

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1508

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: Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail

other names/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number 318 East Washington Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town Red Oak vicinity N/A
state Iowa code IA county Montgomery code 137 zip code 51566

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Rowell J. Saito, Deputy SHPO
Signature of certifying official

November 30, 2005
Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Property Name: Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail
County and State: Montgomery County Iowa

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

Edson H. Beall 1.11.06

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Property Name: Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail
County and State: Montgomery County Iowa

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	<u>Government</u>	Sub:	<u>Fire station</u>
	<u>Government</u>		<u>Correctional Facility</u>
	<u>Social</u>		<u>Meeting hall</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	<u>Commerce/trade</u>	Sub:	<u>Restaurant</u>
	<u>Domestic</u>		<u>Multiple dwelling</u>

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>brick</u>
roof	<u>synthetic/rubber</u>
walls	<u>brick</u>
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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

Politics/Government

Period of Significance 1898 - 1955

Significant Dates 1898
1901
1907

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation _____

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Property Name: Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail
County and State: Montgomery County Iowa

Architect/Builder Christopher, O.H.
Pratt, Charles

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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 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 # _____

- Primary Location of Additional Data
- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other:

Name of repository: Red Oak Express

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property less than one acre

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

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	—	_____	3	—
2	—	_____	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.)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Property Name: Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail
County and State: Montgomery County Iowa

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Suzanne Boyde for Bill Hillman, owner e-mail: billh@heartland.net
organization: Firehouse Brewery date: December 30, 2004

street & number: 318 East Washington Avenue telephone: 712-623-4799

city or town: Red Oak state: IA zip code: 51566
=====

Additional Documentation
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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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Bill and Debbie Hillman

street & number 2085 A Avenue telephone 712-246-4166

city or town Shenandoah state IA zip code 51601
=====

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Red Oak Fire House and City Jail
Montgomery County, Iowa

7. HISTORIC CONDITION

Introduction

The Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail is a late Victorian brick building. It is located in the town of Red Oak, the county seat of Montgomery County, Iowa, in the southwest corner of the state. The building is at the northeast corner of Washington Avenue and 4th Street one block south of the square. It occupies city lots 1, 2, 3 and the south eight feet of lots 4, 5 and 6 in Block 53 in the original plat of the Town of Red Oak Junction. On its site at the southwest edge of the city, the Firehouse is at the edge of the business district, near the public library and county jail and the Montgomery County Courthouse. The Firehouse is on the corner of a lot facing north onto Washington Avenue. The east side of the building is bounded by the sidewalk on 4th Street. The south edge of the property is defined by Red Oak Creek which runs diagonally across the southwest corner of the lot. The west boundary is shared with a commercial building.

The current Firehouse and City Jail building consists of the original Firehouse and several additions, all under one roof:

- The original 24'x64' two-story main firehouse structure put into use in January of 1898. This housed hand-drawn fire carts and other firefighting equipment.
- A 21'x34' two story City Jail built in 1901 which is architecturally integrated into the original structure.
- A two-story 63'x24 foot' addition known as the stables built in 1907 to house the horses needed to pull new equipment.
- A 22'-3" x 45' South addition which opens to the stables on the first floor. This was built in 1907 to house the horse drawn fire equipment. It was later topped by a 495 sq. ft. second story breezeway porch built in 1937.
- A 34'x34' one story City Tool House built in 1924.
- A 25 x 30' "middle addition" on the North built in 1948 to provide two additional fire truck parking bays. This addition tied together the City Tool House, City Jail and Firehouse buildings.

CURRENT CONDITION

Looking at the Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail from the north, one sees a large two story brick building with a bell tower set out from the building on the northeast corner. Facing Washington Avenue there are four sets of wooden sliding doors originally used for fire equipment. On the west is a paved L-shaped courtyard. At the rear (south) of the courtyard is an attached two story building with sliding wooden doors once used as the stables; horse stalls were on the first floor and a haymow on the second floor. The easterly nook of the courtyard is bounded by the City Jail on the east, the tool shed wall on the north and the stables on the south. A narrow paved pathway goes past the west side of the stables to a brick patio on the south bounded by Red Oak Creek, which flows at the bottom of a steep ravine. To the east side of the patio on this (south) side of the building is the south addition built in 1907 to house horse-drawn equipment and to connect the stables with the Firehouse. Above this is the upstairs patio addition on the second floor. Rounding the corner of the lot to the east side of the building one sees two firehouse sliding doors, with the entrance to the upstairs apartments between them and further towards the north, the east entrance to the restaurant and the tower on the northeast corner.

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ORIGINAL FIREHOUSE (built in 1898)

Entering the original firehouse from the northeast past two overhead raised panel garage doors, there is a brick nook immediately to the left with overhead cabinets to the ceiling. Under the cabinets sits a large heavy iron vault built on site in 1899 for the use of the Volunteer Fire Department.

At eight feet from the front doors is a 2x6 foot framed wall, taped and sheetrock textured to match the brick. It has side lighted double doors on the west and three windows on the east. This wall was built in 2002 to provide an air lock so the restaurant could be climate controlled, but still maintain the original outside façade. Above the wall extending from the ceiling is a new drywall tape and textured eight-foot soffit created to accommodate the garage doors when they are raised. The bead board ceiling of the first floor was removed and two layers of 5/8 inch sheetrock were added, then the bead board was put back on. An interior 6x6 foot arched breezeway airlock was also built in 2002 at the existing door on the left (east). Bead board salvaged from the repair of the south stairwell wall was used as a covering. The outside door, which was beyond repair, was replaced by a period schoolhouse door.

There is an eight foot opening in the west wall which looks into the west addition, then further down this wall to the south is an added 32"x10" chase of drywall and bead board to accommodate modern wiring and plumbing. To the south of the chase is a wrapped opening with arched brick above. Further down the wall is a window opening, now lowered to make a doorway into what is now the bar. To the south of this opening is a cooler door cut into the jail/firehouse wall. Six feet south of that opening is a 36" rectangular plastered doorway opening. Original finishes were retained wherever possible.

On the southwest part of the south wall is an opening into the south addition. To the east of this is a new mechanical chase for ductwork and air conditioning, then in the corner is the original doorway which opens into the stairwell.

On the south part of the east wall is a newly framed wall of 2x4 drywall taped and textured to match the brick with a built in shelf at windowsill level which houses a trophy case with memorabilia from the firehouse. This wall and case were built in 2002 in order to retain the outside overhead garage door of the firehouse in its original condition.

Above the trophy case is a three foot octangular opening in the ceiling, faced with bead board, which was the original fire pole opening to the second floor. The top of this opening was covered by a floor in the 1927 upstairs apartment remodel. The relocated fire pole and opening are in the center, 11 feet from the east wall and 22 feet off the south wall.

On the northeast wall is a 7x3 foot arched double hung window. All the brick in this part of the firehouse is back plastered with a sand finish at a height of 32 inches. A new floor with boiler heat was installed in 2002. It is insulated with 4 inches of sealed concrete and has caulked joints.

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CITY JAIL (1901)

The first floor of the jail walls are original with the exception of plaster and painting repairs done to the masonry and the addition of a drywall ceiling with a crawl hole. In 1968 all but one section of the iron bars and cells were removed by the firemen after the jail was condemned and the firemen were allowed to re-decorate the area as a day room.

The brick exterior walls are 14 inches thick. Downstairs the northwest doorway, which was originally the door from the street, opens into a 6 foot by 7 ½ foot holding area. There is also an entrance door on the west wall. This is a doorway for a 7 foot by 30 inch door. This door was beyond repair and has been replaced with a period door. There is a door directly across from the west outside entrance which leads into the cell area. This arched doorway retains its original 2x10 door frame. On the north wall, seven feet from the east edge is a soldiered arched opening containing the barred jail window. The bars had been pegged into the brick, a portion of which remains. These bars are the only remnants of the bars and cages. The interior of the cell area is metal lath over brick and plastered with a sand finish. Walls and ceiling were painted green with a later interior coat of tan. The bricks had also been painted green. In 2002 the 1950's era bathroom on the south wall of the city jail was removed and two bathrooms were added for the restaurant patrons. The two west facing windows were replaced with new material in 2002 because they were rotted. A 2x4 wall was furred out for insulation on the west. The second floor, originally one room, was remodeled into an apartment in 1927.

CITY TOOL HOUSE (built in 1924)

The City Tool House was originally a freestanding building built in 1924. It is a brick building with 2x10" joists and a flat hot tar roof. A water meter was located inside the 6 ½ x 8 foot double doors on the center of the north wall. To west on this wall is a boarded up 3x5 window. A water pipe extends out two feet at the window at the window's top height just east of the window. This was probably used to fill public trucks. To the east is a raised panel door; the top window glass is boarded over.

On the west side of the building are two 12x18 foot openings with accordion hinged raised panel bead board doors which are painted white. A new door is cut into one of the panels in order to give access to what is now a kitchen.

Parapets on the north and south walls drain to the west with gutter and downspout.

On the south wall are two sliding tongue and groove 10x14 foot doors and a 3x3 foot metal fixed glazed window which is boarded over. The building sits three feet from the jail where a brick wall on the south was built to attach to the jail in the 1948 remodel.

Inside there are three sets of double hung windows on the east wall. An 8 foot by 40 inch doorway was cut into the tool house at the corner of the jail area in 2002 to access the kitchen. Inside the tool house (now kitchen) are two equal sized rooms separated by a tile brick wall with openings on the north and south ends. In 2002 the outside walls were furred out, insulated and dry walled, taped and painted. A drop ceiling was also added.

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WEST ADDITION (built in 1948)

A 1948 remodel added a single story that joins the City Tool House with the south side of the city jail and the west side of the fire house. This created two bays for parking fire vehicles. A three foot brick wall was extended on the south from the jail to the City Tool Shed. On the north two piers were built to allow for doors for the bays. On both sides of the addition the north and south parapets have a clay cap. The addition on the north is extended 22 inches and has a mansard roof detail added to give an even appearance from the street.

STABLES (built in 1907)

This two-story building is made of poured concrete walls 8-feet high on the North and 6-feet high on the South. The second story is clay tile block with 2x12 joists for the roof support. There is an asphalt roof capped with a rubber roof.

The downstairs has a new double door cut into the Southwest end of the South side. There are four upper and three lower windows plus the new exit door placed where another window was located. To meet current building and safety standards the first floor windows are now 2x6 with the sill lowered from the original 2x2 window size. The windows were boarded, so new windows were installed in the openings. A new concrete floor was laid over the original dirt floor. There was no footer for the original sliding doors. The sliding doors were redone by replacing rotted wood, straightening tracks and priming and painting. The original hardware remains on the doors.

The upstairs sliding doors were refurbished, but nothing else was changed. Steel tension bars spanning from the underside of the roof running North and South help to support the roof.

On the roof the original masonry cap is back plastered and sealed. The flat roof has a two foot parapet. Two 2x2 upper windows face West. Concrete 18"x16" beam post and headers frame the stable doors. On the North wall on the East side is a single paneled wood door, two 2x2 windows are in the center and there is a double sliding door on the West. The bottom floor has eight 2x14 metal brackets bolted into the block supporting a 1x12 inch wood drip cap and channel from which are hung six sliding barn doors

On the inside the owner added stair access to the second floor. This is the only structural change to the second floor. The roof system and structural framing are three laminated 2x12 beams spread every sixteen inches on center. The roof decking is 1x8 shiplap. Downstairs, the walls and ceilings were furred, sheeted and painted in 2002. A concrete floor with insulated floor heat was added over the dirt floor. Using 2x4 construction with 5/8 drywall, taped and painted a boiler room, two baths, a hallway and office were created on the East side of this section.

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SOUTH ADDITION (built 1907)

This addition was made when horse drawn equipment was purchased. Downstairs in 2002 there were boarded up openings in the 2x2 window frames. New windows were added. The addition is built of hard fired brick made from one course of architectural sized pavers. The ceiling (second story porch floor) is poured concrete post and beam capped with a concrete floor. A hook on a concrete beam in the ceiling of the first floor in the center of the room may have been used to hang harness. The ceiling of the first floor roof has a ¼ inch per foot slope. The owner added a drop ceiling and insulation in the ceiling. The East and South walls are 2x4 wood frame with 5/8 drywall taped and painted. In 2002 a 5x19 foot mechanical room was added on the East wall where there is a sliding door to the outside. Except where covered by drywall, the original brick and mortar and paint are visible. The North wall of the main room has one coat of off-white paint added some time in the past. Original brick shows through the paint where conduit and other items which were painted were later removed. It appears the two South doorways to the original firehouse on the East and the Jail on the West side of this North wall were created when openings were cut into the brick and back plastered with sand and cement.

Outside on the East is a 2x2 window boarded up sitting on a 6"x43' concrete sill with soldiered archway above. A wooden 10'x10'-3" foot sliding door retains the original latch. This door is wood framed faced with tongue and groove siding and a concrete post and beam header.

SECOND FLOOR

The stairwell is entered from the East by way of a door topped by a transom. Along the North wall 1-1/2" steel pipe is fashioned into a safety rail. The stairwell goes up 19 steps before dividing with three steps up to the left to the breezeway porch or to the right to three apartments and the door to the fire pole. Horizontal bead board car siding, some 3/8" and some 5/8" lines the stairwell.

The porch was built in 1937. Entering the porch, the North wall is the original south facing wall of the firehouse and city jail. The West wall is the hollow tile brick of the stable. The roof of the porch is poured beams of concrete with concrete slabs set at a 3 to 12 pitch on top of laid up brick on the South and East wall. The headers of the center and west doors are I-beam, while the header of the East door on the North wall is concrete. The window on this wall is part of the original city jail. Windows on this eight foot deep porch were repaired and reglazed in 2002. The cut face brick used for the South and East walls is 3" brick up to the window sill, then 2" brick from the sill to the ceiling.

Filled up and re-worked steam heat radiators remain in place in the upstairs of the building.

There are three doors on the South wall of the porch which lead to an eleven-foot concrete patio with a metal railing.

The hallway on the other side of the landing from the breezeway porch leads to three apartments and the door which opens onto the fire pole. The handle and striker of the fire pole door are 4-1/2 feet from the floor and the panel at eye level is glass. Once the door is opened, the fire pole is straight ahead. These three apartments, one

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above the city jail and two above the original firehouse, were remodeled for living spaces in 1927. The apartments are newly updated, but the layout remains the same. All windows have been restored.

Going down the stairs and back outside we see that the stairs are in the original firehouse. To the North of this 3x7 foot door, which has an arched soldier lintel, is a 10x10 sliding garage door. Seven carriage bolts on each side and one at the top appear to have held up an earlier frame. Two more carriage bolts are to the North of the slider at eight feet in height. Upstairs, from South to North, are three double hung arched windows, a small 2x3 foot double hung window and another large double hung arched window. Above this, along the top of the building runs a brick façade parapet with continuous decorative arches.

The bell tower on the Northeast corner of the building is set out 18" and is 7 feet square. At the second story height is a decorative soldiered façade sill base for the second story and a double hung arched window inset with a full arch lintel above the window. Above the parapet is pressed tin decoration on the front of a wood fascia. The tower is covered with a flat asphalt roof. The wooden belfry which topped the bell tower and is visible in photos of the original building was sold with the bell in 1923.

THE FRONT

The front façade (on the north side of the building) was remodeled in 1948. It is faced with a Mansard roof which ties in the West addition space north of the city jail and the firehouse.

COURTYARD (remainder of lot)

The courtyard is concrete over poured asphalt and continues Southwest around the building to Red Oak Creek. A newly added covered porch (awning) extends 10 feet over the courtyard on the North. The patio to the South was resurfaced with pavers from the original East side of the building, which was concrete and had to be removed and re-graded.

PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

Considering the length of its history, the Firehouse and City Jail has undergone relatively little physical change throughout the years since the Firehouse was built in 1898. Each change was an addition, not a renovation. The Jail was added in 1901, the horse areas were added in 1907, and the Tool House (built in 1924) was tied into the other buildings in 1948.

As public spaces, the buildings were maintained in a manner to serve their utilitarian purposes. The frugality of fiscal decision-makers may have preserved the building near its original state through the years. Over time the interior spaces were used for various purposes without changing their original form. For example, the stables became the storehouse for excess equipment, the vacated upstairs apartments later stored wheelchairs and hospital beds (which were loaned out to the disabled in the County), and the Tool House went from housing small city equipment to housing firefighting paraphernalia.

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Except for the needs presented by technology (fire equipment updates, city paving, lights, plumbing and electricity), there were few purely cosmetic interior or exterior changes except for 1) the North face changes in the West addition which visually tied-in the three buildings with a mansard roof extension in 1948, 2) the upstairs remodel into three apartments in 1927, 3) the loss of the belfry in 1923 and 4) the firemen's remodel of the City Jail into a day room in 1968.

When the property was transferred to private hands in 2002 most of the original architecture remained exposed and intact. Throughout its recent renovation into a commercial property, every effort has been made to work with the local and state historic offices to retain original details and to restore the building as much as possible to its original state.

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Red Oak Fire House and City Jail
Montgomery County, Iowa

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant Dates (Continued): 1924, 1937, 1948

Summary Paragraph

The Red Oak Firehouse and City Jail is a late Victorian red brick building. It is locally significant under criterion A because it illustrates how local government in this small community dealt with the issues and problems brought on by rapid town growth.

The building housed the fire department and the city jail, both of which provided important public safety functions to the city. In addition, the fire department building provided a center for the social aspects associated with the volunteer firemen's organization. Particularly in the early years of the 20th century, the firehouse served as a meeting place and training center for firemen and the ladies society. It also was used as a social hall for local events such as dances. Secondly, after 1907 the room on the second floor provided housing for firemen while they were on duty and after 1927, three apartments for firemen and their families.

The city jail, maintained by the town marshal's officers, provided a place for breakers of municipal ordinances to be housed, as well as a place for what we would now call the "homeless" to find a bed and a meal.

The city tool house, built in 1924, was a public building used mainly as a place for safe storage of city maintenance equipment. For at least the year of 1924 it was also used as a voting place. After 1948 it was incorporated into the firehouse building and used solely by the fire department.

National firehouse trends

According to The American Firehouse: An Architectural and Social History, the development of fire protection began with a phase of bucket brigades. When volunteer fire departments later formed, they were organizations with a clubhouse or fraternal function. The departments used hand-drawn equipment housed in a small wooden shed until after the Civil War, when transition to the fire station as a public building began. An institutional shift in organization from private to public fire service (when firemen became paid civil servants) took place in the second half of the 19th Century. Architecturally and culturally, the firehouse was unique. "The fire station's requirements became different from those of any other public building: it had to accommodate both men and machines, to include a heavy-duty garage for fire engines, and pleasant living quarters for firemen under the same roof. Combining aspects of a garage, a barracks, and a home, it had to be public and private, institutional and domestic, ceremonial and functional all at once."

The following timeline is described in The American Firehouse and is included here to give perspective to the discussion in this application about the building and subsequent renovations to the Firehouse in Red Oak. The

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Red Oak Fire Department followed this progression, but not necessarily the same dates.

- Early firefighting and the use of fire sheds, 1640 to 1820
- The volunteer fire station in its heyday, 1825 to 1865
- Steam engines and paid departments, 1853 to 1885
- Electricity and horses, 1865 to 1895
- Politics and sentiment, 1890 to 1918
- Motorization, 1905 to 1940
- Streamlining and Specialization, 1925 to 1945
- The modern fire station, 1945 to present

Early firefighting and the use of sheds

Iowa was admitted to the Union in 1846. Red Oak is in the Center of Montgomery County in southwest Iowa. In 1850, when the Iowa legislature undertook a survey of the southwestern counties, only half a dozen non-Native families were living in the entire area. By 1853 the combined population of Montgomery and neighboring Adams County was less than 75 people. By 1860 Montgomery County alone had 1256 residents. It was on the major western and southern stagecoach routes. The present town of Red Oak was a collection of a few frame houses and shops erected here and there by prairie pioneers. In 1865 the county seat was relocated from nearby Frankfort to Red Oak.

In 1868 an early settler “stood on east hill and counted every house in town. They numbered fifty.” The next year, 1869, the railroad arrived, and the town incorporated as Red Oak Junction (shortened to Red Oak in 1902), with the expectation that two railroad lines would cross there. The city quickly grew to 2924 residents in 1870 and by then Red Oak Junction was a well established community. City fathers began creating the necessary civic infrastructure needed to support the city’s transition to a modern municipality which would attract new businesses and commerce.

Like many new towns on the prairie, fire was a major public hazard in Red Oak Junction because houses and businesses were built of wood, and water was not always available when it was needed to douse flames. Fire protection consisted of hastily formed bucket brigades. A particularly devastating fire struck seven businesses on the southeast side of the square on December 13, 1875. According to newspaper accounts, there was a lack of organization among the citizens fighting the blaze. Arguments ensued while the fire raged. This fire served as the catalyst for the formation of the first volunteer fire department in 1876.

“The Red Oak Fire Company” was formed by leading citizens H.H. West, C.H. Mills and B.B. Clark in January of 1876, and a shed to house equipment was soon built. By March the city council had provided a hook and ladder outfit and a three-wheeled velocipede chemical engine with an 80-gallon cylinder. These were manually hauled to fires and were operated by hand. Other chemical extinguishers and other equipment were added over the next few years.

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In 1881 the water works was completed, and the fire department in full dress uniform was featured prominently in the Fourth of July celebration and commemorated in woodcuts by C.S. Burch Co. of Chicago from photos by Mr. Moran, a local photographer. The caption in an 1889 booklet promoting Red Oak reads, "Volunteer Fire Department is well supplied with three hose carts, two thousand feet of hose, hook and ladder trucks." In that year the department was reorganized and was comprised of the Clipper Hose Company Number 1 (changed to Fisher Hose Company in 1885 in honor of Fire Chief J.F. Fisher) and Relief Hose Company No. 2. Each company had 25 members. In May of 1885 an additional company, the Harris Hook and Ladder Company, was formed with 22 members.

With the building of the Firehouse in 1898 the need for existing fire shed hose houses was considered in the past. However, as equipment was hand-drawn, and the homes of prominent citizens were high atop "East Hill", a hose shed was erected there in 1900 to store one cart and some hose for emergency purposes.

The Red Oak Volunteer Fire Station in its Heyday (1876 to 1918)

For Red Oak the "heyday period" began in 1876 with local and regional meetings with other firefighters from neighboring towns. The fire departments became a source of public pride, just as sports teams are for fans today. There were fire department parades, women's auxiliary societies, a Red Oak Fire House Band, a natty formal uniform, regional conventions and firemen's sporting competitions. All were attended by a large contingency of the local citizenry.

From 1907 through 1912 Red Oak's fire horse team Pac and Pac, ex-race horses acquired after their retirement from Paculous Park, the local horse track, won races at firemen's regional competitions hand down. They were celebrities and their images appeared in photographs and documents and on penny picture post cards.

Not until baseball was introduced in the early teens did the fire department as a social outlet start to wane in the mid-west, as elsewhere in the country.

The Red Oak Firehouse was built in 1898, the height of the glory days of the volunteer department. Its design is typical of the storefront design popular in the period. It included one floor for equipment and another equal-sized upstairs floor that was envisioned to serve an important societal function. And indeed, right after its completion there was a flurry of dances, meetings and ladies' auxiliary events held upstairs.

By 1901 when the City Jail addition was completed, the use of the Firehouse for social functions had begun to fall off. Although the Fire Department was featured in parades and such, by 1918 when the horses were replaced by motorized trucks, the "heyday" had run its course. The annual Fireman's Ball and parades continued to be held, but never held the community's fervor of those early times.

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Red Oak Paid Fire Department (1907-)

With regard to the organization of the fire department, since 1907 Red Oak has had a city staff supplemented by volunteers. Today, according to the Iowa Firefighters Pension Task Force, ninety-per cent of Iowa's 870 emergency response (fire) departments are "all-volunteer". The rest are either career departments or a combination of volunteer/career departments. In 1883 the City of Des Moines, the state capital, began a paid department. In 1900 Clinton, in eastern Iowa, did the same. Red Oak's approach as a combined volunteer/paid department has continued to the present time, with dependence on volunteers declining as time goes on.

With the erection of the Firehouse in 1898, jointly funded by the Volunteer Fire Department and the City Council, the Red Oak Fire Department entered a new era of oversight by the City Council. The City Council paid much of the expenses of the new building, ongoing expenses such as repairing equipment as well as the annual \$50 salary of the fire chief. A full inventory was ordered on May 2, 1898. The Red Oak Fire Department housed the following equipment:

1-Hook and ladder cart	2-Service hose carts
1-Extension ladder	1600 ft. of cotton hose
2-30 foot ladders	628 ft. of rubber hose
2-24 foot ladders	4-rubber coats
2- Roof ladders	80-ft. ¾" hose
2-Picks	1-Testing pump
5-Pike poles	1-Stove
2-Axes	1-Three way nozzle
2-Raft poles	5-Service nozzles
2-Rubber coats	15-Spanners
2-Grab hooks	850 feet condemned rubber hose
2-Service hose carts	

In March of 1906 the City Council passed an ordinance entitled "An ordinance creating a Fire Department, and fixing the duties thereof," retaining authority in City hands.

By 1907 when the first horse drawn equipment was purchased, the City had agreed to provide two paid members of the Fire Department. Annual salary for the two men combined was \$719.75. On February 3, 1908, an ordinance was passed regarding the duties of fire department personnel:

The Chief Engineer of the fire department shall be appointed from the membership of the paid force of the Department.

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It shall be the duty of the Chief, upon assuming that office or as soon thereafter as possible, to familiarize himself with the ordinances of the City of Red Oak, Iowa, defining his duties, and all other ordinances in regard to the fire department and the water works system of the city.

It shall be the duty of the Chief to assist the City Marshall in the discharge of all duties of the Fire Warden.

The paid members of the fire department shall provide themselves with, and wear while on duty, a uniform. The uniform of the paid department shall consist of navy blue trousers, shirt, coat and cap. The paid members of the fire department shall provide themselves with boots, and snap trousers and such other facilities such as will enable them to dress quickly in response to fire alarms at night.

The paid members of the department shall at all times except when actually engaged at fires, keep their shoes blackened, their clothing neat, and otherwise preserve a neat personal appearance.

It shall be the duty of the paid force of the department to preserve order, and prevent loud or boisterous conduct in or about the hose house.

The use of, or drinking of intoxicating liquors in or about the hose house is strictly prohibited, and it shall be the duty of the Chief of the department to enforce this rule.

It shall be the duty of the paid department to keep the hose house and apparatus in as neat and orderly condition as possible, and at all times in readiness to respond to fire alarms.

In April of 1925 the Fire Department asked the City Council to turn over the building and equipment of the fire station to the Volunteer Fire Company. This was the beginning of an uneasy division of authority. The joint management of the Fire Department by the Volunteer Fire Department and by the Mayor and City Council continued until this face-down came to a head in 1927. The City Council introduced a new ordinance "creating a Fire Department and fixing the duties thereof," which stated the City Manager was in charge of personnel and decision-making for the Department. Days later the entire Volunteer Fire Department disbanded, leaving the City with no fire protection. The Mayor and City Council formed a new Department within hours, and the era of the independence of the Volunteer Department was at an end. The new employees served at the pleasure and under the direction of city government.

The 1927 resignation of the Volunteer Fire Department and subsequent reforming of a volunteer/city fire department by the City Council resulted in another change to the Firehouse. Since 1907 the upstairs had been used as sleeping quarters for the paid staff and one volunteer who served at night. In 1927 the upstairs was remodeled, and three apartments were provided as a benefit for firefighters and their families. This arrangement continued throughout the time of the historic period of significance. When the fire department staff grew to more than three, the families with fewer children were assigned to the apartments. Others were given a stipend for

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living off-site. In 1931 the city bought paint for painting the walls and one screen door for the fire station. Firemen were to provide the labor. In June of 1937 Charles H. Barnes was paid for building the porch.

The family living apartment type of arrangement, while common for jails, was atypical of fire departments. The norm was for the living quarters to be for the firemen only while they were on duty.

Only one complication is ever mentioned in City Council minutes about the use of the apartments by families after 1927. In 1931 a petition was presented to City Council:

“We the undersigned barbers and beauty operators (17) as tax payers and renters, ask that the beauty and barber shop at the city fire station be discontinued, as it is unfair and unjust competition, because of using city property as a competitive business.”

Electricity and Horses at the Red Oak Fire Department (1907 through 1922)

On April 25, 1902, the South side of the square, less than a block from the Firehouse, suffered a devastating fire as the entire street went up in flames. Firemen were unable to contain the fire, though it was discovered and reported promptly. A city main was later found to be only partially opened. As a response to the 1902 fire, (according to the 1953 Montgomery County Centennial publication, “Cavalcade of a Century”) around 1903 a committee was appointed to solicit funds to purchase harness, horses and wagon with the understanding that the city supply two men at the station at all times.

The transition to horse drawn equipment was accomplished in 1907, ending the era of the hand drawn fire equipment. The first team of horses was Pac and Pac. Building renovations were needed. A stable and a south addition were erected at a cost of \$1404.07. Pac and Pac were sold in 1913, and three teams followed.

On the subject of fire alarms, fireman Gulzow, speaking about Grand Island (a small town similar to Red Oak in size, in the neighboring state of Nebraska) recalls, “Before sirens, they used to use the steam whistle at the power plant. The town was divided into four different wards. For instance, for ward 1 they would blow one long whistle and the different sections within that ward were designated by short whistles. It gave you an idea of where to go, not the exact location, but the general idea of where to go. There were very few telephones at the time. On the hand drawn trucks there was a clapper on the wheel that hit a bell on every revolution.”

In Red Oak, the fire bell was sold on September 3, 1923. The power plant steam whistle system was then in use. Although a system of steam whistle codes for the part of town where the fire erupted was considered, this idea was dropped in 1927 in favor of continuing with a general alarm. In 1929 a special fire phone was installed in the fire station and the gong circuit between the fire station and the fire plant was equipped with signal lights to indicate the wards. In later years an electric siren was placed on top of the Firehouse bell tower. The siren was moved to the new fire department building when the Firehouse was decommissioned in 1980.

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The move to modern horse drawn equipment driven by city employees opened one of the main eras of this station. And it caused the first renovation of the fire department part of the fire department building (the city jail addition was built in 1901 but functioned separately). Stables were necessary to house the horses, and an addition was added which connected to the stables. The day and night staff at the Firehouse also required better accommodations. In 1906 a hot water tank was added upstairs. October of 1907 the Firehouse was equipped with electric lights and was hooked up to the city's municipal steam heat plant. However, the driver of the hose wagon was required to pay for the light he used in the living rooms upstairs.

The assignment of a living area for the use of the firemen in 1907 put an end to the use of the upstairs as a public meeting room. There were other changes as well---with the purchase and upkeep of horses and new equipment and the payment of two salaries and the need for renovations, the City was taking on more and more of the financial responsibility for the Department, setting the stage for more public oversight.

In 1920 the first motorized fire truck was purchased with \$1104 raised at the Fireman's Dance and another \$1100 paid by the city. By 1922 with the purchase of another truck the horses were gone.

In April of 1928 the city manager announced that the City had in service 164 fire plugs with over 100,000 feet of main. There was a need for emergency pumps at each plant and also a need for a storage facility with greater water pressure. At this same meeting the City Council approved the purchase of a new truck to replace the pumper engine, which had a rod loose. In March of 1929, after the presentation of a petition signed by several hundred, \$2236.61 was transferred from the emergency fund to purchase a truck made by American LaFrance and Foamite Industries, Inc.

“The pumper we have, has been felt inadequate for sometime and last week broke down completely at a fire leaving us without a pumping engine and only a hose wagon and chemical truck. Much of our fire residence section is on a high hill which makes a pumper a real necessity in case of fire in this section.”

The Beginnings of the Modern Fire Station and Motorization in Red Oak (1921 to 1927)

Like many fire departments after WWI, Red Oak made the transition from horse-drawn to motorized fire equipment. This transition also provided a change in the use of the interior space in the Firehouse building. In 1923 the Fire Chief reported, “The Red Oak Volunteer Fire Department is composed of 28 volunteer men. Two men are employed day and night on a salary. One man makes his home in the living quarters in the fire station, and is on duty at night. This gives three men at the station at night and two in the day time. The fire department is well equipped with hose and fire fighting equipment. It is composed of two trucks. One with booster pump, capacity 350 gallons of water a minute, with 120 pounds of pressure. This truck carries a 40-gallon fire extinguisher and 1,000 feet of 2-1/2 inch fire hose and hooks and ladders. The other truck carries 1250 feet of 2-1/2 inch hose and 40 gallons chemical, hooks, ladders and all equipment needed to fight fires. We also have a hook and ladder wagon which can be attached to trucks, which carries a 60 foot extension ladder, a 30 foot

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extension ladder, two 24 foot ladders, two 28 and one 30. We have 3450 feet of fire hose, 2-1/2 inch, as good as new. We have 400 feet of second class hose. The finances of the Volunteer Fire Department are in good shape."

The new equipment accompanied a new need for expertise. The recollections of fireman Guzlow of Grand Island could also apply to Red Oak. On the subject of the 1927 purchase of an American LaFrance 750 pumper truck he wrote, "I was old enough to get a ride on the thing. The engineer from the American LaFrance company took me along when he went to pump the truck for the city. In fact, he was here about two weeks teaching 'em how to drive the truck. We had some men on the fire department that didn't know how to drive any vehicles at all before that. They were used to horses."

A full inventory of fire department equipment was ordered in 1927. On hand were:

1 hand drawn hook and ladder truck

2-24 foot ladders

1-28 foot ladder

1-30 foot ladder

1 large hook

1 Reo truck equipped with 350 gal. booster pump, 40 gallon chemical, 2-#2 Habcock chemicals, 1 ax, 1 pike, pole 2 lanterns, 200 foot chemical hose, 1-10 foot ladder, 1-24 foot extension ladder, 4 nozzles (2 pike and 2 8.0), 1-10 ft section suction hose, 1 crow bar, 1 extra charge sods and acid, 1 siren and 1 spot light, 1 Siamese and 1 reversible coupling

40# of soda

3 gal of acid

1 lawn mower

1 shovel

2 rakes

2 brooms

1 spare tire and rim

1 large ring expander and one small for chem. hose

1 clock

1 pressure gauge

1 map of the City of Red Oak showing the location of fire plugs

1-50 foot ladder

2-24 foot light ladders

4 pike poles

1 pick

1 Reo truck equipped with 1-40 gal. chemical tank divided into center making 2-10 gal tanks, 2 #2 2 Babcock chemicals, nozzles (3 straight and 3 shut off), 1 cellar nozzle, 2 tomite chemicals, 10 rain coats, 200 ft of chemical hose, 1 siren, 1-20 foot extension ladder, 2-10 foot roof ladders, 2 axes, 2-10 foot pike poles, 1 dry cell light, 6 helmets, 6 hydrant wrenches, 1 large monkey wrench, 5 hose straps, 44 hose spanners, 3 hose jackets, 2 sets of truck chains, 4100 ft of fire hose, 450 foot of hose could be used in case of emergency.

1-fomite gun

4 charges for fomite

1 smoke helmet (no good)

100 ft garden hose

2 flags

1 qt. polish

6 chairs

1 put and take top

2 flags

1-20 ft. tarpaulin

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An innovation first discussed in 1923 was a firemen's training college held annually in Ames, Iowa. Two firemen, usually the chief and a driver, attended these training sessions at City expense. Educating the public about fire prevention became a civic duty of firemen in the 1930's. This required the use of Firehouse interior space as a site for some of these training sessions. Others were held at local businesses, at schools or at social club meetings.

The Modern Fire Station Era in Red Oak (1941 -)

In 1941 the Red Oak Fire Department took on some more new duties. That year the department took possession of the new truck of the "Farmer's Fire Protective Society" and agreed to respond to rural fires. In 1941 the fire department purchased first aid equipment, an infant iron lung and other equipment such as hospital beds, wheel chairs, crutches, electric blankets, oxygen and carbon dioxide tanks, gas masks, a stretcher and wheel chairs for community use. In 1947 a boat and outboard motor were added, due to the many floods through the years (and the worst flood in history came in that year.) In 1948 an emergency medical treatment truck was added and another rural fire truck was ordered.

Clearly there was a need for more storage of all the new equipment. In 1948 an addition was made to connect the north sides of the firehouse, city jail and city tool house and add two exits. Russell G. Lloyd was paid \$1,710.75 for labor and materials and Lagergren Paint and Roofing Company was paid \$23.90 for the paint. Now the firehouse, city jail, stables and tool house were all attached under one roof.

In 1950 blue blinking lights were added to the cars of 30 volunteers, though cars were also allowed to keep on honking their horns as a signal the car was in route to a fire. A 1950 photo shows the firemen, with trucks and boat in front of the 1948 addition.

No discussion of a fire department is complete without some mention of a mascot. It was in 1951 that Miss Crystal, a Dalmatian coach hound, was purchased in Omaha and trained to ride on the fire truck. She gave birth the next year to eight puppies under the work bench.

In 1953 there were two paid staff and twenty-eight volunteers. All firemen had passed the Red Cross Advanced course in first aid and four wheel chairs, five hospital beds, four polio walkers and one polio heat packer were available to anyone in the County. The fire chief would lug this equipment in the back of his car. In 1954 the 1929 La France was replaced.

The fire department remained at this building until relocating to a new building in 1980.

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE CITY AND COUNTY JAIL SYSTEM IN RED OAK

Frontier town (1854 to 1876)

For many years there was no jail in Red Oak Junction. When the need arose prisoners were transported to the Territorial Jail at Glenwood in Mills County, a distance of thirty miles.

Joint city/county building (1876 to 1899)

In 1876 the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors joined with the City of Red Oak to erect and jointly manage a 16x32 wooden frame jail building. From 1876 through the turn of the century, the newspaper accounts, City Council minutes and County Board of Supervisors referred to the white frame jail building using the terms "calaboose" and "city jail" interchangeably. On January 5, 1876, the building was ready to be painted. On January 12, 1876, Bolt, Crockett & Company was contracted to build a sewer and vault at the jail and it was decided at the same time to have the jail insured. On June 6, 1876, the county supervisors appropriated \$32 from the courthouse fund to build a privy and coal house at the jail.

On August 9th the new Mayor of Red Oak Junction addressed the City Council. His remarks illustrate the view of the time toward the use of the City Jail for what appears to be primarily as a place to house homeless men, at the time called "tramps".

"In making up the General Fund I find from Mayor Docket \$41.50 fines paid while there are over \$500 fines worked out on our City streets and stone pile, nearly 250 pounds of stone broken by the Tramp or Transient element while the cost for same has been very low, meals furnished at 10-cents amounting to some \$125.60 for two years and coal necessary for the ordinary use at City Jail. The Tramp question is easily solved. Give plenty of stonepile labor and good wholesome (sic) food and the tramp will either pay his way or give the town the Goby. If our people would send the Tramp to headquarters our City Authoritys or report them promptly, they would be properly cared for and our people would be saved time and expense. There is no Charity in giving the ordinary Tramp either food or clothing as it simply encourages Tramping, and does not meet ends desired or anticipated.

I congratulate you Gentlemen on the financial Condition of our City. The exceptional Fire protection, the prompt and efficient work of our Fire Company, the general prosperity of our city during the year just closed as compared with our neighboring Towns, the very small amount of public debauches, no house breaking or stealing and little or no disturbances of any kind....Trusting that the coming year will prove as successful we thank each member of the Council for having done his whole duty.

This facility was used by the county to hold a prisoner before transportation to the more substantial Mills County Jail in Glenwood. The City of Red Oak Junction used the jail mainly for overnight detention of drunks and

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vagrants. The building was located on lots 1 and 2 in Block 54 of the Original Plat at what is now Third Street and Washington Avenue (one block west of the present Red Oak Firehouse).

City Jail on Firehouse Lot (1898 to 1901)

On August 25, 1898 (eight months after the Firehouse was dedicated) the county board of supervisors awarded a contract to erect a separate Montgomery County jail building four blocks to the west of the Firehouse at the corner of Broadway and Coolbaugh streets. Construction was completed on March 8, 1889. County prisoners were thereafter housed at the new county jail. This building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

At its December 1897 meeting the City Council ordered the City Jail moved to the south end of Lot 2 of the Firehouse lot. The City Council minutes show that during that fiscal year \$20.77 was paid out for "merchandise for the calaboose", \$62.91 for "coal for the calaboose and mayor's office" (combined) and \$12.35 for "meals for tramps and prisoners". This arrangement continued until the new City Jail addition to the Firehouse building was completed in 1901.

In an April 12, 1901 article in the Red Oak Express, the newspaper provided editorial support for a new city jail building. It appears the City Jail was mostly used as a homeless shelter.

"The city council has been meeting every night this week as a board of equalization. The committee to whom was referred the question of a new city prison reported in favor of fixing up the present disreputable shack into which 22 men were placed last Friday night. Of course these fellows were not under arrest, simply a lot of hoboes who sought shelter, but at present the city hasn't any place to put a prisoner if an arrest were made. Several members of the council opposed spending any more money on the old building, preferring to build a new one. Final action will probably be taken soon."

On April 10, 1901, with a headline of "New City Jail", the Sun newspaper reported: "The unwholesome calaboose that the city has been getting along with for years at risk of damage suits is to be superseded by a respectable city jail. It will be on a city lot, two lots west of the fire department building. Work has begun on it. The building will be of brick, 22 by 32 feet in size, an entry, a small room for a detention room, and a large room. There will be a wash bowl, two water closets and a bathtub in the building. The drainage will be into a cess pool. Councilmen Fikes, Wilson and Paterson are the committee having the improvements in charge. The cost will be about \$1,000."

The city however, made do with the old jail until 1901, when a new facility was built as an addition to the Firehouse building.

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City Jail Addition to Firehouse (1901 to 1967)

In 1901 a two story addition was built on the southwest part of the Firehouse building to house the city jail. The city police staff used the north door of this west addition for access to the jail and its inmates. The location of the jail at the firehouse (and not the marshal's office) makes sense because the property for both entities is owned by the city, and the existing jail building was already on the lot.

Anticipating a City Council vote the editor of the Red Oak Express wrote on April 19, 1901:

The bum and hobo problem is one which the city authorities will have to cope in the immediate future. The town is over-run with a lot of fellows attracted here by the railroad camps. Some of them may be honestly seeking work, but a large majority are probably typical hobos or criminals and their presence is a menace to the peace and health of the community. One of the first things that should be done is to arrange for a city prison and a city rock pile, then pass a vagrant ordinance and arrest every man found begging in the city who is loafing around without visible means of support or who can give no satisfactory reason for being here, and let them spend a few days on the rock pile. If a worthy man, out of work and out of money, applies for aid, let the city furnish him employment on the rock pile so he can pay for his night's lodging and a meal or two.

With such an arrangement rigidly enforced we feel sure the town would soon be free from an undesirable class of citizens and in the meantime the city would be acquiring material which could be utilized either in paving or macadamizing. The same rock pile would be useful, too, to check undue indulgence in bootleg whisky. This is a matter of immediate importance and should be attended to at once.

On May 3, 1901 the newspaper reported that the City Council changed plans for the new jail. Instead of a new building, the jail

"...will be erected beside the hosehouse and will be two stories high extending a little more than half the length of the present building. The upper room will be connected with the firemen's hall. Mayor Griffith expects to have a yard prepared just back of the prison and a supply of rock will be kept on hand for the benefit of the fellows who may want lodgings. It will also be useful in case of fines are to be worked out."

By the middle of June, 1901 the new jail was built, and had already had its first jailbreak. Several "graders" were arrested for playing poker. They spent one night in the old calaboose, but "that was so bad that on Friday night they were given quarters in the new city jail, as yet scarcely completed. They intimated to the marshal that he might not find them Saturday morning, and sure enough, next morning the only trace to be found of them was a large hole in the wall. They had pried out the bricks with their knives without difficulty. As they would have been released on Saturday anyhow, no effort was made to find them. But the 'free delivery' has had the effect of bringing the matter before the city council, and it is probable that a steel cage will be put in shortly"

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Costs associated with the new jail reported by the City Council between April and August of 1901 were:

\$ 41.05	hardware, labor, mdse and tile
\$ 95.41	cement floor
\$455	labor, DC power, brick, iron work
\$219.02	iron doors, windows and doors, stone, lumber
\$490.01	plumbing, fence, jail cells, labor and wiring

The City Jail remained in the Firehouse until it was condemned in 1967 following the hanging death of a prisoner. Thereafter city inmates were housed at the County jail. In 1968 the jail cells were removed and the jail space in the Firehouse was remodeled by the firemen, at no expense to the city, into a lounge, meeting room and recreation area.

The northeast ground floor corner of City Jail is now used as a liquor cooler behind the L-shaped bar and check out counter. A wait staff area bounds the south and west sides and public rest rooms occupy the middle. The second floor area is an apartment.

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(<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/GA/79GA/Interim/2002/comminfo/firefight/final.htm>), 9 pp, viewed on August 2, 2005.

Zurier, Rebecca. *The American Firehouse; An Architectural and Social History*, Abbeville Press Publishers, New York, 1982. 287 pages.

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA

Firehouse Brewery, display materials and artifacts, Red Oak, Iowa

Local History Reference Section, Public Library, Red Oak, Iowa.

Montgomery County Historical Society, Red Oak, Iowa.

Ralph and Ida Mae England, scrapbooks, Red Oak, Iowa.

Red Oak City Hall, City Council Minutes

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Red Oak Fire House
Red Oak, Montgomery County, Iowa

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The Red Oak Firehouse is located on lots 1, 2, 3 and the South 8 feet of Lots 4, 5 and 6 in Block 53 in the Original Plat of the Town of Red Oak Junction, Montgomery County, Iowa, as shown by the recorded plat of said Lot 3 in Block 53, together with and subject to all easements and servient estates appurtenant thereto.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Firehouse and City Jail.

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TIMELINE FROM RED OAK CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Note: The terms in this timeline are those used by the City Council at the time of the notation. The Firehouse was also referred to as the Hose House, the Fire Building and the Fire Department Building. An East Hose House or East Hose Shed is a separate building and always referred to with the "East" designation. The City Jail was also called the calaboose or simply the Jail. There are also distinctions made between the old jail, the county jail and the city jail. These are three different buildings. The City Tool House is also called the Tool Shed.

5-4-1897	Committee on Fire Department instructed to bring in estimates on probable cost of a building for the Fire Department.
6-1-1897	Plans submitted. Estimated cost is \$2500. Also, a house numbering ordinance is passed.
8-3-1897	Warrants for \$1500 are floated for the Fire Department building.
9-8-1897	Petition to change name of Railroad Street to Washington Avenue. This is the street where the Fire Department building will be built. A sewer petition for Railroad Street is also read. Bids were advertised for the building.
9-11-1897	A combined fire department and city hall building is considered and rejected.
9-24-1897	Bids are opened and contract given to O.H. Christensen, who posted \$4,000 bond. Cost is \$2599 plus \$20 for crowning joist and anchoring the second floor joist.
10-5-1897	Railroad Street officially changes its name to Washington Avenue.
12-7-1897	Four warrants for \$500 each are drawn to pay for the fire building.
12-7-1897	The calaboose is moved to the south end of lot 2 in block 53 (where new firehouse is built) and ground on lot 1, including sidewalks is put to grade.
1-11-1898	City of Red Oak paid O.H. Christopher for the fire building.
2-1-1898	H.A. Larson is paid \$3.00 for planning the floor of the firehouse. Also warrants were issued for \$14.65 for merchandise and labor for the Hose House.
2-1-1898	The Fire Department can rent the upper room for private dances as long as the heat and light are not charged to the City.
4-4-1898	Treasurer's annual report: New fire department building \$3180.64
5-2-1898	Full inventory of fire department is submitted to the Council.
4-3-1899	Fire Department Fund annual report: 6 warrants to D.H. Gilsons for total of \$1636.03.

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Red Oak Fire House and City Jail

Additional Documentation: Timeline Page 25 Montgomery County, Iowa

5-1-1899	Health Officer advised some action should be taken regarding the calaboose due to unsanitary conditions. Matter referred to the Street Commissioner.
5-1-1899	P.C. Shipley granted a special permit to construct a vault on the city grounds in block 53 (Firehouse) for the use of the Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Shipley was the Fire Chief in 1892 and 1893.
12-4-1899	Committee appointed to examine the cages in the old jail and to purchase part of the same if advisable.
2-5-1900	Committee appointed to investigate building of a Hose House on East Hill.
4-2-1900	Ray Cleveland warrant for \$87 for building hose house. Cart costing \$60 and hose placed there.
5-7-1900	Motion to build calaboose referred to committee.
6-4-1900	Committee on calaboose given until the next meeting to report back.
4-1-1901	Mayor appointed a committee to investigate the matter of building a city jail.
4-2-1901	Committee on city jail reported and asked for more time.
4-6-1901	Discussion on repairing the old calaboose and adding a water closet and cesspool. Committee appointed to look after repairs.
4-11-1901	Decision to build a new calaboose. Committee given full power to act.
4-6-1901	General fund report: Hardware, labor, mdse. And tile for jail is \$41.05.
6-3-1901	Evan J. Evans was paid \$95.41 for cement floor in jail. The committee on building the jail is instructed to build the jail, and given charge of building a fence and repairing the coal house with full power to act.
7-1-1901	General fund: Warrants drawn to pay for building the jail (labor, DC power, brick, iron work) for \$455.37. Improvement fund (iron doors, windows and doors, stone lumber) warrants drawn for \$219.02 for building of the jail.
8-5-1901	General fund: Warrants drawn for building the jail (plumbing, fence, jail cells, labor, wiring) of \$490.01.
3-3-1902	The name of the city is changed from "Red Oak Junction" to "Red Oak".
3-7-1903	Fire bell installed (bell, raising, freight, lumber) for \$169.45.
11-7-1904	Fire Department authorized to have hot water heat put into the hose house and jail.
4-3-1905	Annual report: Fire Department fund included \$230.49 for repairs to building and new fixtures in Hose House.
10-21-1905	Floor of Hose House found to be in unsafe condition. Recommended by committee that space under the floor be filled up and the same covered with a cement floor.

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3-16-1906	An ordinance entitled "An ordinance creating a Fire Department, and fixing the duties thereof" is read and passed. Many other public offices are also defined at this time.
3-27-1906	"An ordinance to authorize the working of prisoners confined in jail, and to protect prisoners while at work" is read and moved.
3-27-1906	Warrant: Plans for addition to city jail \$10.00.
3-4-1907	The Committee on the Fire Department is authorized to have changes, alterations and improvements made at the hose house necessary to accommodate a hose wagon to be used for fire purposes.
4-1-1907	Warrant: Repairs to building and new fixtures is \$29.80.
5-6-1907	Plan for re-organization of the Fire Department was ordered. Emory Millhollin appointed as driver of the Fire Department team. Driver authorized to have an old dray fixed up to use as a hose wagon until the new one is ready to use.
8-24-1907	Second man assigned to the Fire Department.
9-2-1907	Meter placed on the light service for the living rooms at the Hose House (continued) and the driver of the hose wagon is required to pay for lights used in the living rooms.
9-4-1907	City heat is extended and necessary chimneys erected at the hose house.
2-3-1908	Rules for government of the Fire Department read and adopted.
4-6-1908	Annual report: Warrants for \$1404.07 were drawn to Fire Department for repairs to and changes to the building.
8-3-1908	Fire Department Fund taxation is 2 mills on the dollar.
4-5-1909	Annual report of warrants drawn to Fire Department: Repairs to building, \$191.36.
4-1-1912	Annual report of warrants drawn to Fire Department: Curb and gutter and new equipment \$129.10 and new fire team \$500.00
4-2-1912	The band asks for funds.
5-6-1912	Taxes for 1912-13 Fire Department Fund are 3.3 mills.
12-21-1912	Complaint made by the Fire Chief that the present team is too big and slow and should be removed from the fire station.
3-3-1913	Annual Fire Department Fund report: New fire equipment: \$502.15.
12-1-1913	Fire wagon re-painted for \$50 by Mr. Fenton.
4-2-1917	Budget Report: New equipment for Fire Department was \$485.65 in 1917 and expected to be \$462.97 in 1918.
5-10-1919	Purchase of a fire truck discussed.

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8-4-1919	Langergren Metal Roof and Painting Co. authorized to repair roof over the stables at the Fire Department. (Note: this business is called "Swedish (cont.) Metal Paint and Roofing, Co." with manager Langergren in the 1917 Red Oak McCoy Directory)
3-12-1920	Council agreed to purchase two fire trucks.
4-5-1920	Authorization to sell fire team and equipment sold and purchase motorized fire equipment. (note: other city horse drawn equipment is being replaced with motorized equipment around this time)
4-4-1921	Annual report: New equipment for Fire Department: \$1454.21
6-6-1921	Council moved to buy a new Reo truck for \$4280.00. (note: other sources indicate that the East Hose House and the fire bell were also put out of commission at this time.)
1922	Lots of new paving in town.
4-4-1923	Fire Chief's report: Two men are employed day and night at the Fire Station and another man makes his home in the living quarters in the fire station and is on duty at night.
5-7-1923	"Phone" shows up as a line item for the first time.
8-6-1923	Fire Maintenance Fund tax is 3 mills, Fire Equipment Fund tax is 1.5 mills. Total city levies are 4.7 mills.
9-3-1923	Chief instructed to sell old bell.
9-4-1924	Tool shed built at 308 Washington Avenue.
2-16-1925	Polling place for the First Ward is at the City Tool House located at 308 Washington Avenue.
4-7-1925	Fire Chief asks that building and equipment be turned over to the Fire Company. Tabled.
4-22-1925	City manager is instructed to be in charge of all departments (evidently in response to the Fire Department request.)
6-1-1925	Pavement on Washington Avenue widened to 60 feet between 2 nd and 5 th . Water mains placed before paving put in. Also "proper street lights" installed.
10-5-1925	Fire Department Committee recommended adding a flue inspector to the city rolls.
12-7-1925	City Council expresses concern about overdraw status of Fire Department fund.
3-30-1926	Tank and gas heater installed in apartments above the fire station.
4-5-1926	Committee appointed to look into necessary work at the fire station.
6-17-1926	"Ordinance creating a Fire Department and fixing the duties thereof" is introduced.

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4-11-1927	Re-election of the fire chief is rejected by the Council.
4-12-1927	Red Oak Fire Department disbands and funds are disbursed among the (cont.) members at 9:30 p.m. By midnight a new organization is formed by the Mayor consisting of eight "old" members.
4-14-1927	The new Fire Department employees are officially named by the Council.
4-19-1127	Council orders plans to remodel the 2 nd story over the jail and fire station into three apartments.
5-2-1927	Plans looked over.
5-12-1927	Committee formed.
5-23-1927	C.H. Barnes gave an oral estimate to the Council and was employed to do the remodel.
8-22-1927	Transfer of \$801.09 was made from the Emergency Fund to the Fire Department Fund for remodel to accommodate the paid firemen of the City of Red Oak.
10-1-1927	Full inventory of Fire Department submitted to the Council.
4-12-1929	Fire Chief's report: General fire alarm is still given by steam whistle. A special fire phone has been installed in the Fire Station.
5-21-1929	West driveway corner at the fire station is rounded.
8-3-1931	Mr. Winn ordered to discontinue the beauty parlor in his home over the fire station after complaint by beauty parlor and barber owners that using city property for a business causes unfair competition.
4-16-1931	City to buy paint for walls and one screen door for the Fire Station. Firemen to provide all labor.
6-22-1937	Chas. H. Barns paid for building porch at fire station.
10-18-1948	Chairman Johnson given permission to construct building to house the new rural fire truck. (note: this became the Firehouse West addition)
12-6-1948	Red Oak Fire Department will house and maintain the rural fire truck.
4-1-1968	Jail condemned. (note: other sources report firemen were allowed to remove the jail cells and build a day room with pool table, card table and wall-mounted TV.)
10-5-1980	Dedication of new Fire Department Building on the north side of town.
1980-2002	Old Firehouse building used for storage.
3-2002	Existing condition report of alternative uses of Firehouse instead of tearing it down was submitted to the Council by the Red Oak Historical Association.
2002	Bill and Debbie Hillman become the new owners.
2002-2004	Remodel of downstairs into restaurant and upstairs to rentable apartments.
2004	Restaurant opened.
2005	Apartments rented.

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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information applies to all photographs:

Red Oak Fire House and City Jail
318 East Washington Avenue, Red Oak, Iowa 51566
Montgomery County
Photographer: Sarah Waite
Date of photographs: August 1, 2005
Location of original negatives: Bill and Debra Hillman, 2085 A Avenue,
Shenandoah, IA 51601

1. The orientation of this photograph looking southwest from corner of East Washington Avenue and 4th Street.
2. This photograph is of the east end of the front of the property. It was taken looking south from East Washington Avenue.
3. This photograph is of the west end of the front of the property. It was taken looking south from East Washington Avenue.
4. This photograph is taken looking west from 4th Street.
5. This photograph is taken looking east from the courtyard.
6. This photograph is taken inside the stables looking east.
7. This photograph is taken inside the south addition looking west.
8. This photograph is taken inside the original firehouse structure looking north.