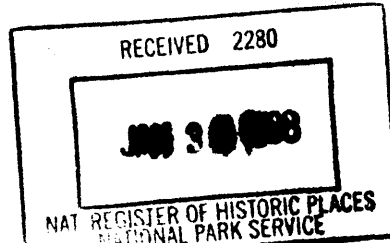


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



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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 an 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 Ada Village Hall

other names/site number Ada City Hall

2. Location

street & number 404 West Main Street not for publication N/A

city or town Ada vicinity N/A

state Minnesota code MN county Norman code 107 zip code 56510

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Ian R. Stewart 1/21/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date
State of Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

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

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Erson A. Beal Date of Action 2/26/98

Ada Village Hall

Norman County, Minnesota
County and State

Name of Property

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)
Category of Property (Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government: city hall, fire station

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government: city hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Clapboard

roof Wood

other Clapboard

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Ada Village Hall
Name of Property

Norman County, Minnesota
County and State

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.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is: N/A

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics and Government

Social History

Period of Significance

1904-1947

Significant Dates

1904

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

O'Meyer, Diedrich A. (architect)

Thori, Martin P. (architect)

Larson, H. L. (builder)

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Norman County Historical Society, Ada

Ada Village Hall
Name of Property

Norman County, Minnesota
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References Ada, Minn., 1965
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 4	6 8 7 7 5 0	5 2 4 1 2 6 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
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 Susan Granger, Kay Grossman, and Patricia Murphy

organization Gemini Research date July 31, 1997

street & number 15 East Ninth Street telephone 320-589-3846

city or town Morris state MN zip code 56267

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Ada, Norman County, Minnesota

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Ada Village Hall, built in 1903-04, is prominently situated at the northeastern corner of West Main Street N. (formerly Pacific Avenue) and West Fourth Avenue N. (former Downs Avenue) in the center of the city of Ada. Situated in Norman County, Ada is a city of 1,700 people that is located in the Red River Valley 56 miles northeast of Fargo, North Dakota, and 35 miles south of Crookston, Minnesota. The village hall is located approximately 100 feet west of the former Great Northern railroad tracks upon which Ada was founded. The building is surrounded by commercial properties and the current Ada Fire Hall, a recent building which stands at the northern end of the block.

The village hall property has a small area of grassy lawn on the east side of the building, a larger grassy lawn on the north, a concrete pedestrian sidewalk and tree-planted boulevard to the west, and a small concrete parking area on the south. There is a gravel alley east of the building between the village hall and a trackside coal shed. Early photographs indicate that the building's original setting was quite similar, except that the concrete parking area south of the building was originally a gravel driveway for fire trucks, and there was originally a track spur at the location of the alley east of the building. The streets around the village hall were first paved in 1919.

The Ada Village Hall is a two story brick building that was designed by St. Paul architects O'Meyer and Thori and constructed by contractor H. L. Larson. The stretcher-bonded, cream-colored brick that faces the exterior of the building was manufactured at the Ada Brickyard. The exterior of the building has been painted.

The village hall is a simple, somewhat utilitarian example of the Classical Revival style from the Beaux Arts period, a style that was popular for government and institutional buildings erected after the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In addition to its Beaux Arts influences, the building also has some details (particularly in its window treatment and wooden ornamentation) that are reminiscent of earlier Victorian-era architectural styling.

It is interesting that, while the design of the village hall was inspired by the Beaux Arts, its setting was apparently not influenced by the landscape principals of the Beaux Arts. Rather than being grandly set apart from nearby buildings on a landscaped block or square, or at least framed by formal sidewalks or plantings, the Ada Village Hall was sited on railroad right-of-way a mere 100 feet west of

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the railroad tracks and directly across the tracks to the west of the railroad depot.

The building is a narrow, long, rectangular structure that is aligned north and south, parallel with the railroad tracks. It measures approximately 30 feet wide by 80 feet long. The building has a wood-shingled, gabled roof with wooden pedimented gable ends. There is a semicircular fanlight and patterned brickwork that suggests a stone quoin-like effect within the pedimented end on the main facade. There were originally three acroteria that projected from the corners and peak of the main facade's pediment. The building originally had a simple, square open belfry that supported a slightly bulbous pyramidal cap that was topped by a tall flagpole. From early photographs it appears that the belfry had a wood shingle-covered base. A 300-pound fire alarm bell that had been moved from the first village hall hung in the belfry until it was removed during a World War II scrap metal drive. Both the acroteria and the belfry have also been removed. The building has a simple brick belt course that extends around the building just below the tops of the second story windows.

The main (southern) facade of the village hall is dominated by a partially recessed second story wooden balcony that is situated within a wide, segmental-arched opening. There is a single-leaf door (flanked by two rectangular double-hung windows) that leads from the interior of the building onto the balcony. The exterior wall of the building within the balcony is sided with clapboard. The balcony is supported by seven massive wooden brackets that are adorned with ball pendants. The brackets have Eastlake style diagonal wood-paneled insets. The original balustrade of the balcony was of wood with narrowly-spaced square balusters. It has been replaced by a simple iron balustrade. A flagpole has been added to the center of the balcony; it may date from the time that the belfry and flagpole were removed from the roof. On each side of the balcony is an unusual feature--a vertical row of iron rods set into the brickwork that form a fire escape ladder to evacuate the second story. The balcony is also flanked two tall, narrow oval windows that each have four brick simulated keystones. There are two similar oval windows immediately around the corners of the building on the side walls.

Beneath the balcony is the original fire equipment entrance. This entrance originally had hinged, paneled doors and a segmental-arched opening that was eventually changed to a rectangular opening. After the fire department was moved from the building in 1965 the equipment entrance was reduced in size with plywood and fitted with a single-leaf pedestrian door. The equipment entrance was originally flanked by two narrow segmental-arched window openings. The eastern window has been converted to an entrance with a single-leaf pedestrian door. A wooden message

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board is affixed to the exterior brick wall near the left edge of the southern facade.

At the center of the western facade is the main pedestrian entrance to the building. It consists of a segmental-arched opening that was originally filled with a single-leaf door and a transom window. The original door has been replaced with a new door and the transom has been filled with plywood. Near the northern end of the western facade is the original main entrance to the second story meeting room. It is a segmental-arched opening with an original double-leaf wooden door and a transom that has been filled with wood.

The village hall has long, relatively plain side walls that have closely-spaced, vertically-aligned, tall, narrow, segmental-arched window openings with smooth concrete sills. The second story windows are slightly taller than those on the first story. The windows originally had 2/2 sash, some of which has been replaced with 1/1 sash. The first story windows now have aluminum-framed storm windows.

The interior of the first story of the building contains a series of offices and meeting rooms that have been altered with modern materials on the walls, floors, and ceilings. The second story of the building, however, is virtually intact. The second floor is accessed via a wide wooden stairway located at the northwestern corner of the building. The northern one-third of the second floor contains the stair landing, a small meeting room, a closet, and bathrooms. The central one-third of the building contains a dining room (separated from the stair landing by a double-leaf door) and a kitchen that has a serving window into the dining room. The southern one-third of the second floor consists of a large meeting hall that is separated from the dining room by a wide, rectangular arch. There are two small closets at the southern corners of the meeting room, flanking the door and two window that lead to the exterior balcony. Longtime residents remember that the closets were used for storage for the various organizations that used the hall. The Ada City Band, for example, stored its music and instruments in the western closet, and the American Legion and Chamber of Commerce stored their records and minute books in the eastern closet.

The second story has plaster walls, wooden floors that are covered with linoleum tile, original woodwork of a simple design, and radiators standing against the walls. Furnishings in the second floor rooms originally included large leather chairs and oak tables.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ada Village Hall is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A (significance to the broad patterns of our history) in the areas of Politics and Government and Social History. The Ada Village Hall is significant as the building that has served as the center for local government in Ada since 1904 and as a structure that was an important public meeting hall and social facility from 1904 through the 1970s. Architecturally, the building is an excellent representative example of the type of combined city hall and fire hall buildings that were constructed throughout Minnesota near the turn of the century. The property is significant within the statewide historic context entitled "Railroads and Agricultural Development 1870-1940."

Ada was founded on the Wild Rice River in northwestern Minnesota's Red River Valley in about 1876. The Red River Valley was one of the last agricultural parts of Minnesota to be settled. Several factors including the Civil War, grasshopper plagues, and a lack of rail service delayed settlement of the region until the late 1870s. It was not until a predecessor of the Great Northern Railroad, the St. Paul and Pacific, built a line from Barnesville to Warren (part of the "St. Vincent Extension") in 1872-1876 that immigrants from southern Minnesota, the East Coast, Wisconsin, and Europe began to claim land in the vicinity. It was during this period that a number of so-called Bonanza Farms were established in the Red River Valley including the Gradin Farm which was located about 15 miles west of Ada. In 1875, before the inauguration of rail service, there were only 22 people living in the township surrounding present-day Ada. By 1885 there were 720 people living in Ada alone. The majority were of Scandinavian heritage.

Ada's role as an agricultural trade center began in 1876 when its first settler, William Shields, built the first grain elevator in the community. In 1876, the year the first train arrived, 50,000 bushels of wheat were shipped out of Ada. This number continued to increase through the early 1880s in an agricultural boom that was celebrated by a local newspaper which boasted in 1883 that "Ada is already the leading primary wheat market in northern Minnesota, receiving last year from teams over 400,000 bushels of wheat" (Weld 1915: 37). Ada's five grain elevators, saw mill, flour mill, and creamery constituted the town's largest industries. These plants, plus Ada's retail stores, lumberyards, and service businesses such as undertakers, blacksmiths, and dentists drew the county's farmers to visit Ada to market their produce and purchase supplies.

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The land surrounding Ada was first part of Polk County (which had been established in 1873), but in 1881 became part of Norman County (named for its large settlement of "Norsemen" or "Normen") which was established on February 17, 1881. Ada was incorporated as a village and named the county seat in 1881. The 1885 state census enumerated 720 people in Ada. Of that population, 28% were born in Norway, 26% were born in Minnesota, and 13% were born in Wisconsin. By 1890, the population had dropped to 622, but rose again during the next five-year period to 845 in 1895. By 1900, there were 1,253 people residing in Ada, and in 1910 there were 1,432. Ada's population peaked at about 2,000 people in 1950 and remained near that level through the 1970s.

Ada was a "railroad town," platted in 1881 by the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba, which had acquired the St. Paul and Pacific in 1879. Ada was the first of three railroad stations to be established in Norman County by the railroad (the other two were Borup (1899) and Lockhart (1901)), and was the first of Norman County's 11 towns and villages to be platted. (The county's last village, Syre, was platted in 1909.) The village was named "Ada" for the daughter of H. W. Fisher, a St. Paul attorney and railroad official who had supervised the construction of the line through the region.

The Ada Village Hall is located at the center of a business district that is bisected by the railroad tracks that run through the center of the city, dividing it into nearly even halves. The tracks separate two parallel business streets, Atlantic Avenue (now East Main Street) on the eastern side of the tracks and Pacific Avenue (now West Main Street) on the western side. Commercial buildings were constructed only on the "outer" sides of Atlantic and Pacific Avenues so that the buildings faced each other and the tracks. The village hall was constructed on railroad right-of-way between these two streets, adjacent to the tracks.

Ada's plan is an example of what geographer John Hudson refers to as the "symmetric" design in railroad town plats, one of three common town plans that were frequently used by railroad companies nationwide. (The other two common plans are the "orthogonal town" in which the tracks bisect the town and the main street runs perpendicular rather than parallel with the tracks, and the "T-town" in which the tracks run along the edge of town rather than bisecting it and the main street runs perpendicular with the tracks.) "Symmetric" designs were often planned by the Great Northern and Northern Pacific railroads and their associated lines in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Hudson explains that "There were two business streets in the symmetric railroad town, with buildings facing each other across a 300-foot railroad right-of-way

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designed for elevators, lumberyards, and other enterprises needing direct rail access. Land along the tracks was underused, and eventually some towns acquired a portion of it for parks. The two business streets rarely developed equally, especially in the smaller places. . . ." (Hudson 1985:88). Hudson indicates that the plan was used rarely after the 1890s, largely because it proved undesirable for a town's business district to be split by a strip of land a block wide and to have the business district constantly disrupted by passing trains (Hudson 1985:89).

It is unusual that the Ada Village Hall was built on railroad right-of-way, rather than being constructed on property that was purchased by the public farther from the tracks. Railroad right-of-way was typically reserved for businesses such as grain elevators, mills, lumberyards, and coal dealers that needed to load or unload freight from the train. It is interesting that Ada's first village hall (built circa 1883) was also located on right-of-way, as was the village's first electric generating plant and waterworks (built in 1900).

The village hall's close proximity to the railroad tracks is, however, typical of the strong physical orientation to the railroad tracks that railroad-based agricultural communities like Ada often display. Ada's streets, for example, were platted at an angle parallel with the railroad tracks (which run at an angle through the county), rather than being aligned with cardinal north. Nearly all major businesses and most public buildings in Ada were built within one and one-half blocks of the tracks including the first and second Ada Village Hall (ca. 1881, 1903-04), the first and second Norman County Courthouse (1883, 1904), the village's electric light plant and water works (1900), the Ada High School (1904-09, razed), and the U. S. Post Office (1941).

The Ada Village Hall was built during an expansionary period in Ada's history that began around 1898. After more than ten years of intermittent growth and decline, in 1898 Ada experienced an unprecedented building boom with the construction, in a single year, of the Ada Hotel and First National Bank, the Norman County Bank, the Gilbertson Block, the Lystad Block, the Calkins Block, the Prigge Block, a lumber warehouse, and six major residences, and a number of smaller structures including a new village bandstand.

The boom continued with other major improvements--most of them public--that were completed between 1900 and 1910. These improvements mark the end of Ada's early settlement or "frontier" period of 1876-1898 and herald Ada's transformation into a full-fledged city. In 1900, for example, the village built an electric light plant and waterworks, both located about one block north of the current village hall. In 1903 a cooperative creamery was formed and a flax mill was constructed.

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The current village hall, completed during the fall of 1904, was built almost simultaneously with the Norman County Courthouse and the Ada High School, both of which were also designed by O'Meyer and Thori. (The courthouse, completed in 1904, was listed on the National Register on May 9, 1983 and the high school, built in 1904 and enlarged with a third story in 1909, was razed in 1994). In 1904 the first 20 electric street lights were installed, and in 1904 the village government accept a gift of land on which to create Ada's second park. (The railroad had donated land one block west of the tracks for Ada's first village park in the 1880s.) Near the end of this period, in 1908, the Village of Ada was incorporated as a city.

This expansionary period was also the time in which Ada's business community, led by the Commercial Club, began to petition the Great Northern railroad to replace Ada's original depot that had been built in 1877 (and located across the tracks from the current village hall) with a larger structure. After the Great Northern refused their request, the Ada group appealed to the State Railway Commission and eventually won a 3-year court battle that was settled by the State Supreme Court. The Great Northern was compelled to construct a new \$25,000 brick depot that opened in 1917 one block south of the 1877 depot on the eastern side of the tracks.

The Ada Village Hall was built to replace the previous village hall and fire hall that had been constructed shortly after the village government was formed in 1881. The first village hall was located about one block south of the current building, and, when the new village hall was constructed in 1904, the first village hall was sold to W. H. Matthews and moved from its site.

It was the disastrous fire of 1900, which burned down an entire city block of Ada's central business district, that inspired the Ada Fire Department to solicit funds for better fire-fighting equipment and facilities. The village council responded in 1900 by approving the construction of a city waterworks that included an 80-foot-tall water tower and 2,800 feet of piping and hydrants, and by purchasing a new pump engine, a 100,000-gallon reservoir, additional fire hose, and hook and ladder trucks.

The Ada Fire Department was a volunteer organization that had been organized about 1884 under the direction of chief G. H. Brown and captains C. F. Gaetke and Fritz Andrist. The department's initial equipment consisted of a horse-drawn water tank, two hand pumps, and hose. The department reorganized in May of 1885 with 62 members forming two companies. Following the reorganization, the village council purchased a 300-pound fire alarm bell for the village hall, 400 feet of rubber hose, and a 16-inch speaking trumpet so that the officers could direct the force (Johnson 1976:

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17). In 1899, the department's equipment included two hose carts, 1000 feet of 1 1/2-inch hose, and five ladders.

The fire department began lobbying for the construction of a new village and fire hall during the spring of 1903. At the April 7th council meeting the fire department formally requested that the council issue bonds to finance a new building. At the April 28th meeting, following a citizen petition drive, the council voted to raise \$5,000 to construct the hall and to hold a special election to approve the bond issue. The plan was passed by a large majority of citizens at the May, 1903, election. Five months later, in August of 1903, plans and specifications for the new building were presented to the council by architects O'Meyer and Thori (who were paid a fee of \$135) and the construction bid was awarded to contractor H. L. Larson (about whom little is known).

The building was constructed during the spring and summer of 1904 and completed by October of 1904. It was constructed of brick that was manufactured at Ada's only brickyard, a facility that had been established by W. H. Matthews in 1898 near the southern edge of the city. Between 1898 and 1912 (when the clay deposits had been exhausted), Ada brick was used to construct several major buildings in town including the Ada Hotel and First National Bank, the Norman County Bank, the Gilbertson Block, the Lystad Block, and the Calkins Block.

Architecturally, Ada Village Hall is a good example of the type and design of municipal buildings that were constructed in Minnesota communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings were typically designed to house a city's fire department, police department, city council chambers, meeting rooms, and various city offices within a single structure. Their form followed historical precedents for American city halls that had been established in the 18th century when the first city halls usually included offices for public officials, a room for public meetings and judicial proceedings, and a bell which announced public assemblies and important events.

The formal, Classical Revival styling of the Ada Village Hall, and thousands like it built across the U. S., was meant to symbolize the democratic principles, strength, and order of government. Such buildings were designed to be among the most architecturally imposing buildings in a community. Built for approximately \$6,000, the village hall was a modest structure in comparison to other major construction in Ada during this period including the \$20,000 Ada Hotel and First National Bank (1898) and the \$10,000 Norman County Bank (1898). But despite its relatively low cost, historical photos indicate that the village hall did eclipse

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most other commercial and residential structures in the community, many of which were woodframe.

The Ada Village Hall was one of three major public buildings in Ada that were designed by O'Meyer and Thori. O'Meyer and Thori also designed the Norman County Courthouse (1904) and the Ada High School (1904-09). Diedrich A. O'Meyer and Martin P. Thori practiced together until about 1905. The firm was prolific, designing hundreds of houses, churches, commercial buildings, and institutional and public buildings throughout Minnesota and other Midwestern states. Many houses designed by the firm in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were exuberant versions of the Queen Anne, while many of the firm's public buildings were Romanesque Revival and Classical Revival in style. O'Meyer and Thori designed at least six buildings in Minnesota that have been listed on the National Register (NRHP). They are New Main at Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis (1901, listed on the NRHP 10-6-83), Park Region Luther College in Fergus Falls (1901, listed on the NRHP 11-8-84), Steensland Library at St. Olaf College in Northfield (1902, listed on the NRHP 4-6-82), the Bank of Long Prairie (1903, listed on the NRHP 9-5-85), the Cottonwood County Courthouse (1904, listed on the NRHP 4-18-77), and the Norman County Courthouse (1904, listed on the NRHP 5-9-83).

Between 1904 and the present, the Ada Village Hall has been the center of civic and governmental affairs in Ada. The entire city bureaucracy including the fire department, law enforcement offices, village jail, municipal court, village council chambers, and village administrative offices were located on the first floor of the building. The Ada Fire Department was headquartered on the first floor of the city hall until 1965 when a new fire hall was constructed several hundred feet to the north. The police office and jail were located in the northern corner of the building until the law enforcement department was moved to a new location in the 1970s. All local elections except school board elections were also held in the building.

The Ada Village Hall is also significant as the principal public gathering place within the city of Ada for many decades. Most community functions, special events, and meetings were held in the second floor meeting hall. There was a large assembly room, a kitchen, a dining area, and a small meeting room on the second floor that served the public as its primary community gathering place. Longtime residents report that a meeting or event was held in one of the rooms on the second floor nearly every night of the week from 1904 through the 1970s.

The small meeting room on the western side of the second floor was used as a public library for nearly 45 years. The library had been established about 1914 by the

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Commercial Club and was eventually operated by the Ada Public Library, which was established in 1941. In 1959 the library was moved to the Zion Lutheran Church building.

The Commercial Club, the forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce, was one of the most prominent groups that met regularly on the second floor. The Commercial Club promoted local economic development and was instrumental in compelling the Great Northern Railroad to construct a new depot in Ada and in establishing the Ada Hospital. Its successor, the Chamber of Commerce, held its meetings at the hall beginning in 1918.

The Simonson-Betcher Post #26 of the American Legion held their meetings on the second floor from the year of its organization in 1919 through the late 1970s. Similarly, the American Legion Auxiliary met there from 1921 (the year of its organization) through the late 1970s. Other organizations that used the second floor meeting rooms included the Twentieth Century Club (organized in 1901), the Modern Woodmen of America (organized in 1895), the Royal Neighbors of America (organized in 1924), the Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) (organized in 1944), the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and various 4-H Clubs.

The large assembly room was used by the Ada community band for practice. Ada's first municipal band was organized in 1882. It was known through the years by various names such as the Ada Silver Cornet Band, the Ada Band, the Ada Concert Band, and the Ada Municipal Band. The band received municipal funding beginning in 1890 and operated for many decades. Other events held in the large assembly hall included dances, anniversary parties, music concerts, fund-raising events, and other large gatherings.

The second floor of the city hall was no longer being used by the early 1980s. The First State Bank of Ada had constructed a new building that included a community room, and most community organizations moved to this location. Today the second floor of the city hall is closed to the public. However, the first floor of the Ada Village Hall building continues to serve as the headquarters of city government in Ada, housing the City Council Chambers, the City Clerk, and other city offices.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the nominated property is shown by the dotted black line on the accompanying map entitled "Ada Village Hall, Ada, Norman County, Minnesota."

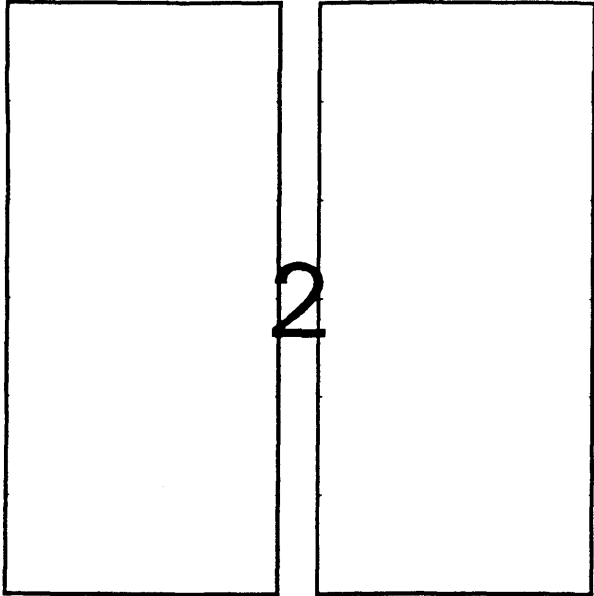
Boundary Justification:

The boundary of the nominated property includes the parcel of land historically associated with, and currently occupied by, the Ada Village Hall. The nominated property is located on railroad right-of-way and a legal description of the parcel does not exist. The property boundary shown on the accompanying map was determined by extrapolating from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps the parcel of land that was used by the Village (later City) of Ada for village hall purposes.

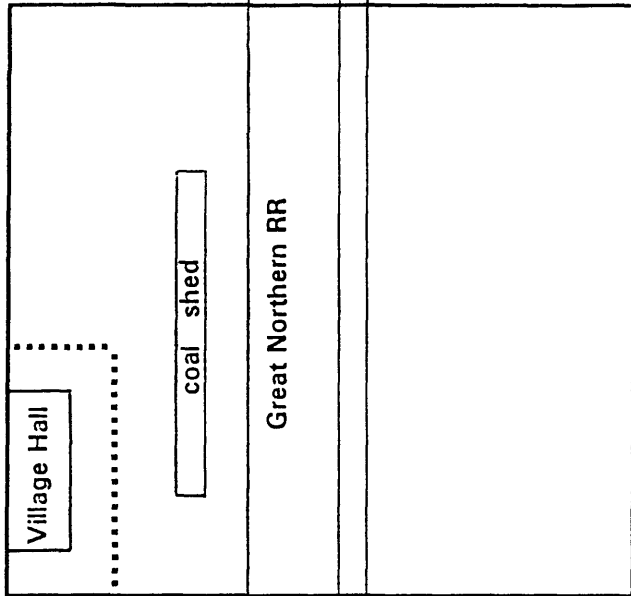
Ada Village Hall
Ada, Norman County, Minnesota



WEST 5TH

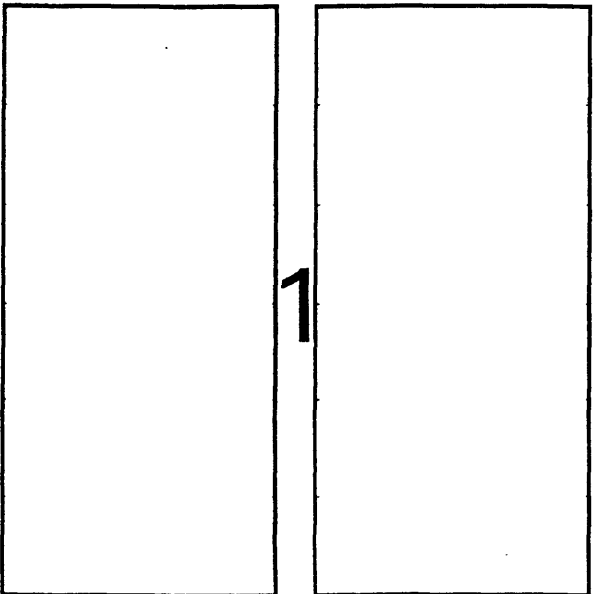


ST N

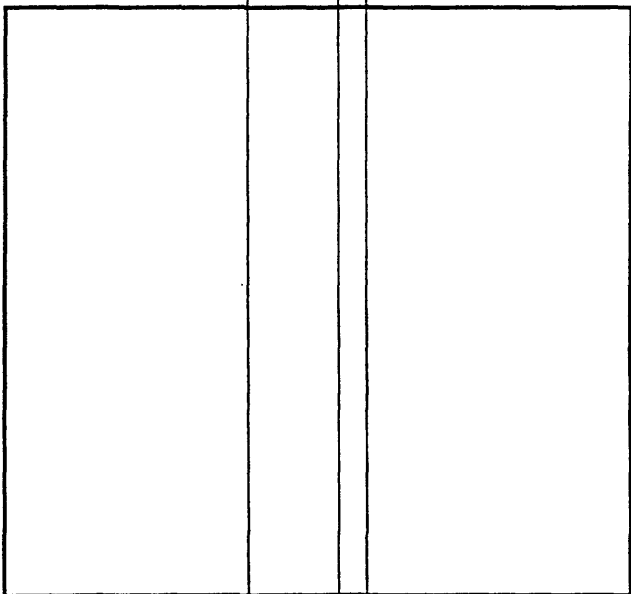


ST N

WEST 4TH



AVE N



WEST MAIN

EAST MAIN

..... Boundary of Designated Property

SCALE 1" = 100'