-century programs of the associations were generally split into religious work, physical education, formal education and building services. While associations developed programs specific to their communities, most associations adhered to the YMCA's national committee structure and programs which included self-governing clubs, International Institute for Foreign Women, Industrial clubs, Girl Reserves, National Federation of Business and Professional Women and Travelers' Aid Society. Changes in the economic and social status of women and girls during World War I and II and the Depression were immediately reflected in YWCA programs. As educational levels rose, careers for women were expanding and the mission gradually shifted from suitable lodging to training and leadership.¹⁵ The YWCA buildings acted as urban recreational and social centers.

In the 1960s, the YWCA updated their mission "to empower women and girls and to eliminate racism." The Christian and religious aspects were gradually eliminated from the mission, but character building remained a strong feature of the organization. Today the YWCA has increased focus on child-care, racial justice, violence against women and birth control. The National YWCA reports 300 associations and 1,100 sites serving over 2.6 million people and remains the oldest organization owned and managed by women.¹⁶

YWCA in Minnesota

The Young Women's Christian Association reached Minnesota in the late nineteenth century through the college student associations that concentrated on the physical and spiritual well-being of the students rather than the plight of the urban, working-class women. Carleton College in Northfield organized the first branch in 1884 followed by the University of Minnesota in 1885.

The Ladies' Christian Aid Society of Minneapolis represented the evangelical churches in urban relief efforts for twenty years before they organized a YWCA branch in 1891. The announced ideals of the YWCA were "to serve the highest interest of young women through furnishing educational, recreational and social advantages."¹⁷ The organization's 1903 YWCA building at 89 South Seventh Street (razed) was replaced with a larger building in 1929 at 1130 Nicollet Street (razed). By the 1920s, the organization also had four district branches across Minneapolis. The YWCA of Duluth organized in 1893 and provided social services in a rented building before constructing its signature building in 1908. St. Paul organized a branch in 1907, but at the 1909 National YWCA conference it was noted that St. Paul was the largest city of its size in the country without a YWCA building.¹⁸ The YWCA of St. Paul headquarters was constructed five years later at 123 West Fifth Street (razed). By 1925, Minnesota had YWCA branches in Austin, Hibbing, Red Wing, Rochester, Virginia and Winona.

YWCA of Duluth

The founding of the Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth in 1893 occurred at a high point of the city's economic growth. The opening of the Vermilion and Mesabi iron ranges in the 1880s, the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad connecting St. Paul to Duluth (1870), and the completion of the Minnesota Point canal (1871) marked the city's industrial rise. With improved shipping facilities and rail access, Duluth became a hub for the transfer of iron ore, grain, lumber and workers, and headquartered the mining industry and the subsidiary industries that derived from iron ore production. Duluth's population grew from 2,200 in 1878 to 30,000 in 1887;¹⁹ and nearly 60% were foreign-born.²⁰ By 1892 Duluth had 50,000 residents, 42 churches, 34 schools and 100 saloons.²¹

¹⁵ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 244.

¹⁶ *YWCA Facts* (New York: National Headquarters, 2001), p. 1.

¹⁷ Marion Shutter, *History of Minneapolis: Gateway to the Northwest* (Chicago: Clarke Publishing Company, 1923), p. 202.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Wilson, *Fifty Years of Association Work Among Women 1866-1916* (New York: National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association, 1916), p. 254.

¹⁹ Michael Koop and Chris Morris, "Historic Resources of Duluth's Central Business District, 1872-1929," *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2006), Sec. E, p. 6.

²⁰ Ryck Lydecker and Lawrence J. Sommer, *Duluth: Sketches of the Past: A Bicentennial Collection* (Duluth: American Bicentennial Commission, 1976), p. 73.

²¹ Michael Koop and Chris Morris, "Historic Resources of Duluth's Central Business District, 1872-1929," *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2006), Sec F, p. 5.

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By 1900, the upper Great Lakes region had a larger land area inhabited by foreigners than any other region in the nation.²² Duluth's first wave of immigrants arrived between 1840 and 1890 from northern and western Europe, but by 1900, 70 percent of the immigrants on the Iron Range came from Finland, Sweden and the South Slavic states.²³ While the first immigrants were employed by the logging and milling industry that peaked in 1902, most immigrants were attracted to the mining industry boom of the 1890s which employed large numbers of unskilled workers. The 1910 U.S. Census identified 41,000 foreign-born people on the Iron Range with Finns comprising one-fourth of that population.²⁴ American-born workers filled the majority of the skilled labor positions and the supervisory roles of the mining industry.²⁵

Jobs for women were limited at the turn of the century in Duluth. American-born women obtained the skilled positions of teachers and nurses while 70 percent of the working foreign-born women were employed as domestic servants.²⁶ Only 13 percent of Duluth's working women were married and lodging these single women was of early concern.²⁷

In the late nineteenth century, local industries began to assist the churches and fraternal organizations that were providing the bulk of social services. The Northern Pacific Railroad Company opened the Immigrant House in 1872 to manage the influx of immigrants arriving by train. The Duluth Bethel Association was incorporated in 1873 and opened Bethel House in 1888 to house and feed sailors. It was soon followed by the Bethel Rescue Home "for unfortunate and fallen girls."²⁸

Adjacent to a zone of port facilities and lakefront warehouses, the central downtown developed as a dense district of banks, office buildings, and department stores. While Bethel House and Rescue Home were situated close to the port, social services began to locate and assist working-class employees in the urban core at the turn of the century. The main thoroughfare, Superior Street, parallels the shoreline and is situated up the hill from the port. By situating near the Superior streetcar line (electrified 1890), social service organizations like the Young Men's Christian Association (1908, razed) at the corner of Second Street West and West Third Avenue and the Masonic Temple (1905) at 4 West Second Street were easily accessible to their membership. Duluth's exploding population was evident in the built environment. In 1906, 968 building permits were issued for a total estimated construction cost of more than \$2.7 million and 80 miles of streetcar track were laid by 1910.²⁹

Founding

The YWCA of Duluth organized in 1893 but disbanded during the nationwide financial Panic of 1892-93. Unemployment rates and the bitter winter of 1893-94 dictated the need for YWCA relief efforts and programs in Duluth. However, *The Journal* of the YWCA of Duluth notes that the organization was slow to re-organize, compelling a visit in 1901 from the YWCA State Secretary who discussed the need with thirty Duluth women.³⁰ In the spring of 1902, a new board of directors was organized. Meetings and services were held in the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Young Men's Christian Association (organized in 1888), until the Axa Building on Superior Street with its "narrow and inconvenient quarters, a gymnasium and two small rooms" was rented.³¹ Within a few months, the membership rose from six hundred to twelve hundred and the lunchroom, cafeteria and gymnasium were at capacity.³²

²² Clifford Clark, *Minnesota in a Century of Change: The Site and Its People since 1900* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1989), p. 170.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.176.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.177.

²⁸ Walter Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County, Minnesota: Their Story and People*, vol. 2, (Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, 1921), p. 631.

²⁹ Michael Koop and Chris Morris, "Historic Resources of Duluth's Central Business District, 1872-1929," *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2006), Sec 8, p 9.

³⁰ *The Journal*, [The YWCA of Duluth, January 1905], p. 11.

³¹ *Duluth News Tribune*, June 7, 1909, p. 6.

³² *The Journal*, [The YWCA of Duluth, January 1905], p. 13.

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In 1906, the lot at the corner of West Second Street and Second Avenue was purchased and \$170,000 was raised for the new building.³³ The YWCA building opened to great fanfare on June 6, 1909 with accolades regarding the efforts of Mrs. W.C. Agnew, wife of the owner of Alworth Mining and Development Company. Other corporate contributors included Chester Congdon of the U.S. Steel Corporation and Tom Cole of the Northern Cold Storage and Warehouse Company.³⁴

While the YWCA would undergo transformation over the next century, at its founding its religious roots were prominent. Ministers from every denomination in the city took part in the dedication and the opening celebration lasted a week.³⁵ Reverend Hans K. Madsen of the First Norwegian-Danish Methodist Episcopal Church stated his wish for the building that “it should be the center from which streams of pureness and holiness, and everything that is good should flow out over the entire city. It is the womanhood of our city that must help make the city better, and this institution will give to Duluth many splendid young women and bring happiness to many homes.”³⁶

Program Development

The Second Renaissance Revival, four-story building provided the standard features required of the YWCA program and served as a comfortable home away from home for its clients. The basement housed a gymnasium, bowling alley and swimming pool. The spacious ground floor lobby and reception area provided a homelike welcome complete with fireplace and decorative millwork and plaster. The ground floor also offered meeting rooms, offices, cafeteria and a tearoom. The second floor provided an assembly hall, classrooms and parlors. The upper two floors were divided into 75 small rooms intended for short-term tenants.

The building supported many programs and activities for young, independent, single women in Duluth and particularly the foreign-born. Since Duluth’s Union Depot was a target for women traveling alone, the Traveler’s Aid Committee—popular in most cities—was one of the first Duluth YWCA initiatives and the depot matron was the organization’s first employee. The YWCA negotiated with the railroad companies for a matron and eventually two deaconesses. The YWCA distributed thousands of leaflets at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904 urging that “every Association should pledge itself never to run away a girl on any condition or under any circumstance...and when only a few trains or boats can be reached or met, preference be given to local trains.”³⁷ At the turn of the century the deaconesses met an average of 700 trains each month and helped 500 people at the depot.³⁸

The programs and services in the new building closely followed the programs organized by the national YWCA. The committee structure in 1909 consisted of devotional, membership, Bible study, Noon Rest, Rooms, Educational, Physical, Finance, Traveler’s Aid and Reception.³⁹ Devotional aspects included Sunday Vesper services and local church introductions. “Noon Rest” provided a hot lunch away from the workplace and opportunities for mid-day religious instruction. An average of 370 meals per day were served in 1909, and the Rooms Committee managed seventy-five rooms that rented for \$6 a month in 1909.⁴⁰

The Educational Committee responded to the issues of the day and coordinated employment and training for the members. Career guidance included negotiating the training and employment of female streetcar operators and police officers. In the first decades, English lessons and diverse classes including mandolin, painting, citizenship, first aid,

³³ *Duluth Evening News*, June 7, 1909, p. 9.

³⁴ Virginia Jean Nelson, “The Young Women’s Christian Association of Duluth: A History, 1893-2003. (Duluth: YWCA, 2002), p. 1.

³⁵ *Duluth News Tribune*, June 7, 1909, p. 1.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 5.

³⁷ Elizabeth Wilson, *Fifty Years of Association Work Among Women 1866-1916* (New York: National Board of the Young Women’s Christian Association, 1916), p. 201.

³⁸ Virginia Jean Nelson, “The Young Women’s Christian Association of Duluth: A History, 1893-2003. (Duluth: YWCA, 2002), p. 3.

³⁹ *The Journal*, [The YWCA of Duluth, January 1905], p. 1.

⁴⁰ Virginia Jean Nelson, “The Young Women’s Christian Association of Duluth: A History, 1893-2003. (Duluth: YWCA, 2002), p. 3.

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sanitation, French, current events, commercial law, millinery and sewing were offered.⁴¹ A tradition of foreign association pageants began in 1913 with the annual Folk Festival that continues today.

By 1918, the YWCA of Duluth had more than 1400 members.⁴² Many clubs and activities grew outside the YWCA with their sponsorship, including the Federation of Business and Professional Club's Blue Triangle. Other federated clubs met at business establishments including drugstores and wholesale establishments.⁴³ YWCA programs intended for newly arrived immigrant women expanded to the International Institute on East Gary Street (razed). Established in 1919, it assisted Croatian, Slavic, German, Finnish, Italian and Swedish women. The institute sponsored parties, plays and festivals as well as English classes. The Raleigh Street Neighborhood House at 5519 Raleigh Street (razed) began as a project of the YWCA Duluth Americanization Committee and offered similar programs including team sports.⁴⁴ These self-governing clubs lifted the spirits of female employees by offering incentive programs and social events. Working with high schools, the YWCA organized the Girl Reserves in 1918 (later Y-Teens).

The Physical Committee managed the pool and gymnasium. A 1920 national mandate required the move from "physical" education to "health" education noting, "health is a synthesis of physical, mental and spiritual well-being."⁴⁵ Other programming mandates required a health director, pool instructor, health associate, health exams, health talks, individual exercise in the form of gymnastics, dance or games and recreation in the form of pageants, parties and camping.⁴⁶ The Duluth YWCA adapted to the new requirements and a 1925 staff roster included a physical director and a health associate. Instruction in badminton, golf and modern dance were added to the curriculum. The Duluth YWCA helped fund the Camp Wanakiwin on Little Hanging Horn Lake which opened in 1925 on 47 acres of land southeast of Barnum.⁴⁷

The transformation from programs based on religion to those focusing on individual development seems evident in the Duluth YWCA's publications during and after the Depression, but traditional activities were also represented. Social counseling on marriage and child rearing were offered, along with an emphasis on temperance. The Women's Christian Temperance Union held its meetings at the YWCA in the 1930s, and reminded residents of the benefits of prohibition.⁴⁸

The Duluth YWCA assisted in the war effort through Traveler's Aid and the International Institute. Instead of distracting attention from the YWCA, World War II "gave new definition and purpose to its activities."⁴⁹ The influx of women into the workforce and their reluctance to surrender their jobs after the war brought debate among the Duluth Business and Industrial Women's Club of the YWCA and the American Federation of Labor and Federated Trades Assembly regarding the city's changing labor pattern.⁵⁰

The United Service Organization (USO) operated a drop-in center in the building and numerous USO dances were held at the YWCA. At the end of World War II, Traveler's Aid was assisting over 6000 a year and resources were taxed with service men and war brides arriving in Duluth.⁵¹ A USO office in the bus depot was opened in the 1950s.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 3.

⁴² Ibid, p. 7.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Richard Hudelson, *By the Ore Docks: A Working People's History of Duluth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. 297. The Raleigh Street Neighborhood House merged with the International Institute in 1930. The International Institute eventually evolved into the International Institute of Minnesota and is located in Minneapolis.

⁴⁵ Edith Gates, *Health Through Leisure-Time Recreation: The Health Education Program of the YWCA* (New York: The Woman's Press, 1931), p. 193.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 194.

⁴⁷ Virginia Jean Nelson, "The Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth: A History, 1893-2003. (Duluth: YWCA, 2002), p. 4.

⁴⁸ Ibid p. 10.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 12.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 13.

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In the 1950s, the Duluth YWCA—like those across the United States—asked if the institution could change rapidly enough to “meet the needs of the social revolution of the 1950s.”⁵² Programs and clubs for working girls, teenagers, senior citizens, and young wives were continued along with programs on world peace and brotherhood. After the Civil Rights Act of 1964, while the “Christian purpose” was still regarded as a framework for the organization, community building to allow others was open to all.⁵³ In 1965, the YWCA participated in the creation of the Human Rights Commission of Duluth.⁵⁴

The Trepanier Hall addition was dedicated in December of 1970 and provided an auditorium, meeting spaces and daycare facilities. The neighboring two-story Decker Building was purchased by the YWCA in 1973 for the Little People’s Center daycare, but is currently vacant. A second facility, the YWCA Spirit Valley in West Duluth, opened in 2003.

German and Lignell

The 1908 YWCA design by Frederick German (1863-1937) and Anton Werner Lignell (1867-1954) dates from their seven-year association between 1905 and 1912. In this period they also designed the five-story Young Men’s Christian Association of Duluth (1908, razed) on the corner of Second Street and Third Avenue West. Other Duluth commissions include the six-story, commercial building, 131 West First Street (Bayha Furniture Company, 1905, Duluth Commercial Historic District, NRHP 2006), across Second Avenue from the YWCA, the Service Motor Company Drivers’ Union Hall (1908, NRHP Duluth Commercial Historic District 2006) at 124 East Superior Street, Freimuth Building (1907) on Superior Street and Glen Avon Presbyterian Church (1905).

Frederick German was born in Ontario, Canada and trained in New York before he came to Duluth in 1892. German practiced with Leif Jenssen from 1913 to 1928 and designed the Pilgrim Congregational Church (1916), Duluth Curling Club (1913, razed) and a number of residences during that partnership.

Anton Lignell was born in Aland, Sweden and immigrated to Butte, Montana where he designed the Anaconda Copper Mining Company Employees Club.⁵⁵ In partnership with Clyde Kelly, Lignell designed the Cook County Courthouse (1912; NRHP). Lignell’s Duluth commissions include the Duluth Steam Bath (1921, razed) and numerous residences. He is also credited with the Roseau County Courthouse (1913; NRHP) and the Superior, Wisconsin Central High School (1905-9).

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⁵² Ibid, p. 15.

⁵³ Virginia Jean Nelson, “The Young Women’s Christian Association of Duluth: A History, 1893-2003. (Duluth: YWCA, 2002), p.16.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 20.

⁵⁵ Michael Koop and Chris Morris, “Historic Resources of Duluth’s Central Business District, 1872-1929,” *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2006), Sec. F, p. 5.

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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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):
SL-DUL-2390

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than an acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>568497</u>	<u>5181569</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The YWCA of Duluth (1908) occupies Lot 34 and east 1/2 of Lot 36 including the vacated 0.1 feet of alley lying adjacent to Lots 34 and 36 of Duluth Proper 1st Division West Second Street. The non-contributing Trepanier Hall (1970) addition occupies west 1/2 of Lot 36 except south 48.90 feet of Duluth Proper 1st Division West Second Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the property historically associated with the Young Women's Christian Association building of Duluth.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amy M. Lucas and Carole S. Zellie
organization Landscape Research LLC date 11/17/10

Y.W.C.A. of Duluth
Name of Property

St. Louis County, MN
County and State

street & number 1466 Hythe St. telephone 651-641-1230
city or town St. Paul state MN zip code 55108
e-mail alucas@landscaperesearch.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

8 x 10 Black and White Photo Log

Name of Property: Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth (YWCA of Duluth)
City or Vicinity: Duluth
County: St. Louis State: MN
Photographer: Amy Lucas, Landscape Research LLC
Date Photographed: November 2008
Location of Original Files: 1466 Hythe St., St. Paul, MN 55108

1 of 8.

MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth
Exterior, north and west facades, looking southwest.

2 of 8

MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth
Exterior, west façade, looking east along Second Street.

3 of 8

MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth
Exterior, north façade, looking south along Second Avenue.

4 of 8

MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth
Exterior, detail of north façade, looking south.

5 of 8

MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth
Exterior, east elevation, looking west.

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MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth

Exterior, east elevation, looking west.

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MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth

Exterior, south elevation, looking north (Trepanier Hall in center).

8 of 8

MN_St.LouisCounty_Y.W.C.A.Duluth

Interior, elevator lobby, looking north.

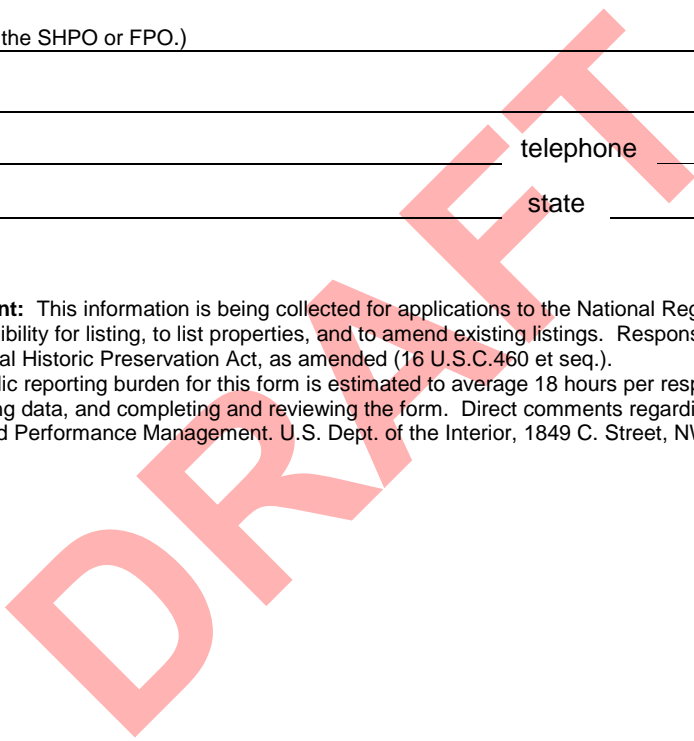
Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page

Y.W.C.A. of Duluth

Name of Property
St. Louis County, MN

County and State
Historic Resources of Duluth's Central Business District. 1872-1933

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 1. Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth, looking southeast
Minnesota Historical Society, 1910.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page

Y.W.C.A. of Duluth
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

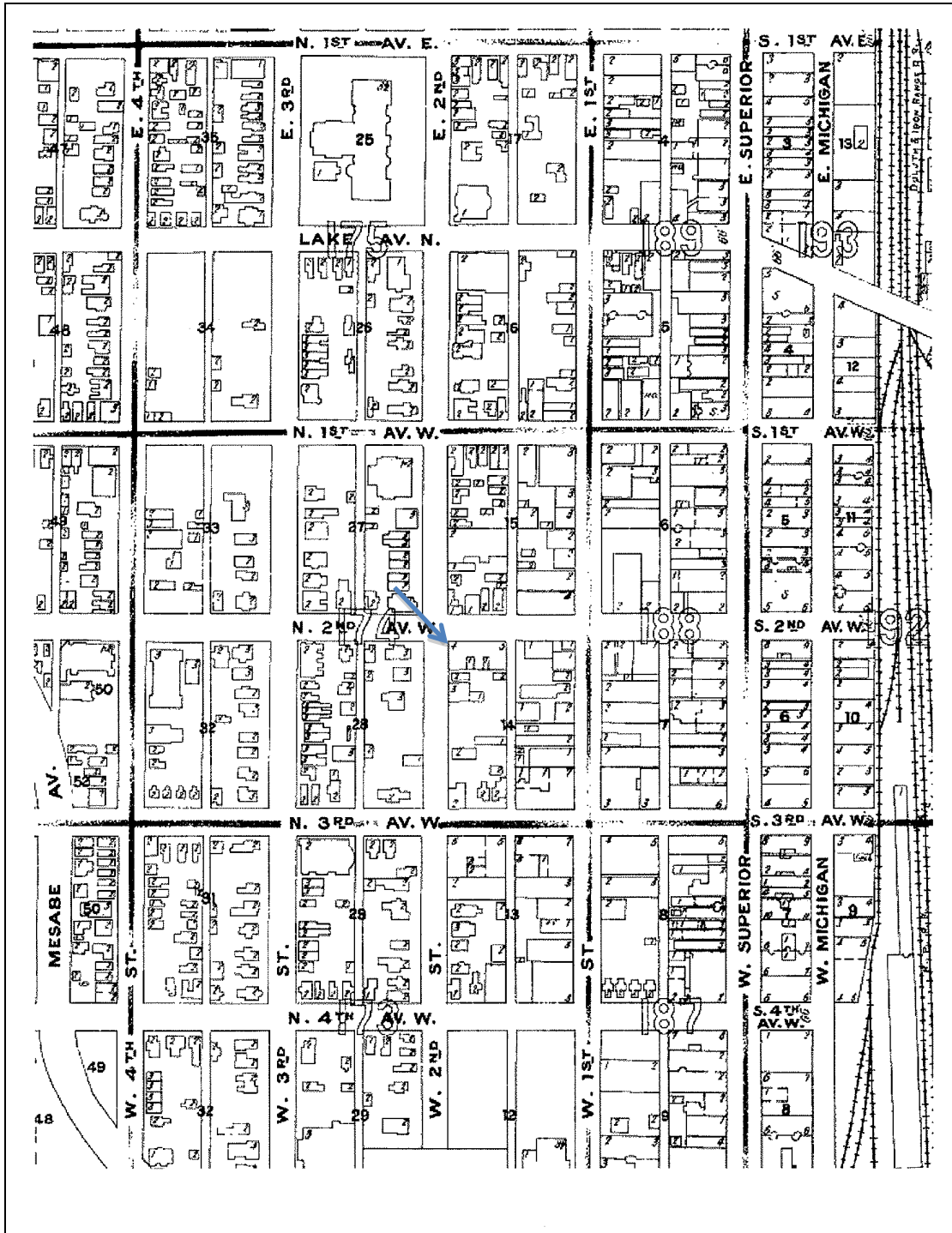
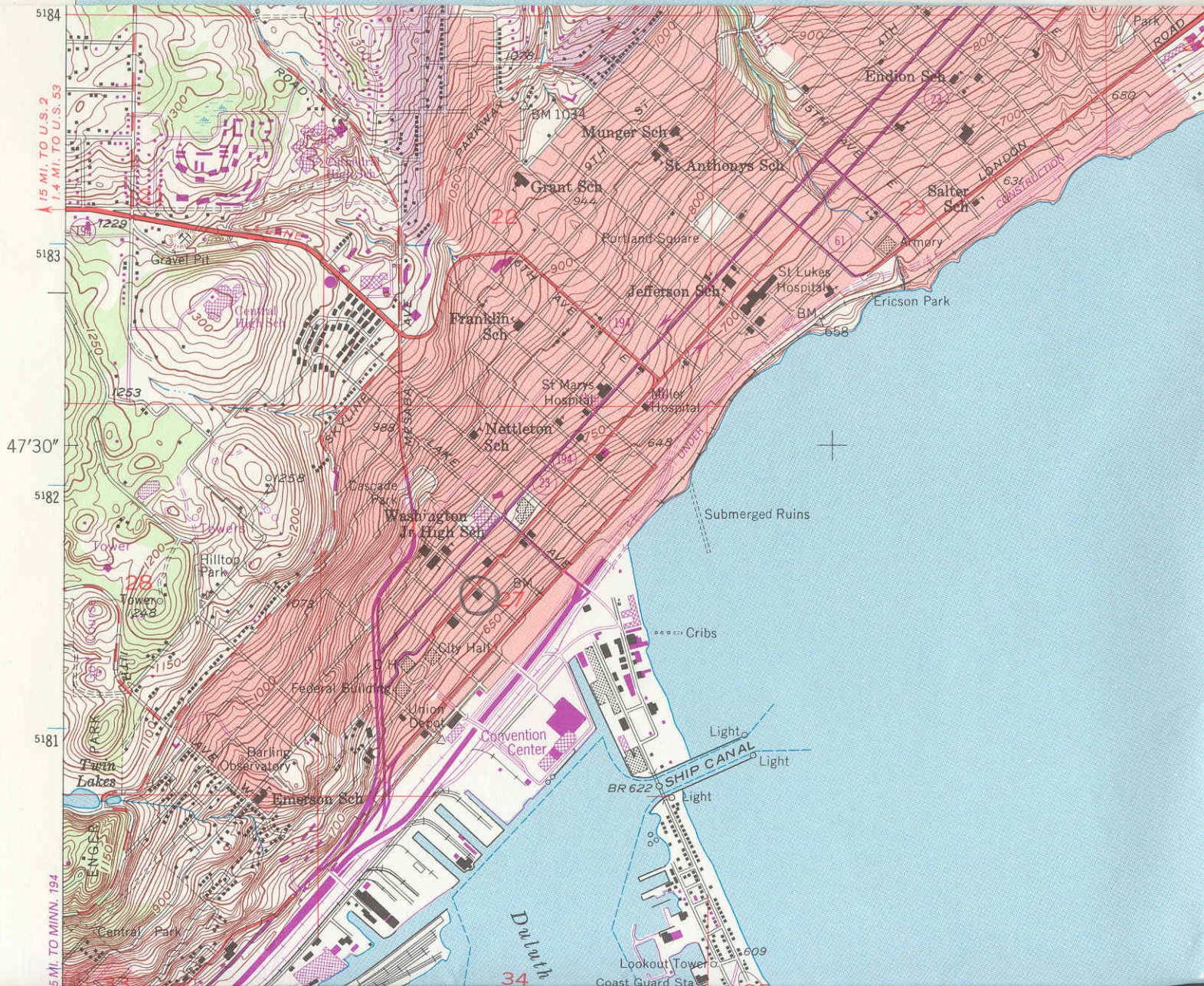


Figure 2. Young Women's Christian Association of Duluth. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Duluth, Minnesota, 1908-09, Vol. 1, 1908. Sheet 0a.



1.5 MI. TO U.S. 2
1.4 MI. TO U.S. 53

47°30'

5181

5183

5184

1.5 MI. TO MINN. 194

Duluth
34