

Interpreting a Permit Card

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Background

When the City of Minneapolis began issuing building permits it started using these index cards to keep an on-going history of all permits issued to an address. Cards were started on buildings built prior to this time whenever someone requested a permit to do work on the building. These cards are a chronological listing of all permits issued for an address from 1884 up until a computerized permit system was implemented in 1974. Permit records after this date may be obtained through the City's Development Review Office.

The original permits were handwritten into bound books, 100 permits a book. Because of their deteriorating condition, the City's Inspection Department had them microfilmed so the data would be preserved. These rolls of building and Wrecking permit microfilm are available for public use at the City's Development Review Office. Because other types of permits are not permanent records, the books of Plumbing, Electrical, Heating, Street Use, Plastering & Lathing, and Elevator permits have been destroyed.

The city began using a computer system (PERMIT System) to track/issue permit information in 1973. Paper permits (all types) were filmed in numerical order by permit type. When the retention schedule was updated in 1993 it allowed for all permits, other than Building & Wrecking, to be destroyed 3 years after completion.

City Permit Records

Minneapolis Development Review

Minneapolis Development Review is a department of the City of Minneapolis' Community Planning and Economic Development division. The department issues and manages permits, licensing, and inspections for city residents, businesses, and other organizations.

The customer service center is located in downtown Minneapolis at 250 S. 4th St. in Room 300. Hours are 8-4:30 M-W & F, and 9-4:30 Th. The service center provides computer kiosks for viewing and printing digital permit records. These include:

- Permit index cards (1884-1973)
- Permit index records (1974-1989)
- Building and Wrecking permits (1884-Present)

All digital files are black & white pdf files. Digital files cannot be saved electronically. Printed copies only. There is a charge of 25 cents per copy. Assistance for searching and printing is available. More information is available at their [website](#).

Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis Central Library

The James K. Hosmer Special Collections department houses the original permit index cards for 1884-1973.

Search and browse the digitized permit index cards in the Hennepin County Library Digital Collections:

<http://digitalcollections.hclib.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/PermitCards>

Special Collections is located on the 4th floor of the Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis. Hours are 10-4:30, M-Th and the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month.

Permit Codes Used on Permit Index Cards

Alpha Identifier & Permit Type	Date First Permit Issued
A – Building Permits ¹	June 11, 1884
B – Building Permits ²	May 21, 1884
C – Elevator	October 16, 1903
D – Plumbing	July 10, 1884
E – Moving	May 26, 1884
F – Electric	June 18, 1890
G – Steam & Hot Water	July 10, 1905
H – Signs	June 24, 1905
I – Wrecking	January 18, 1910
J – Billboards	April 13, 1915
K – Plastering	October 24, 1919
L – Lathing	May 16, 1927
M – Gas Burner	December 6, 1935
N – Oil Burner	November 25, 1935
O – Stokers	January 25, 1938
P – Mechanical Warm Air (Forced Air)	January 25, 1938
Q – Gravity Warm Air	January 25, 1938
X – Street Use	April 18, 1893

¹ This type of building permit was issued for construction *within the Fire Zone* area of the city as outlined in the Building Code Section of the Code of Ordinances in force at the time. As set forth in the Ordinance, building construction within the Fire Zone was limited to certain types of construction using specific types of building materials. When the Uniform Building Code was adopted by the City in 1972 Fire Zones became irrelevant and all Building Permits were issued as type “B” from then on.

² This type of building permit was issued for construction *outside of the Fire Zone* area of the city as outlined in the Building Code Section of the Code of Ordinances in force at the time.

Permit Card Abbreviation “De-Coding”

There is no official “key” to the abbreviations for the terminology used on the permit cards. How they were completed was up to the individual clerk when doing entry on the card. However, we have attempted to give you interpretations for some of the most commonly used abbreviations based on what they were generally understood to mean. Below are several examples along with interpretations of the abbreviations used.

The Lot, Block and Addition information can be used to identify the location of the building on a plat map.

The hand-written “1D” in the upper right indicates the number of dwelling units for this address

The date is the date the permit was issued

“Contractor” is the name of the person or business to whom the permit was issued. This may be the contractor or the homeowner.

“Cost” is the estimated cost of the job.

“O.K.” is the date of the final inspection and completion of the permit (if and when the inspector or clerk entered in onto the card)

Interpretations of abbreviations used in permit cards

Abbreviation	Interpretation
add	addition
addn	addition
alt	alterations
alum	aluminum
amp	amperes
att	attachment
basin	sink
bldg	building
blk	block
blr	boiler
br.	brick
bsns	basins (sinks)
c basin	catch basin
calcin	calcinator (incinerator)
con	connect
conc	concrete
conn	connect
const	constructed
dble	double
det	detached
dev	device

dishw	dishwasher
disposal	garbage disposal
drink	drinking
drs	drains
dwlg	dwelling
elec	electrical work
exp	expansion
ext	exterior
exter	exterior
fam	family
fdn	foundation
feeder	circuit between main electrical service and sub-panel
fin	finished
fix	fixture (electrical)
fixt	fixtures (electrical)
fnt	fountain
fr	framed
g	gas
galv	galvanized
gar	garage
gs	gas
h.w.	hot water
hse	house
htg	heating
htr	heater
instl	installed
int	interior
inter	interior
kit	kitchen
lath	lathing (plaster work)
lets	letters
lite	gas light
liv	living
mach	machine
mec	mechanical
mech	mechanical
misc	miscellaneous
move	structure relocated
mtrs	motors
pip	pipng (gas)
pipng	pipng (gas)
pl.	plaster
plast	plaster work
plbg	plumbing work

pri	private
qtrs	quarters
redash	stucco work
remdl	remodeled
remod	remodeled
rep	repair
rge	range
rm	room
rpl	replace
rpl	replace
serv	service
sgl	single
stoker	stoker (coal burner)
stu	stucco
sty	story
trans	transformer
transf	transformer
tub	bathtub
ven.	veneer
vent	ventilation
ventl	ventilation
w.a.	warm air (forced air)
wash tray	laundry tub
wat	water
wd	wood or wooden
whse	warehouse
wir	wire or wiring
wrehse	warehouse
wtr cl	water closet (toilet)
wtr clo	water closet (toilet)
yd	yard

Examples of Actual Permit Cards Along with Interpretations

Permit Card #1 – 1108 16th Ave. SE: A Residence

INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS 1D X					
LOCATION 1108--16th Ave. S. E.					
LOT 28 BLOCK 2 ADD. Elwells					
6612 1589 0109 0346					
PERMIT NO.	CONSTRUCTION	DATE	CONTRACTOR	COST	O. K.
B 89850	25x30 Fr. dwlg.	10-3-10	E. T Olson	2900.	
D 51006	Plbg.	11-3-10	H. E. Van Orden	240.	1-27-11
F 116120	Elect.	11-12-19	J. W. Miller	75.	
F 116450	Elect.	11-20-19	J. W. Miller	75.	
D 147365	Plbg.	9-6-22	M. Mattson	20.	
B 212201	12x18 Pri. fr. gar.	8-7-28	G. M. Qinette	200.	
D 278042	Plbg.	12-21-37	Arthur Cragg	140.	5-17-38
O 1467	Stoker	10-5-39	Nelson Pettit O.B.Serv.	235.	12-5-39
F 324834	Elec.	10-17-39	Edw. F. Seestrom	20.	
D 404665	Connect gas range	10-6-48	M. Mattson	5.	
D 422561	con. gas rge.	9-21-49	McKee Plbg.	10.	
M-112377	Inst. gas burner	7-11-56	Fowler Gas Htg.Co.	200.	
F 533315	Trans, Gas	7-17-56	Ted's Elec. Service	20.	
G 52904	Inst. exp. tank	9-18-56	Comfort Htg	50.	
D 603732	rpl g wat htr	2-24-61	Pagelkopf Plbg	50.	
K 85302	Paint Stucco	6-17-64	D.F. Vizecky Const.	495.	
M 151935	Gas burner	12-2-69	H. O. Soderlin Inc.	50.	
G 76946	Repl. boiler	12-2-69	H. O. Soderlin Inc.	500.	

- B 89850 – 25 x 30 (ft.) Framed Dwelling
- B 212201 – 12 x 18 (ft.) Private Framed Garage
- F 533315 – Transformer installed for gas burner
- G 52904 – Installed expansion tank
- D 603732 – Replace gas water heater

Permit #2 – 218 15th Ave. S.: A Business

INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS X

LOCATION 218--15th Ave. So.

LOT 5 BLOCK 142 ADD. Town of Minneapolis
3412 1489 0107 2729

PERMIT NO.	CONSTRUCTION	DATE	CONTRACTOR	COST	O. K.
B 27436	22x40 Wd. blacksmith shop	4-12-92	Gust Carlson	300.	
B 32262	12x22 Addn.	4-6-94	Gust Carlson	50.	
B 35528	12x22 Addn.	10-2-95	Gust Carlson	25.	
F 11466	Elect.	12-9-04	J. E. Kelvie	10.	
B 70364	Alt. shop to foundry & rep.	3-13-07	G. E. Stowe	1000.	
B 70658	Steel cupola 36"x16'	4-2-07	G. E. Stowe	500.	
B 88638	Rep. to whse.	7-22-10	Reliance Oil & Supply Co.	150.	
F 72272	Elect.	5-18-15	F. E. Miller	35.	
H 1236	Galv. iron sign	5-28-15	Northern Display Co.	100.	
F 86020	Elect.	8-21-16	Mpls. Elect. Const. Co.	50.	
I 1439	Fr. shed	9-9-19	W. A. McLean	60.	
F 36707	Elect.	8-17-20	W. O. Hartig Elect. Co.	30.	
D 589328	g wat htr	1-27-60	KL Anderson	120.	

SEE 1426-30 Washington Avenue South

- B 27436 – Wooden Blacksmith Shop
- B 32262 – 12ft x 22ft addition (also B 35528)
- B 70364 – Alterations: Shop changed to a foundry, and repairs
- B 66638 – Repairs to warehouse
- H 1236 – Galvanized iron sign
- I 1439 – Framed shed constructed
- D 589328 – Gas water heater installed

“SEE 1426-30 Washington Avenue South” indicates this property was also identified by this address at different times in its history. Permit cards may also be filed under this address.

Permit Card #3 – 2512 2nd St. NE: A Business

INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS					
LOCATION 2512 2nd St. N.E.					
LOT 8,9,10		BLOCK 13		ADD. B. S. Wrights	
PERMIT No.	CONSTRUCTION	DATE	CONTRACTOR	COST	
B 376084	100x100x12 Mach. Shop & Metal Stamping Bldg.	9-18-61	King Jones	75,000.	Survey
F 584643	Wir fixt 600amp Service 80'-60 amp plug in duct	10-23-61	Enterprise Elec. Co.	9,000.	
D 611541	plbg, fixt, wat met. g pip, wat htr	10-24-61	Bowler Co	4,000.	
M 131527	4 Gas Burners	11-24-61	Perfection Htg.	3,820.	
P 45336	Air Cond., Mech.W.A.; Vent. Sys.	12-1-61	Perfection htg.	3,820.	
H 39026	flat wall sign(plastic lets)	1-18-62	Hamann Sign Co.	200.	
M 144743	Instl. Gas Burn.	12-19-66	Fred Vogt & Co.	1,200.	
P 55644	Instl. 1 Mec.W.A.Ht & 1 Vent. Sys.	12-19-66	Fred Vogt & Co.	1,200.	
F 625999	mtr for gas htg plant	2-9-67	John Ess Electric	75.	
M 156186	gas burner	10/19/71	Standard Htg.	550.	

- B 376084 – Construction of a machine shop and metal stamping building
- F 584643 – Wiring for fixtures with 600 ampere; 80ft 60 ampere plug installed in duct work.
- D 611541 – Plumbing, miscellaneous fixtures, water meter, gas piping and water heater installed
- P 45336 – Air conditioning, Mechanical Warm Air Heating (Forced Air furnace) and ventilation system installed
- H 39026 – Flat wall sign with plastic letters installed
- P 55644 – Installed a mechanical warm air heating and ventilation system.
- F 625999 – Installed meter for gas heating plant

Permit Card #4 – 100-06 E. 22nd St.: An Institution

79 OVER 0224 INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS

LOCATION 100-06 E. 22nd St. Northwestern Lutheran
Theological Seminary

LOT 6 BLOCK None ADD. Pond & Pettibone's Addn.
0801 0389 0126 2280

PERMIT No.	CONSTRUCTION	DATE	CONTRACTOR	COST	
B 96936	87x78.2Ston.&Reinforced Conc. Dwlg.	3-12-12	H N Leighton Co	75000.	
D 57174	Plbg	3-19-12	A W Scott	7000.	12-3-12
F 47800	Elect.	5-4-12	Pierson-Wilcox Elec	3000.	
F 52888	Elect.	1-9-13	do	100.	
F 57288	Elect.	8-16-13	do	250.	
F 57900	Elect.	9-5-13	Clarence H. Jerdee	3000.	
F 242046	Elect. - dwlg	9-3-30	F M Tripp	25.	9-8-30
D 221518	Plbg - dwlg	9-11-30	Engolf & Kronberg	350.	10-30-30
G 27830	Alt	8-12-40	H A Ronnader	315.	10-15-40
G 29316	Special device	1-28-42	P J Mooney P Sales	110.	
F 351670	Motor for gas	2-9-42	Chas F. Dymoke	35.	
P 4595	Alt. to Mech.W.A.	2-9-42	Waterbury Co	750.	
D 342354	Rpl gas rge	1-4-44	Caron P&H	150.	
O 5413	Stoker	9-25-45	N.W. Hanna Fuel	30.	
F 413227	Motor for stoker	8-30-48	Carl E. Lindgren	40.	
O 7547	Inst. Stoker	8-27-48	N.W. Hanna Co	900.	
D 406612	Plbg., gas rge	11-10-48	Caron P&H	200.	
F 422486	Wiring	3-9-49	Lyndale Elec	50.	
G 39177	Repr. boiler	5-2-49	Daniel Bell	500.	
O 9453	Repr. stoker	5-25-51	N.W. Htg.Engrs.	225.	

F-33 10-1954 8M

- B 96936 – 87 x 78 (ft.) Stone and reinforced concrete dwelling
- G 29316 – “Special device” – Mystery!
- F 351670 – Motor installed for gas furnace
- P 4595 – Alterations to mechanical warm air furnace (forced air)
- D 342354 – Replace gas range
- O 7547 – Installed coal burning furnace (“stoker”)
- D 406612 – Repairs to plumbing and gas range
- G 39177 – Repairs to boiler

Note: Specific institution is identified on card

Note: Building is large enough that it spans over several address numbers (“100-06”)

Permit #5 – 103 W. 36th St.: A Residence

0369 INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS 10 X

LOCATION 103--W 36th St.

LOT E 1/3 of 1 & 2 BLOCK 8 ADD. Park
0104 9029 0128 1253

PERMIT NO.	CONSTRUCTION	DATE	CONTRACTOR	COST	O. K.
B 70539	26.6x28 Fr. Dwlg.	3-26-07	S. B. Appleton	3500.	
G 776	H. W. Htg. Plt.	3-26-07	S. B. Appleton	350.	
F 20752	Elec.	4-19-07	Gugler Elec. Mfg. Co.	25.	
D 34027	Plbg.	4-26-07	J. J. Reilly	330.	6-20-07
F 21383	Elec.	6-14-07	Pike Elec. Co.	50.	
D 83771	Plbg.	4-29-15	M. Cogwin	15.	
F 105285	Elec.	10-7-18	S. Side Elec. Co.	110.	10-24-18
F 105494	Elec.	10-18-18	Jacob Andresen Co.	50.	10-24-18
F 105501	Elec.	10-18-18	J. Andresen Co.	10.	10-24-18
D 154894	Plbg.	7-9-23	Woodward Page F. Co.	70.	1-9-24
B 220244	Rep. after fire	2-26-30	J. B. Larrawa & Son	500.	
F 260401	Elec.	5-22-33	L. L. Elstad	325.	
B 248243	Rep. Fr. Dwlg.	4-15-37	U. S. Roof Co.	400.	
D-380619	Repl water closet	8-18-47	F.H. Muralt	60.	
M 73566	Inst. gas burner	1-30-52	Francis J. Fox	250.	
D 591032	rpl g wat htr	3-16-60	Fred Muralt	150.	
D 609745	conn rge	8-25-61	Mpls Gas	5.	
B 416374	Reroof dwlg.	7-15-69	Pfaff & Almos	270.	
B440526	Misc repairs, reroof, model city	4-6-73	Village Builders	5,600.	

- B 70539 – 26.6 x 28 (ft.) Framed Dwelling
- G 776 – Installed hot water heating plant (hot water heater)
- B 220244 – Repairs after fire
- B 248243 – Repairs to framed dwelling
- D 380619 – Replaced water closet (might indicate an exterior toilet or outhouse)
- D 609745 – Connect range
- B 416374 – Reroof house
- B 440526 – Miscellaneous repairs, reroof. Repairs done as part of the Model City program.

Examples of records from the Minneapolis Development Review office

Post-1973 Permit Indexes – 250 S. 4th St.

DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS MICROFILMED PERMITS REPORT										REPORT 440-B1X140
ADDRESS	PERMIT NUMBER	ISSUE DATE	COMPL. DATE	LOT	BLOCK	ADDITION NAME	ESTIMATED COST	FEE AMOUNT	CONTRACTOR NAME	CONSTRUCTION TYP COMMENTS
250 S 4TH ST				46		AUDITORS SUBD NO: 156				
	9011729	02/20/81	02/27/81	0000			1,065	.00		G-COIL REPLACEMENT ** LEVAHN BROS
	F760850	04/28/81	04/05/82	0000			800	.00		ALTS & REPRS MAINT BATTLE ELEC
	C011908	08/12/81	09/18/81	0000			750	.00		ALTS & REPRS MONTGOMERY ELEV
	B511707	11/24/81	03/04/82	1161	B20		129,000	.00		2N REMODL 2ND FLR FOR OFFICES * # T.C.M. Y
	9015480	11/25/81	06/11/82	0000			18,000	.00		P-MWA,A/C ALTS ** HAYES CONTR
	X012025	11/25/81	03/25/82	0000			0	.00		100' PORT OF SIDEWALK TO HLD SCAFFOLDI Y
	F766756	12/09/81	08/03/82	0000			15,000	.00		50+30A CKTS 2-FL SNYDER ELEC
	F767741	01/30/82	09/29/83	0000			900	.00		82 MAINY CITY OF MPLS
	F768186	02/26/82	01/06/83	0000			300	.00		3-30A CKTS FL BOXES WILSON ELEC
	B513052	04/08/82	09/13/82	1164			178,000	.00		2N METAL SKYWAY APROX 12X15X64 LENTH
	D845139	04/12/82	07/14/82	0000			500	.00		FL2 DF HAYES CONTRACTORS
	B515382	07/08/82	09/13/82	1166			3,500	.00		INT. RHODL PORTN OF 2ND FL * LUCKIE CON Y
	F770613	07/08/82	01/99/83	0000			1,800	.00		18-30A CKTS, RISER ELEC
	K099716	07/14/82	06/29/83	0000			2,200	.00		INT. PLAST & LATH 5 YDS
	D849053	10/30/82	06/03/83	0000			1,450	.00		FL3 2SNK CURT STEFFENSEN
	F775950	11/22/82	01/04/83	0000			275	40.50		2ND FL, HOOK UP 2 WALL PART & 1 RECPT
	C012471	02/04/83	03/04/83	0000			1,000	35.50		RPR GENERATOR COMM
	B519492	02/11/83	09/27/83	1168		N	850	.00	GENERAL CONTRACTOR	INSTL DR & FR 3RD FL FREE PER A. LARSON
	F776458	03/28/83	01/18/85	0000			900	40.50	CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS	ALT \$900 COMRCL, MAINT.
	F776805	04/12/83	08/12/85	0000			500	40.50	WILSON ELECTRIC	MAINTENANCE FOR 3/17/83 TO 3/17/84
	F779068	07/14/83	02/02/84	0000			100	30.50	WILSON ELECTRIC	ALT \$100 COMRCL
	D854286	09/27/83	10/24/83	0000			500	30.50	STEFFENSEN, CURT J	RPL 1 WATER STILL-5TH FLOOR LAB
	C012919	03/19/84	04/13/84	0000			1,000	35.50		RPR MISC. EQUIPMENT, COMRCL
	F785957	04/13/84	08/12/85	0000			800	31.50		ALT \$800 COMRCL, MAINTENANCE
	C013021	06/19/84	09/24/84	0000			1,000	35.50		RECABLE ELEVATOR #2, COMRCL

Building Permit – 300-14 2nd Ave. (Guarantee Loan Building)

AGREEMENT.

Made this 7 day of Dec 1888 by
 between the City of Minneapolis, by H. J. BROWN
 Director of Buildings, party of the first part, and
N. W. Guaranty Loan Co
 of the second part, that for and in consideration
 of Building Permit No. A 1170 to them in hand
 red by said party of the first part, said part
 of the second part agree to do the promised work in ac-
 cordance with the description set forth in the application
 and statement hereto attached, and in the plans and
 specifications of which the said application and statement
 are a part, and in strict accordance with the provisions of
 an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE TO RE-
 GULATE THE CONSTRUCTION, REPAIRS, AND
 MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS IN THE CITY OF
 MINNEAPOLIS."

H. J. Brown (Seal)
 B. H. Brown (Seal)

APPLICATION TO BUILD INSIDE FIRE ALARMS.

A1170
 Owner North Western Guaranty Loan Co Office of the Inspector of Buildings.
 Architect C. F. Mix
 Builder Minneapolis, Minn. Dec 7th 1888

PROPOSED LOCATION OF BUILDING.

No.	Street	Part of Lot	Lot	Block	Town, Ambros or Subdivision	Ward
	<u>W. 14th St</u>		<u>6+7</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>Minneapolis</u>	<u>5</u>

DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING.

Front Width	Depth	Average Height	No. Stories	Kind of Wall	Material of Construction	To be used as	To be Completed	Estimated Cost
<u>128</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Brick</u>	<u>Fireproof</u>	<u>Office Building</u>	<u>May 1890</u>	<u>125000</u>

to have necessary metallic ladders & stand pipes on outside of building

Di 3817

I hereby certify that the above statement is substantially correct.

B. H. Brown (Seal)

Additional Sources for House & Building Information

Lot Surveys

Lot surveys are drawings conducted by surveyors establishing the property lines for a specific property. These were normally done at the time the house or building was first constructed. However, lot surveys were also sometimes conducted for permit projects where the location of property lines was significant, such as when adding a garage or retaining wall.

The Hennepin County Library has lot surveys for Minneapolis properties on microfilm for building permit work performed from 1916 to 1965. These are arranged by “B” building permit number. The reels are stored on the 3rd floor of the Minneapolis Central Library and can be scanned or printed. Scanning is free, prints are 10 cents per page.

City Directories

Minneapolis city directories are useful for determining the residents of a house or function of a building over time. Entries can be looked up using address (i.e., “reverse directory”) or names. City directories recorded the names of homeowners, the spouses of homeowners, and roomers (as with a boarding house). The occupations of the residents were also normally recorded. Businesses will be listed by name and function.

The directories covering 1859-1922 are freely available [digitally](#) on the Hennepin County Library website and are keyword searchable. Directories from 1922-present are available in print and on microfiche on the 4th floor of the Minneapolis Central Library in both the Special Collections department and in the 4th floor general collection stacks. PDF versions of the 1923-29 directories are also available for searching in the Special Collections dept.

Census Data

Census data is recorded decennially and is publically available through the 1940 census. Census data is useful for determining all of the residents at a specific address, including children. It will also provide age, place of birth, and occupational information. Census information is freely available from the Census Bureau. It is also available through Ancestry and Heritage Quest, two databases which also provide a variety of additional genealogy search tools. Ancestry is freely available for use within Hennepin County Library locations. Heritage Quest may be used remotely with library card log-in.

Newspapers and Subject Vertical Files

House and building information is often available from newspapers and other print sources. The [Historic Minneapolis Tribune \(1867-1922\)](#) is freely available through the Minnesota Historical Society. The Special Collections department also has extensive newspaper clipping files on buildings, houses and individuals.

Plat Books

Plat maps record the specific location of structures on city lots and properties, as well as location and type of sewer and water lines. Special Collections houses several plat maps from the 1880s to the 1980s. Many of these are available online ([1885](#) - [1887](#) - [1898](#) - [1914](#) - [1940](#)). Additional plat books are available at the University of Minnesota’s [Borchert Map Library](#).

House/Building Plans

The [Northwest Architectural Archives](#) at the University of Minnesota houses the architectural plans for many houses and buildings in Minneapolis available for viewing by the public. Please contact them ahead of time before visiting.

Photographs

There are several sources for photographs of city houses, buildings and other features, but they are scattered and none is comprehensive. Finding historic photos of a prominent building will generally be far easier than locating one for an ordinary house. Local sources include:

- Special Collections has thousands of Minneapolis-related photos, many of which are available digitally at digitalcollections.hclib.org. You may have better luck searching for a street name or neighborhood, rather than a specific address.
- The Minnesota State Historical Society has many digital images of Minneapolis houses on their [website](#).
- The [Hennepin History Museum](#) houses an extensive collection of home and building photographs. These are not available digitally, but can be viewed in person at the museum.
- The University of Minnesota's [UMedia Archive](#) is another good source for house and building photos, as is [Minnesota Reflections](#).

Minneapolis [PropertyInfo](#)

This is a free database which will provide basic building information and recent history on sales, permits, inspections and taxes.

Hennepin County Land Information

Tax and other property survey information can be found in the [Hennepin County Interactive Property Map](#).

Current and historic section maps can be viewed on the [County Surveyor's Office website](#).