



Researching a Fort Collins Building

Material to aid in your building history research can be found at the [Archive at Fort Collins Museum of Discovery](#), the [Poudre River Public Library District](#), and at the [Fort Collins History Connection](#), an online collaboration between the Museum and the Library.

Archive Resources

Building Search Tips for the Fort Collins History Connection Website

1. Select “All Collections” from the dropdown menu next to the search box at the top of the home page.
2. Enter your address with your house number and street name only in the search box. Do not include direction or Avenue, Street, Drive, etc.
3. Click Search. Please keep in mind that only a portion of the Archive’s collections are online, so contact us if you are not getting any search results online. You may need to visit the Archive in person.

[City and County Directories](#) — Available for most years from 1902-present and often include all of Larimer County, indexed alphabetically by name, business, and address. 1904, 1906, 1907, and 1934 directories do not feature the street guide. 1902-2005 directories are scanned and available online. Physical copies are in the Archive.

[Historic Photographs](#) — Date from 1860s-present and include Larimer County and Fort Collins' businesses, residences, street scenes, and more. [Digital reproductions](#) of most photographs are available for purchase.

[Historical Maps](#) — [Maps](#) from 1914, 1915, 1929, and 1940, and atlases from 1956, 1959, 1963, 1968, and 1974 detail property ownership of Fort Collins and Larimer County.

[Reference Books](#) — Popular books for building research include the 3 volumes of *History of Larimer County* (1911, 1985, and 1987), *Fort Collins Then & Now*, and *Fort Collins: The Miller Photographs*. Neighborhood surveys include: City Park, West Central, West Side, East Side, Laurel School, Southwest, Holy Family, and Buckingham/Alta Vista/Andersonville Neighborhoods. Architectural style guides are in the 720 to 728 section of the Archive’s books.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps – Depict Old Town and early residential areas of Fort Collins for 1886, 1891, 1895, 1901, 1906, 1909, 1917, 1925, and 1959. Physical copies are at the Archive or [online](#) through the Poudre River Public Library District. CU-Boulder provides Colorado Sanborn maps in full color [online](#).

[Biographical and Subject Files](#)—Contain files of clippings, pamphlets, reports, and other documents pertaining to specific buildings, streets, and neighborhoods in Fort Collins and Larimer County. “Dwellings by Street” files can be helpful for building research and are available in the Archive.

[Building Permits](#) – Online database includes many permits from 1920-1956. Permits from 1956 to present are searchable online through [CityDocs](#). Permits from 1983 to present are searchable through the [City of Fort Collins Citizen Portal](#).

[Building Survey](#) – Online database of a limited amount of architectural information from the Archive's collections pertaining to buildings located in a rectangular area of approximately 8 square miles: North of Prospect road, West of Lemay Avenue, South of Vine drive, and East of Taft Hill road.

[Historic Designations](#) – Online database of many Fort Collins historic properties that are listed as Local Landmarks, on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, and/or on the National Register of Historic Places. Also view [Landmark Designation Vertical Files](#) at the Fort Collins Local History Archive, [CityDocs](#) to online city ordinances for specific addresses and associated Fort Collins Landmark paperwork, and the [Fort Collins Historic Preservation Department](#) to access an up-to-date list of Fort Collins Landmarks.

[Building Records](#) – Online database that contains a listing of building records that were summarized in Fort Collins newspapers, typically at end of each year in late December or at the beginning of the next year in early January. Years include 1878, 1879, 1886, 1887, 1889, 1895, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1907-1908, 1950, 1955, 1956, and 1957.

[Tax Assessor Records](#) — Partial collection of Larimer County tax records 1948 to circa 1990 and include residential, commercial, and rural properties. They often feature photographs, construction details, and sketches of building footprints. Over 8,000 building photographs from these cards are online. Tax assessor cards are also available for research by visiting the Archive. Some cards are filed by street address and kept in files at the Archive, but many addresses and rural areas are filed in boxes by their legal description (parcel number). View the [inventory](#) for the Tax Assessor Collection for more information.

[Farms & Ranches](#) – Scans of 2400 tax assessor photos of various farms and ranches organized by legal description.

[Historic Newspapers](#) – Microfilmed Fort Collins newspapers 1874 and 1878-present, and *Triangle Review* for 1973-1995 are available. A card index for Fort Collins newspapers for 1878 through 1912, 1924, and from 1975 to 1987 is also available. [Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection](#) features early Fort Collins newspapers online.

[Special Collections](#) – Contain building plans, abstracts of title, and more that can help with building research. Inventories for these collections are online, and the contents of these boxes may be viewed in the Archive by appointment: AP – Advanced Planning Collection; ARCH –Architectural Drawings Collection; ATC – Abstracts of Title Collection; BS – Rolled Maps and Other Documents; CPR – City Planning Records; DP – Fort Collins Design Plans; RDSL –Ron Sladek Property Research Collection.

Library Resources

[Poudre River Public Library District's](#) Old Town Library at 201 Peterson Street in Fort Collins, CO, 80524, contains microfilm reels of newspapers and city directories and reference books on Fort Collins and general architectural history. Researchers may also use their library card to access Ancestry.com, HeritageQuest, and other [eResources](#) from the Library.

Other Building Research Sources

[Larimer County Clerk & Recorder](#) – 200 West Oak Street, Fort Collins, CO, 80522 (970-498-7000). Document types on record include various deeds, marriage records, and more. Records available [online](#) date from 1971 to present. For records dating 1862-1971, you must visit the Clerk & Recorder's office in person. Patrons don't need an appointment to visit the Clerk & Recorder for research purposes, but the staff is prohibited by statute to do any searching on behalf of patrons.

[Larimer County Assessor](#) – 200 West Oak Street, 2nd Floor, Fort Collins, CO, 80522 (970-498-7050). [Online](#) property search provides legal descriptions of property (parcel number), current owner names, and sale price history.

[Larimer County Land Information Locator](#) – Explore legal descriptions and current property owners through an interactive map.