COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

I. IDENTIFICATION

1. Resource number: 5BL.8248
2. Temporary resource no.: N/A
3. County: Boulder
4. City: Boulder
5. Historic building name: Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association Building
6. Current building name: Atrium Building
7. Building address: 1300 Canyon Boulevard
8. Owner name and address: City of Boulder
   1050 Walnut #325
   Boulder, CO 80302

National Register eligibility assessment: Eligible
State Register eligibility assessment: Eligible
Local Landmark eligibility assessment: Eligible

Official eligibility determination
(ODHP use only)

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
II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M. 6th Township 1N Range 70W
   NE ¼ of SE ¼ of SW ¼ of SW ¼ of section 30
10. UTM reference (NAD83)
    Zone 13: 476348 mE 4429564 mN
11. USGS quad name: Boulder, Colorado
    Year: 2013 Map scale: 7.5
12. Legal Description: Lots 4-6, and ½ Vacated Alley
    Addition: Boulder O T Year of Addition: 1868
13. Boundary Description and Justification: This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): Square Plan
15. Dimensions in feet: ~100 N-S by ~100’ E-W
16. Number of stories: One
17. Primary external wall material(s): Stone, Glass
18. Roof configuration: Pyramidal Hipped Roof
19. Primary external roof material: Other Roof (Brown-colored cast composition roof tiles)
20. Special features: N/A
21. General architectural description:

   The following architectural description was prepared by Diane Ray in 2000. There have been no additions and no noteworthy exterior alterations to the building from that time to the present.

   The Midland Savings and Loan is prominently sited on Canyon Boulevard in the central business district of downtown Boulder. The building is a one story rectilinear structure with a square footprint. The front wall on the street side comprises a line of floor to ceiling glass windows with piers placed at regular intervals. These square columns are clad in golden brown Colorado sandstone. These square stone columns surround the entire building. On the other sides of the building, the walls are clad in sandstone with horizontally linked windows above. A distinctive feature of the building is the pyramidal roof surmounted by a pyramidal skylight made of transparent acrylic. In the original floor plan that has been lost, this large skylight once provided illumination for an enclosed central atrium. At that time the rooms of the building were arrayed around the atrium space. The pyramidal roof is clad in brown-colored cast composition roof tiles. The material choices are interesting since they relate to those used on the University of Colorado campus buildings. The architect, Hobart Wagener employed golden brown sandstone and brown roof tiles for the Midland Savings and Loan. This seems to be a critique of the parallel relationship of the red sandstone and red roof tiles,
seen on many campus buildings. The landscaping includes foundation plantings and screens of deciduous trees.

Additional Architectural Description Information
The building is supported by a poured concrete foundation, and displays a strong horizontal emphasis. The pyramidal hipped roof features widely-overhanging eaves, with heavy stained dark brown exposed rafter ends and purlins. Entry doors on the Canyon Street side include two sets of paired glass-in-burnished-metal-frame doors with transom lights. The east-facing wall contains a glass-in-burnished-metal-frame door that opens onto a concrete sidewalk and handicapped-accessible ramp. The west-facing wall contains a glass-in-burnished-metal-frame door that enters the building from a 2-step concrete porch with a black pipe railing. There are no doors in the south-facing wall.

Architectural style/building type: Modern Movement (Rustic Modernism)

22. Landscaping or special setting features:
This building is located at the southeast corner of Canyon Boulevard and 13th Street. Asphalt-paved parking lots flank the building’s north, east and south sides. Three deciduous trees are in a wide landscaped strip between the public sidewalk and the curb along 13th Street. Four deciduous trees are along the public sidewalk on the Canyon Boulevard side of the property. Bicycle racks are adjacent to the entry on the building’s west side. The Boulder Dushanbe Tea House at 1770 13th Street is the next property to the south.

23. Associated buildings, features, or objects: N/A

IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

24. Date of Construction: Estimate: 
   Actual: 1968-1969


26. Architect: 
   Hobart D. Wagener


27. Builder/Contractor: 
   Fagre Construction Company (Richard Fagre)


28. Original owner: 
   Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association
29. Construction history (include description and dates of major additions, alterations, or demolitions):
   The Midland Federal Savings & Loan Association Building was designed by prominent Boulder
   architect Hobart Wagener and erected by the Fagre Construction Company between March 1968 and
   January 1969. A permit for the building’s construction was issued on March 12, 1968 and a Certificate
   of Occupancy was issued in January 1969. There are no additions and no notable exterior alterations to
   the original building.

30. Original Location: Yes  Date of move(s): N/A

V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): Commerce/Trade / Financial Institution
32. Intermediate use(s): Commerce/Trade / Financial Institution
33. Current use(s): Government / Government Offices
34. Site type(s): Building

35. Historical background:
   The following historical background narrative was prepared by the City of Boulder Planning Housing
   and Sustainability Department following the submission of an application for individual landmark
   designation by Historic Boulder, Inc. in 2015.

   The Midland Savings & Loan / Atrium Building, located at 1300 Canyon Blvd., was built in
   1969 after designs by noted modern architect Hobart Wagener. Today, this area is part of the
downtown business district of Boulder and is on the eastern edge of the Civic Area. The
southeast corner of 13th and Canyon was previously the site of the Miles D. Bradfield Lumber
Company, operating from 1927 until 1966. The Lumber Company was oriented towards 13th
Street rather than Canyon Boulevard, making its address 1776 13th Street. In 1966, the
Bradfield Lumber Company relocated to 2490 Spruce Street where a “modern lumber and
building supply facility” was built. [Daily Camera. “Bradfield Lumber Co. Planning Relocation.” Jan. 12,
1966.]

   After the Bradfield Lumber Co. moved out in 1966, the land was acquired by the Flatirons
Bank of Boulder. In 1967, the lot was leased to the Midland Federal Savings and Loan
Association, who announced plans to build a new branch office at the location. The Boulder
branch of Midland Federal planned to relocate here from the office they then operated at 1125
Pearl St. The Midland Federal Savings and Loans Association was established in 1891 in
Denver. It is unclear exactly where in that city their first office was located, but their largest
and most grand was the building designed for the company by the Fisher & Fisher firm in the
1920s. While no longer occupied by Midland Federal, the building still exists and is located at
444 17th St. in downtown Denver.

By the 1960s, Midland Federal already had several other branch buildings located throughout the Denver-metro area, including Aurora, Littleton, Englewood, and Fort Collins. In 1970 Midland Federal announced that their assets totaled to $200 million, making them one of the largest savings and loan associations in the country. [Daily Camera. "Midland Savings Assets Reported At $200 Million." March 8, 1970.] While Midland Federal's downtown Denver building was designed by the prominent Denver Fisher & Fisher architectural firm, many of its mid-century branch buildings were designed by Boulder modernist architect, Hobart D. Wagener. In a 1967 Daily Camera article that announced the new Boulder branch, it was also reported that the company would "[retain] Hobart D. Wagener Associates of Boulder to design a 10,000 square foot, one-story building." [Daily Camera. "Midland Savings Plants 13th, Canyon building." October 15, 1967.]

**Hobart D. Wagener**

Hobart Wagener was born in South Dakota in 1921 and graduated from the University of Michigan, School of Architecture in 1944. After serving in World War II in the Okinawa campaign, Wagener began his architectural practice in New York City with Eggers and Higgenes. In 1950, Wagener and his family moved to Boulder where he first worked with local architect James Hunter prior to launching his own firm in 1953. In 1985 Wagener and his family retired to Coronado, California where he died in 2005. [Hobart D. Wagener Obituary. http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/denverpost/obituary.aspx?n=hobart-d-wagener&pid=15374827. Published Oct. 16, 2005.]

Wagener had a prolific career, designing over 200 public and private buildings in the Boulder area. Some of his most notable commissions include The Greenshield Insurance Building and Labrot House (both individual local landmarks), St. John’s Episcopal Chapel, the First Methodist Sanctuary, Fairview High School, and the First National Bank. He also designed the University of Colorado Kittredge Dormitories Complex and Williams Village and collaborated in the design of the University’s Engineering Sciences Complex. The Kittredge Commons building was demolished circa 1916. Ten of Wagener’s designs received either national or regional awards from the American Institute of Architects and in 1985 the AIA recognized him as the architect of the year.

Hobart Wagener’s firm was responsible for designing at least ten Midland Federal buildings located in Denver, Arvada, Aurora, Fort Collins, Greeley, Lakewood, Longmont, Gunbarrel, and Boulder. At this time, more research needs to be done to conclude how many Midland Federal branches existed along the Front Range and exactly how many were designed by Wagener. Many of Wagener’s Midland Federal buildings share a similar roof-dominated
design, with ribbons windows and a horizontal emphasis. At this time, only four addresses of 
Wagener’s Midland Federal buildings are known, but these four are all still standing. They are:
1300 Canyon Blvd., Boulder; 5400 Idylwild Trail, Gunbarrel; 606 Mountain View Ave.,
Longmont; 1435 Wadsworth Blvd., Lakewood.

The design of the Midland Federal building is characteristic of Wagener’s commercial and 
institutional building designs executed during the late 1960s and early 1970s, his most prolific 
period of work. The Kittredge Complex and Darley Commons at the University of Colorado,
constructed in 1963 and 1969 respectively, are both visually similar to the Midland Federal 
building with their hipped roofs, deep overhanging eaves, ribbon windows and natural stone 
walls. Kittredge Complex was constructed as a group of units for student housing, located at 
the southeast corner of campus. Darley Commons consists of a dining hall, studying areas, a 
convenience store, and a mailroom for students who live in Williams Village.

One of Hobart Wagener’s most awarded designs was the private residence he built for himself 
and his family at 7060 Roaring Fork Trail just outside of Boulder. Built about 1965, the house 
features deep overhanging eaves, ribbon windows, and a hipped roof similar to the Midland 
Federal building. The design merited an AIA Honor Award, was featured in the Sunset 
magazine’s Western Home Award, and received the prestigious Architectural Record 1967 
award. The house’s design incorporated a central garden room with a 25-foot high roof with a 
pyramid shaped skylight. “The lush greenness of the garden…is an integral part of every 
room – exotic, tropical, exciting – like a jungle in miniature.” The rear elevation of the house 
that faces west is all glass, “giving the living room the feeling of being enveloped by its 
surroundings…. [The Denver Post. “Garden in the House.” April 7, 1968.] Likewise, the Midland Federal 
building’s interior is visually similar to the Kittredge complex and the Wagener residence. All 
feature high, slanted ceilings with exposed wood and tall, vertical windows to maximize 
natural daylight into the interior spaces.

In 1984, the Midland Federal Savings and Loan Company merged and changed its name to the 
Midland Western Federal Savings and Loan Association. Beginning in the 1980s, parts of the 
1300 Canyon building were rented to various tenants, including the Bonded Business 
Services, Ltd. and the Boulder Alcohol Education Center, in addition to the Savings and Loan 
Company. The 1994 City of Boulder directory shows that the City’s Open Space and Real 
Estate departments shared a part of the building with the Savings and Loan Company. 
Beginning in 1995, the building was occupied solely by City departments, such as Downtown 
Management, Urban Renewal, and Open Space and Mountain Parks.

In 2018, the building remains under ownership by the City of Boulder. It currently serves as office space 
for the Division of Housing, and administrative offices for Finance, Park Operations, and the City 
Manager’s office.
36. Sources of information:

   Boulder County Assessor property data: https://www.bouldercounty.org/property-and-
   land/assessor/data-download/.
   Building Permit files. On file with the City of Boulder Planning and Development Services Department.
   City of Boulder, Planning and Development Services, Parcel Summary Report for Parcel
   #146330355002.
   “Hobart D. Wagener.” (obituary) http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/denverpost/obituary.aspx?n=hobart-
   “Memorandum.” From City of Boulder staff (Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager, Debra
   Kalish, Senior Assistant City Attorney, James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner,
   Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner, and Angela Smelker, Historic Preservation
   Intern) to the Landmarks Board, dated August 5, 2015.
   Sanborn Insurance maps for Boulder, dated November 1883, July 1886, December 1890, September
   1895, November 1900, June 1906, July 1910, March 1918, February 1922, January 1931, and

VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: No Date of designation: N/A
   Designating authority: N/A

38. Applicable National Register Criteria:

   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;
   ✓ C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or
      represents the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or represents a significant and
      distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
   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
38A. **Applicable State Register Criteria:**

A. The association of the property with events that have made a significant contribution to history;
B. The connection of the property with persons significant in history;
C. The apparent distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction, or artisan;
D. The geographic importance of the property;
E. The possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history.

Does not meet any of the above State Register criteria

38B. **City of Boulder Criteria for Individual Landmarks:**

**Historic Significance**

The place (building, site, area) should show character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community, state or nation; be the site of a historic, or prehistoric event that had an effect upon society; or exemplify the cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community.

Date of Construction: This area of consideration places particular importance on the age of the structure.

Association with Historical Persons or Events: This association could be national, state, or local.

Distinction in the Development of the Community of Boulder: This is most applicable to an institution (religious, educational, civic, etc.) or business structure, though in some cases residences might qualify. It stresses the importance of preserving those places which demonstrate the growth during different time spans in the history of Boulder, in order to maintain an awareness of our cultural, economic, social or political heritage.

Recognition by Authorities: If it is recognized by Historic Boulder, Inc. the Boulder Historical Society, local historians (Barker, Crossen, Frink, Gladden, Paddock, Schooland, etc.), State Historical Society, The Improvement of Boulder, Colorado by F.L. Olmsted, or others in published form as having historic interest and value.

Other, if applicable.

**Architectural Significance**

The place should embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, a good example of the common; be the work of an architect or master builder, known nationally, state-wide, or locally, and perhaps whose work has influenced later development; contain elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or be a fine example of the uncommon.

Recognized Period/Style: It should exemplify specific elements of an architectural period/style, i.e.: Victorian, Revival styles, such as described by Historic American Building Survey Criteria, Gingerbread Age (Maass), 76 Boulder Homes (Barkar), The History of Architectural Style (Marcus/Wiffin), Architecture in San Francisco (Gebhard et al), History of Architecture (Fletcher), Architecture/Colorado, and any other published source of universal or local analysis of a style.
Architect or Builder of Prominence: A good example of the work of an architect or builder who is recognized for expertise in his field nationally, state-wide, or locally.

Artistic Merit: A skillful integration of design, material, and color which is of excellent visual quality and/or demonstrates superior craftsmanship.

Example of the Uncommon: Elements of architectural design, details, or craftsmanship that are representative of a significant innovation.

Indigenous Qualities: A style or material that is particularly associated with the Boulder area.

Other, if applicable.

Environmental Significance

The place should enhance the variety, interest, and sense of identity of the community by the protection of the unique natural and man-made environment.

Site Characteristics: It should be of high quality in terms of planned or natural vegetation.

Compatibility with Site: Consideration will be given to scale, massing placement, or other qualities of design with respect to its site.

Geographic Importance: Due to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, it represents an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

Environmental Appropriateness: The surroundings are complementary and/or it is situated in a manner particularly suited to its function.

Area Integrity: Places which provide historical, architectural, or environmental importance and continuity of an existing condition, although taken singularly or out of context might not qualify under other criteria.

39. Area(s) of significance: Architecture
40. Period of significance: 1969
41. Level of significance: Local
42. Statement of significance:

The following Statement of Significance was prepared by Diane Wray in 2000.

The Midland Savings and Loan is significant for its association with the development of the Modern movement in architecture in Boulder. The Midland Savings and Loan is significant in that it embodies the characteristics of the Rustic Modern style: it has a mix of horizontals and verticals, it has horizontal ribbon windows divided by vertical mullions, there is a skylight, there is the use of traditional materials like stone, there is a traditional conception of the building's volumes, there is the integration of the indoors and outdoors, there is no ornament, there are deep over-hanging eaves, and there is a pyramidal hipped roof which is a prominent design feature. The Midland Savings and Loan is significant for the high standard of the construction craft. The stonework is of the highest quality as is the tile-clad roof. The pyramidal roof structure is expertly crafted. The Midland Savings and Loan is significant for the appearance of natural stone walls, a prominent feature in Boulder's architecture that relates to the University of Colorado campus and to many historic buildings off-campus. The Midland Savings and Loan is significant because it is the work of Hobart D. Wagener, an acknowledged master of Boulder architecture. The Midland Savings and Loan is significant for its prominent location as a key commercial building on Canyon Boulevard in downtown Boulder.

The Midland Savings and Loan also satisfies Criteria Consideration G, achieving significance within the past fifty years due to its exceptional significance. The exceptional significance is defined by its integral relationship to the post-war development of Modern architecture in Boulder, a movement which has received extensive press coverage; by comparison with other Modern architecture of the post-war period in Boulder; and as documented by an ever-increasing body of scholarly evaluation on the historical importance of Modern architecture which developed during the post-war period.

Re-evaluated in 2018, the building maintains the same architectural significance and the same overall high degree of integrity as it did eighteen years ago. Moreover, with a January 1969 date of completion, the building is on the cusp of becoming fifty years old. Thus, as of January 2019, Criteria Consideration G need no longer apply. The building is evaluated as individually eligible for inclusion in the National and State Registers, and eligible for local landmark designation by the City of Boulder.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:
The Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association building displays an overall high level of 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, feeling and association. The building is on its original site, and thus retains its integrity of location. The setting, both within the property and the surrounding neighborhood has not changed appreciably since the property was previously surveyed in 2000. The property also largely maintains its integrity of setting relative to how it appeared in 1969. There are no additions and no notable adverse alterations to the original construction. The building, therefore, retains its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. National Register eligibility assessment: Eligible
   State Register eligibility assessment: Eligible
   Local Landmark eligibility assessment: Eligible

45. Is there National Register district potential? No

   Discuss: Historic buildings in this neighborhood are too dispersed and do not collectively have the significance or display the integrity to comprise a National Register historic district.

If there is N.R. district potential, is this building contributing or noncontributing? N/A

46. If the building is in an existing N.R. district, is it contributing or noncontributing? N/A

VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

47. Photograph numbers: CD # 1, Images 1-5

   CD filed at: City of Boulder, Department of Planning, Housing and Sustainability
               1300 Canyon Blvd.
               Boulder, CO  80306

48. Report title: N/A

49. Date(s): May 29, 2018

50. Recorder(s): Carl McWilliams

51. Organization: Cultural Resource Historians

52. Address: 1607 Dogwood Court, Fort Collins, CO 80525

53. Phone number(s): (970) 493-5270
Current Images

CD 1, Image 1. View to Northwest of the east-facing wall

CD 1, Image 2, View to Southwest, of the east-facing and north-facing walls
CD 1, Image 3, View to Southeast, of the north-facing and west-facing walls

CD 1, Image 4, View to Northeast, primarily of the west-facing wall
CD 1, Image 5, View to North, of the south-facing wall.

Photo

Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association Building, view to west, circa 1970
Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association Building, circa 1970s, view to southeast.

Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association advertisement, circa 1969
Midland Federal Savings and Loan Association advertisement, circa 1969