

Structure/Site Information Form

1 IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 2541 Washington Blvd.

UTM: 12/418660/4563390

Name of Structure: Ogden/Weber Municipal Building

T. R. S.

Present Owner: Ogden City/Weber County

Acreeage: Less than one

Owner Address: 2541 Washington Blvd., Ogden, Ut. 84401

Year Built (Tax Record):  
Legal Description

Effective Age:  
Kind of Building:

Tax #:

East 1/2 of Block 18, Plat A, Ogden City Survey. Nomination includes the Municipal Building only.

2 STATUS/USE

Original Owner: Same

Construction Date: 1939

Demolition Date:

Original Use: Governmental

Present Use: Same

Building Condition:

Integrity:

Preliminary Evaluation:

Final Register Status:

- Excellent     Site     Unaltered     Significant     Not of the     National Landmark     District
- Good     Ruins     Minor Alterations     Contributory     Historic Period     National Register     Multi-Resource
- Deteriorated     Major Alterations     Not Contributory     State Register     Thematic

3 DOCUMENTATION

Photography:

Date of Slides:

Slide No.:

Date of Photographs:

Photo No.:

Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other

Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other

Research Sources:

- Abstract of Title     Sanborn Maps     Newspapers     U of U Library
- Plat Records/Map     City Directories     Utah State Historical Society     BYU Library
- Tax Card & Photo     Biographical Encyclopedias     Personal Interviews     USU Library
- Building Permit     Obituary Index     LDS Church Archives     SLC Library
- Sewer Permit     County & City Histories     LDS Genealogical Society     Other

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

See footnotes after History.

Street Address: 2541 Washington Blvd.

Site No:

4  
ARCHITECTURE

Architect/Builder: Hodgson & McClenahan / George A. Whitmeyer & Sons

Building Materials: Brick; glazed terra cotta

Building Type/Style: Art Deco

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:  
(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

5  
HISTORY

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date:

Ogden/Weber Municipal Building  
Ogden, Utah  
Structure/Site Form

Architecture

A public works project completed in 1939, the Ogden/Weber Municipal Building is the last of three important Art Deco commissions in Ogden designed by the firm of Hodgson and McClenahan. It is a warm brick building with glazed terra cotta trim. In many ways it is a "typical" Art Deco example, resembling the Syracuse Lighting Company Office Building (1932), Syracuse, New York.\*

Symmetrically arranged from a rectangular base, side wings step down gradually from the taller central mass. Metal frame casement windows are separated by brick pilasters which function visually to accent verticality and to modulate the surface planes. The flat roofs are capped with contrasting glazed terra cotta trim which undulates respectively to the walls and pilasters, activating the roofline and terminating the vertical movement with crisp geo-curvalinear shapes. The water table and window sills are also glazed terra cotta elements.

The building is twelve stories in height, with its main entrance centered on the east facade in a projecting flat-roofed pavilion capped with terra cotta trim. A flight of stairs leads to the actual entrance area and four steel frame doors. Each door has a tall transom which displays a metal grill with pierced geometric design. The doors and transoms have a terra cotta surround. Period lamps in the Art Deco Style flank the entrance.

The exterior retains its historic integrity, and the interior maintains much of its original character. Especially notable in the interior are the marble dados, metal and wood trim, plaster work, light fixtures, and patterned floors.

\*Elizabeth D. Mulloy and Tony P. Wrenn, America's Forgotten Architecture (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), p. 180.

Statement of Significance and History

The Ogden/Weber Municipal Building, 1939, together with the U. S. Forest Service Building (1933) and the Ogden High School (1937), are exceptionally significant as the best Art Deco Style buildings in Ogden and the state of Utah. They also represent important works of the architectural firm of Hodgson and McClenahan, and are excellent examples of federal work projects initiated during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Municipal Building also symbolizes the unification of city and county governments in an effort to consolidate facilities and save tax dollars.

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Local governmental officials were conferring on a consolidation of Ogden City and Weber County facilities in Ogden at least as early as March, 1934.<sup>1</sup> At this time federal aid, through the Public Works Administration, was made available to the states as part of the government's response to the depression. The PWA program was initiated to help provide jobs and construct useful buildings.<sup>2</sup> In October, 1937, U. S. Senator Elbert D. Thomas, of

Utah, notified Ogden Mayor Herman W. Peery that Ogden City and Weber County "may" receive a federal grant for a joint building.<sup>3</sup> R. A. Hart, PWA director for Utah, stated at the dedication of Ogden High School that Ogden City and Weber County had done more for recovery through construction projects than any other unit of government in the state.<sup>4</sup>

Leslie S. Hodgson and Mryl A. McClenahan were commissioned sometime in late 1937 or early 1938 to prepare preliminary plans for a building, subject to final approval by the PWA. By April, 1938, backers of the joint facility were confident that funds appropriated by the Roosevelt administration for the project would be released. Those local officials who supported the effort included Mayor Peery, City Commissioners Edward T. Saunders and William J. Rackham, and County Commissioners George F. Simmons (Chairman), Charles A. Halverson, and W. R. McEntire.<sup>5</sup>

Plans, as drawn by Hodgson and McClenahan, called for a "modern" Art Deco design. In the words of Leslie Hodgson, "It might be termed 'restrained contemporary' design with vertical lines emphasized and marked by the absence of horizontal accentuations."<sup>6</sup> The building was then, in 1938, projected to cost about \$600,000. Work began in October, 1938, as the south wing of the old City Hall was razed to make way for the new edifice. By April, 1939, the reinforced concrete foundation had been poured, but final plans for the structure were delayed because of a need for further engineering data.<sup>7</sup>

Work commenced again in June, 1939, and in March, 1940, the Salt Lake Tribune echoed the headline, "Ogden-Weber Building Nears Finish." The article stated that,

Ogden city offices will occupy the north side of the first floor, and Weber county offices will be on the south. The 11 stories above will be occupied alternately by the city and county.

Jail equipment will occupy three stories with cells, but it will take four entire stories for the jail, detention quarters and city-county law enforcement offices. A joint custodian will be in charge of the jail system for both city and county.<sup>8</sup>

On November 8, 1940, the \$952,668 Weber County-Ogden City administration building was formally dedicated, even though it had been occupied since June 15. Morgan M. Lewis, acting regional head of the PWA from San Francisco, stated that the building was a "monument to the creative and public spirited activities of the architects, Hodgson & McClenehan [sic], and the sponsors, Weber county and Ogden city [sic]."<sup>9</sup> The final cost was placed at \$952,668.52, with the PWA paying 43% or \$410,175. Ogden City and Weber County each contributed \$271,246.75, or 28 1/2% of the cost. Ogden City's last payment occurred in 1940.<sup>10</sup>

The building continues to function as the Ogden-Weber Municipal Building, a center for local governmental activity.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Deseret News, March 26, 1934, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Deseret News, October 30, 1937, p. 3. Comments by state PWA director R. A. Hart.

<sup>3</sup>Deseret News, October 15, 1937, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Deseret News, October 30, 1937, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, April 24, 1938.

<sup>6</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, October 2, 1938.

<sup>7</sup>The Ogden Standard Examiner, April 10, 1939; April 30, 1939.

<sup>8</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, March 3, 1940.

<sup>9</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, October 17, 1940.

<sup>10</sup>[Elizabeth Tillotson], A History of Ogden -- 1960 'Ogden: Ogden City, 1962), p. 10.