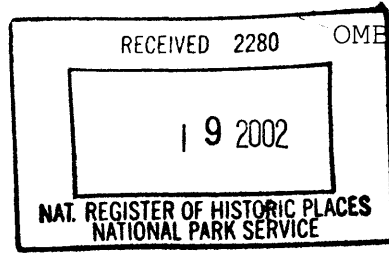


MAR 01 2002

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)



426

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Mason City YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 15 N. Pennsylvania not for publication  
city or town Mason City vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Iowa code IA county Cerro Gordo code 33 zip code 50401

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide X locally.  
( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Howell G. Sork*

*March 5, 2002*

Signature of certifying official

Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau





Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

       Social History         
       Entertainment/Recreation       

Period of Significance        1926-1952       

Significant Dates        1926       

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)        McNider, Charles H.  
       MacNider, Hanford

Cultural Affiliation        N/A       

Architect/Builder        Tyrie and Chapman Architects, Minneapolis Minnesota       

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====  
**9. Major Bibliographical References**  
=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 #

Primary Location of Additional Data

- X   State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- X   Other

Name of repository:        Mason City Public Library, 225 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SE, Mason City, Iowa, 50401

=====  
**10. Geographical Data**  
=====

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	483960	4777540	3	---	---
2	---	---	---	4	---	---

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
**11. Form Prepared By**  
=====

name/title Cheryl Carlson, Marketing Representative

organization Henkel Construction Company date August 9, 2001

street & number 208 East State Street telephone 641-423-5674

city or town Mason City state IA zip code 50401  
=====

**Additional Documentation**  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

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

name Mason City YMCA, Executive Director, Mike Gulick

street & number 1840 S. Monroe telephone 641-422-5999

city or town Mason City state IA zip code 50401

=====  
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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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**Physical Description**

The Mason City YMCA is a four story, rectangular brick building designed in Colonial Revival style and completed in 1926. Designed by Minneapolis architects, Tyrie and Chapman, this building, located just a couple of blocks from the center of Mason City, was constructed of red brick and accented with limestone reinforcing the appearance of symmetry. Windows on all four floors, a central entrance on the primary façade, limestone accents, twin roof pediments, and twin chimneys complete the symmetrical design. The perfect constellation of windows on the primary façade was slightly changed after the plans were detailed in order to allow for the main interior staircase.

**Exterior**

While the building was designed as a utilitarian facility, the building's use of Bedford limestone to accent the red brick Flemish bond exterior created an overall decorative effect. For example, limestone was used as the first course on the exterior. The stone was tapered from north to south to level out the elevation with the street as the ground floor is only partially sunk into the ground. Limestone was also used around the main entrance with a large split pediment with accent modillion blocks. At the top of this pediment is a vase that once held a glass flame and later a triangle signifying the YMCA's motto "Spirit, Mind, Body." The words "Young Men's Christian Association" remain engraved in a Roman style lettering with large serifs over the door. The stone around the entrance was stepped back slightly and provided some relief to the primarily two-dimensional façade. Stone was also used at the windowsills, below all of the divided light windows, and arched above the seven large windows on the west elevation. A wide band of stone across the north, west and south elevations was placed under the row of large windows on the first floor and third floor windows. Most of the building's façade is devoid of three-dimensional relief.

The variations in the scale of windows and accompanying decoration are also important features. Each of the seven large windows on the west elevation has an iron grille with a rose design in the center reminiscent of the rose windows in classic architecture. With exception to the large windows, a soldier course of brick was used over all of the windows, where a rowlock course followed the arched stone. The third floor windows are separated by textured plaster and accented by brick. From the street, the accent brick looks like shutters.

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The sloped roof was originally constructed of green tile. The lower roof over the swimming pool was flat with large skylights. This roof was commonly used by the residents for sunbathing. The original gymnasium had an arched roof similar to roofs built in armory buildings in the 1900's.

Few exterior changes have been made to this building. The metal doors which once greeted members on the primary façade have been replaced, an entrance on the north elevation was removed, and a gymnasium and racquetball courts were added. The last change is not visible from the primary façade but is apparent from the East elevation.

**Interior**

The interior features many elements original to its construction. Inside the main entrance is a large foyer with the main staircase to the right. Through the foyer is another door that leads into the ground floor. The ground floor included a large room for meetings and banquets, a kitchen, restrooms, classrooms, meeting room for boys and high schoolers, and the structure and mechanics of the pool on first floor. The boys' meeting room has an ashlar cut stone and brick fireplace designed to be reminiscent of a campground setting. There is a terrazzo staircase leading up to the first floor just inside the foyer. Next to these stairs there is a Kimball Brothers dumbwaiter that serves the four levels of the building. This dumbwaiter is still functional and was in use until October 2000. (Note that the street level floor is called the ground floor. The stairs lead to the next floor, referred to as the first floor.)

The main staircase has marble treads, wrought iron balustrades and wood handrail. The landings are inlaid with terrazzo. The main stair leads up to the first floor with the men's lounge on the right. The lounge is the most detailed room in the entire building. Three keystone arches on square Tuscan columns with a simple capital and marble-accented bases were open on the north end of the room. A fireplace with a bookcase and window on either side rests on the south end of the large room. The cornice around the ceiling and beams is an egg and dart pattern. A decorative chair rail molding surrounds the room. The lounge and the men's game room next to it were a popular place for the men to socialize. When the use of the room changed with the need for additional office space, the arches were filled in with drywall but the rest of the room remains in near original condition.

On the other side of the main stair is the registration desk. The desk originally had a burgundy marble top with the same chair rail molding used in



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the lounge. At one point the marble top and chair rail were removed but the original mailbox cupboard and dormitory room call system remained functional as of October 2000.

A large doorway led into the boy's section of the building. The boy's lounge and game room had their own marble-topped registration desk and egg and dart patterned cornice. On the north wall of the boy's lounge is a fireplace that has been bricked in and two large storage cupboards. These two rooms have undergone the most remodeling in the building. When the rooms were made into a women's health center, the boy's registration desk was removed, and interior walls were changed. Much of the egg and dart patterned cornice has been damaged.

The pool on the first floor remains with very few changes. The tile wainscot includes a checkerboard pattern of mosaic tile with six colors. The boy's locker room, however, was remodeled as part of the women's health center.

The second floor had 34 dormitory rooms, three of which were double occupancy rooms. The single rooms measured approximately 7'-6" x 17' and included a small closet. There was a large bathroom, shower room, linen closet and trunk room. The shower and bathroom were remodeled with new fixtures in 1948. In the 1980's, eight of the dormitory rooms in the east wing were altered to provide a large aerobic exercise room. While the building was designed and constructed to house dormitory residents, the third floor was not finished until the early 1950's. As part of the fundraising efforts for the construction project, Cecil Frisk, Manager of the Mason City Brick and Tile Company, agreed to donate all of the clay needed for the interior walls. This perforated clay tile has never been painted and remains intact today.

When the building was built in 1926, the attached gymnasium had an open truss arched roof. Originally, the gymnasium was only as high as the roof over the pool. To suit new programs, the YMCA needed a new gymnasium. The north elevation of the building still shows the outline of the original gymnasium. An additional 14 feet was added to the east of the existing building to house the six new racquetball courts and larger gymnasium. Other minor changes have been made to the interior to accommodate the growth and changes in YMCA programming.

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**Significance**

The Mason City YMCA Building is locally significant for its association with events and their contributions to broad patterns of social history in Mason City, Iowa. Furthermore, this Colonial Revival building is associated with the ordinary lives and events of a small community as well as with the strong, public-minded business leaders who made significant contributions to Iowa as well as to their hometown. In short, the Mason City YMCA Building meets Criterion A as a property representing a significant piece of the social fabric of an Iowa community and by contributing to patterns of this community's history; and meets Criterion B for its association with Charles H. McNider and Hanford MacNider, two public spirited individuals who not only influenced the growth and development of Mason City but the State of Iowa as well.

**Criterion A**

A small north Iowa town on the edge of the midwestern prairie did not seem like a likely location for an industrial boom, rapid growth and an accumulation of wealth. But in fact, that is exactly what happened to Mason City at the turn of the century. In the 1880's the first brick and tile works was founded on the edge of town. When geological surveys revealed large deposits of blue and yellow clay, the brick industry exploded. By the 1890's, there were four such brick and tile industries crowning Mason City as the single largest producer of brick and tile in the world. Similarly, large deposits of limestone and plenty of water spurred the development of large cement companies. One such company was Northwestern States Portland Cement Company, which was founded in 1905 and continued through much of the twentieth century. These important industries were followed by a large meat packing plant, a forerunner to Armour. Mason City even manufactured Colby Automobiles and boasted that five railroad lines crossed through its city limits by 1904.

A population explosion followed Mason City's economic success. According to the city directories, in 1900 the unofficial count reported 8,600 people living in Mason City. By 1920, 26,720 were reported in the Mason City community. Furthermore, these new citizens acquired wealth and reinvested back into their community. In fact, the business leaders responsible for the construction of the YMCA and for the YMCA's influence as an organization were also the entrepreneurs who assured the development of banking, manufacturing, meat packing, railroads, newspapers and education in Mason City and northern Iowa.

At the same time that Iowa's prairie was being transformed by business and industry, farmsteads and small towns, an organization was founded in England to

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save men from the "wicked life of the London streets." It was called the Young Men's Christian Association and by the late nineteenth century, YMCA organizations soon began to develop across the United States.

In 1892, Mason City leaders gathered in local attorney J.J. Clark's office to establish Mason City's YMCA. By 1904 the Board shared plans from a Chicago architect to build a three story brick building. However, without funds, hope of construction soon vanished. The first rooms that would be used for the Mason City YMCA were over Yakishes' Boot and Shoe Store, on South Federal Avenue, that the Association rented for \$17 per month. In 1895, the group moved its headquarters to the I.O.O.F. Building located at 12 E. State Street.

The next revival of the construction plans for the YMCA building was led by the women's auxiliary and Mrs. C.H. Barber. The women's organization had been formed in February 1895 when the YMCA President, J.J. Clark, was instructed to "appoint" a women's auxiliary. According to a December 2, 1906 Globe Gazette article, "the prospects for a YMCA building were never brighter in the history of the Association." Purchase of a lot from the Presbyterian Church took place on January 7, 1907 for \$3,500. This lot was then traded to St. John's Episcopal Church for the present site on the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE and Pennsylvania Avenue. In the early 1900's, the Y's offices were located in the K.P. Building on North Washington Avenue.

Mason City then entered a period of rapid growth. The Mason City Brick and Tile Company and Decker's meat packing plant were expanding and two cement plants, Northwestern States and Lehigh Portland Cement Companies, were built. By 1910, the population was 11,230 and would more than double in the next decade. Unfortunately, the YMCA did not experience the same growth. In fact, this period was later referred to as the "dark years"- so devoid of activity that no records were kept. By January of 1916, the board agreed to discontinue the offices in the K.P. Building and store the furniture. There was even some discussion of selling the lot.

Then the United States entered World War I. All YMCA organizations were required to raise money for the Army. Mason City's quota was \$25,000; and a well-regarded community leader and the first treasurer of the YMCA was selected to lead the campaign, Charles McNider. Thanks to the enthusiasm for this effort, McNider's leadership and a new YMCA Executive Director recruited from Wisconsin, a capital campaign for a YMCA building was also successful.

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By November of 1924, \$300,000 was raised with 3,000 persons signing pledges. McNider, himself, pledged \$27,500. Fred Hanson, State YMCA secretary announced that Mason City had surpassed the highest mark set in the Iowa YMCA campaign work. Financial Service Secretary of the International YMCA, R. L. Vail, went on to say that only three other cities in the Middle West within the last three years had subscribed more money for a YMCA. By late 1924, Mason City was poised to build a YMCA facility. On November 7, 1924 McNider reported to the Globe Gazette, "we feel that this location will make this part of the city a civic center. We have gone into this with a great deal of care, looking not only to today but also to the future. This must be a building that will do for Mason City a large number of years." (Globe Gazette, November 7, 1924).

The building committee was then formed consisting of McNider, B.C. Keller, W.L. Patton, Frank J. Hanlon, W.F. Muse, W.E. Brice and Jay Decker. Tyrie and Chapman, architects from Minneapolis, Minnesota were chosen to design the new facility. The structure was to have three stories with a ground floor that would be at street level because of the elevation of bedrock. The building was to be of fireproof construction and include a 60 by 90 foot gymnasium, a 34 by 74 foot natatorium with a 20 by 60 foot swimming pool. The ground floor would include a dining room to seat 300, classrooms, offices and women's restroom. The first floor would include locker rooms, showers and offices while the second and third floors would be used for dormitory rooms. (Note that this was constructed as a four-story building but all records refer to the first floor as the ground floor.)

On February 15, 1926, the contracts were let for the construction of the building. Madsen Construction Company of Minneapolis was awarded the general construction contract for \$163,000. The plumbing and heating contract was given to P.J. Gallagher of Faribault, Minnesota at a value of \$33,000. The electrical contract was awarded to Twin City Electric of St. Paul, Minnesota for \$4,170. The day of the letting, the building committee sat with William Tyrie and Mr. Odlin of Tyrie and Chapman and representatives from Pillsbury Engineering, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and discussed items that could be eliminated from the project without damage. One of these cost savings items was to not finish the third floor until there was a demand for the additional dormitory rooms. Extra equipment for the building would cost \$6,043.67.

Ground was broken in April of 1926. It was the desire of the building committee to include as many local products as possible. Northwestern States Portland Cement was exclusively used. Mason City Brick and Tile Company's

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Denison Load Bearing Tile was used for all load-bearing walls. Local contractor, George Peterson and Son, was chosen to do the excavation and sitework. Mica Insulating Company of Mason City supplied the roofing materials. Madsen also agreed to hire local labor.

Late in 1926 the YMCA building was completed. However, Chairman McNider refused to turn the building over until all of the pledges were converted into cash. For nearly a year, this new building sat empty while the remaining pledges were collected. Board member William Hathorn said, "Thanks to the kindly but firm insistence of Mr. McNider, [the building committee] is able to fulfill its pledge to the people of Mason City, that the building and equipment would be turned over to the association free of debt."

There are several extraordinary persons and events connected to this 1920's building. The Mason City community attracted media attention as the site for a string of bank robberies in the 1930's. On March 13, 1934, John Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson, John Hamilton and Tommy Carroll robbed the First National Bank, owned by McNider, and left town with \$52,000. A local legend is that two of Dillinger's gang stayed at the Mason City YMCA two weeks earlier in order to "case the job."

After Jesse Owens captured four gold medals for the United States in the 1936 Olympics, he organized and starred in a basketball exhibition held at the Mason City YMCA. Spectators drove to Mason City from miles around to attend this well-publicized event in 1937.

Just as Charles McNider had envisioned, the YMCA building served the community for almost eight decades, and with few changes, this four-story brick building contributed significantly to community life until 2000. As the Globe Gazette proudly announced in 1958, "Mason City is the center of activity for North Iowa- just as the YMCA is the hub of spirit in this city." (Globe Gazette, January, 27, 1958)

For almost a century, the Mason City YMCA contributed to the social, recreational and philanthropic life of this north Iowa town. From basketball tournaments, to softball leagues, to swim meets, free movies, and variety shows, the building was the center of community life for all ages. The Globe Gazette reported the weekly results of "free learn to swim" campaigns, father/son meetings, free hair cuts for "worthy" boys by local barbers and foreman training

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for industrial workers during World War II. There were bridge tournaments, cribbage competitions and holiday banquets. From coffee groups to exercise classes to campaigns to feed the "less fortunate," the YMCA's central location and its benevolent mission contributed to its function as a host for community conversation and problem solving.

One particular function at the Mason City YMCA was the weekend teen dances held in the 1940's. Nicknamed the "Hi-Dive," the YMCA Youth Center had a great impact on the social lives of teens at that time. Several hundred students attended the dances and social events every night it was open. Each evening would begin with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the band playing "The Star Spangled Banner." In addition to dancing, the "Hi-Dive" also offered ping-pong and other table games. The "Hi-Dive" quickly became the weekend hang out for high school and junior college students and is credited for keeping juvenile delinquency to a minimum.

Perhaps the centennial celebration brochure best summarizes the building's contribution to history:

No one has to live in Mason City long to realize this YMCA is a living, permeating influence in the community. Around it and from it have emanated scores of movements and programs, seeking the betterment of our city. It is a part of a great bulwark of Mason City institutions that stand for morality and civilization.

In short, the YMCA building is significant in part, not because of its relationship to extraordinary events and extraordinary people, but rather because of its relationship to ordinary people and their lives in an Iowa community.

**Criterion B**

The building is significant for its association with Charles H. McNider and his son, Hanford MacNider, two public spirited individuals who not only influenced the growth and development of Mason City but the State of Iowa as well.

In the 1910 book, History of Cerro Gordo County, the author writes that Charles H. McNider serves as an example of what can be accomplished by a poor boy. Thomas B. and Anna McNider had three children. William, who would follow his father into the railroad business, eventually moved to Sioux City, Iowa and

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died from cancer at the age of 42. They also had a daughter that moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota with her husband in the 1890's. Their third child, Charles Henry McNider was born on February 9, 1860 in Dubuque, Iowa.

The family moved to Mason City in 1871 following Tom's work for the Central of Iowa Railroad (Milwaukee and St. Louis division of Northwestern). His work on the railroad did not go well and by the time the project was completed, Tom lost all he had. It became necessary for the boys to work.

Charles H. McNider's life has been described as no greater example of the American dream. C.H. attended school until 1875, when, at only 15 years old, he began work at a grain elevator. Before long, a great opportunity presented itself which proved to have a profound effect on not only C.H., but on the history of Mason City. In April of 1875, he began his career in banking as an office boy and janitor for the Cerro Gordo County Bank. He began working for a salary of \$8 per month. He saved money by sleeping in the bank and acting as a night watchman.

McNider lacked extensive education but spent his free time reading everything he could on finance. His interest in the United State money system and stock market paid off in 1881. The bank was reorganized and became First National Bank. At the age of 21, he was made Assistant Cashier. By 1887, he was promoted to Cashier. In 1895, he was elected President.

McNider made his bank a very successful institution that survived financial panics like the one in 1907 that put many banks out of business. His financial wisdom earned him considerable respect throughout the city, state and nation.

McNider was also involved in several banks in North Iowa. In 1910, he served as President of the Mason City Loan and Trust Company, The First National Bank of Dougherty, the Citizens' Savings Bank of Hanlontown, the Farmer's State Bank of Joice and the Carpenter Savings Bank of Carpenter.

While still in his thirties, C.H. was the President of the Iowa Banker's Association and had been offered several executive positions with large financial institutions but turned them down to stay in the hometown that he loved.

In 1905, he was elected to serve a three-year term as Head Banker of the Modern Woodmen of America. This was a great honor to C.H. but was also very

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important to the Mason City community. With this position went over \$2 million in capital to the local banks of the Head Banker. These assets and the decision to pay cash instead of clearing house certificates helped First National Bank survive the panic of 1907.

During World War I he was placed on the Board of Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. McNider used his position with the Reserve Bank to help his own bank and the community. In 1928, the farm economy was under severe strain and there was a great fear of the bank collapsing. C.H. ordered a large shipment of gold to be delivered to Mason City from Chicago. The shipment went on display at First National Bank to assure their customers that their deposits were secure.

In addition to his work in the banking industry, McNider can be identified for his work in commercial and industrial enterprises. The most important of these to Mason City was his involvement with Northwestern States Portland Cement Company.

Over the years the McNider family was able to acquire a large amount of land in and around Mason City. This land included a 286-acre farm north of Mason City. This land was later proven to have abundant deposits of limestone. In 1905, the Northwestern States Portland Cement Company came to Mason City under the leadership of W.J. Cowham and W.H. McCourtie. In exchange for the land that the plant was to be built on, McNider took stock in the company rather than money.

In November 1911, McNider took over as President of the floundering cement business. Under his management, dividends were paid up, a \$600,000 bond issue was paid off and a \$1,750,000 preferred stock issue retired. The company experienced a great deal of growth under his leadership. At the time of his death in 1928, he only had 406 ½ shares out of the total 35,000 shares outstanding.

Although he lacked formal education, he was also a driving force in public education including his leadership of the Mason City school board for over 10 years and as a trustee for Iowa State Teachers College (presently University of Northern Iowa).

McNider also took a role in state and national politics. In 1896 and 1900 he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention. During World War I, he was chosen to be the director of the third and fourth Liberty and Victory bond



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drives for Iowa. He was recognized for his organizational ability to help make Iowa the first state in the union to exceed its goals.

Charles Henry McNider died in his office at First National Bank on October 30, 1928 at the age of 68. This man that started his career as a janitor left behind an estate valued at over \$2.4 million. When McNider came to Mason City, it was nothing more than a small village. Largely through his efforts, Mason City became a thriving center for industry and manufacturing.

C.H. McNider and his wife, May Cordelia Hanford, were married in 1884 and had one son, Hanford MacNider, born on October 2, 1889. There is some confusion regarding the spelling of the last name. In Charles' travels to Canada, to where his father was born, he discovered that Thomas' family changed the spelling from MacNider to McNider. Tom's father passed away when he was only one year old. He was then adopted by a McDonald family and the "a" was dropped to avoid confusion. Charles wanted to change the name back to its original spelling but had already signed hundreds of legal documents with the shortened version. He insisted that Hanford use the original spelling.

Hanford went on to achieve even greater honors than his father. He achieved national and international recognition for his success as a solidier, statesman, industrialist and civic leader.

As a child Hanford became very interested in military matters. He attended Mason City Public Schools until the age of 14 when he was enrolled at Milton Military Academy in Massachusetts. When he graduated from Milton Academy he was offered a noncompetitive appointment to West Point. His parents already had a plan for their son, to attend an Ivy League school and begin work at his father's bank. Hanford then chose to attend Harvard University.

After three years, he graduated from Harvard in 1911. Following a trip around the world, he did return to Mason City and worked at First National Bank starting as a bookkeeper and moving up to teller and assistant cashier. Hanford did not share his father's passion for finance.

Like his father, Hanford shared the ability to raise money. Hanford was elected to serve in the National Guard and was chosen as chairman to raise funds for the armory.

When the war broke out in 1914 he saw it as an opportunity to escape the bank. In 1916, he signed up to be an ambulance driver in the French Army. On

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the very day that he was going to announce his intentions, C.H. had a stroke and Hanford was told not to carry out his plans at the risk of killing his father.

In June of 1916, his company was called to Brownsville, Texas. This would begin his prestigious military career that if discussed in detail would be quite lengthy. He became one of the most decorated soldiers serving in World War I. He began as a Second Lieutenant in 1916 and within 6 years he rose to Colonel. He retained this rank while serving as Assistant Secretary of War from 1925-1928.

When he returned home in 1919, he took the lead in forming an American Legion Post and became its first Commander. He was then elected Vice-Commander of the Iowa American Legion and continued as State Commander in 1920-1921. In 1921, he was elected National Commander of the American Legion.

He was only 31 at the time and traveled extensively as National Commander. He made speeches at nearly every Legion post encouraging them to make unselfish contributions to the welfare of their communities.

Hanford did not forget his own words when he returned home to Mason City in 1922. He spent the years between the wars tending to business and helping his father in fund raising efforts for worthy causes like the YMCA. He also worked at the First National Bank now serving as Vice President. When his father died in 1928, Hanford assumed management of the family affairs and became Chairman of the Board at the bank. In January 1929, the First National Bank joined with the Northwestern National Bank of Minneapolis and the First National Bank of Fargo to form the Northwest Bancorporation. Hanford became the Vice President and Director. In March 1941, Hanford resigned as Chairman of the Board of the bank because he wanted to spend more time on his other commitments.

One of those commitments being the Northwestern States Portland Cement Company. He had been serving as Director since 1915 and took over as Treasurer in 1923. When his father passed away, W.H. McCourtie assumed the Presidency of Northwestern but during the year he lead the company he was accused of using its resources to the detriment of the community. After purchasing a large holding of stock, and receiving other backing, Hanford assumed his father's place as President and General Manager of the cement company in December 1929.

In 1930, President Hoover asked him to serve as Minister to Canada for the purpose of drafting a treaty regarding the St. Lawrence Waterway. MacNider eventually accepted the position. It took more than two years to come to an

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agreement. He resigned from his post in September 1932. He had always been very active in the Republican party like his father. He also served as a Presidential elector in 1924. In 1928, he was Iowa's candidate to be Herbert Hoover's running mate, but he declined the position. In 1932 he received 178  $\frac{3}{4}$  votes for nomination as the Republican candidate for Vice President.

Before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hanford was very vocal being opposed to the U.S. getting involved in another war. He was one of the founders of "Defend America First." For leadership in this group, he was virtually black-balled by the Roosevelt administration and had to beg to be accepted. MacNider was recalled to active duty on January 14, 1942 and was ordered to Australia. Upon the arrival of General MacArthur, MacNider was promoted to Brigadier General of the Line. He became the commanding General of the Buna Task Force whose job it was to drive the Japanese out of New Guinea. In November of 1942, he became the first American General in Pacific warfare to be wounded. Following several operations he was able to return to battle.

With the war over, Hanford returned to Mason City in October of 1945. In all, Hanford earned 28 decorations and 18 service awards during his career. He was released to inactive duty in February 1946. In August 1947, he became commanding General of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Reserve Infantry Division. In May 1949, he was promoted to Major General of the Line of the United States Army Reserve. He retired in September 1951. On August 8, 1956, President Eisenhower signed a congressional measure that promoted him to Lieutenant (3-star) General. It was the first time that an officer in the reserves had achieved a rank higher than Major General.

When he returned home from World War II he devoted himself to remodeling and expanding Northwestern States. A great deal of the success of this cement plant can be credited to Hanford. Under his management, not only did he guide the company through the Great Depression, but increased sales volume eight-fold, from \$2 million to \$16 million annually and profits rose correspondingly. Hanford established the first profit sharing plan in the cement industry. He also instituted life insurance, health and accident coverage, a retirement program and numerous other employee benefits.

He also continued the rest of the family business including local philanthropy. The MacNiders donated a lot of time and money to local organizations including the YMCA.

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Throughout his military, political, industrial and finance careers he still had time for a family. He married Margaret Elizabeth McAuley on February 20, 1925. They had three sons; Tom, born in 1926; Jack, born in 1927; and Angus born in 1928. All three sons attended Milton Academy and fought in different branches of the military in World War II, Tom with the Air Force, Jack with the Marines and Angus for a brief time with the Navy. Hanford passed away in his sleep while vacationing in Florida on February 17, 1968.

Angus died suddenly following an accident in February 1953, when he was only 24, while he was a student at Iowa State College studying farming.

Tom studied at Iowa State College and Harvard University and returned to Mason City to work at the cement plant starting as a Service Engineer and eventually moving up to Executive Vice President and Assistant General Manager in 1961. He became involved in the restaurant business. He also was elected to the Board of Directors of the First National Bank. He passed away in September 1986.

The remaining son, Jack, carried on many of the traditions of the MacNider family. Born on February 21, 1927 in Washington D.C. he attended Mason City Public Schools and Milton Academy. On his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday he enlisted in the Marines and saw some of the worst fighting in Iwo Jima. He was discharged in November 1945. Jack then attended Harvard University and graduated in 1950 and received his M.B.A. from Harvard in 1952. He returned to Mason City to work for Northwestern States Portland Cement and eventually became Vice President. When his father retired in 1961 he became President and General Manager.

Jack carried on the other family businesses as well. He was also very involved in civic and social groups. He was actively involved in the YMCA serving on the board for a number of years. The MacNider's most recent involvement in the local organization included Jack and his son Charles' donation of \$25,000 to the YMCA for their new facility.

Other members of that formidable building committee also played a critical role in northern Iowa's industrial development. W.E. Brice, for example, owned and built railroads. The local electric line for which he was responsible still runs between Mason City and Clear Lake. But Brice's influence extends much further. In the 1890's Brice joined an engineer named Dike and another investor, Charles McNider, and capitalized the Iowa Minnesota Northwestern Railway. Before Brice sold it, he constructed stations all along the line from north central Iowa into Minnesota. Because he named his stations after family members,

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employees or employee family members, towns like Briceland, Blue Earth, Keister and Frost in Minnesota and Iowa towns such as Voorhees, Parkersburg, Dike, Hanlontown and Eleanor all have their names because of W.E. Brice. Even Zaneta, named after his bookkeeper's daughter, and Wheelerwood, coined from his banker's family, can trace their beginnings back to the desk of W.E. Brice.

Jay Decker, another member of the building committee, was also a familiar name and leader in Iowa beef packing. He started Decker meat packing company in Mason City in 1899 and by the 1920's was Mason City's largest employer with 1500 workers. In 1935, Jay Decker sold his successful venture to Armour.

In addition, W.F. Muse was a well-known newspaper leader, author, world traveler and community leader who owned the Globe Gazette and eventually sold it to Lee Enterprises in 1925. Muse left behind the Muse-Norris Foundation that financially supports worthy businesses and causes.

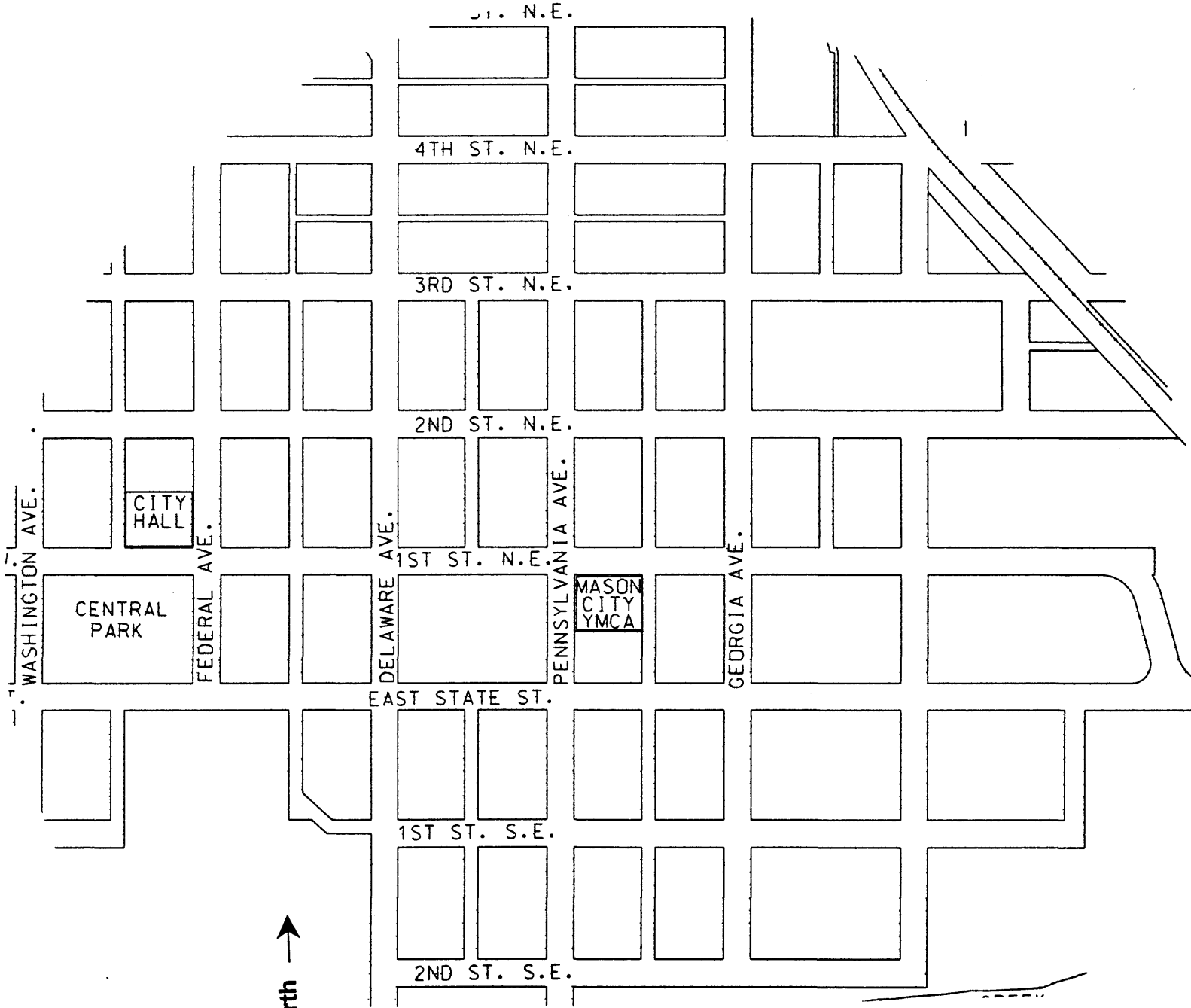
In all, the men responsible for the construction of the Mason City YMCA and for the development of the organization are not surprisingly the same persons associated with the growth and development of North Iowa.

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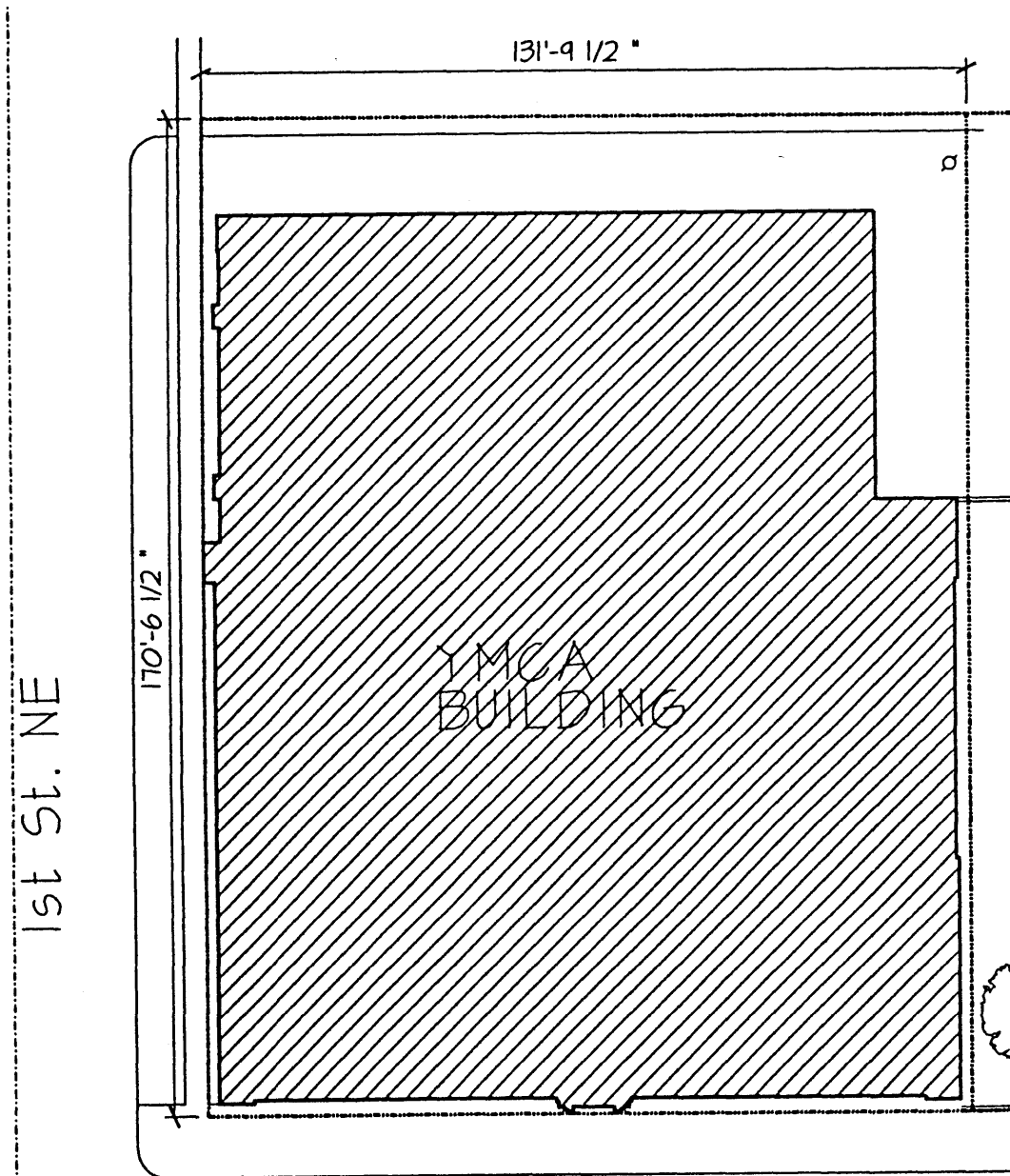
City Map

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N. PENNSYLVANIA AV.

ORIGINAL SITE PLAN

← North

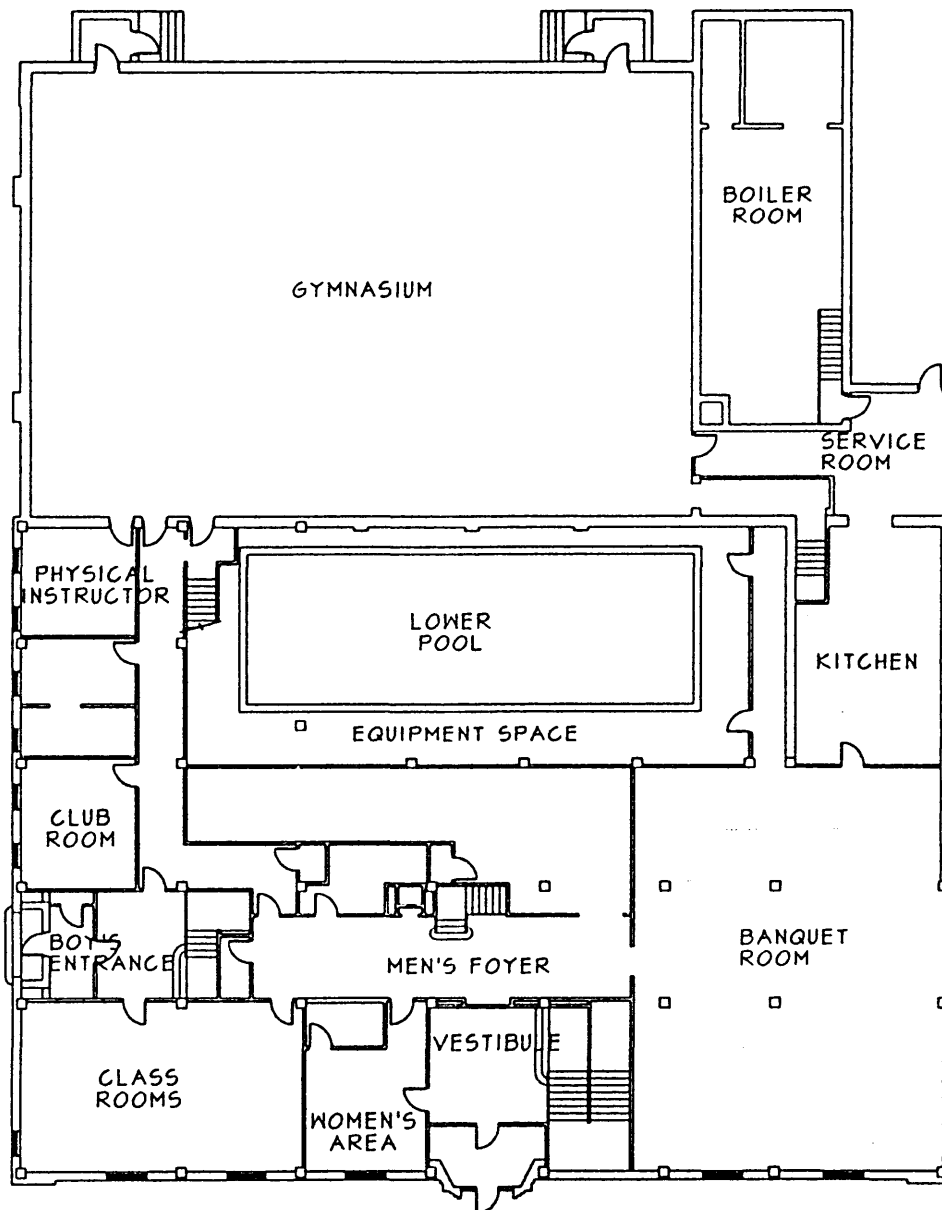
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ORIGINAL GROUND FLOOR PLAN

← North



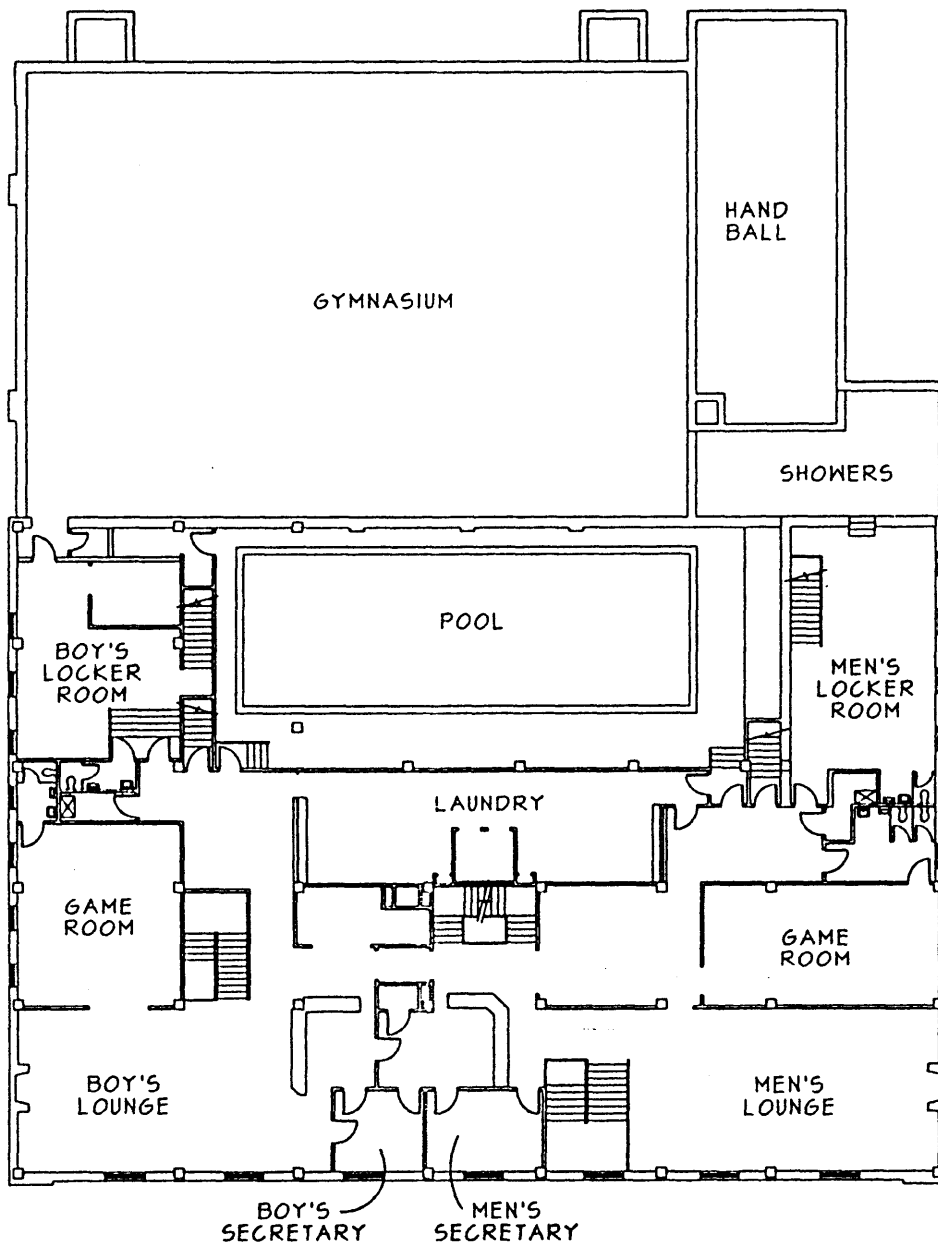
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ORIGINAL FIRST FLOOR PLAN

← North

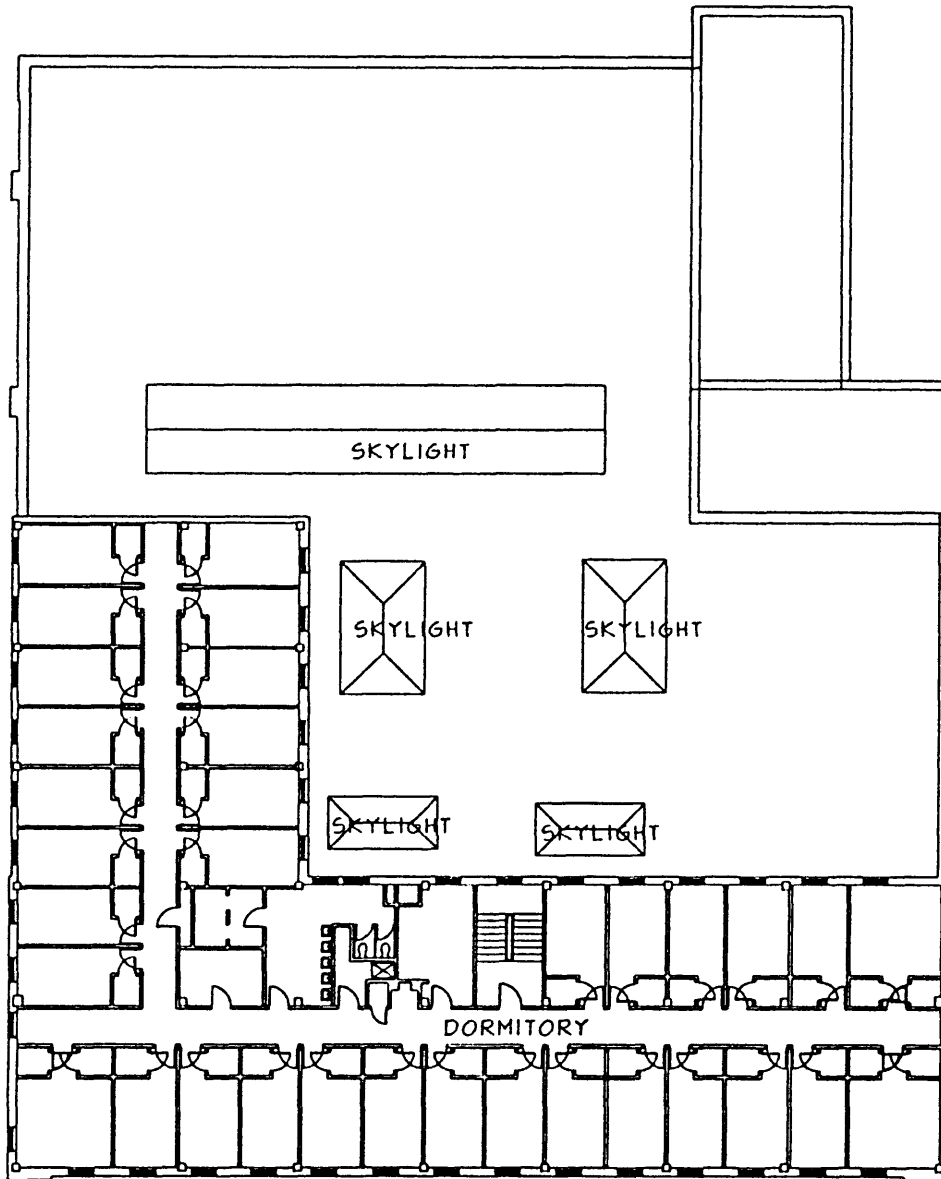
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ORIGINAL SECOND FLOOR PLAN

← North

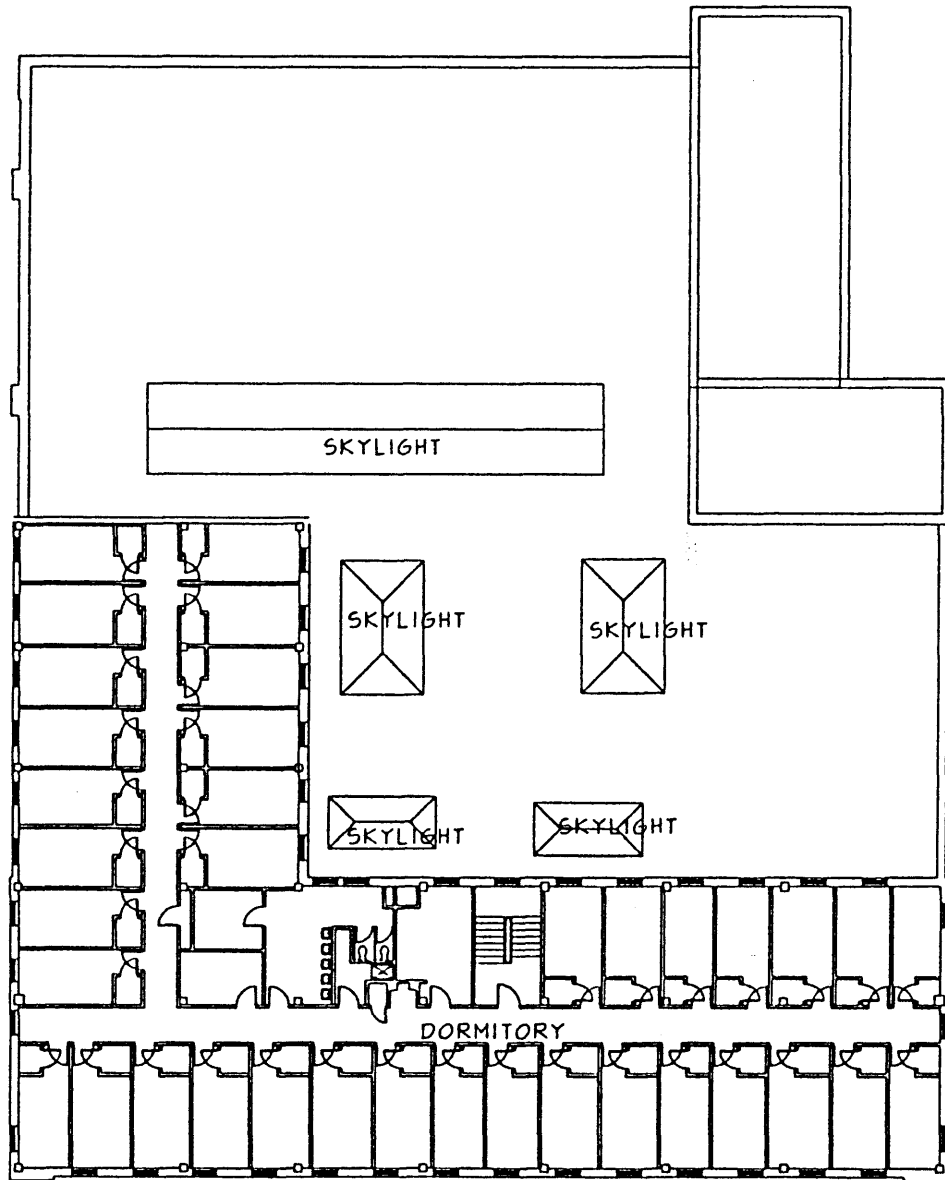
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ORIGINAL THIRD FLOOR PLAN

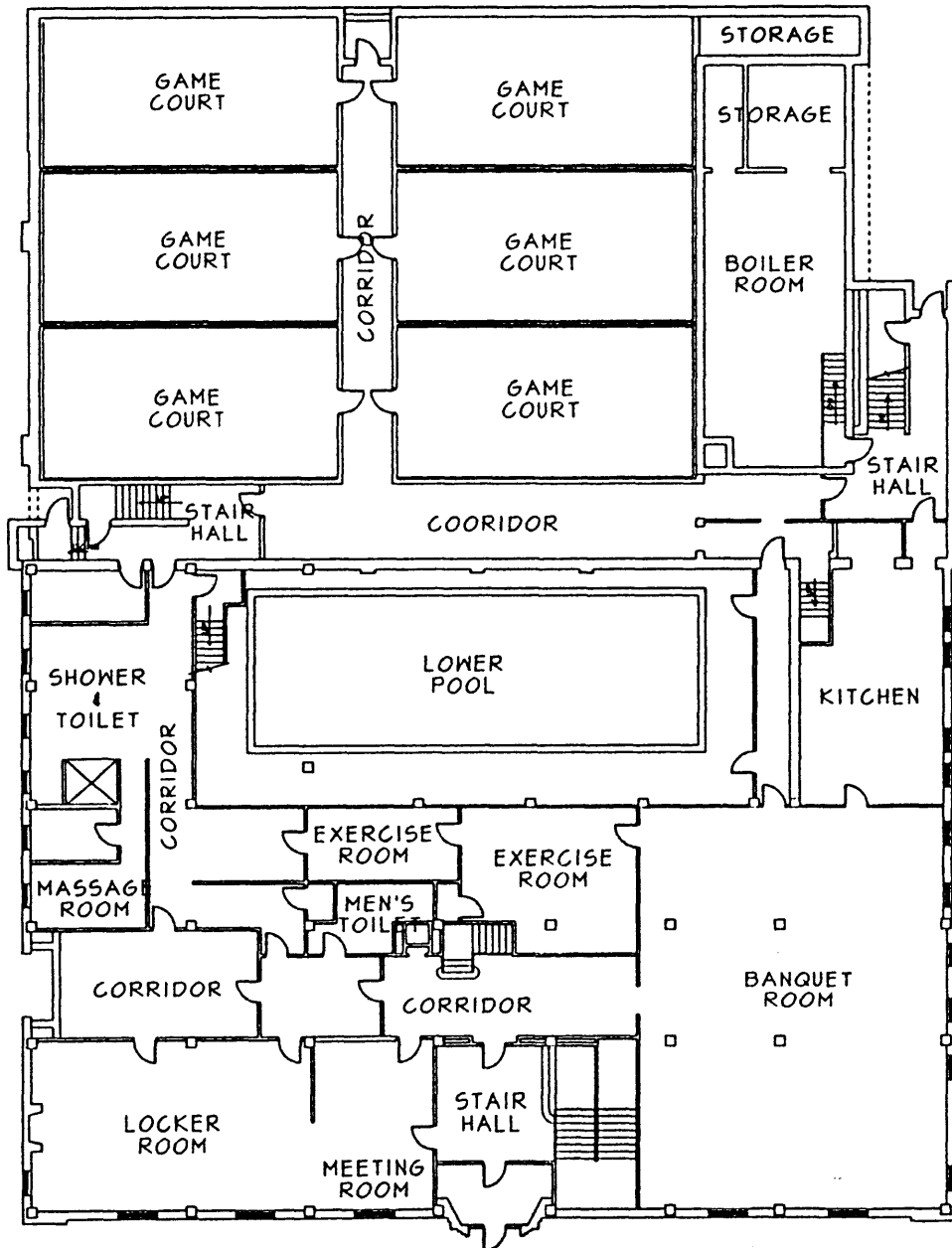
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EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN



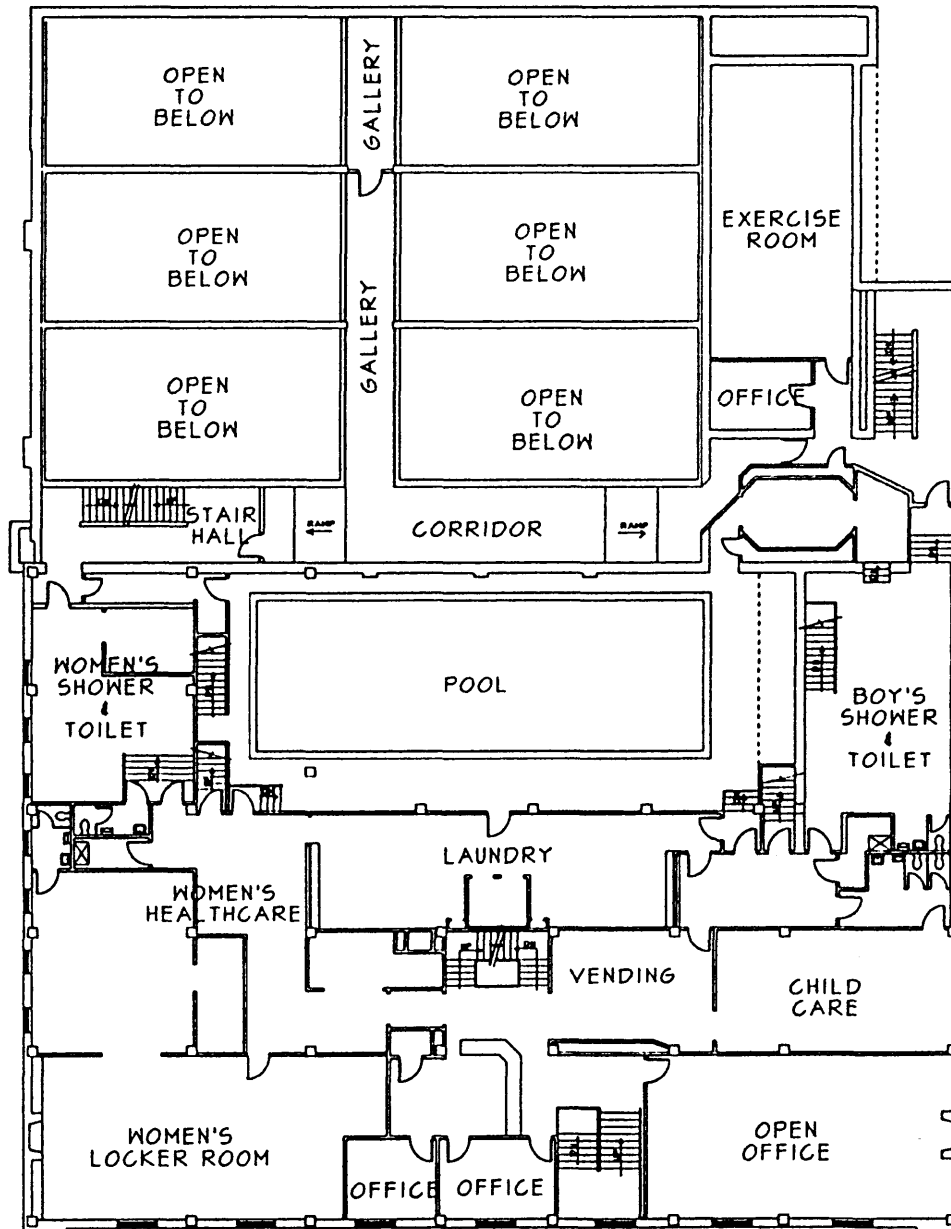
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EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN

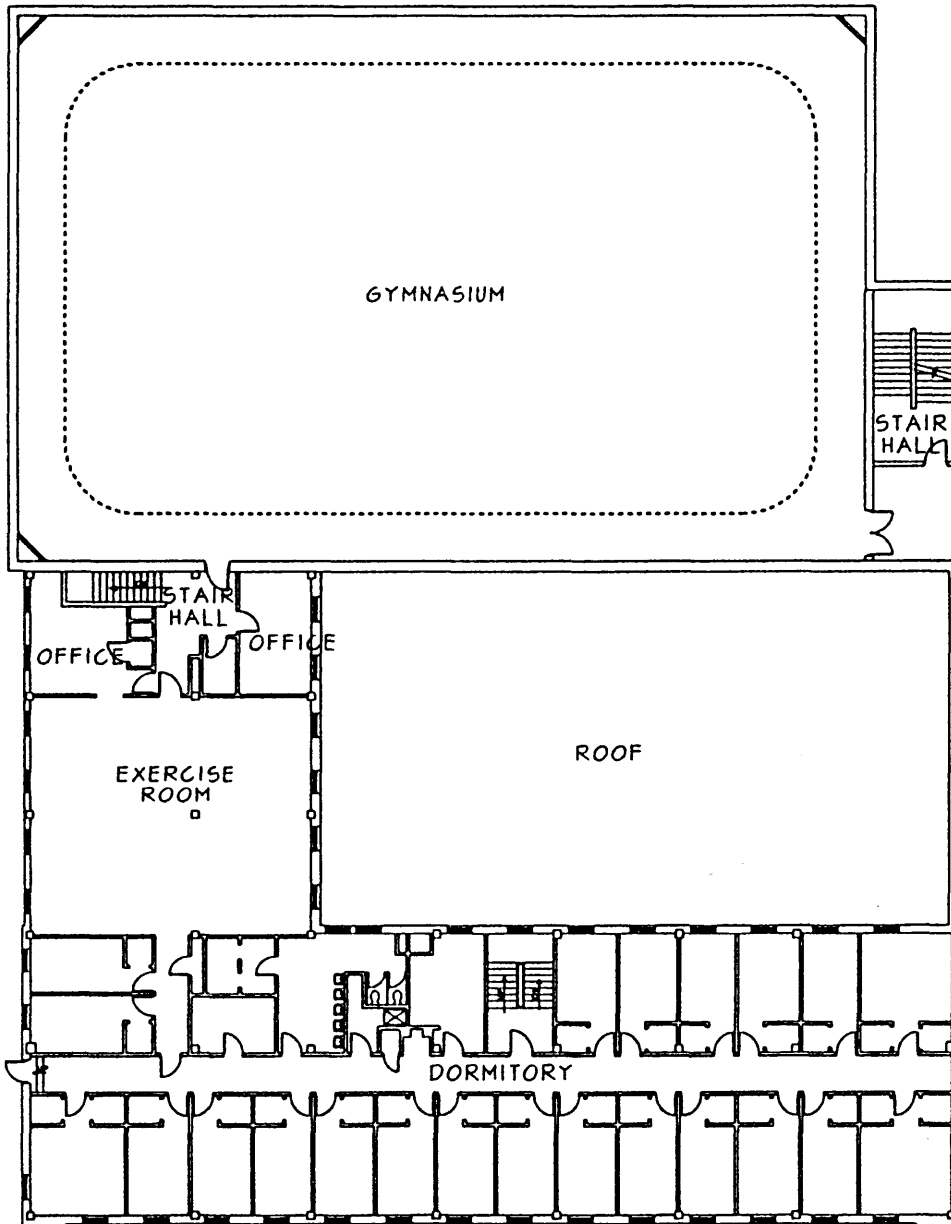


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EXISTING SECOND FLOOR PLAN

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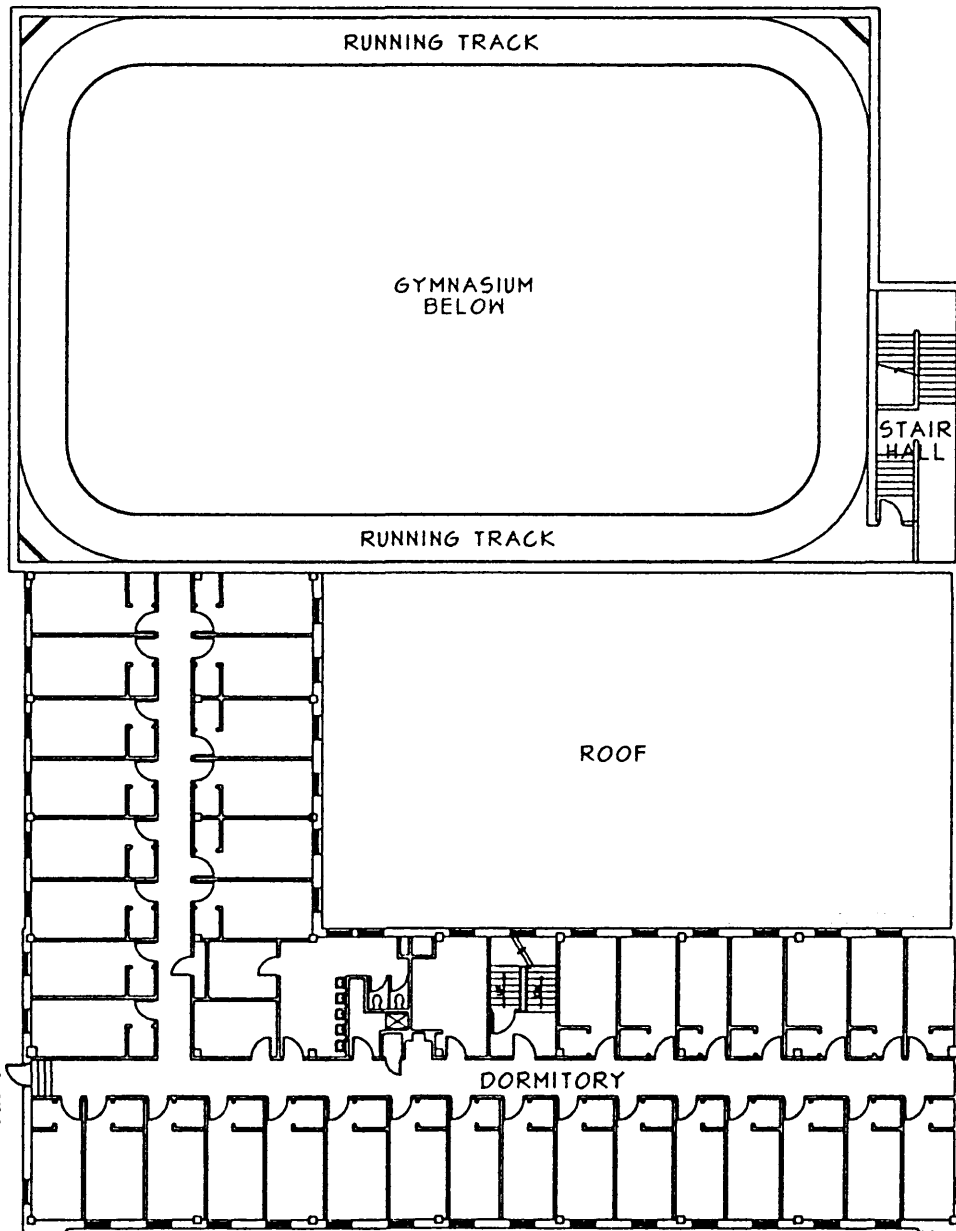
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EXISTING THIRD FLOOR PLAN

← North

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January 30, 1924, Page 1 Final Edition, "Drive for \$300,000 Y.M.C.A. Planned. Drive announced for next May at annual gathering."

May 15, 1924, Page 9, "Business would suffer without this building, women led campaign for "Y" Building in 1906 and raised money to buy lot."

May 17, 1924, Page 9, "Y building to occupy Episcopal Church Quarter, Deal is made for exchanging sites."

June 21, 1924, Page 9, "To resume Y building campaign here next week."

July 1, 1924, Page 9, "\$300,000 Y.M.C.A. Building is assured for Mason City, 3 weeks if work brings \$252,587."

October 29, 1924, Page 1, "\$300,000 Is Subscribed for Y.M.C.A Building, Goal is reached in Campaign which 300 workers took part and 3,000 subscribed."

November 7, 1924, Page 9, "\$300,000 Drive for "Y" is "Crowning Effort" of 25 years in Mason City."

December 31, 1924, Page 12, "Construction of \$300,000 Building will be work of Mason Cityans next Year."

August 13, 1925, Page 1, Y.M.C.A. Building Plans are adopted, Committee is to receive bids for plant next month."

August 18, 1925, Page 1, "This is Mason City's Future YMCA Building."  
(Schematic sketch)

February 16, 1926, Page 9, "Contract is awarded for YMCA Building, Madsen of Minneapolis to start excavation for new structure before April 1."

March 13, 1926, Page 10, "Mason City Labor Materials, Architect and



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Subcontractors to be used in the construction of Proposed YMCA Building."

April 3, 1926, Page 9, "McNider Starts Excavation For Y.M.C.A."

October 8, 1927, Page 10, "Plans show arrangement of Y rooms and equipment."

December 7, 1927, Pages 13-18, Several articles devoted to the YMCA history and opening.

December 11, 1937, Page 9, "Sprint Star's Olympians to meet Diamond Breed."

December 13, 1937, Page 9, "Owens' Quintet romps to 44-26 court win here."

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Norem, Enoch A., We Look Forward Through the Past, 1844-1944.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Lots Two (2) and Three (3) and the west 6.33 feet of the north 132 feet of the north-south alley, all in Block Thirty-one (31) in Paul Felt's Plat of Mason City, Iowa.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated area coincide with the legal and historical boundaries of the property.

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Photographs

Applies to all photographs:

Photographer: Cheryl Carlson  
Date of Photographs: May 2001  
Location of Negatives: Henkel Construction Company  
208 E. State Street  
Mason City, IA 50401

Description of Views:

- Photo 1: View of west elevation of YMCA. View to the east.
- Photo 2: View of the west and north elevations. View to the southeast.
- Photo 3: View of the west and south elevations. View to the northeast.
- Photo 4: View of north elevation. View to the south.
- Photo 5: View of the north and east elevations. View to the southwest.
- Photo 6: View of the east and south elevations. View to the northwest.
- Photo 7: View of Men's Lounge. View to the southwest.
- Photo 8: View of main staircase. View to the south.
- Photo 9: View of 3<sup>rd</sup> floor dormitory corridor. View to the north.

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Slides

Applies to all slides:

Photographer: Cheryl Carlson  
Date of Photographs: October 2001

Description of Views:

Slide 1: View of west elevation of YMCA. View to the east.

Slide 2: View of the west and north elevations. View to the southeast.

Slide 3: View of north elevation. View to the south.

Slide 6: View of Men's Lounge. View to the southwest.

Slide 8: View of 3<sup>rd</sup> floor dormitory corridor. View to the north.

Slide 9: View of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor dormitory corridor. View to the north.