

PH# 366404

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED NOV 11 1976  
DATE ENTERED APR 13 1977

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

### 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Nelson, Knute, House

AND/OR COMMON

Knute Nelson Memorial Home

### LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

420 12th Avenue Southeast

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Seventh

STATE

Minnesota

CODE

27

COUNTY

Douglas

CODE

041

### CLASSIFICATION

#### CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

#### OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

#### STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

#### PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER Home for Aged
- MILITARY

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Knute Nelson Memorial Home Corporation

STREET & NUMBER

420 12th Avenue Southeast

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

VICINITY OF

STATE

Minnesota

### LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Douglas County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

STATE

Minnesota

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Minnesota Historical Society - Building 25, Fort Snelling

CITY, TOWN

Saint Paul

STATE

Minnesota

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT                       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                               RUINS  
 FAIR                                 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Knute Nelson House is located in a grove of trees on the northeastern fringe of the Knute Nelson Memorial Home Complex in Alexandria, Douglas County.

The Knute Nelson House is a simple two and one half story wood frame building executed on a cruciform plan. The house has a steep gabled roof and is three bays wide. Italianate decorative features include the window surrounds and porch brackets and columns. Gothic features include the steep pitched roof and window proportions which emphasize verticality.

The original house, built in 1872, formed an L and is visible today as the central projecting bay on the front facade and the one story wing to the east. The second story and attic on the east wing and the entire west wing were added in 1915. Three exterior wood fire escapes on the east and north sides of the house were added in 1948 when the house was first utilized as a retirement home for the aged.

The interior of the house was remodeled in the 1940s to provide facilities to care for the aged. The first floor contains a large kitchen, public rooms, baths, and two bedrooms. The second floor contains seven bedrooms and three baths distributed off of a central hallway. The remodeling did not alter the basic floor plan of the house but did involve covering the original wooden floors with linoleum. The original woodwork and many of the interior Italianate features are intact.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION	Historic figure	

SPECIFIC DATES 1872 - present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT 1917 remodeling - A.F. Gauger

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Knute Nelson House is significant due to its association with the "Grand Old Man of Minnesota". The house served as Knute Nelson's residence throughout his over fifty years of public service. In 1871 Nelson entered a U.S. homestead of 120 acres adjoining the Village of Alexandria. Upon his death in 1923 the house and surrounding acreage were willed to the American Lutheran Church for service to the aged.

Knute Nelson, a Norwegian immigrant, settled on this property after serving in the Civil War with Company B, Fourth Wisconsin Volunteers, being admitted to the bar, and serving two years in the Wisconsin Assembly. From 1872 to 1875 he served as county attorney of Douglas County. Nelson served as a member of the state Senate from 1875 to 1879. In 1880 he was a presidential elector on the Garfield ticket, and a member of the board of regents of the University of Minnesota from 1882 to 1893. He was elected as a representative to Congress in 1882 and served three terms, when he declined reelection. He then resumed the practice of law in Alexandria. In 1892 he was unanimously nominated as the Republican candidate for Governor of Minnesota and was elected by a plurality of over 14,000. A renomination and reelection by a plurality of 60,000 followed in 1894. Soon after his reelection as Governor he was elected to the U.S. Senate by the Minnesota Legislature in 1895, to which position he was reelected in 1901, 1907, 1913, and 1919.

Nelson was the first Scandinavian elected to the U.S. Congress. During his years in the Congress Nelson served on many important committees including the Committee on Indian Affairs, the Committee on Commerce, the Pension Committee, Committee on Public Lands, and the Committee on Agriculture. Nelson is credited with the passage of a number of important bills. The Bankruptcy Act of 1898, often referred to as the "Nelson Cure", was drafted, sponsored on the floor of the Senate, and steered through both houses by Nelson. Another important act, drafted, introduced, sponsored, and piloted through Congress by Senator Nelson, was the law creating the Department of Commerce and Labor. Senator Nelson endorsed a federal income tax and was active in securing the passage of a constitutional amendment authorizing Congress to impose such an act. Senator Nelson took a lively interest in pure food and meat inspection legislation, and was one of the most active in securing other progressive laws urged by President Theodore Roosevelt.

A great deal of legislation which benefitted the state of Minnesota was introduced and steered through Congress by Senator Nelson. Among this legislation was a bill granting to Minnesota lands for a state sanitarium site near Leech Lake, various bills appropriating money for public buildings, and for rebuilding the reservoirs of the Upper Mississippi. Senator Nelson showed his interest in conservation and reclamation by his act of 1904 authorizing the state of Minnesota to select and acquire 20,000 acres of public land for forestry purposes.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Borjan, George Rudolph, The Success Story of an Immigrant, Minneapolis: 1967.  
 Memorial Addresses Delivered in the U.S. Senate in Memory of Knute Nelson, Washington D.C.: 1925  
 Gieske, Millard L., The Politics of Knute Nelson: 1912-1920, Minneapolis: 1965  
 Odland, Martin W., The Life of Knute Nelson, Minneapolis: 1926

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

316-030

A	1,5	317970	5,08,30,2,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Lynne VanBrocklin - State Historic Preservation Office

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Minnesota Historical Society

28 August 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Building 25, Fort Snelling

612-726-1171

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

St. Paul

Minnesota

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE X LOCAL     

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Russell W. Fridley*

TITLE Russell W. Fridley  
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 10/27/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF *[Signature]*  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 4/13/90

ATTEST: *[Signature]*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3-18-77

1/25/88

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

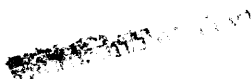
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

---

Nelson, Knute, House  
Douglas County, MINNESOTA

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Keeper Beth Boland 3/1/88

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Knute Nelson House, Alexandria, Minnesota

Section number 10 Page 1

RECEIVED

JAN 25 1988

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

As per CFR 60. 15 (3) the information is as follows:

DATE OF MOVE: 2 October 1986

ACERAGE: 1.12 acres

NEW VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: That part of the southwest quarter of section 20, Township 128 North, Range 37 West; Douglas County, Minnesota described as follows: Beginning at the southeast corner of Lot Nine, Block Four, Olson's Addition to Alexandria according to the recorded plat thereof: thence on a record bearing of south along the west right-of-way of the Soo Line Railroad a distance of 376.54 feet, thence west 130.00 feet to the east right-of-way to Nokomis Street, thence north along said east right-of-way 376.05 feet to the southwest corner of said Lot Nine, thence north 89 degrees 47 minutes east 130.00 feet to the point of beginning.

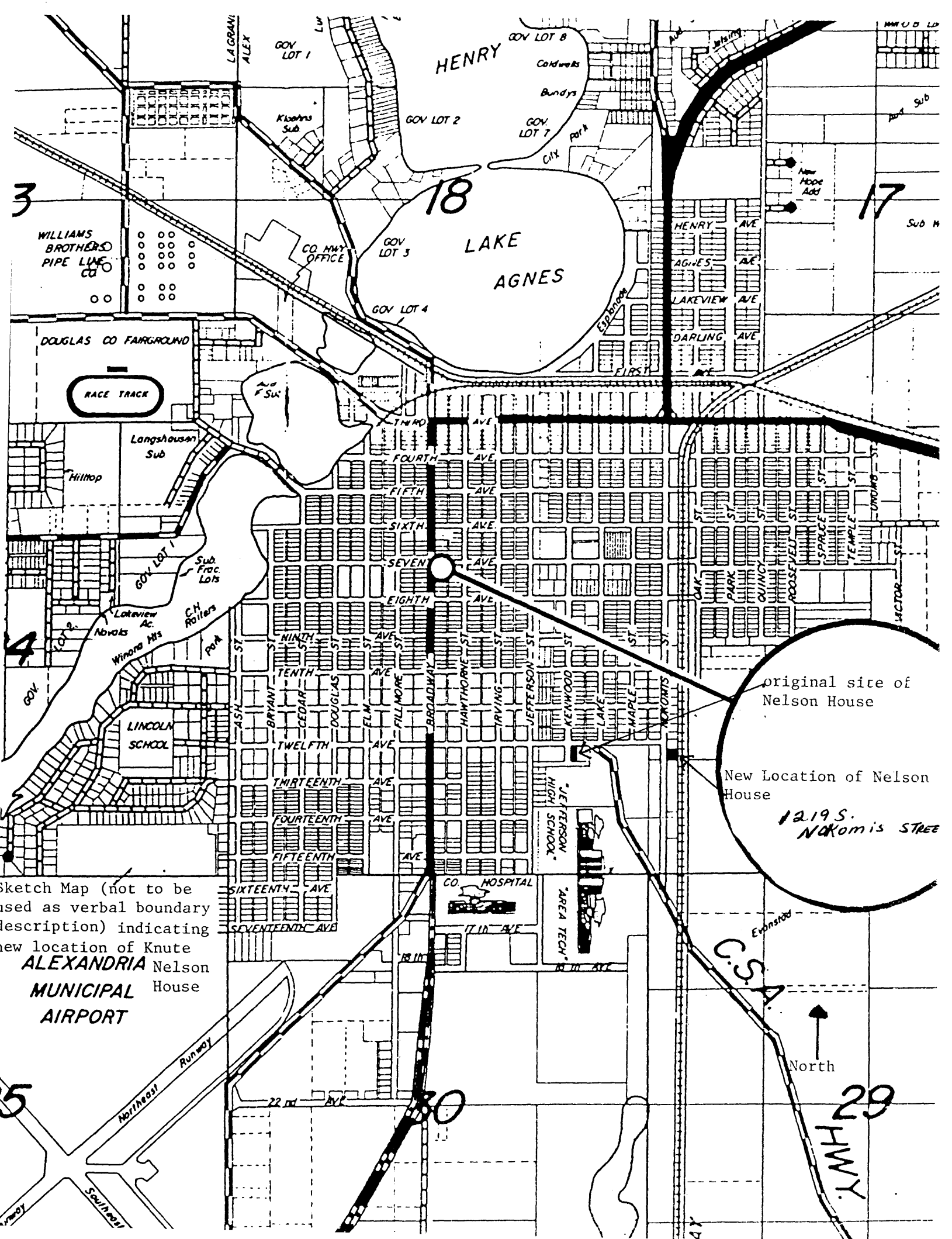
UTM REFERENCES: Zone: 15  
Easting: 316380  
Northing: 5083040  
QUAD: Alexandria East, Minn.  
SCALE: 1:24,000

*Nina M. Archabal*

Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer

*1/14/88*

Date



3

18

17

4

19  
HWY. 29

WILLIAMS BROTHERS PIPE LINE CO

HENRY

LAKE AGNES

HENRY AVE  
AGNES AVE  
LAKEVIEW AVE  
DARLING AVE  
FIRST AVE

DOUGLAS CO FAIRGROUND

RACE TRACK

Langshousen Sub

LINCOLN SCHOOL

CO. HOSPITAL

AREA TECH

original site of Nelson House

New Location of Nelson House

1219 S. NOKOMIS STREET

Sketch Map (not to be used as verbal boundary description) indicating new location of Knute ALEXANDRIA Nelson House MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

North

Northwest Runway  
Southeast Runway

5

LAGRANI ALEX

GOV LOT 1

GOV LOT 2

GOV LOT 8

GOV LOT 7

GOV LOT 3

GOV LOT 4

GOV LOT 1

GOV

SIXTEENTH AVE

SEVENTEENTH AVE

22nd AVE

THIRD AVE

FOURTH AVE

FIFTH AVE

SIXTH AVE

SEVENTH AVE

EIGHTH AVE

NINTH ST

TENTH ST

ELM ST

FILLMORE ST

BROADWAY

HAWTHORNE ST

TRVING ST

JEFFERSON ST

KENWOOD ST

LAKE ST

MAPLE ST

NOKOMIS ST

EVANSTON ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

SEVENTEENTH ST

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

LA

HWY 29

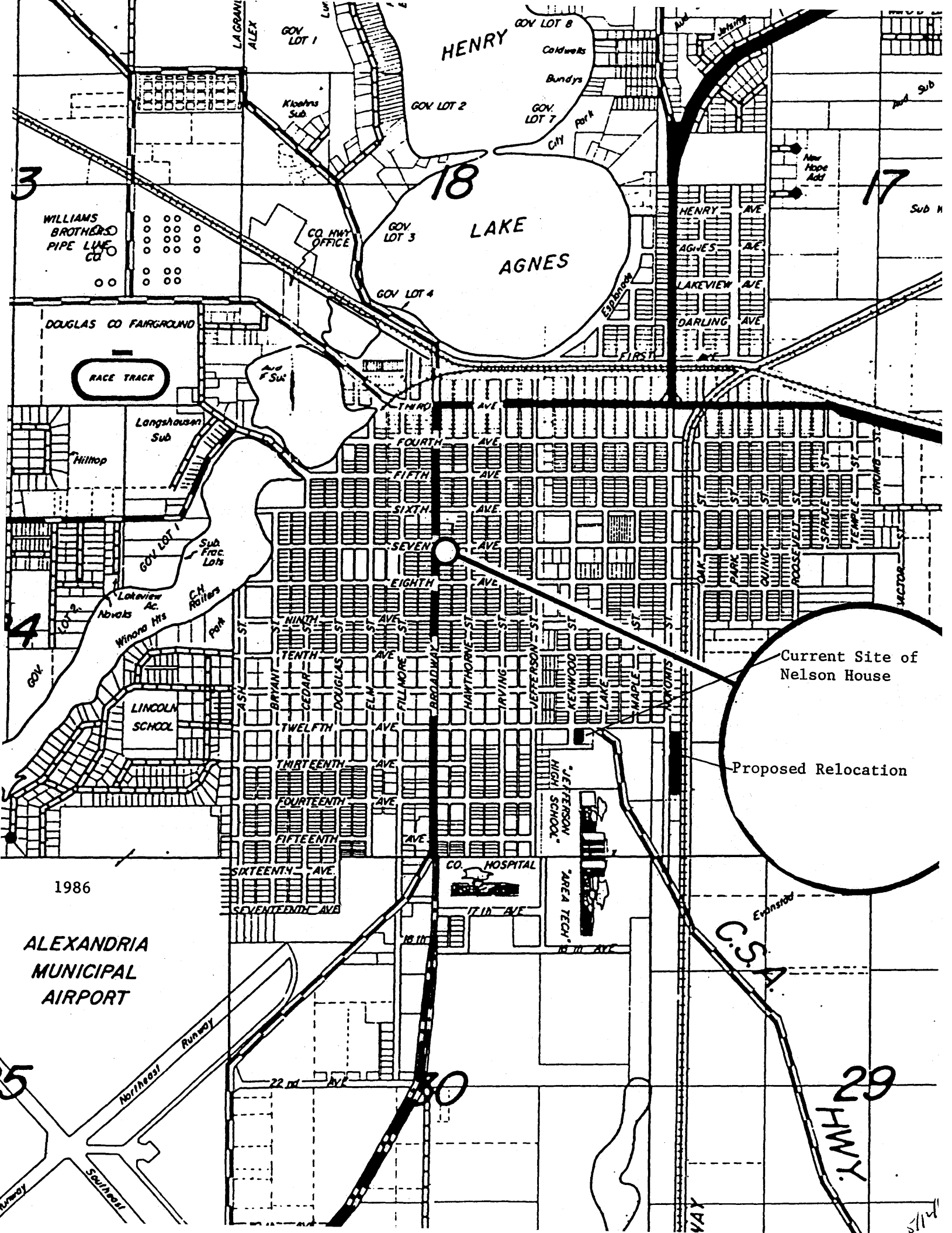
Sub

Sub M

SECTOR

Evans

LA



WILLIAMS BROTHERS PIPE LINE CO.

DOUGLAS CO FAIRGROUND  
RACE TRACK

Langshousan Sub  
Hilltop

GOV LOT 1  
Sub Frac Lots  
Lakeview Ac.  
Winona Hts  
C.H. Rollers Park

LINCOLN SCHOOL

THIRTEENTH AVE  
FOURTEENTH AVE  
FIFTEENTH AVE  
SIXTEENTH AVE  
SEVENTEENTH AVE

1986

ALEXANDRIA MUNICIPAL AIRPORT  
Runway  
Northeast  
Southwest

22nd AVE

20

HENRY

GOV LOT 8  
Coldwells  
Burdys  
GOV LOT 7  
Park  
City

GOV LOT 2

18

LAKE AGNES

GOV LOT 3  
GOV LOT 4

CO. HWY OFFICE

THIRD AVE  
FOURTH AVE  
FIFTH AVE  
SIXTH AVE  
SEVENTH AVE  
EIGHTH AVE

GOV LOT 1  
GOV LOT 2  
GOV LOT 3  
GOV LOT 4

NINTH AVE  
TENTH AVE  
ELEVENTH AVE  
TWELFTH AVE  
THIRTEENTH AVE  
FOURTEENTH AVE  
FIFTEENTH AVE  
SIXTEENTH AVE  
SEVENTEENTH AVE

CO. HOSPITAL

JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL  
AREA TECH

17th AVE  
18th AVE

20

GOV LOT 8  
Coldwells  
Burdys  
GOV LOT 7  
Park  
City

HENRY AVE  
MAGUIRES AVE  
LAKEVIEW AVE  
DARLING AVE  
FIRST AVE

17

NEW HOPE ADD

EDMUND

THIRD AVE  
FOURTH AVE  
FIFTH AVE  
SIXTH AVE  
SEVENTH AVE  
EIGHTH AVE

GOV LOT 1  
GOV LOT 2  
GOV LOT 3  
GOV LOT 4

NINTH AVE  
TENTH AVE  
ELEVENTH AVE  
TWELFTH AVE  
THIRTEENTH AVE  
FOURTEENTH AVE  
FIFTEENTH AVE  
SIXTEENTH AVE  
SEVENTEENTH AVE

JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL  
AREA TECH

17th AVE  
18th AVE

20

Current Site of Nelson House

Proposed Relocation

Edmond

C.S.A.

29

29

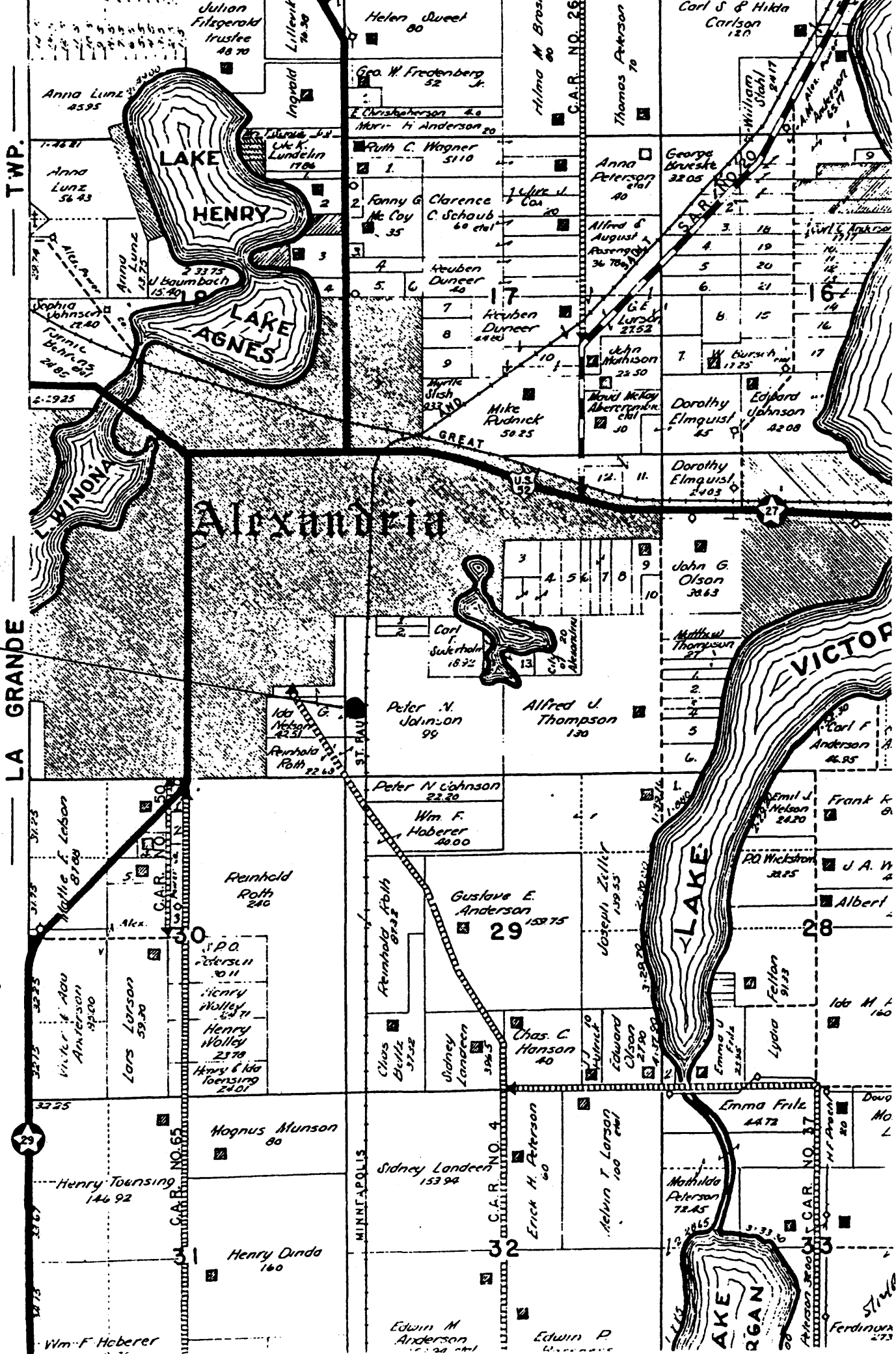
29

29

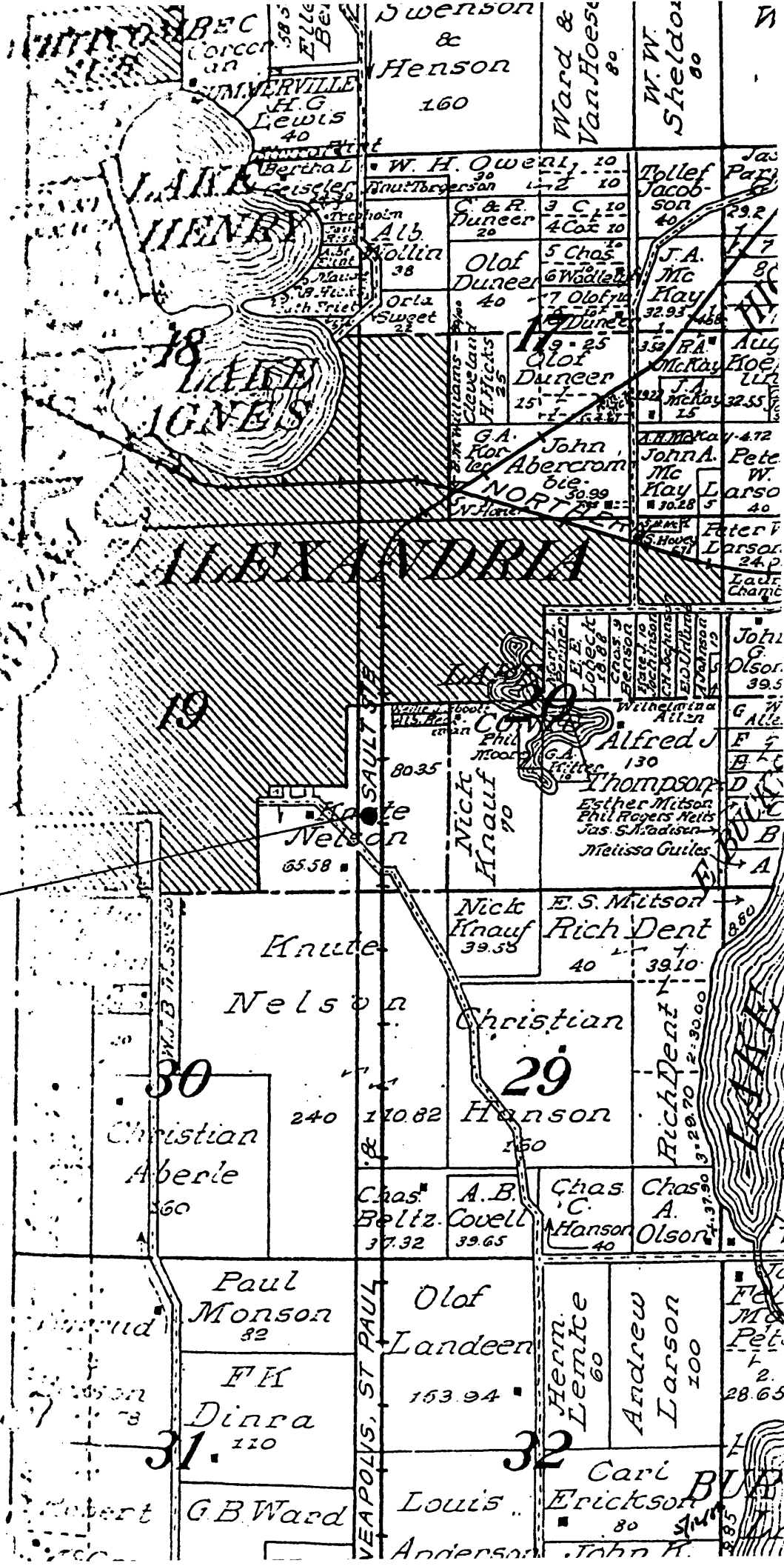
29



Proposed Site



Proposed Site





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Note: These changes apply to  
Nelson, Knute, House in Douglas  
County, Minnesota.**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** 77000729

**STATE:** MINNESOTA

**COUNTY:** Douglas

**RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):**

**CITY:**

**VICINITY OF:**

**ADDRESS:** 1219 S. Nokomis St.

**CERTIFICATION DATE:**

**REMOVED DATE:**

**COMMENTS:** The property was recently relocated.  
The move was approved by the Keeper.

*Nina M. Archabal*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Nina M. Archabal**  
**State Historic Preservation Officer**

**JUN 17 1988**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**