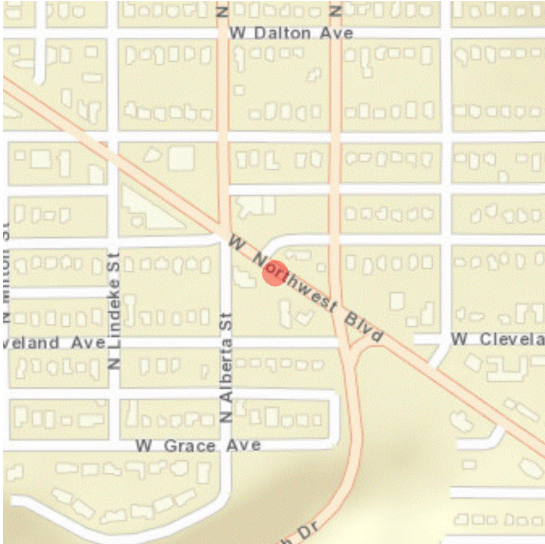


Historic Property Report

Resource Name: Old National Bank

Property ID: 710449

Location



Address: 2523 W Northwest Blvd, Spokane, WA, 99205, USA

Geographic Areas: Spokane Certified Local Government, Spokane County, T25R42E12, SPOKANE NW Quadrangle

Information

Number of stories: N/A

Construction Dates:

Construction Type	Year	Circa
Built Date	1971	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Use:

Category	Subcategory
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Historic Context:

Category
Architecture

Architect/Engineer:

Category	Name or Company
Architect	Fiedler, William
Builder	Inland Construction

Historic Property Report

Resource Name: Old National Bank

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Thematics:

Local Registers and Districts

Name	Date Listed	Notes
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Project History

Project Number, Organization, Project Name	Resource Inventory	SHPO Determination	SHPO Determined By, Determined Date
2016-12-08751, , Spokane Mid-20th Century Modern Survey 2016	6/30/2017		

Photos



North side facade



Front (east) facade in setting



Front (east) facade



Drive-through window

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Northeast facade



Northwest corner sign



Detail, northeast facade



South side facade



West rear facade



Lighting detail, west facade



Window detail

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Detail, northeast facade



Detail, northeast facade

Inventory Details - 6/30/2017

Common name: WESCO
Date recorded: 6/30/2017
Field Recorder: Diana Painter
Field Site number:
SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Characteristics:

Category	Item
Foundation	Concrete - Poured
Form Type	Commercial
Roof Type	Flat with Parapet
Roof Material	Asphalt/Composition - Built Up
Cladding	Stone - Rubble
Plan	Irregular

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: Yes

Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local): No

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local): No

Significance narrative: History. The Northwest Blvd branch of the Old National Bank is located about two miles northwest of the Monroe Street Bridge, in the northwest section of Spokane. In the days of the street railways this area was served by Washington Water Power's Northwest Blvd-Altamont streetcar line, which traveled across the Monroe Street Bridge and then north on Maple Street until it intersected with Northwest Blvd. The line terminated at Kiernan. Once the streetcars were no longer in service, automobile traffic dominated Northwest Blvd.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show that even in 1910 this area displayed very sparse residential development. There was almost no commercial development. In the post-war era, suburban residential development populated what were previously the outer suburbs, such as this area, and the commercial development that became established along Northwest Blvd was auto-oriented. What is now Washington State Employees Credit Union (WSECU) is an auto-oriented business, with its drive-up banking window on the rear façade of the building. It also displays an unusual form on the Northwest Blvd side of the building, where it would catch the attention of passing motorists.

The Old National Bank itself was founded in 1891 and grew quickly to become one of the foremost banks in the Inland Empire. The Old National Bank headquarters building is credited with being the first skyscraper in Spokane. The 1911 building was designed by the venerable Chicago firm of D. H. Burnham & Company; it was one of the last buildings

designed by Burnham before his death. The result of a design competition, the building reflected the latest architectural trends and featured opulent materials. According to one author, the new building “served as a symbol of prosperity for the rising economy of the Inland Empire.” The building has been occupied by US Bank since 1988.

Architectural Context. This Modern office building is singular in its design. The building nonetheless shares a number of characteristics with other Modern office buildings. There are several important ideas about contemporary commercial and institutional design in the post-war era that fall under the general classification of “Modern.” These qualities are found in many post-war structures, regardless of style, and reflect the underlying values of Modernism. One is the three-dimensional arrangement of forms as part of the architectural expression of the building. Another idea is the importance of the two-dimensional composition on any one plane as a design feature. This composition is typically asymmetrical and does not, as in traditional architecture, serve primarily to emphasize the building form. It is a design feature that may express the interior functions of the building. As an aesthetic device, it can also facilitate a three-dimensional “reading” of the building form by drawing the eye around the corner to the next building plane.

A third Modern idea is that the pattern, texture, color, reflectivity, and other visual aspects of the building materials were considered decorative features. In many post-war styles the materials take the place of traditional architectural detailing to embellish the building. Examples include the juxtaposition of polished granite and rusticated or volcanic stone, the repetition of simple metal frames and pattern of small ceramic tiles, or the tinted glass and colored metal panels seen in many Modern buildings in Spokane. In this building, the contrast between the masonry walls and refined appearance of the anodized aluminum window and door ensembles is an example of contrasting materials expressing the building’s aesthetic. Another prominent feature of this building is the contrast between the white-painted pebble dash-finished panels and the dark rubble stone masonry.

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Architect. The architect for the Northwest Blvd branch of the Old National Bank was William Gustav Fiedler; the construction company was Inland Construction. Fiedler was born October 20, 1923 in Hancock, Minnesota. He became a member of the American Institute of Architects in 1965. A brief obituary in the October 20, 1997 Spokesman-Review mentioned that Fiedler, who served in the Navy, "worked as a commercial architect and had lived in Spokane for 51 years." Various AIA directories indicate that he worked as a draftsman for L. A. Klaue in 1950, for Whitehouse & Price in 1952, for E. D. McCarthy and Associates from 1954-56, and for Carlton G. Tollefson from 1957-59. His firm, Miller and Fiedler Architects, designed St. Mary's Catholic Church in Deer Park (1968), as well as the cooling tower, pump room, and an addition to the TRIGA Nuclear Research Reactor Building at Washington State University in Pullman. Fiedler is also credited with the design of Assumption Parish in Spokane (1979), a building he curiously referred to as "unsophisticated." He died at 73 on October 15, 1997 in Spokane.

Physical description:

Location and Setting. The Northwest Blvd branch of the Old National Bank (Washington State Employees Credit Union or WSECU today) is located on the south side of Northwest Blvd, about two miles northwest of the Monroe Street Bridge in the Audubon neighborhood in northwest Spokane. Meenach Drive, which dips down and crosses the Spokane River to become Fort George Wright Drive, is southwest of the property. Northwest Blvd is a busy arterial that extends from Monroe Street to Wellesley Avenue, where it becomes Assembly Street before joining Hwy 291. The street is populated by commercial businesses, including numerous restaurants. Audubon Elementary is about eight blocks to the southeast and Audubon Park is about three blocks to the northwest.

Beyond the commercial strip, the neighborhood is primarily residential. The bank occupies an irregular, .63-acre lot that is largely triangular in shape, the long side of the triangle paralleling Northwest Blvd. It fronts on the street, overlooking the boulevard. One entry drive is located on Northwest Blvd and one is located on Cleveland Avenue, to the rear of the bank, which is the entry to the drive-through window. To the immediate east of the parcel on the Northwest Blvd side is a garage that is part of the auto detail business that occupies the former gas station at the corner of Northwest Blvd and Cleveland Avenue. A residence occupies the lot to the east of the bank on the Cleveland Avenue frontage.

Materials. The exterior cladding and finishes on the Old National Bank is a combination of pebble dash panels painted white, rough-finished stucco panels, and volcanic rubble stone masonry walls. The foundation is concrete and the roof is built-up. The windows and doors are framed in anodized aluminum, with metal panels covering the top portion of the windows, which have dark-tinted glass.

Massing and design. The Northwest Blvd branch of the Old National Bank building is a one-story building with a basement, an irregular footprint, and a flat roof with a parapet. It is sited in the far northwest corner of its .63-acre parcel, which is located in the western portion of a triangular block created by the diagonal path of Northwest Blvd. Most of the remainder of the parcel is taken up by surface parking, although the perimeter of the parcel is landscaped. The building façade is faceted in a saw tooth pattern along the Northwest Blvd frontage. A notch occupied by a stone-faced addition with a slightly lower roofline is located in the southwest corner of the building. The west side façade of the building is parallel to Alberta Street, the front entry façade faces east and is oriented toward Northwest Blvd, and the drive-through window is located on the south side of the building and projects into the parking lot. One of the most distinctive features of the building is the faceted faces along Northwest Blvd, which are finished in



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stone masonry and separated by tall, narrow fixed windows of tinted glass that are partially shielded by metal panels along the upper edge. Additional character-defining details include the tall fascia and deep eave overhangs on portions of the building. The Modern building was designed by architect William Fiedler and constructed in 1971.

Changes over time. Changes to the building that are noted in the City of Spokane building permit files include new landscaping, added in 2000, and a new canopy at the drive-through window, added in 2002. The interior was remodeled in 2007. No additional information on building changes were noted in the files, and none were apparent on site.

Landscape and site design. The bank occupies the northwest corner of the parcel, which is at the intersection of Northwest Blvd and Alberta Street. Both the northeast and west frontages parallel the streets. There is an entrance to the parking area on the north side of the parcel, off Northwest Blvd, and on the south side, off Cleveland Avenue. Entrances to the building are located on the north side, accessed from the public sidewalk along Northwest Blvd, and on the east side, accessed from a walkway in the parking area. The site is formally landscaped with shrubs and deciduous trees around the building foundation and the perimeter of the site. A landscaped swale is located in the southwest corner of the parcel.

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