

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 an 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 Woodlawn Cemetery

other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number 1500 Las Vegas Boulevard North not for publication

city or town Las Vegas vicinity

state Nevada code NV county Clark code 003 zip code 89101

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.)

Rachel M. Jones, SHPO 10-6-06
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of commenting 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action 11-21-06

Woodlawn Cemetery

Name of Property

Clark, Nevada

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
3		sites
	1	structures
1	2	objects
5	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY-cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY-cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick covered with stucco

roof wood covered with asphalt

other

Narrative Description

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

Woodlawn Cemetery
Name of Property

Clark, Nevada
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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 and development
social history
landscape architecture

Period of Significance

1914 to 1956

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

J.T. McWilliams

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 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:

University of Nevada Las Vegas
Department of Special Collections
Other = Woodlawn Cemetery business office

Woodlawn Cemetery

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 37.31 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1 1 6 6 7 8 9 0 4 0 0 6 2 5 0
Zone Easting Northing
2 1 1 6 6 8 6 6 0 4 0 0 6 2 7 0

3 1 1 6 6 8 6 5 5 4 0 0 6 0 6 0
Zone Easting Northing
4 1 1 6 6 7 8 9 0 4 0 0 6 0 3 5

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 Joseph Thomson

organization individual date January 2006

street & number P.O. Box 33807 telephone 702-656-8738

city or town Las Vegas state Nevada zip code 89133-3807

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 City of Las Vegas

street & number 400 Stewart Avenue telephone 702-229-6011

city or town Las Vegas state Nevada zip code 89101

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.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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Woodlawn Cemetery Clark County, Nevada
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Woodlawn Cemetery is best described as a cemetery district, a cohesive landscape that is further defined by the relationship of features found within. Woodlawn Cemetery contains extensive roadways, a former sexton’s residence and one of Las Vegas’ first well sites. Burial landscapes are further defined into sub-sections which are representative of religious, social and military distinction as well as chronological delineation. These organizational classifications found within the boundaries of Woodlawn Cemetery provide needed information to areas of investigation in a current environment whereas no other physical references remain. In a community severely lacking in examples of historic preservation Woodlawn Cemetery provides the silver lining and a yet untapped resource of a remarkable past.

Woodlawn Cemetery is basically 40 acres that was acquired in three pieces. When modern easements are taken into consideration the 40 acres is reduced to 37.31 acres.¹ The overall layout of the property boundaries of Woodlawn Cemetery is best described as four ten acre squares that are stacked in a linear fashion moving west to east. The development of Woodlawn Cemetery followed this west to east movement during the process of expansion. The first ten acre section to the west is the original section established in 1914², the second ten acres moving east was acquired in 1944,³ followed by the final 20 acres that was added in 1953.⁴

Woodlawn Cemetery contains five contributing resources and three noncontributing resources. The five contributing resources include the three sections of development and expansion, the sexton’s or caretaker’s house and a well site. The three

¹ Clark County Assessors Office, Parcel map number 139-26-1

² J. T. McWilliams, “Woodlawn Cemetery,” Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 11.

³ George Rittenhouse, “Woodlawn Cemetery,” Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 64; Las Vegas Review-Journal, “Cemetery Annex Approved Today,” September 22, 1944.

⁴ Clark County Assessors Office.

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noncontributing resources are a fence that surrounds the entire property, a steel structure located in section three and a fence that surrounds that structure. Additional information specifying the location of these resources can be found on the sketch map.

The first ten-acre section, which borders Las Vegas Boulevard on the western edge was designed and dated July 22, 1914, by surveyor J. T. McWilliams.⁵ The first section is the base model that the later two emulated and it contains the oldest burials in Woodlawn Cemetery. While the road structure and basic layout of the later sections are similar on the surface, Section One is vastly different in design. J. T. McWilliams designed the original Woodlawn Cemetery utilizing many of the features representing the transformation from 19th century "rural" cemeteries to 20th century perpetual care lawn cemeteries and memorial parks. This first section of Woodlawn Cemetery was designed with 25 foot roadways and five foot buffers for parking totaling 35 feet between burial sections with additional sections for landscaping. The burial grounds were designed with extensive open spaces between actual burial plots. These generous ten foot buffers between rows were not a part of the other sections that followed.

The physical design and formation of Woodlawn Cemetery was unique in the fact that it did not have natural elements of landscape to create buffers between plot sections or challenges in construction that typical predecessors in other communities might have encountered. There were not any existing hills or water obstacles to maneuver around and no existing trees or landscape to selectively thin. Woodlawn Cemetery was given a near flat empty canvas to create the planned nature that would separate the cemetery from the harsh undeveloped desert landscape that dominated the Las Vegas Valley.

McWilliams' design included ten sections integrated between six 25 foot interior roadways with two entrances leading from proposed streets bordering the western and

⁵ J. T. McWilliams, "Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 11.

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northern boundaries. A 25 foot main entrance is located at the center of the western border, splitting Section A on the north and Section B to the south. Sections A and B are fronted to the east by the north/south running Park Drive which turns east to Farview Drive on the north and Inglewood Drive on the south. The main entrance road is Central Drive which divides the property down the center running west to east the length of Woodlawn Cemetery. Bordering Central Drive are the two largest sections, to the north is Section K and to the south Section J. Directly east of sections K and J, separated by Crystal Drive, are sections E and F respectively. Moving further east, separated by Las Vegas Drive, is the long narrow Section G which borders the eastern edge of Section One. Section H borders the southern boundary and is fronted by Inglewood Drive which separates Section H from sections J and F. On the northern border Section C, to the west, and D, to the east, are fronted by Farview Drive which separates sections C and D from sections K and E respectively. Sections and roadways are generously edged with curves from 70 to 122 feet in length at a radius of 45 and 39 feet respectively.⁶

McWilliams' original design included a second 25 foot entrance at the center of the northern border between sections C and D. This entrance currently does not exist and was eliminated during a revision that was adopted and signed by city engineer Harlan Brown on September 30, 1942.⁷ The changes that were made to the existing design were in response to a lack of available plots, discussion to expand the existing cemetery began in 1937.⁸ This group of alterations made to Section One occurred in 1942 before additional steps were taken 1943 and 1944 with the acquisition and creation of Section Two.⁹ While alterations occurred in Section One in relation to the number of plots that were available it is determined that these alterations do not significantly alter the integrity

⁶ J. T. McWilliams, "Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 11.

⁷ Harlan Brown, "Amended Plat of Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 60.

⁸ Las Vegas Review-Journal, "City Planning To Extend Cemetery," January 08, 1937.

⁹ Ibid, "New Rules Adopted For Cemetery," December 17, 1943.

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of the site and are more or less an indication of a style of use of the original design. These alterations from 1942 are well over 50 years old and contribute considerably to the overall history of Woodlawn Cemetery in its need for expansion and growth. The following paragraph details variances between J. T. McWilliams' original design and Harlan Brown's updated use of that design. Additional information is available by referencing the two plats, both of which are included in this nomination.

The most noteworthy physical changes to J.T. McWilliams' original design are the subtraction of the second entrance on the northern edge, the addition of plots in locations that were previously open space and the reduction of plots in the southwest corner of the cemetery for open space that would be utilized for parking. The reduction of plots in section A and H for what is currently a small parking lot might have occurred as early as 1915 when construction of block building commenced.¹⁰ The subtraction of the northern entrance contributed to the additional plots introduced in 1942, those additional plots are outlined as follows. Section A lost plots at the southern edge for what would later become parking and alterations were made with the addition of a row for a net loss of about 20 plots. Section B saw the addition of plot rows and the filling in of some of the existing ten foot walkways with additional plots for a net gain of about 240 plots. Section C gained by the closure of the northern entrance and the filling in of the ten foot walkways, in addition the majority of the plots were changed to smaller baby plots for a gain of about 900 spaces. Section D gained by the closure of the northern entrance and the filling in of the ten foot walkways for a gain of approximately 252 spaces. Section E gained by the filling in of the ten foot walkways for a gain of 56 spaces. Section F gained from the filling in of the ten foot walkways for an additional 56 spaces. Section G lost seven spaces due to an opening at the center of the row. Section H lost plots due to the opening of space that later became parking but gained due to the filling in of the ten foot walkways for a net gain of approximately 112 plots.

¹⁰ Las Vegas Age, "To Investigate Oxford Saloon," April 13, 1915.

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Additional sections to the south of Section H exist presently but were not part of the 1942 space-use changes. Section H-AA borders Section H to the south followed by a service road followed by a long narrow section that borders Section One and Section Two to the south. Sections J and K were unchanged with the new design in 1942 but the ten foot walkways were later filled with plots for a gain of about 330 plots in each section.¹¹ As for the retention of original use it is unfortunate that these walkways were filled in. All historical references and organizational traits found in the first burials still exist; furthermore those plots that were added certainly add to the issues of growth and do so in a measurable form. Sections J and K contain the largest concentration of early pioneer Las Vegans. These sections along with portions of section A, B, C, and D were designed with large family plots measuring up to 12 feet by 24 feet in size. It is probable from the alternatives of layout and use found in sections J and K that these large plot sections were initially tended to by the individual owners including landscape and tree selection.

Trees originally surrounded the entire ten acre first section of Woodlawn Cemetery along with a wooden fence.¹² The original trees and fence do not currently exist, the trees have been replaced throughout the years by other landscape, some of which is quite old, and the fence has been replaced by a current iron fence that surrounds all three sections of the cemetery. The recent addition of the current fence is a non-contributing object but has proven essential as a protector of the entire cemetery district.

It is important to point out that the plot estimates are just that, estimates from the engineering plats of J. T. McWilliams and Harlan Brown, combined with visual evidence

¹¹ J. T. McWilliams, "Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 11; Harlan Brown, "Amended Plat of Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 60.

¹² Joy Hamann, "Determined Women Led Fight For LV Cemetery," Las Vegas Review-Journal, December 15, 1963. (see photo included with article for tree formations that currently do not exist)

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collected from numerous on-site visits. These estimates are given primarily as an indication of alteration and change. Actual exact numbers for burials and plots does not exist in form that can be referenced at this point although it is expected that an intense survey of Woodlawn could create such reference material. Some of these estimates of burial plots will be further altered by actual burial patterns that include the stacking of burials in some locations.

Section Two which borders Section One to the east is a ten-acre section that was designed by Las Vegas City Engineer George Rittenhouse and dated September 20, 1944 with burials dating to the mid forties.¹³ In addition, located in Section Two, Sub-Section "O," are eight individuals who were moved in May 1971 to lots 541,542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, and 548, from the cemeteries that preceded Woodlawn Cemetery; these earlier cemeteries bordered and intersected with Woodlawn at Section Three, Sub-Section "OA2."¹⁴ Section Two follows the same basic layout as Section One with roadways intermixed with the plot sections. These roadways follow a similar pattern as those in Section One and the three east/west streets are a continuation of Fairview Drive to the north, Central Drive at center and Inglewood Drive to the south. There are two north/south roadways with Woodlawn Drive at the west and Memorial Drive at the eastern side of Section Two. The small service road from Section One continues the length of Section Two.

Burial plots in section two follow George Rittenhouse's 1942 design rather closely except for the addition of plots to the south of Section S in Section S-2. Further plots were added in the long narrow section south of the service road. There is also an addition of a roundabout that borders Section Two and Section Three. The largest burial sections are sections T, U, V and W, which are surrounded by the roadways, and contain

¹³ George Rittenhouse, "Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book two, Page 64; Las Vegas Review-Journal, "Cemetery Annex Approved Today," September 22, 1944.

¹⁴ Flora Keller, memorandum, 14 May 1971, Woodlawn Cemetery.

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approximately 900 plots each. Surrounding Sections M, N, O, P, Q, R and S were designed to contain another approximately 2,290 combined plots. Some smaller additional sections and alteration have been added through the years with the most significant being a slender addition to Section O, being OA, on the northern border of Section Two. The entrance to Section Two is from Section One at the center of their common border by way of Central Drive. A second entrance is located on the southern border at the back of Section Two, this entrance/exit is accessed from Foremaster Lane and enters on to Myrtle Drive which straddles Section Two and Section Three. Central Drive leads into a roundabout that surrounds a round plot section that straddles the border between Section Two and Section Three.¹⁵

Section Three is a twenty acre section that borders Section Two to the east. Section three dates to 1953 with burials dating to the early sixties.¹⁶ Section Three contains burials in Sub-Section OA2 that are from cemeteries that predate Woodlawn Cemetery and now intersect with Woodlawn Cemetery at Sub-Section OA2, lots 28, 33, 35, 37 and 54.¹⁷ Section OA2 borders the northern edge of Section Three. Section Three contains a similar basic road structure comparable to the other sections with Inglewood Drive to the south, Central Drive at center and Fairview Drive at the north. North/south roadways are Tamerisk Drive on the east border followed by Sycamore Drive, (which accesses Foremaster Lane to the south), Acacia Drive, Pine Road and Myrtle Drive, which straddles the borders of Sections Two and Three. Plot sections in Section Three date to the early sixties at the elder side with burials still continuing at present day. Section Three also contains a non-contributing area that is currently used for burial placement services. This area contains a non-contributing steel shed structure and is separated from the burial grounds by a non-contributing chain link fence.¹⁸

¹⁵ George Rittenhouse, "Woodlawn Cemetery," Clark County Assessors Office, Book two, Page 64.

¹⁶ Clark County Assessor's Office.

¹⁷ Flora Keller, memorandum, 14 May 1971, Woodlawn Cemetery.

¹⁸ Sales map, Woodlawn Cemetery; observational surveys, 2005-6.

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Located in the southwest corner of Section One is a concrete block building that currently is utilized as sales office.¹⁹ It is probable that a portion of this building historically dates to 1915 when George Swander was contracted by the city of Las Vegas to construct a block building for cemetery use at a cost of 574.50.²⁰ The initial construction would be expanded to serve as a residence for the cemetery's caretaker. Architectural plans outlying the process of transformation do not exist although physical details that will be described in the following paragraph suggest the probable options.

The building is primarily two rectangular sections joined by a common wall. The exterior dimensions of the largest section to the east measures 32' x 27' 4", including the common wall. The exterior dimensions of the smaller section to the west measures 20' x 15' 4", including the common wall. The overall footprint covers an area of 51' 4" x 27' 4". The building currently is being used as a sales office although historically it seems to have been used as a home for the cemetery's caretaker among other uses. The foundation is concrete with exterior walls of 8" concrete block construction covered in stucco. The smaller section to the west is a single room with interior dimensions of 18' 8" x 14'. The room is divided north to south by a 39" high 4" wide half-wall with an opening at the north end. The west elevation contains a 72" wide x 48" high single pane window. The north elevation contains a 36" door in a 48" modern casement with a 27" wide x 38" high window to the east; further east is another exterior door that measures 30." The construction of this second door preceded the door to the west. The east elevation shares a common 8" concrete wall with the larger section to the east. The entrance between these sections is an opening that was once a 30" door. The south elevation contains a 26" wide x 38" high window to the west and a 48" x 48" window at center. At the eastern edge of this wall section, visible only from the exterior, is what remains of an exterior

¹⁹ Joseph Thomson, National Register Nomination Photographs 9 and 10, August, 2005.

²⁰ Las Vegas Age, "To Investigate Oxford Saloon," April 10, 1915.

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door that has been closed in. There is a walkway from this doorway that leads to the southern edge of the property. It is likely that this section could have been constructed first with the section to the east constructed later as living quarters.

The second larger section to the east is representative of a typical home with an entry way, bathroom, kitchen, two bedrooms and a living room with all interior walls measuring 4 inches in thickness. The basic layout, clockwise from the southeast corner, started with the kitchen followed by the entryway and living room on the south side and two bedrooms separated by a bathroom on the north side. Current dimensions are as follows: the kitchen space measures 8' 10" x 11' 6", the entry measures 5' 10" x 11', the living room measures 15' 4" x 11', the northwest bedroom measures 10' 4" x 11' 4", the bathroom measures 8' x 11' 4" and the northeast bedroom measures 11' 8" x 11' 4". A 36" hallway divides the rooms running west to east with a 48" x 30" closet at the eastern end. The kitchen area has a 2' x 6' wide window on the east elevation as does the northeast bedroom. The southern elevation has a 32" entry door that leads to a 36" exterior walkway that turns east as well as two windows in the living room a 39" wide x 36" high window at center and a 48" x 48" window at the western edge of the living room. The west elevation has a 6' wide by 2' high window for the northwest bedroom. The north elevation has a 3' high x 2' wide window for the bathroom and a 4' high x 2' wide window for the northeast bedroom. The entire building is covered by a wooden framed roof structure that is topped by asphalt shingles.²¹

Located approximately 125' east of the caretakers' building and approximately 50' from the southern boundaries is a well that dates to May 1916. The well was constructed by Beckley and Laubenhiemer for \$905 to provide water for cemetery needs.²² This well, which is located in the southwest corner of Woodlawn Cemetery, was

²¹ Joseph Thomson, national register nomination photographs 9 and 10.

²² Las Vegas Age, "Regular Meeting of City Board," May 06, 1916.

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one of the first wells to be drilled in the Las Vegas Valley. This well site is unique as early water needs were typically filled by natural springs and the Las Vegas Creek. This well is no longer in service and has been capped but still remains on the property encased in concrete.²³

The physical headstones and statuary found on the grounds of Woodlawn Cemetery are obviously historic in nature but also constitute some of the earliest forms of artistic expression found in the Las Vegas Valley. While it is beyond the scope of this nomination to identify and catalog all of the headstones and statuary it is safe to say that the integrity of the collection as a whole is quite impressive. There is a large selection of upright headstones and statuary found within all sections of Woodlawn Cemetery. Many of these examples are artistic achievements in their own right and provide a wealth of information with regard to the availability and use of materials during particular times in Las Vegas' history.

The overall physical Woodlawn Cemetery site is rather complex in its entirety. Approximately 24,000 burial plots are in Woodlawn Cemetery with each and every element holding a relational tie with all that surrounds it. There is much for the community to gain by preserving these relationships within the historical site. While ongoing burials dictate that the site is ever changing the protection and preservation of existing burials is of utmost importance to the Las Vegas community; therefore it is expected a National Register Nomination will tremendously support, encourage and positively impact the preservation of Woodlawn Cemetery for future generations.

²³ Joseph Thomson, National Register Nomination Photograph 11, August 2005.

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Woodlawn cemetery meets and fulfills multiple areas of significance within the National Register Criteria. The areas of significance that will be addressed in this narrative are: (A) an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. (C) The property represents the work of a master, specifically J. T. McWilliams, the civil engineer who designed the district's most significant portions. The nomination also addresses additional criteria for a cemetery, Criteria Consideration D, a cemetery deriving its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features and from an association with historic events. Woodlawn Cemetery possesses important historic associations from Las Vegas' early period of settlement and reflects important aspects of the community's history.

“Criterion A: Broad Patterns of History”

Woodlawn cemetery is the foremost representation of a community that has grown to become one of the most successful cities founded in the 20th century. Patterns of extensive growth influenced by mining, railroad, construction, military and gambling have created one of the largest, yet youngest, great cities in the western region of the United States. Las Vegas is of great significance at a national level as the individuals who formed this community at inception are representative of migration and travel patterns that are directly tied to the technology of the period. There are individuals of great significance represented within the grounds of Woodlawn Cemetery, however this nomination takes the position that the community as a whole is of far greater significance than any individual part. A full representation of the diversity and complexity of the community does not exist in any other physical form.

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In addition to the history of Woodlawn Cemetery the following narrative establishes a history of the area of significance concerning community planning and development and social history before the formal creation Woodlawn Cemetery in 1914. This is due to the importance of the process that leads to the construction of Woodlawn Cemetery. These events made a considerable contribution to the broad patterns of the history and development of the physical community as well as contributing to the formation of a cohesive cultural identity.

Two and a half years after major growth was initiated in the Las Vegas Valley by the formation of J.T. McWilliams' Las Vegas Townsite in December 1904, a wish list of sorts appeared on the front page of the local paper. In May 1907 the *Las Vegas Age*, wearing their promotional hat, compiled the key elements of improvement that could be achieved if the new city were to become incorporated. The *Las Vegas Age* stated that an incorporated city would include provisions for necessities such as healthy water and a city fire department. An incorporated city would provide needed organizational traits such as the numbering of houses on clean streets lined with shade trees and lighting. An incorporated city could manage the community by punishing criminal offenses and vagrancy with fines, imprisonment or a chain gang and an incorporated city would also provide a "cemetery and other necessities to civilization."¹ This wish list defined what it meant to be a real community and the need for a cemetery was a key ingredient.

The plea for a cemetery continued in early 1908 as "Las Vegas should organize a cemetery association and arrange for proper grounds."² The local interest column also urged the community to plant Pepper and Umbrella Trees in the Railroad Park and on the Vegas Town Park as "they would grow while we sleep and soon beautify the city." While making repeated requests for a cemetery the community did in fact already have two

¹ Las Vegas Age, "Town Government," May 25, 1907.

² Ibid, "Of Local Interest," January 4, 1908.

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cemeteries. One existing cemetery was most often referred to as the Ranch Cemetery. The Ranch Cemetery dated to the first burial on October 31, 1905, following the death of Chas Ericson, who was struck by a locomotive on October 28, 1905.³ The Ranch Cemetery was located next to an earlier cemetery which was referred to as the "Boot Hill Cemetery." These two cemeteries were located at the northern edge of land owned by the Los Angeles, San Pedro & Salt Lake Railroad.⁴ A portion of these cemeteries intersects with the current Woodlawn Cemetery at section OA2.⁵ Burials at the Ranch Cemetery were ongoing; W. D. Neally who died December 28, 1907 was buried in the second row, space number 11.⁶ The Reverend Harry G. Gray officiated over a Ranch Cemetery ceremony with the burial of prominent pioneer, W. B. Beall, who died on January 4, 1909.⁷ Outlying ranches also contained family burial plots, as example, William J. Stewart brought his brother, H. R. Stewart, who died 5 years earlier in Los Angeles, to Las Vegas to be buried in the Stewart Family Vault.⁸ The Stewart Family Vault was a family burial site that was located on a four acre parcel owned by the Stewart family. A point of clarification, the vault is not associated with the Ranch Cemetery, of which, a portion crossed onto land that was at one time owned by the Stewart family. The local undertaker for these burials was E. W. Griffith who would soon start a cemetery of his own.

In April 1909 "The Las Vegas Cemetery Association," with E. W. Griffith as president, purchased 40 acres of land and the artesian well that went with it from the Artesian Water Syndicate.⁹ The land was 1.5 miles south of the city; the western edge of

³ E. W. Griffith, "Undertakers Ledger," University of Nevada Las Vegas, Department of Special Collections.

⁴ Delphine Squires, "Southern Nevada History," Las Vegas Age, undated article.

⁵ Flora Keller, 14 May 1971, Woodlawn Cemetery.

⁶ Las Vegas Age, "Died," January 04, 1908.

⁷ Ibid, "Died Alone," January 09, 1909.

⁸ Ibid, "Local Notes," May 02, 1908.

⁹ Ibid, "New Cemetery," April 24, 1909.

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which crossed the railroad tracks with the majority of the property east of the tracks.¹⁰ Work was to begin at once to clear 5 acres, fence it off and divide for plots. A reservoir for water was to be built and trees planted. The *Las Vegas Age* added support, "this is an improvement which has long been needed for Vegas."¹¹ Five people were buried at Griffith's new Las Vegas Cemetery Association grounds: a baby from the Mishalis family, who died July 10, 1909 and was buried July 11, 1909;¹² Mr. Finny who died at Eldorado Pass, July 14, 1909 and was buried July 19, 1909;¹³ Pablino Del Real, who was thrown from a hand car and died October 5, 1909 and was buried on October 7;¹⁴ A. Minks, who was buried at the expense of Clark County after being struck by a passing train at Arden on October 18 and was buried October 19, 1909;¹⁵ and a two-year-old Edwards child who died of spinal meningitis on November 20, 1909 and was buried November 22, 1909.¹⁶ By December burials had ceased at Griffith's Las Vegas Cemetery Association location as burials continued at the Ranch Cemetery. Franklin Hall died December 28, 1909 and was buried at the Ranch Cemetery in plot eight, row three.¹⁷ It seems that the creation of Griffith's new cemetery was monetarily motivated. This new location was not supported by the community as Griffith's new location was quite far from the population center. Not only had Griffith's new cemetery failed but four of the five burials were removed and reburied at the Ranch Cemetery before the burial of Franklin Hall. Mr. Finny was now located in row three position five while Pablino Del Real was moved to row three position six. A. Minks was now in row three position seven

¹⁰ E. W. Griffith, "Undertakers Ledger," University of Nevada Las Vegas, Department of Special Collections.

¹¹ *Las Vegas Age*, "New Cemetery," April 24, 1909.

¹² E. W. Griffith, "Undertakers Ledger," University of Nevada Las Vegas, Department of Special Collections.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Las Vegas Age*, "Section Man Killed," October 09, 1909.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, "Killed By A Train," October 23, 1909.

¹⁶ E. W. Griffith, "Undertakers Ledger," University of Nevada Las Vegas, Department of Special Collections.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

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and the Edwards child was moved to row three position zero.¹⁸ The Ranch Cemetery proved adequate and was well plotted in four rows aligned exactly east to west.¹⁹ A return to the Ranch Cemetery was an embracing of the traditional burial location, the vicinity that would eventually become the Woodlawn Cemetery.

Within a few months in early 1910 the call for a new cemetery was initiated again and with it the formation of a committee to seek proposals. A meeting of citizens was held in the office of Judge Willis with the purpose of obtaining a permanent cemetery. The meeting produced a committee consisting of W. J. Stewart, F. M. Grace, and the familiar E. W. Griffith.²⁰ The committee reported with three proposals: 20 acres that was offered by the Las Vegas Land and Water Company that they claimed included the Ranch Cemetery (actually the Ranch Cemetery was located about 30 feet east of this acreage), 20 acres by John Mcgrath of Saint Paul Minnesota, and ten acres owned by Helen J. Stewart.²¹ At this time there was not any course of action on these proposals. Instead, another new cemetery, called the Las Vegas Cemetery, (not to be confused with Griffith's Las Vegas Cemetery Association), began to alternate burials with the Ranch Cemetery. On November 28, 1910 Celio Valdez, age about 40, died and was interred in the "Las Vegas Cemetery" by undertaker L. D. Smith, on November 29.²² Ludwig Johnson died on Thanksgiving Day 1910 and was also buried at the Las Vegas Cemetery again by undertaker L. D. Smith.²³

During this period burials continued simultaneously at both cemeteries. James Magner, age 38, died on August 29, 1911 of Brights Disease; the funeral was held August 31 at the Fraternal Hall under the auspices of Las Vegas Aerie Fraternal Order of the

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Las Vegas Age, "Cemetery Wanted," February 26, 1910.

²¹ Las Vegas Age, "New Cemetery," May 28, 1910.

²² Ibid, "Died," December 03, 1910.

²³ Ibid, "Died," December 03, 1910.

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Eagles. The deceased was a member of the Sioux City Aerie no. 77 of Sioux City Iowa.²⁴ Mr. Magner was buried at the Ranch Cemetery and his association with the Eagles is an important factor as he was later reburied at Woodlawn Cemetery with fellow Eagles.²⁵ Calvin Hooper, a 12-year-old who died March 23, 1912 was buried at the Las Vegas Cemetery with Lloyd D. Smith as undertaker.²⁶ Carrie Bergman, three-year-old daughter of Senator George Bergman, was also buried at the Las Vegas Cemetery beside Miss Ethel Dalameter.²⁷ Miss Olive Helm died March 28, 1913, and was buried March 30 at the Las Vegas Cemetery. Miss Helm is the only one to this point who was originally buried at the Las Vegas Cemetery and was later reburied at Woodlawn.²⁸ Mrs. John Tuck died April 10, 1913 and was buried at the Ranch Cemetery,²⁹ but is not listed on the ledger by Griffith as an official burial. It seems that some people preferred to continue to informally bury the departed at the old Ranch Cemetery instead of with Lloyd D. Smith and the Las Vegas Cemetery. Burials continued in both locations; John J. McGowan died August 14, 1913 and was buried at the Las Vegas Cemetery³⁰ while 43 year old Thomas H. Champenoy, who died August 13, 1913, was buried at the Ranch Cemetery.³¹

On January 10, 1914, the issue of a new cemetery is again discussed and a meeting is requested by Mrs. I. C. Johnson and Mrs. W. B. Mundy. This is the first official step towards what will eventually lead to the creation of Woodlawn Cemetery.³² In late January there are two other burials at the Las Vegas Cemetery, an infant son for the Ball family who died January 20,³³ and Charles Caleb Thomas who died January 26,

²⁴ Ibid, "Died," September 02, 1911.

²⁵ Ibid, "Re-interment," February 13, 1915.

²⁶ Ibid, "Died," March 23, 1912.

²⁷ Ibid, "Died," March 30, 1912.

²⁸ Ibid, "In Memoriam," April 05, 1913.

²⁹ Ibid, "At Rest," April 19, 1913.

³⁰ Ibid, "Died," August 04, 1913.

³¹ Ibid, "Died," August 16, 1913.

³² Ibid, "Busy Day For City Fathers," January 10, 1914.

³³ Ibid, "Died," January 24, 1914.

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1914.³⁴ In early February Mrs. Mundy, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Long reported the gift of ten acres by the Las Vegas Land and Water Company for a cemetery near the old Ranch Cemetery; the city accepted the gift and allotted \$300.00 for improvements on the property. An ordinance providing for the city commission to care for the cemetery was added. Mayor W. E. Hawkins, and City Commissioners Curtiss, Griffith and Sullivan approved the donation, Commissioner E. E. Smith was absent for the vote.³⁵ This acceptance of an area close to the Ranch Cemetery again returned to the traditional community burial location and would allow for a future intersection with the older cemeteries as Woodlawn expanded. Within weeks the cemetery committee of Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Mundy and Mrs. Long were busy looking after improvements of the new cemetery. A fence surrounding the property was nearly completed and they obtained several hundred Cottonwoods ready for planting. The committee asked support from city businesses to contribute to the cause.³⁶

An ordinance covering the operation of the cemetery was printed in the *Las Vegas Age* March 7, 1914. The key points are as follows: Section One provided for the creation of a six member board of trustees which is appointed by the Board of City Commissioners. The members of the Board of Cemetery Trustees were to receive no compensation for their services. Section Two provided for the Board of Cemetery Trustees to elect officers among themselves. Section Three provided that the Board of Cemetery Trustees provides all services needed for creation of the physical space and the operation of the cemetery. Also the funds received from the sale of plots will be collected by the Board of Cemetery Trustees Treasurer and turned over to the city of Las Vegas Treasurer for deposit in a special account for care and maintenance. Section Four provides that the Board of Cemetery Trustees will be in charge of all burials and removals. Section 5 states that the ownership of a purchased plot becomes the property of

³⁴ Ibid, "Died," January 31, 1914.

³⁵ Ibid, "City Dads Hold Busy Session," February 07, 1914.

³⁶ Ibid, "New Cemetery," February 21, 1914.

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that person and their heirs unless it is released and recorded in the office of the County Recorder of Clark County. Section Six declared that all ordinances in conflict with these ordinances are repealed. Section Seven specified that this ordinance takes affect after publication in the Las Vegas Age and was dated and signed March 4, 1914. Those voting for approval were Mayor W. E. Hawkins and Clark County Commissioners, Curtiss, Griffith and Sullivan, thus approving the ordinance on March 4, 1914.³⁷ There is no direct evidence that these regulations actually altered behavior in the community but they would have in fact contributed to the stability of the Woodlawn Cemetery location and as such helped preserve the integrity of the site.

The Cemetery Association supplemented the budget with additional funds from the Clark County general fund such as \$200 that was added on April 4, 1914.³⁸ Construction immediately progressed, as example \$264.75 was paid to the Ed Von Tobel Lumber Company, for lumber for the cemetery.³⁹ While Woodlawn progressed, burials continued at the Las Vegas Cemetery on May 25, 1914 with the burial of an infant son for the Rhoads family,⁴⁰ as well as Fred Knecht, who died in October 1914.⁴¹ Burials continued at the Las Vegas Cemetery in early 1915 with an infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Teague who died February 12, 1915⁴² as well as George Fleming who died on March 1, 1915.⁴³ Woodlawn Cemetery continued its physical transformation following the design of J. T. McWilliams.

“Criterion C: Works of a Master”

³⁷ Las Vegas Age, “Ordinance Number 56,” March 07, 1914.

³⁸ Ibid, “City Business Attended To,” April 04, 1914.

³⁹ Ibid, “City Claims,” April 04, 1914.

⁴⁰ Ibid, “Died,” May 30, 1914.

⁴¹ Ibid, “Fred Knecht Meets Death,” October 10, 1914.

⁴² Ibid, “Died,” February 13, 1915.

⁴³ Ibid, “Died,” March 16, 1915.

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J. T. McWilliams was the civil engineer who designed the layout for the original 10 acre Woodlawn Cemetery; the completed plans were signed and dated July 22, 1914.⁴⁴ Mr. McWilliams was a master of his trade and was responsible for nearly every major civic civil engineering project in the early historic period of the formation of the community of Las Vegas. Mr. McWilliams surveyed all of the original land purchases for the San Pedro Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad. Located within these surveys is land that is inclusive of Woodlawn Cemetery as well as Clark's Las Vegas Townsite. In December 1904 Mr. McWilliams designed the first official townsite in Las Vegas in which an individual could purchase lots. Mr. McWilliams set a precedent with the design of his townsite in which the surveyed lines and property boundaries would follow the modern east-west north-south directional boundaries. When the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad opened their Clark's Las Vegas Townsite in May 1905, the directional boundaries followed the railroad tracts at a southwest to northeast direction. This skewed directional pattern made it nearly impossible for cohesive growth beyond the land that the railroad owned. This limitation created extensive confusion and waste of property due to unusual and odd shaped parcels that were created when the city did eventually expand in those bordering areas. This point is of utmost importance because Mr. McWilliams' design for the Woodlawn Cemetery was the first large scale development on the railroad property to conform to a directional standard, thus paving the way for responsible cohesive growth. In present day Las Vegas the vast majority of the Las Vegas Valley conforms to the standards set forth by Mr. McWilliams with his townsite and his design of the original Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mr. McWilliams' Original Las Vegas Townsite was destroyed by the addition of a freeway through the town site in 1971. This leaves the Woodlawn Cemetery as the best, last remaining example of his work that so greatly influenced a growing community. In

⁴⁴ J. T. McWilliams, "Woodlawn Cemetery Las Vegas Nevada," Book Two, Page 11, Clark County Assessors Office, Las Vegas Nevada.

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addition, Mr. McWilliams now resides in Woodlawn Cemetery along with his wife, daughter and fellow pioneers who initiated the great city of Las Vegas. The integrity of the original ten acre portion is well represented with all major road and plot sections remaining to this day.

While work continued to progress on Woodlawn, L. D. Smith, the undertaker for the Las Vegas Cemetery was arrested and charged after an infant baby he was paid to bury was found wrapped in a blanket under a bush at the edge of town. It seems that Smith buried a box filled with something other than the baby. Smith then took the baby home with him so experiments could be performed on the body. When he was finished, he then paid Arnold Gardner, a man he met in the Colorado Saloon, two dollars to bury the baby.⁴⁵ Smith was charged with "failing to properly inter the body of an infant,"⁴⁶ but won his case due to the technicality that the baby was stillborn and thus was not included in the text of the law.⁴⁷ While there were still a few burials in his Las Vegas Cemetery, Smith's scandal basically closed down the operation and opened the doors for Woodlawn to become the only cemetery for the community outside of a few small family plots. This is a key issue as Woodlawn now presented as near as possible a complete sampling of the population in the Las Vegas Valley. It is worth mentioning that of all of the individuals that were placed in the care of L. D. Smith and the Las Vegas Cemetery only two can be accounted for and they currently can be found at Woodlawn: Mrs. Olive Helm who died March 28, 1913 and Domenica Marchetti who died August 10, 1914, at age 70 and was the mother of Hotel Nevada owner John F. Miller.

In October 1914, the City of Las Vegas added funding for a sexton and the position was filled by D. F. Watson with a salary of \$35.00 per month.⁴⁸ In February of

⁴⁵ Las Vegas Age, "Undertaker is Arrested," February 06, 1915.

⁴⁶ Ibid, "District Court Opens Tuesday," March 13, 1915.

⁴⁷ Ibid, "Smith Escapes Laws Clutches," October 30, 1915.

⁴⁸ Las Vegas Age, "City Board," October 10, 1914.

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1915 the City of Las Vegas accepted a bid from sexton D. F. Watson of \$30.00 for each indigent burial. At the same meeting the city approved the sale of 50 plots for that purpose at five dollars each.⁴⁹ In early 1915 Senator Newlands sent a collection of seeds of trees from the Botanical Gardens at the Department of Agriculture at Washington D.C, which were planted at Woodlawn Cemetery.⁵⁰ Trees were a valuable commodity in the desert as the early plantings provided shade as well as an identifiable boundary for Woodlawn Cemetery.⁵¹ In February 1915 three bodies are moved to Woodlawn Cemetery from the Ranch Cemetery by the Eagles who purchased a section with 40 plots for fellow Eagles. These are probably the first individuals to be buried at Woodlawn Cemetery. The individuals are James Magner who died October 10, 1911; John E. Penault who died April 7, 1910 and Charles W. Crowley who died February 8, 1911.⁵² The City Commissioners continued to financially support Woodlawn Cemetery; in fact it was used as a campaign tool for City Commissioner E. E. Smith who stated as one of his accomplishments that, "A beautiful cemetery has been opened up."⁵³

The City Commissioners requested bids for a concrete block building to be constructed at Woodlawn for use as a tool-house among other functions in April of 1915. Bids were received for the construction of the building by J. A. Delameter, for \$625.00, and George Swadner for \$574.50. The latter was accepted with the building to be completed within 60 days.⁵⁴ It is probable that this is the initial construction of the building that would serve as a home for the cemetery's caretaker. The building is located at the southwest corner of Woodlawn Cemetery and is currently used as a sales office.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Ibid, "County Board Held Meeting," February 06, 1915.

⁵⁰ Ibid, "Roberts Sends Plants," March 13, 1915.

⁵¹ See Photograph 0171 0594, University of Nevada Las Vegas, Department of Special Collections.

⁵² Las Vegas Age, "Eagles Move Bodies From Ranch Cemetery to New Cemetery," February 13, 1915.

⁵³ Ibid, "Smith Tells Why," May 01, 1915.

⁵⁴ Ibid, "To Investigate Oxford Saloon," April 10, 1915.

⁵⁵ Joseph Thomson, National Register Nomination Photographs 9 and 10, August, 2005.

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A year later in April of 1916 The Cemetery Board of Commissioners received bids for drilling a well to furnish water for the cemetery. Bids were received from Watt Hooker for \$895 and Beckley and Laubenhimer for \$905. The job called for sinking an eight-inch hole to a depth of 600 feet.⁵⁶ During the May 1916 meeting of the City Commissioners the contract was awarded to Beckley and Laubenhimer.⁵⁷ This well, which is located in the southwest corner of Woodlawn Cemetery, was one of the first wells to be drilled in the Las Vegas Valley. This well site is unique as early water needs were typically filled by natural springs and the Las Vegas Creek. This well is no longer in service and has been capped but still remains on the property.⁵⁸ It is probable that the well is the oldest remaining visible well in the Las Vegas Valley as any that preceded it are sure to have been in areas that have seen considerable redevelopment.

It is probable that the first burial in which the individual was directly buried at Woodlawn Cemetery without being moved from another location occurred on November 24, 1915. James C. Conway, who resided in Searchlight, died at the Las Vegas Hospital where he was being treated for an infection from an ulcerated tooth. This is also the first time that the term "Woodlawn" is used in the *Las Vegas Age* in reference to the cemetery. Funeral services were conducted by Vegas Lodge number 32 F. & A. M. as Conway was a Mason being a member of the Streator Illinois Lodge No. 607.⁵⁹ Conway can currently be found in plot 13, Block F.⁶⁰ Others who died before Conway are currently at Woodlawn Cemetery but as discussed previously they were moved at a later date after they were buried elsewhere. As example, George H. Brockman Jr. who died April 3,

⁵⁶ Las Vegas Age, "Bids Received," April 29, 1916.

⁵⁷ Ibid, "Regular Meeting of City Board," May 06, 1916.

⁵⁸ Joseph Thomson, National Register Nomination Photograph 11, August 2005.

⁵⁹ Las Vegas Age, "Died," November 27, 1915.

⁶⁰ Woodlawn Cemetery, "James C. Conway's Burial Registration Card," November 24, 1915.

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1915⁶¹ and Mrs. Sarah Hardwood who died May 25, 1915⁶² can both be found at Woodlawn Cemetery.

While it is certainly an exhaustive process to trace the origins of individual deaths in the early period of the formation of Woodlawn Cemetery it is key to the placement of Woodlawn Cemetery at the core of the formation of the community. This nomination has concentrated on the process that has led to the formation of the location in which Woodlawn Cemetery now stands. Individuals that played a role in that process were highlighted for their contribution to that process but this in no-way is the extent of historic importance with regards to individual contributions to the community. Thousands of individuals with compelling and contributing histories are buried at Woodlawn Cemetery including members of nearly every pioneer family that lived in the Las Vegas Valley during the formative years. That being said this nomination is not about individual histories, it is about the sum of those who have contributed as a group to the formation of a community. This nomination will lead to future individual-historic investigations due to enlightened awareness; Woodlawn Cemetery will prove to be a key resource for those investigations.

At the core of this nomination is a physical place, a place that has been proven to hold significant value within the community for designation as a burial site. The history and lineage of this site has shown that it was preferred above all other locations. The Ranch Cemetery location was chosen because it was next to the existing Boot Hill Cemetery. When E. W. Griffith attempted to create the new Las Vegas Cemetery Association's cemetery the community rejected the location and burials returned to the vicinity of present day Woodlawn Cemetery. When L. D. Smith's Las Vegas Cemetery

⁶¹ Las Vegas Age, "Youth Hunting Kills Himself," April 03, 1915.

⁶² Ibid, "Died," May 29, 1915.

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failed the community again returned to their traditional burial location with the continued support of the Woodlawn Cemetery. An added point of information, albeit not properly documented at this time, is the fact that Paiute remains have also been found in the vicinity of Woodlawn Cemetery.⁶³ It is possible that the Boot Hill Cemetery was located where it was, due to the fact that it was already an established burial location. Woodlawn Cemetery has expanded from ten to 40 acres and thus now crosses paths with the Boot Hill Cemetery, the Ranch Cemetery and a possible Paiute Cemetery. Burials presently continue at Woodlawn Cemetery over 90 years since the first burials in 1915.

Woodlawn Cemetery is basically 40 acres created from 3 phases of development which, minus modern easements, equals 37.31 acres.⁶⁴ The first ten-acre section, which is at the western edge of the cemetery, is the section that this nomination has dedicated the majority of the narrative to. It is the section that surveyor J. T. McWilliams designed and dated July 22, 1914. This first section is extremely important in design and content as those who are buried in this section are a finite number of original pioneers that were responsible for the creation and survival of the community.

Section Two which borders Section One to the east is a ten-acre section that was designed and dated by Las Vegas City Engineer George Rittenhouse on the September 20, 1944.⁶⁵ Section Two burials date to the mid-forties, during a period of extreme growth in Las Vegas' history due to war-time economics. Discussion to expand the existing cemetery to include this section began in 1937.⁶⁶ The decade of the 1940s saw Las Vegas' population grow from approximately 8,000 to 40,000 creating a need for the expansion when only about 190 spaces remained in the section one.⁶⁷ This second section

⁶³ Donna Address, "From our Readers," Preservation Association of Clark County, December 2004.

⁶⁴ Clark County Assessors Office, Parcel map number 139-26-1.

⁶⁵ Clark County Assessors Office, Book Two, Page 64; Las Vegas Review-Journal, "Cemetery Annex Approved Today," September 22, 1944.

⁶⁶ Las Vegas Review-Journal, "City Planning To Extend Cemetery," January 08, 1937.

⁶⁷ Ibid, "New Rules Adopted For Cemetery," December 17, 1943.

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is quite important due to the age and its connection to the early formation of Las Vegas both within its physical structure and due to those that are buried in this section. In addition within Section Two, Sub-Section "O" there are eight individuals who were moved in May 1971 to plots 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, and 548, from the cemeteries that preceded Woodlawn Cemetery; these earlier cemeteries bordered and intersected with Woodlawn at section OA2.⁶⁸

Section Three is a twenty acre section that borders Section Two to the east. Section Three dates to 1953,⁶⁹ with burials dating to the early sixties. Section Three is relatively new and in general is not as historically significant as Section One and Section Two except for the fact that this is where the cemeteries that predate Woodlawn Cemetery intersect with Woodlawn Cemetery at section OA2, including plots, 28, 33, 35, 37 and 54.⁷⁰ This makes that particular portion of Section Three very important as it is the connecting point between Woodlawn and its historic predecessors. This connection as discussed in the narrative is key to way that the community embraced this general location as the choice for burial of their community peers. The entire 37.31 acre district is retains the integrity of the location as while it has expanded in size over time there has never been any substantial portion of the property that has been removed from the overall site.

There does not exist in any physical form a better example of the Las Vegas Valley community than that which can be found within the boundaries of Woodlawn Cemetery. This statement seems at first a rather odd declaration for memorial garden that rather naturally waves that banner simply by **retaining the integrity of the site** and continuing under the same intent in which it was founded. The fact is that Woodlawn Cemetery has achieved a remarkable feat in this community by retaining the integrity of

⁶⁸ Flora Keller, memorandum, 14 May 1971, Woodlawn Cemetery.

⁶⁹ Clark County Assessor's Office.

⁷⁰ Flora Keller, memorandum, 14 May 1971, Woodlawn Cemetery.

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the site. Any preservation effort particular to Las Vegas faces severe challenges due to the extreme rapid transformation that has been a byproduct of growth since inception. The statement of preeminence is best challenged by asking, "is there any other example of a location whereby all members of the pioneering community have gathered?" The answer is simply no! Woodlawn Cemetery is a unique location whose parameters of inclusion break all barriers existent in life. Issues of class, gender and race aside, those who rest in eternity are conveniently gathered in death where the rules of life would not have allowed. The orders of organization will no doubt provide further investigations into this unique community.

The integrity of the association with the community and the general feel of the site are well represented. The original aspects and most historic elements of Woodlawn Cemetery are in-tact and at the same time new burials continue the tradition of association in the community. Woodlawn Cemetery is an artistic masterpiece with statuary and headstones representing some of the earliest physical remnants of the pioneer community. Although this aspect that has not been discussed in depth in this narrative because it is not a subject being specifically used as a nomination category it is the aesthetic and associative strength of Woodlawn Cemetery. I must concede that the research and documentation of individual headstones or statuary is beyond the scope of this nomination but is stating that reserve the hope that one such ambitious project would be undertaken at some point.

Woodlawn cemetery is well deserving of nomination status fulfilling multiple areas of significance within the National Register Criteria. Woodlawn Cemetery became the indicator of a cohesive society that invested a long term commitment to the future of Las Vegas. Woodlawn Cemetery is the supreme example of a broad group of people who gathered early in the 20th century to form the impetus of one of the last great western cities. Woodlawn Cemetery is the best remaining example of the work of a master in J.T.

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McWilliams, the civil engineer who brought deep professional sensibilities to Las Vegas in its infancy. Woodlawn Cemetery is not simply a Las Vegas cemetery it is “**the**” Las Vegas Cemetery with a rich, deep connection to countless important historic associations from Las Vegas’ early period of settlement and has continued this reflection of the community’s history with a respected position that will gain tremendous status from protection and preservation efforts that will be positively effected by inclusion of this historic site on the National Register of Historic Places.

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- . "Died," March 23, 1912.
- . "Died," March 30, 1912.
- . "In Memoriam," April 05, 1913.
- . "At Rest," April 19, 1913.
- . "Died," August 04, 1913.
- . "Died," August 16, 1913.
- . "Busy Day for City Fathers," January 10, 1914.
- . "Died," January 24, 1914.
- . "Died," January 31, 1914.
- . "City Dads Hold Busy Session," February 07, 1914.
- . "New Cemetery," February 21, 1914.

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Bibliography (continued)

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---. "City Business Attended To," April 04, 1914.

---. "City Claims," April 04, 1914.

---. "Died," May 30, 1914.

---. "Fred Knecht Meets Death," October 10, 1914.

---. "City Board," October 10, 1914.

---. "Undertaker is Arrested," February 06, 1915.

---. "County Board Held Meeting," February 06, 1915.

---. "Re-interment," February 13, 1915.

---. "Eagles Move Bodies From Ranch Cemetery to New Cemetery," February 13, 1915.

---. "Died," February 13, 1915.

---. "District Court Opens Tuesday," March 13, 1915.

---. "Roberts Sends Plants," March 13, 1915.

---. "Died," March 16, 1915.

---. "Youth Hunting Kills Himself," April 03, 1915.

---. "To Investigate Oxford Saloon," April 13, 1915.

---. "Died," May 29, 1915.

---. "Smith Escapes Laws Clutches," October 30, 1915.

---. "To Investigate Oxford Saloon," April 10, 1915.

---. "Smith Tells Why," May 01, 1915.

---. "Died," November 27, 1915.

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---. "Regular Meeting of City Board," May 06, 1916.

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---. "New Rules Adopted For Cemetery," December 17, 1943.

---. "Cemetery Annex Approved Today," September 22, 1944.

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---. "Sales map, for section identification."

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Woodlawn Cemetery Clark County, Nevada
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Verbal Boundary Description

Woodlawn Cemetery is bordered in its entirety on all four sides by paved streets. Las Vegas Boulevard North borders the western edge of Woodlawn Cemetery. Owens Avenue borders the northern edge of Woodlawn Cemetery. Bruce Street borders the eastern edge of Woodlawn Cemetery. Foremaster Lane borders the southern edge of Woodlawn Cemetery. These bordering streets are visible in the photographs that are included as part of this National Register nomination application. The Clark County Assessors Office number for the parcel is 139-26-101-003.

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Boundary Justification

The boundaries that were selected for use as the verbal "Boundary Description" for Woodlawn Cemetery were chosen because they are currently both the legal and common borders for the property. When Woodlawn Cemetery was created Las Vegas Boulevard, Owens Avenue, Bruce Street and Foremaster Lane did not surround the property. Original cemetery footprints both included and excluded plans for bordering streets and in some cases the streets have expanded in size. As these streets were created or expanded to border Woodlawn Cemetery land was taken from Woodlawn Cemetery for these purposes and the overall acreage of Woodlawn Cemetery was thus reduced in size from 40 acres to the present 37.31 acres. Woodlawn Cemetery does not share any borders with any properties outside of these streets.

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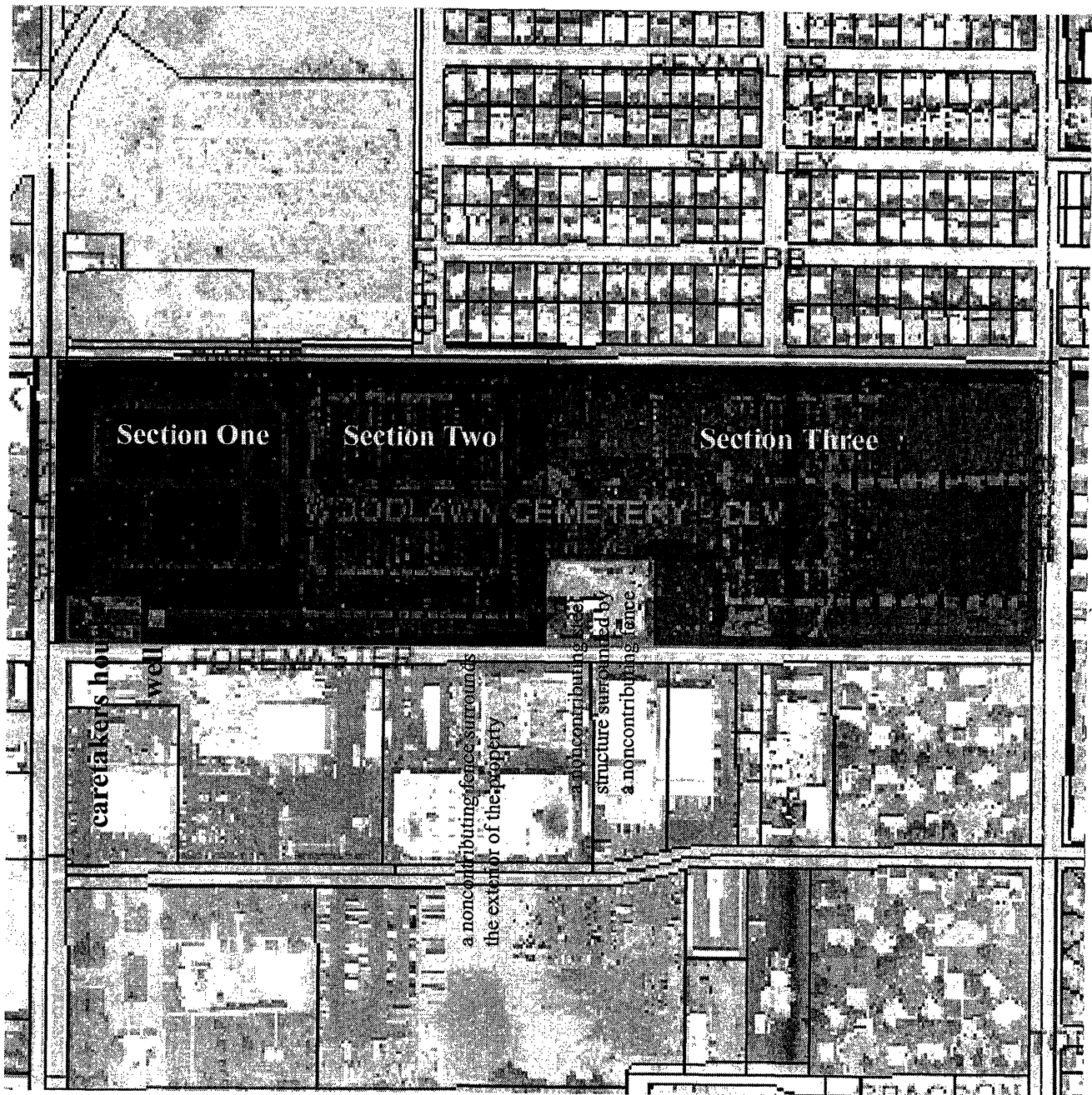
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Woodlawn Cemetery
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Clark County, Nevada
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Sketch Map



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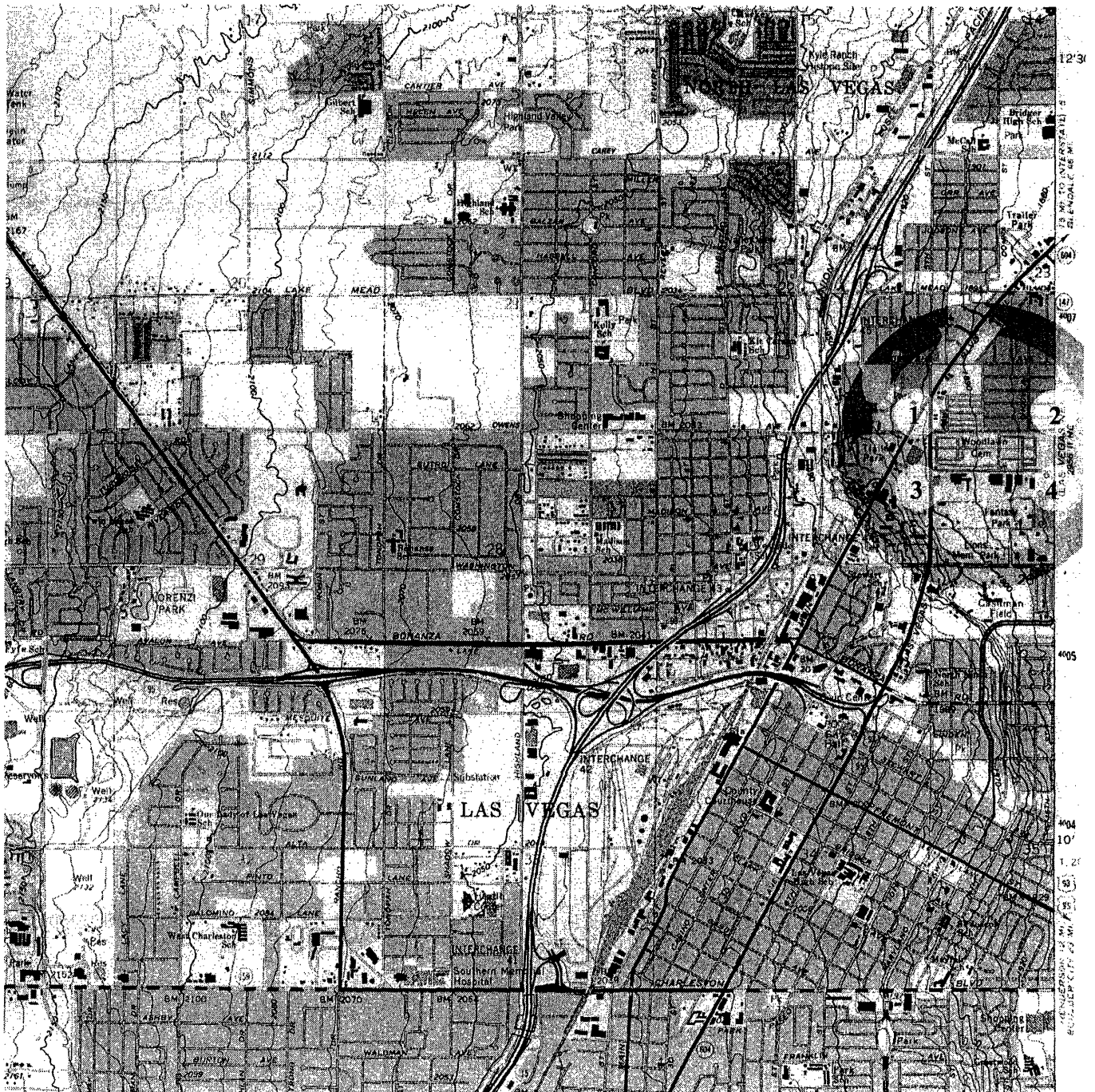
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USGS map with UTM reference points



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Joseph Thomson, Photographer

August 2005, Date of Photographs

Las Vegas Nevada, Joseph Thomson, Curator of Negatives

#1. View from the southwest corner.

#2. View from the northwest corner.

#3. View from the northeast corner.

#4. View from the southeast corner.

#5. West Elevation, from Owens Avenue to Foremaster Lane.

#6. North Elevation, from Bruce Street to Las Vegas Boulevard North.

#7. South Elevation, from Las Vegas Boulevard North to Bruce Street.

#8. East Elevation, from Foremaster Lane to Owens Avenue.

#9. Northwest corner of caretakers house

#10. Northeast corner of caretakers house.

#11. Well.

#12. detail, from southwest corner.

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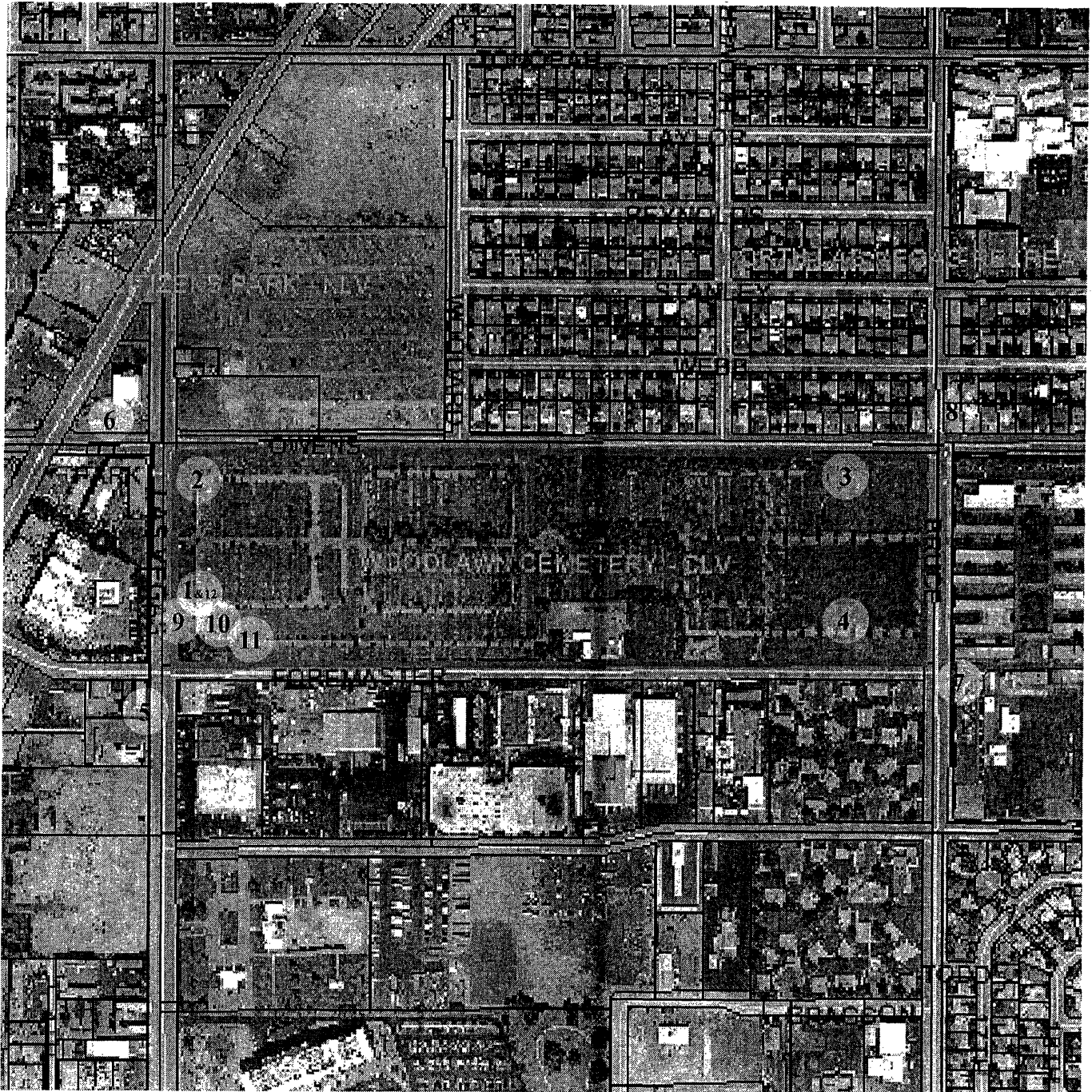
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Location of photographs 1-12



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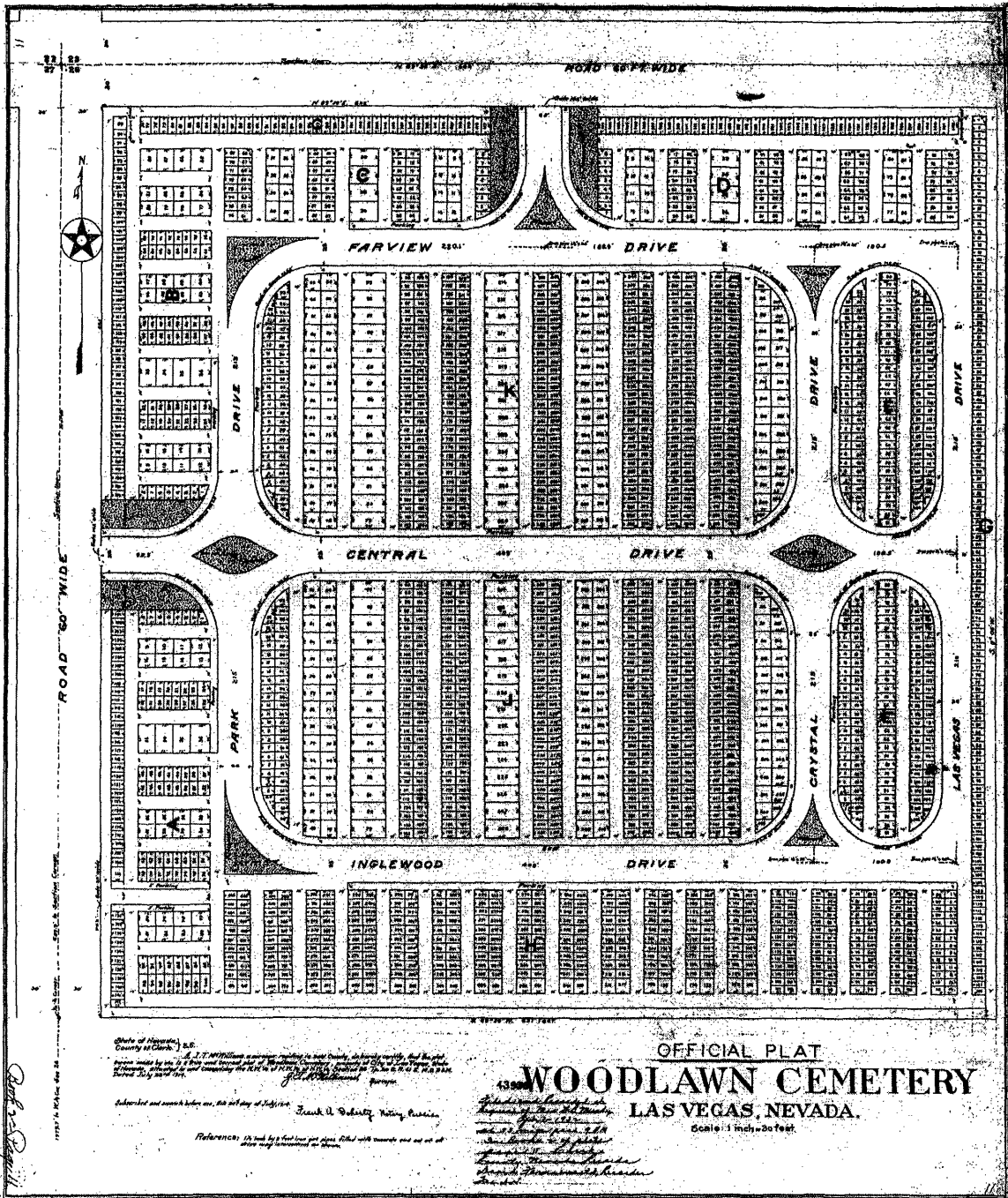
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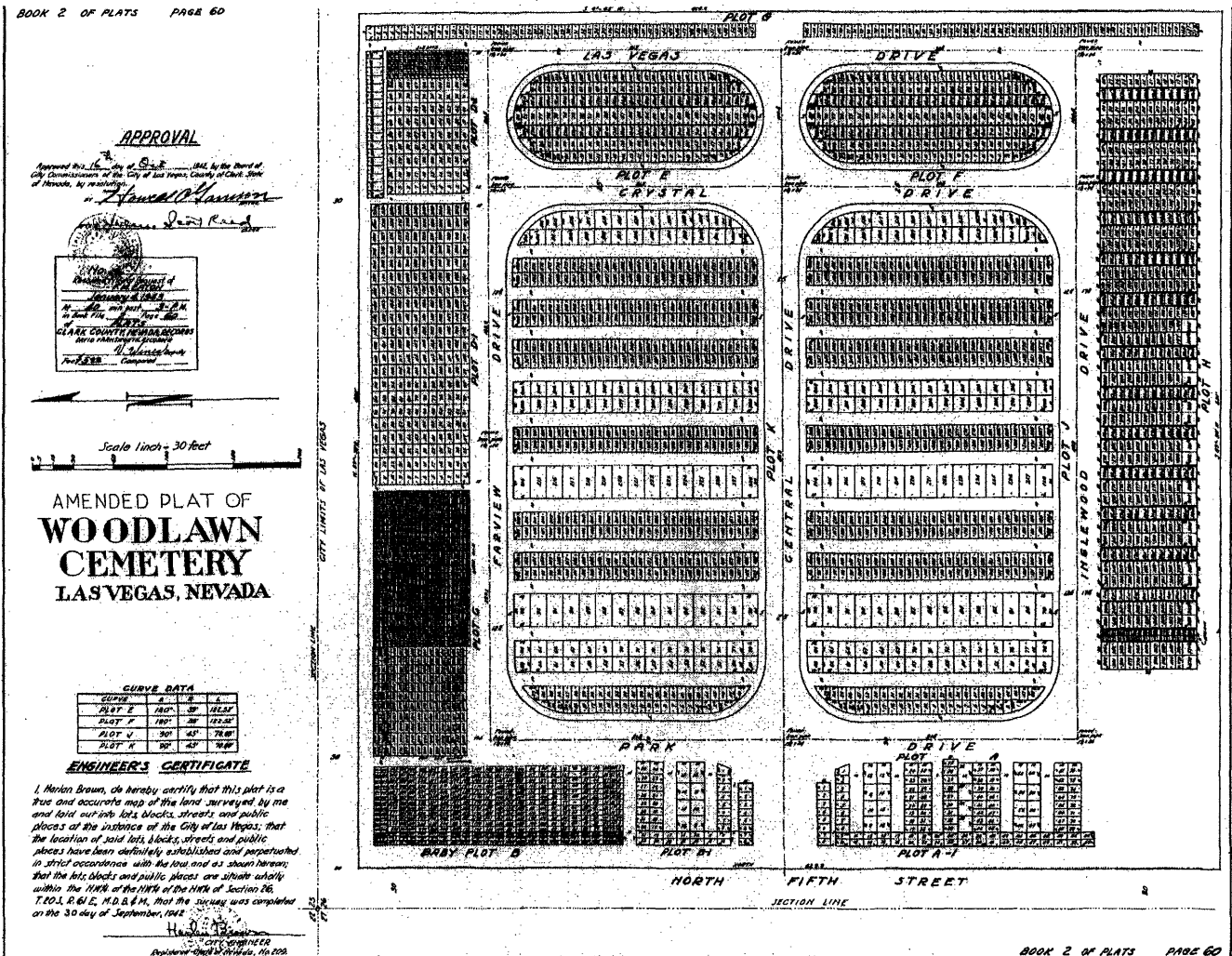
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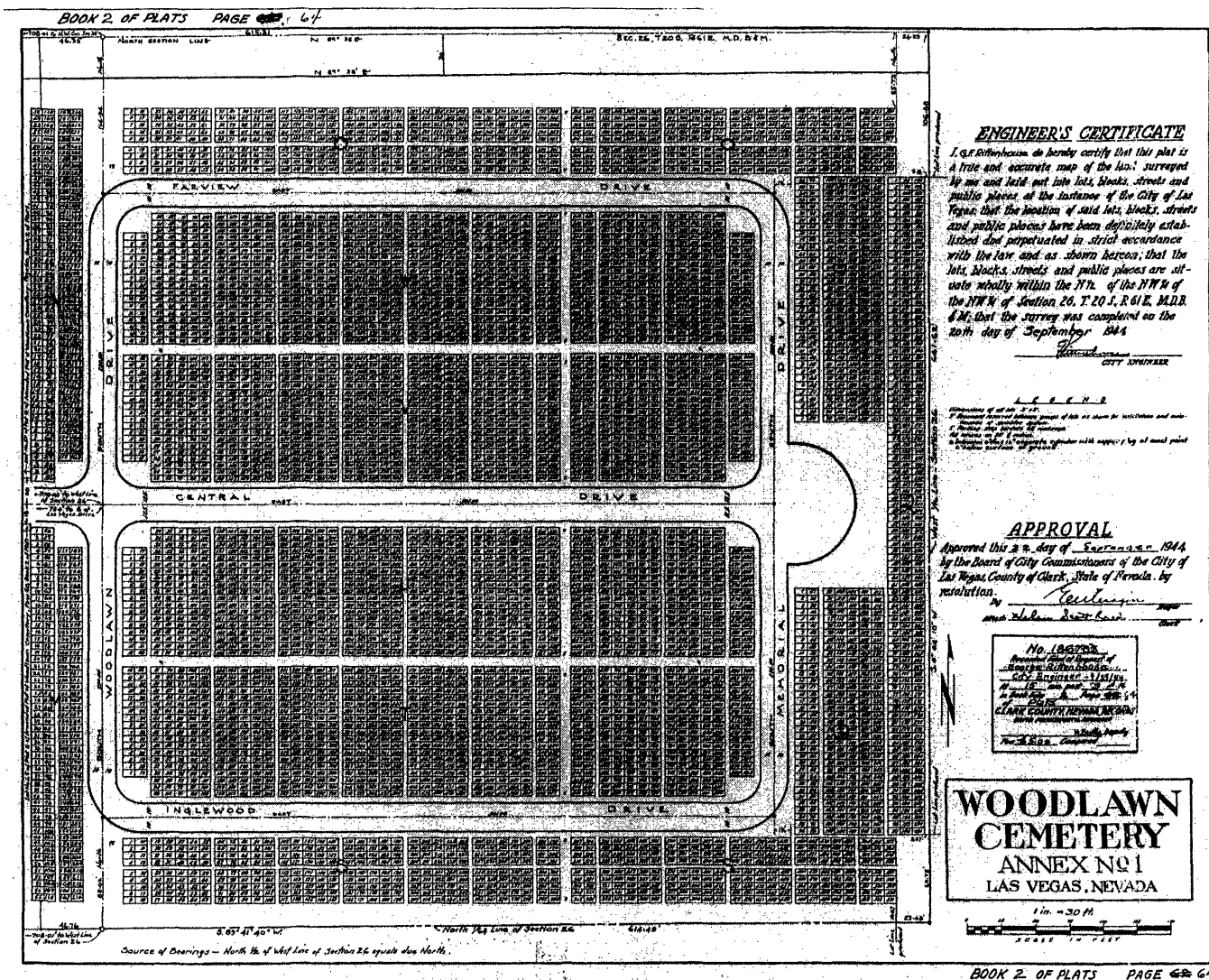
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Woodlawn Cemetery, 9-20-44, Book Two, Page 64



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Historic photograph 0171 0594.



NOTES

This map is for assessment use only and does NOT represent a survey. No liability is assumed for the accuracy of the data delineated herein. Information on roads and other non-assessed parcels may be obtained from the Road Document Listing in the Assessor's Office. This map is compiled from official records, including surveys and deeds, but only contains the information required for assessment. See the recorded documents for more detailed legal information.

USE THIS SCALE(ETC) WHEN MAP REDUCED FROM THIS ORIGINAL.

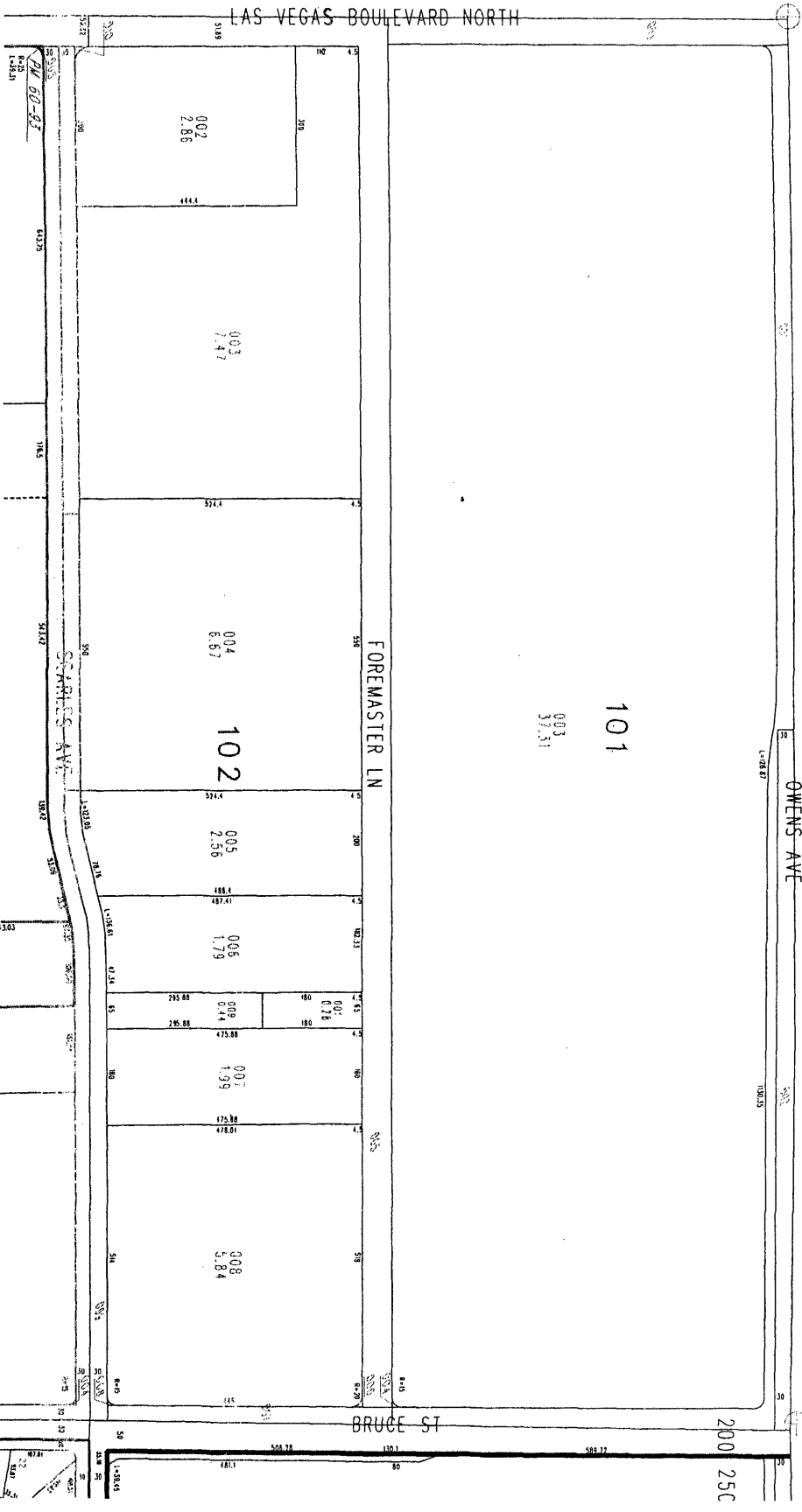
MAP LEGEND

- Parcel Boundary
- Subd Boundary
- Road Easement
- PW/LD Boundary
- Non-Parcel Lot Line
- Match Line / Leader Line
- Road ID Number

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE - CLARK CO., NV.
M. W. S. ASSESSOR

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