

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received JAN 18 1983
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Valley Junction—West Des Moines City Hall and Engine House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 137 Fifth Street not for publication

city, town West Des Moines vicinity of

state Iowa code 19 county Polk code 153

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name M. A. Knutsen

street & number P.O. Box 65095 (504 Maple Street)

city, town West Des Moines vicinity of state Iowa 50265

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Polk County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Des Moines state Iowa 50309

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title CIRALG Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978-80 federal state county local

depository for survey records Iowa SHPO

city, town Des Moines state Iowa

7. Description

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This multiple use public building exemplifies the combination of basic ornamental elements with a simple and practical plan. The combination engine house and city hall is relatively uncommon in Iowa, and these buildings rarely retain their original integrity to the degree that this one does.

The subject building is located in the center of a four block commercial area, near the corner of Maple and Fifth Streets, just a block north of the railroad station. Residential buildings surround this central commercial core.

The two-story brick building is of rectangular plan, measuring 25' by 145'. The building was constructed in two stages, one story at a time. In its final form the first floor housed the engine house and jail (the latter remains intact), and retains a decorative tin ceiling. The second floor served as City Hall and retains hardwood floors and decorative tin ceiling. A single story rear addition postdates the original construction. Originally a separate single story hose cart storage structure stood behind the main building on the alley.

On the main facade, the first floor front is unsymmetrical, being composed of a narrow left hand side entrance, and a double door flanked by side windows. Flat gauged brick arches with keystones of corbelled brick topped the side door and windows and were incorporated into a wide belt course composed of soldier bricks. A roman arch of gauged brick encircled the engine house main door transom. Side pilasters on the second floor rise to support a corbelled brick cornice with stone coping. A raised pediment interrupts the cornice and features the words "CITY HALL" in a stone panel. Three sash windows (6/6) (same pattern in rear wall) have segmental arches and their stone lintels are incorporated into a continuous belt course. Two courses of dogtoothed bricks underscore this belt course. Above the windows a corbelled symmetrical brick frieze incorporates a pattern of interlocking "L" forms.

In 1933 the first floor was altered by the widening of the fire house door. The original arch was transformed into a relieving arch, and the right hand side window was eliminated. The left hand window was shortened.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1901–52 **Builder/Architect** *Unknown*

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Valley Junction/West Des Moines City Hall/Engine House (1901) was a manifestation of the town planning process which directed the expansion of a small railroad community suburb of the state capitol. Provision for a unique combined city hall and fire engine house building was made before a fire department was even organized in 1905. The building was in use as a city hall until 1952.

The town of Valley Junction was incorporated in 1893, was the county's second largest city by 1911, and was named for its role as a main line junction of the Rock Island Des Moines division, and the Sibley, Winterset and Indianola branches of the Rock Island railroad. The Minneapolis and St. Louis line also crossed at that point. Rapid growth began in 1892 when the town was selected by the Rock Island as a division station. In 1898 the interurban railway linked the town directly with the city of Des Moines to the east. The proximity of the Iowa coal field provided additional impetus for growth. The name was changed to West Des Moines c. 1939–40.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see Continuation Sheet, Item No. 9, page 1.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Des Moines SW

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A

1	5
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4	4	0	9	6	0
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4	6	0	2	1	5	0
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Verbal boundary description and justification

North one half of lot 15, Block 14, Valley Junction, now part of West Des Moines.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state Iowa code 19 county Polk code 153

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator

organization Iowa SHPO date 14 December 1982

street & number Historical Building
East 12th and Grand Ave. telephone 515-281-4137

city or town Des Moines state Des Moines 50309

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Adrian A. Anderson

title Executive Director Iowa State Historical Department date 24 November 1982

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 2/17/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET BIBLIOGRAPHY ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Brigham, Johnson. Des Moines; The Pioneer of Municipal Progress and Reform of the Middle West, Together With the History of Polk County, Iowa. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1911, p. 696.

City of West Des Moines 1893-1968, A Detailed History of the Birth and Growth of West Des Moines. West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, 1968, pp. 7, 14, 20, 24, 26, 49, 59.

Valley Express, September 21, 1900.

The West Des Moines Express. Ninth Annual Progress Issue, West Des Moines, Iowa, October 24, 1963, pp. 1-2.