EVALUATION OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

PUBLIC SERVICE CENTER

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
PID: #2302924330051

JUNE 2015

PRESERVATION
DESIGN WORKS, LLC

Evaluation of Historic Significance
Public Service Center
250 South 4th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota
PID: #2302924330051
HE-MPC-5277

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Executive Summary

In 2015, the City of Minneapolis contacted Preservation Design Works (PVN) to assess the Public Service Center at 250 South 4th Street in Minneapolis in support of a feasibility study of the property (see Image 1).[1] PVN evaluated the building with respect to local landmark designation criteria.

The Public Service Center meets City of Minneapolis Criterion 1, 3, and 4. Specifically, the site is notable for its representation of architect Robert Cerny's involvement in urban renewal in Minneapolis in the mid-twentieth century. The building was designed by Cerny, built in 1957, and retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance.[2]

The period of significance for the property begins in 1957, with the construction of the building, which was originally known as the "Public Health Building." The period of significance for the property ends in 1965, the year that marks the end of major building efforts within the boundaries of the Gateway Urban Renewal Project; construction of the Public Service Center and other civic buildings within the boundaries of the project were the result of Robert Cerny's tireless efforts to advocate for urban renewal in downtown Minneapolis.[3] Currently, the building is used by the City of Minneapolis as office space.

Photo 1. Public Service Center, south and east façades, 1958.

[1] The building was originally known as the "Public Health Building." For ease, throughout this report, the building is referred to by its present day name, "Public Service Center."

Photo 1: "Public Health Center, 250 Fourth Street South, Minneapolis," Norton and Peel Photograph Collection, NP 250283, 1958. Minnesota Historical Society Collections Online.

[2] The Minneapolis Municipal Code defines "integrity" as: "The authenticity of a landmark, historic district, nominated property under interim protection or historic resource evidenced by its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association."

[3] While 1965 is, in fact, exactly 50 years from the present, it is important to note that unlike the National Register of Historic Places Criteria, the City of Minneapolis Criteria do not require that the end date of a property's period of significance be set at least 50 years prior to the present.

Introduction

The Public Service Center currently serves as office space for the City of Minneapolis. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate whether the building is a historic resource, as defined by the City of Minneapolis Municipal Code. According to Section 599.210, the criteria that should be considered when determining the historic significance of a property are as follows:

1. The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.
2. The property contains or is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.
3. The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city of neighborhood identity.
4. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.
5. The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.
6. The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.
7. The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The Public Service Center is not currently locally or nationally designated. The building was inventoried as part of the 2011 *Central Core Historic Resources Survey* prepared by Mead & Hunt. It was included in a list of buildings that were recognized as potentially eligible for designation as "local landmark[s] under Criterion 1: History and/or Criterion 4: Architecture/Engineering/Construction and/or National Register listing under Criterion A: History and/or Criterion C: Architecture." Likewise, in a Historic Review Letter for the property dated May 14, 2015, City of Minneapolis staff determined that the Public Service Center "may be considered locally significant under Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 6."

The Public Service Center represents architect Robert Cerny's involvement in urban renewal in Minneapolis in the mid-twentieth century and, as such, is significant under Criterion 1, 3 and 4. The building does not meet Criterion 6, as the firm of Thorshov & Cerny designed over one hundred buildings between 1942 and 1960 and the Public Service Center is not an exemplary structure within their firm's larger body of work.

The Public Service Center was built in 1957, as the City of Minneapolis' Public Health Building, and retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under Criteria 1, 3, and 4.[4] The Public Service Center building has undergone exterior alteration. Skyways were added to the building in 1982 and 1996. According to building permits, the addition of skyways required changes at both the interior and exterior of the building.[5] To some extent, these alterations do compromise the historic integrity of the original design of the Public Service Center building, which could limit the building's potential to meet national level historic designation criteria.[6] However, as the skyways are an existing feature, do not alter the primary façade of the building, and have become ubiquitous throughout the central core, they do not compromise integrity to a significant enough degree that the building should be denied local designation.

To prepare this report, Preservation Design Works (PVN) completed a site walk-through and observation of integrity on May 27, 2015 and also conducted archival research at the Minnesota Historical Society Gale Family Library, Hennepin County Library James K. Hosmer Special Collections, and University of Minnesota Libraries to assess the historic significance of the site with regard to the local designation Criteria. The report that follows includes an overview of the context of mid-century urban renewal, a history of the firm of Thorshov & Cerny, a history of urban renewal in Minneapolis – including the key role played by Robert Cerny, an assessment of the building's historic integrity, photographic documentation, and conclusions.

[4] The Minneapolis Municipal Code defines "integrity" as: "The authenticity of a landmark, historic district, nominated property under interim protection or historic resource evidenced by its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association."

While the building was originally known as the "Public Health Building," for ease, throughout this report, the building is referred to by its present day name, "Public Service Center."

[5] Minneapolis Building Permit B513052 (April, 1982); B515382 (July, 1982); B0631443 (July, 1996)

[6] According to 599.110 of the City of Minneapolis Municipal Code, historic integrity is "the authenticity of a landmark, historic district, nominated property under interim protection or historic resource evidenced by its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association."

Historical Overview

Urban Renewal: Reshaping the United States' Urban Cores

The Public Service Center was constructed as part of Minneapolis' mid-twentieth century urban renewal efforts. During the decades following World War II, "urban renewal" captured the imagination of America. Proponents of the movement, which included everyone from federal government officials to planning school faculty to common citizens, believed in what planning scholar Judith Martin describes as "the promise [that urban renewal could] solve the physical, social, and even the economic problems of American cities."[7] Broadly speaking, the physical, social, and economic problems in American cities during the 1950s can be traced to two related phenomena:

1) The lack of new development and maintenance of existing structures in urban cores during the war years

2) The mass movement of upper and middle class citizens out of urban cores and into newly developing suburbs during the post-war years

In cities across the country, deferred maintenance from the war years combined with lower urban tax bases that had resulted from the suburban exodus of upper and middle class Americans. The result of this phenomena was that urban cores were left with crumbling buildings and roads, insufficient low-income housing and public transportation systems, and scores of small lots that made redevelopment at a "modern scale" infeasible. In a description of pre-urban renewal St. Paul, that could just as easily have been used to describe any other city in the country, architectural historian Jeffrey Hess describes popular opinion of the city's downtown in the early 50s as "old, drab, and depressing with very few examples of nationally acclaimed architecture in either remodeled or new structures."[8] Urban renewal sought to bring a renaissance to urban cores through their large-scale demolition and redevelopment – ambitious projects that were generally funded, at least in part, by the federal government.

[7] Judith A. Martin and Antony Goddard, *Past Choices/Present Landscapes: The Impact of Urban Renewal on the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, 1989), 1. The report can be accessed online, at CURA's website: http://www.cura.umn.edu/publications/catalog/c1021

[8] Jeffrey A. Hess and Paul Clifford Larson, *St. Paul's Architecture, A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 201.

The ideals of urban renewal were first launched as official government policy along with the Housing Act of 1949.[9] President Harry Truman issued an enthusiastic statement upon signing the Act into law,

> "I have today approved the Housing Act of 1949. This far-reaching measure is of great significance to the welfare of the American people. It opens up the prospect of decent homes in wholesome surroundings for low-income families now living in the squalor of the slums. It equips the Federal Government, for the first time, with effective means for aiding cities in the vital task of clearing slums and rebuilding blighted areas… The task before us now is to put this legislation into operation with speed and effectiveness. .. This legislation permits us to take a long step toward increasing the well-being and happiness of millions of our fellow citizens. Let us not delay in fulfilling that high purpose."[10]

In a typical urban renewal project of the 1950s, the government would exercise its right to eminent domain and purchase large groups of parcels in city centers. The land would then be cleared of all existing development and re-parceled and sold or leased to a local government entity or approved local redevelopment agency to facilitate the completion of a pre-approved project. Projects varied from vast low-income housing developments such as Chicago's infamous Cabrini-Green, to new highways that connected downtowns with the suburbs as was the case with Boston's Fitzgerald Expressway, to sprawling surface parking lots – the ultimate fate for much of the land that underwent urban renewal in downtown Minneapolis.

[9] The U.S. Housing Act of 1949 was amended in 1954, 1959, 1961, and 1965, but remained essentially the same until the passage of the U.S. Housing Act of 1968.

[10] Harry S. Truman, *"Statement by the President Upon Signing the Housing Act of 1949,"* July 15, 1949. Accessed via: The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13246

Thorshov and Cerny[11]

As much as the urban renewal movement was driven by the support and funding of the federal government, the logistics and designs of individual projects were realized through the work of city planners and architects sympathetic to the cause. In Minneapolis, the architectural firm Thorshov & Cerny, particularly principal Robert Cerny was instrumental in furthering the city's urban renewal agenda (see Image 2).[12]

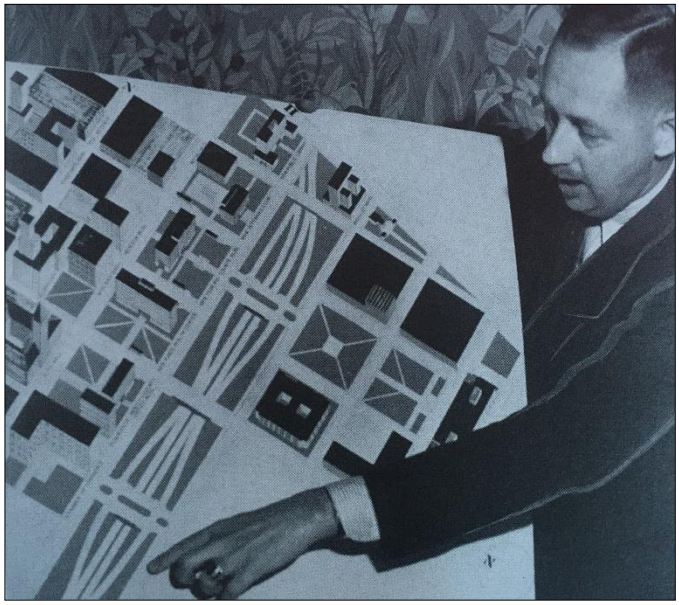

Image 2: Robert Cerny with a map of his "Civic Center Plan" for urban renewal in downtown Minneapolis.

The architectural firm of Thorshov & Cerny traces its roots to the seminal Minneapolis firm Long & Kees.[13] Original partners in Long & Kees, Franklin Long and Frederick Kees, founded the firm in 1884. Kees left the firm in 1897, at which time Lowell Lamoreaux and Franklin Long's son Louis joined the elder Long as partners and the firm was renamed Long, Lamoreaux & Long. The three remained partners until Franklin Long's death in 1912. In 1920, Olaf Thorshov, a Norwegian immigrant, was named partner, and the firm's name changed yet again, this time to Long and Thorshov. Olaf Thorshov died prematurely in 1928, at which time his son Roy took over the firm. Robert Cerny joined Roy Thorshov as his partner in 1942 and, in 1951, the firm became Thorshov and Cerny.

Both Roy Thorshov and Robert Cerny were educated at the University of Minnesota, receiving bachelor's degrees in Architecture. Cerny went on to receive a Master of Architecture from Harvard University.

Together, Thorshov and Cerny designed over 100 buildings between 1942 and 1960, at which time the partnership dissolved. Despite the fact that Thorshov and Cerny's partnership lasted less than 20 years, their body of work was substantial. The firm's commissions included nearly a dozen religious buildings, over twenty educational facilities, numerous private residences, commercial buildings and offices buildings, Metropolitan Stadium in Bloomington, MN, and an airport terminal

[11] See also: "Long & Kees," in Alan Lathrop's *Minnesota Architects: A Biographical Dictionary* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 143; Northwest Architectural Archives, "Cerny Associates Papers" Finding Aid, http://special.lib.umn.edu/findaid/xml/naa029.xml; and "The Cerny Associates, Inc. (firm)," in the AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/ahd4000953.aspx.

[12] Image 2: "Favor Cerny Plan," *Minneapolis Times*, June 8, 1945.

[13] In *Minnesota Architects, A Biographical Dictionary*, Alan Lathrop asserts that Long & Kees "became one of the most successful architectural practices in the history of Minneapolis," p. 143.

(now the Lindbergh Terminal of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport). During the 1950's the firm hovered around 125 staff members, making it one of the largest in Minneapolis.

While the firm of Thorshov & Cerny was known for its modernist design aesthetic, the partners actually fell on opposite sides of the mid-twentieth century urban renewal agenda. Roy Thorshov, while a modern designer in practice, was also an ardent preservationist who was appointed the first chair of the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission. In sharp contrast, Robert Cerny was chairman of the Urban Renewal Committee of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce and spent much of the 1940s and 1950s advocating for the largescale redevelopment of the Gateway District in downtown Minneapolis. It was Cerny's passionate belief in the benefits of urban renewal that secured his firm the commissions for three of the four major public buildings that were erected in downtown Minneapolis in the late 1950s – placing Thorshov & Cerny front and center as Minneapolis tore down and redeveloped its central core.

Robert Cerny and Urban Renewal in Minneapolis

"From the start, the Twin Cities seemed to have a strong, if overly ambitious, renewal experience" note Judith Martin and Anthony Goddard in *Past Choices/Present Landscapes: The Impact of Urban Renewal on the Twin Cities*.[14] It can be argued that the most ambitious of the Twin Cities' renewal projects was the Gateway Urban Renewal Project, which Minneapolis embarked upon in 1957. Over the following decade, approximately 70 acres of downtown's Lower Loop/Gateway District were razed, including the sites that would be redeveloped as the City of Minneapolis' Public Health Building (now the City's Public Service Center) at 250 South 4th Street, the State of Minnesota's Department of Employment Security (now the City of Lakes Building) at 309 2nd Avenue South, and the U.S. Courthouse and Federal Office Building (now the Hennepin County Family Justice Center) at 110 4th Street South, all civic buildings designed by Thorshov & Cerny.

The Gateway District had long been met with disapproval by many Minneapolitans. Since the last decades of the 19th Century, the area was known as a skid row, infamous for its flophouses, bars, nightclubs, and substantial homeless community. The former Gateway Park, located at the foot of the Hennepin Avenue Bridge drew the particular ire of the broader community; the Beaux-Arts style pavilion located in the park was commonly referred to as the "piss-house" due to the number of homeless men that could be found in the park at any given time (see Image 3).[15]

Image 3: Unemployed men gathered in Gateway Park.

Reforming the Gateway District had been on the minds of Minneapolis' citizens and local government since the early 20th century. Likewise, the realization of a Gateway District redevelopment scheme had long been a dream of Robert Cerny's. Cerny served as executive secretary of the Civic Center Development Association (CCDA), which had been formed a decade earlier with the goal of promoting redevelopment of the Gateway District. By the late 1940s, the CCDA was specifically pushing a redevelopment plan designed by Cerny. This plan eventually became known as the "Civic Center Plan." It called for "eliminating an 18-block area [of the Gateway

[14]Martin, *Past Choices/Present Landscapes*, pg 19.

Martin and Goddard's report, which was produced for the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, provides a thorough description and analysis of the process and outcomes of urban renewal in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The narrative description of the Gateway Project and its outcomes provided here draw significantly on Martin and Goddard's work.

[15] Image 3: "Unemployed men gathered in Gateway Park, Minneapolis," *Minneapolis Star Journal*, July 6, 1937. Minnesota Historical Society Collections Online, HG4.1 p6.

District] and designing a cluster of public buildings…arranged in a civic-center form."[16] Specifically, Cerny intended to add a veteran's center, a county welfare building, a federal courthouse, a public health building, a public safety building and a library to the area. The plan also called for a four-lane expressway that was to fill the entire block between Washington Avenue and Third Street. Cerny intended the various public buildings to be located to the south of the new expressway, while the area that had formerly been Gateway Park would be devoted to new industrial buildings. Generally, the plan was well received; a 1945 article in the *Minneapolis Times* called for the public to "Favor [the] Cerny Plan."[17]

Much to Cerny's frustration, despite local support and the nation-wide popularity of urban renewal, redevelopment efforts in the area moved slowly. During the late 40s and early 50s, Cerny was known for his frequent public discussions of his plan – he maintained a nearly weekly public speaking schedule, presenting to civic groups, downtown businesses, the mayor's office, and "anyone who would listen."[18] In 1948, Cerny's efforts were the subject of an article in *Progressive Architecture* titled "The Architect and His Community." Cerny used the article to advocate that architects should "take some positive leadership in making planning and architectural studies of a public nature."[19] In regards to his Civic Center Plan, Cerny noted that a "bold stroke" was needed to cure blight in downtown Minneapolis, and that "lac[ing] [the area] with nonstop arterial highways" was an imperative step in the city's revitalization.[20]

In 1952, the city unveiled its own urban renewal design, "Beautiful Entrance to a Beautiful City." At the request of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, the city plan integrated Cerny's Civic Center plan into the new scheme. The city plan called for clearing a full 40 blocks of the Gateway District and Warehouse District over a 20 year time period. Roughly 75 percent of the existing building stock in the area was slated for demolition. A large scale public housing development was planned for construction in part of the area. Cerny's proposed expressway remained in place, and a three-story parking garage intended to accommodate 3,000 cars was slated to fill two square blocks just south of the current location of the federal courthouse. The total cost of the project was estimated at $85 million.

In 1955, the Minneapolis Housing and Redevelopment authority (HRA) presented its own plans for the Gateway District, the "Lower Loop Redevelopment Plan." The HRA had been created as part of the Housing Act of 1949, and was composed of a locally appointed board of commissioners. Gaining the HRA's approval was the only way to access federal urban renewal dollars. The agency secured federal backing for their Lower Loop plan in 1957. This plan differed from Cerny's original plan in that it did not include the expressway. Additionally, the footprint of this plan was closer to that originally proposed by Cerny than to the sprawling Beautiful City plan. Cerny remained

[16] "Robert Cerny," *Architecture Minnesota* (November/December 1992), 57.

[17] "Favor Cerny Plan," *Minneapolis Times*, June 8, 1945.

[18] "Robert Cerny," *Architecture Minnesota* (November/December 1992), 57.

[19] "The Architect and His Community, Case Study: Long & Thorshov, Inc.," *Progressive Architecture*, 29, no. 3 (1948): 47-48.

[20] Ibid.

outspoken in his opinions regarding the overall redevelopment and successfully lobbied to have the HRA adopt his original plan to locate a row of public buildings along Third Street.[21]

After federal funds for the Gateway project were officially released in 1958, "public agencies spent about $19 million on new structures for the Minneapolis Public Library [1961], the Public Health Center [Public Service Center, 1957], the State Employment Security Office [City of Lakes Building, 1959], and a new federal courthouse [Hennepin County Family Justice Center, 1960]."[22] With the exception of the Public Library, Thorsov & Cerny was responsible for the design of each of these buildings.

Image 4. The Gateway District before and after demolition. Aerial photographs from 1957 (left) and 1964 (right).

Demolition and construction followed shortly after the Lower Loop plan received federal backing, even prior to the official release of federal funds (see Image 4).[23] The Thorshov & Cerny designed Public Service Center was constructed in 1957, making it one of the first new buildings to be realized in the Gateway urban renewal district. The building was well received in architectural circles, and was nominated for the prestigious American Institute of Architects' R.S. Reynolds Memorial Award in 1960.

Demolition of the old Gateway District was not instantaneous, it took until 1963 for the wrecking balls to stop swinging at which point approximately 200 buildings had been razed. Intensive redevelopment in the district continued until 1965, at which point funding had all but

[21] Edwin C. Hirschoff and Joseph Hart, *Down & Out: Life and Death of Minneapolis's Skid Row*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 42.

[22] Judith A. Martin and Antony Goddard, *Past Choices/Present Landscapes: The Impact of Urban Renewal on the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, 1989), 64.

[23] Image 4: WN-4M-124, aerial photograph, 1957 (left) and EN-2EE-101, 1964 (right). Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online, https://www.lib.umn.edu/apps/mhapo/

dried up. By the mid-60s, urban renewal had come under attack from both disillusioned academics and community members, who had yet to see ambitious projects like the one in the Gateway District come to full fruition. Significant portions of the Gateway District were not redeveloped in the manner that proponents of the project, including Cerny, had hoped for. In fact, much of the area was covered over for surface parking and remained that way until fairly recently.

In his discussion of urban renewal in the Twin Cities, Jeffrey Hess notes that "modern architecture served the purposes of those who wished to destroy an old image as much as to create a new one."[24] For Robert Cerny, and his work in the Gateway District, this was certainly the case – as an architect and community advocate, Cerny was convinced that Minneapolis "had to become a modern-looking metropolis in order to prosper."[25]

[24] Jeffrey A. Hess and Paul Clifford Larson, *St. Paul's Architecture, A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 192.

[25] "Robert Cerny," *Architecture Minnesota* (November/December 1992), 57.

Building Assessment

The Public Service Center, constructed in 1957, is a five story office building with a rectangular massing and flat roof (Images 5-10). The building features an aluminum and glass curtain wall at the upper stories, and marble cladding at the first story. The building measures 79 ft. across the front, has a depth of 165 ft., and is 67 ft. high. Its estimated cost was $1,537,850.[26] In 1960, the building was nominated for the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) R.S. Reynolds Memorial Award for "distinguished architecture with significant use of aluminum."[27] The "significant use of aluminum" is still visible in the present day building—as ribs that are part of the building's curtain wall.

Image 5: South and East Façades, 2015

The Public Service Center's dominant architectural feature is the rhythm created by its curtain wall system, which is present at each side of the building. The curtain wall covers the upper four floors of the building and is composed of glass and aluminum. The floors are articulated by changes in the curtain wall material, which is arranged in nine horizontal bands. Light blue opaque glass bands are located at each floor plate and at the parapet; these bands alternate with bands of vision glass. The curtain wall system is completed by vertical aluminum ribs which extend from the second to fifth floors of the building.

Image 6: South Façade, and Primary Entrance, 2015

[26] City of Minneapolis Building Permit A32315 (28 May 1956).

[27] Thorshov & Cerny's St. Mary's Greek Eastern Orthodox Church was also one of the ninety-nine nominees from the United States for the $25,000 award in 1960; "Two Minneapolis Buildings Nominated for Architecture Award," *Minneapolis Tribune*, March 15, 1960, Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission file for 250 4th Street South, Minneapolis; "AIA Opens Competition for Awards," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 1969, D9, AIA opens competition for awards. (1969, Oct 04). *The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)* Retrieved from http://login.ezproxy.lib.umn.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/147625908?accountid=14586

The upper four floors of the building project slightly outward from the ground level. The ground level is clad with a black and tan veined marble. At the south, east, and west facades, a ribbon of clerestory windows is located just above the marble (Image 7). The building's structural bays are apparent at the level of the clerestory windows, as an aluminum clad column is present after every fourth window pane.

The Public Service Center's primary façade faces south toward 4th Street South (Images 5 and 6).[28] The building has a significant setback from 4th Street South, the primary entrance is located at the southeast corner of the building. The approach to the entrance includes a concrete walk with three steps which is met by a projecting exterior vestibule. The vestibule has a flat roof that rests on columns clad with marble that matches the first story of the building. To the west of the vestibule, the setback is landscaped as a flat grass lawn which is raised a few feet above grade.

Image 7: Detail, Marble Cladding and Ribbon Window, 2015

At the east façade, a skyway connection has been added at the second floor near the center of the building (Image 5). A storefront window system is present in the four structural bays to the south of the skyway connection. Moving south from the skyway connection, the storefront windows cover the ground and second floors in the first two bays and then only the ground floor in the third and fourth bays. This face of the building is built flush with the sidewalk.

Image 8: North and East Façades, 2015

[28] Note on Cardinal Directions: In downtown Minneapolis the street grid is oriented to the Mississippi River, and runs NW/SE, NE/SW, meaning that 4th Street South, marks the SW boundary of the property, and 3rd Avenue South marks the SE boundary of the property, etc. When referring to the building's facades, the façade fronting 4th Street South will be considered south, the façade fronting 3rd Avenue South will be considered east, etc.

At the west façade, another skyway connection is present near the south end of the building. A series of aluminum swing doors are located at the first level.

Image 9: West façade and 217 3rd Street South, 2015

At the northern end of the west façade, and wrapping around to the north façade, the Public Service Center is connected to a single story building, 217 3rd Street South (Image 9 and 10). 217 3rd Street South is located on a separate parcel from the Public Service Center, and not considered part of the Public Service Center in any way.[29] This building was constructed in 1932, and at the time of the Public Service Center's construction 217 3rd Street South was re-clad with matching marble.

Image 10: North Façade, 2015

The Public Service Center was built in 1957 and retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under Criteria 1, 3, and 4.[30] The Public Service Center building has undergone exterior alteration. Skyways were added to the building in 1982 and 1996. According to building permits, the addition of skyways required changes at both the interior and exterior of the building.[31] To some extent, these alterations do compromise the historic integrity of the original design of the Public Service Center building, which could limit the building's potential to meet national level historic designation criteria. However, as the skyways are an existing feature, do not alter the primary façade of the building, and have become ubiquitous throughout the central core, they do not compromise integrity to a significant enough degree that the building should be denied local designation.

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[29] 217 3rd Street South was reviewed by City Staff in a Historic Review Letter dated May 14, 2015, that found that the property does not meet any of the local historic Criteria. The Historic Review Letter also notes that in 2010, the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office issued a letter to the city recommending that the property not be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The property was not recommended for further study in the 2011 Mead and Hunt *Central Core Historic Resources Survey*.

[30] The Minneapolis Municipal Code defines "integrity" as: "The authenticity of a landmark, historic district, nominated property under interim protection or historic resource evidenced by its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association."

[31] Minneapolis Building Permit B513052 (April, 1982); B515382 (July, 1982); B0631443 (July, 1996)

Conclusion

As a widely respected architect and chairman of the Urban Renewal Committee of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, Robert Cerny actively advocated for urban renewal policies and federal urban renewal funding and had a profound influence on the dramatic alteration to the social, political, economic, and architectural character of the central core of downtown Minneapolis in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Thorshov & Cerny-designed Public Service Center represents Cerny's commitment to urban renewal and his modernist vision for the city of Minneapolis. As such, it meets City of Minneapolis historic designation Criterion 1, 3, and 4 and is a locally significant historic resource.