

## COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

**Architectural Inventory Form**

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ Determined Eligible- NR  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Determined Not Eligible- NR  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Determined Eligible- SR  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Determined Not Eligible- SR  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Need Data  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Contributes to eligible NR District  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Noncontributing to eligible NR District

**I. IDENTIFICATION**

1. Resource number: **5LR.2497**
2. Temporary resource number: **SHF-21**
3. County: **Larimer**
4. City: **Fort Collins**
5. Historic building name: **St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church**
6. Current building name: **St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church**
7. Building address: **305 East Elizabeth Street**
8. Owner name: **St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Collins**
- Owner organization:
- Owner address: **305 East Elizabeth Street  
Fort Collins, CO 80524**

Parcel number: **97133-08-915**

- |   |   |  |                                     |  |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 44. National Register eligibility field assessment: | <input type="checkbox"/> Individually eligible            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not eligible | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs data | <input type="checkbox"/> Previously listed |
| State Register eligibility field assessment:        | <input type="checkbox"/> Individually eligible            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not eligible | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs data | <input type="checkbox"/> Previously listed |
| Local landmark eligibility field assessment:        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individually eligible | <input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible            | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs data | <input type="checkbox"/> Previously listed |

Fort Collins Post-World War II Survey

**HISTORITECTURE**

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## II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **6th** Township: **7N** Range: **69W**  
**NW 1/4 NE 1/4 NW 1/4 SW 1/4** of section **13** Grid aligned on **southwest** corner of section.
10. UTM Reference Zone: **13**  
 Easting: **493754** Northing: **4491476**
11. USGS quad name: **Fort Collins** Scale: **7.5**  
 Year: **1984**
12. Lot(s): **Lots 15, 16, and 17; Block 4**  
 Addition: **Crafts Resubdivision** Year of addition: **1889**
13. Boundary description and justification: **The boundary, as described above, contains but does not exceed the land historically associated with the property.**
- ☐ Metes and bounds exist

## III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building Plan (footprint, shape): **Irregular Plan**  
 Other building plan descriptions:
15. Dimensions in feet: **Unknown**
16. Number of stories: **Two**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Brick**  
 Other wall materials:
18. Roof configuration: **Gabled Roof/Side Gabled Roof**  
 Other roof configuration:
19. Primary external roof material: **Asphalt Roof/Composition Roof**  
 Other roof materials:
20. Special features: **Window/Stained Glass**  
**Roof Treatment/Dormer**
21. General architectural description:  
**Oriented to the north, this church incorporates buildings with three different dates of construction. The 1951 original sanctuary is located at the west, the 1963 sanctuary is located to the east, and a ca 1980s addition runs along much of the southern elevation. The irregularly shaped building is dark brown brick. The side gabled roof is clad in asphalt shingles. The current primary entry is located within a flat-roofed brick vestibule centered on the combined (1951 and 1963 buildings) façade. The double glass doors are framed in metal painted royal blue; there are fixed transoms over each door and large, square, fixed pane windows flank the west side of this entry. The west-facing side of this vestibule contains a secondary entry, a solid metal door painted blue, and two narrow, rectangular, vertically oriented, fixed pane windows. The brick bell tower with an open top and visible bells rises above this entry vestibule. East of the current entry there is a solid brick wall panel containing the name of the church in large letters.**

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Between this signage wall and the eastern bay with the front-facing folded plate roof detail, a line of large steel fixed pane windows with casements in the bottom appear on each of the two stories and are juxtaposed against bands of cream acrylic or plastic facing. This center section of the building has an International style appearance. This same window and acrylic panel arrangement continues onto the east-facing portion of this building bay, although on this side brick vertical bands separate these units. At the southeast corner, near the main façade of the building, there is a slightly recessed secondary entry. It appears to be a solid (wood or metal) door painted blue with a glass surround.

The northeastern corner of the façade features four gable peaks in the folded plate roof detail. Stained glass windows appear within these gabled sections and run from the gable peak to approximately halfway down the façade. The individual rectangular panes of the window angle outward and appear to be separated by steel bands. There are cream-colored vinyl panels underneath each stained glass window. Underneath the two central windows, at the base of the building, there are two glass double-door entries; these doors feature metal trim painted blue and fixed pane transoms. There is a flat-roofed, two-story, brick secondary entry tower at the northeastern most portion of the façade's corner. This tower includes a double metal door painted blue with a fixed transom. In the corner tower there is also a rectangular fixed pane second story window with a casement at the bottom and a cream-colored vinyl pane below.

The 1951 church features its original primary entry along the façade. It is a wooden double door painted royal blue with a stone decorative arch located within a small front-gabled vestibule; there is a narrow, rectangular, vertically oriented window trimmed in the same stone as the arch around the door located in the west-facing side of the 1951 entry vestibule. The area above the door, which may have originally been an irregularly shaped transom, is filled with concrete. In the area between the 1963 entry and the 1951 entry there are brick pilasters, arched steel windows with three lites and a casement in the bottom, and what appear to be series of slider windows allowing light into the basement. West of the 1951 entry there is a four-window unit trimmed in stone. The west elevation of the 1951 church features a front gabled bay with stylized cross motif in the gable face and a four-window unit which matches the element on the north side located within a square projection.

The ca 1980s addition abuts the 1951 church. There is a change of brick color and type, marking the intersection of the two buildings. On this side of the building the addition appears as a side roofed projection. There is a metal door painted brown with a fixed pane window in the center located within the addition near where the two buildings meet. This door is reached via several steps and there is a metal platform immediately outside this door. All of the metal work is painted dark brown. A staircase to the basement with a brown metal handrail runs underneath this upper flight of steps. There are two window openings, each with arched tops, on the portion of the west elevation south of the metal entry door. These windows appear to have been designed to mimic the general shape of the window openings in the adjacent 1951 church. However, this fenestration lacks the decorative stone surround of the earlier design. The windows within these openings appear to be fixed pane on the top and operative casement at the bottom.

The western portion of the south elevation is comprised of a trio of front gabled bays. It is possible this design was chosen to imitate, in a much simpler manner, the folded plate roof detail of the 1963 church addition. Each bay has two windows each. These are identical to the previously described window on the west side of the ca 1980s addition. Open metal drain pipes, painted dark brown, separate the three bays. There are circular vents in the upper gable face, near the peak, on each of the front gabled sections. East of the trio of front gables there is a flat roofed plane; vegetation obscures the brick surface, but it appears to be a solid run of brick. Near the intersection of the ca 1980s and 1963 additions, there is a rear entry. This front gabled projection faces southeast; the door, obscured by the angle of this open entry vestibule, was not visible from the public right of way. The south elevation of the 1963 church features four folded plate dormers. The windows in these elements do not, like those on the façade, extend downward toward the foundation. Neither do these windows contain panes of stained glass. There are no other window or door openings on this side of the 1963 church.

The front-gabled east elevation features a projecting window band, vertically oriented and comprised of numerous rectangular panes, centered on this side of the building. The glass appears to be mirrored. However, there is likely stained glass on an inner pane. Several ventilation panels appear on this elevation and the air conditioning unit is visible near the base of a large evergreen tree.

Character defining features of this church, taken as a whole, include the folded plate roof with integrated canted windows, the bell tower, and the window and vinyl panel pattern on the façade.

## 22. Architectural style: **Modern Movements**

Other architectural style:

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Building type:

## 23. Landscape or special setting features:

This building is located on a series of narrow rectangular-shaped lots along East Elizabeth Street. There is a grass lawn surrounding the north, west, and east sides of the building. There are several large evergreen trees on the property. A large L-shaped parking lot runs along the east side of the property and extends around the rear of the building. There is a small fenced playground area on the west, near the church. The property is sited on a lot with an elevation of 4990 feet above mean sea level.

## 24. Associated building, features or objects:

None.

## IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Date of Construction: 1951, 1963, and ca 1980s ☒ Actual ☐ Estimate

Source of Information: 75th Anniversary: 1908-1983—St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (booklet), field observation (estimate for addition on rear)

## 26. Architect: Harlan E. Rathburn (1951); Magerfleish &amp; Burnham (1963)

Source of Information: "St. John's: Good, clean architecture with elegance." *Coloradoan*, 5 July 1980, p. 5.

## 27. Builder: Unknown

Source of Information:

## 28. Original Owner: St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Source of Information: 75th Anniversary: 1908-1983—St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (booklet)

## 29. Construction history:

Portions of this building were constructed in 1951, 1963, and ca. 1980s. An analysis of the style, building materials, and other historical records corroborate these dates of construction. The most recent addition is large and spans the entire length of the two (1951 and 1963) churches combined. The originally functional bell tower was replaced with electronic clarion bells sometime prior to 1980. The original blue and white stained glass windows in the 1963 church were replaced, one a year, between 1991 and 1999; the stained glass artist for the new windows was Marge Davis. In 2011 the building was re-roofed.

## 30. Location: Original Location Date of move(s):

## V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

## 31. Original use(s): Religion/Church

## 32. Intermediate uses(s): Religion/Church

## 33. Current uses(s): Religion/Church

## 34. Site type(s): Church

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## 35. Historical background:

The building at 305 East Elizabeth Street was constructed in stages starting in 1950, but St. John's Lutheran Church has a much longer history in Fort Collins. The first Lutheran services in town were held in 1906, with this church community formally organizing on May 3, 1908. During the early years, St. John's shared a pastor with Greeley's Trinity Lutheran Church. However, by 1916, they had not only hired their first pastor, Rev. F. W. Grunwald, but also purchased their own church building. St. John's worshippers moved into the Church of God's former facility located at the intersection of Canyon Avenue and Mulberry Street. In 1921 St. John's became a member of the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church.

The church started preparing for an even bigger home in 1940, purchasing lots on East Mulberry Street to build a larger house of worship. However, due to World War II, the parish postponed construction, sold this land in north Fort Collins, and purchased a site at the intersection of Mathews and Elizabeth streets instead. Like many churches in Fort Collins and elsewhere across the United States, the St. John's Lutheran congregation grew exponentially during the postwar period; on most Sundays 186 parishioners showed up for services, but there was seating for only seventy five. St. John's needed a larger church and, in 1950, initiated construction of this sanctuary. While this building was under construction the congregation held services at the Colorado A&M military building. Architect Harlan E. Rathburn of Denver designed a new building with sanctuary seating for 256, room for 130 in an overflow area, and space for an additional 200 in the fellowship hall. This new church was dedicated in 1951. In 1955 there was more change: Rev. Theodore A. Meyer, who had served the worshippers at St. John's for twenty three years, died of a heart attack. The newly appointed pastor was Rev. John Henning who served both this parish and performed duties at the Danforth Chapel on the campus.

St. John's congregation continued to grow and, by the late-1950s, they purchased a nearby house and vacant lot on Elizabeth Street to provide land for further expansion. This new building took place in 1963 when the architectural firm of Magerfleish & Burnham designed a newer, even larger sanctuary; the 1950s sanctuary was repurposed as an educational wing for the parish. Other administrative changes followed, with Henning ceasing his duties at Colorado State University in 1965 and St. John's hiring its first associate minister in 1972. An October 1981 article in the Fort Collins Coloradoan noted how the church was "healing itself" after it suffered losses of members and low morale after internal conflicts between longtime pastor Henning and a new assistant caused the leader to resign his position and move to a parish in Nebraska. During this "difficult time" those worshippers who remained at St. John's recommitted themselves to the church and donated hundreds of hours and dollars to physical improvements.

In August 1983 St. John's celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary with a special church service, procession of their All Saints banners, a picnic, and a mortgage burning. During the late-1980s the congregation launched a fundraising drive to raise money for new stained glass windows. When the new sanctuary was constructed in 1963, there was only money available for a single patterned stained glass window behind the main altar and the other windows were "sterile blue and white" instead. Starting in 1991, the congregation was able to add a single patterned new stained glass window each year until 1999 when the last replacement window was installed.

## 36. Sources of information:

Larimer County tax assessor property records (online).

"St. John's : Good, clean architecture with elegance." *Coloradoan*. 5 July 1980. p. 5.

"Healing itself: Challenges remain, but St. John's members are looking forward now." *Coloradoan*. 16 October 1982.

"St. John's will mark its 75th year Sunday." *Coloradoan*. 6 August 1983.

*75th Anniversary: 1908-1983—St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church* (booklet)

"Longtime dreams take color in St. John's windows." *Coloradoan*. 13 May 1999.

## VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Designation authority:

Date of designation:

## 38. Applicable National Register criteria:

☐ A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

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- ☐ B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
- ☐ Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see manual).
- ☐ Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

Applicable Colorado State Register criteria:

- ☐ A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history.
- ☐ B. Connected with persons significant in history.
- ☒ C. Has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan.
- ☐ D. Is of geographic importance.
- ☐ E. Contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history.
- ☐ Does not meet any of the above Colorado State Register criteria.

Applicable City of Fort Collins landmark criteria:

- ☐ 1. The property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or
- ☐ 2. The property is associated with the lives of persons significant in history; or
- ☒ 3. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- ☐ 4. The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

39. Areas of significance: **Architecture**40. Period(s) of Significance: **1951, 1963**41. Level of Significance: ☐ National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐ Not Applicable

42. Statement of Significance:

**St. John's Lutheran Church, when they started this building in 1950, chose a location a little over a mile south and east of their prior location; this shift matched the movement of Fort Collins's residential areas, especially newer subdivisions, which were built in areas away from the downtown center.**

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Architecturally, this building represents a combination of churches or additions built in 1951, 1963, and ca. 1980s. Despite the differences in time periods, the three portions have been integrated to form a relatively cohesive whole. An article in the July 5, 1980, edition of the Coloradoan described the 1963 building in particular as “good, plain, clean architecture—with a touch of elegance.” The character-defining features of the folded plate roof and tall canted windows composed of rectangular panes support this statement. The level of significance is not sufficient for this property to qualify for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. However, it qualifies for listing as a Fort Collins Landmark.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

With portions of the building constructed in 1951, 1963, and ca. 1980s, this church exhibits a decent level of physical integrity relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling. The architects responsible for the ca 1980s addition were particularly sensitive in terms of design to the historic churches, choosing to include elements which mirrored but did not copy motifs from the earlier buildings. In terms of materials, the brick work is similar but not identical. The three portions of the building are discernable but, together, achieve a reasonably cohesive church. This resource retains sufficient physical integrity to convey its architectural significance for listing as a Fort Collins local landmark.

## VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. National Register eligibility field assessment: ☐ Individually eligible ☒ Not eligible ☐ Needs data ☐ Previously listed  
 State Register eligibility field assessment: ☐ Individually eligible ☒ Not eligible ☐ Needs data ☐ Previously listed  
 Local landmark eligibility field assessment: ☒ Individually eligible ☐ Not eligible ☐ Needs data ☐ Previously listed

45. Is there National Register district potential: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Needs Data

Discuss: **This inventory was conducted as an intensive-level selective survey and, therefore, lacks the continuity of resource data necessary to recommend the creation of an historic district.**

If there is National Register district potential, is this building contributing: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it contributing: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

## VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

47. Digital photograph file name(s): **elizabethste0305 - 1.tif through elizabethste0305 - 8.tif**  
 Digital photographs filed at: **Historic Preservation Program, City of Fort Collins**  
**281 N. College Avenue**  
**Fort Collins, CO 80522**

48. Report title: **Fort Collins Post-War Survey**

49. Date(s): **12/14/2010**

50. Recorder(s): **Mary Therese Anstey**

51. Organization: **Historitecture, LLC**

52. Address: **PO Box 181095**  
**Denver, CO 80212-8822**

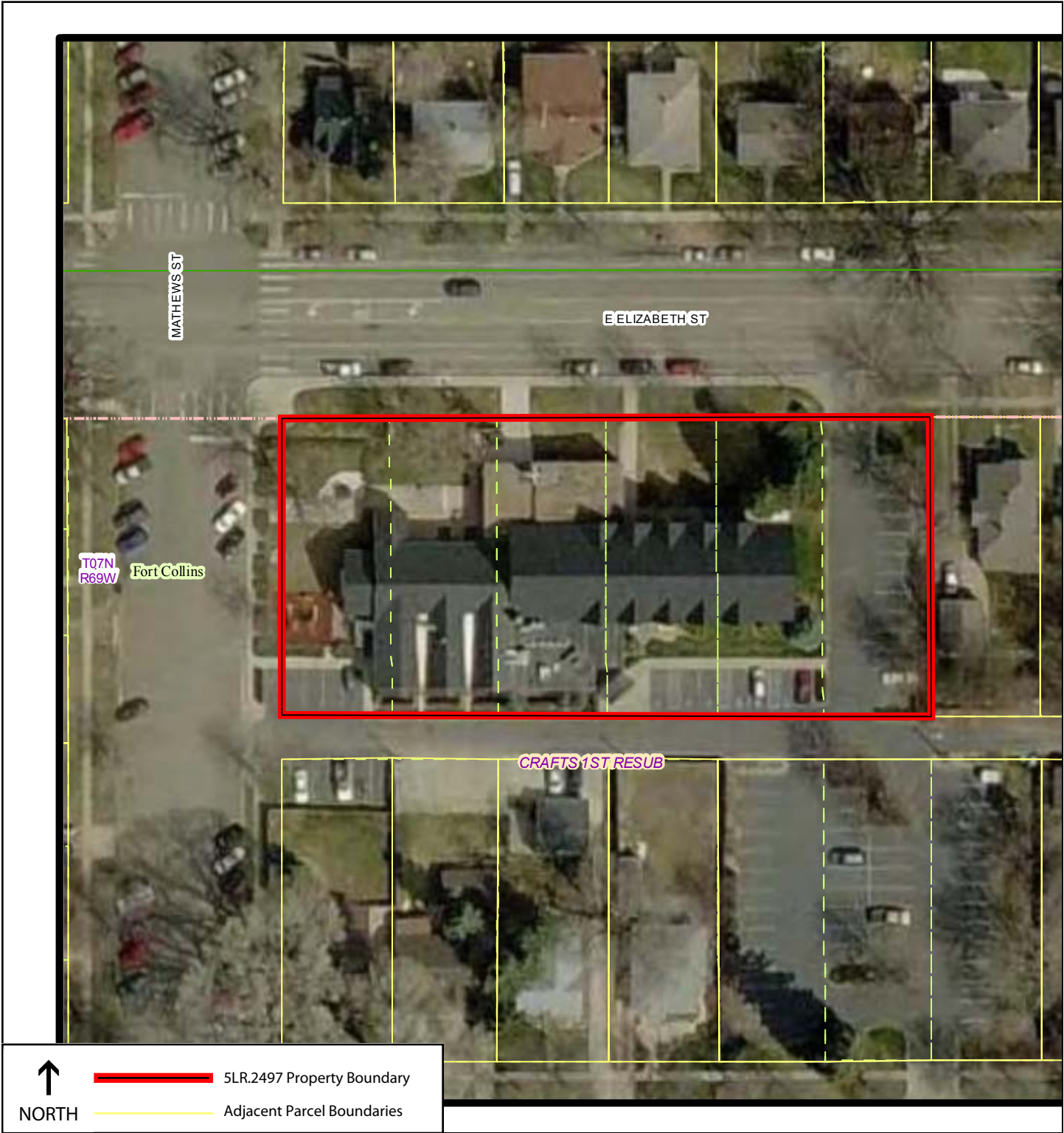
53. Phone number(s): **(303) 390-1638**

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# HISTORITECTURE

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SKETCH MAP

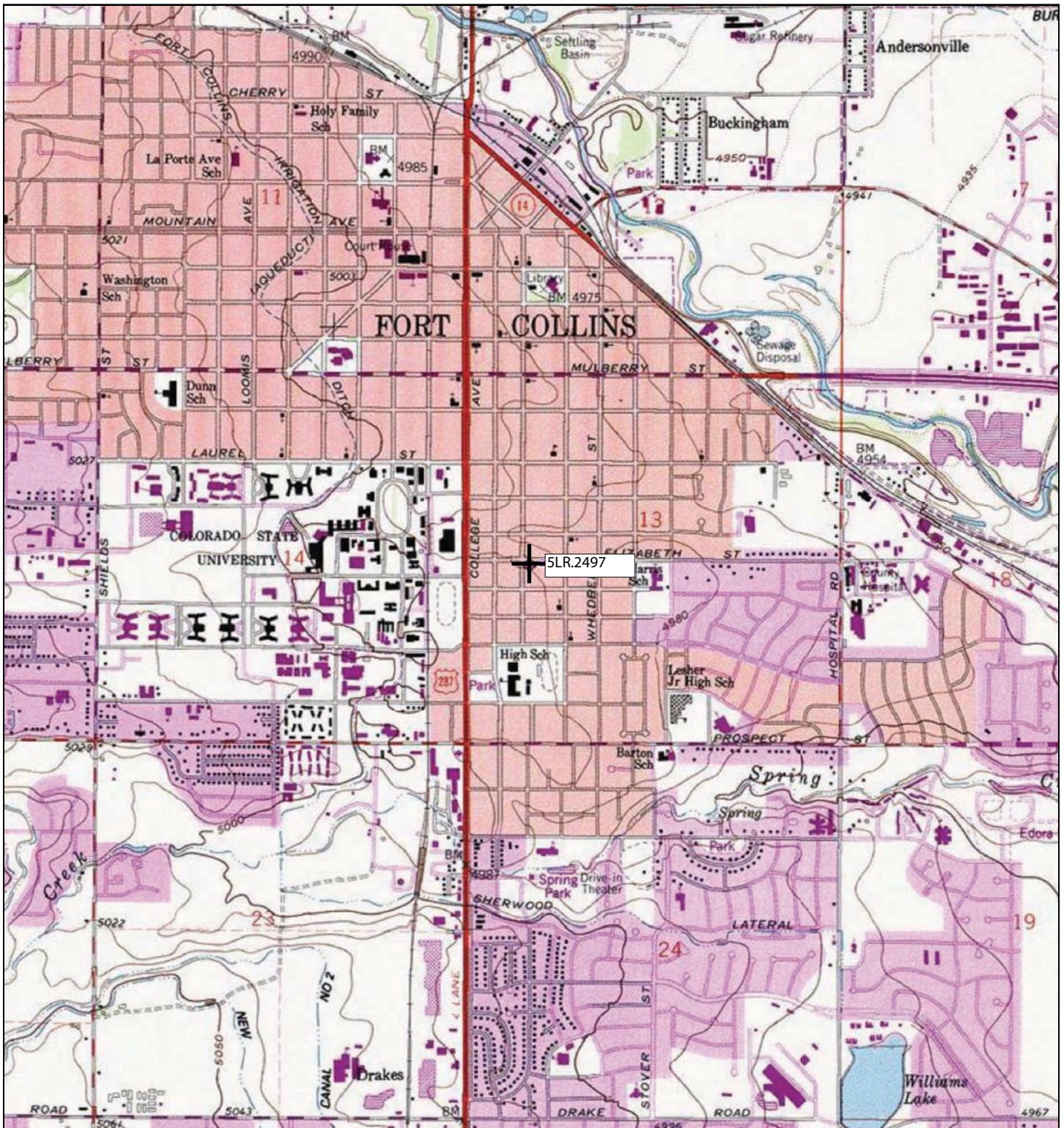




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## LOCATION MAP



Source: U.S. Geological Survey 7.5' Fort Collins - 1984

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