

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

Official Eligibility Determination (OAH use only)

OAHP1403 Rev. 9/98

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

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

I. IDENTIFICATION

- 1. Resource number: **5SM.1827**
- 2. Temporary resource number: **N/A**
- 3. County: **San Miguel**
- 4. City: **Telluride**
- 5. Historic Building Name: **Sheridan Opera House; Segerberg Opera House**
- 6. Current Building Name: **Sheridan Opera House**
- 7. Building Address: **110 N. Oak Street**
- 8. Owner Name and Address: **Sheridan Arts Foundation  
P.O. Box 2680  
Telluride, CO 814352680**

Parcel number(s):	<b>456536411006</b>



<b>THLD RATING:</b>	<b>Contributing to District</b>
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## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 2 of 11

### II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **New Mexico** Township: **43N** Range: **9W**  
**SW ¼ of SW ¼ of SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 036**
10. UTM reference (Datum: NAD27)  
 Zone: **13** **252890 mE** **4202456 mN**
11. USGS quad name: **Telluride, Colorado**  
 Year: **1955** Map scale: **7.5'**
12. Lot(s): **Lots 21, 23, Block 3**  
 Addition: **Telluride Original Townsite** Year of addition: **1883**
13. Boundary description and justification:  
**This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.**  
 Metes and bounds?: Describe:

### III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Rectangular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **61' N-S by 50' E-W**
16. Number of stories: **3**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Brick**
18. Roof configuration: **Flat Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Asphalt Roof/Composition Roof**
20. Special features: **Segmental Arch**
21. General architectural description:  
**Built in 1913, the Sheridan Opera House is located on the east side of N. Oak Street. It abuts the north elevation of the 1994 addition to the New Sheridan Hotel, which fronts onto Colorado Avenue. The Opera House is a rectangular-shaped three-story building of brick masonry construction. Its walls are made of red brick, laid in running bond, with a corbelled brick cornice. The roof is flat. A shed-roofed overhang provides cover for a fire escape staircase on the north elevation. A historic lighted "SHOW" sign hangs perpendicular to the south end of the facade wall. The first and second story windows featured sandstone lugsills and segmental brick arches with stone keystones and springers. The third story windows have flat arches. Some third story windows have been filled with brick. A set of paired glass-in-wood-frame doors, painted black with gold trim, enter the building from the Oak Street side on the west elevation. This entryway is covered by a segmental brick arch with a stone keystone and springers. Another set of paired glass-in-wood-frame doors, painted black with gold trim, enter the far north end of the west elevation from within a recessed entryway, also with a segmental brick arch.**
22. Architectural style: **Early Twentieth Century Commercial Style**  
 Building type:

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 3 of 11

23. Landscape or special setting features:

The Sheridan Opera House is located on the east side of Oak Street in the half block north of Colorado Avenue. The Opera House's south elevation abuts the north elevation of the 1994 addition to the New Sheridan Hotel, which fronts onto Colorado Avenue. The east-west running alley between Colorado and Columbia Avenues is immediately west of this building. Oak Street is vacated from this point south, through a block south of Colorado Avenue.

24. Associated buildings, features or objects: **New Sheridan Hotel (5SM.1534)**

### IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Date of construction: Estimate: Actual: 1913  
 Source of information: "Segerberg Opera And Dance Pavillion [sic] Is Completed." *Telluride Journal*, March 6, 1913, p. 7.
26. Architect: Unknown  
 Source of information: N/A
27. Builder: Unknown  
 Source of information: N/A
28. Original owner: J. A. Segerberg  
 Source of information: "Big Real Estate Transaction." *Telluride Journal*, August 29, 1912, p. 1.

29. Construction history:

The following narrative relates the construction history of this building, the Sheridan Opera House (5SM.1827, and the related New Sheridan Hotel at 231-235 W. Colorado Avenue (5SM.1534). The original "Sheridan Hotel" in Telluride was built in 1891 at the northeast corner of Colorado Avenue and Oak Street (on Lots 21 and 23 of Block 3). The "New Sheridan Hotel" was built six years later, in 1897, as a two-story building on the adjacent property to the west (on Lots 25 and 27). A third story was added to the New Sheridan Hotel in 1899, with local builders William E. Anderson and W.E. Crain awarded the contract for the brickwork, and August Brodin receiving the contract for the interior plaster work. A fire destroyed the original, two-story, 1891 Sheridan Hotel in December of 1905. The adjacent three-story New Sheridan Hotel was minimally damaged in the blaze, and remained standing. In 1913, the W.A. Segerberg Opera House (also known as the Sheridan Opera House) was erected on the back (north) end of the lots previously occupied by the original Sheridan Hotel. After years of gradual decline, the New Sheridan Hotel was renovated in 1977, at a reported cost of \$350,000.00. The Opera House's auditorium and original opera curtain were restored a few years earlier, in 1973, as the facility became home to the world-renown Telluride Film Festival. A new entryway, elevator, conference room and third floor salon were added to the original opera house in 1985. In 1994, a two-story addition was built on the west side of the New Sheridan Hotel (where the original Sheridan Hotel had stood between 1891 and 1905). The 1994 building's construction is detailed on a plaque on the west elevation:

This structure is similar to the original two-story building, with new details inspired by Telluride's past. Representations of the surrounding mountains, gold nuggets, mining lamps, and Indian shields can be found in the building's cornice, columns and accents."

30. Original location:  Moved: Date of move(s):

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 4 of 11

### V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s):                   Recreation and Culture / Theater
32. Intermediate use(s):           Recreation and Culture / Theater
33. Current use(s):                   Recreation and Culture / Theater
34. Site type(s):                     Sheridan Opera House

35. Historical background:

**Because their histories are related, a common historic background narrative for the New Sheridan Hotel (5SM.1534) and the Sheridan Opera House (5SM.1827) is hereby presented:**

The New Sheridan Hotel was constructed in 1897, immediately adjacent to the original Sheridan Hotel (built 1891), a joint venture of long-time Telluride citizens Max Hippler and Gustaf Brickson. On September 9, 1897, the Telluride *Daily Journal* reported that the foundation of Brickson's and Hippler's new building was already being excavated. Just three days previously, the paper had noted that the two partners had purchased a lot on Colorado Avenue from the First National Bank. Costing \$2,800, the transaction actually consisted of the purchase of two 25 foot lots just to the east of the Sheridan Block, providing fifty feet of street frontage for the new hotel. The article noted that the new hotel was to be a brick building, with a pressed brick façade to match the Sheridan Hotel's exterior. However, the two buildings would not be joined, either physically or in partnership, and instead would be separate businesses. Measuring 46 x 105 feet, the new hotel would contain thirty guest rooms, as well as a large dining room, office, barbershop, and bathrooms. Hippler and Brickson designed their hotel as a two-story building, but stipulated that it be constructed so that, "if in the future should business demand a larger hostelry," it could be easily enlarged. The newspaper also noted that Hippler and Brickson intended to manage the hotel themselves, at least for some period of time.

Just four months later, on January 15, 1898, the New Sheridan Hotel celebrated its grand opening with a banquet and ball, abundantly attended by the townspeople. An August 1898 *Telluride Daily Journal* advertisement highlighted the hotel's barber shop and "recently added" bathrooms, and noted that each of its twenty-two elegantly furnished guest rooms featured a much sought after amenity of the time - outside ventilation. The hotel was an instant success, and was often unable to accommodate the demand for rooms. Anticipating this eventuality, but not expecting it so soon, in 1899 Brickson added a third floor to the building, contracting with William Anderson and W. E. Crain for the brickwork, and August Brodin for the interior plastering. By July 1900, one year after its grand reopening, the hotel's 45 rooms commanded a rate of \$3 per night. The "pride of Telluride," the hotel's saloon featured a cherry and mahogany bar, imported from Austria in 1897, and calfskin clad walls. According to the property's May 1986 inventory record form (prepared by Laurie Simmons and Whitacre of Front Range Research Associates): "Behind the bar was the Continental Room, which featured 16 velvet curtained booths, each equipped with phone plugs by which diners called for service."

On October 27, 1902, presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan made a brief visit to Telluride. As reported by the politically opposed *Telluride Journal*, Bryan stayed for just 50 minutes, speaking to an estimated crowd of 1,500 or more on a stage in front of the New Sheridan Hotel. According to the *Journal's* account, Bryan gave a slightly updated version of his famous "Cross of Gold" speech, touching upon "the trust question, what he is pleased still to term 'imperialism', and the money question." Considered the greatest political orator of his time, William Jennings Bryan was a populist congressman from Nebraska, and was the Democratic candidate for

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 5 of 11

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president in 1896, 1900, and 1908. He first delivered his "Cross of Gold" speech at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, in 1896, and he later presented updated versions of the speech throughout the country.

On December 26, 1905, the *Journal* reported that an early morning blaze had destroyed the adjacent (original) 1891 Sheridan Hotel. The blaze, which began in the furnace room, caused an estimated \$30,000 in damages, and the original Sheridan building was a complete loss. The New Sheridan Hotel, while badly scorched, was not critically damaged. However, the costs for its repairs were estimated at several thousand dollars. While plans to rebuild the 1891 building were initially proposed, its owners ultimately determined that it would be too costly. For the next eight decades, the lot sat vacant. In 1994, a new Sheridan Hotel building was reconstructed on the site of the 1891 building which had burned in 1905. Now joined to the New Sheridan Hotel, the two buildings together provide the citizens of Telluride with an exceptional hotel and dining experience.

From the day of its grand opening in 1898 until only a few years before his death, Gustaf Brickson was intimately involved in operating the New Sheridan Hotel. It is likely that Hippler chose to be a silent partner in the enterprise, as the two remained lifelong best friends and business partners. Brickson was born in Sweden in December 1855. At the age of 14, he immigrated to the United States, and eventually settled in Telluride. While it is not known when he arrived here, he was often referred to as one of the town's early citizens. In 1893 or 1894, Brickson married Miss Augusta Olson. Also a native of Sweden, Augusta had moved to America in 1886 with her family. Gustaf and Augusta Brickson raised two children: a daughter they christened Olga Eliss, born in December 1894; and a son named Rolf Arnulf, born fifteen months later. A third child did not survive. A true entrepreneur, as Telluride prospered, so did Brickson. Apparently having worked in the area's mines for a time, he later invested in several successful mining ventures, including partnership in the Florence L. Mine and ownership of the Elgiva, Jonah and Free Mill Lodes. In 1907, Gus Brickson and four others, including Gus' brother Adolph and brother-in-law John Olson, incorporated as the Colorado-Utah Gold Mining Company. The firm successfully developed what became known as the Gold Queen Mine, located in the Blue Mountains just across the Colorado border.

Brickson and Hippler also partnered in other business ventures, operating a wholesale beer business and soft drink manufacturing company during the 1890s. The two also owned at least one of Telluride's many saloons, and Brickson dabbled in real estate as well. In addition to his business enterprises, Brickson was a notable town leader. He served as a town trustee for many years, in the 1890s and early 1900s, and also served on several of the town government's standing committees, including the committee overseeing police and fire, streets and alleys, and, of great importance, managing the town's ordinances. Gus Brickson was also prominent in community affairs. A talented musician, he served as Telluride's unofficial and official band master for most of his adult life. Brickson and his two children, who inherited his musical abilities, played at numerous important community events in San Miguel County, including graduations, weddings, parades, and for Memorial Day and July 4<sup>th</sup> activities. An active member of Telluride's Masonic Lodge, he held every office, including Grand Master.

Gustaf Brickson passed away in June 1912, leaving his wife Augusta and teenage children to mourn his passing. The family remained in Telluride. Daughter Olga married Oscar Ostrom on June 11, 1916. The couple had one daughter, also named Olga. By 1920, son-in-law Oscar was widowed, and he and 1½ year old Olga were living with Augusta and Rolf in their north Oak Street home. Oscar Ostrom worked as a machinist at the stamp mill. Max Hippler. Rolf Brickson graduated from the engineering department at the Colorado A. & M. in Fort Collins. Returning to Telluride, he received employment with the Tomboy Mine, working with its electrical crew. He later worked for the Telluride Power Company. On November 11, 1921, Rolf Brickson married Miss

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 6 of 11

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**Cora Mae Smith in Montrose.** A Montrose native, Miss Smith had attended high school in Telluride, where the couple met. The couple made their home at 211 S. Oak Street, where they became quite prominent in Telluride's social circles.

**Max Hippler, Gustaf Brickson's partner in the New Sheridan Hotel, was born in Germany about 1846. He came to America in 1865, and never married. In Telluride, he achieved a measure of prominence, both in business and in politics. He was elected to the Board of County Commissioners in the late 1890s, and served as its chairman. In 1910, he left Telluride, building a home for himself on Hasting's Mesa, near Sawpit. He spent several years here, enjoying his retirement, while visiting his many friends in Telluride and elsewhere. According to census records, by 1920, as he approached the age of 70, Hippler had moved to Denver, although he apparently returned to Telluride to visit from time-to-time, staying as a lodger in the Brickson family's north Oak Street home.**

**A few years before his death, Gus Brickson apparently sold his ownership in the New Sheridan Hotel to A. J. Segerberg. After years of advertisements demonstrating Brickson's involvement with the hotel, by 1905 the *Telluride Journal's* classified ads identified Segerberg as the hotel's proprietor. Arvid Segerberg came with his family to the United States from Sweden in 1889. By 1900, the Segerberg family, consisting of Arvid's widowed mother, Christina, brother Johan and sisters Albertina W. and Alfreda, had settled in Denver, where thirty-year-old Arvid was employed as a bookkeeper. A few years later, Arvid moved to Telluride, where he became proprietor of the New Sheridan Hotel. In Telluride, Arvid and his wife Louisa raised three children, daughters Katherine and Johanna, and a son, Sulvig [?]. Another son died in childhood. By 1910, brother Albert had joined Arvid in Telluride, working as the hotel keeper. Ten years later, census records show that another sister, Elfrida, had also moved to Telluride, working as a waitress in the hotel, with Albert Segerberg listed as the hotel's manager and Arvid as its proprietor.**

**In 1913, J. A. Segerberg [possibly Johan] determined to build a movie house on the back of the New Sheridan Hotel, facing Oak Street. Originally known as the Segerberg Opera House and Dance Pavilion, the now famous Sheridan Opera House officially opened for business on March 17, 1913. An advertisement in July of that year noted that the price of admission was just a dime for a vaudeville show or movie, and in 1915, it was noted that the program changed daily. John Erickson, one of the best scene and water color painters in the country, was engaged to decorate the theatre's interior, as well as to paint the drop curtains and other scenery.**

**Famous for its near flawless acoustical properties and best known as the site of the world-renowned Telluride Film Festival, today the 250 seat Sheridan Opera House hosts noted performers of both classical and popular music, plays, comedy revues and cabaret. Life for the theatre has been hard, however, and for several decades the theatre was under-utilized and under-appreciated. In 1973, after years of neglect, new owners Bill and Stella Pence arranged to have the auditorium and original opera curtain restored. Under the name Rocky Mountain Cinemas, Pence at one time owned 15 theatres, including the Sheridan Opera House. In the early 1980s, Pence was the director of the Institute of Film at Dartmouth College, and served as the director of the National Film Preserve, which produced the Telluride and Santa Fe film festivals. In December 1983, after the Town Council refused an offer to purchase the building, the Opera House was bought by and J. W. Lloyd and Roger N. Williams, who had been leasing the building for about nine months. President of the Picture Show Corporation, Williams stated his intent to promote conferences, concerts and live stage events, with less emphasis on movies. A new entryway, 40' by 40' banquet and conference room, and third floor saloon were added in 1984. In 1991, the building was threatened by commercial development. Telluride's concerned citizens joined together to save the building, forming the Sheridan Arts Foundation. The Foundation supports many of the community's notable**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 7 of 11

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music, performance and film events, including the well known Telluride Film Festival, Telluride Bluegrass Festival, and the Telluride Jazz Celebration. It also serves as a community venue, hosting local nonprofit and school performances. In 1999, the opera house's exterior façade, roof and landmarked interior were rehabilitated. In early 2008, fire sprinklers were added, ensuring that the Sheridan Opera House will host Telluride's world-renown festivals for many more years.

36. Sources of information:

Colorado Business Directory listings for Telluride, 1881-1950.

Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection. <http://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>.

"Hippler & Brickson..." Telluride *Daily Journal*, August 7, 1897, p. 4.

"Hippler & Brickson..." Telluride *Daily Journal*, September 6, 1897, p. 4.

"A score of men are now employed..." Telluride *Daily Journal*, September 9, 1897, p. 4.

"Will Add Another Story." Telluride *Daily Journal*, April 15, 1899, p. 4.

"The contract for adding a third story to the New Sheridan..." Telluride *Daily Journal*, May 6, 1899, p. 5.

"The roof is on the New Sheridan..." Telluride *Daily Journal*, June 10, 1899, p. 3.

*Telluride Journal*, October 16, 1902, p. 4.

"William Jennings Bryan The Great Commoner Has Come and Gone." *Telluride Journal*, October 30, 1902, p. 1

"Sheridan Block Reduced to Ruins." *Telluride Journal*, December 26, 1905, p. 1.

"Sheridan Will Be Rebuilt" *Telluride Journal*, March 15, 1906, p. 1.

"Seegerberg Opera And Dance Pavillion [sic] Is Completed." *Telluride Journal*, March 6, 1913, p. 7.

"Transfer in Mining Property." *Telluride Journal*, December 18, 1913, p. 2.

Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy, DPL Western History Photos database.

<http://www.photoswest.org>

Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, San Miguel, County, Colorado.

"Opera House Sells." *The Telluride Times*, December 29, 1893.

San Miguel County Assessor records.

San Miguel County Property Appraisal Record.

Sanborn Insurance maps, August 1886, October 1890, February 1893, December 1899, July 1904, November 1908, October 1922.

Simmons, Laurie and Whitacre, Christine. Historic Building Inventory Record, May 1986.

"Telluride Museum Collection of Historical Photos." [www.telluridemuseum.org](http://www.telluridemuseum.org)

Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, San Miguel, County, Colorado, Central Telluride precinct.

Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, San Miguel, County, Colorado, Central Telluride precinct.

# Architectural Inventory Form

Page 8 of 11

## VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: Yes No  Date of designation:

Designating authority:

38. Applicable National Register criteria:

- xx** A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- xx** C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.
- Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).
- Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

Telluride Standards for Designation:

- xx** 7-505.A.1. The structure is representative of a unique historical social activity of an era
- 7-505.A.2. The structure dominates the neighborhood by virtue of its mass, architecture or location
- xx** 7-505.A.3. The structure was an historically or architecturally important public building
- xx** 7-505.A.4. The structure has a unique historical significance beyond a local level
- xx** 7-505.A.5. The parcel was the site of an important historic event or activity
- xx** 7-505.A.6. The structure has a "contributing or qualified contributing" rating on the THAS

39. Area(s) of significance: **Architecture; Entertainment / Recreation; Performing Arts**

40. Period of significance: **1913; 1913-**

41. Level of significance: National: **xx** State: Local:

42. Statement of significance:

**The Sheridan Opera House is architecturally significant for its Early Twentieth Century Commercial style of architecture, for the craftsmanship displayed in its fine brick construction, and for such features as its segmental arched windows with stone keystones and springers. The landmark building is also historically significant for its association with Telluride's cultural and commercial development dating from the time of its construction in 1913. More recently, the building is significant for its association with the Telluride Film Festival. This building is individually eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. It is also a contributing building within the Telluride National Historic Landmark district.**

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

**The Sheridan Opera House displays a high standard of physical integrity, relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation - setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 9 of 11

### VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

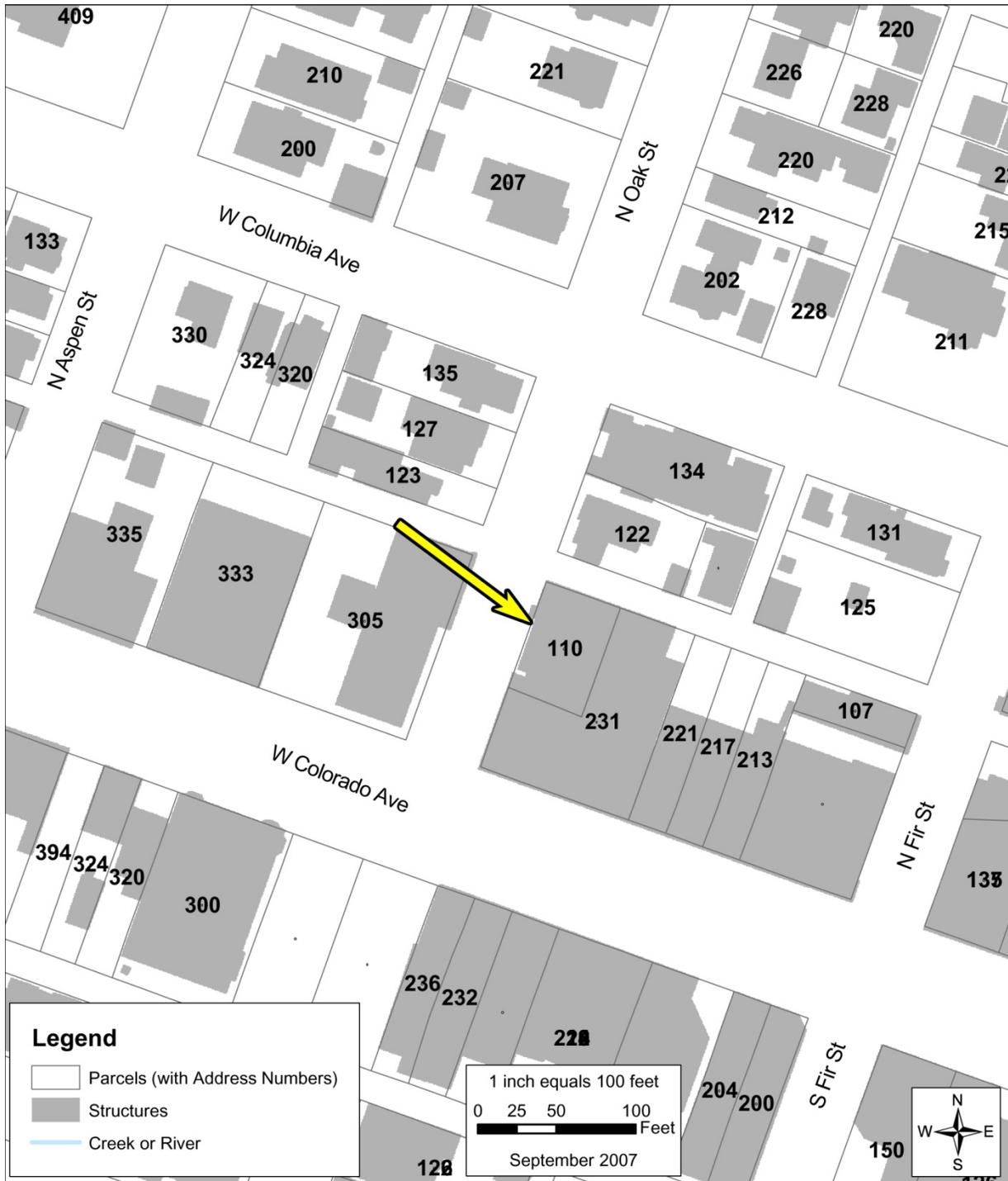
44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**  
 Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Contributing to District**
45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes  No
- Discuss: **This property is located within the Telluride National Historic Landmark District.**
- If there is National Register district potential, is this building: Contributing Noncontributing N/A:
46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it: Contributing  Noncontributing N/A:

### VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

- |                           |                                                           |               |                                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 47. Photograph number(s): | <b>CD #6, Images 138-140</b>                              | CDs filed at: | <b>Town of Telluride</b>                    |
| 48. Report title:         | <b>Town of Telluride Re-Survey of Historic Structures</b> |               | <b>Planning and Building<br/>Department</b> |
| 49. Date(s):              | <b>June 1, 2011</b>                                       |               | <b>113 West Columbia Avenue</b>             |
| 50. Recorder(s):          | <b>Carl McWilliams<br/>Karen McWilliams</b>               |               | <b>Telluride, CO 81435</b>                  |
| 51. Organization:         | <b>Cultural Resource Historians</b>                       |               |                                             |
| 52. Address:              | <b>Dogwood Court<br/>Fort Collins, CO 80525</b>           |               |                                             |
| 53. Phone number(s):      | <b>(970) 493-5270</b>                                     |               |                                             |

# Architectural Inventory Form

## Sketch Map



# Architectural Inventory Form

## Location Map

