



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE


1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20240

December 13, 2010

## Notice to file:

This property has been automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This is due to the fact that the publication of our Federal Register Notice: "National Register of Historic Places: Pending Nominations and Other Actions" was delayed beyond our control to the point where the mandated 15 day public comment period ended after our required 45 day time frame to act on the nomination. If the 45<sup>th</sup> day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the property will be automatically listed the next business day. The nomination is technically adequate and meets the National Register criteria for evaluation, and thus, automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1009



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Main Public Library

other names/site number Downtown Metropolitan Library

## 2. Location

street & number 131 Dean McGee Avenue

N/A

not for publication

city or town Oklahoma City

N/A

vicinity

state Oklahoma code OK county Oklahoma code 109 zip code 73102

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

     national      statewide X local

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official/Title

10-25-10  
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

     determined eligible for the National Register

     determined not eligible for the National Register

     removed from the National Register

     other (explain:)

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

12-13-10  
Date of Action

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## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: Library

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE: GRANITE; BRICK

walls: CONCRETE

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Main Public Library in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma is a four-story with a basement, cast stone, Modern Movement style building. The building was designed by the Oklahoma City architectural firm of Winkler and Reid, who also prepared the design for the 1951, two-story, Capitol Hill Library in south Oklahoma City. Constructed in 1951-1953 and dedicated in early 1954, the Main Public Library was used for its intended purpose until 2004 when the new Ron Norick Library opened in a different location in downtown Oklahoma City to the southwest of the historic library building. The Main Public Library building has been largely vacant since 2004. Currently, a portion of the first floor is in use for offices for a construction firm working in a nearby building. The Main Public Library has a combination black granite and dark brown brick foundation. The flat roof is clad with tar and asphalt. The walls of the building are concrete panels, more exactly Harter Cast Stone panels. The existing primary doors consist of two, automatic, aluminum, glazed slab doors with a glazed slab surround. Originally, the doors were triple, glazed, slab doors with a second set of matching doors inside, creating an entry vestibule. The doors were changed at an unknown time but probably to facilitate access to the library as the existing doors are wider and automatic, making them more accommodating than the original, manual, narrower doors. The windows are a combination of fixed, aluminum, three-quarter height, display windows; double, fixed, aluminum windows; and, double, undivided pane, aluminum, casement. Exterior features include a rear drive-up window, rear inset two-car parking area and two rooftop equipment penthouses. Decorative details are minimal, in keeping with the mid-century Modern style of the building, and consist of ribbon windows and limited decorative cast stone panels. The Main Public Library is located on the north side of downtown Oklahoma City. Since the turn-of-the-twentieth century, the corner of Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (now Dean McGee Avenue) and Robinson Street was the location of Oklahoma City's primary public library for over one hundred years. The original Carnegie Library, an opulent, Late Victorian style building, stood at the location until it was demolished in preparation for construction of the existing historic Main Public Library. According to the Main Public Library's original plans, marble from the Carnegie Library was salvaged and used in the new building. Located directly east of the historic Post Office, Courthouse and Federal Office Building (NRIS 74001665) since its construction in 1912, the Main Public Library occupies a prominent locale within downtown Oklahoma City. The buildings to the east and south of the library are tall office buildings of various ages, most being erected after the Main Public Library. To the immediate north of the library, there is a Contemporary style, bank drive-up that covers the entirety of the north half of the block with an open plaza area on the west side behind the library. The library has only three visible elevations, the south (façade), the west and the north (rear). The east elevation is fully obscured by the adjacent, light colored brick, Southwestern Bell building which was built in 1975 and towers over the library. When the library was erected, there was a three-story, red brick, parking garage to the immediate east of the new city building with several one-story garage buildings on the east side of the parking garage. All of these buildings were demolished in the early 1970s to make way for the new Southwest Bell building. The south elevation of the Main Public Library fronts onto Dean McGee Avenue (originally Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue). The west wall of the library faces toward North Robinson Avenue, one of the main thoroughfares in downtown Oklahoma City both historically and presently. The north elevation overlooks the alley that was called "Library Court" according to the 1955 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and was apparently one-way to the west when the Main Public Library was constructed, thus allowing the library's drive-up to be on the right side of the cars traversing the alley.

### Narrative Description

The Main Public Library has a combination black granite and dark brown brick foundation. The foundation of the visible street elevations are black granite. The back elevation is dark brown brick. The flat roof of the building is covered with tar and asphalt (see photographs 8, 9 and 10). The roof was replaced fairly recently because the previous roof was leaking, causing damage to the interior finishes. Visible on the roof above the north elevation is a white, rectangular, metal penthouse that houses the building's mechanical equipment, including the equipment for the building's rear freight elevator (see photograph 5 and 9). The penthouse has a metal slab door with a small rectangular light on the west side and four, metal, awning windows on the south side. There are no openings on the north wall and only vents on the east side of the penthouse. Off the southeast corner of this penthouse is additional mechanical equipment for the building. Although not



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visible from the street, there is a long, low projection in the center of the roof that corresponds to the historic fourth floor auditorium (see photographs 8, 9 and 10). On the southwest side of the low projection, there is a second small, metal, elevator penthouse for the front passenger elevator (see photograph 8). There is a partial door on the north side of the front elevator penthouse. Both penthouses are original elements of the four-story building that contained both a freight and passenger elevator as part of its design.

The façade of the building has a first floor composed largely of three-quarter height, fixed, aluminum, display windows which give the visual impression that the more solid floors above are floating, a popular design technique in Modern Movement style buildings (see photographs 1, 2 and 3). To the west of the entry on the first floor of the south elevation was originally a large display window matching the windows to the east of the entry. Currently, the west window is obscured by a large banner-style sign advertising the Carnegie Centre. To the east of the entry, there are fourteen large display windows which are equal in size. Underneath the windows on both sides of the entry is the black granite foundation. The first floor is topped by a wide, cast stone, horizontal band that extends the full length of the elevation.

The library's main entry is located towards the west side of the south elevation and consists of two, inset, automatic doors. Historically, above the entry were two rows of projected, individual, metal letters spelling "Public Library." The signage has been removed, probably when the library moved buildings. The glazed slab doors are separated on the exterior by a simple, metal railing with the east door being the entry and the west door the exit. Both doors have slightly raised, striated, rubber mats held in place with aluminum frames. The mats activated the doors to open and extend the length of the entryway on both the interior and exterior sides of the doors. The doors are flanked by full-height, fixed, sidelights and are topped by an undivided transom. The doors were altered at an unknown time, probably to facilitate access to the building both in terms of physical limitations and ease of use. In addition to being wider, the nonoriginal doors are automatic, thus alleviating the patron from having to manually open the doors and, therefore, making the library more inviting and user-friendly. According to the original plans, the main entry consisted of three, glazed slab, aluminum doors with chrome plated handles set into a bright red plastic laminate surround. As remains today, above the doors was an undivided transom; however, there were no sidelights as the three doors fully occupied the available space. The plans called for the doors to be Pittsburgh's Custom Herculite with a finish of Alumilited Aluminum. A second set of matching doors was set inside the inset entry to create a small, enclosed vestibule. The vestibule became part of the lobby when the doors were changed as a second set of doors was not installed, again probably to reduce unnecessary barriers at the building's only public entry. The overall size and exterior position of the main entry was not changed when the doors were altered to two wider doors. The reduction from three doors to two doors allowed for the addition of sidelights, as well as for the exterior aluminum railing separating the entries. The introduction of the railing subtly defined the entry door from the exit door with traffic automatically using the door on their right.

There are no windows on the second floor of the south elevation as this area was designed to contain the library's "stacks," as well as research space. The lack of natural light on the stack floor was desirable to prevent damage to the books caused by long-term exposure to the sun, as well as restrict outside noise interference. On the third and fourth floors of the south wall, the double, undivided pane, aluminum casement windows are set in a recessed rectangular block that does not extend the full length of the south elevation. The block is defined by a projected concrete band that extends downwards to the top of the first floor on both the east and west sides. The double windows on the third and fourth floors are separated by narrow, vertical, concrete bands that extend fully along both floors. Below the third floor windows within the recessed rectangular block are striated concrete panels that are yellowish in color. The panels match the width of the windows above with two panels between each vertical band. Between the third and fourth floor windows, there are two striated panels stacked on each other. Window air conditioning units are located within some of the third floor windows, obviously later additions for some of the third floor offices. On each corner of the south elevation, there is a projected, concrete band that extends from the granite foundation to the roof.

Along the length of the west elevation, at grade level, is a narrow landscape strip between the building and the concrete sidewalk. This is the only green area on the entire library lot. The west elevation of the Main Public Library contains a large, triple, display window towards the south side on the first floor (see photographs 3, 4 and 5). This window was boarded over apparently when the interior lobby was remodeled at an unknown time. In discussion with current staff at the Ron Norick Library, it was indicated that the display window may have leaked, contributing to it to being covered over. There are no other openings on the first floor or at all on the second and third floors of the west elevation. The lack of fenestration on this side of the building would have reduced noise levels in the library as Robinson Avenue is, and has been, a major thoroughfare in downtown Oklahoma City. The fourth floor contains six sets of windows that cover the majority of the west elevation. The five sets of windows towards the south are matching and consist of double, aluminum,

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undivided pane, casement windows flanking a large, double paned, fixed window. The sixth window, on the far north corner of the fourth floor, is smaller than the other openings. The sixth opening contains only two sets of double, undivided pane, aluminum, casement windows.

The rear elevation is divided vertically into four equal bays (see photographs 4, 5 and 6). The foundation of the north elevation is a dark brown brick. The first floor is divided from the upper floors by a flat concrete ledge that extends the length of the elevation. On the east side of the first floor in the easternmost bay of the north elevation, there is a two-car parking area that is inset (see photograph 7). The walls of the parking area are red brick, which contrasts with the light-colored cast stone panels of the rest of the building. The ceiling of the parking area is concrete panels with a metal light fixture centrally located above each parking space. The floor of the parking area is concrete. To the west of the parking area on the first floor in the second bay of the north wall is a four-part window. The four-part window has four, narrow, metal-lined openings. The two outside openings retain their undivided glass panels while the inner two openings now contain louvers. Continuing west in the second bay of the north elevation, there is a small metal vent near the top of the wall and to west of this is a metal slab door with a full-height metal sidelight. Above the door is a metal box and, above this in the concrete ledge, there is a metal light that matches the other lights suspended from the concrete ledge to the west. To the west of the door in the second bay there is another inset area for the gas lines that come up through the concrete curb along the edge of the north elevation in the third bay. This inset area has walls of dark brown brick that matches the brick of the foundation. West of the utilities area in the third bay is a large, metal, slab door with a large, square, wire glass window. There is a metal light above the door. Starting just west of the door, there is a pipe metal railing that extends all the way to the west corner of the north elevation. The railing is an original feature of the building and was designed to prevent cars from hitting the building when using the drive-up. The drive-up window in the westernmost (fourth) bay of the north wall has a projected window with the railing extended upward to protect the window. The drive-up window has metal pieces on the top and bottom with fixed panes of glass in the middle. Like a bank drive-through window, the bottom metal element of the library drive-up window extended outwards to provide the books to the waiting motorist (see Continuation Page 25 for c. 1954 image). Above the drive-up window is a metal light fixture. To the west of the drive-up window is a window similar to the fourth floor windows on the west elevation. This window, however, only contains the center, two-pane, fixed windows with a double, undivided pane, aluminum, casement window on the far west side. Above the windows historically were projected, metal letters matching the signage above the front entry. As on the front, the signage was simply the words "Public Library." As on the façade, the signage has been removed. According to library staff who worked in the Main Public Library, the drive-up was used through about the mid-1970s when the adjacent, multi-story, Southwestern Bell building was erected. The new Southwestern Bell building replaced several garage buildings that apparently accessed the alley with traffic flowing strictly in a westward direction which would have put the drive-up window on the correct side of the car. Following construction of the new Southwestern Bell building in 1975, the flow of traffic in the alley changed. This, in turn, restricted use of the drive-up as access off of Robinson Avenue placed the window on the wrong side of the car for efficient use.

As on the façade, there are no windows on the second floor of the north elevation which corresponded to the interior stack floor. The window pattern of the third and fourth floors is identical. The first and second bays from the east on the two upper floors each contain matching three-part windows that are identical to the fourth floor windows on the west elevation. There are no openings on the upper floors in the third bay. The fourth, or westernmost, bay also has the three-part windows on the third and fourth floors matching those in the first and second bays.

#### INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

Currently, the front entry on the south elevation opens onto a lobby area through a single set of doors (see photograph 11). Historically, there were two sets of doors creating an enclosed vestibule. Within the vestibule, on the east wall, there was a construction plaque that has been removed, probably prior to the city selling the building. The outline of the plaque remains evident on the pink marble walls of the vestibule. The library counter in the lobby was and is located on the west side of the lobby with the main building stairs on the southeast and the passenger elevator on the southwest. North of the lobby, the first floor opened up into a large, open, reading room. Currently, only a portion of the first floor is in use and it has been temporarily partitioned to create office space. The second floor of the building was reserved for the stacks with a small office/restroom/infirmary area in the area that corresponds to the first floor lobby area. The second floor was the shortest floor in terms of height and was denoted as the "stack floor" on the original plans with the actual third floor being called the second floor. According to the original elevation plans, the basement floor was 11 feet, 4 inches in height; the first floor was 12 feet, 8 inches; the stack floor was just 8 feet, 8 inches; the third floor measured 12 feet, 4 inches; and, the fourth floor a total of 11 feet, 4 inches. The arrangement of the actual third floor was similar to the first floor with a large,



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open, reading room occupying the majority of space. On both the north and south sides of the floor were various office spaces. The fourth floor contained a central auditorium area that was later converted to the audio visual area and, subsequently, to the business office. Office areas lined the east, south and west walls of the fourth floor, including the highly distinctive local history room on the southeast corner (see photograph 12). In a connection to the original, Late Victorian style, Carnegie Library that stood for half a century on the site, the local history room was decorated reminiscent of the opulent Victorian style. The basement of the building originally included a stack area, as well as the commodious children's reading room. Modern in every way when constructed, the building was designed with air conditioning, as well as inside planting boxes to compensate for the lack of windows. To serve the drive-up on the northwest corner of the building, a dumbwaiter was and remains located in the east wall of the far northwest rooms of all floors.

**ALTERATIONS:**

Alterations to the exterior of the building have been minimal. The roof of the building has been replaced in the last few years. This was a necessary action as the previous roof was allowing water infiltration into the building, damaging the ceilings, walls and floors of the interior. The corner, first floor, display window to the west of the entry on the south elevation is currently obscured by signage for the project to develop the building into housing. The first floor display window on the west elevation was boarded at an unknown time. While the windows have been obscured, they are still understandable as windows.

The majority of the windows in the building were replaced following the 19 April 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building. The Murrah Federal Building was located two blocks north of the library building with the damage to windows extending in all directions for blocks. The bombing blew out an estimated ninety percent of the library windows, as well as did minor damage to the interior. Based on available photographs, the replacement windows match the original windows. Prior to the 1995 bombing, the front doors to the library building were replaced.

It is unknown when the doors were reduced from triple doors to double doors. While the change in the doors diminishes slightly the integrity of the building's original design, the replacement doors are evidence of the on-going need for the library to encourage use of public facilities. The nonoriginal doors are not only larger in size to be more accommodating but are automatic so as to be more inviting to the public. As evident in studies of Oklahoma City's library situation prior to construction of the Main Public Library, the need to attract and facilitate use of the building with the public-at-large was a major consideration in the design, use, and eventual success, of the library. On a relatively minor scale, the signage reading "Public Library" on the front and rear of the building has been removed to avoid possible confusion as the building is no longer the site of the downtown library.

The interior of the building has been more extensively modified, particularly following the removal of the original library function of the building in 2004. While the majority of the building is not currently in use, a portion of the first floor, west of the historic lobby area, has been partitioned for office space. The partitions are full-height but are reversible as the current arrangement of space is known to be temporary. The proposed new use for the building will be residential in nature which will require reconfiguration of existing interior spaces. The owner of the building, who is also the primary developer of the rehabilitation project, is seeking to obtain the available Investment Tax Credits for the project which will require that the work meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Overall, the Main Public Library retains a good degree of historic integrity, including the aspects of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. The building ably conveys its historic and architectural significance as Oklahoma City's Main Public Library, a landmark to residents of all ages.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1951-1954

### Significant Dates

1953

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Winkler and Reid, architects

Bollinger Construction Company, builder

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance spans the years of construction for the building.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Oklahoma City's Main Public Library is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with public education efforts of the 1950s. Public libraries provided critical services for the community that contributed to the broad pattern of education. In addition to loaning books, the Main Public Library had available for loan projected books<sup>1</sup>, films, framed pictures and recordings. Additionally, the library provided carrels for students or researchers, coin operated typewriters, microfilm readers and the auto drive-in service. On the fourth floor of the library was an auditorium and workshop rooms that were available for a variety of community programs and events, as well as the local history room named the Charles E. France Room. Unlike the other ultra-modern spaces of the library, the France Room was decorated in a Victorian style to recall the original, elaborate, Late Victorian style, Carnegie Library that stood on the same site. As the principal library in Oklahoma City's metropolitan library system, the Main Public Library's historic educational significance to the local community is undisputable. The Main Public Library is also eligible under Criterion C as an excellent example of a Modern Movement style library building designed by the Oklahoma City architectural firm of Winkler and Reid. The library exhibited many notable features in terms of library design of the time period. Noteworthy attributes of the building include the drive-in window on the north side of the building and the fourth floor auditorium. The building is without parallel in downtown Oklahoma City and is the only mid-century municipal building still extant in downtown Oklahoma City. The city's Central Fire Station was constructed in the late 1940s to the southwest of the Main Public Library but it was demolished to make way for the Myriad Gardens, an element of Oklahoma City's Urban Renewal development known as the Pei Plan after its chief architect I.M. Pei. The Main Public Library is also distinct from the other branch libraries that were constructed from the early 1950s through the early 1970s in Oklahoma City. Not only was the Main Public Library the seat of library service in Oklahoma City during the period, it was unique in its architectural expression through the use of gray colored, cast stone panels and its relative lack of ornamental detail. The period of significance for the Main Public Library extends from 1951 to 1954 representing the years of construction of the building through the formal dedication of the library. Because the building's contribution to public education efforts extended throughout its years as a library with very little demarcation, the period of significance incorporates only the years of construction of the building and its opening, the most significant period of contribution in terms of discernible change.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Constructed in 1951 through 1954, the Main Public Library continued a half century old tradition of public education efforts available at the corner of Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Robinson Avenue in downtown Oklahoma City. As with many public libraries, Oklahoma City owes its library system to two women's clubs, the Philomathean Club and the Sans Souci. The federated women's clubs were organized as "...study and self-culture groups." Topics studied by the individual clubs included American history, poetry, art, as well as political issues of the day, such as suffrage and child labor laws. Critically, these clubs, largely composed of middle class housewives and mothers, endeavored to use "...their clubs as vehicles to influence the social progress of their homes, their cities, and the infant state of Oklahoma." As such, the development of public libraries was a natural focus of numerous groups across Oklahoma. Generally, membership in the federated women's club movement peaked in the mid 1950s; however, many clubs, as well as the state and national organizations, remain in existence to the present day.<sup>2</sup>

Following the chartering of the library and selling of stock in the late 1890s, the ladies turned their attention to securing accommodations for the new facility. The Commercial Club of Oklahoma City offered a room in the Farmer's National Bank Building at the southwest corner of Grand and Robinson Avenue for the new library. However, this quickly proved inadequate for the library and the former president of the Philomathean Club, Mrs. Selwyn Douglas, contacted philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to secure funds from the steel magnate to construct a new building. Carnegie pledged \$25,000 towards

<sup>1</sup> Projected books were books on film that were projected onto a ceiling using a projector so bedfast persons could read the printed material.

<sup>2</sup> Susan L. Allen, "Progressive Spirit: The Oklahoma and Indian Territory Federation of Women's Clubs," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, 66:1 (Spring 1988), 4-6. See also "Chronology of GFWC History," *About Us: General Federation of Women's Clubs*, <[http://www.gfwc.org/about\\_us.jsp?pagelid=20906118812251062016982136](http://www.gfwc.org/about_us.jsp?pagelid=20906118812251062016982136)>, retrieved 19 August 2005 and Linda D. Wilson, "Women's Club Movement," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, <<http://www.ok-history.mus.ok.us/enc/womensclubs.htm>>, retrieved 19 August 2005.

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construction of a new library building provided that the city of Oklahoma City agreed to pay \$2,000 a year to the building's operating expenses.<sup>3</sup>

Obviously agreeing to the condition, the city located the new library building at the intersection of Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and North Robinson Avenue. Based on the 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the area was largely residential at that time with houses spanning the remainder of the library's block except for the Methodist Episcopal South Church on the southeast corner of Block 19. Directly across the street to the south of the library was the Christian Church with the First Methodist Episcopal Church on the northwest corner of the block directly north of Block 19. The library's site was thought to be "...sufficiently removed from the bustle of downtown Oklahoma City to insure pleasant reading without being disturbed by the clatter of horses in the street." The land for the library was bought from a family named Johnson for a reported \$1,700 and the cornerstone for the elaborate, Late Victorian style, stone and brick building was laid on 16 August 1900. Just over a year later, the new library opened on 29 August 1901 with all due pomp and circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

By 1909, the burgeoning city had outgrown the original turn-of-the-twentieth-century building. Andrew Carnegie was again contacted and offered \$35,000 for the construction of an addition. The city of Oklahoma City provided an additional \$4,800 to the construction effort which resulted in the library being "...hailed as one of the most modern plants in the southwest." Despite this advance, by the conclusion of World War I, the library was again deemed "...crowded and inadequate." Under the oversight of Miss Mabel Peacock, who became librarian in 1919, an expansion of library services extended the reach of the public library in an effort to serve all parts of Oklahoma City's ever-expanding population. In 1921, the Dunbar Branch was established in the eastern part of Oklahoma City to serve the city's African American population. In 1925, as Capitol Hill in south Oklahoma City continued to flourish, the meat packing plants in that part of the city provided land for construction of the Wright Branch Library on Exchange Avenue. It was also in the 1920s that the city entered into an agreement with the local school district to establish branch libraries in six of Oklahoma City's public schools.<sup>5</sup>

As the Great Depression brought increasing pressure upon public services and Oklahoma City continued to expand, Miss Peacock sought to have the library included in the new, expansive, \$6.5 million, Civic Center project that ultimately resulted in a multi-building, City Beautiful complex that consisted of a new City Jail, Municipal Building, Civic Auditorium and Oklahoma County Courthouse. The Civic Center was largely funded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal-era Public Works Administration (PWA) and was designed by a consortium of Oklahoma City's notable architects: J.O. Parr designed the auditorium; Sol Layton and George Forsyth the Oklahoma County Courthouse; and the remaining buildings were designed by the Allied Architects, consisting of Leonard H. Bailey, T.R. Bramblet, C.F. Drury, Ed Gahl, John D. Jeffers, C.L. Monnot, B. Gaylord Noftsgar, Guy C. Reid, W.H. Schumacher, Walter Vahlberg and George Winkler. Despite Miss Peacock's declaration in an issue of *Harlow's Weekly* that "What we need is a large downtown central library" in order to better serve business men and their institutions, there was not sufficient money in the final Civic Center project to include a new library. The lack of available funds for the \$500,000 library portion of the Civic Center project was attributed to the more costly, PWA allocation of \$7 million to the Bluff Creek Reservoir. In addition to funding issues, there was apparently "A heated fight over the proposed location of the new (library) building in (the) Civic Center" project.<sup>6</sup>

The "...problem of library service had grown so acute..." by 1937 that Miss Peacock encouraged a special bond election to fund construction of a new library. Just the year before, the owners of the Shrine Auditorium offered \$300,000 and their building for the library property; however, the library board determined that it would be too costly to transform the existing business building into a library. In 1941, the Carnegie Library was noted as providing "...super-service on a limited budget, stretching every dollar farther than double the sum made to serve in some cities of comparable sizes." At the time, Oklahoma City expended 30 cents per capita for library service while other cities of similar population spent 69 cents per capita. The American Library Association recommended \$1 per capita as the proper expenditure. With the advent of World War II, Oklahoma City's original Carnegie Library continued to add new books "...until the stacks were jammed with

<sup>3</sup> "History of the Oklahoma City Libraries," Unpublished Manuscript, (available <http://cybermarsx.mls.lib.ok.us/folklore/folklore.asp?WCI=BrowseResults&WCU=15>, retrieved 9 April 2010), 1-2. See also Lucyl Shirk, *Oklahoma City: Capital of Soonerland*, (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma City Board of Education, 1957), 159-160.

<sup>4</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1904. See also "History of the Oklahoma City Libraries," 2 and *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 9 November 1945.

<sup>5</sup> "History of the Oklahoma City Libraries," 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-7.



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volumes and there was no additional space." By the time the war concluded, "...the main library was falling apart." In addition to a leaking roof, the "...stones were beginning to weaken and crumble and (the library) was rapidly becoming unsafe for public use." In late 1945, the library board chairman, Victor Harlow, declared "...the present Carnegie-endowed structure at 131 NW 3 is obsolete and in bad repair." Additionally, as noted by Harlow, the building was erected "...before the principles of library building were developed." In late November 1945, city residents voted in favor of a nearly \$16 million bond issue that allocated \$500,000 for construction of a new library. At the time, members of the library board favored a building that would be of a "functional type" over that of "monumental type architecture" in order to utilize all space as efficiently as possible.<sup>7</sup>

In late January 1946, the library board appealed to the public for assistance in development of the new building. Rather than "...rushing headlong into building the new \$500,000 bond issue edifice," the library board developed a ten step program that further called for city council approval after each individual step. Because "The new building will have to last a long time..." each step was to be "...meticulate (sic) and deliberate." The first step was "Selection of a suitable site." The second step required a "Determination of the general character of the library building." The third step involved "Selection of the architect." The fourth step mandated "Approval of the work of the architect." The fifth step was the "Recommendation of advisement for bids." The sixth step called for "Determination of the lowest and best bidder and the recommendation to the council for the execution of building contract." The seventh step consisted of "Observation and oversight of actual construction of the building." The eighth step was simply "Acceptance of the building." The ninth step allowed the "Payment of final settlement on building." The tenth and final step was "Conditioned upon the presence of the necessary funds (to provide) the recommendation of the purchase of the necessary equipment for the building." The public was invited to provide suggestions for step one; however, the library board decreed that each suggestion be accompanied with a brief statement explaining the reasons why the nominated site would be a good choice.<sup>8</sup>

By mid-March 1946, Harlow forecast that the "Construction of a new library is not going to be a speedy thing." In addition to the myriad of details that required resolution before construction and then the predicted "...many problems connected with the actual construction of the building," Harlow explained that the post-World War II lack of sufficient building materials, including steel and concrete, would likely prevent construction. It was Harlow's opinion that the construction project would not "...qualify under the government's new priority system governing the release of building materials."<sup>9</sup>

Less than two weeks later, the library issue was "...in danger of tearing the city apart." The fight apparently erupted over whether the American Library Association would "...make an impartial survey of Oklahoma City's library needs." At the heart of the fight was the issue of where the money to fund the survey would come from. The library board was unanimously opposed to taking any money from the available bond fund "...for any other purpose other than actually building the library." Additionally, the library board "...dropped the idea of using the old county courthouse as a library site after..." a compromise agreement to transfer the property to the city was declined by the county commissioners. Two of the three county commissioners opposed the transfer because of earlier promises to sell the old courthouse and use that money to retire the bonds on the new courthouse building. In addition to the determination that all the bond money be spent only on the building, the library board also identified policy statements that the new library building "...be located close to the center of Oklahoma City;" that monies acquired through sale of the existing library site "...be used to purchase additional desirable equipment for the new library;" and, that the new building "...be constructed in such a manner that would not increase normal administrative costs of library operation."<sup>10</sup>

In October 1946, as the impartial library survey was underway, Joseph L. Wheeler, director of Baltimore's Pratt Memorial Library in Maryland and one of the two American Library Association surveyors, declared at a dinner meeting in the Huckins Hotel that "Oklahoma City should have one of the finest public libraries in the country, housed in the most beautiful building in the city." Wheeler further opined that the new building should avoid being located "...in a park or near other buildings which are not generally used, but should be on the main stem of the downtown area." In addition to recommending that the city should spend half as much on the site as it would cost for the building itself, Wheeler put forth a vision of a building "...with some of the most exciting show windows in town." In Wheeler's words, "A free public library is a merchandising organization selling the most valuable merchandise to be had – information, inspiration and self-

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 7. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 5 July 1941, 16 October 1945 and 9 November 1945.

<sup>8</sup> The Daily Oklahoman, 25 January 1946.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 19 March 1946.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 29 March 1946.



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education." A quality library considered four factors in its development, according to Wheeler: a good book collection; a good physical plant; a well-trained staff; and, adequate financial support.<sup>11</sup>

The 1947 American Library Association survey report by Wheeler and Walter H. Kaiser, librarian for Wayne County, Michigan, concluded that another bond issue to provide an additional \$400,000 to \$500,000 was necessary to provide Oklahoma City with adequate facilities to meet the needs of the city. The current salaries, as well as many of the libraries out-dated practices, were deplored. Additional important recommendations made by the survey report included the need to adequately address library services for the African-American community, the need for a department to serve the 14 to 20-year-old population and the need to reduce the number of branch libraries operating as the public school libraries. The survey recommended as first choice for the location of the new main library building a site within the Civic Center between Robinson Avenue and Broadway (also known as the Couch Drive site). The site measured an atypical 40 feet by 510 feet. The survey insisted that to be acceptable the forty foot strip be widened to forty-eight feet to accommodate an unusual, narrow, rectangular building that would be highly distinctive. To accomplish widening of the site, however, would require that the city secure the agreement of the property owners in the area who would lose some of their loading area, making the scheme unlikely to reach a successful conclusion. A second site recommended in the survey report was the Service Center ground in the Civic Center which fronted onto Broadway. If the existing library site were to be utilized, the survey recommended that an additional \$150,000 be spent to acquire more land. This would then have to be added to the anticipated \$125,000 that was expected from the sale of the site so the overall cost of re-using the site at Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Robinson Avenue increased to a pricey \$275,000.<sup>12</sup>

Also in 1947, Clarence S. Paine became the head librarian for the Oklahoma City Libraries. It was at this time that the original "Carnegie Library" name was reportedly abandoned in favor of the "Oklahoma City Libraries." Because of the shortage in library facilities and to provide improved library service, Paine started "booketerias" and special collections at Walnut Grove and Pilot Center; established a Business and Technical Reference Department "...to serve the needs of thousands of business men who had no central source of information;" created a Folklore and Local History Section to preserve "...historical and cultural material concerning Oklahoma City and County;" developed an Out Service Department to provide "projected books and standard books for convalescents and shut ins;" and the Children's Department re-instituted their weekly story hours "...for the convenience of shopping mothers and the entertainment of Oklahoma City Children." Overwhelmingly, "...the increased program of outlying service did not remove the need for a new library building."<sup>13</sup>

In early June 1947, the city's public buildings committee recommended that the location of the new library be "...in a downtown area close to heavy pedestrian traffic." The committee was established to study the Bartholomew public buildings report, part of Oklahoma City's first comprehensive community planning plan since the 1930 Hare and Hare plan. At the committee meeting, Charles E. France with the library board indicated that the site for the library near the Municipal Auditorium which was recommended in the Bartholomew report was "...too far from downtown traffic." France also indicated that "...there was serious doubt that civic center (Couch Drive), as recommended by the experts in their report, could ever be obtained for a new building site." According to France, the property was acquired by the city for the purposes of a double parkway and drive. The deeds for the property included reversionary clauses so if the land were to be used for other purposes, it would revert back to the abutting property owners.<sup>14</sup>

By February 1948, a site at the northeast corner of Northwest 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and North Harvey Avenue was tentatively approved by the library board "...in preparation for the proposed spring bond election." Notably, the legal ownership of the property had not been investigated and the board did not have a purchase price for the favored site. The existing library site was named the second choice by the board. Additional land to augment the existing site which measured only 100 by 140 feet was noted as being required. Land to the east or north of the Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Robinson Avenue site was deemed to be "...extremely high in value and will be very difficult to obtain." Because of raising material costs, the board

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 24 October 1946.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 20 March 1947. See also Joseph L. Wheeler and Walter H. Kaiser, "Report of a Survey of the Oklahoma City Public Library to the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Library, the Mayor and City Manager, and the City Council of Oklahoma City." (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 1947).

<sup>13</sup> "History of Oklahoma City Libraries," 8.

<sup>14</sup> The Daily Oklahoman, 4 June 1947.

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was also going to ask several contractors "...to take the library experts' figures and determine how much costs have gone up in the past year to give local officials a rough estimate of present construction costs."<sup>15</sup>

In March 1948, the library board requested that the city council consider hiring the architectural firm of Winkler and Reid to do a preliminary survey and cost estimates for the new library. The city council's vote was delayed because there was confusion over whether the firm was being hired to do preparatory work only or if the firm would "...do the entire library job." The president of the library board, Mrs. Walter Gray, indicated that "...the board simply wants an estimate of cost now, but...it is the feeling of the board that Reid & Winkler should do the entire job." The city council approved selection of the architects only "...after the library board explained the firm was not to be paid for preliminary work." The architects would receive payment "...only if and when a new library building is constructed." The ward three councilmen was the only dissenting vote. In casting his opposing vote, LeVerne Carleton declared that "the library board should have built the library in the three years they had that \$500,000 from the 1945 bond fund."<sup>16</sup>

Attorney and library board member Charles France announced to a June 1948 meeting of city realtors that the library would have to use the existing site in his opinion. France was careful to note that he was not speaking for the library board. In France's view, locating the building in the Civic Center was not "advantageous." He indicated that "...schoolchildren had expressed a dislike for such a location..." due to difficulties in reaching the site on the bus routes. France predicted that obtaining a site within the center of the city, an area outlined as between Main, Broadway, Hudson and Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup>, would require all of the available bond money just to acquire the land. France also noted that the original half-million allocated for the building was insufficient as the bond money was for the building only and no consideration had been given to land requirements. Interestingly, France did not favor the development of a branch system as a solution to the library problem. France cited increases in personnel costs to maintain the branches as the primary reason the solution was undesirable. He did favor a bookmobile system because "After all, the primary purpose of a library is not a fine building, but to get books to the people."<sup>17</sup>

France's declaration did not end speculation upon the site. Just two weeks later, the local newspaper published a proposed plan for the city library. Drawn by G.W. Qualls, an architecture student at the University of Oklahoma, as a class project, the plan centered on the Civic Center site located between Robinson and Broadway. The proposed building, designed in cooperation with Clarence Paine as a "theoretical client," was fifty wide and five hundred feet long. The three floors with a basement building included "...roomy, informal reading areas and plenty of books shelves." The Modern style building also provided space for a waiting room, secretary and library director offices, meeting rooms, an auditorium, business offices, children's room, kitchenette, lounge and sun deck.<sup>18</sup>

In late September 1948, the library board made their formal recommendation on the library site. The site recommended was the same site the board identified in February of that year, the northeast corner of Northwest 2<sup>nd</sup> and Harvey Avenue. City manager William Gill Jr. indicated he was in agreement with the board's site selection as they "...had given considerable study to the matter." The next step would be for the city to purchase the land, a move up to the city manager and city council. Notably, the minimum 150-foot frontage site would provide 21,000 square feet of ground space. This was 4,000 square feet less than recommended in the Wheeler-Kaiser survey which indicated to meet city needs at least 25,000 square feet was needed. Pushing the frontage to 175-feet would push the total available ground space to 24,500 square feet.<sup>19</sup>

Indicating that the issue remained contentious was the October 1948 announcement by the Friends of the Library that they still considered the Civic Center strip between Robinson and Broadway as the preferred location for the building. Archibald C. Edwards, president of the organization, stated that "A library on that site with any ability and courage in its design would give Oklahoma City, as far as the United States is concerned, the library of the century." In response, Mrs. Gray indicated that the library board had "...investigated at length the possibilities of acquiring the Couch drive site" with the conclusion that it would take too much time and money. City manager Gill summed it with the statement that "...it was impossible." Gill, however, also pointed out that no matter the recommendation, the city did not have the money to purchase any

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 8 February 1948.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 30 March 1948 and 2 April 1948.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 3 June 1948.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 20 June 1948.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 28 September 1948.



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site. The original bond was voted only to cover the building and equipment. To purchase any land, another bond election would be required.<sup>20</sup>

To garner more public attention to the continuing issue of library facilities, the library produced bulletins, pamphlets and posters that showcased the expanded library services while "...stressing the need for civic action." Articles in the newspaper also addressed the system's deficiencies while emphasizing the dedication and value of the library system to the public. Highlighted in the articles was the library's threefold primary purpose: education, information and recreation. In addition to the shortages at the downtown Carnegie Library, the twenty-plus-year-old Wright Branch Library was deemed "...totally inadequate for a community as large as Capitol Hill."<sup>21</sup>

Despite all the publicity, the library board still encountered "a battle on funds plea" in 1950. At that time, the board asked for a bond amount of \$926,360 to go with the original half-million bond passed in 1945. Of the total \$1.4 million, just over \$1 million was asked for the main library building. The costs were broken down as \$823,280 for clearing the existing site and constructing the new library; a five percent contingency fund of \$41,140; an additional \$120,000 for stacks, furnishings and equipment; and, \$55,000 for architects and engineering fees. The money in excess of the main library building was for construction of a library in the Capitol Hill area and acquisition of a site for that new branch library. The Capitol Hill building had an estimated cost of \$223,000 with a five percent contingency fee of \$11,150. Furnishings and equipment for the branch building was anticipated to cost \$15,000 and the architects and engineering fees was set at a modest \$14,280. In addition to these costs, the branch library would require \$17,500 to purchase the necessary site, a book stocking cost of \$100,000, as well as \$6,000 in moving expenses. The total bond amount was opposed by the city's action committee and city council who felt the costs were excessive and, therefore, responded by paring the library's allocation to \$526,360. Library director Paine indicated that the Capitol Hill branch would then be eliminated from the building program and \$25,000 shaved from the main library project to meet the allocated funds. The city council immediately decried abandonment of the Capitol Hill building and proclaimed that the \$1,026,360 allocated for the library project from the 1945 and 1950 bonds would be sufficient to complete both buildings, although some of the "frills and frazzles" may have to be left off.<sup>22</sup>

The second bond election for construction of a new main library, as well as the Capitol Hill branch, was finally set for early May 1950. By that time, the final location of the new Main Public Library had apparently been established with little fanfare as the original Carnegie Library site. The location issue did not arise again as a point of contention. The criticism about the size of the proposed building (and the additional needed money) was quickly and logically met with the response that "Despite the eventual establishment of branches, which may be years away, the central building will still house all the repair, maintenance, clerical and supervisory functions of (the) library system," as well as "...all the technical information needed by business, will provide meeting places, committee rooms and many other important and desirable facilities for the downtown area." The city successfully passed an \$822,000 bond for the library construction effort on 9 May 1950. The bond also included a variety of other improvement efforts, including street, sewer and other public building improvements. The library portion of the 1950 city bond issue included construction of a new library in the Capitol Hill area of south Oklahoma City. Both buildings were "...to be advanced designed libraries for the comfort and convenience of patrons" with the Capitol Hill library to include a sun deck, large auditorium and the latest library equipment.<sup>23</sup>

In late July 1950, the city council approved architects and engineers for the May 1950 bond issue work. Of the selected architects for the various city projects, the city council approved the plans for the main library prepared by Winkler and Reid under the previous council authorization. The plans for the Capitol Hill Library, which Winkler and Reid prepared "...without council blessing" were also approved for use. Construction of the Capitol Hill Library moved more rapidly with the building being erected by late the following year. Out of the available library fund, the Capitol Hill building was constructed for a total of \$253,000, representing a \$10,000 savings which was achieved by not including an elevator in the building and removal of the garage designed as part of the original plan. Indicative of the continuing underlying lack of adequate funding for the library system was the \$5,000 appropriated for the new library's book stock, representing just twenty percent of the original scheduled amount.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 11 October 1948.

<sup>21</sup> "History of the Oklahoma City Libraries," 7. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 21 July 1949.

<sup>22</sup> The Daily Oklahoman, 21 July 1949 and 23 February 1950.

<sup>23</sup> The Daily Oklahoman, 3 May 1950 and 14 May 1950. See also "History of the Oklahoma City Libraries," 7.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 27 July 1950 and 3 June 1951.



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Work on the main library building continued to encounter difficulties. More than a year after the second bond issue was passed, "Price jumps have whittled at the city's library program," causing "constant revision" to the main building plans which resulted in a "completely functional" building. Because of the twenty percent increase in the cost of construction and equipment, the board also made provisions to not complete areas of the building slated for future expansion and that purchase of new equipment was "...kept at a bare minimum." Furthering the latter goal was the effort to use "...every piece of usable equipment and furniture in the present plant." Citing a familiar theme, Paine noted that "...some other source of funds must be found before (the main library) building can be completed and adequately equipped, and before the Capitol Hill branch will have even a basic stock of books."<sup>25</sup>

In mid-July 1951, the local school board agreed to allow the Main Library to locate in the Roosevelt School rent-free while the new Main Public Library building was under construction. While the temporary location provided only one-third of the desired space, the library would save approximately \$5,000 in rental fees. The overflow books from the school location would then be housed in the Capitol Hill Library. The building contract was set to be let on 1 September 1951 to meet the deadline set by the National Production Authority (NPA). The NPA was a Korean War agency established in the Department of Commerce on 11 September 1950. The purpose of the agency was to develop and promote the "...production and supply of materials and facilities necessary for military defense." The agency also sought to ensure that the needs of the civilian economy were sufficiently included in the defense effort and that small businesses were included in defense contracts. As such, the NPA had approval and denial authority over the allotment of critical building materials during the period. Near the end of July 1951, the needed 85 tons of steel for the new library building were allocated, allowing the city council to ask for bids on the project.<sup>26</sup>

Library service at Oklahoma City's Carnegie Library ended on 13 August 1951, just sixteen days short of a full fifty years after the building opened. For the convenience of patrons during construction, a drive-up book-return box remained located to the south of the old building. By late August 1951, the contract to demolish the old building had been let to the Concho Construction Company, headed by Moore C. Hess, and work was underway. Hess actually worked as water boy at the construction of the Carnegie Library in 1901. While "...several older persons...lamented wrecking the old building," Hess took the philosophical viewpoint that "Life is like the constant weaving of a tapestry. Old people and old buildings are woven out at one end and new babies and new buildings are woven in at the other end." The Golden Jubilee of the Carnegie Library was celebrated at the end of August 1951 on the first floor of the abandoned building. Workmen were then at work razing the second floor of the building. During the first week of October 1951, demolition of the building was well underway with the "old bricks" being dumped at 6600 North Olie and the "...big stone and cement chunks..." deposited at Northwest 44<sup>th</sup> and Portland.<sup>27</sup>

In January 1952, as work continued at the site, the city council rejected the use of Bedford limestone for the new building. The library board had raised the issue as they felt "...the limestone would look much nicer than pressed stone." The estimated cost for the natural stone was \$34,974. The opposing councilmen noted that "...not one person in 500 would know the difference between natural and artificial stone" and that \$35,000 would purchase a lot of books. When the building was completed, advertisement featuring the library and its use of Harter Cast Stone materials specifically identified that the use of the cast stone saved the taxpayers \$34,979. In January 1952, the council did approve a \$4,600 change in the building plans to allow the installation of tile floors and walls in the restrooms. By March 1952, the Hamilton Manufacturing Company was the apparent low bidder on the library's shelving contract with a bid of \$43,911.<sup>28</sup>

With construction nearing completion, in January 1953, the city council delayed action on a library board recommendation to name the local history room the Charles E. France Memorial Room in honor of library board member Charles France, who passed away on 10 November 1952. By mid-March 1953, the new library building had been accepted by city authorities; however, the final touches were delaying the opening of the building to the public, possibly until June 1953. The finishing touches not yet completed included the laying of the floors and letting of furniture contracts. The furniture contracts were the primary factor in the delay as it was required that sixty days elapse after the contracts were let. The

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 3 June 1951.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 17 July 1951 and 24 July 1951. See also "Records of the National Production Authority (NPA)," Guide to Federal Records, National Archives, <http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/277.html>, retrieved 26 September 2007.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 12 August 1951, 26 August 1951, 30 August 1951, 29 September 1951, 7 October 1951 and 21 October 1951.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 9 January 1952, 25 March 1952 and 16 August 1953.

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local newspaper quoted Mrs. Betty Lounge's, the library circulation department assistant, succinct assessment of the not yet completed interior as "It's wonderful."<sup>29</sup>

By the end of April 1953, the opening date for the library was still uncertain, although Paine's best guess still had it sometime in June. The delay was apparently related to the delivery of the main furniture. At the end of May 1953, the city council was considering whether to reject the \$71,000 worth of furniture that the Myrtle Desk Company of High Point, North Carolina had ready for delivery. The library board and the building's architects jointly prepared a report for the city council indicating how the samples failed to meet the contract specifications.<sup>30</sup>

In mid-June 1953, the library began moving into the long-awaited building. The move was anticipated to be a slow process as some of the shelves in the temporary library would have to be emptied and then moved to the new building. One department would be moved at a time. In all, fifty moving van loads of books were transferred from the temporary library to the new Main Public Library. The first floor of the building opened to the public on 6 July 1953. No plans were made for an official opening as the building in its entirety was not yet ready for public viewing. Only the office and non-service departments had received their complete new equipment. The various departments were to be opened over a period of several weeks.<sup>31</sup>

During the library's first week, "substantial numbers" of Oklahoma Cityans turned out "...to inspect and use the \$600,000, ultra-modern new main library...". Record rates of residents were signing up for borrowing privileges, as many as 150 persons a day. Only the basement and first floor were open at the time. The entire west half of the basement was devoted to the children's department and the area included a glassed-in story hour and conference room, as well as flower wells and large, outdoor, photo murals to compensate for the lack of windows. On the first floor, the control and circulation desk was located off the entry area. The adult reading room on the first floor featured "...comfortable leather lounge chairs, general information desk and patron registration." Temporarily located in the area were the general reference department, which was on the opposite side of the room from the reading area, with the business and technical departments behind that. All three of these departments were slated to be moved to the third floor.<sup>32</sup>

Reported to be a first in the nation, the new Main Public Library offered drive-up service with a window on the back of the building opening up onto the alley. Directions for use of the drive-up service consisted of "You call the library, place an order for materials, and your books will be handed to you in your automobile at a specified time." Library director Paine did note that motoring patrons were not allowed to browse as that "Would create a traffic jam." Another innovation at the library were the individual study carrels available on the second, or stack, floor of the building. There were a total of fifteen open cubicles with each providing "...ample desk space and lighting." Across from the open cubicles were eight, private, lockable, work booths which were designed for patrons working on research projects lasting a week or more. For a fee, telephone service was available in the work booths. The open cubicles were available free of charge. Also available in the stack floor were microfilm reading machines with coin typewriters to be added later. Public restrooms, a telephone booth and a first aid room were also on the second floor.<sup>33</sup>

The third floor of the building contained general offices and a smoking lounge when the building opened. The fourth floor held the community workshop offices and meeting rooms, the library's processing division and non-service department, a 285-person seating capacity auditorium, the Charles E. France room and staff restrooms, lounge and lunchroom. The Charles France Memorial Room, also known as the local history room, was a notable contrast in the otherwise "ultra-modern" building. Harkening back to the style of the original library building, the room featured "...three excellent pieces of massive, handcarved (sic) furniture..." which were obtained from the estate of esteemed Oklahoman Charles Colcord, as well as "some well-made copies of period furniture, tasteful Italian drapes and fine carpeting especially made for the room." Also in the room was "...the old grandfather clock which stood for many years in the old Carnegie library building." The idea to "...preserve in this new library something of the beauty in furnishings that has been so closely allied throughout the years to the arts and other intellectual pursuits" was credited to France. France was said to feel "...that in this present age of architecture and construction that stress efficiency and utilization, we were apt to forget the quiet beauty and formal graciousness of the past." Lining the north wall of the France Room were hand-rubbed birch shelves that were "...almost

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 21 January 1953 and 14 March 1953.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 29 April 1953 and 23 May 1953.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 10 June 1953 and 5 July 1953.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 12 July 1953.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.



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too pretty to cover with books." Each floor of the new building provided more useable space than available in the entirety of the old Carnegie Library. According to the newspaper, the only hitch in the library's move to the new facility was the "...specification trouble on new furniture."<sup>34</sup>

Trouble with the new furniture continued to delay the official opening of the library through early January 1954. In mid-September 1953, the library began staying open late one night a week. Plans had been made to keep the library open until 9 every night but cutbacks in the city budget made that infeasible. The new furniture for the building was finally ready for shipment at the end of November 1953 with the library expected to be fully-equipped by the New Year.<sup>35</sup>

Oklahoma City's Main Public Library formally opened on 10 January 1954 with an afternoon open house from 1:30 to 6 o'clock. In addition to tours through the building all afternoon, the open house featured a dedication of the Charles France Room at 2 o'clock and a building dedication at 3 o'clock in the building's new fourth floor auditorium. From 3:30 to 6 o'clock, the Friends of the Library hosted a reception. The library was proclaimed "...adequate for the present...yet designed for expansion as need arises." It was further proclaimed that the library catered "...to every member of the family, from story-book time to industry's latest technical data." In sum, the new building was deemed "Truly a library we can all be proud of."<sup>36</sup>

At the formal library dedication, James E. Webb, president of the Republic Supply Company, delivered the principal address to a crowd estimated to number 1,000 people "Despite sub-freezing weather and slippery ice-glazed streets...". In his address, Webb declared:

...the public library plays an indispensable part in this new southwest land of opportunity. Our Oklahoma City public library provides the means by which every person can develop more and more knowledge, more inner strength and more ability to co-operate. Our American democracy, with its churches, its schools and its public libraries; with its emphasis on individual freedom, responsibility and initiative; with its potential for overcoming those stubborn obstacles against which other democracies have broken and fallen, is still the brightest hope of mankind. Oklahoma, and this southwest, can become the brightest hope of America.<sup>37</sup>

With the building formally dedicated, the Main Public Library entered into fifty years of educational service to the Oklahoma City community. A variety of educational events were held at the library such as the "...new discussion series on comparative religion..." that was led by Rabbi Israel Chodos of Emanuel Synagogue beginning in February 1954. In April 1954, the library featured a series entitled "Medicine and You" which in its first meeting exceeded the seating capacity of the auditorium, causing the library to provide additional meeting rooms to accommodate the overflow crowd. At the end of May 1954, a display of "fifty fancy books" was exhibited on the third floor of the library. The selected books were identified by the American Institute of Graphic Arts in New York and represented the "...best in design, typography, editorial content, manufacture, concept and significance."<sup>38</sup>

One year after the Main Public Library first opened its doors to the public, "The lure of air conditioned reading rooms (was) bring (sic) record crowds to both the main library and the Capitol Hill branch." During the month of June 1954 alone, 22,566 books were checked out by Oklahoma Cityans at the Main Public Library. The cool air attracted non-readers of all ages as well. Assistant library director Virginia Owen reported "teen-agers (sic) with miniature chess sets seated regularly at library tables and has noticed an artist sketching in the cool of the reading room." Overall, for the fiscal year ending 30 June 1954, there was a 430 percent increase in borrowers' registration with registered patrons jumping from 9,372 to 21,613. The number of books checked out increased by 100,000, going from 220,000 loans in 1952-1953 to 320,000 for the 1953-1954 fiscal year. Undeniably, the new library building had a major impact on educational trends in Oklahoma City.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 12 July 1953, 17 August 1953 and 11 January 1954.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 22 August 1953, 23 August 1953, 15 September 1953, 17 September 1953 and 27 November 1953.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 10 January 1954.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 11 January 1954.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 1 February 1954, 18 April 1954 and 30 May 1954.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 21 July 1954.



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## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to its contribution to Oklahoma City's educational trends, the Main Public Library is architecturally significant as an excellent example of a Modern Movement style library building designed by the Oklahoma City architectural firm of Winkler and Reid. Typical of public architecture, the style of the building reflects popular taste at the time, as well as the aspirations of the city to be perceived as cutting edge. Characteristics of the Modern Movement style evident in the building include the overall lack of ornamental detail; the use of gray cast stone panels which enhances the functional character of the building; the row of first floor windows that create the impression that the above floors are floating; the use of flat concrete ledges to separate windows and floors; and the maximum usage of lot space with absolute minimal landscaping.

The Main Public Library stands out among Oklahoma City's collection of historic libraries as the seat of the entire library system. As the primary building in the system, the Main Public Library housed the myriad of activities needed to support library-related endeavors. In terms of architecture, this translated to a requirement for a larger, more complex building. With the exception of the Capitol Hill Library, none of the other libraries bear any architectural similarities to the Main Public Library. The oldest standing library building in Oklahoma City is the Wright Branch Library on Exchange Avenue which still serves in its original function for the Metropolitan Library system. The Wright Branch Library consists of small, brick, one-story building designed in the popular Classical Revival style of the 1920s. The Capitol Hill Library was constructed immediately prior to the Main Public Library and is discussed in more detail below. The Belle Isle Library was erected in 1963 just off of the new Northwest Expressway. The dramatic, circular, stone building is an excellent example of the Exaggerated Modern style. The two other branch libraries in Oklahoma City were both built in the mid-1970s and are brick, one-story buildings.

While the Capitol Hill Library was also designed by Winkler and Reid in the Modern Movement style, the two libraries exhibit several differences that readily distinguish the buildings. One of the primary differences is in the size of the buildings. The Main Public Library is a four-story building with a basement while the Capitol Hill Library is only two-stories. Another striking difference is in the exterior wall materials. The Main Public Library was constructed of a uniform gray-colored cast stone while the Capitol Hill Library featured a combination of white cast stone and orange brick. While both buildings feature rows of windows, the Main Public Library does not appear as open as the Capitol Hill Library due to its lack of windows entirely on the second floor, as well as the limits on the windows on the first and third floors of the west elevation. As with the Main Public Library, the Capitol Hill Library occupies a corner position with the building designed to fully abut an adjacent building, causing one wall to have no windows at all and two street elevations. While the patrons of the Main Public Library enjoyed the benefits of the unique drive-up window, the Capitol Hill Library patrons had use of the sun deck on the rear of the second floor. Left out of the original construction of the Capitol Hill Library was the garage on the rear of the building; however, this was added subsequently to house the library system's bookmobile. The availability of land to construct the Capitol Hill Library garage also differentiates the two buildings. The Main Public Library building itself spans nearly the entire available lot space, similar to its neighboring buildings. The Capitol Hill Library, in contrast, has a wide grassy strip with a sidewalk that wraps around from the front of the building to the west side, as well as a landscape bed along the front and part of the west elevations. Both buildings failed to provide adequate parking to support use of the libraries, possibly a reflection of the expectation that library patrons would utilize public transportation means.

The design of the Main Public Library by the firm of Winkler and Reid is also noteworthy for its association with the architects. By the time the library was constructed, both Guy C. Reid and George Winkler had well established architectural careers in Oklahoma. George Winkler, the elder partner in the firm by about twenty-four years, came to Oklahoma from Pennsylvania around 1907. Winkler received his architectural training from Curry College in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and Columbia University in New York City. Winkler worked in Tulsa for nearly twenty years before relocating to Tampa, Florida, for about four years in the late 1920s. While in Tulsa, Winkler designed the Central High School on the southeast corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Cincinnati; the Holy Family Cathedral at the southwest corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Boulder (NRIS 82003704); the Producers National Bank Building on the north side of 3<sup>rd</sup> between Main and Boulder; the Hunt Department Store Building at the southeast corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Main; the Trinity Episcopal Church on the southeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Cincinnati; and the Mayo Hotel on the northeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Boulder (NRIS 80003303). Winkler also designed several residences in Tulsa, including the Lee Clinton Residence at 1322 South Guthrie (NRIS 79002027). When Winkler moved to Oklahoma City in 1930, the firm of Winkler and Reid was possibly established. Based on research in Oklahoma City's city directories, the firm was clearly established by the mid-1930s. Winkler continued as a principal with the firm of Winkler and Reid apparently until the early 1950s when he likely retired from architectural practice. Winkler passed away at the age of 92 in April 1962. According to his obituary, Winkler,

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"...a widely known architect," was "...noted for his work in Oklahoma, Florida and Pennsylvania." Winkler's contribution to the profession included being a past president of the Oklahoma Board of Examiners of Architects and of the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>40</sup>

Guy Clifford Reid came to Oklahoma from Des Arc, Arkansas, to study at Oklahoma A & M College in Stillwater. Graduating in 1916, Reid went to work for the noted Tulsa architectural firm of Rush, Endicott and Rush according to his World War I Draft Registration Card. Reid served in the armed forces during World War I. By 1919, Reid had relocated to Oklahoma City, where he continued to practice until his death in 1962. Reid apparently operated independently during the a year or so following his move to Oklahoma City and again in the late 1920s. During the early to mid-1920s, Reid was part of the firm of Monnot and Reid which was dissolved around 1927. From at least 1935 through the early 1950s, Reid partnered with George Winkler. Following dissolution of the firm of Winkler and Reid apparently in the early 1950s, Reid operated the architectural firm of Reid and Associates. Reid passed away in November 1962 at the age of 68, seven months after Winkler's death. In his obituary, Reid is credited with the design of the Youngblood Hotel in Enid; the Ponca City Junior High School; several buildings on the Oklahoma State University (formerly Oklahoma A & M College) including Bennett Hall, the biology building and the agricultural administration building; and, many schools in the Oklahoma City area. It is unknown which of these buildings may have been designed in partnership with Winkler. Among other activities, Reid was a member of the National Council of Architects Registration Board and former state president of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to designing the Main Public Library and the Capitol Hill Library, the firm of Winkler and Reid also designed Oklahoma City University's Gold Tower. Constructed in 1954, the Gold Tower, also known as the Gold Star Memorial Building, was constructed as a memorial to United Methodists from Oklahoma who died in service to their country. The building is characterized as a "landmark that is easy to recognize in Oklahoma City." Additionally, the two architects were part of the consortium of architects that designed the Civic Center buildings in the mid-1930s. In 1939, the firm was also chosen by the State Board of Affairs as one of three firms to prepare plans for various state buildings. Winkler and Reid were to handle design of an \$80,000 ward building in Fort Supply at the Western Oklahoma Hospital and the \$80,000 ward building in Enid at the Northern Oklahoma Hospital. In the early 1940s, Winkler and Reid were part of the advisory committee of contractors, architects and fire prevention experts which undertook revision of Oklahoma City's city building code which was deemed "...antiquated by construction development since..." its adoption in the mid-1920s. It was also during this time that Winkler and Reid designed the new administration and classroom building at Southwestern Institute of Technology in Weatherford. All in all, the firm of Winkler and Reid was involved in a myriad of public projects at both the state and local levels. As such, while more remains to be learned about their contribution to Oklahoma's built environment, the firm is noteworthy in the annals of Oklahoma history and their standing work merits due consideration.<sup>42</sup>

The Main Public Library is also architecturally significant as the only standing, mid-century Modern building constructed in downtown Oklahoma City by the city of Oklahoma City. As part of their bond activities, the city constructed a variety of buildings, primarily fire stations, across the city limits. Only limited building activity occurred, however, in the downtown area. In addition to the Main Public Library, the city constructed a commodious Central Fire Station on West California Avenue during the mid-twentieth century. The Central Fire Station was also funded by the 1945 municipal bond issue. The fire station was erected in 1947-1948 and was designed by the architectural firm of Hudgins, Thompson, Ball and Associates. Similar to the Main Public Library, the Central Fire Station was to "...be the last word in modern fire-fighting equipment." The building was to "...boast tile floors, indirect lighting, cathedral-like windows, a cross-ventilated bedroom, and a library and recreation room." However, the fire station was demolished in the mid-1970s because the building was deemed obsolete. The 1970s-era Central Fire Station was moved to a different site because the site on California Avenue was to be part of phase 2 of the Myriad Gardens development, part of Oklahoma City's urban renewal plan that was not fully implemented until the late 1980s. As the only standing, mid-century Modern, municipal building in downtown Oklahoma City, the Main Public Library is significant as the best representation of city construction efforts during the mid-twentieth century.

<sup>40</sup> "Architects: George Winkler, AIA (1869-1962)," Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, <http://www.tulsaarchitecture.com/architects/winkler.shtml>, retrieved 9 April 2010. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 18 April 1962.

<sup>41</sup> The Daily Oklahoman, 23 November 1962.

<sup>42</sup> The Daily Oklahoman, 18 April 1962, 14 July 1939, 10 September 1941 and 14 January 1942. See also "Gold Star Memorial Building," Oklahoma City University: Campus Tour, <http://www.okcu.edu/tour/tour24.htm>, retrieved 9 July 2010.



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Overall, the Main Public Library contributed an iconic mid-twentieth-century public building to Oklahoma City's built environment. As desired by the library board in 1945, the building clearly conveys a functional feeling that well represented the library's purpose as an important, non-frivolous public service. As a critical element of the city's educational facilities that served residents of all ages, the library made a significant contribution to Oklahoma City's educational means and opportunity as well.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

Oklahoma City never experienced the growing pangs of other cities. From its overnight formation in April 1889, the city matured rapidly. A scant two months after the opening, the town boundaries were set at Seventh Street on the north, Walker Street to the east, Seventh Street to the south and the Santa Fe Railway on the west. The total population stood at 4,138 people, with the majority being male. By the turn-of-the century, Oklahoma City was booming with several industries, including two cotton gins, a flour mill, ice factory and three railroads: the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, present before the land opening; the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, which arrived in the city in 1895; and, the Saint Louis and San Francisco Railroad, which entered the city in 1898. The 540 percent increase in city population between 1900 and 1910, from 10,037 to 64,205, is credited largely to the railroads.<sup>43</sup>

To accommodate the persistent demand for housing, the city continuously annexed more land. Between 1907 and 1908 alone twenty-two additions were incorporated into the city, bringing with it a population of three thousands persons. By 1910, the city limits extended to Thirty-sixth Street on the north. During the 1910s, city development slowed down but in no way halted. Oklahoma City increased in population only 42 percent, rising to number 91,295 in 1920. For the most part, the working class largely resided around Third Street, while the business class lived in the vicinity of Eighth Street.<sup>44</sup>

Critical to the expansion of the residential areas away from downtown Oklahoma City was the development of public transportation means. Beginning around 1902, electric street cars provided an important source of public transportation throughout Oklahoma City. With essentially all of the electric track within Oklahoma City laid by 1916, use of Oklahoma City street cars reached their zenith in 1919, carrying a total of 17.5 million passengers. Riding of street cars fell in 1924 to just about twelve million due to increased automobile travel. In 1925, the railway company put its first buses into operation, further detracting business from the street car system. By 1930, bus service was available throughout Oklahoma City. However, street car use rose briefly again in 1930 to seventeen million but it became increasingly obvious that the future of public transportation was moving ever closer towards buses exclusively. Street car service continued in Oklahoma City until 1946, when the decision to convert to strictly a bus system forced the sale of assets related to inner-city street car lines.<sup>45</sup>

The Roaring Twenties proved to be another significant decade of growth for Oklahoma City. It was during this decade, especially the latter half, that Oklahoma City once again entered a major boom period. City population experienced a tremendous increase, growing by over a hundred percent in ten years. Although this does not equal the phenomenal 540 percent escalation of the first decade of the twentieth century, substantially the 1920s were a greater decade of growth as the population increased from 91,295 to 189,389 by 1930. While residential development continued north towards Thirty-ninth Street, the 1920s also brought disbursement of the population on an east-west basis. White collar workers continued their northward thrust, with Tenth Street functioning as the southern boundary. Blue collar workers resided primarily in the business district and southern half of Oklahoma City.<sup>46</sup>

Valuation of building permits issued in the city increased slowly from about five million dollars in 1920 to eight million dollars in 1924. Permits slumped slightly in 1925 but rebounded admirably to exceed eighteen million in 1928 and remarkably twenty-four million dollars in 1929. The increased development was credited to the city's critical locale. As stated by the 1929 president of the Chamber of Commerce, Ed Overholser, "No city is better situated with respect to

<sup>43</sup> Susan Allen and Cynthia Smelker, "Final Survey Report: Intensive-Level Survey of the Central Park, Jefferson Park and Paseo Neighborhoods in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma," (March 1994, available Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 11, 12-13.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 20.



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variety and volume of resources within its own trade territory." Companies associated with agriculture, utilities and various industries continued to locate in the Oklahoma City area, creating persistent demand for housing and services.<sup>47</sup>

Probably the greatest economic incentive during the late 1920s and 1930s was the discovery of oil in the Oklahoma City vicinity in 1924 and within the city itself in 1928. Oklahoma City benefitted greatly from its central location in the Mid-Continent Oil Field, one of the largest producers of oil in the United States in the latter 1920s and 1930s. Largely due to the presence of oil and its related industries, Oklahoma City was able to sustain growth during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The city went from a base population of 189,389 in 1930 to reach 204,224 by 1940.<sup>48</sup>

Although the oil industry and related developments bolstered city finances, Oklahoma City, of course, did not completely escape the ruthless path of the Great Depression. Due to the harsher impact of the depression on rural and small town residents, Oklahoma City experienced an inundation of new citizens seeking jobs, housing and aid. This naturally contributed to the economic burden of the city. In the early depression years, camps of substandard housing developed along the North Canadian River and destitute Oklahomans filled the soup lines. The Dust Bowls of 1935 and 1936 sent many people scurrying to the greater stability of the city, intensifying the need for affordable housing and public services.<sup>49</sup>

Oklahoma City continued to thrive through the 1940s, with the establishment of Midwest Air Depot, now Tinker Air Force Base, in 1941. The depot, located to the southeast of the city, boosted the monetary resources of Oklahoma City by creating nearly fifteen thousand civilian jobs at the depot and an additional twenty-three thousand jobs at the related Douglas Cargo Plane Plant. The Douglas Plant manufactured many cargo and other types of planes necessary for successful deployment in World War II. This new economic force allowed Oklahoma City to come out of the Great Depression with a roar. The depot has continued to perform an important role in the city finances to the present day. The depot, however, spurred residential growth in a new direction, the southeast. Midwest City, located at the depot's front gate, developed quickly between 1941 and 1943. Other residential development continued in that direction with Del City a few years later. The varied economic base developed through the first half of the twentieth century continued to fuel expansion of the city through the 1950s, so much so by 1960 the Oklahoma City population reached 324,253. While growth slowed over the ensuing decade, in 1970, 366,481 persons resided in Oklahoma City.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 20. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 6 January 1929.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 22. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 3 January 1943.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 23-24.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less Than One Acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 14 634630 3926310  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lots 27 through 30, Block 19, Oklahoma City Original, part of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 33, Township 12 North, Range 3 West.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include all of the property historically associated with the building.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian, for Judy Hatfield, owner  
organization Architectural Resources & Community Heritage Cons. date July 2010  
street & number 346 County Road 1230 telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Pocasset state OK zip code 73079  
e-mail archconsulting.savage@yahoo.com



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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Main Public Library  
County: Oklahoma  
Photographer: Cynthia Savage  
City or Vicinity: Oklahoma City  
State: Oklahoma  
Date Photographed: 8 April 2010  
Location of original digital files: 346 County Road 1230, Pocasset, OK 73079

#### Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photo #0001: Façade/South Elevation, camera facing northwest  
Photo #0002: Façade/South Elevation, camera facing northeast  
Photo #0003: Façade/South Elevation (right) and West Elevation (left), camera facing northeast  
Photo #0004: West Elevation (right) and South/Rear Elevation (left), camera facing southeast  
Photo #0005: West Elevation (right) and South/Rear Elevation (left), camera facing southeast  
Photo #0006: South/Rear Elevation First Floor, camera facing southeast  
Photo #0007: Inset Parking Area on South/Rear Elevation, camera facing southeast  
Photo #0008: Roof, camera facing southeast  
Photo #0009: Roof, camera facing northeast  
Photo #0010: Roof, camera facing northwest  
Photo #0011: Front doors from Interior First Floor Lobby, camera facing south  
Photo #0012: Charles France Local History Room, Fourth Floor interior, camera facing southeast

All of the photographs were printed on an Epson Stylus R2400 printer, using Epson Ultrachrome K3 ink and Premium Presentation Paper Matte. The digital images were taken in RAW format and converted to TIFF.

### Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Carnegie Centre, c/o Judy Hatfield  
street & number 701 Wall Street/PO Box 1763 telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city Norman state OK zip code 73069/73070-1763

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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"Downtown Library"

Main Public Library  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Image taken by Jacoby's Photo Service, c. 1954

Image available from "Oklahoma Images," Metropolitan Library System,  
<http://webinfo2.mls.lib.ok.us/okimages/okimages.asp?WCI=ViewImage&WCU=000000669>,  
retrieved 20 July 2010.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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"Auto Library at Rear of Downtown Library"

Main Public Library  
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Image taken by Jacoby's Photo Service, c. 1954

Image available from "Oklahoma Images," Metropolitan Library System,  
<http://webinfo2.mls.lib.ok.us/okimages/okimages.asp?WCI=ViewImage&WCU=000000670>,  
retrieved 20 July 2010.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Main Public Library  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OKLAHOMA, Oklahoma

DATE RECEIVED: 10/26/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/30/10  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/15/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/11/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10001009

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12-13-10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0001



OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0002





OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0003



OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0004



OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0005





OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0006



OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0007















OK\_OklahomaCounty\_OklahomaCity\_MainPublicLibrary\_0012

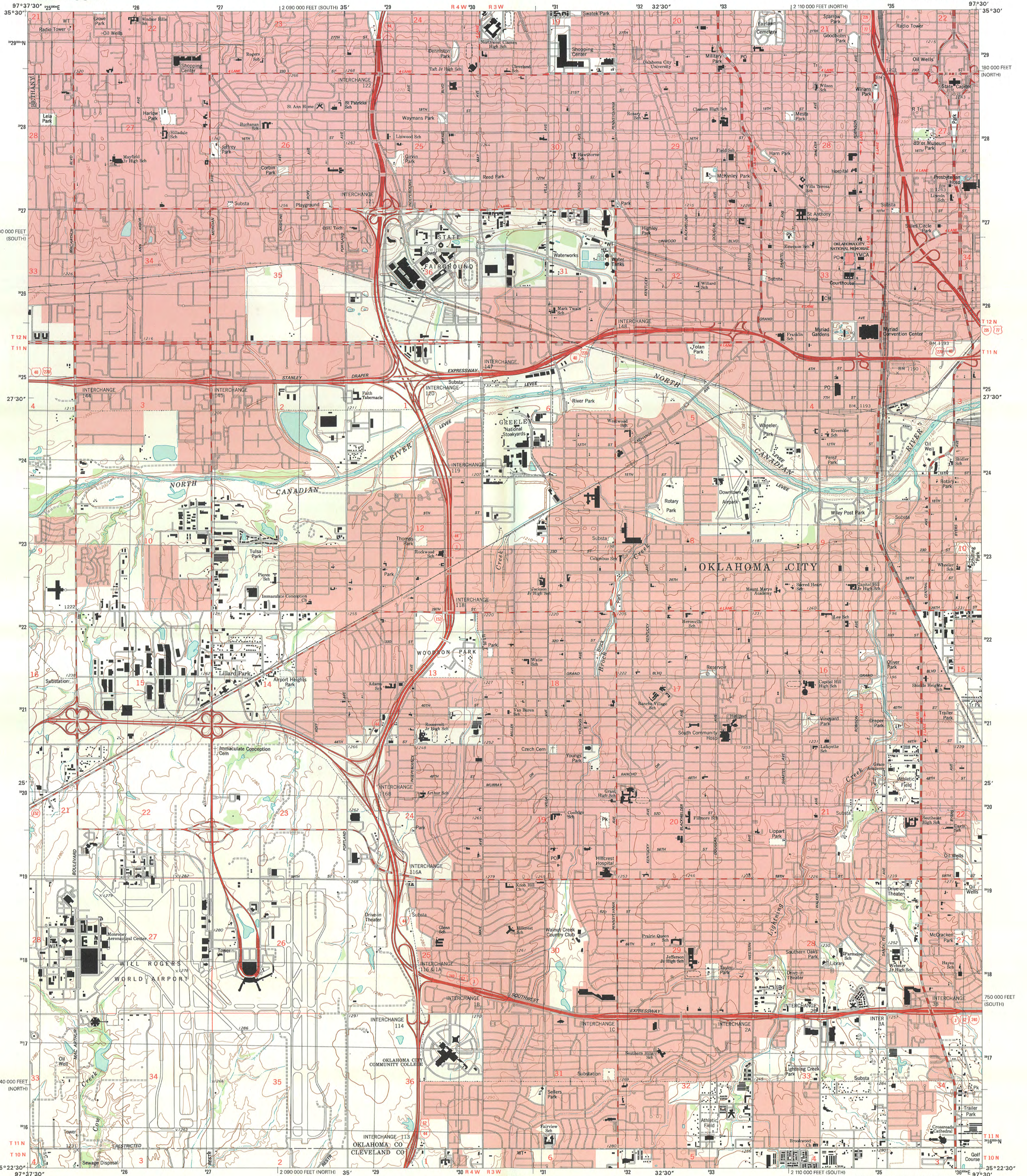




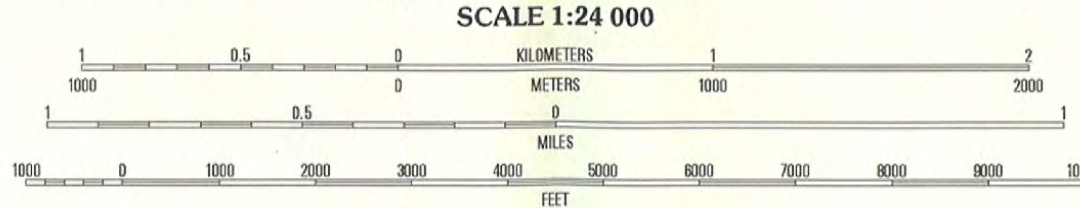
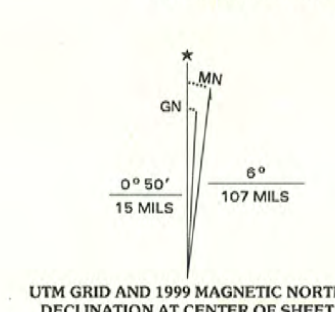
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Main Public Library  
Oklahoma City  
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma  
14-634630-392630

OKLAHOMA CITY QUADRANGLE  
OKLAHOMA  
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

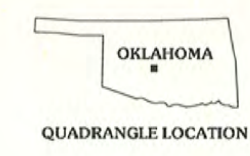


Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Topography compiled 1954. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1955 and other sources. Public Land Survey System and survey control current as of 1985.  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 14 10 000-foot ticks: Oklahoma Coordinate System of 1983 (north and south zones).  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.  
Landmark buildings verified 1985.



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225  
AND OKLAHOMA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, NORMAN, OKLAHOMA 73069  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway  
hard surface .....  
Secondary highway  
hard surface .....  
Light-duty road, hard or  
improved surface .....  
Unimproved road .....  
Interstate Route  
U.S. Route  
State Route

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK  
1995

NIMA 6454 1 NE-SERIES V883







**Oklahoma Historical Society**  
**State Historic Preservation Office**

*Founded May 27, 1893*

Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917  
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • [www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm](http://www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm)



October 25, 2010

Ms. Carol Shull  
Acting Keeper of the Register  
National Park Service 2280, 8th floor  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW  
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

We are pleased to transmit nine National Register of Historic Places nominations for Oklahoma properties. The nominations are for the following properties:

KATY Historic District, Tulsa, Tulsa County  
North Cheyenne Historic District, Tulsa, Tulsa County  
Oil Capital Historic District, Tulsa, Tulsa County  
Downtown Ponca City Historic District, Ponca City, Kay County  
Main Public Library, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County  
Eastern Oklahoma Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Talihina vicinity, Latimer County  
Archeological Site 34LV181, Love County  
Archeological Site 34LV184, Love County  
Archeological Site 34JF109, Jefferson County

We look forward to the results of your review. If there may be any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Lynda B. Schwan of my staff or myself.

Sincerely,

Melvena Heisch  
Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer

MKH:lbs

Enclosures