

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



80

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Talent Elementary School

other names/site number Talent Town Hall, Talent City Hall, Talent Community Center

2. Location

street & number 206 Main Street not for publication

city or town Talent vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Jackson code 029 zip code 97540

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official/Title: [Signature] Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 1-12-12

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper [Signature]

Date of Action 3/7/12

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
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

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- EDUCATION: School
- GOVERNMENT: City Hall/Town Hall
- GOVERNMENT: Library
- SOCIAL: Meeting Hall
- SOCIAL: Clubhouse
- SOCIAL: Civic

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- GOVERNMENT: City Hall/Town Hall
- SOCIAL: Meeting Hall
- SOCIAL: Civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- foundation: STONE: Sandstone
- walls: WOOD: Horizontal Board (Drop Siding)
- roof: ASPHALT: Asphalt Shingle
- other: N/A

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Completed in 1899, the Talent Elementary School is a large single story wood-frame structure with a gable-on-hip roof that rises from a stone and post-pier foundation. The property is located in the center of Talent, Oregon and has, for more than a century, served both literally and figuratively as the center of civic life in that community. Essentially a vernacular volume, the exterior of the building exhibits a modest Classical influence, typical of vernacular public-use structures built during the late 19th century. The Talent Elementary School retains its original double-drop exterior wood siding, double-hung 1/1 wood windows, and virtually all other original details on both the interior and exterior. After purchase by the City in 1914, the building was augmented by several additions to the rear and east, all constructed during the period of significance (1899-1971). The Talent Elementary School retains very high integrity to its original design and character, effectively conveying both its original appearance and the associations for which it is significant.

Narrative Description

The Talent Elementary School building, long referred to as Talent City Hall and now known as the Talent Community Center, is an imposing one-story wood-frame volume with a bell tower, located in the heart of downtown Talent, Oregon. Built in 1899 and first used as a school, the building was converted to city government use in 1914 and since then has housed a wide variety of public and civic uses. Designed in a simple vernacular style with cornerboards, a wide frieze and strong watertable typical of Classical architecture, the Talent Elementary School building is largely unaltered from its original design and construction. Additions to the rear and east, related to the building's expanding use by the City of Talent, were all completed during the period of significance.

Location and Site

The Talent Elementary School building is located on a flat parcel at the northwest corner of Main and Market (formerly I) streets, in the center of downtown Talent, Oregon. The nominated parcel is a portion of Tax Lot 4800, a larger lot that has been devoted to public use since its purchase by School District No. 22 in 1899. The building occupies roughly the front half of the site, along with its associated landscape features. Two other, newer, public buildings are located to the north; the 1975 Talent Public Library (now occupied by the Talent Historical Society) and the still newer Talent Branch of the Jackson County Library System, completed in 2007.

Talent is one of eleven incorporated cities located in Jackson County, Oregon and was founded in the late-19th century, primarily due to its proximity to the major north-south wagon route north of Ashland. In early 1884 the main north-south rail line through the Rogue River Valley also came through the Talent area, connecting Oregon to California by 1887. In 1915 Jackson County took steps to develop the former wagon route (now Talent Avenue) into what became the Pacific Highway, later Highway 99. This route passed through Talent one block east of the nominated parcel for the next two decades, prior to being relocated to the current route of Oregon 99 (South Pacific Highway) in the late-1930s. Interstate 5 was opened located east of Bear Creek, adjacent to downtown Talent, in 1963.

The front lawn of the building contains several community-installed elements, as described below, within a small park-like setting. Surrounding uses include modern commercial to the east and a small historical residential area directly to the west. Talent's current City Hall and Commons, as well as a replica Talent Railroad Depot, are located at the NE corner of Main and First streets, creating a public/governmental core

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

area that occupies the majority of the Block L, as defined on plat of the Original Town of Talent. Other uses, on the south side of Main Street, include small residential, civic and commercial structures of mixed vintage.

Exterior Description

The main, original, wood-framed volume of the Talent Elementary School is a rectangular plan with a projecting stairwell/bell tower centered on the south-facing, front, elevation. Both the 31' x 53' main volume and the attached bell tower rise from an exposed coursed stone foundation with vertical wood skirting above a post and pier substructure, all of which remains largely as-built in 1899. A strong two-part watertable runs the perimeter, below original double-drop painted wood siding. Cornerboards rise to a wide frieze below box soffits. The main roof, now of dark architectural grade asphalt shingle, is a modified gable on hip roof, with small gable-ends below the raised main ridgeline.

The front projecting entry volume is a clipped gable, also in architectural grade shingle, with the open bell tower above, set below a pyramidal hipped roof. An original, framed, panel is located above the doorway, with twin diagonal siding frames flanking a larger, rectangular "sign panel," that has been serially used to identify the building since its construction. The main entry doors are twin five panel painted wood, set below fixed transom panels. Windows on the main volume are almost entirely original, 1/1 double hung wood sash set singly to light the restroom facilities flanking the entry, and in larger banks of three elsewhere. Upper sash on the main volume all retain extended side elements, creating the characteristic "lamb's tongue" detail typical of 19th century design. The banked windows also include an upper, fixed, transom panel to create a 10' tall opening. Window trim is of plain 6" wide painted boards with projecting sills and aprons. Rear entry doors, opening onto the non-original ADA ramp system at the NW corner, are modified, with solid-panels over original wood panels.

The main volume of the Talent Elementary School is augmented to the rear (north) and side (east) by two additions. At the rear a clipped gable volume (approximately 20' x 28') is now used for storage. This wood-framed addition is clad 6-inch v-groove shiplap siding. Lacking a water table this building shows considerable exterior evidence of modification with a non-functional rear door at (actually below) grade, as well as various other modified openings.

The entire eastern side of the main volume is flanked by a large (22' x 60') flat-roofed addition that was built by the Talent Lions Club in 1957 (see below); a project that included the removal of the original east elevation. This addition includes an excavated, daylight basement and has concrete masonry unit (concrete block) walls below the main floor level with mixed siding above (double drop on the north-facing elevation, 8" lap siding on the remaining (east, south and west) elevations. Some of this siding was likely salvaged from an earlier structure in this area of the Community Center. The 1957 addition has a flat, membrane-type roof, with unusual boxed soffits.

Interior, Main Floor

Primary access is via a wide flight of stairs on the south-elevation, leading to an anteroom (with bell rope) and the large main meeting room. The central meeting room retains original beadboard wainscot for much of the perimeter, with mixed, non-original, tackboard above that is approximately 48" high. Above the tackboard a horizontal trim board delineates the transition to lath and plaster upper walls and ceiling. A picture molding remains, running the entire perimeter of the tall (13') high ceiling.

An engaged brace frame of large 8" x 8" timbers divides the space, centered on the entry doors to the north and south. Two engaged brick flues are located on the north wall, original elements that are no longer functional as the above-roof elements (corbelled brick chimneys) were removed post-1963. Door and window trim is uniformly of painted wood in traditional design, with plain casings and projecting crown molding. There is no baseboard to speak of, with 3/4" quarter round molding atop vinyl tile flooring.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Lighting throughout the main meeting area of the building is non-original, having been installed in 1995 as an element of a community restoration project. Period-appropriate "Schoolhouse" type globes on brass pendants are mounted in two parallel rows, based on typical schoolhouse design of the early 20th century. Ceiling fans are mounted in a single row, down the center of the space, also a modification installed as part of the 1995 community restoration effort.

A set of non-original double doors set into the north elevation lead to the clipped gable roof "storage" room. The interior of this space is largely non-descript, with little indication of its original design or historic character. Two small "stub" walls of the original volume define the separation between original and the 1957 Lions Club addition at the east. Ceiling height here in this area is lower, approximately nine-feet, although exterior windows appear to have been salvaged from the east elevation of the 1899 building and, shed of the upper transoms due to lower ceiling height, were reinstalled as part of the 1957 addition design. The front portion of the addition, to the south, is currently used as office space by the Talent Chamber of Commerce, having previously served as a variety of city offices and the first location of the Talent Historical Society. The front office space, in addition to an interior connection, is also accessible via an exterior entryway. The rear portion of the 1957 addition is used as the community kitchen and is located behind a glass/counter system that is set up for cafeteria style food distribution. The interior of the kitchen, with stoves, a commercial sink, and storage areas has been much modified and while continuing a historic use, has little design of note.

At the SE corner of the 1957 addition, a small door leads, via dog leg stair, to the daylight basement level. This area, with CMU walls, occupies the majority of the 22' x 60' addition area. A second entrance, at the NE corner, provides exterior access beneath a small landing that creates rear access to the community kitchen. The basement was formally used to house a variety of city services including the public library, and at last a pre-school. The basement is prone to severe ground-water and flooding and is no longer occupied.

No interior photographs of the Talent Elementary School during its initial period of use are known to exist. The understanding of the original configuration of the building during its school usage is largely conjecture, based upon period descriptions of the "two room" school, some physical evidence, and the scant data available from exterior photographs. From those sources it appears the main volume included a central partition wall located where the brace frame is today, centered on the two entry doors, to create two roughly equal sized classrooms. As shown in the attached historic figures, interior finish and design, to the extent that can be determined, appears largely as it does today, albeit with stained trim rather than the current paint.

In the decade following its purchase of the school district property in 1914, the City of Talent appears to have largely limited alterations to paint and general cleaning. The only documented change from this period is the installation of town's fire bell, in replacement of the removed school bell, in the tower.

In 1928, in cooperation with the Talent Ladies Improvement Club, the City Council approved the reconfiguration of the interior, as well as an addition. "A large banquet room has been built, which will seat about 100" (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 29-March-1928). Based upon physical details and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (see Map 4), this addition appears to be the one at the rear now used as storage. At the same time the original "two-room" configuration of the main school area was modified, to create the larger, unified, character of the main floor as it exists today. This change is amply documented, in both the minutes of the Talent City Council, which approved a motion to "...take out the partition between the two rooms and put in folding doors..." and then in the minutes of the Talent Community Club, which in October purchased a "...a curtain to divide the room.". Among other improvements at the time was a new floor, "...which was laid over the old floor" (*Talent Council Minutes*, 6-May-1928, *Talent Community Club Minutes*, 17-Oct-1928).

When completed [the building] will be dedicated as Talent's Community Hall. There has been quite a need for this kind of a building in Talent, and everyone is overjoyed by the prospect of having a building of this type in town (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 29-March-1928).

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Another major improvement in 1928 was the installation of interior plumbing, the costs of which were shared by the City and the Community Club. The City also installed a septic system at this time (Talent Council Minutes, 3-April-1928). That project was completed by June of that year, when the Council "...decided to remove the old toilet from the [city hall] grounds and sell it for \$10" (Talent Council Minutes, 5-June-1928). Various maintenance and minor improvements occurred throughout the 1930s, as the building saw increased use during the Depression. In 1934 Council approved the Chamber of Commerce's request to build a playground to the rear of the City Hall and in 1934 they agreed to cooperate with the Chamber and the Community Club to purchase a piano. A major project, Talent's new city-wide sewer system, was completed in 1936, replacing the septic system. A new roof and painting occurred in 1939 and 1941, respectively, but little other work appears to have happened at the building until the late 1950s. At some undocumented time, prior to 1976, the original shingle siding of the bell tower was removed and replaced with double-drop, to match the remainder of the exterior.

The largest single modification to the Talent Elementary School building occurred in 1957, when the construction of the large addition to the east was funded by the Talent Lions Club. "Lions Club Volunteers under the direction of Mayor Frank Christian built an addition to the Community Building on the northeast side, using pumice blocks" (Cook, 1999:6). The rear portion of the addition was dedicated for use by the Talent Library, finally getting that function out of the main room and giving it a secure location. "Since the Talent Library moved into the new room built by the Talent community and the Lion's Club last September, its popularity has had a spectacular increase according to the librarians" (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 25-August-1958, 14:1).

By the mid-1960s the "old kitchen" which was located somewhere to the rear of the building, was in such poor condition that the Jackson County Health Department condemned it. The City granted permission to the Lions and other clubs to raze the old kitchen and convert the-then library into a new one. "In January 1966, the Lion's Club provided the labor and funding to build the current kitchen and the library moved into the basement of the 1957 addition" (Cook, 1999:7).

After the 1971 relocation of Talent's government offices to a new building, the Talent Community Center became the focus of the community's bicentennial celebration effort. Progressive Remodeling Company, of Medford, served as the general contractor for the project, which included the reconstruction of the front doorway and a new ramp that would allow for wheelchair access (*Ashland Daily Tidings*, 12-June-1976). This feature, which was located on the west side of the stairs and projected out from the building into the lawn area, was subsequently removed, when the present ADA ramp was constructed at the building's NW corner in 1990. The 1971 project, which included the installation of a new heating system, may have also resulted in the removal of the exterior brick chimneys, which had survived at least as late as 1963 (See Figure 8). An effort in 1971 to repair the bell, which had cracked, apparently failed. The Talent Fire Bell, which still remains in the tower, was finally repaired and rung again in late 1980 (*Ashland Daily Tidings*, 17-December-1980,

The most recent renovation effort occurred following the formation of the Talent Community Center Restoration Commission in 1994. Their five year plan included repair to the stone foundation, a new roof, repainting of the exterior, and restoration of the interior in historically appropriate colors. New, replica, lighting was installed in the main hall, replacing earlier, non-historic, fluorescent fixtures.

Site Features

As a publicly site for more than eleven decades and the main location for most of Talent's governmental and social functions during that period, the grounds of the Community Center have been the focus of local interest since before the City purchased the property and the ladies of Community Club voiced interest in seeing the property "parked." Periodic reports in both the council minutes and the monthly meeting notes of the Community Club document new plantings, a public barbeque, playground and even a community Christmas tree, among other efforts to improve and beautify the grounds. Several built features on the property remain

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

and while not individually counted as resources within Section 5, they help to document the history of the site as the "center" of civic and community life in Talent, Oregon. The small built elements surrounding the Community Center are;

John L. Butler Sr. Memorial Drinking Fountain: This feature, of random laid stone mortared to a concrete base,

is located adjacent to the main entry walkway. It was placed by the Talent Lions Club in honor of Mr. Butler, who served as the Talent Watermaster. Believed to have been installed about 1960, this is not the drinking fountain that was approved by City Council in 1935 (Council Minutes, 4-June-1935, Wright, 2011). That feature, of cobblestone, was located within a circular walkway in front of the building and was removed at some undocumented time (See Figure 9).

Flagpole: A steel flagpole mounted in a small concrete base, this feature is adorned with a cast bronze plaque that identifies it simply as "Another Lions Project." It is located just beyond the drinking foundation, on east side of the main walkway. No specific date of installation or other information on the flagpole is known, although it likely dates from the 1960s.

Talent Veterans Memorial: A two-part monument of pink and grey granite, this memorial is located west of the walkway, set within the lawn. It is dedicated to the memory of ten individuals who lost their lives in World War II, as well as all those from Talent who served in the military. No specific date of installation or other information on this feature is known, although it likely dates from the late 1940s or early 1950s and may be related to the use of the City Hall by the Veterans of Foreign Wars during that period.

Architectural Style

Although the Talent Elementary School building reflects the influence of various stylistic trends during the 19th century, the building is most accurately described as being of vernacular design with strong evidence of the Classical style, as was employed for late 19th century public structures in the region. No designer has been identified with the 1899 construction and while newspaper accounts clearly indicate that "plans and specifications" were prepared as a part of the bid package, the assumption is that these plans were fairly simple, referring to size, room arrangement and basic method of construction. "Vernacular" design has been defined as "...traditional architecture, passed on to successive generations of builders and designers through the use of manufactured building forms and elements..." (Gottfried & Jennings, 1885:VII).¹

Although in much of the West vernacular is most accurately described as building devoid of presumption, a structure that simply encloses space and provides function, Gottfried & Jennings' recognition of the use of manufactured building forms and elements into the definition, is particularly telling. The arrival of the railroad to an area like Talent in the late 19th-century, and the ready availability of millwork and standard elements that came with it, no doubt affected the design and construction of a wide range of buildings, including the Talent Elementary School. Surviving detail of the structure, including the double-drop siding, a mass-milled siding that presents the appearance of two 3" drop boards milled together to allow easier and faster installation, is just one example of the influence of manufactured millwork on design. The five panel doors that remain throughout much of the original volume were also likely purchased from the mill, even if that mill happened to have been located in the wood-producing region of southern Oregon, also show the broader influence of the manufacturing process on design. As one of the oldest wood-framed public structures still extant in the southern Oregon region, the Talent Elementary School Building is a rare, nearly unaltered, example of the vernacular style as used during the late-19th and early 20th century.

¹ In this sense a barn, for example, is often best described as a "vernacular" structure, essentially a machine in building form that has evolved through trial and error over time to best suit the needs of the farm.

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

Summary

Although the Talent Elementary School building has been subject to various modifications and additions in the eleven decades since it first opened as Talent's third elementary school, the building retains a very high degree of integrity in design, location, use of materials, and workmanship. Original siding, original windows, even those that were relocated into the 1957 addition to the east, not only convey the building's original design but effectively document its evolution and change over time as it grew and was modified to provide for a wide range of public and social services in the city. Built in 1899 and continuing in public use as modified for more than a century, the Talent Elementary School retains very high integrity to its original design and character

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1899 - 1971

Significant Dates

1899 - Date of Construction

1899 - 1911 - Used as school

1912 - 1971 - local gov't/civic use

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Roberts & Orr, Medford, OR (Builders)

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Period of Significance (justification)

The initial period of significance under Criterion A (1899-1911) includes the construction of the building and its operation as the Talent Elementary School. The second, longer, period of significance (1914-1971) reflects the period of the building's history during which it housed virtually all aspects of local government while serving as the focal point of the community and the meeting place for a wide variety of social and civic groups in Talent, Oregon. The period of significance under Criterion C is 1899, the date of construction and the completion of the builder's work.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary):

The Period of Significance for Criterion A, Politics and Government, extends past the 50-year guideline to incorporate the entirety of the building's service history as the Talent City Hall and the period during which the building was the center of community life.

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

Built in 1899, the Talent Elementary School is located in the center of Talent, Oregon and for more than a century and served literally and figuratively as the center of civic life in that community. First used as a school and then, acquired by the city in 1914, this one-story building has housed virtually every aspect of local government, serving as Talent's city hall, city offices, post office, and the library in addition to hosting a wide variety of non-profit community groups, public lectures, dances, public movies, and other events. The Period of Significance under Criterion A, Education, begins in 1899 with the building's construction and ends in 1911 when the building ceased to serve as a school. The building's association with Government and Politics and Social History begins in 1914, with the city's acquisition, and continues through 1971 when Talent built a new city hall and moved its administrative functions out of the building for the first time since 1914. The Talent Elementary School is locally significant under Criterion A, for its strong and continuing association with the development of Talent, Oregon and its role in that city's local government. The building is also significant under Criterion C, as a rare and almost entirely intact example of 19th century wood-frame vernacular architecture as used for public purposes in the southern Oregon region. The period of significance under Criterion C is 1899, the date of construction.

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

Built in 1899 as the third building occupied by the Talent Elementary School, by 1912 this large one-story wood frame building located in the center of Talent, Oregon was in use as that city's first city hall. Purchased from the school district in 1914, under various names the Talent Elementary School, including the Talent City Hall and the Talent Community Center, has housed the full range of public and social organizations that have collectively played a pivotal role in the history and development of the community. The Talent Elementary School has been formally known as the "Talent Community Center" since 1965. The property is eligible for listing under Criterion A and C, in the following areas of significance.

Education: Constructed in 1899, the third Talent Elementary School was constructed by School District #22 to accommodate a growing school-age population. In July 1899 the citizens of Talent unanimously approved funds to construct a new school in a special election. The new building was completed on schedule and classes were first held in the building in early December 1899. By 1910, after just eleven years of school use, the community of Talent was still growing and pressure again mounted for the construction of a newer and more modern school facility. Construction on the fourth Talent Elementary School, built of brick, began in May 1911 and was completed by late that year. Although the district may have held classes in both structures for a time during late-1911, the older wood-frame building was soon vacated.

Politics/Government: Occupied by city offices in 1912 and purchased by the City of Talent in 1914, four years after its incorporation, the Talent Elementary School was Talent's first permanent city hall and until 1971 housed virtually all elements of local government, including administrative offices, city council chambers, police, public works, and the building and planning departments. Indeed, with the exception of the local fire department (located in a now removed structure elsewhere on the same tax lot) the nominated property contained all local government functions in Talent, Oregon for nearly seven decades.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Social History: The Talent Elementary School building is strongly associated with a variety of community and social functions in Talent, Oregon, including the "Ladies Improvement League (later the Talent Community Club), which advocated for the city's original purchase of the property in 1914 and worked to maintain and improve the building and its grounds for local use. Between 1920 and 1964 the Talent Elementary School housed the Talent Library, partially funded and staffed by the members of the Community Club. Numerous other local groups and functions, including boy and girl scouts, the VFW, Lions Club, Talent Garden Club, Red Cross and others have all relied upon the Talent Elementary School for regular meeting space.

Architecture: The Talent Elementary School is a large and substantially "as-built" example of late-19th century wood-frame vernacular architecture, exhibiting elements associated with the Classical Revival style that was popular during the later part of the 19th century. One of, if not the, oldest example of wood-frame vernacular public-use structures in southern Oregon, the building exemplifies the design and character of typical construction as used for schools, churches, and other public buildings.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Context

The area that became Talent was first settled by Euro-Americans in the mid-19th century as immigrants staked claims in the flat plains flanking Wagner Creek and began to develop agricultural tracts. The area was largely rural, with few if any local services. "For more than 20 years, the pioneers of the Wagner Creek vicinity had to travel to Phoenix, Ashland, or Jacksonville to pick up their mail, dine at a restaurant, buy dry goods or get a shave and haircut" (Wright, 2009:7). About 1875 a carpenter by the name of Aaron Patton Talent arrived in the area and soon began buying land adjacent to the creek and the main wagon road through the area. Mr. Talent divided the acreage into lots for a new town and soon developed a small commercial center, focused on his own store, "Talent's."

By 1884 the community had begun to take shape. The *Ashland Tidings* reported that "...across [Wagner Creek] it is all divided up now and is being covered with housing, forming quite a village" (*Ashland Tidings*, 31-October-1884). The new community obtained a post office in February 1883 and after the short tenure of Charlie M. Harvey, A. P. Talent was named as the postmaster, a position he held until 1890. Although Mr. Talent's preferred name for the new community was reportedly "Wagner Creek," the town almost immediately became known as Talent and the name stuck (Helbock, 1968).

Talent, the town, developed steadily, if not rapidly during the late-19th century, as it became a service center for the vast surrounding agricultural acreage. Although the railroad line through the Rogue Valley went through the center of Talent, the town itself did not merit a formal depot until 1900, when the Southern Pacific Railroad deigned to relocate the old, original, wood frame depot that had served Medford since 1884. Loaded onto a flatbed car, Talent's new depot was placed at the NE corner of First and Main streets, and quickly boosted the town's ability to ship area products out of the valley (*Medford Mail*, 15-Jun-1900, 5:3).

In the decade between 1900 and 1910 Talent, like the rest of the Rogue River Valley and much of Oregon, saw significant population growth. Jackson County's prosperity was largely fueled by expansion of the orchard industry and the fertile, generally flat, lands surrounding Talent were placed into orchard and crop production. In September 1910, convinced of the town's bright future, Talent voters began the process of incorporating their community and petitioned the Jackson County Court for the right of self-governance. "At the Court's direction, an election was held on 5-October-1910 for qualified voters within the boundaries of the proposed city and by a vote of 46 for and 24 against the "Town of Talent" was formally established" (Kramer, 1994:18).

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Talent's population in 1910 is estimated at about 200 residents. The 1920 census reports 278 residents living in the community (*Oregon Bluebook*, 1925-26:181).

School District No. 22

Wagner Creek, settled initially by a locally distinct group of families that apparently placed high value on education and independent thinking, established its first school as early as 1856. The Wagner Creek School District #22 was created on December 9, 1862 (Nesheim, 1977:64).² The first Wagner Creek School building was located far outside what would become the town of Talent, closer to the farming families lining the canyon along the creek. As the new town grew, the ability of the Wagner Creek district to serve the town's children was difficult, given the distance between the two areas and so in 1888 the school district was split, with Talent retaining the District #22 designation.³

Talent's District #22 apparently built another building within the town for its use, the second Talent Elementary School. By 1899, however, as the community continued to grow, they determined to construct a new and modern structure to be located in a more accessible location. In July 1899 Talent voters participated in a special election on the question of whether to fund construction of a new school. They answered that question strongly in the affirmative.

[T]he voters of the Talent School District decided by unanimous vote to issue bonds [in the] amount of \$2000 for the purpose of erecting a new school building. A two-room building will be required and it will be a creditable structure. The site has not yet been definitely decided upon but there will be a change from the location at the present building, which is situated about one mile from the center of town (*Ashland Tidings*, 6-July-1899).

By the end of the month the school board was advertising for bids. The plans and specifications were reported as being available for inspection at the home of D. H. Hanscom, the board chairman however a delay in finalizing the plans pushed the contract award out to late August (*Ashland Tidings*, 27-July-1899, 14-August-1899). In early September 1899 C. K. Klum, a prominent local businessman, sold a large lot in the center of the town to District No. 22 for \$200 (JCD 36:425). On September 10, 1899 the School Board awarded the \$1400 construction contract for its new school building to Roberts & Orr, a contracting firm based in Medford (*Ashland Tidings*, 14-Sept-1899, 3:4). Less than a week later the contractors were on the site. The new and much larger building was anticipated to be completed by late November.

Work on the new school building for this place is being pushed by the contractors, who have agreed to complete it in 60 days. It will be a two-room building, fitted with modern furnishings, with a maximum seating capacity of 100 and costing \$2000. It will occupy a fine site near the center of the village, which is well-drained and easy to access to the entire district (*Oregonian*, 21-September-1899, 3:5).

Construction of the new and commodious two-room school house in district No. 22, Talent, the contract for which was let last week, is being pushed. It will be a credit to the district and the

² Among Wagner Creek's earliest residents was John Beeson, who would become a nationally-known crusader urging fair treatment of the Rogue Valley's native peoples. Beeson's son, Welborn, who's valuable diaries remain a significant primary source for southern Oregon history, built a hexagonal house, likely one of the only such structures in the county, and was known for his "free-thinking" on a wide range of issues. Other Wagner Creek residents would later band together to form the UML, the Universal Men of Liberty, a sort of gathering hall for political and social discussion. Talent is notable, in 1912, for having elected a Socialist Party candidate, William Breese, to its city council and was among the first communities to elect a woman to serve as well.

³ Wagner Creek would become District #56 and would remain independent until after WWII. The Wagner Creek School, a fine stucco-coated masonry structure, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992 (NRIS 92001331).

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

public spirit of the tax-payers (*Ashland Tidings*, 14-September-1899, 3:4)

Construction on the new Talent Elementary School, the third building of that name, was completed on schedule and classes were first held in the building in early December 1899. "School will commence at the fine new schoolhouse, just completed at Talent, District No. 22, next Monday, the 11th, with Miss. A. A. Beebe of this city as principal and Miss Annie Jeffery as assistant" (*Ashland Tidings*, 4-December-1899).

By 1910, after just eleven years of school use, the community of Talent was still growing and pressure again mounted for the construction of a newer and more modern school facility. Albany-based architect Charles F. Burgraff was hired to design a large new multi-story brick structure that would include space for secondary education in addition to the primary grades. Construction on the fourth Talent Elementary School began in May 1911 and was completed by late that year. Although the district may have held classes in both structures for a time during late-1911, the older wood-frame building was soon vacated.⁴

With the end of classes, the future of the 1899 Talent Elementary School remained uncertain. By February 1912 published accounts suggested that it might be transferred to the newly incorporated Town of Talent for public use.

What is to be done with the old school house just vacated for the new one? This is a question that comes to some of the citizens of the district. Many are in favor of turning the grounds and buildings over to the Town of Talent, to be used for public purposes, and the grounds to be parked and the buildings to be painted and put in good condition (*Ashland Tidings*, 26-February-1912, 6:3-4).

More than a year later the idea of the town acquiring the building was still being discussed. "Citizen," an anonymous writer to the local newspaper, suggested making the old school "...the civic center of the community," and transforming it to accommodate "...a fine city hall...reading room, gymnasium etc," suggesting that volunteers could do the work of fixing up the building as soon as possible to fix the present eyesore (*Ashland Tidings*, 8-December-1913, 3:3-4).

The ladies of the village have suggested the parking of the property and would undoubtedly do their part as they have everything else.... [I]n the past nearly every move for a healthier and more beautiful community anywhere was started among the women, or with some man whose wife was the power behind the throne (*Ashland Tidings*, 8-December-1913, 3:3-4).

Town Hall and the "Ladies of the Village"

Much of the interest in the old school building seems to have been directed by an organized group of Talent women who first banded together under the banner "Ladies Improvement League" but soon became known as the Talent Community Club. By early 1914 the club was meeting at the schoolhouse, discussing options for a city park on its grounds. "The old school property would make an ideal plot in a central place and could be fixed up at as little an outlay as any site in the community" (*Ashland Tidings*, 16-December-1914, 3:3).

The Community Club, or the Talent Women's Community Club, would later and more formally become known as the Talent Federated Women's Club. It was started in 1912 perhaps in part related to the opportunities the women saw in the "old schoolhouse" and remained a key element in the history of the Talent Elementary School building for more than half a century. In early March 1914, presumably at the instigation of the club, the Talent Town Council voted to offer the school district \$1500 for the old school house property. "If the transfer is made, the community club plans to beautify the building and grounds at once" (*Ashland Tidings*, 9-March-

⁴ The 1911 multi-story brick Talent Elementary School was razed in 1973 (Wright, 2009:106).

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

1914, 3:4).

A special election was held on 11-April-1914 to confirm the District's sale of the building to the town, with the small turnout voting almost unanimously to sell the property. On May 9, 1914 the Talent Elementary School property was formally transferred to the town (JCD, 105:408-9).⁵

It is the intention of the authorities to put the building into first-class condition, and the club is considering the beautifying of the grounds. (*Ashland Tidings*, 16-April-1914, 3:3-4).

Upon securing the building, the town and the ladies club proceeded as planned with some needed repair work, modifying the building to serve as Talent's first town hall and a large meeting space that would be available for the community's clubs and various social activities. "Two rooms of the Town Hall have been redecorated. One will be used by the Community Club and the other by the Town Council (*Ashland Tidings*, 8-February-1915, 3:4).

Shortly after the town purchased the building, perhaps as early as 1914, the Community Club provided funding to build an addition that housed the first kitchen and dining room (Burnett, 2009).⁶ This modification, with the stove and dishes provided by the club, allowed the Community Center to serve meals and cater events of all types. The Community Club kitchen would provide a much needed service to the growing number of users for the building. The Talent Community Club would continue to meet in the building for the rest of the club's existence, into the 1980s.

Upon its purchase of the old school building, and its redecoration in partnership with the Community Club, the former Talent Elementary School building was generally referred to as the "Town Hall," and that is the name that was painted over the main entry doors. The main floor provided the city with its first city council chambers, and the city's various officials, including the recorder, the town marshal and others were all housed in the building. The jail, a wood crib structure, was located out back. The Talent Fire Department housed its equipment in a small volume located to the building's west (See Figure 4) and then later in a larger structure facing the street, all on the former school property (See Figure 10).

Talent Library

A library for the community of Talent was established on April 24, 1920, with over two hundred books and eight magazines as its offerings. A room in city hall was prepared for the service, and records indicated that thirty-seven books were checked out on opening day (Reynolds, 1996:79).

One of the community uses that Talent lacked during this period was a public library and it was natural that the Talent Community Club would step up to address that need. The first library collection, which was located in the northwest corner of the main floor, had to be removed from the shelving at the end of the day and stored in a padlocked crate. "Since many events were held in this room, it was necessary to keep the library books cleared from the room" (Sommer, 1989).⁷

Beyond leading the charge to create a public library, and presumably either collecting or purchasing the books that formed the original collection, the Community Club undertook to fund the staff for the facility, paying the librarian's wages of \$5 per month. "The library was open two afternoons a week for three hours each day. The

⁵ This deed was not recorded until August, resulting in the use of an incorrect date in several previous discussions of this transfer.

⁶ This kitchen and dining room area was later razed and rebuilt with funding from the Talent Lions Club.

⁷ See Figure 5. The large wooden crate in the center of the photograph was reportedly used to store the library's books during off-hours.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

wages were raised to \$7.50 per month and then \$10.00, for three afternoons per week" (Sommer, 1989). The Community Club continued to pay the librarian's salary and other costs associated with the Talent Library for thirteen years, until the Talent City Council assumed that responsibility in 1933 (Talent City Council Minutes, February 1933).

As a part of city government, the Talent Library remained in the Community Center from more than half a century. From its first location at the northwest corner of the main floor, the Talent Library grew and after 1957 moved into the area that is now the kitchen, at the northeast corner of the building. Next, in 1964, the library moved into its third and final location in the building, in the daylight basement of the 1957 addition. This was a much larger and separate space with its own exterior entrance, an indication of the growing library use in Talent. "We thought this was our answer to a library until the rains brought excess flooding to the basement...Police Chief Chuck Roberts called me to tell me it was flooding and when I arrived the books were floating around on water up to my knees" (Sommer, 1989).

Merged into what is today the multi-branch Jackson County Library System, the Talent Library moved into its own, new, building located on city-owned property immediately behind the Community Center in June 1975. Today, still part of the county system, the Talent Public Library is located in an even newer building, completed in 2007, that is also located on the Community Center property. The 1975 library building is now the home of the Talent Historical Society, which has started and was first housed in the nominated Talent Elementary School.

Community Events

As one of the largest meeting spaces in town, the Talent Elementary School building has played host to a wide variety of events and social groups throughout its history. Beginning in the 1920s the Boy Scouts of America, as well as the Campfire Girls and the Girl Scouts and later the Blue Birds, all held their regular meetings here, paying the city rent for use of the space.⁸ The Council minutes throughout the 1930s are filled with various requests for use of the hall, or negotiation over its rental for special events or civic functions. Beginning in the late-1920s or 1930s, in addition to the scouting groups and the on-going use by the Community Club, the Lion's Club of Talent began its long-time association and use of the building. The Lions Club took an active role in renovation and improvement of the building and grounds, including the 1957 replacement of the original wood-frame kitchen/dining room in concrete block. Other groups that met in the building over the years include the Talent Grange, the Talent Garden Club, the Dramatic Club, and the Red Cross (who during WWII used the building to make bandages and other materials for the war effort). In 1940 the local meeting of the Townsend Club was held here. That national organization, which advocated for government assistance to people over the age of 60 and helped influence the debate that led to the 1937 creation of the Social Security system, was not the first politically-charged effort to rely upon the meeting space in the Talent City Hall building. In 1933 the Talent Council voted to end its rental agreement with the Talent meeting of the Good Government Congress, a controversial southern Oregon group that played a major role in what has been called the Jackson County Rebellion (Council Minutes, 20-March-1933).⁹ After WWII, along with the continuing civic and governmental uses, the Community Center also provided a home for the Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting and the Talent Moose Lodge. The "Square Services Church" held services in the building on Wednesday nights in 1940 (*Talent News Flash*, Vol. VII, #14). The Friends Church regularly rented

⁸ The Community Club and the Lions Club, nominally the "major" tenants in the building who essentially operated it on a near-partnership basis with the City, also paid rent. Council Minutes are replete with various discussions and disagreements between the entities about rental payments and discounts for club investments in lieu of rent.

⁹ The GGC, rising to power in the early days of the Great Depression, began as something of a workers union but soon devolved into a near-military like band that wrecked havoc throughout Jackson County in 1932-33. The rebellion is often said to have provided the inspiration for Sinclair Lewis' 1935 novel *It Can't Happen Here*.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

the space for its Sunday Services (Council Minutes, 3-October-1950).

In addition to these organizational uses, the Community Center provided a space for any number of dances and social events. During the Depression, a movie projector would be set up and local residents could enjoy a low-cost movie night, avoiding the costs of traveling to Ashland or Medford, since Talent didn't have a movie theater (see Figure 6). Members of the Civilian Conservation Core, the CCC, also used the building to show movies during the 1930s.

Post-City Hall Uses

While the city's use of the Talent Elementary School building continued after WWII, other uses, including the post office were also accommodated into the building which increasingly struggled to keep up with the space requirements of the growing community. Talent's population in 1940 was 381. Ten years later the city had grown to 739 residents, according to the US Census, growing further, to 862, in 1960 (Oregon Bluebook, 1960-61:328). In 1964 both the police department and the library were moved into the basement, creating more space upstairs. The old kitchen was condemned and in January 1966 the Lions stepped up to fund and construct a new kitchen, the one still is use today (Cook, 1999:7).

In 1970 Talent began construction of a new concrete block city office building to the west of the school building, and relocated most of the city services into that facility, including the council chambers.¹⁰ "[B]y 1971 the entire city administration, including the police department, had moved to its new facility" (Cook, 1999:8). As noted earlier, the library relocated to new quarters, still on the Community Center site, in 1975 and a new building for the Talent Police Department was constructed near the south portion of the town, shifting all formal city functions out of the old school building. Still used for public meetings, the building was renamed the Talent Community Center. In addition to the continued social and community uses, the building housed the LOVE Preschool in the 1975-1977, one of the first such institutions in Talent. In 1976 the restoration of the Community Center became a focal point for Talent's Bicentennial efforts, receiving a new, "extra wide" doorway and wheelchair ramp so that everyone could have access (*Ashland Daily Tidings*, 12-June-1976). The fire bell, installed in the tower around 1914, after the school bell had been removed, was restored in 1980 and rung for the first time in local memory (*Ashland Tidings*, 17-December-1980). The bell remains in the tower today.

In 1994 there was another community wide effort to restore the Community Center. The Talent Community Center Restoration Committee, under the auspices of the City, raised money to repaint the exterior, rebuild the front steps and renovate the building's interior, this time with careful attention to its historic design. One outcome of that effort was the formation of the Talent Historical Society, which opened its doors in the Community Center, in the front office space, on July 15, 1995.

More than a century after it opened as a school building, the Talent Community Center continues to serve a wide variety of public and social uses. When the 1970 concrete block city hall building was torn down and a new Talent city hall was constructed to the west, the Talent City Council moved its regular meetings back into the Community Center. Today, the Talent Elementary School Building is once again the location of a wide variety of public meetings, including, in addition to Council, the Talent Planning Commission, and the Talent Architectural Review Board along with most other city boards. Such public uses share the space with any number of family reunions, wedding showers, club meetings, and other functions, as the Talent Elementary School continues to serve the community of Talent.

¹⁰ Fire services had moved to yet another separate structure, located north of the 1975 library building, on the site that is currently occupied by most recent Talent Library.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Architectural Significance

The Talent Elementary School Building was designed and built of wood frame construction in a modest vernacular expression of the Classical Revival style. This style was typical for many of southern Oregon's earliest schools, churches, and other public or governmental buildings, particularly in the region's less populated cities and rural areas, where classic elements were interpreted in simple wood-frame structures that housed public uses such as schools, churches and government buildings. Many such structures, particularly within cities, were short-lived, replaced by larger and more permanent brick or otherwise "fireproof" construction as the valley's population grew and its economic capacity allowed for more elaborate designs. While several early wood-frame public structures survive in Jackson County *cities*, most notably the West School building in Medford (1884), most of these early structures were razed and replaced by other, more "permanent" construction, often within just a few decades after construction.¹¹ The pattern in Jackson County's unincorporated, less populated, *rural* areas, however, was different. As the small rural districts that they once served were merged into larger, typically more urban, districts through consolidation, rural school buildings were often sold and put to other uses. Most started out as one- or two-room buildings, substantially smaller in scale than the 1899 Talent Elementary School, if for no other reason than the Talent building served a far larger population than most of the region's small school districts. None of the several wood-frame school houses that do survive in southern Oregon, most of which post-date 1900, remain in public ownership. Most have been converted to residential use, although several are in use as community buildings, churches, or similar meeting spaces.¹² It bears note, of course, that the 1899 Talent Elementary School was itself replaced by a new, significantly larger, brick structure by 1911-12, after just over a decade of school use.

Like many vernacular structures, especially larger ones intended for public use, the Talent Elementary School has elements that reflect the influence of other design idioms. The strong cornerboards, frieze, boxed soffits and watertable of the building, although all functionally based and related to construction practice and durability,¹³ is based on the vocabulary of Classical Revival architecture, the resurgent interest in classical Greek and Roman design that influenced architecture in late-18th and 19th century America. The refined symmetry of the Talent Elementary School, especially evident in the balanced, bi-laterally symmetrical design of the original volume, clearly and effectively demonstrates a Classical Revival influence. As such, the Talent Elementary School is among the best wood-frame examples of that style in southern Oregon and is believed to be the best example of a 19th century wood-frame public use structure in southern Oregon still in public ownership.

¹¹ The West School, located at 517 West 10th Street, was originally located on what is now the site of the Jackson County Courthouse. Moved to allow construction of Medford's second school building (known as Washington School) in 1891, the building was sold to local businessman A. A. Davis, substantially redesigned and converted to residential usage. Later used as office space, it is now owned by Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Examples of early wood frame vernacular schools that were razed and replaced by brick or other masonry construction include, in addition to the examples in Talent detailed in this nomination, the old North School in Ashland (replaced by the brick Washington Elementary, which was itself razed for Briscoe Elementary in 1949) and the original Bellview School, which was replaced by a still standing and recently renovated masonry building the 1920s.

¹² Examples of late-19th and early 20th century school buildings that remain from Jackson County's one-time 102 individual school districts include the Antelope School, Derby School, and Valley View School. See Clay/Atwood, 1992). The Willow Spring school stands vacant, a hoped for community center, and the Table Rock School is now owned and occupied by a small church.

¹³ For example, the design of the watertable, although architecturally significant as a strong "base" for the building, is more logically related to the need to shed water away from the foundation and protect the interior framing. Use of multi-part elements in both the watertable and frieze allowed a carpenter to create a detailed, functional, element from small moldings and boards, resulting in attractive details that were within the limitations of the construction technology of the era. Cornerboards not only visually "frame" the design, but also protect the end grain of the siding boards while avoiding the need to hand-cut dozens and dozens of miter joints, each of which would be prone to expand with the change of the seasons and permit water to penetrate into the structure. In this way "style" was really based upon construction technology and function, each element either providing for an improved weather envelope or making the job of assembly with hand-powered tools that much more efficient.

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

Summary

The Talent Elementary School, built in 1899 as the third structure to serve that function, played an important role in the development of the community of Talent and is among the oldest public buildings in southern Oregon that is still regularly used by the public. It is the among the oldest wood-frame public use structures still serving their original function to survive in the region.¹⁴

Purchased by the Town of Talent in 1914, just three years after its incorporation, the building now known as the Talent Community Center has housed virtually every aspect of local government; the city council, recorder, police and fire departments that Talent offers, along with other community services from the city's first public library and historical society. As the Community Center, still one of the largest meeting places in Talent, the building has been the home of a wide variety of social and community uses, from the Boy and Girl Scouts, to the Townsend Club, the Lions Club, the Red Cross, the VFW, and the Moose Lodge. The Talent Elementary School building plays a pivotal role in almost every aspect of the development of the city, and remains, as it has for more than 100 years, the "center" of the community in almost every way the term center can be defined.

Built as the Talent Elementary School, long known as the Talent City Hall, or the Talent Town Hall, is today best and most accurately known as the Talent Community Center. The building is considered historically significant and eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic under Criterion "A" for its eleven-decade plus association with virtually every aspect of the history of Talent, Oregon and its strong, clear, and unmatched association with the development of that community. As a virtually intact example of vernacular design with simple Classic Revival influences as used in a wood-frame public building, the Talent Elementary School is additionally significant under National Register Criterion "C" for its design.

¹⁴ The Jacksonville City Hall, known locally as "Old City Hall," was built 1880-81 and is still used for City Council and other public meetings. The Jackson County Courthouse (1883), located in Jacksonville, is owned by Jackson County and, until recently, was operated by the Southern Oregon Historical Society as a museum. Ashland's City Hall (1893) continues to serve as that city's administrative offices. All these buildings are of masonry construction. The small wood-frame Lucky Queen (Hugo) School, in Josephine County, was built in 1894 and became a grange and community club until it was purchased by the public if non-governmental Hugo Ladies Club in 1940, which still meets there. The small Sexton's Shed in the Jacksonville Cemetery, and a similar building in Ashland, also pre-date 1900 and remain in public ownership and use. No other 19th century public/governmental buildings in southern Oregon that remain in public use have been identified.

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Talent Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): Talent Inventory of Historic Resource, TAL NO. 209.0

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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

1	<u>10</u> Zone	<u>517451</u> Easting	<u>4676979</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

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

The nominated area consists of that portion of Tax Lot 4800 as shown on Jackson County Assessors Plat 381W23CD that is located south of the alley west of I Street and north of Main Street, in downtown Talent, Oregon, an area comprised of Lots 1-5, Block L, of the Original Town Plat of Talent, Oregon, as filed in July 1889. This portion of Tax Lot 4800 extends for 125 feet on the north side of Main Street and continues north for 150 feet on the west side of Market Street (formerly I Street), containing 18,750 square feet, or approximately .43 acres.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated portion of the subject tax lot, includes the entire Talent Elementary School building and its associated setting, independent of the other, newer, city-owned structures that have been subsequently built within Tax Lot 4800 by the City of Talent. The nominated parcel is the pertinent portion of those lots purchased by the Town of Talent from Talent School District No. 22 in 1914, as conveyed to the city in May 1914 and recorded in Jackson County Deed Volume 105, page 408-409.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George Kramer, M.S.
organization Kramer & Company date April 2011
street & number 386 North Laurel telephone (541) 482-9504
city or town Ashland state OR zip code 97520
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

Photographs:

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

Name of Property: Talent Elementary School
City or Vicinity: Talent
County: Jackson **State:** Oregon
Photographer: George Kramer. Kramer & Company
Date Photographed: February and March 2011

Date of Photographs(s) and number:

- Photo 1 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0001
South Facing [Front] elevation, looking N, from Main Street
- Photo 2 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0002
SW quarter, looking NE, from parking area
- Photo 3 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0003
West-facing [Side] elevation, looking SE, from parking area
- Photo 4 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0004
Rear, "dining room" storage area/ADA-ramp, looking SE, from parking area
- Photo 5 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0005
East-facing elevation, looking NW, across Market Street
- Photo 6 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0006
Front Entry, Looking South from walkway
- Photo 7 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0007
Exterior Detail, foundation, skirting, entry way
- Photo 8 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0008
Exterior Detail, siding, windows
- Photo 9 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0009
INTERIOR: Entry doors, restroom doors, looking South from main meeting space
- Photo 10 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0010
INTERIOR: Main meeting space, looking West, toward Council Chamber
- Photo 11 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0011
INTERIOR: Main meeting space, looking East, toward addition
- Photo 12 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0012

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR
County and State

INTERIOR: Main meeting area, looking SW from kitchen area

Photos Continued

Photo 13 of 13: OR_JacksonCounty_TalentElementarySchool_0013
INTERIOR: Main meeting area, looking SW from kitchen area

Property Owner:

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

name City of Talent attn: Mark Knox, City Planner
street & number P.O. Box 445 telephone (541) 535-1566
city or town Talent state OR zip code 97540

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property Jackson Co., OR
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 23

Documents

Maps

- Map 1: Vicinity Map, Annotated 2009
 Map 2: Assessor Plat
 Map 3: Original Town Survey Map, 1889
 Map 4: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1930
 Map 5: Floorplan/Room Arrangement
 Map 6: Floorplan/Room Arrangement, additions marked
 Map 7: Site Plan and Photo Location Map
 Map 8: Floor Plan with Interior Photo Locations

Figures

- Figure 1: Talent Elementary School, looking NE, c. 1900
 Figure 2: Talent Public School, Looking North, c. 1900
 Figure 3: Talent Public School, Looking North, c. 1900
 Figure 4: Talent, Oregon, View of Talent Avenue, Looking North, toward Main Street, c. 1910
 Figure 5: Talent Public Library (at NW corner of Elementary School), c. 1922
 Figure 6: Talent Elementary School, "Movie Night," Looking SW, c. 1935
 Figure 7: Community Art Show, (rear dining room/storage volume), c. 1970
 Figure 8: Talent City Hall (Talent Grange) circa 1950 (note fountain in foreground)
 Figure 9: Talent City Hall and Fire Station, c. 1950
 Figure 10: Talent City Hall, Looking North, October 25, 1963
 Figure 11: Talent Elementary School, c. 1975

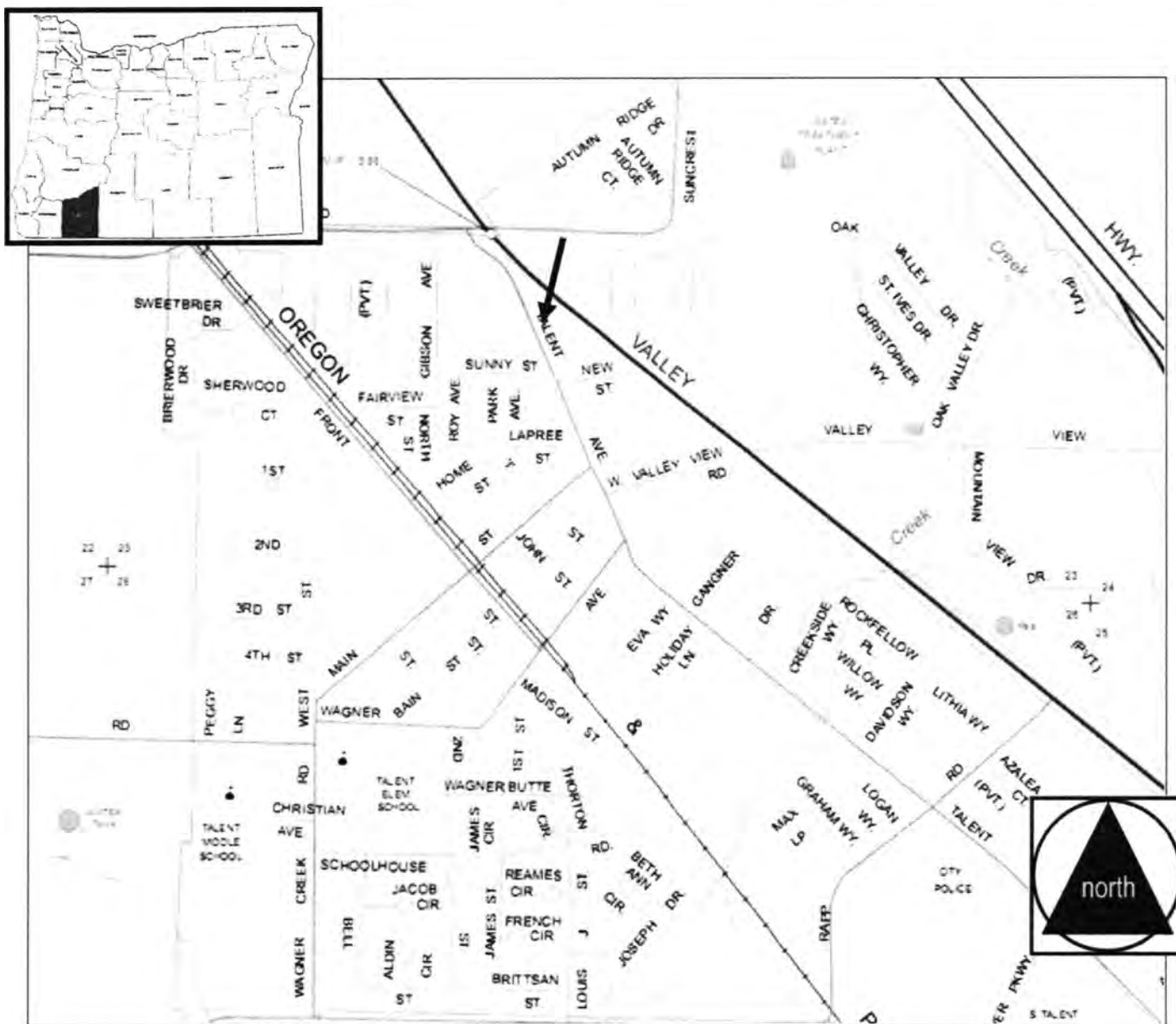
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 24

Map 1: Talent Elementary School Vicinity ODOT TALENT (Jackson County) Map, Annotated 2009



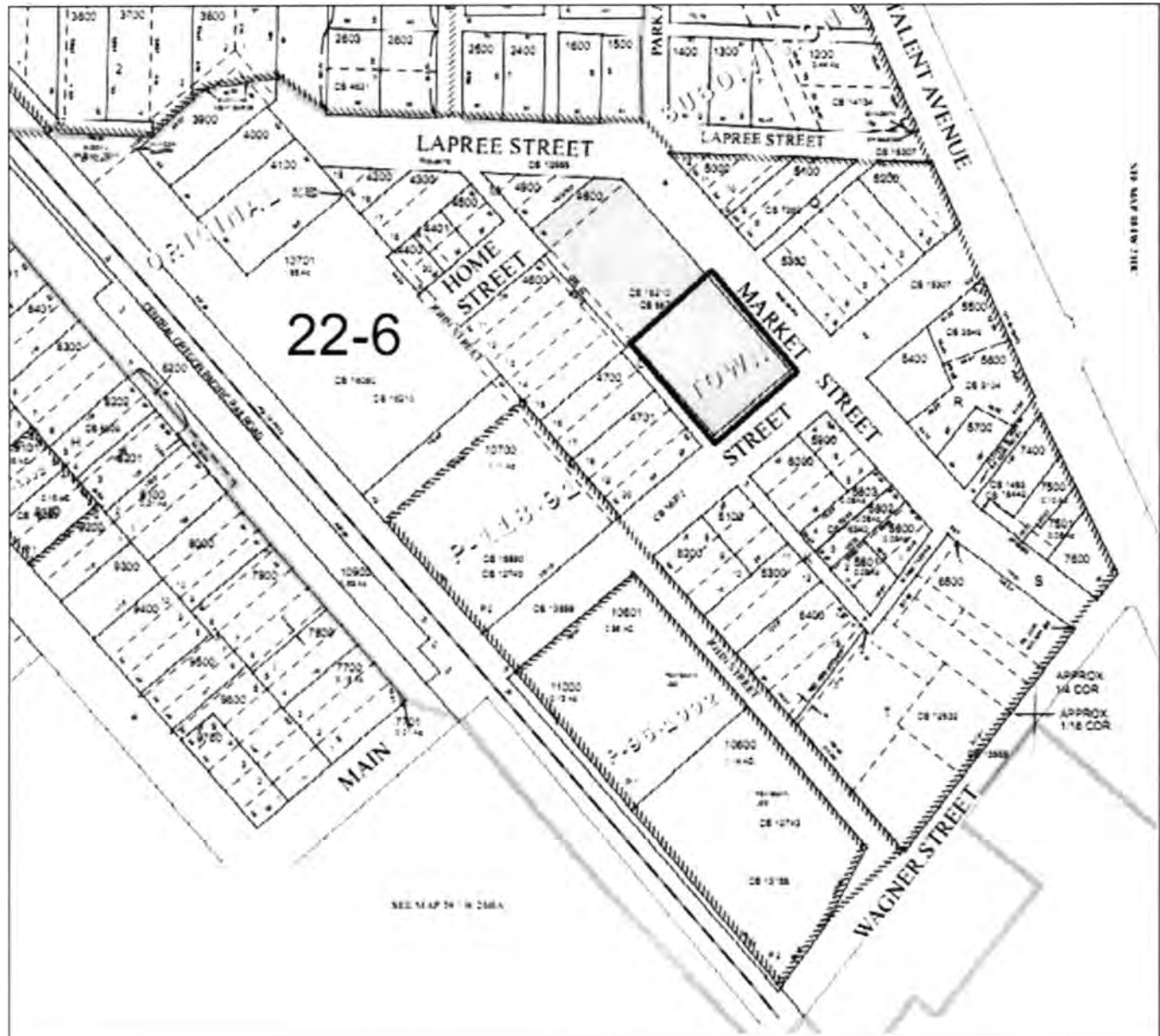
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 25

Map 2: Talent Elementary School, Jackson County Assessor Plat 381W23CD, Tax Lot 4800
Approx. Nominated Parcel Outlined



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

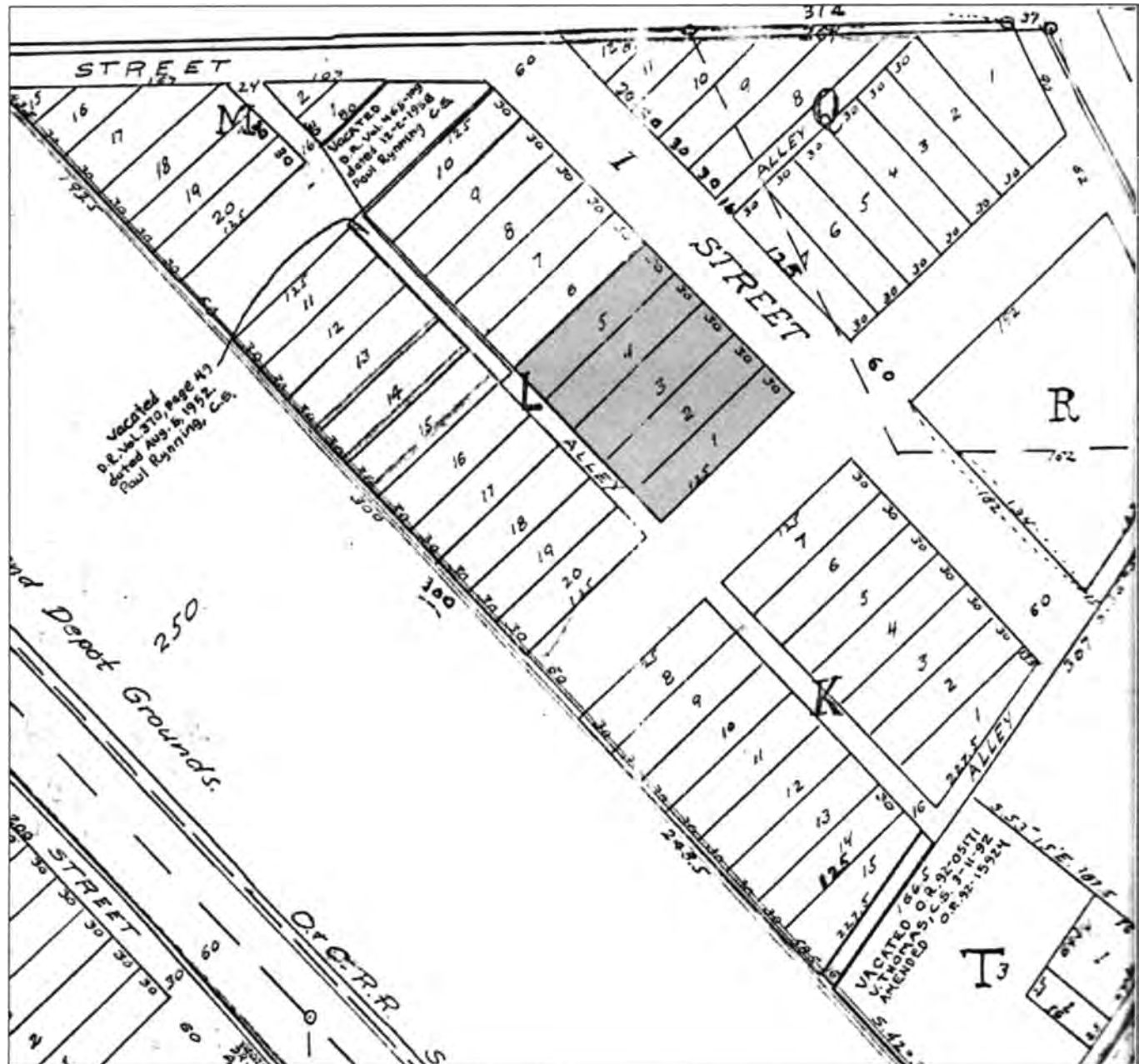
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 26

Map 3: Talent Elementary School, NOMINATED AREA
Town of Talent, Original Town Survey, 1889 Block L, Lots 1-5 (Nominated Area)
Shaded



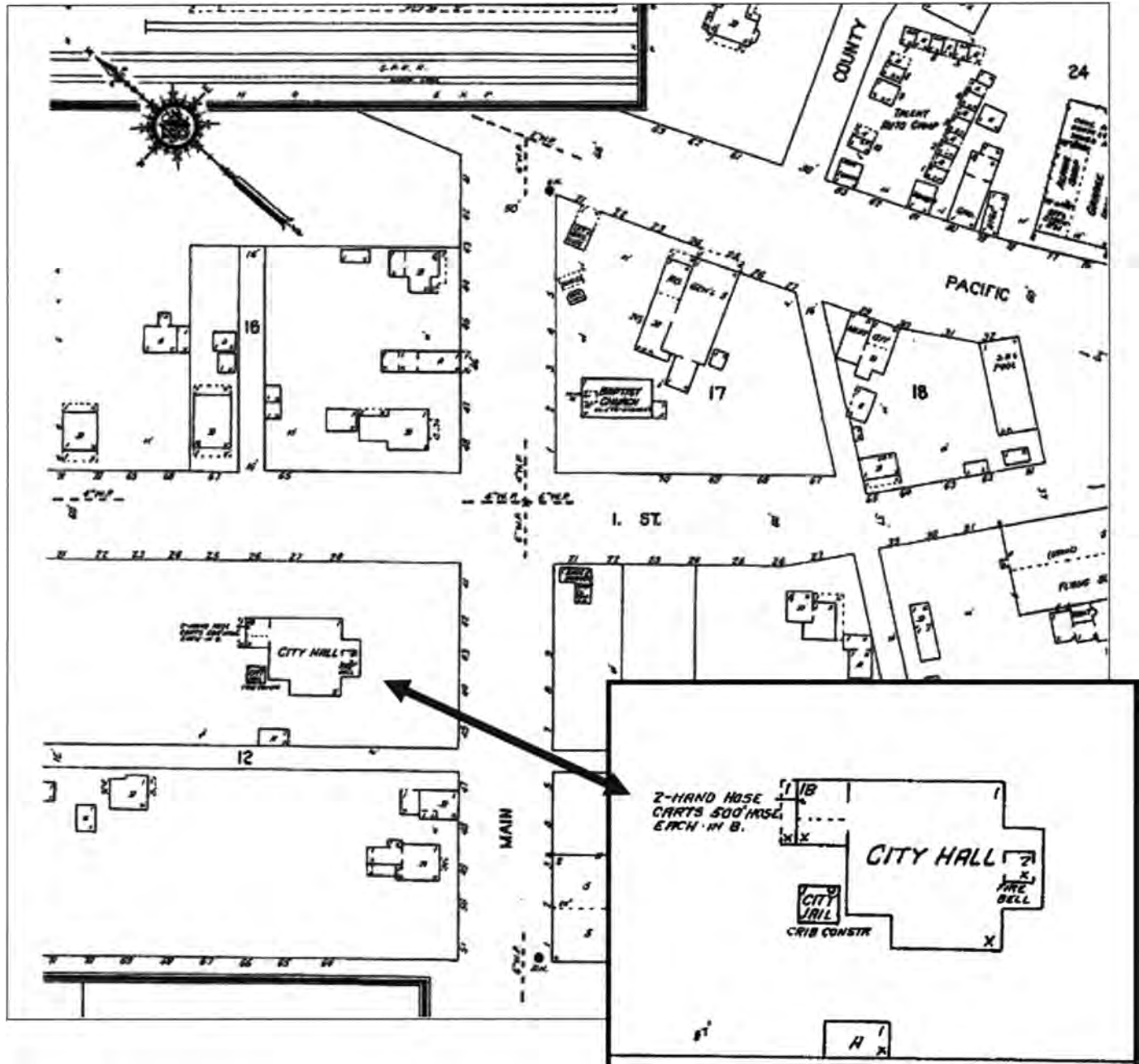
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 27

Map 4: Talent Elementary School, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Talent, Oregon (June 1930)
Sheet 1 with enlarged detail



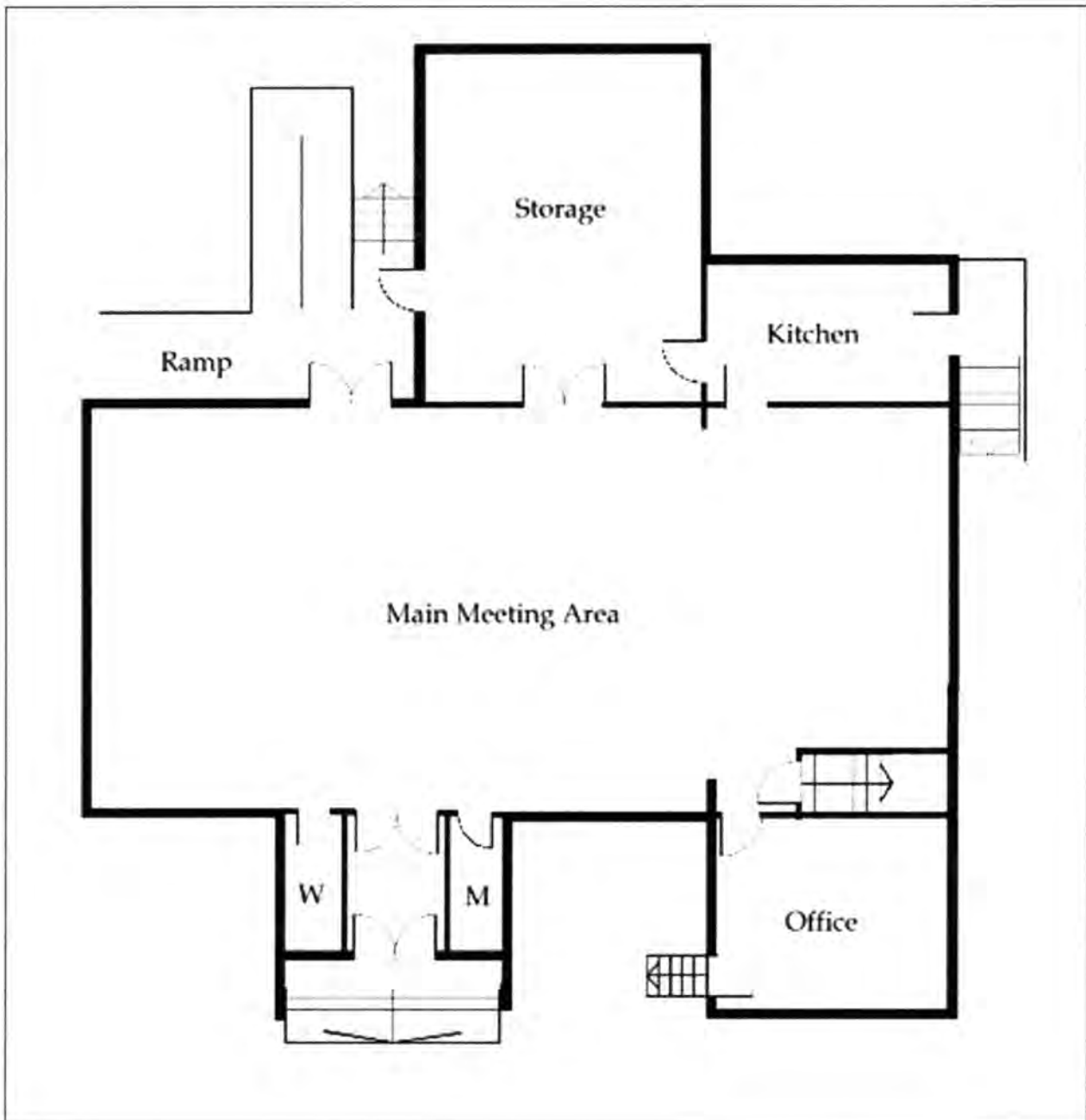
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Documents Page 28

Map 5: Talent Elementary School, Floorplan/Room Arrangement
NOT TO SCALE



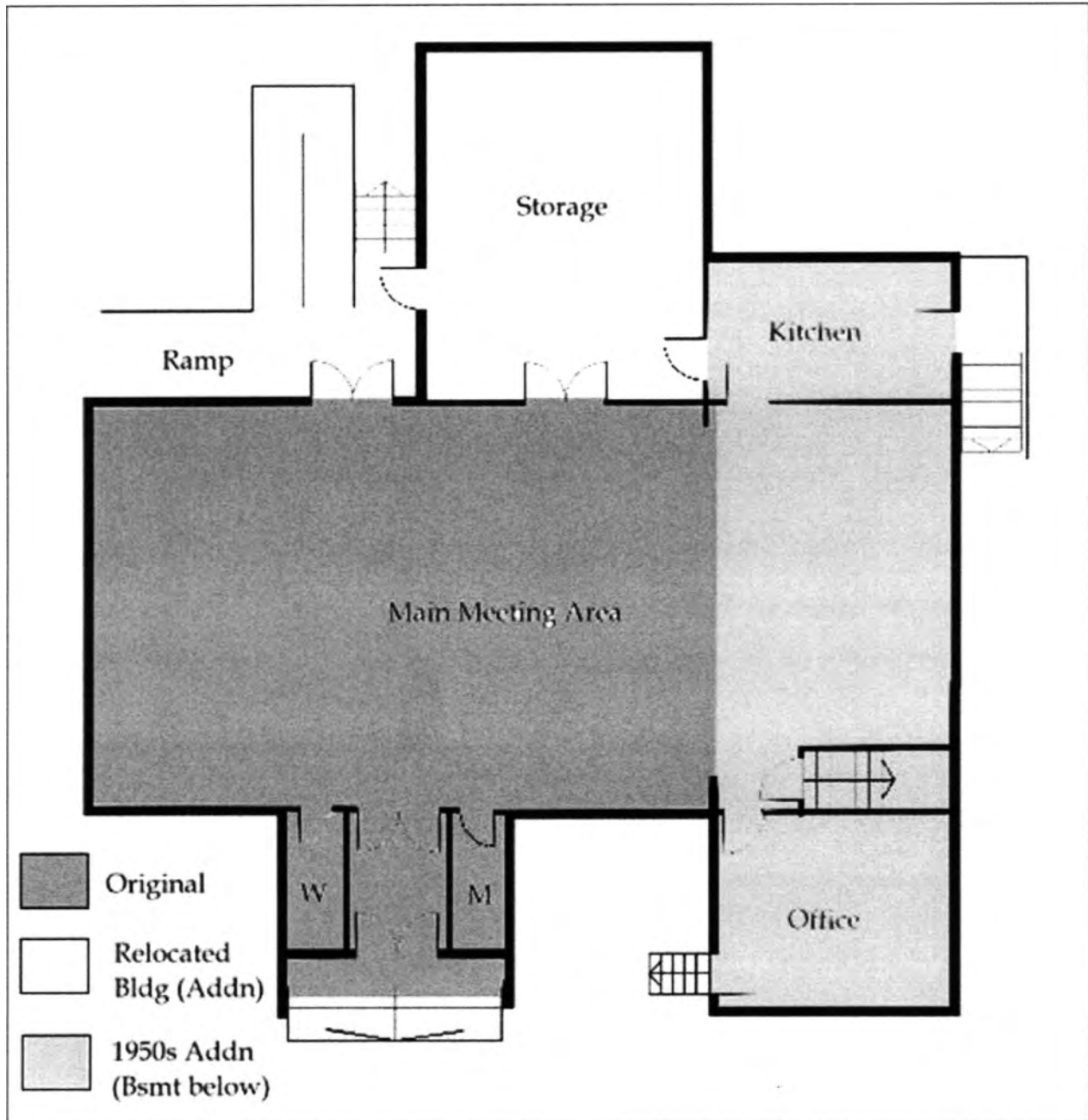
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Documents Page 29

Map 6: Talent Elementary School, Floorplan/Room Arrangement
NOT TO SCALE



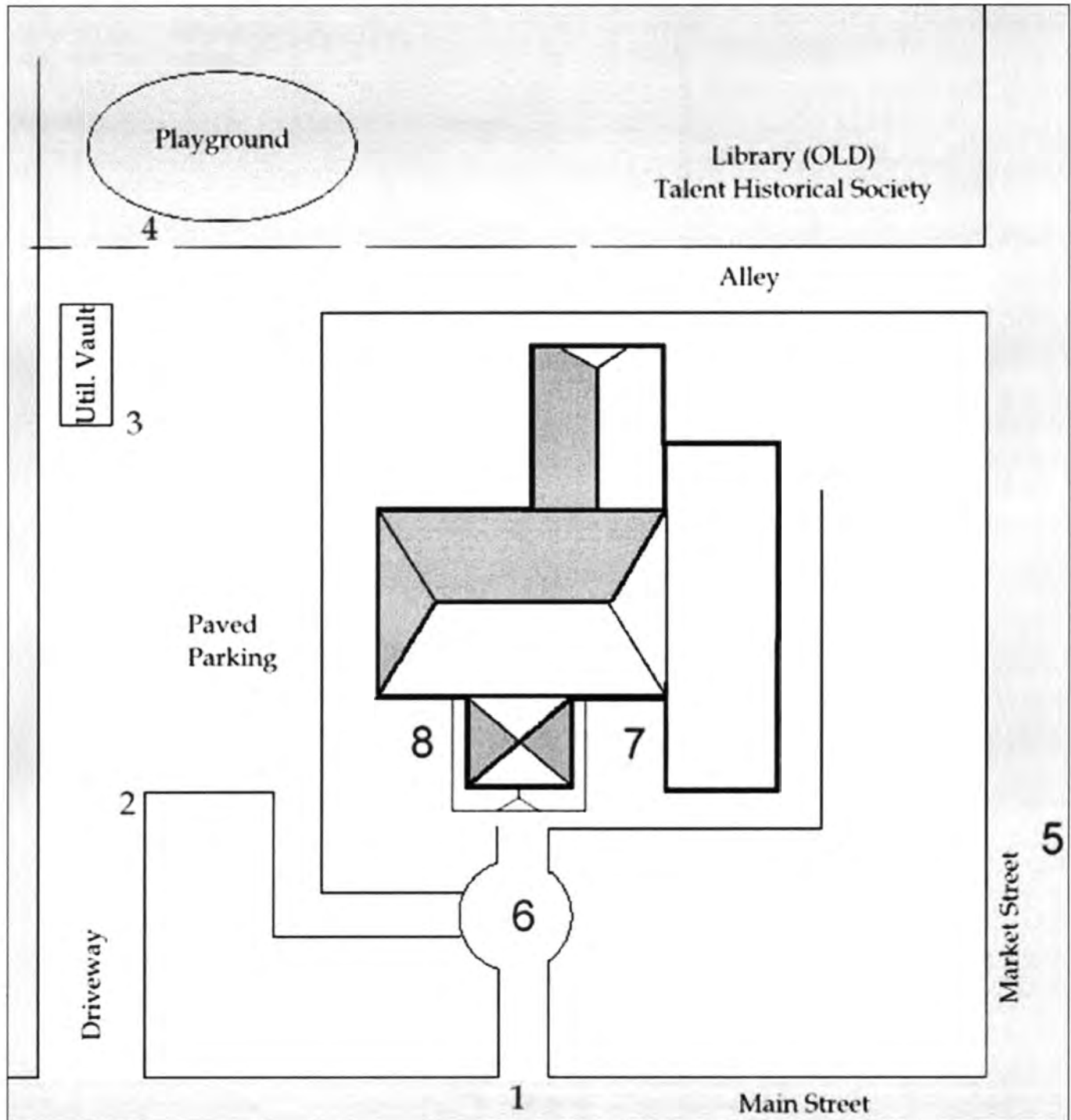
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 30

Map 7: Talent Elementary School, SITE PLAN, Sketch Map-Keyed to Exterior Photo Locations



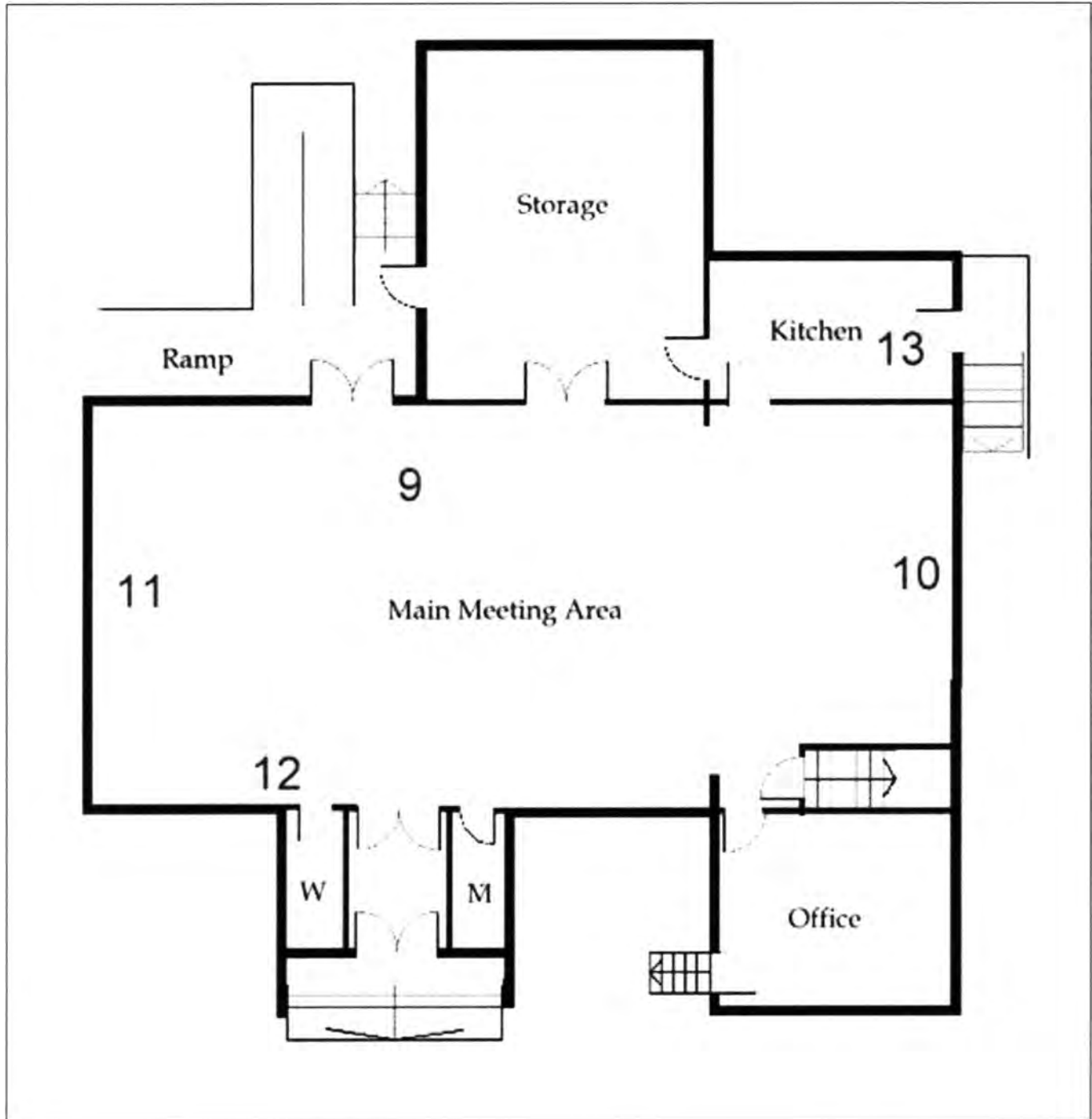
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Documents Page 31

Map 8: Talent Elementary School, Sketch Map-Keyed to Interior Photo Locations



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 32

Figure 1: Talent Elementary School, looking NE, c. 1900, Southern Oregon Historical Society Image, No. 1070



Figure 2: Talent Public School, Looking North, c. 1900, Talent Historical Society Image



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 33

Figure 3: Talent Public School, Looking North, c1900, Southern Oregon Historical Society
Image, No. 16270



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 34

Figure 4: Talent, Oregon, View of Talent Avenue, Looking North, toward Main Street, c. 1910
Talent Historical Society Image (School Building at left, in distance)



Figure 5: Talent Public Library (at NW corner of Elementary School), c1922,
Talent Historical Society Image



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 35

Figure 6: Talent Elementary School, "Movie Night," Looking SW, c. 1935
Talent Historical Society Image



Figure 7: Community Art Show, (rear dining room/storage volume), c1970
Talent Historical Society Image



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School
Name of Property
Jackson Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 36

Figure 8: Talent City Hall (Talent Grange) circa 1950 (note fountain in foreground)
Talent Historical Society Image (Klimek #125)



Figure 9: Talent City Hall and Fire Station, circa 1950
Talent Historical Society Image (Klimek #127)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

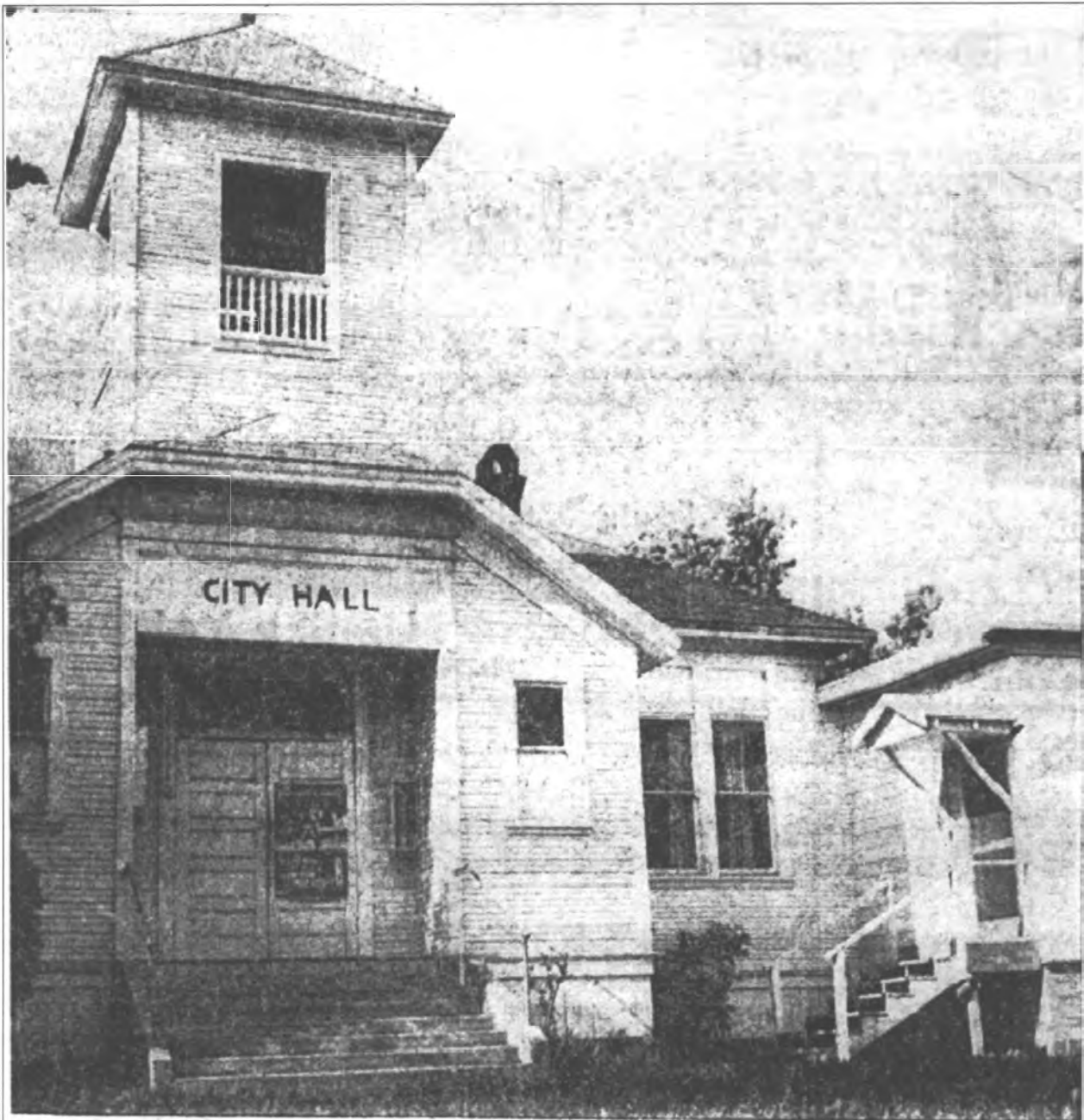
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 37

Figure 10: Talent City Hall, Looking North, Ashland Daily Tidings, 25-October-1963



THE CITY HALL IN TALENT is one of the most often used buildings in the city. It is made available for all public meetings as well as to the Scouts, Camp Fire Girls and Women's Clubs. Many families use the building for reunion gatherings and it is frequently the scene of a public dance. The hall houses the offices of City Recorder Virginia Gleim and Chief of Police Charles Roberts.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Talent Elementary School

Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR

County and State

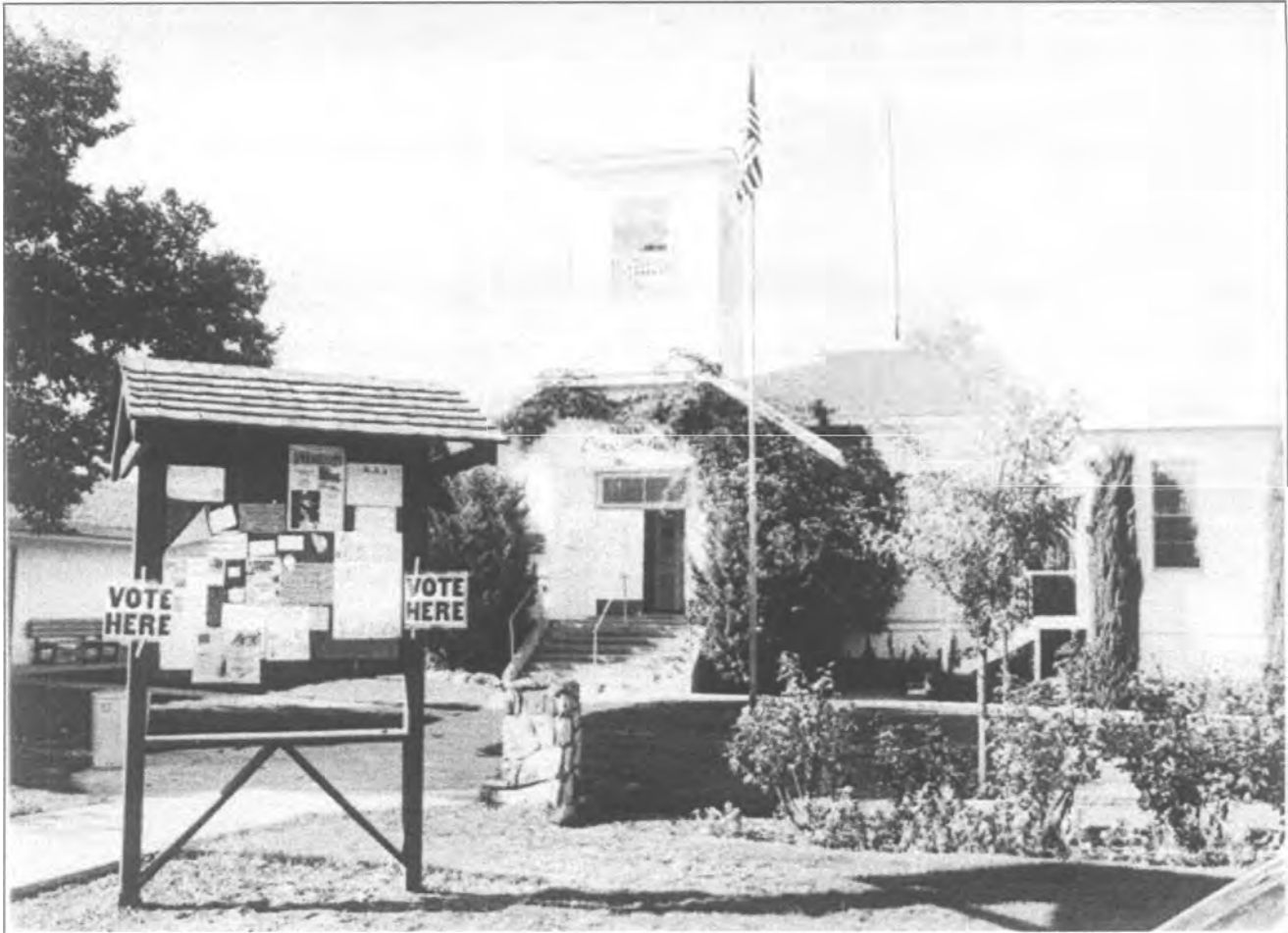
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Documents Page 38

Figure 11: Talent Elementary School, c1975, Southern Oregon Historical Society Image, No. 16258



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Talent Elementary School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Jackson

DATE RECEIVED: 1/20/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/21/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/07/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/09/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000080

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/7/12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*school - later used as city hall/civic hall.
1899
POS 1899-1971.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Doc

REVIEWER Wondra

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 3/7/12

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

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



COMMUNITY
CENTER

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JACKSON COUNTY, OR
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JACKSON COUNTY, OR

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**COMMUNITY
CENTER**

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Receipt # 261311 DR Jackson County Talent
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TALENT ELEMENTARY
JACKSON COUNTY, OR

7 of 13



Receipts 8/13 <> OR-Jackson County-Talent
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Talent Elementary
Jackson County, OR

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EXIT

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JACKSON COUNTY, OR

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JACKSON COUNTY, OR

10 of 13



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JACKSON COUNTY, OR

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Receiving 12/13 ✓
Fud 1, 1123 03/14 ✓
Dr. Jackson County, OR

TALENT ELEMENTARY
JACKSON COUNTY, OR

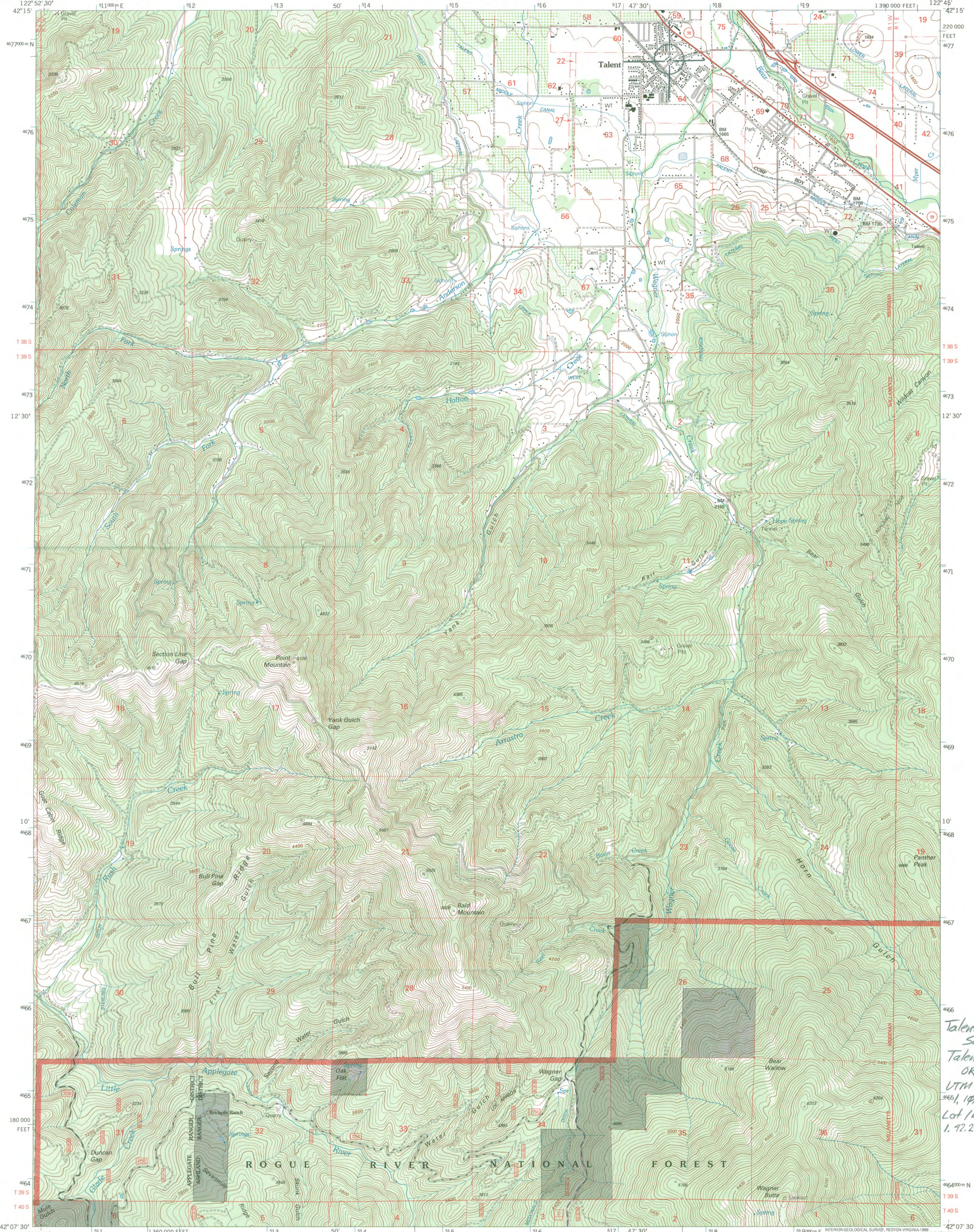
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JACKSON COUNTY, OR

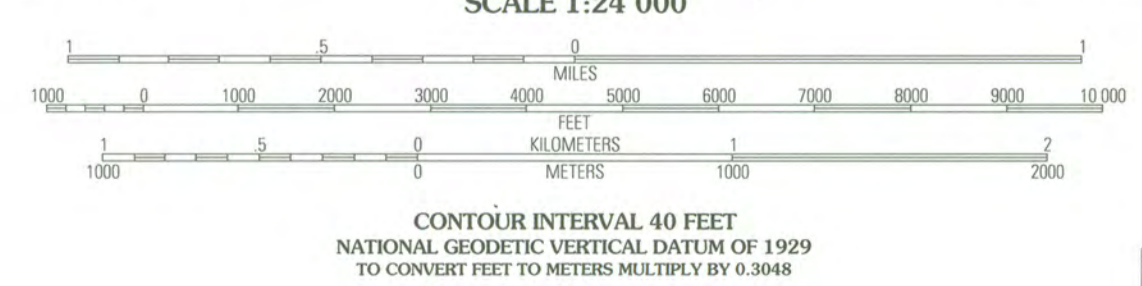
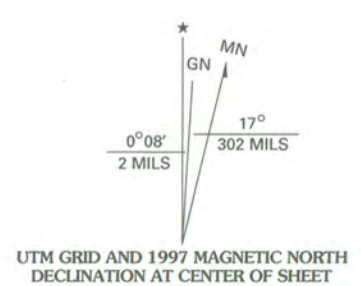
13 of 13



Talent Elementary School
Talent, Jackson Co.,
OR
UTM Reference (NAD 83)
14P51745114676979
Lot/Long Rebrance
1. 72.244841-122.78847



Produced by the U.S. Geological Survey
Revised by the U.S. Forest Service
Areas outside the National Forest System lands may not have been revised
Topography compiled 1983. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1994
Public Land Survey System and survey control current as of 1978
Partial field check by U.S. Forest Service 1996
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks:
Oregon coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
Blue 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator ticks, zone 10
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software
Non-National Forest System lands within the National Forest
Inholdings may exist in other National or State reservations
This map is not a legal land line or ownership document. Public lands are
subject to change and leasing, and may have access restrictions; check
with local offices. Obtain permission before entering private lands



1	2	3	1 Medford West 2 Medford East 3 Rio Canyon 4 Searling Creek 5 Ashland 6 Dutchman Peak 7 Skakyou Peak 8 Mount Ashland
4	5		
6	7	8	

HIGHWAYS AND ROADS

Interstate	.....	Primary highway	.....
U. S.	.....	Secondary highway	.....
State	.....	Light-duty road	.....
County	.....	Paved	.....
National Forest, suitable for passenger cars	.....	Gravel	.....
National Forest, suitable for high clearance vehicles	.....	Dirt	.....
National Forest Trail	.....	Composition unspecified	.....
		Unimproved; 4 wheel drive	.....
		Trail	.....
		Gate	.....

TALENT, OR
1996
NIMA 1468 III NW - SERIES V892

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



CITY OF TALENT



Mayor's Office

POST OFFICE BOX 445 · TALENT, OREGON 97540 · TELEPHONE (541) 535-1566

June 21, 2011

State Historic Preservation Office
Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
Attn: Cara Kaser
725 Summer Street NE, Suite C
Salem, OR 97301

**Subject: National Register of Historic Places Nomination -
Talent Community Center (Talent School)**

As Mayor of the City of Talent I'm pleased to submit the nomination materials for listing the Talent Community Center (old Talent School) on the National Register of Historic Places. This opportunity has been graciously provided to the City of Talent through the Robert E. Collins Fund, of the Oregon Community Foundation.

The Talent Community Center, constructed in 1899, remains a critical community building located in the heart of Downtown Talent. For more than a century the Community Center has served the community for various assembly uses such as the Council Chambers, Planning Commission hearings, public lectures, wedding receptions as well as many other events. Besides the building's continuous use as public assembly space for the citizens of Talent, its civic architecture and street presence in Downtown Talent clearly make it one of the most important buildings in the City.

That said, on behalf of the Talent City Council, I respectfully request the State Historic Preservation Office and the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation accept the Talent Community Center's nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Bill Cecil, Mayor

cc: George Kramer, Kramer & Company
Amy Cuddy, Oregon Community Foundation
Devon Finley, Oregon Community Foundation



CITY OF TALENT

POST OFFICE BOX 445 · TALENT, OREGON 97540 · TELEPHONE (541) 535-7401

August 24, 2011

State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation
Attn: Roger Roper, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C
Salem, OR 97301-1266

Subject: Talent Elementary School, National Register of Historic Places Listing

On behalf of the City of Talent, I wish to express our support for in the listing the Talent Elementary School on the National Register of Historic Places. This opportunity has been graciously provided to the City of Talent through the Robert E. Collins Fund, of the Oregon Community Foundation.

The Talent Elementary School, today locally referred to as the Talent Community Center, is worthy of the Committee's review and recommendation. Built in 1899 as a schoolhouse, it remains a critical community building in the heart of Downtown Talent where multiple public functions occur ranging from public City Council meetings to wedding receptions. It's civic architecture, street presence and continuous public use clearly distinguishes it as one of Talent's most important buildings.

Unfortunately I cannot attend the meeting in Weston, Oregon on October 13th, 2011 to personally represent the City of Talent in this important endeavor. However, George Kramer, Historic Preservation Consultant, who has helped us with the nomination materials, has agreed to attend and answer any of the Committee's questions.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Committee for their time and effort on this and other preservation related matters. Preservation of our historical assets is vital to a community's health and leaves future generations with both a sense of pride and place.

Respectfully,

Bill Cecil, Mayor

cc: George Kramer, Kramer & Company
Amy Cuddy, Oregon Community Foundation
Devon Finley, Oregon Community Foundation



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor



Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St NE, Ste C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

(503) 986-0671

Fax (503) 986-0793

www.oregonheritage.org

January 12, 2012



Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
USDOI National Park Service - Cultural Resources
1201 "Eye" Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Shull:

At the recommendation of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, I hereby nominate the following historic property to the National Register of Historic Places:

TALENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
204 MAIN ST E
TALENT, JACKSON COUNTY

We appreciate your consideration of this nomination. If questions arise, please contact Ian Johnson, National Register & Survey Coordinator, at (503) 986-0678.

Sincerely,

Roger Roper
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Encl.