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## Preservation group says jail endangered

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By: [Candace Renalls](#), Duluth News Tribune

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The former St. Louis County Jail has again made the top 10 list of most endangered historic places in Minnesota, as pressure to raze it continues.

The list, compiled annually by the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, was announced Thursday in Minneapolis. The jail also made the list in 2004 and 2008.

The listing comes 10 days after the Duluth City Council temporarily denied a demolition permit requested by St. Louis County. Councilors said the county hadn't actively tried to sell the imposing neoclassical building built in 1923. The county owns the now-vacant jail. But with historic local landmark designation, the jail is protected under city statute.

"It's apparent there needs to be a publicity effort around this building," said Erin Hanafin Berg of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota. She's been working with local preservationists to save the jail, which is part of the four-building civic center complex designed by renowned architect Daniel Burnham. "We need to find a developer to rehab the building. We need to get the word out locally and nationally to get attention to this project."

At the time of their vote April 27, councilors talked about giving the county and preservationists a year to find a buyer before reconsidering a demolition permit.

But Councilor Todd Fedora will offer a resolution at Monday's council meeting to grant the demolition permit after Nov. 15 if the county aggressively tries to market the property and fails.

"That makes me panicky," Berg said.

"We're certain we can work hard in the next year to find somebody," she said. "But I'm not sure about November. We don't know what the economy will do. If we had a year, I would be much more optimistic."

Councilor Garry Krause agrees. He'll propose an amendment to extend the timeline another year, to Nov. 15, 2010.

"You can't do anything in six months," he said.

Meanwhile, county commissioners this week voted to offer the jail to the city for \$1, throwing in the \$108,000 it set aside for demolition. The council is expected to reject the offer.

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