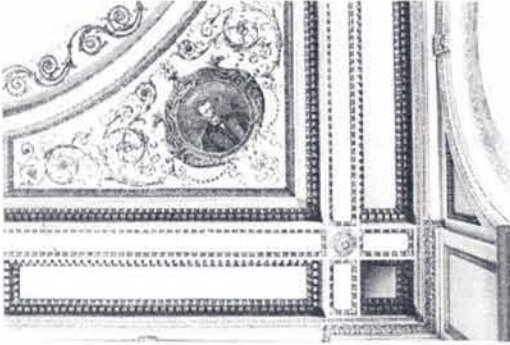


Art Work In City Hall

Rotunda -- Frescoes are painted in the spandrels between the arches in the Rotunda. The frescoes depict early scenes of Indians and settlers in St. Louis by artist Frederick Lincoln Stoddard.

Entrances-- The murals inside the Market and Tucker Blvd entrances were painted in 1934 by Carl Bonfig, who was described as a decorator. He was paid \$1.37 an hour under a federal works program. He was commissioned to copy existing paintings to create the six murals. Three were completed -- "The Spirit of St. Louis," a picture of Charles Lindberg's plane; a painting of the Forest Park statue of King Louis IX on his horse and "Front Street in 1840," a copy of a lithograph by Joseph Casper Wild that shows the riverfront and the first building used as City Hall -- when the project came to the attention of the Municipal Art Commission. They halted the project, saying the murals did not meet the artistic standards required for a public building.

Board of Aldermen (Room 230) -- The chamber of the Board of Aldermen is built in neo-classical style, containing walls with a segmented arcade, an elliptical ceiling with decorative borders and Scargolia wainscoting. The room contains numerous murals by artist C. Arthur Thomas of New York. The corners of the ceiling are medallion portraits of prominent St. Louisians. Alternating with the portraits are five lunettes depicting the founding of St. Louis and "Industry, Education, Agriculture and Art."



Board of Public Service (Room 208) -- The chamber of the Board of Public Service is a half dome ceiling rising to a height of about 30 feet at its apex. The decor is a Neoclassical Revival style. The ceiling contains five murals that radiate from the center of the dome. Depicted are "Time, Victory, Justice" and the seals of Missouri and St. Louis. The paintings were done by William W. Davis of the Davis Art Glass Company of St. Louis.

Mayor's Office (Room 200) -- The walls of the mayor's office are decorated with five panels, also by F. L. Stoddard. Four are on the curved south wall and are allegories of St. Louis and the Louisiana Purchase with the Mississippi River as the connecting background. The west wall has a painting of early St. Louis with the seals of St. Louis and Missouri and the inscription: "I have chosen a site for a settlement which may become one of the great cities of America. Pierre Laclède, 1764"

Recorder of Deeds -- The office contains a mural by Joseph Bufalo showing a composite scene of the early St. Louis riverfront combined with the modern city. It was commissioned in 1971 by Francis Slay, who was recorder of deeds.

Halls -- Portraits of former mayors line the halls adjacent to the mayor's office. Composite photos of members of the Board of Aldermen and its staff surround the entrance to the aldermanic offices.

Alterations To The Original Building

- **1906** -- A pneumatic clock was installed above the entrance of Tucker Boulevard. In 1912 it was found that the clock tower shook each time the clock struck and the striking mechanism was discontinued. The numeral "6" fell off in 1971 and was found on the 4th floor balcony. Mayor Vincent C. Schoemehl Jr. replaced the number himself in 1981.
- **1934 and 1960**-- The coal-blackened exterior was sandblasted to reveal the original pink and orange colors. Many people were shocked to see the true colors, believing it was made of black stone. The 1960 refurbishing included the installation of anti-pigeon strips along the roof and windows. These were removed in 1968.
- **1936** -- The lantern-like central tower, about 80 feet tall, above the Tucker Boulevard entrance and the two smaller spires, each about 19 feet in height, on either side of the central tower were removed. In the process of reroofing, the structural steel frame of the towers was found to be so corroded that the tower had to be taken down with great care, piece by piece. The public was outraged that the tower was demolished and Mayor Bernard Dickmann promised to build a new tower when the city had the money. The replacement cost at the time was estimated to be \$10,000. A campaign was started in 1946 to replace the tower and a study was done. It was found to be too expensive and the project was dropped.
- **1943** -- The words "City Hall" were engraved in the stone above the doors on the Market, Tucker and Clark street entrances. This was done only after the City Art Commission refused to allow Mayor Bernard Dickmann to put a neon "City Hall" sign in red, white and blue above the door.
- **1950s** -- A fountain with a three-foot tall metal statue of cupid was removed from the center of the floor in the Marriage License Bureau.
- **1957** -- The open caged-style elevators were enclosed in shafts.
- **1967** -- Mayor A.J. Cervantes redecorated the mayor's office and installed the carpet with the Seal of the City of St. Louis woven in it.
- **1981** -- Double-glazed, aluminum windows were installed.
- **Unknown** -- Ornate, five-globe lamp posts, located throughout the City Hall grounds, were removed.
- **Unknown** -- Long, slender copper finials extending above each of the lower dormer windows were removed.

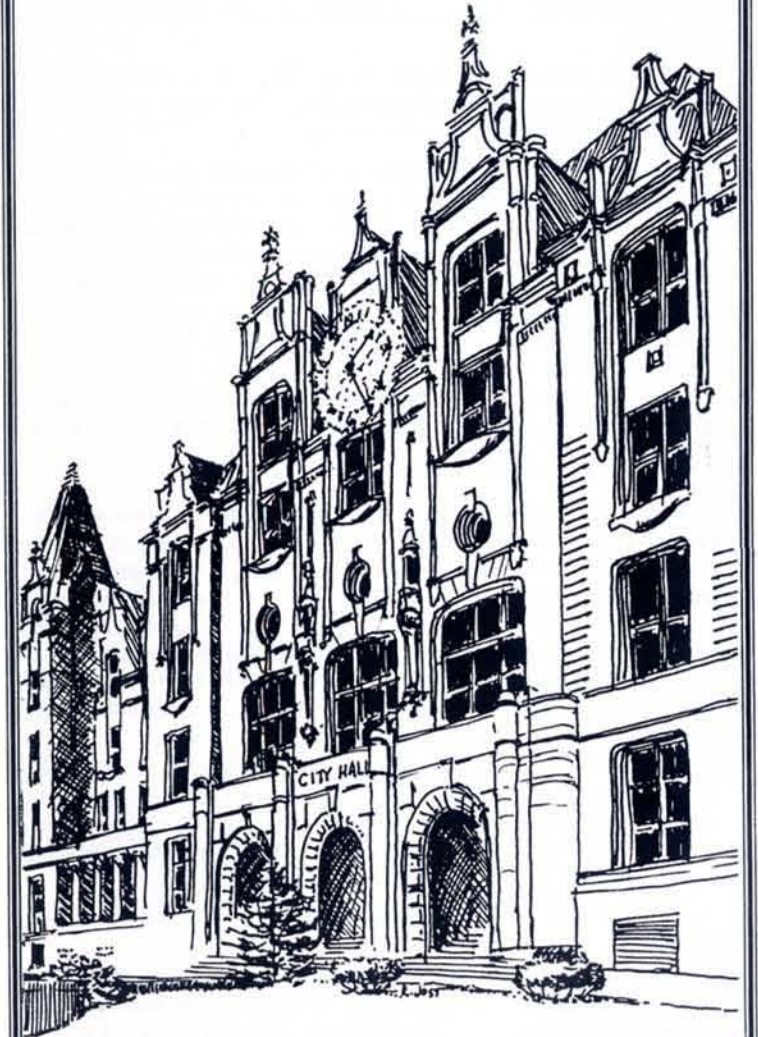
For information on permits to use the City Hall Rotunda for events, contact the Special Events Office at 314-589-6640 - City Hall Room 301

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CITY HALL

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

HISTORY





t. Louis City Hall, which has housed city government since 1898, is a landmark by appearance, reputation and city designation. Architecturally, the building is representative of the French Renaissance Revival style, similar to the Paris Hotel de Ville, the City Hall of Paris.

Located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Tucker Boulevard and Market Street, the front of City Hall faces Tucker although the official address is 1200 Market St. City Hall sits on part of a six-acre site, now known as Washington Square, that originally was part of the Chouteau Hill Pond tract. The city bought the land for \$25,000 from Thomas Smith on Dec. 1, 1840. It was Washington Park until City Hall was built some 50 years later. The Municipal Courts building was added to the site in 1909 and the City Jail was built in 1915.

City officials first discussed building a new City Hall in 1868 but decided in 1872 to erect a "temporary" building. Known as "the barn," it was located on 11th Street between Market and Chestnut streets.

Efforts to build City Hall got underway in May 1888 when the City Hall Commission was formed. On April 4, 1889, an ordinance was passed to authorize the commission to advertise for bids for the building. The cost was not to exceed \$1 million. A design competition was held and six leading architects from around the country submitted plans. The commission chose the design of George Richard Mann, of the firm of Eckel & Mann of St. Joseph. His design was titled "St. Louis 1892," obviously expecting it to be completed by 1892.

The construction of City Hall started July 19, 1890, with Zoe Noonan, the mayor's daughter, digging the first shovelful of dirt. The cornerstone was laid on June 6, 1891.



o bond issue was passed to finance construction of the new City Hall, which helps explain the 14 years required to build it. Funds came from general revenue and the sale of city property. Every year or two, the Board of Aldermen would authorize an average of \$110,000 to continue construction. An ordinance was passed on Sept. 10, 1893 to limit the total cost at \$2 million. Though the building was not completed, it finally was occupied on April 11, 1898 when Mayor Henry Ziegenhein headed a ceremonial parade of city officials from the old building to their offices in the new City Hall.

In 1904, the final portions of the building were completed -- the Rotunda, the Tucker Boulevard vestibule and the grand staircase -- using the design by the St. Louis architectural firm of Weber and Groves. The building officially was completed on Nov. 5, 1904 when Mayor Rolla Wells held an open house for the residents of St. Louis.

The total cost of the building was \$1,787,159.16, well under the \$2 million limit.

Actually, the exterior of City Hall never was quite finished. All sides of the building have ornamental dormers called belvederes and each of them have bare spaces of limestone, which were originally meant to be carved decorations. They were never carved, probably due to lack of money.

Despite its incomplete state, City Hall was praised for its "splendid architectural composition," and called "an impressive period piece of craftsmanship."



City Hall in 1911 shows the towers that were removed in 1936.

Its exterior has been compared to a "sumptuous French chateau." The four-story building has a frontage of 380 feet and a depth of 205 feet.

The front, or Tucker Boulevard side, has pavilions on each corner with a grand, central entry pavilion in the center. The original 80-foot lantern-like bell tower flanked on each side by 19-foot spires was removed in 1936.

The dormer windows are similar to those at the Chateau de Chambord in France.

The exterior of the first story is Missouri pink granite that contrasts with pink-orange Roman brick on the upper floors and buff color sandstone trim located in an irregular pattern around the window openings. The roof is burgundy-red clay tiles.

The building has four floors and basement level. It was considered fireproof by 1904 standards and contained 150 rooms: 26 in the basement, 34 rooms each on the first, second and third floors; and 22 rooms on the fourth floor.

When City Hall was designed, St. Louis had a bicameral form of government similar to the Missouri Legislature. The building originally had chambers and meeting rooms for the House of Delegates and the City Council. The City Charter, adopted in 1914, eliminated the Council and changed the House of Delegates to the Board of Aldermen.

The room that once housed the Council is now the Board of Public Service chamber and the Board of Aldermen occupy the House of Delegates chamber and committee rooms.

The mayor's office remains in its original space on the northeast corner of the second floor.

The main area of City Hall is the 45-foot by 65-foot square atrium (called the Rotunda) reaching four stories in height, encircled by balustraded balconies on each of the upper three stories that overlook the ground floor. The floors are

white Italian marble and the walls on each floor around the atrium are a combination of white marble, light and dark Tennessee marble wainscoting and black Glen Falls marble.

The skylighted ceiling of the Rotunda is framed with "obscured" gold glass and sits upon a richly embellished arcade bordered throughout with decorative plaster molding finished in burnished gold.

Leading from the first floor lobby to the second floor is a grand marble staircase, rising half the height of the lobby and then branching into two directions to the second floor. The balusters are marble.

There is generous detailing throughout the public corridors including cast-iron steps, oak trim on windows, marble wainscoting and ornamental ceilings.

Original plans show the landscaping around City Hall was a modest system of sidewalks, grass, trees, and flower beds. There was no parking except in the circular drive on Tucker Boulevard. Hitching posts were located every 25 feet along Tucker Boulevard.

Overlooking the intersection of Market Street and Tucker Boulevard is a bronze statue of former President Ulysses S. Grant by sculptor Robert P. Brinhurst. The statue was relocated from the Clark Street area to its present location in 1914. Located on the northwest corner of the grounds is a bronze statue of St. Louis founder Pierre Laclède by sculptor Isaac Taylor. The statue was installed there in 1912.

St. Louis City Halls

1808 to 1827 -- The town fathers met in private homes, banks, saloons --anywhere they could find a meeting place. Early records show the clerk of the Board of Aldermen was required to translate each ordinance into French, make five copies and post them on the doors of the homes of prominent persons and the church.

1827 -- The Council voted to spend \$13,000 to build a combination City Hall/market on the Place D'Armes, a site on the riverfront on the south side of Market Street at Walnut. The building is shown in the mural inside the main entrance (Tucker Boulevard) "Front Street in 1840." The building was saved from the 1849 fire that destroyed much of downtown. Men stood on the roof and beat back the flames with wet blankets. However, the building was razed the next year.

1851 -- A new City Building was constructed using funds from a bond issue. However, the city decided not to use it for the municipal building. It burned in 1856.

City Hall then was rented space in the Old Courthouse. The city leased one of the wings for about \$1,000 a year.

1872 -- The first building to be used only as City Hall was built on the block bounded by 11th, 12th, Market and Chestnut streets with the entrance on 11th Street. The three story building cost \$70,000 was called a "temporary" building. It was so shoddily built that newspaper accounts say the floors creaked. It was used as City Hall until 1898 but the building stood until 1921 when it was razed.