

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

other names/site number BD 2042

2. Location

street & number 1421 South Andrews Avenue N/A  not for publication

city or town Ft. Lauderdale N/A  vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Broward code 011 zip code 33316

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Janet Snyder Matthews June 5/2001  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action  
7-25-01

**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)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"N/A"

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: offices

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: speciality retail, offices

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Nineteenth-Twentieth Century Revival: Mediterranean Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STUCCO

walls STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1923-1926

**Significant Dates**

1923

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of Repository

Ft. Lauderdale Historical Society

# \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 7	5 8 5 6 7 0	2 8 8 7 2 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jaimee Adams/Robert O. Jones, Historic Sites Specialist, Barbara E. Mattick, Deputy SHPO for S&R

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date June 2001

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Jay and Jaimee Adams, Bayou Meto, Inc.

street & number 919 SE 6 Court telephone 954-522-5282

city or town Ft. Lauderdale state FL zip code 33301

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 amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 **CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION  
BUILDING  
Ft. Lauderdale, Broward Co., FL**

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**SUMMARY**

The Croissant Park Administration Building is located at 1421 South Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Florida. The Croissant Park Administration Building was constructed in the Mediterranean Revival Style in 1923. The architect is believed to be Francis Abreu, who did many building designs in Fort Lauderdale during the 1920s. It is a poured concrete, L-shaped, two-story building. Its most distinguishing features are its textured stucco exterior and concrete lanterns on the corners of the roof. It has a cut corner. Fenestration is 1/1 wooden sash windows in the main building block in various configurations, and fixed showroom windows. It remains an architectural landmark in a community that has been dramatically altered in recent years.

**SETTING**

The Croissant Park Building was built in what now is the southern part of Fort Lauderdale. In the early 1920s the land was still largely undeveloped. There were more pine trees than people and what is now one of the major arteries through town (Andrews Avenue) was then still not paved. The area which became known as Croissant Park was south of the already developed downtown that was centered on both banks of the New River. The New River is the mostly east-west major river that runs through Fort Lauderdale and linked the Everglades to the Intercoastal Waterway. The building and section of Fort Lauderdale were named after the accomplished real estate developer from Chicago, G. Frank Croissant. Croissant and his sales staff of 146 sold plots, built sidewalks and roads, added street lighting and residential housing. Croissant Park included 1,270 acres of land, 86 miles of boulevards, and 172 miles of sidewalks when Croissant finished. Spanish-style homes were typical and averaged \$7,500.

Over the years, Croissant Park became extensively developed with retail, office, and residential neighborhoods. The County's major hospital facility, The Broward General Medical Center, is also located within the area. The County's Courthouse is ½ mile to the north, on the south side of the New River. Due to this, many homes in the area have been converted to law offices. However, all the homes west of the railroad tracks are still 100% residential and include some of the original 1920's homes. Andrews Avenue now is one of Fort Lauderdale's most significant roads, linking the airport and I-595 with downtown. Along Andrews, very few of the 1920s buildings remain, though Croissant's administration building and a house designed by Francis Abreu, located 3 blocks north on Andrews Avenue, still exist. Both have been restored.

**Exterior**

The Croissant Park Building is a two-story, "L" shaped, 6,000 square foot building, designed in the Mediterranean Revival Style. There is a one-story northern extension. Its exterior walls are poured concrete with heavily textured stucco. There is a cut corner entrance. The masonry lanterns positioned at the NE and SW corners of the roof are prominent features of the building. The roof is flat with parapets. The parapets have

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a coping cap, and are flat except for rises at the main entrance corners, and on the south, east, and southeast corner, feature smooth, recessed panels suitable for signage. The parapet is on the east elevation's one-story northern extension. Below the parapets, at the corners, are stucco ornaments. These ornaments match ones found on the entrance arch that used to be at the northern boundary of Croissant Park.

The cut corner with main entrance faces southeast, and fronts onto the intersection of Andrews Avenue, and 15<sup>th</sup> Street (Photo 1). The double doors with large single lights are surmounted by a single light transom. At the second story is a window filled with a pair of sashes. Above the windows is a smooth, recessed panel.

The east elevation fronts onto Andrews Avenue, and has a two story building block to the south, and a one story northerly extension (Photo 2). Centered in the two story portion is an entrance with double doors with large single lights, surmounted by a double light transom. The entrance is flanked by large display windows composed of three large lights, surmounted by three transoms. At the second story are two windows composed of banks of sashes. The window to the south has three sashes, and the window to the north has four sashes. As at the corner, above the windows is a smooth recessed panel. At the northern corner of the second story is the large lantern. The one story extension has a single entry door with large single light, and single light transom, tied to a display window composed of two large lights. To the south side of the single door is a narrower display window composed of two large lights. The hip roof of a roof monitor is visible.

The south elevation fronts onto 15<sup>th</sup> Street (Photo 3). The two-story elevation has a single door entrance at the center, and to the north is an entrance with double doors, surmounted by two transoms. Each door has a large single light, and is surmounted by a transom. To the north of the double doors is a display window with a two lights and two transoms. The second story has a window centered above the center door, that contains a pair of sashes. Toward the south corner are three windows with single sashes. Toward the north corner are two windows composed of groups of three sashes. A large lantern is at the north corner of the roof.

The west elevation has a single door with transom at the north corner, and a small window with a pair of sashes near the south corner (Photo 4). The second story has two small identical windows; one near the south corner and one near the north corner. The roof level lantern visible on the south elevation is at the south corner of the west elevation. A metal rain gutter, rather than a parapet, is present at the roofline. Also visible is the west elevation of the one story northern extension that fronts onto Andrews Avenue (Photo 5). A single door with transom is at the north corner, and a metal fire escape rises to the roof level at the juncture with the two-story block.

The north elevation displays the north wall of the northern extension and the main two-story block. In the north extension, two horizontal windows with fixed glass are set high in the wall (Photo 2). At the second story of the main block above the extension is a single fire escape door and three windows (Photo 5). Two of these windows have paired sashes. The west half of the main block displays both stories which contain two windows on each story. Each window contains three sashes. The straight parapet steps down half way from east to west on this elevation.

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**Interior**

The first floor's interior spatial arrangement remains largely intact (Photos 6 & 7). The first floor is divided into three areas. Two original bathrooms remain in the center of the floor but have been modernized. New Spanish clay tiles cover the floor whose historic surface was gone when the present owners acquired the building. The ceiling height of the first floor is just over 10 feet; originally it was 11 feet but it was minimally lowered to house new electrical, plumbing, and HVAC lines. The interior walls and ceiling are drywall covered with plaster. A cypress wooden staircase (Photos 8 & 9), centered on the south entrance, rises to the second floor and to the roof. The second floor contains four rooms to the east and west of the landing (Photos 10-12). Bathrooms on the second floor are also centrally located to the north of the stairwell, and have been modernized. The floors are the original Dade County pine, and the ceilings and walls are drywall covered with plaster. Baseboards and original interior wooden doors remain.

**ALTERATIONS**

The Croissant Park Building has not had any major design or configuration changes. In the 1970s, open spaces that joined the major work areas on the first floor were closed making separate areas, and the first floor storefront windows and doors were removed and enclosed with concrete. Based on mid-1920s photographs, the present owners restored the window and door configuration to the original, and used doors taken from a 1920s home that was demolished at the SE corner to recreate the original entrance. The first floor windows and trim were replicated in kind with cypress wood (Photo 13). Severe water damage required that most second floor windows and trim be replicated in kind with cypress wood. The stairwell from the first floor to the second had rotted and was also replicated, using cypress rafters that had been concealed within the ceiling (Photo 14). When the current owners bought the building, the historic flooring on the first floor was gone. Based on research of architect Abreu's buildings, including Frank Croissant's home, 8-inch Spanish clay tile was selected to refinish the floors (Photo 6). Interior walls and ceilings that had suffered water damage were replaced with dry wall finished to replicate the original plaster walls.

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**PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST**

1. Croissant Park Administration Building, 1425 S. Andrews Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale
2. Broward County, Florida
3. Jay Adams
4. August 2000
5. Jay Adams
6. East elevation and cut corner, looking west
7. Photo #1 of 14

Items 1-5 are the same for the following photographs.

6. East and north elevations, looking southwest
7. Photo #2 of 14

6. South elevation, looking north
7. Photo #3 of 14

6. West elevation, looking east
7. Photo #4 of 14

6. North and west elevations, looking southeast
7. Photo #5 of 14

6. Interior, first floor, west unit, looking north
7. Photo #6 of 14

6. Interior, first floor, west unit, looking northwest
7. Photo #7 of 14

6. Interior, second floor stairway landing, looking southwest
7. Photo #8 of 14

6. Interior, second floor, showing stairway looking northeast
7. Photo #9 of 14

6. Examples of original doors, flooring, baseboards, looking north
7. Photo #10 of 14



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- 6. Typical space, showing original features, facing northwest
- 7. Photo #11 of 14
  
- 6. Typical second floor space, facing northwest
- 7. Photo #12 of 14
  
- 6. Main façade, showing corner entrance, east and south elevations, and setting at corner, facing northwest
- 7. Photo #13 of 14
  
- 6. Cypress stairway, facing southeast
- 7. Photo #14 of 14

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**CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION  
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**SUMMARY**

The Croissant Park Administration Building is nominated to the National Register for local significance under **Criteria A and C** in the areas of **Community Planning and Development and Architecture**. The building was the Florida headquarters of the accomplished national developer G. Frank Croissant. From the building, he and his Chicago staff of over 90 sales people transformed hundreds of acres into a thriving residential and commercial section of Fort Lauderdale. The Croissant Park Building is an excellent example of Mediterranean Revival Style construction that was popular in Florida during the 1920s.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

The beginnings of Fort Lauderdale date to the late nineteenth century, when Frank Stranahan set up a trading post on the banks of the New River, providing services for pioneer farmers. In 1895, Henry Flagler extended his Florida East Coast Railway from West Palm Beach to Miami. Fort Lauderdale became the focal point for land reclamation in 1905, and within five years, the settlement had a population of 143. Incorporated in 1911, Fort Lauderdale began a period of rapid development, which ended with World War I. By 1918, the population had grown to 2,000 residents. During the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s, real estate and tourism played important roles in the local economy. By 1922, developers had begun to transform wetlands into expensive neighborhoods. By 1925, the population was approximately 16,000 people, with the city limits measuring forty-three square miles. The speculative land boom collapsed in 1926, and culminated with the disastrous hurricane in September of that year. Devastated, the city's population declined to 9,000. The Great Depression threatened continued hard times, but as the 1930s progressed, Fort Lauderdale began to recover, and the former boomtown gained a national reputation as a seaside resort. More growth followed World War II, and today, with a population of about 150,000 in a larger metropolitan area of about 1.3 million, Fort Lauderdale remains a popular resort community. It is increasingly known for its commercial office buildings, and for attracting large technology companies.

**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**

Before the land south of Fort Lauderdale's New River became known as Croissant Park, others had tried but never succeeded with it as a real estate investment. In the 1880s, a Philadelphia combine bought 4,000,000 acres of land including what is now Croissant Park, for \$.25 an acre from the State of Florida. Later, in 1887, two sections of what is now southwest Fort Lauderdale were purchased by a group headed by Arthur T. Williams of Fernandina, Nassau County, Florida. Williams' group platted "Palm City," and cut 500 city blocks with plans for sidewalks and roads. They offered 50' x 100' lots at \$10 a piece, but there were few buyers. In 1920, a New York syndicate known as The Placidena Corporation, headed by Ross Clark and J.L. Turner purchased 400 to 500 acres of area land. By 1922, electric streetlights were being installed along Andrews Avenue, the main north/south thoroughfare, and a bridge was being built across the Tarpon River on Andrews.

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In 1923, what became the Croissant Park Building was built as a field office for the corporation. Purchasers of lots included locally prominent Sam Gilliam, founder of Everglades Lumber Company, Dr. S.J. Clark, and George Mathews, publisher of the Sentinel newspaper.

In 1924, Turner died and his partner, Clark, and the Turner heirs sold the corporation's holdings, including the management building to G. Frank Croissant's clients, Chicago investors Thomas Hoskins, Gilbert Woods, and Joshua Young. The investors also bought 600 additional adjacent acres, re-platted the combined tract, and named it Croissant Park after their developer. That year through 1926, Croissant laid the groundwork for a new residential development. The administration building served as the center for Croissant's planning and sale of the platted community.

Frank Croissant was born on July 12, 1884 in Brooklyn, New York. He became a teller at the Union Bank of New York in 1906. In 1908, he began a real estate career. Whether working for others or for himself, he was a qualified developer who eventually completed projects in Ohio, Michigan, Chicago, Illinois, Florida (Fort Lauderdale), New Jersey, and Majorca, Spain. Croissant was hired by Henry Ford to develop his Dearborn, Michigan, home sites. He bought his first vacation home in Miami in 1922, and became familiar with South Florida real estate. In 1924 he returned to Fort Lauderdale with the goal of making the community "Florida's Finest City." Frank Croissant died December 5, 1956. Today Croissant Park is a thriving neighborhood of families and young professionals.

**ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

Mediterranean Revival is an eclectic style containing elements from Spanish or Mid-eastern traditions. The style is found in the states that have a Colonial Spanish history, and was popular in Florida from the late 1910s into the 1930s. A Florida building "boom" in the 1920s proved the popularity of the style applied to buildings of all functions, from cottages to grand hotels. Mission and Spanish styles are a variant encompassed by the style. The style is characterized by shaped roof parapets, red tile roofs, and an asymmetrical facade attached to a simple rectangular plan. Openings are often arched; support columns are enlarged and square; walls are usually stucco. Ornamentation is commonly used to accent doors and windows, and is usually accomplished with decorated tile, terra cotta, carved stone or wrought iron.

Although the identity of the architect of the Croissant Park Administration Building is uncertain, it has features that are typical of buildings designed by Francis Luis Abreu, one of Fort Lauderdale's first architects. Abreu was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Diego Abreu. Diego Abreu was sugar planter with property in Cuba and Newburgh, New York. Mrs. Abreu was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Juan Jacinto Jova, owner of the Jova Brickworks in Newburgh.

When the Diego Abreu family moved to Fort Lauderdale from Newburgh in 1919, their son Francis was a student at Cornell's College of Architecture in Ithaca, New York. Although his studies were interrupted by military duty during World War I, Abreu graduated with a degree in architecture in 1921. Soon after, he was probably living in Fort Lauderdale where his parents had purchased a winter cottage on the New River. Family sources believe that he worked for Joseph Young at Hollywood-by-the-Sea. Young's company, Hollywood

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Land Water Company, had a complete engineering department, which employed architects among other technicians.

Abreu opened his first office in Fort Lauderdale in 1923, but he had surely taken commissions in the town before that date. Although there are no city building records remaining from the 1920s and few newspaper sources, approximately thirty buildings in Fort Lauderdale have been identified as the work of Abreu. One of his first documented projects was a remodeling job for his grandmother, Mrs. J. J. Jova, on a house she had purchased in Colee Hammock, just around the corner from the Abreu cottage. In 1924, he designed a beach house for her.

Abreu designed many projects for community leader Tom Bryan. In 1925 he was working on two apartment projects for Bryan and an office building on S.W. Second Street. In that same year he designed Bryan Court on Andrews Avenue, where Abreu located his office. In 1926, he designed a house for Tom and Camille Bryan on Tarpon Bend. In December 1926, Abreu completed a post office building project. Probably through the influence of Bryan, he received the commission to design a clubhouse for a municipal golf course. Other major projects included St. Anthony Parish School (NR 1997), West Side Fire Station, and a beach casino. Abreu also received numerous important residential commissions in 1925 and 1926 in Fort Lauderdale, including a home on Andrews Avenue for Frank Croissant. Most of Abreu's work in Fort Lauderdale was designed in the fashionable style of the period, the Mediterranean Revival.

As the real estate boom collapsed, Abreu had to let most of his staff go, though he did complete several other municipal commissions during that period. In 1928, he moved to Brunswick, Georgia, to design a Sea Island project for Albert Jones, but continued to maintain an office in Fort Lauderdale and accepted commissions there throughout the 1930s.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Croissant Park Administration Building is an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival Style as applied to a South Florida commercial building. The masonry construction, stucco exterior, and sculpted roofline parapets are in keeping with the style. The commercial character is indicated by the continuous walls along the two main elevations that give uninterrupted visibility to the storefront windows. The octagonal lanterns are allusions to towers, and contain false arched openings. The lanterns are in keeping with the Spanish Mission Style. Fort Lauderdale is a rapidly growing community and many of the city's historic buildings have been demolished. The Croissant Park Administration Building is one of the few historic commercial buildings remaining in the city and is a prominent landmark on South Andrews Avenue (Photo 13).

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**CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION  
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**CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION  
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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Croissant Park, Block 25, Lot 11. Plat Book 4

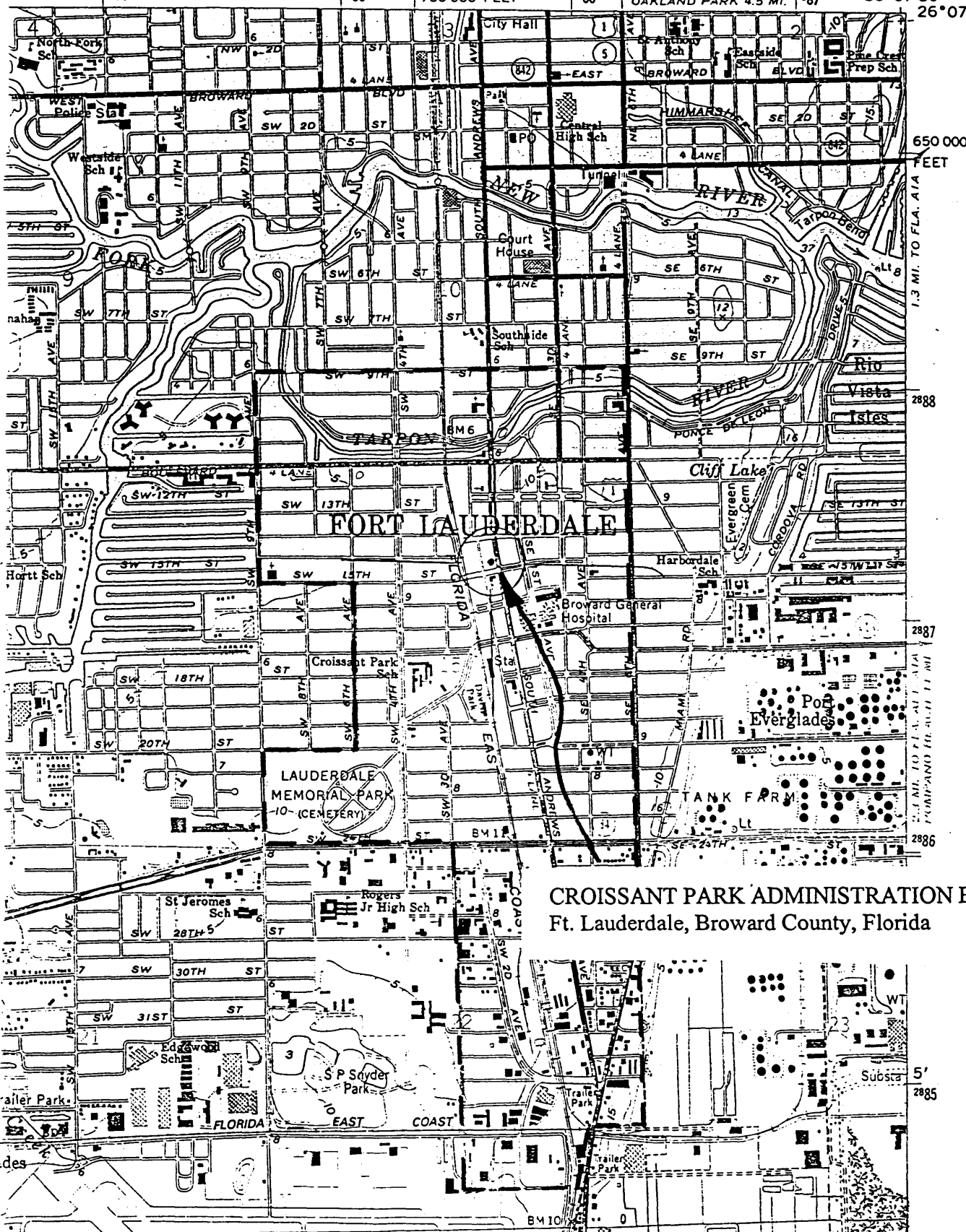
**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary encompasses the property historically associated with the Croissant Park Administration Building.

FLORIDA-BROWARD CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

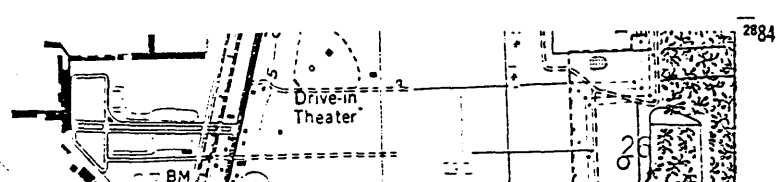
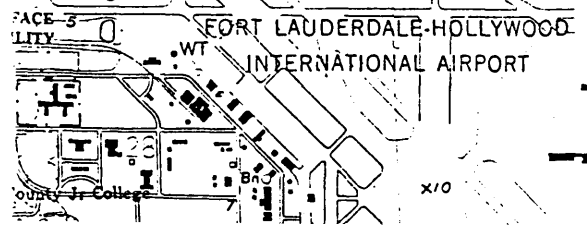
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584 585 780 000 FEET 586 587 80°07'30" 26°07'30"

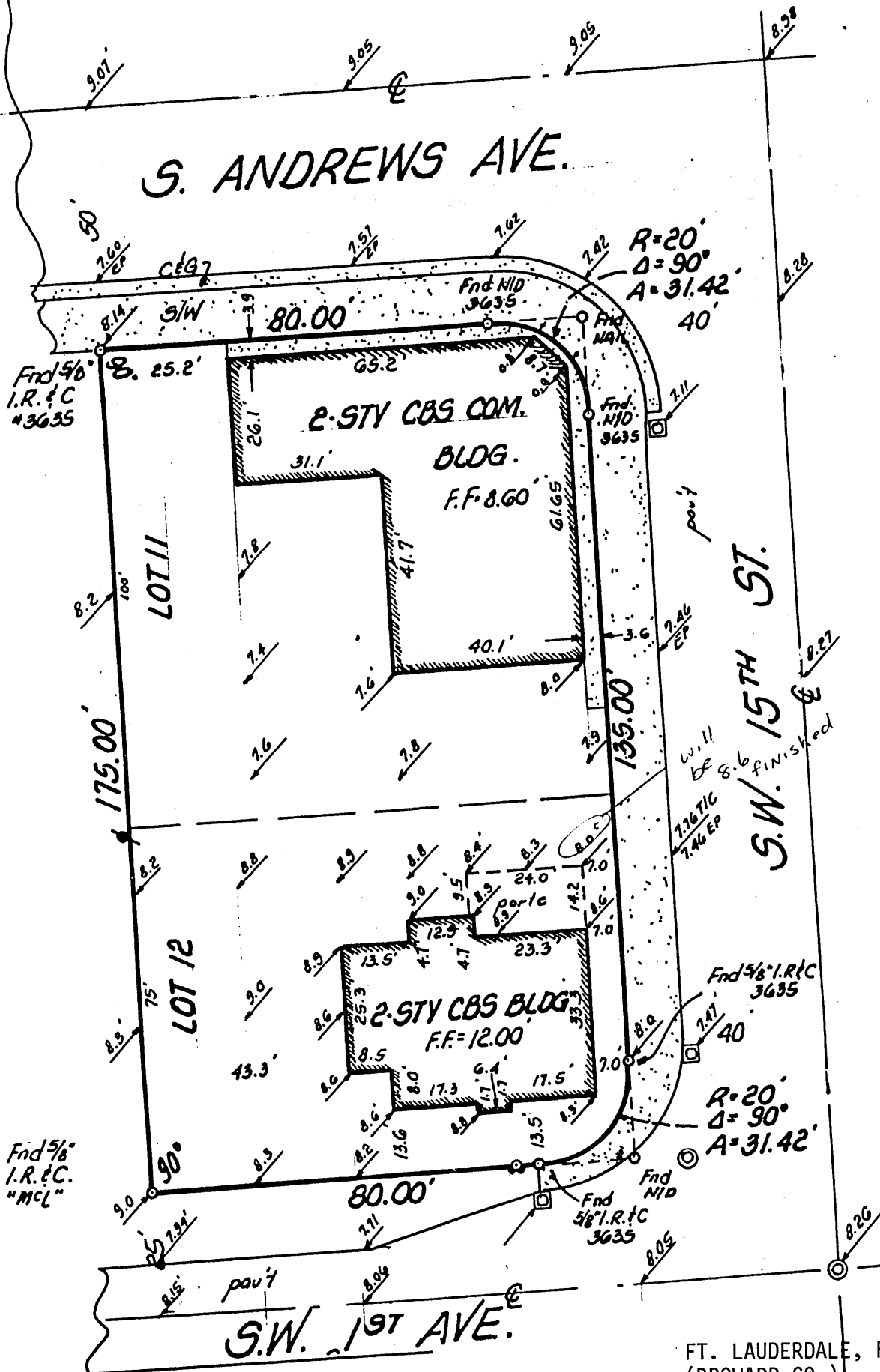


CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
Ft. Lauderdale, Broward County, Florida

CROISSANT PARK ORIGINAL BOUNDARIES



S. ANDREWS AVE.



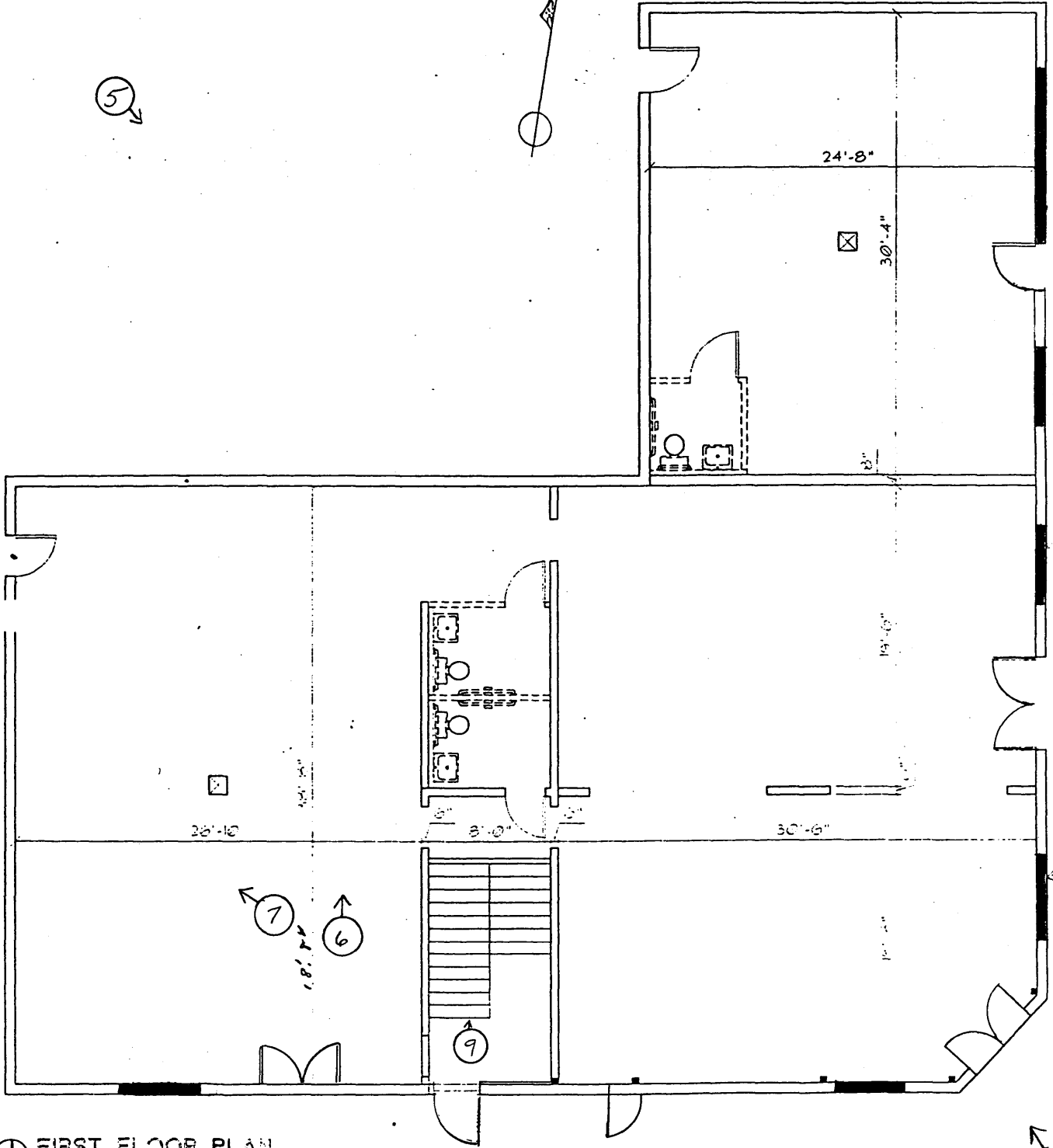


The Croissant Park Administration Building  
Fort Lauderdale FL

North



5



4

28'-10"

7

6

18'-1"

9

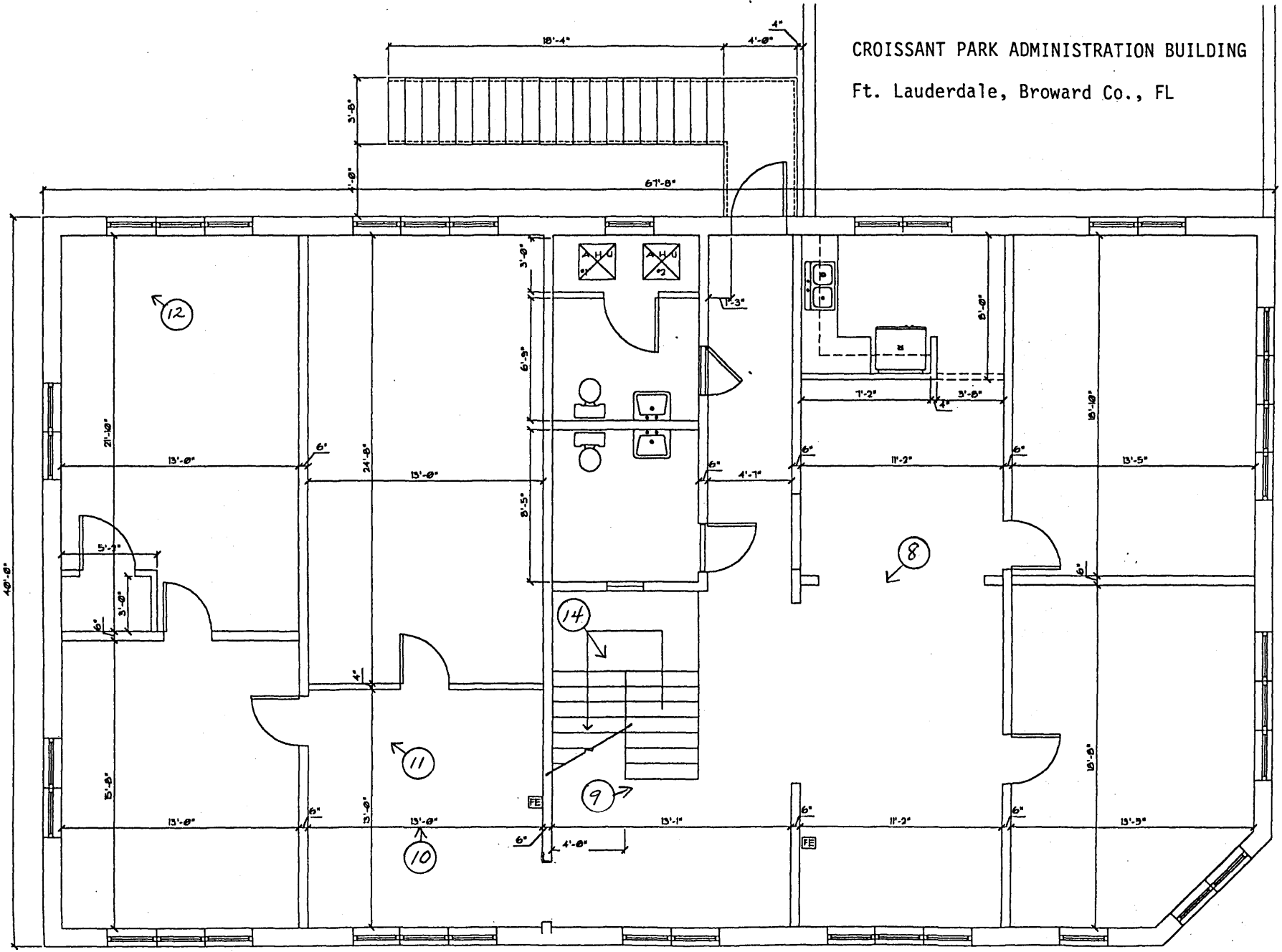
3

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

E.W. 15TH ST

13

CROISSANT PARK ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
Ft. Lauderdale, Broward Co., FL



① SECOND FLOOR PLAN