

Staff Report and Findings of Fact Nomination to the Spokane Register of Historic Places Inland Auto Freight Building – 102 E Main

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. SMC 17D.040.090: "Generally a building, structure, object, site, or district which is more than fifty years old may be designated an historic landmark or historic district if it has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city, county, state, or nation."

- Completed in 1922; the Inland Auto Freight Building meets the age criteria for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

2. SMC 17D.040.090: The property must qualify under one or more categories for the Spokane Register (A, B, C, D).

- The Inland Auto Freight building is significant under Spokane Register of Historic Places **Category A** for its association with Spokane's prominence as the regional shipping center for the Inland Empire and the development of the East Riverside neighborhood around the Northern Pacific Railway's freight depot to support this responsibility.
- The building is significant within the Commerce and Transportation Areas of Significance.
- As a freight depot constructed adjacent to the railroad, the Inland Auto Freight building illustrates the shift towards auto-dominated freight in shipping, particularly to transport goods to smaller surrounding communities. The building's size and proximity to the railroad, along with its 1922 construction date, connect it to a specific period in Spokane's shipping history as the railroad had peaked in prominence and the automobile began rising in importance.

3. SMC17D.040.090: "The property must also possess integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association." From NPS Bulletin 15: "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance...it is not necessary for a property to retain all its historic physical features...the property must retain, however, the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity."

- The Inland Auto Freight Building is a good example of the industrial warehouse building type and form. The one-story, hollow clay tile building with a truncated triangular footprint has a poured concrete foundation. The building is utilitarian in appearance, but its hollow clay structure sets it apart from neighboring brick buildings. Hollow clay tile was an inexpensive alternative to brick, with more heat- and moisture-proof characteristics than brick.
- The Inland Auto Freight Building has recently undergone an extensive adaptive reuse from vacant warehouse to a functioning office and event space.
- Changes to the building were reviewed for comment by the SHLC in 2019. Proposed changes included cutting new openings into the building for both windows and entry doors to support the new uses. The SHLC tentatively supported the building's eligibility for listing after viewing renderings of the proposed changes.
- The current appearance of the building's exterior, while not an exact match to its original design, remains recognizable as the historic Inland Auto Freight building—retaining its distinctive triangular footprint, hollow clay tile walls, and ghost signs.
- Original window openings are distinguished from newer openings by the added concrete lintels. Rowlock bricks form the window sills for all original window openings.

4. Once listed, this property will be eligible to apply for incentives, including:

Special Valuation (property tax abatement), Spokane Register historical marker, and special code considerations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The **Inland Auto Freight Building** qualifies for eligibility under Spokane Register **Category A**.

Preservation Officer Review: Megan Duvall
Nominations Committee: West, Rast, Bradley
Landmarks Commission Review: Pending

Report: 1/9/20
Site Visit: 1/9/20
Hearing: 1/15/20