

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only  
received AUG 9 1984  
date entered SEP 7 1984

**1. Name**

historic Shorewood Village Hall

and/or common same

**2. Location**

street & number 3930 North Murray Avenue \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Shorewood \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Milwaukee code 079

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	NA in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Village of Shorewood

street & number 3930 North Murray Avenue

city, town Shorewood \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53211

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds Milwaukee County Courthouse

street & number 901 North 9th Street

city, town Milwaukee \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53233

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1984 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Wisconsin State Historical Society

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53706

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved

date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Shorewood Village Hall is a three story building with attic level that is constructed of Milwaukee cream brick painted beige in color. Constructed in 1908 as School House No. 4 for the Town of Milwaukee, it was a functional, architecturally non-descript design with modest Classical Revival features. Later embellishments imparted a Colonial Revival flavor that has been maintained to the present. It is located in the southwest part of the village in a residential neighborhood on North Murray Avenue. This location is two blocks east of Shorewood's central business district at North Oakland Avenue and East Capitol Drive. The village hall is sited on approximately a half acre of land between the village safety building and the public library. Shorewood is an incorporated village located in northeast Milwaukee County. It abuts the City of Milwaukee on its south incorporation line, East Edgewood Avenue, and extends north about one mile between Lake Michigan on the east and the Milwaukee River on the west to the incorporation line of the Village of Whitefish Bay at Glendale Avenue.

The village hall is a symmetrical cross-gabled plan with pavilions that project from the center of the main block on the east and west facades. It sits on a very high ground story that is separated from the slightly exposed brick foundation by a pronounced, beveled limestone beltcourse. A similar beltcourse also separates the ground and first floors. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and at the eaves are box gutters with wide frieze boards and broad reveals with cornice returns in the gable ends. The windows are all double-hung, wooden sash with varying numbers of lights. The fenestration of those windows found on the ground level, at the first and second levels of the west pavilion and the first level of the east pavilion, and at the attic level are segmental-arched openings with stone sills and splayed brick lintels. The remaining windows are large, rectangular expanses grouped in pairs or in threes with stone sills and no lintels.

In 1937, both the exterior and interior of the village hall underwent renovation. On the exterior, the paired window units on both the first and second levels flanking the west pavilion and on the second level of the east pavilion were added; the Doric Order portico and pilasters were added on the west pavilion over the main entrance; the main entrance was modified with a half-circle transom and wrought iron balcony above; rusticated stone veneer was added at the ground level of the west pavilion flanking the entrance; on the north and south elevations within the plain of the building, it was enlarged with two story additions that partially filled in the cross plan; and a seven bay garage and auxiliary building were added at the southeast corner.

The interior plan was first modified in 1916 when the building was purchased for use as the village hall. The 1937 renovation did not radically alter the earlier changes, but the rear enlargements did provide new spaces for the first time; specifically the council rooms on the second level of the north addition and the village manager's offices also on the second level of the south addition. The original woodwork treatments were replaced throughout with knotty pine designed in a Georgian Revival motif. This included new baseboard, ceiling and door moldings, six panel doors, waninscoating and floors of oak planking of varying lengths and widths secured with butterfly dowels of walnut. Two of the most handsome spaces are the council chambers with its pedimented doorways and round arched windows, and the committee room with its finely detailed fireplace over the mantel. These rooms, along with the main corridors and village manager's, are still largely intact. Also, many of the furnishings that were purchased at that time remain. All of these renovations were largely financed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) at a cost of almost \$18,000, of which the village paid nearly \$3,500 from its own treasury.

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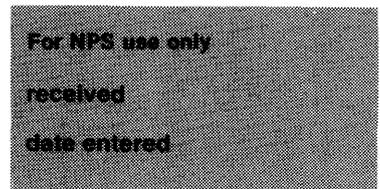
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The 1937 renovation of the village hall was one of many WPA projects implemented to stabilize Shorewood's economic base and enhance its physical quality. These changes did not radically alter the building's structural form in comparison to historic photos, but were cosmetic embellishments designed to distinguish it from its previous use as a school-house. The exterior of the building has retained its 1937 appearance to the present and changes to the interior have been minimal. Primarily, the ceilings have been covered and/or lowered with accoustical tile, light fixtures have been replaced (the 1937 ones have been retained) and some floors have been covered with carpet.

Located in the village hall are all of the major municipal offices except the fire and police departments. When entering from Murray Avenue there is a small vestibule through which is a steep flight of stairs to the first floor and also a stairway to the ground floor. The ground floor is used primarily for utility purposes, but also here are the Department of City Development Annex and a thrift shop operated by the Shorewood's Women's Club. On the first floor are the offices of the treasurer, city clerk, sanitation department, health department and city development. On the second level are the village manager's office, the council chambers, the committee room, the city engineer, the village attorney and assessor.

In the past few years, the citizens of Shorewood have begun an aggressive program to improve the maintenance and overall appearance of the village hall. Part of the village's long term plan is to update the building's service systems while restoring the interior to its 1937 condition.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) W.P.A.
period of significance: 1917 to 1937				
<b>Specific dates</b>	1908 <sup>1</sup>	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	unknown	

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Shorewood Village Hall, locally significant in the area of politics and government, is an important historical resource as the village's first and only center of municipal government. Constructed in 1908 as a Town of Milwaukee district schoolhouse, this structure was purchased in 1916 by the Village of East Milwaukee, precursor of Shorewood, for use as its village hall. In 1917, East Milwaukee was renamed Shorewood and this structure became the focus of Shorewood's phenomenal rise from a struggling settlement to a modern 20th century community in a twenty year period. During the 1930's, a series of public works projects funded by the village's own relief program, called the "Shorewood Plan" and the Works Progress Administration, were tantamount to Shorewood's development success. Included in these public improvements was the 1937 renovation of the village hall. This renovation solidified the structure's use as the permanent seat of municipal government and was, in part, responsible for its preservation to the present. See Inclusion Excluded Properties.

### Politics/Government

As previously stated, the Shorewood Village Hall was constructed in 1908 as schoolhouse No. 4 by the Town of Milwaukee for the Village of East Milwaukee. By 1915, space limitations had rendered this structure obsolete and the present Atwater Elementary School, funded by East Milwaukee, was built. In the following year, the former school was purchased by East Milwaukee for use as the new village hall.<sup>2</sup> In April of 1917, it was proposed by the administration of board president, Ernest Von Briesen, to rename the village, Shorewood.<sup>3</sup> The name change was part of an overall plan to upgrade the village's image as an attractive place to live. This action was approved by the village board on July 24, 1917.<sup>4</sup> From this point on, the village put behind its dismal past of repeated failures to establish a permanent community and an aggressive plan of improvements and ordinances were devised by the village government to develop Shorewood into a modern and attractive place of residence. The village hall now became the focus of the community as all governmental decisions concerning its destiny would emanate from this location.

Shorewood was incorporated with its present boundaries in 1900 as the Village of East Milwaukee.<sup>5</sup> This was another attempt, dating from 1836 when Mechanicsville was platted on the east bank of the Milwaukee River near present day Capitol Drive, to establish a permanent village in this part of Milwaukee County. Throughout the nineteenth century, developers first tried to capitalize on the water power of the river as a site for an industrial village and then as a mecca for summer resorts. None of these efforts prevailed, and when East Milwaukee incorporated there were only a handful of residents. Conditions in the village were primitive with no public services and few graded or paved streets. By 1907, there were less than 200 people living in the village.<sup>6</sup> Limited improvements were in place by 1910 with concrete sidewalks and four blocks of paved streets in 1913.<sup>7</sup> The early government also had a restrictive law repealed in 1914 which required consent by a majority of abutting property owners before the streets could be paved.<sup>8</sup> The repeal of this law would be the springboard three years later for the newly renamed Village of Shorewood to begin the first of its many improvements.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Federal Writers' Project, American Guide Series, "Shorewood," (Works Progress Administration, 1939). League of Women Voters. Profile of Shorewood (1978).  
 Works Progress Administration, "Research History of Shorewood," vols. 1-4, #7040; "Special Shorewood File, Shorewood History Project," vols. 1, 2, #7164, (1938).  
 Gregory, John G. Southeastern Wisconsin Old Milwaukee County, vol. 1 (Chicago 1932).

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.6

Quadrangle name Milwaukee 15 min. SW/4

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	4	2	7	9	8	0	4	7	7	0	7	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property occupies lots 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 in block one of Stanhopes Addition to the Village of Shorewood, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N.A. code county N.A. code

state N.A. code county N.A. code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robin Wenger, Consultant

organization N.A. date 3-19-84

street & number 2167 North Hi-Mount Boulevard telephone 414/223-5706

city or town Milwaukee state Wisconsin 53208

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title Director, Historic Preservation Division date Aug 6 1984

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature]  
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
 National Register

date 9-7-84

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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No longer requiring the majority consent of property owners for paving streets, the village board, in 1917, authorized twelve miles of streets to be paved with concrete and integral curbing.<sup>9</sup> This was the first paving system of its kind used in Milwaukee County.<sup>10</sup> These improvements, along with the extension of water lines and sewers from those previously established by the City of Milwaukee, advanced Shorewood's desirability over similar, but unimproved areas of Milwaukee's upper eastside. As a result of these first improvements, Shorewood's population increased 77% from 900 in 1913 to 1,600 in 1917.<sup>11</sup>

Shorewood's development as a separate community was typical of the multi-faceted suburban expansion occurring in Milwaukee County during this period. As surface transportation improved at the end of the 19th century, the outer reaches of the county were being served by electric streetcars. This allowed for both the decentralization of jobs and homesites. Even though the City of Milwaukee was not built to capacity on its periphery and was still the primary employment center of the region, the desire to live apart from the central city was inherent to a particular segment of the population. To the south and west of Milwaukee, the first successful suburban development occurred as paternal industrial communities where the overwhelming majority of the residents were employed by the primary company. Examples of this were South Milwaukee (inc. 1896), the locale of Bucyrus-Erie Steam Shovel and Dredge Company; Cudahy (inc. 1893), the locale of the Ladish Company and Cudahy Packing Company; and West Allis (inc. 1902), the locale of Allis-Chalmers Company. On the north shore, suburban development occurred later and was typified by residential communities with no industry and limited commercial development. The first community to be incorporated was White Fish Bay in 1892; then Shorewood and then Fox Point in 1926. Their suburbs were seen as select homesites for the upwardly mobile professional and business classes who still retained their jobs in the Milwaukee central business district.<sup>12</sup>

After World War I, the village board established a plan to subdivide Shorewood into zones based on house construction values. This action would have the greatest effect on Shorewood's development and overall visual character. The goals of this plan were to insure a varied class of housing that would maintain consistent residential character as well as affordability to those of moderate means. All land in the village was controlled by either zoning ordinance or deed restriction with areas set aside for public and religious uses. Aside from the limited commercial areas that were allowed, the village was divided into house value zones starting at \$2,000, then upward to \$5,000; \$8,000; \$10,000; and, in certain cases, \$40,000.<sup>13</sup> This was also done to prohibit any industrial development in the village. As one drives through the village today, there is clear evidence of this early planning effort as Shorewood's neighborhoods reflect the harmony and balance of planned development.

As Shorewood entered the 1920's, it had a population of 2,650.<sup>14</sup> During this decade, the village experienced tremendous growth and the village board enacted measures for the development of a complete community. The police department was established in 1920 with the fire department in 1929.<sup>15</sup> Both are housed in the Shorewood Public Safety Building directly north of the village hall. To accommodate the increasing demands placed on the village board, the government structure was changed in 1929 from a board and president to a paid village manager to oversee the administrative duties.<sup>16</sup> The first village manager was C.M. Osborne who had held a similar position with the City of Kenosha.<sup>17</sup>

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Probably the greatest single achievement of the village government during this period was the advancement of the public schools. Milwaukee County schools had existed since the late 19th century and the first village funded school was Atwater Elementary, built in 1915, at 2100 East Capitol Drive by East Milwaukee.<sup>18</sup> In 1921, the village board created the Shorewood Public School District.<sup>19</sup> It was the second municipal school district in the county and the village then erected Lake Bluff Elementary School at 1600 East Lake Bluff Drive in 1924 and the following year, its first high school at 1701 East Capitol Drive.<sup>20</sup> Shorewood's schools were recognized not only for their outstanding facilities, but also for their approach to public education. Class size was small and a highly varied, but structured curriculum offered students many specialty classes. During the 1920's, over half of the city property tax levy was appropriated for local education.<sup>21</sup> Highlights from this period were the establishment of the Shorewood Opportunity School for adults in 1928; the state's first four-year old kindergarten in 1929; and in 1934, one of the first programs in Wisconsin for the hearing impaired.<sup>22</sup>

W.P.A./Inclusion of Excepted Properties

By 1930, the village had built-up almost 95% of its usable land.<sup>23</sup> The population had increased to 13,479 and Shorewood was considered a model if not idyllic community.<sup>24</sup> The Great Depression did have its effect on the village as a significant number of the local residents were unemployed. Because of their previous high middle level incomes, many of these people were ineligible to receive public assistance. The village board feared a decline in property values and overall condition of the neighborhoods because the unemployed homeowners could not pay their mortgages or maintain their homes properly. To counteract this, the village board enacted the Shorewood Plan of work relief in 1930.<sup>25</sup> The plan not only enhanced and preserved the community, but maintained the dignity of its residents. This plan of work relief was the first of its kind implemented at the municipal level in Milwaukee County.<sup>26</sup> It served as the model for the County, upon the recommendation of Shorewood's village manager, Harry A. Schmitt, to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors in 1932.<sup>27</sup>

Under the plan, storm sewers were excavated, a portion of North Lake Drive was widened, and fire hydrants and catch basins were relocated. By June, 1933, the Shorewood Plan employed 110 village residents.<sup>28</sup> A year later, the village received its first federal assistance from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Under the WPA, the scope and number of projects dramatically increased, employing large work crews, 90% of whom were non-Shorewood residents.<sup>29</sup> As of January 1, 1939, there were a total of 57 WPA sponsored projects in the village.<sup>30</sup> From 1934 to 1939, the parks were refurbished, the schools redecorated, new sewers laid, new light poles erected and thousands of trees and shrubs planted.<sup>31</sup> One WPA project that stands out from this period was the refurbishing of the village hall. To exemplify the grace and elegance of the community, it was decided to embellish the building with Colonial Revival elements. To the exterior, the Doric Order portico was added and the interior was remodeled in a Georgian Revival motif. The cost of this undertaking was almost \$18,000 of which the village paid nearly \$3,500 from its own treasury.<sup>32</sup>

The impact of these Depression relief projects on Shorewood's physical appearance has been lasting. The Shorewood Plan, along with the WPA, whose legacy has been recognized for its

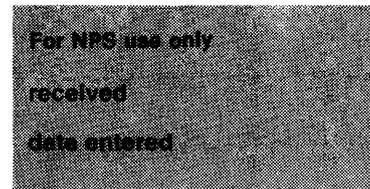
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outstanding contribution to the nation's architectural heritage, was credited for sustaining the young community's economic base and greatly enhancing its physical character. The significance of the 1937 village hall renovation not only upgraded the community's most important building but affirmed its use as the seat of municipal government. Because of its pivotal role in the development of Shorewood and as a well-preserved example of a major nationwide public works effort, the village hall is deemed to be an exception to the 50 year rule of eligibility of the National Register of Historic Places.

By 1938, the village had developed to capacity. The population was 15,292, only a few hundred less than its peak population of 1970, with all public services in place.<sup>33</sup> In a twenty year period, the village government had guided Shorewood's from a struggling settlement to a modern 20th century community. Its neighborhoods, schools, parks and government administration are exemplary of progressive and rational planning.

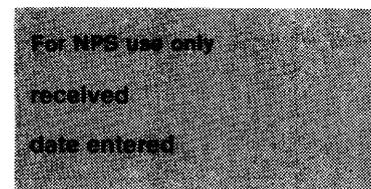
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FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>League of Women Voters, Profile of Shorewood (1978), p. 29.
- <sup>2</sup>Ernest G. Henkel, ed., "Special Shorewood File, Shorewood History Project" (1938), vol. 2, #7164, p. 6.
- <sup>3</sup>Henkel, ed., vol. 1, #7164, n.p.
- <sup>4</sup>Henkel, ed., vol. 2, #7164, n.p.
- <sup>5</sup>League of Women Voters, p. 8.  
Federal Writers' Project, American Guide Series, "Shorewood" (Works Progress Administration, 1939), p. 50.
- <sup>6</sup>Federal Writers' Project, pp. 34-38.
- <sup>7</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 52.
- <sup>8</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 52.
- <sup>9</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 52.
- <sup>10</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 52.
- <sup>11</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 52.
- <sup>12</sup>John G. Gregory, Southeastern Wisconsin Old Milwaukee County (Chicago- 1932), vol. 1, pp. 395-404.
- <sup>13</sup>Federal Writers' Project, pp. 59, 60.
- <sup>14</sup>Gregory, vol. 1, p. 393.
- <sup>15</sup>League of Women Voters, pp. 23, 26.
- <sup>16</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 64.
- <sup>17</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 64.
- <sup>18</sup>League of Women Voters, p. 29.

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- <sup>19</sup>League of Women Voters, p. 29.
- <sup>20</sup>League of Women Voters, pp. 30, 31.
- <sup>21</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 58.
- <sup>22</sup>League of Women Voters, pp. 29, 32, 34.
- <sup>23</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 62.
- <sup>24</sup>Gregory, pp. 393, 403.
- <sup>25</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 66.
- <sup>26</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 68.
- <sup>27</sup>Milwaukee Sentinel, August 5, 1932.
- <sup>28</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 67.
- <sup>29</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 67.
- <sup>30</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 67.
- <sup>31</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 67.
- <sup>32</sup>Henkel, ed., #7164, vol. 2, p. 6.
- <sup>33</sup>Federal Writers' Project, p. 68.

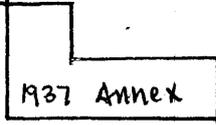
CAPITOL DRIVE



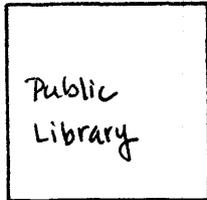
SHOREWOOD SAFETY BUILDING



SHOREWOOD VILLAGE HALL



1937 Annex



Public Library

N. MURRAY AVE.

N. FREDERICK AVE.

SHOREWOOD BLVD.

Shorewood Village Hall, Shorewood, Milwaukee Co., WI  
- - - - site boundaries

