

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Washington
COUNTY: Pierce
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE MAY 17 1974

1. NAME

COMMON: Old City Hall
AND/OR HISTORIC: Tacoma City Hall

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 7th Avenue between Commerce and Pacific			
CITY OR TOWN: Tacoma		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #6 - Honorable Floyd V. Hicks	
STATE: Washington	CODE: 53	COUNTY: Pierce	CODE: 053

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

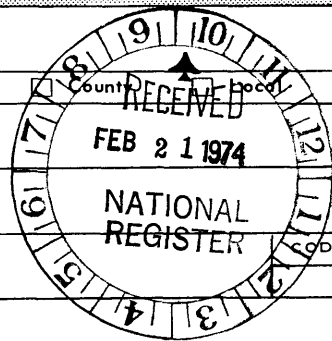
OWNER'S NAME: Old Tacoma City Hall Corporation Ltd. Partnership	STATE: Washington
STREET AND NUMBER: Pier 59	
CITY OR TOWN: Seattle	
STATE: Washington	
CODE: 06	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Pierce County Courthouse, County/City Building	
STREET AND NUMBER: 930 Tacoma Avenue South	
CITY OR TOWN: Tacoma	STATE: Washington
	CODE: 53

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: None
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
STATE:



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The old Tacoma City Hall is a five story masonry structure with a prominent tower on the southeast corner which rises to a height of ten stories. There is a suggestion of a second tower on the northeast corner but it extends not much beyond the corner height of the main structure and has a hipped roof as does the predominant tower. Both are copper sheathed and have acquired a vedigris.

Although built with masonry bearing walls, the building has many windows. Windows are rectangular and of equal size on the second and third stories. The fifth story windows are much smaller and narrower although of the same proportions. The fourth story windows are fully arched.

The original plan called for foundations of rusticated stone but this was replaced by local Wilkeson stone, probably for reasons of economy. Wilkeson sandstone is a light warm gray stone of exceptional durability. The foundations walls are eight feet thick at the base and taper to six feet at street level. The walls themselves are of common red brick faced with yellow Roman brick. The origin of the facing brick is a matter of some conjecture. Some feel it came as ballast from China or Belgium. Others say it was imported from Italy. Although visually appearing as part of a single structure the square tower is actually a freestanding masonry mass. There is a clock on each face.

The building is a trapezoid in plan and strongly reflects the Italian Villa style. Small round windows appear below the corner line; three large round windows occur below the corner on the tower. Heavy brackets are installed above the corner and separate narrow rectangular windows on the tower body. A group of three arched windows are situated on each side near the top and a row of small round windows circles the tower between the arched windows and the eave line. Terra cotta decorations embellish the tower and areas of the entablature.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Completed 1893**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

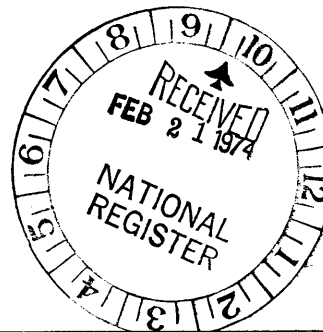
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Tacoma was first and foremost a railroad town, the western terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Although surrounded by forests, an unusually large number of the city's civic and economic leaders in the 1880's and 90's were educated in the east or middle west. Attracted by the potential of financial success, they came to the city with pre-established tastes in business and culture and the Old City Hall is an example of those tastes.

The building was designed by the San Francisco firm, Hatherton and McIntosh. Hatherton was the official architect for San Francisco and had designed that municipality's city hall. The old Tacoma City Hall was completed April 23, 1893 at a cost of \$257,965 and was used by the city until 1957.

The upper floors of the tower house a magnificent clock and a set of four bells. The clock is reputed to be one of the finest in the world, and the bells were cast by the McShane Bell Foundry in Baltimore, the same company which, over 100 years earlier, cast the Liberty Bell. The bells consist of 8,000 pounds of silver bell metal, a metal made especially to resonate. Hugh Wallace of Tacoma, ambassador to France during WW1, gave the bells and chimes for Tacoma in memory of his daughter on Christmas Day, 1904. The pendulum of the clock, twelve feet in length, is suspended on a single wire, forty feet in length. The mechanism of the clock is run by gravity and the motors are wound electrically. In the early years of the clock's history, a man had to wind a different part of the mechanism every four hours by hand.

The structure is representative of the ebullience of spirit that characterized the city of Tacoma in the late 19th century; it "...seems to combine a romantic feeling for the spirit of fifteenth century Florence with the mercantile spirit of nineteenth century America."



9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Tacoma Daily Ledger, October 26, 1891, April 1, 1931.
2. Hunt, Herbert, Tacoma, Its History and Its Builders. Chicago, 1916. Volume 2, pp. 167-170.
3. Tacoma Weekly News, May 25, 1917.
4. Polk's City Directory, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895
5. Sias, Patricia, An Examination of Influences on Selected Tacoma Architecture 1890-1914, M.A. Thesis, University of Puget Sound, 1971.
6. Tacoma News Tribune, January 25, 1967.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

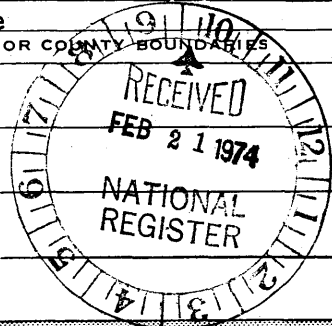
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		47° 15' 27"	122° 26' 20"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

10/542486
5233710
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Barnett P. Schorr, Project Architect

ORGANIZATION: **Barnett Schorr Co., Inc.** DATE: **July, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
707 N.E. Northlake Way

CITY OR TOWN: **Seattle** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **53**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Charles H. Odegaard
Charles H. Odegaard

Title: Director - Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission

Date: February 8, 1974

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/17/74

ATTEST:

Charles H. Henry
Acting Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5 16 74