

Superior Bathhouse

The first Superior was constructed on portions of the old Hale and Big Iron bathhouse sites. It was made of red brick, some of which may have been reused in the current building. The style of construction was markedly different from that of the Victorian bathhouses that were its contemporaries. The business's name was said to derive from offering superior service, but it may also have been meant to appeal to the many health seekers arriving from the upper Midwest.

The present Superior opened on February 1, 1916. It was built by L. C. Young and Robert Proctor in "an eclectic commercial style of classical revival origin," contained 11,000 square feet, and cost \$68,000 to build. The architect was Harry Schwebke. Brick pilasters lend architectural interest to both the forward projecting sun porch and to the second story portion of the main building. The vaguely Doric pilaster capitals are inset with a center medallion of green tile, as are the paterae over the pilasters. Both the sun porch and the second story portion of this bathhouse are topped with brick parapets. The smallest bathhouse on the Row, the Superior also had the lowest rates; it offered only the basic hydrotherapy, mercury, and massage services. It closed in November of 1983.



First Superior Bathhouse

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