

OAHP1403
Rev. 9/98

Official eligibility determination
(OAHP use only)
Date _____ Initials _____

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

- _____ 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

Architectural Inventory Form

INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Parcel #/s 2077-16-3-07-022
Neighborhood 3566.00 Off Broadway (South)

I. IDENTIFICATION

- 1. **Resource number:** 5AH.1994
- 2. **Temporary resource #:** N/A
- 3. **County:** Arapahoe
- 4. **City:** Littleton
- 5. **Historic building name:** Courthouse Professional Building
- 6. **Current building name:** Courthouse Offices
- 7. **Building address:** 2009 W Littleton Blvd
- 8. **Owner name, address:** Courthouse Offices LLC
24998 Foothills Dr N
Golden, CO 80401



National Register:	Eligible for Individual Listing (local level)	Ineligible for District Listing
State Register:	Eligible for Individual Listing (local level)	Ineligible for District Listing
Littleton Landmark	Eligible for Individual Listing	Eligible for District Listing

II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. **PLSS information:** PM6 T5S R68W, NW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 16
10. **UTM reference:** NAD 83 ZONE 13S
11. **USGS quad name:** Littleton
Year: 2016
Map scale: 1:24000
12. **Lot(s)** 25-28 (partial)
Block: 2
Addition: Littleton Heights
Year of Addition: 1890
13. **Boundary Description and Justification:**
 The East 120 Ft Of Lots 25-28 Blk 2 Littleton Heights
 The boundary of the property is the legally defined parcel, encompassing .0964 acres.

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. **Building plan (footprint, shape):** Rectangular Plan
15. **Dimensions in feet:** 65' x 42'
16. **Number of stories:** Three
17. **Primary external wall material(s):** Brick
18. **Roof configuration:** Other
19. **Primary external roof material:** Asphalt Roof/Composition Roof or Synthetic Roof
20. **Special features:** N/A
21. **General architectural description:**

The former Courthouse Professional Building is sited along the east and south property lines of a rectangular lot at the northwest corner of W Littleton Blvd and S Spotswood St.

The three-story building has a rectangular footprint. Due to the grade of the lot, which falls to the northwest, the full three-story volume is only visible to the west. To the east and north, the lower floor is recessed partially below grade. To the south, facing Littleton Boulevard, the lower level is partially visible behind a recessed walkway. There is an accordion or folded plate roof with overhanging eaves that project beyond the body of the building and form deep eaves to the north and south. The fascia is finished with metal flashing. Materials include brick masonry with metal and glass doors and windows.

A tan-gray brick masonry flanks the south and east window bays and forms the west and north walls of the building. The running-bond brick has a row of alternating stretchers and headers every seventh course.

On the south wall, a full-height bay rises from a lower level entrance to the folded plate roof above. At the lower level, a glass entrance door with shallow transom is flanked by a wall of windows above a stack-bond wall of white glazed brick or tan brick retaining wall. At the second floor, a single solid door is centered behind a small balcony with a simple open metal railing. It is flanked by a wall of windows above a stack-bond wall of white glazed brick. A full-length spandrel panel of the stack-bond brick appears below the third floor, where a row of trapezoidal clerestory windows extends to the deeply projecting eaves of the folded plate roof. Narrow operable windows appear at the base of alternate fixed windows.

On the east wall, due to the lower grade, the white glazed brick spandrel panels appear only below the second and third floor windows. A low band of first floor windows appears above a single course of white glazed brick immediately adjacent to the public sidewalk. At the north end of the bay, a series of details express the interior stair-hall. A second floor spandrel panel ends just south of a glass entry door with full height sidelight and transom window. Two blind panels appear at the level of the second floor windows and on the white glazed brick spandrel panel of the third floor, a pair of surface mounted can fixtures provide lighting over the entry door.

The north wall displays four slightly recessed vertical bays with pairs of casement windows and angled rowlock sills. The first floor windows are low with taller windows on the second and third floors. Just above the third floor windows, a row of trapezoidal clerestory windows extends up to the deeply projecting eaves of the folded plate roof. At the west end of the wall, a surface-mounted metal fire stair extends between the exit doors of the first to third floors.

The west wall is blind brick masonry, detailed only by an aluminum band that top aligns with the third floor windows on the south side of the building and the flush, horizontal eave-line, that drops slightly at the center third of the wall.

22. Architectural style: Modern Movement / Expressionist Style
Building type: Commercial

23. Landscaping or special setting features:

To the south, facing Littleton Boulevard, a recessed concrete/red brick walkway flanked by two stepped retaining walls angles from the public sidewalk to the first floor entrance, a half-story below grade. The retaining walls are constructed of concrete and the same tan-gray brick masonry as the building. There is a partial pipe handrail on the west side of the walkway. During a recent rehabilitation, the street address was surface-mounted on the face of the east retaining wall.

Turf and mature trees appear between the public sidewalks and the street along the east and south sides of the lot. Lawns and plantings appear between the building, parking lot and public sidewalk to the south. Surface parking appears to the west and north (rear) of the building.

24. Associated buildings, features, or objects:

A sign displaying the current name of the building and multiple occupants is surface-mounted on the brick masonry on the facade.

IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

- 25. Date of Construction:** 1960
Estimated or Actual: Actual
Source of information: Arapahoe County Assessor Records.
- 26. Architect:** Eugene Sternberg
Source of information: *The Historic Context of Littleton Colorado 1949-1967* (2008)
- 27. Builder/Contractor:** Unknown
Source of information: N/A
- 28. Original owner:** Unknown
Source of information: N/A
- 29. Construction history (description, dates of major additions, alterations, demolitions):** N/A
- 30. Original Location:** Yes
Date of move(s): N/A

V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

- 31. Original use(s):** Commerce/Trade, Business/Professional
- 32. Intermediate use(s):** Government/Government Office
- 33. Current use(s):** Commerce/Trade, Business/Professional
- 34. Site Type(s):** Commercial Building
- 35. Historical background:**

The post-World War II period in Littleton was characterized by economic prosperity, rapid population growth, suburban housing expansion, road development and improvement, and increased auto ownership and use.

The earliest commercial development on W Littleton Blvd after World War II were professional buildings, initially constructed at the west end of the street near the Arapahoe County Courthouse. Though W Littleton Blvd might appear to be largely a retail strip, the most common building type of the period is the professional building. These buildings fall into several discrete categories according to use.

The most critical type, since the nearest hospital was located in Englewood, was the medical office, sometimes with a dispensing pharmacy. Most common were offices for the local professionals involved with the rapid transformation of farms and ranches into sprawling residential subdivisions. These included developers, architects, real estate agents, and attorneys. Sales related to real estate, life and auto insurance expanded. Along W Littleton Blvd, a variety of professional and office buildings were built to accommodate these firms, some owner occupied and others built for lease to one or two individual firms. A few larger buildings rented office spaces to local professionals

and other businesses of all types and sizes, including those in the aerospace and defense industries.

These professional buildings are commonly distinct from retail buildings in the quality of their materials and design, and often display more discreet signage with parking lots concealed to the rear.

The former Courthouse Professional Building was designed by Eugene Sternberg to house his offices, those of prominent Littleton attorney, Martin Miller, and, at the lower level, Thebus Pharmacy.

Sternberg and Miller met at the University of Denver around 1951. Sternberg, a Czech émigré who had fled the Holocaust, was the first professor hired for DU's new School of Architecture and Planning. Miller was attending DU on the GI Bill while recuperating at Fitzsimons Army Hospital from a near fatal wartime injury. With Sternberg's wife Barbara, and Miller's wife Edythe, they were part of a group of like-minded friends that shared a deep commitment to social justice and were involved in Democratic Party politics. Both men were also active in Littleton's community, civic, and cultural affairs. Their friendship led them to plan the new professional building to house the separate offices for their growing firms. They purchased land adjacent to the Arapahoe County Courthouse with architect Sternberg supervising the construction.

In 1965 Arapahoe County outgrew its existing facilities in the adjacent Courthouse. Representatives of the county approached Sternberg and Miller, seeking to expand the county's offices into the Courthouse Building. Sternberg and Miller consented, and the county began to gradually assume possession. Miller maintained his offices in the building until the Miller Building was completed in 1973, while Sternberg remained through 1976. By 2008, the County had vacated the building, and it was threatened with demolition. It was then purchased by its current owners, who restored the building to use.

36. Sources of information:

Eugene Sternberg Family Archives.
 Arapahoe County Assessor Records.
 Littleton City Directories.

The Historic Context of Littleton Colorado 1949-1967 (2008) by Diane Wray Tomasso, prepared for the City of Littleton, Office of Community Development.

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 Colorado State Register of Historic Properties 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, 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. Applicable Littleton Landmark Standards:

- ✓ 1. Exemplifies specific elements of an architectural style or period;

- √ 2. Is an example of the work of an architect or builder recognized for expertise nationally, state-wide, regionally, or locally;
 - √ 3. Demonstrates superior craftsmanship or high artistic value;
 - 4. Represents an innovation in construction, materials or design;
 - 5. Represents a style particularly associated with the Littleton area;
 - √ 6. Represents a built environment of a group of people in an era of history;
 - 7. Represents a pattern or grouping of elements representing at least one of above criteria;
 - 8. Has undergone significant historic remodel;
 - 9. Is the site of historic event that had an effect upon society;
 - √ 10. Exemplifies cultural, political, economic or social heritage of the community;
 - √ 11. Represents an association with a notable person or the work of a notable person;
 - 12. Represents a typical example/association with a particular ethnic group;
 - 13. Represents a unique example of an event in Littleton's history;
 - 14. Enhances sense of identity of the community;
 - 15. Is an established and familiar natural setting or visual feature of the community?
- Does not meet any of the above City of Littleton Landmark standards.

39. **Area(s) of significance:** Architecture, Commerce

40. **Period of significance:** 1960

41. **Level of significance:** Local

42. **Statement of significance:**

The former Courthouse Professional Building is evaluated as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and Colorado State Register of Historic Properties under Criteria A and C and is eligible for Littleton local landmark designation under Criteria 1, 2, 3, 6, 10 and 11.

NR Criterion A: The former Courthouse Professional Building exemplifies the cultural, social and historic heritage of the City of Littleton through its association with the development of the city's professional class during its greatest period of suburban growth and expansion in the post-World War II period.

NR Criterion C: The former Courthouse Professional Building portrays the environment of the post World War II era of Littleton history characterized by the Expressionist Style in architecture. It embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the Expressionist Style. It is the work of acknowledged master of Colorado architecture, Eugene Sternberg. It is well-designed and displays a high standard of material quality and construction craft.

43. **Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:**

The former Courthouse Professional Building retains all of the seven aspects of integrity. The building retains its original location and setting. Its design, material and workmanship are largely intact, along with its feeling and association.

VII. ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. **National Register eligibility assessment:** Individually eligible (local)

State Register eligibility assessment: Individually eligible (local)

Local Landmark eligibility assessment: Individually eligible

45. **Is there historic district potential?** Yes

Discuss: Eligible for proposed Littleton Overlay District.

46. **Building located in N.R. district?** No

Contributing N/A

Noncontributing N/A

VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

47. **Photograph numbers:**

2009 WLB 01.jpg through 2009 WLB 04.jpg

2009 WLB Historic 01.jpg

All photographs by Diane Wray Tomasso except as noted.

CD on file at the City of Littleton Historic Preservation Office.

48. **Report title:**

Survey of Commercial Modernism in the West Littleton Boulevard Corridor 1950-1980.

-
49. **Date(s):** June 2018
50. **Recorder(s):** Diane Wray Tomasso and Michael Paglia
51. **Organization:**
Performed on behalf of the Office of Community Development, Littleton, CO, in association with the State Historical Fund, History Colorado.
52. **Address:** 3058 S Cornell Circle, Englewood, CO 80113
53. **Phone number(s):** 303 552-8254

Aerial Map



Source Data DRCOG Regional Data Catalog
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5AH1994

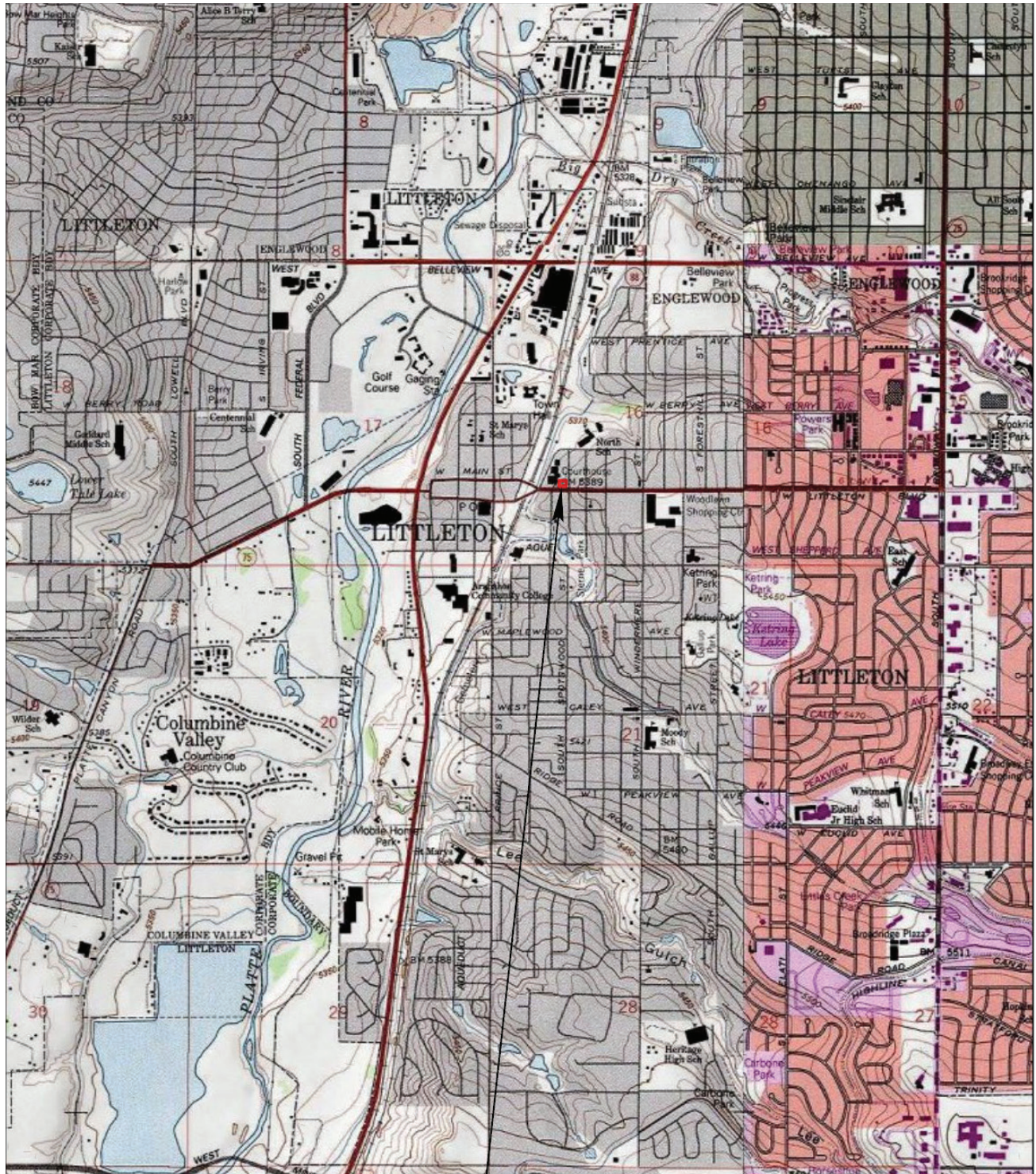
Sketch Map



Source Data DRCOG Regional Data Catalog
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Location Map



5AH1994

Photo: 2009 WLB 01.jpg
South Wall, Facade (left); East Wall (right).



Photo: 2009 WLB 02.jpg
West Wall (left); South Wall (right), W Littleton Blvd in foreground.



Photo: 2009 WLB 03.jpg
South Wall, Facade (left); East Wall (right), S Spotswood St in foreground.



Photo: 2009 WLB 04.jpg
East Wall (left); North Wall (right).



Image: 2009 WLB Historic 01.jpg

South Wall, Facade

Source: Eugene Sternberg Family Archives



Eugene D. Sternberg, 1915-2005

Eugene Sternberg was born in 1915 in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. He earned an architectural engineering degree from the Technion, just outside of Prague. Sternberg was pursuing his graduate degree in architecture at Cambridge University in England when World War II broke out. He remained in London through the war, teaching part time at Cambridge, then joining the firm of Sir Patrick Abercrombie, where he was involved in the rebuilding of housing destroyed by the bombing of London. Abercrombie was a key architect of London's 1944 Green Belt plan and was a major influence on Sternberg's development as a planner.

In 1945, like many European architects displaced by the war, Sternberg immigrated to the United States. He had accepted a teaching invitation at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, but quickly became dissatisfied with Cornell's restrictions on combining an architectural practice with teaching. At the urging of his friend Lewis Mumford, Sternberg accepted a teaching offer from Carl Feiss, Director of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Denver. Feiss had come to Denver in 1942, hired by the city of Denver as Planning Director. He had previously served with distinction as head of the Planning & Housing Division of Columbia University's School of Architecture in New York City. After the war, Feiss was hired as Planning Director by the University of Denver, where the student population had leaped from 3,000 to 10,000 as young soldiers returned from the war to the classroom. Under Feiss' direction, prominent Denver architects including Fisher and Fisher, Burnham Hoyt, G. Meredith Musick, and Smith, Hegner and Moore updated and expanded the University Park and Civic Center Campuses.

In 1946, Feiss' interest in architectural education drew him to spearhead the creation of the new School of Architecture and Planning, of which he was appointed director. It was the first school of architecture in the Rocky Mountain region. In 1949, *Architectural Record* discussed his innovative program combining architecture and planning in their article "Architectural Education in the West." It was a model curriculum at a time when many architectural schools were being transformed from programs based on the traditional, Old World model of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*, focused on classical and historical models, to a syllabus based on modern materials, techniques, styles, planning, and social concerns.

Sternberg was the first faculty member to be hired for the University of Denver's new School of Architecture and Planning. He and his English-born wife Barbara settled into a faculty-housing complex of prefabricated, military-surplus quonset huts and buildings on the University Park Campus.

A newspaper article announcing Sternberg's arrival in Denver prompted an inquiry by Dr. Ralph W. MacKenzie, who hired Sternberg to design a medical building on Littleton Boulevard at Sherman Avenue. The design of the 1950 Littleton Clinic building, Sternberg's first architectural project in Colorado, was acknowledged for its architectural and planning significance, appearing in a number of surveys of medical clinics of the period. As a result of the project, Reinhold Publishers hired Sternberg to tour Europe in 1954 and collect information and photographs for a book on medical offices and clinics internationally. The Littleton Clinic moved into a Richard Crowther-designed building to the east and the Sternberg building was renamed the Littleton Medical Center. It was demolished in 2009 and replaced by an apartment complex.

In 1949, Sternberg was hired by developer Edward B. Hawkins to design the site plan and model homes for Englewood's Arapahoe Acres. The project was the first post-World War II residential subdivision to be listed as a National Register Historic District. It was recognized for its significance in post-war social history, architecture, planning, landscape design, and construction technology. Since the subdivision was not yet fifty years old, it was recognized for its exceptional significance and remarkable physical integrity.

Concurrent with the development of Arapahoe Acres, Eugene Sternberg was developing "Mile High Cooperative" off Dahlia, just south of Iliff. This was one of the first projects to take advantage of a new federal post-war housing program to provide low cost loans for cooperative single

family housing. Sternberg designed and supervised the construction of all the homes in "Mile High." Its residents, including the Sternbergs, were largely University of Denver professors whose modest salaries restricted their access to quality housing. "Mile High" features a central park like one Sternberg originally envisioned for Arapahoe Acres.

With a number of partners, Sternberg also launched Orchard Hills in Arapahoe County south of Belleview between South Yosemite and South Dayton Streets. The one hundred and fifty acre site included a broad greenbelt with walking paths that adjoin each homesite and a neighboring lake. Sternberg designed seven of the original homes at Orchard Hills.

After the closure of the University of Denver School of Architecture and Planning in 1952, only six years after its inception, Sternberg was free to devote himself entirely to his architectural practice. It thrived, focusing on socially involved projects including schools, hospitals, medical facilities, and elderly and low-income housing. He designed over four hundred buildings in Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, British Columbia and the United Kingdom.

Eugene D. Sternberg is the single most important architect in the built environment of post-WW II Littleton. Sternberg designed and constructed his own offices at 2009 W. Littleton Boulevard, across the street and just east of the IREA Littleton Headquarters Building, and southeast of the Arapahoe County Courthouse. His was the first architectural firm to be located in Littleton. A lead editorial in the Littleton Independent by editor Houstoun Waring proclaimed, "In choosing Littleton for their headquarters, Eugene Sternberg & Associates have cast their lot permanently with our community... we suspect the dynamism of these men will help transform Littleton into the state's most attractive suburb."

Sternberg quickly became an important and influential member of the Littleton community, promoting the development and appreciation of the arts, planning, and architecture in the city. He virtually became Littleton's architect, designing some of its most prominent buildings of the post-World War II period. These included, among others, the 1962 Faith Congregational Church, the 1964 Geneva Village, the 1964-65 Bemis Library, the 1966-67 Carl Sandberg Elementary School, the 1972 Heritage High School, the 1974 Arapahoe Community College, and the homes and offices of a number of the city's most influential citizens including Martin Miller, whose 1972 Littleton Law Center was designed by Sternberg at 1901 West Littleton Boulevard, just north and east of the IREA Littleton Headquarters Building (demolished in 2016 along with the original IREA building by Eugene Groves).

In addition to his architectural accomplishments in Littleton, Eugene Sternberg was also an active member of the Littleton and Arapahoe County communities. In 2004, Historic Littleton, Inc. presented Sternberg with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Expressionism

Expressionism is a rare style in post-war American architecture but it found ready acceptance in the Denver area. Expressionism is only vaguely related to the German Expressionist style of the early 20th century, which is why it may be inappropriate to call the American style Neo Expressionism, as some do.

Expressionism's reliance on theatrical sculptural forms contrasted both the woodsy charm of the Usonian, on the one hand, and the crisp rationality of the International Style and Miesian on the other. The Expressionists picked up the tradition of dramatic building forms that had earlier manifested itself in the United States in the Moderne, such as the many buildings constructed for the 1939-1940 New York World's Fair. Whereas Moderne buildings often evoked the speed of a locomotive, it was the jet age that many Expressionist buildings suggested. Eero Saarinen's 1962 Dulles International Airport in Chantilly, Virginia outside Washington, D. C. clearly makes the case with its smooth and continuous lines.

Expressionism in American architecture was broadly conceived and included the more clearly hard-edged and geometric approach taken by Walter Netsch for Skidmore Owings and Mer-

rill in the design of the Air Force Academy Chapel of 1962 outside Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Expressionist style was never dominant in American architecture because the soaring forms it favored and the experimental materials it preferred were too costly. It was also this same fiscal issue that guaranteed that most Expressionist buildings, with notable exceptions such as Dulles and the Air Force Academy Chapel, were in the form of luxurious houses.

The origin of the term is unknown.

Defining Characteristics of Expressionism

- sculptural forms
- irregularly-shaped windows
- non-traditional structural elements
- use of experimental materials
- use of cast-in-place concrete
- same materials used inside and out
- organic or geometric floor plans
- organic or geometric ornamental programs
- use of the cantilever
- dramatic site planning, use of topography as a design element
- butterfly or other unconventional roof designs
- roofs as continuations of the walls