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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Washington High School

other names/site number Washington-Monroe High School; Child Services Center

2. Location

street & number 1300 SE Stark Street not for publication

city or town Portland vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97214

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Christine Cuman 9-17-15
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain):

Joe Edson H. Beall 11.9.15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- Private
- public – Local
- public – State
- public – Federal

- building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

PORTLAND'S EASTSIDE HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES, 1850-1938

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business; restaurant
RECREATION AND CULTURE: music facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:
Classical Revival

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
 walls: CONCRETE; BRICK; TERRA COTTA

 roof: ASPHALT: Built-up roof
 other: N/A

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Washington High School is located in Portland, Oregon on the east side of the Willamette River. The site is bounded by SE Stark Street to the north, SE 12th Avenue to the west, SE Alder Street (vacated) to the south, and SE 14th Avenue to the east. The school building is located at the southwest quadrant of the intersection of SE Stark Street and SE 14th Avenue in Portland's Buckman Neighborhood. The blocks to the north, south, and west feature primarily one- and two-story commercial and apartment buildings, while the east side of SE 14th Avenue is primarily single and multifamily residences.

Washington High School is a 104,000 square-foot, four-story, poured-in-place concrete building that was constructed from 1923 to 1924. Designed in the Classical Revival style by the Portland architecture firm of Houghtaling & Dougan, the building is faced with red brick and speckle-glazed terracotta moldings and details. It features rigorous symmetry and a centralized tripartite portico with engaged columns on its primary (west) façade. Other decorative details can be found across the building's exterior including bas relief panels, engaged brick pilasters, lions heads, caryatid heads, and inspirational quotes.

Inside Washington High School, the spaces that originally comprised the classrooms, science laboratories, offices, and support spaces are located along all four of the building's window walls. A donut-shaped corridor up to eighteen feet wide acts as the building's primary thoroughfare. At the core of the building is an 830-seat auditorium with a balcony.

The building ceased functioning as a high school in 1981. While it was used for social service uses until the 1990s, it was largely vacant until Portland Public Schools sold the property to a private party in October 2013. At that time the building underwent a substantial rehabilitation and was converted to commercial office and retail use. The flagpole plaza in front of the building, the athletic field, and vacant land/parking lots to the south of the building were sold to the City of Portland's Bureau of Parks & Recreation in 2004.

Narrative Description

SETTING

The Washington High School campus is located in the heart of the Buckman Neighborhood in Portland's Central Eastside. Prior to Portland Public Schools' disposition of the property in October 2013, the campus not only included the historic area bounded by SE Stark, SE 12th, SE Alder, and SE 14th, but also more-recently-acquired blocks to the south bounded by SE Morrison Street.

The building is unique in that it does not face the street but instead faces west toward the interior of the block and its grass athletic field. Washington High School is highly visible to traffic and pedestrians, particularly those traveling eastbound on SE Stark and northbound on SE 12th, as there are unobstructed views across the athletic field to the building's monumental primary elevation.

Development on the blocks west of the property consists of primarily commercial and industrial uses within the Central Eastside Industrial District. Development to the east is predominately a mix of multifamily and single-family housing built between 1880 and 1920. Small commercial storefront businesses are located along SE Morrison and SE Belmont to the south, and SE Stark to the north. With the surrounding neighborhood being primarily residential dwellings and small-scale commercial buildings, the scale of Washington High School and

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its formal Classical Revival style creates a strong visual identifier within the neighborhood. At four stories tall and the equivalent of one full city block, it is the largest building in the immediate neighborhood.

SITE

The Washington High School's site slopes upward toward the east. It features retaining walls on the west, north, and east sides of the property¹ that are adjacent to the school and the building is set back eight feet from the sidewalk on its north and east sides. Collectively, this heightens its monumental stature and gives the illusion of the building being atop a plinth. The concrete retaining wall continues to wrap the athletic field on its north and west sides and is further topped with chain link fence. (Photo 1)

At the west façade, this retaining wall also runs parallel to the building, creating a break between the lower grass athletic field and the property's main plaza. The primary access to the plaza is from a flight of original concrete steps off of SE Stark Street that align with SE 13th Avenue, which dead ends at the campus. As part of the 1923 design by Houghtaling & Dougan, the plaza features a metal flagpole mounted on a circular concrete base. Directly north and south of the flagpole plaza are two new flanking concrete patios that date to 2014. This plaza also features new bike racks, sidewalk light fixtures, and a new ADA ramp with metal handrails to the north.

On the north and east façades, the setbacks and original retaining walls allowed for new ADA ramping to be constructed around the site in 2014 with minimal visual impacts. The north façade features a new three-step stair centered on the façade, which is flanked by two new bollard light fixtures. The east façade features concrete steps that step down from the sidewalk to the pedestrian entrances, which are at grade. An ADA ramp is also present on the east façade. The south side of the building features a concrete sidewalk that connects back around to the west flagpole plaza. There is also a new parking lot on the south side of the building. Previously there was a gymnasium located here (constructed 1958; demolished 2006) and prior to that was the Hawthorne School (constructed 1897; demolished 1958).

The Washington High School campus had very little landscaping during its period of significance. Historical photos show primarily lawn, low-growing plants, and a few shrubs. The large trees that are currently located northwest of the plaza appear to have been planted in the late 1950s or early 1960s based on the photographic record. As part of the 2014 rehabilitation, new landscaping was planted in front of the west façade. The site also features street trees along its north and east façades. The athletic field is planted with grass.

The unique siting of the high school—facing downtown Portland instead of the street, as well as its siting on the crest of a hill—adds to the monumental feeling of Washington High School. In addition to its rigorous Classical Revival detailing and the fact that the building is much larger than surrounding structures, the school was historically a constant reminder to both the neighborhood and the larger Portland community of the importance of education.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Washington High School is a four-story, poured-in-place, reinforced concrete-frame building with hollow clay tile infill. The foundations from the 1905 Washington High School were reused in the construction of this school in 1923, although new footings and a new slab were poured.² The building is faced with non-structural red brick and glazed terracotta ornamentation. The roof is mostly flat and obscured by a three-foot parapet wall.

¹ All retaining walls are original except those on the east elevation, which were modified in the 2014 rehabilitation.

² Original foundations were observed during the building's rehabilitation in 2014. In 1923, railroad tracks were used as horizontal reinforcement when the contractor poured the new slab.

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There is a roof well with a gabled roof over the auditorium attic, which is not visible from the ground. In plan, the building features three defining spaces: the outer ring of classroom/tenant spaces, an inner corridor ring, and a central two-story auditorium at the core. Collectively, these three spaces contribute the building's overall shape and size.

Constructed from 1923 to 1924, Washington High School continues to express the characteristics of the Classical Revival style common in late 19th and early 20th century public buildings, schools, and banks. Although it features a more modern, restrained interpretation of this style, many Classical Revival characteristics can nonetheless be seen on the building. These details include:

- Formal symmetry derived from the traditional base-shaft-capital composition
- Symmetrical fenestration patterns
- Prominent entrance vestibules on the west, east, and south façades
- Molded terracotta Ionic columns, bas relief panels, window sills, and cornices
- Belt courses executed in both terracotta and brick that break up the massing of the building and articulate the projecting bays found on each elevation
- Brick pilasters with terracotta plinth blocks and capitals that range in order from Doric to Composite.

The façades of this square-shaped building share many common design elements that will be described here to reduce redundancy in the façade-by-façade description to follow. Each façade features at least one projecting center bay. The west and east façades share commonalities in their treatments of these bays, as do the north and south façades. With respect to fenestration, the building features 243 large, double-hung wood windows. They are typically twelve-over-one and trimmed in Douglas fir. Additionally, common to all façades are two prominent brick belt courses composed of soldier, header, and rowlock bricks that wrap the building at the top of the first and second stories. The first-story brick belt course is composed of three rows. The first row is a course of soldier bricks atop a rowlock base. The second row features two corbeled header courses, while the third row of bricks features a soldier course with a rowlock capital. The second-story belt course also features three rows; however, its composition is different from the first story. The first row of the second-story belt course features a soldier course base. Above this row are two corbeled header courses and above these rows is a more prominent brick course that features a rowlock base, soldier field, and rowlock capital.

Washington High School also features two terracotta belt courses at the uppermost section of each façade. The first band consists of a brick and terracotta belt course with dentil trim, acting as a decorative lintel above the fourth-floor windows. Approximately two feet above the first band is a second terracotta belt course that signifies the height of the structural roof deck. Finally, above that is the building's three-foot parapet, which is capped in terracotta with cream-colored aluminum flashing.

West Façade

The west façade (Photo 2) is Washington High School's primary elevation and its most significant expression of the Classical Revival style. The façade wall is not flat, but instead the middle two-thirds is composed of a projecting bay and contains all of the façade's fenestration. A centered, four-story entry portico projects further, making this the most prominent entry on the high school. The portico features a prominent vestibule at the ground-floor level that is accessible from the plaza by three concrete steps. The vestibule's three entry points feature terracotta architraves with egg-and-dart trim. Above the architrave at each of the openings are terracotta hoods that sit within a large terracotta frieze that wraps the projecting entryway. Flanking the vestibule are new, period-appropriate globe light fixtures. Within the vestibule is a landing with three pairs of original wood double-doors. Each door leaf features a wire-glass relicht in its upper two-thirds with a recessed wood panel below. Flanking each pair of double doors are two sidelights with a multi-light transom above.

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Each vestibule opening features a relief of classical figures and the following inspirational quotes, which historically served to link the ideals of classical democracy with progressive education:

- Northwest (left): "Education has this object of the formation of character." (Herbert Spencer)
- Northwest (right): "Foundation of every state is the education of its youth." (Diogenes)
- Center (left): "School houses are the republican line of fortifications." (Horace Mann)
- Center (right): "Promote as an object of primary importance institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge." (George Washington)
- Southwest (left): "Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army." (Edward Everette)
- Southwest (right): "Education is a possession which cannot be taken from man." (Epitetus)

At the second-floor level are three, double-leaf wood casement windows with multi-light transoms and terracotta sills above the ground-floor vestibule. Above these windows are the engaged, fluted columns that were executed in terracotta using motifs from the Ionic order. They rise two stories from the third to the fourth floors. Between these columns on both floors are multi-light, wood casement windows with multi-light transoms. Topping these four columns is a full terracotta entablature with a frieze featuring the inscription "Washington High School," flanked by a bas relief grouping of classical figures. Below the frieze is an architrave composed of three bands in terracotta, while above the frieze is a terracotta cornice with projecting lion heads. The entablature is topped with an elevated brick parapet that features a terracotta cornice that is framed by two scroll details.

The rest of the west façade continues to express Washington High School's Classical Revival design through its mirroring symmetry with each of the four stories featuring the same pattern of fenestration on either side of the entry portico. At each floor on both sides of the portico are four ganged windows followed by a single window and then a large expanse of solid brick. Engaged brick pilasters with terracotta capitals and plinth blocks are used to frame these windows at the ground level. The single windows on the ground level were converted to new pedestrian openings in 2014. The north opening consists of a glazed aluminum storefront door with a sidelight and twelve-light wood transom that matches the upper sash of the historic double-hung windows in size and muntin profile. The south opening—the property's new ADA entrance—features a recessed, glazed double-door with an eight-light transom. Because the high school's ground-floor level sits below grade, the sills of the large double-hung windows appear to be at almost ground-level on this façade.

The ganged windows at the second-floor level on the west façade feature terracotta sills and engaged brick pilasters with terracotta plinth blocks and ornate caryatid-head capitals in terracotta. The single windows on this floor only feature a terracotta sill and no pilaster ornamentation. The blank brick fields on either side of the mirrored fenestration feature a blind window with engaged brick pilasters and terracotta details.

The third story of this façade features the same fenestration pattern with terracotta sills and engaged brick pilasters as was featured at the second story. However, like the Ionic columns on the central portico, these pilasters extend over both the third and fourth stories—a consistent design feature on each façade. Additionally, this story's northernmost and southernmost sections do not feature blind windows, but rather an uninterrupted field of brick.

At the fourth story, the windows have concrete sills rather than terracotta sills. Additionally, the pilasters that frame this floor's gang of four windows feature terracotta capitals inspired by the Composite order. This floor also features terracotta relief panels to the north and south of its single windows. These are aligned with the blind windows on the second level below.

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North Façade

Historically, the north façade (Photo 3) was the only façade on the building that had no doors and was characterized by a continuous rhythm of twelve-over-one fenestration. As is the case on each building façade, the north façade is not a continuous flat wall, but features a slightly projecting center bay that is articulated by the brick and terracotta belt courses that wrap the building.

Largely symmetrical, this story's fenestration pattern is expressed identically at each level. From east to west, the pattern is as follows: First, four ganged windows followed by one single window, then two sets of four ganged windows on the projecting center bay, then a pair of windows, and finally another grouping of four windows.

At the ground level, three original windows have been converted to new pedestrian openings. Like the west façade, these new pedestrian openings consist of a glazed aluminum storefront door with sidelight. The multi-light transom above mimics the twelve-light upper sash of the historic windows. The ground-floor level also features five new globe light fixtures that are located in between the prominent breaks in the fenestration pattern.

Like the west façade, the first-, second-, and third-floor windows all feature terracotta sills, while the fourth-floor windows have concrete sills. Engaged pilasters with simplified capitals and plinth blocks executed in terracotta frame the windows on the first and second floors. Also like the west elevation, the third and fourth floors share a continuous engaged brick pilaster with terracotta plinths and Composite capitals.

East Façade

Like the west façade, the east façade (Photo 4) is rigorously symmetrical and features all of its fenestration within its center projecting bay that comprises approximately two-thirds of the wall plane. The ground level of this façade features the building's original secondary entrances in the form of two projecting, one-story vestibules at the south and north. These vestibules are accessed via concrete steps and are flanked by terracotta-clad Doric columns and new globe light fixtures. At the top of each vestibule is an entablature with an inspirational inscription. The northwest vestibule features a quote from Cicero that reads: "What greater gift or better can we offer to the state than if we teach and train up the youth." The quote above the northeast vestibule is by Herbert Spencer and reads: "Education has this [sic] object the formation of character."³ These inscriptions have a terracotta border that features a small wave pattern and flanking the inscription panel on either side is a larger, elongated scroll. The 1923 plans indicate that this scroll detail was originally intended to be a pedestal for a terracotta urn. None of the four urns appear to have been constructed on this façade. The entire inscription ensemble rests on top of a simple cornice with an egg-and-dart molding finished with a bead-and-reel motif. The vestibules feature their original wood double doors, matching sidelights, multi-light transoms, and terrazzo landings.

In between the two vestibules are three sets of four ganged windows—a fenestration pattern that is repeated at all four levels on this façade. Window surround patterns established on the previously-described façades were intended to be carried forward on this façade per the 1923 plans; however, some changes were made during construction. The first and second floors have simplified terracotta capitals and plinth blocks; however, there are no capitals topping the continuous engaged pilasters that span the third and fourth floors. While these are depicted on Houghtaling & Dougan's elevations, what was constructed was a continuous brick band that frames the ganged windows.

³ The quote is not accurately reflected on the building. Spencer's actual quote is: "Education has for its object the formation of character."

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At the ground-floor level, one window in each grouping was turned into a pedestrian opening with a hollow-metal door, likely c. 1958. In 2014, these pedestrian openings were replaced with a standard storefront door, sidelight, and multi-light wood transom. Additionally, the ground floor of the façade is unique in that the historic windows are twelve-over-two lights.

Above the two vestibules and at the north and south sides of this façade's projecting bay is a unique grouping of stacked windows and brick detailing that denotes the building's northeast and southeast interior stairwells. The groupings are identical on both sides of the façade. The second-floor window features a large, multi-light, fixed-sash window with a starburst muntin pattern and sidelights with the same pattern. This tripartite arrangement features a continuous terracotta sill. The center window and sidelights are separated by engaged brick pilasters with brick plinth blocks and a simple terracotta capital. The window arrangement on the third level is similar except the center fixed window is larger and features twenty-four rectangular lights topped with three large starbursts. The sidelights are narrower than the second floor, but feature the same starburst pattern. The center window and sidelights feature a continuous terracotta sill and are separated by engaged brick pilasters with brick plinth blocks and stylized Corinthian capitals. Above the window grouping is a subtle change in the brick patterning using header and rowlock bricks to suggest a lintel above the window. This is further highlighted by two terracotta medallions using a simple circle-on-square motif. Finally, the fourth level features a fixed twenty-light wood window with a terracotta sill, but no sidelights or engaged pilasters. This window also features a change in brickwork using header and rowlock bricks to suggest a frame around the window. At the corners of this frame are four smaller terracotta medallions with a circle motif.

On either side of the east façade's projecting bay is an uninterrupted section of brick wall with no fenestration. On the second-floor level, the brick field includes a blind window, as was featured on the west elevation. At the fourth-floor level is a brick panel that mimics the size and location of the west façade's terracotta relief panels. The brick panel comprises alternating pairs of soldier and stretcher bricks, and is framed by a projecting double band of brick coursing.

To the north of the northernmost entry vestibule is a new set of double doors that was punched in the blank expanse of brick at this corner of the building. Above the doors are a simple steel-and-glass canopy and a multi-light wood transom. This alteration was made in 2014.

South Façade

The south façade (Photo 5) is the least symmetrical of the building's façades. Mirroring the north elevation, the center one-third of this façade projects from the wall plane. Centered on this projecting bay is a ventilation tower with a fourth-story conservatory. The tower is faced with a solid field of brick at the first and second stories. The third floor of the tower has window-sized openings that feature metal ventilation grates with a fish scale pattern. The fourth story features one multi-light fixed-sash window on each of the tower's three façades. These windows have transoms with a starburst muntin pattern. Brick pilasters are featured on the second floor of the tower with a simple plinth block and capital detail. Continuous brick pilasters span the third and fourth floors with terracotta plinth blocks and stylized Corinthian capitals.

The ground level of this façade features a projecting entry vestibule near the southwest corner. It is similar to the entry vestibules found on the east elevation, but with a more simplified design. There are no columns and no entablature with an inspirational quote. The building received a small, one-story addition at the westernmost corner of this façade, adjacent to the vestibule. The construction date is unknown, but occurred after 1950, based on photographic evidence. The addition is brick masonry construction and utilizes the same size window openings, making it difficult to discern that it is not original to the 1923 building.

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To the east of the addition and the original vestibule is a trio of blind windows at the ground-floor level. They feature terracotta sills, plinth blocks, and capitals. The blind windows are original to the building and not infill, as interior to this wall was the original mechanical room with the large air handlers. East of the tower, there was another trio composed of two blind windows and a building-standard window. At an unknown date, one of the blind windows was converted to a metal pedestrian door and the window converted to an ADA building entrance. As part of the 2014 rehabilitation, this ADA entrance was improved with the new standard storefront door and transom. Continuing west to east from these doors, the ground floor features a single window followed by four ganged windows. Because of the slope of the site and the fact that the high school's ground-floor level sits below grade, the sills of the large double-hung windows appear to be almost at ground level on this façade.

Above the entry vestibule, the fenestration pattern of the second and fourth floors mimics what was established at the ground level. From west to east the windows are as follows: A gang of four, two trios separated by the ventilation tower, a single window, and finally another gang of four. There is less detail around the windows on this façade than the other façades. Whereas the second-floor windows on the other façades each had brick pilasters with capitals, the south windows feature capitals only on the outermost windows of each grouping. This was not reflected in Houghtaling & Dougan's original drawings. Like the east elevation, the fourth-floor windows do have not capitals on their pilasters and are instead framed with a band of brick. Again, this was not intended by the architects.

Like the east façade, the vestibule on the south façade marks the entrance to a multi-floor stairwell, which is further signified by its decorative windows. The windows and brick detailing are the same on the second and third floors as was seen on the east façade. The fourth floor features a smaller, six-over-six-light, double-hung wood window that does not feature the circular medallions found on the east façade.

Roof

The roof is generally flat and is enclosed by a three-foot parapet wall, except where it is taller on the west façade at the location of the portico entry. There is a roof well in the fourth floor plate with an attic and metal gabled roof over the auditorium. The south portion of the roof features a new roof terrace with steel and metal cable guardrails. The southwest corner of the roof is also the location of a metal-clad elevator overrun. There are metal-clad stair enclosures at the southeast and northeast corners of the roof. The roof also features multiple HVAC mechanical units on steel racking and several skylights.

Exterior Alterations

The majority of the alterations have been described in the body of the exterior description to clarify which elements on the building are original and which are the product of alterations.

The first critical impact that has changed how Washington High School is viewed today occurred in 1958-1960 when the adjacent 1897 Hawthorne School and 1910 Gymnasium were demolished. These demolitions coincided with the building of a new gymnasium immediately south of the high school in 1958 and a new three-story classroom wing in 1960 (the "C" Wing as it was known). The C Wing was attached to the west façade of the high school at the second and third floors. Portland Public Schools subsequently demolished both buildings in 2006. After its demolition, the C Wing left two scars on the west façade that were repaired in 2014 and received replica wood windows.

In 1990, the wood window sashes were removed from the south façade and were replaced within the original frames with double-glazed, aluminum sliding sash windows and infill panels. These metal windows were removed in 2014, the frames restored, and new wood sashes installed to match the existing wood windows. The west elevation also included a few altered wood sashes that were restored.

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The 2014 rehabilitation included site work, landscaping, converting landscape beds to concrete paving for ADA accessibility, adding period-appropriate lighting, illuminating the columns on the west façade, converting five additional window openings to pedestrian doors, extensive masonry repairs, and the addition of a deck, elevator overrun, and HVAC mechanical on the roof. Despite these recent alterations, Washington High School resembles its 1923 condition more today than it has for over fifty years.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Plan

The Washington High School's interior consists of a square-shaped plan with three distinct sections: an outer ring, inner ring, and core. The outer ring comprises rooms along the window wall. Historically, these were the classrooms, science labs, offices, and support spaces for the high school use. The inner ring is a circular corridor acting as the building's original interior thoroughfare. Historically, this corridor system ranged in width from 15-18 feet. At the second, third, and fourth-floor levels, the core of the building consists of a large auditorium with balcony and attic. Collectively, these three sections contribute to the overall logic and functionality that explains Washington High School's interior and square-shaped plan.

West Entry & Stair

As noted in the exterior description of the building, there are several entry points to the school; however, the west entry is the most prominent. (Photo 6) Before fully entering the building, one passes through an entry vestibule that features two half-round, twelve-foot-high niches at each end giving it an oval shape. The ceiling of the vestibule features highly detailed composite moldings and three period-appropriate, but non-original, globe light fixtures.

The entry vestibule opens into the original grand double-return staircase that connects the first, second, and third levels. (Photos 7-8) The ceiling above the landing features one-foot-square acoustical ceiling tiles with three globe light fixtures centered on each of the double-door openings. Facing the main staircase, one can either directly ascend the doublewide flight to the second level or descend one of two flanking half flights to the ground level.

Two square columns with chamfered edges and boxed capitals frame the staircase at the west entry landing and at the top of the flight of stairs. The stairs themselves are concrete and feature a diamond pattern safety tread. The grand stair features original oak handrails on new metal brackets throughout each level. The main doublewide flight of stairs features an additional center handrail on metal, ball-capped posts. The cement plaster staircase half-walls feature new matching oak guardrails installed on the original oak cap railing. The railing still features projecting blocks to prevent students from sliding down the banister. There are two pendant light fixtures with schoolhouse globes above the doublewide flight of stairs.

The second-level landing is surrounded by a glazed kalamein⁴ enclosure. Originally this included three pairs of metal-clad doors and two single-leaf doors. However, two of the door pairs were blocked with a metal rail at an unknown date. The metal-frame glazed enclosure features significant wire-glass in the door reights, sidelights, and the fixed transoms that extend to the ceiling. The ceiling above the landing includes plaster-finished beams with moldings.

The third-level landing of this staircase is similar in design to the second floor. (Photo 9) It features a glazed enclosure with a metal-clad frame and two single-leaf doors. However, unlike the second-level landing, this

⁴ At the time that Washington High School was built, the cladding of wood windows and doors in sheet metal as a fire protective measure was called "kalamein." Doors sometimes had asbestos cores as a further fire-protective measure.

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landing's view to the west features an extensive amount of multi-light interior glazing that wraps its open vertical volume. The glazing is a translucent patterned glass and is framed in metal painted with a faux wood pattern.

Overall, given its size, impressive vertical volume, center handrails, and multi-light interior glazing, this double-return staircase is parallel in prominence to its west façade entry way and vestibule. Except for the ceiling tiles, new light fixtures, and sensitive changes to the stair handrails, for safety reasons, the west grand stair is exceptionally intact.

Secondary Stairs

The secondary staircases are located at the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the building. (Photo 10) Housed within the building's outer ring, these staircases are internal and completely enclosed. The stairwells, which originally served all four levels, are easily noted within the building's corridors by the significant amount of sidelight and transom wire-glass glazing within a kalamein sheet-metal-clad wood frame system. They feature fireproof, metal double doors with wire-glass reights. From the exterior of the building, these stairwells are identified by their series of fixed-sash windows with a starburst muntin pattern. The inside of these windows are finished with wood trim that is stained to match the rest of the building's wood materials. The windows serve as the stairwell's primary source of light; however, at each floor landing, the stairwells also feature a new linear florescent light fixture.

Accessed by each level's corridor, these staircases are like that of the grand staircase in that the steps are also concrete and have the same handrail and guardrail design and materials. However, unlike the primary double-return staircase, these are half-turn staircases. This results in the fact that their intermediate landings visually bisect the stairwell windows. To prevent these windows from being kicked out, there are diamond-pattern chain-link-type wire guards with oak handrails at each landing. These do not appear to be original, but are likely at least fifty years old.

The northeast stairwell no longer provides access to the ground floor, as it was walled off in 2014. A new painted steel stair has been added within the southeast staircase at the fourth-floor level to access the roof. The southwest stair features its original roof stair, which is significantly narrower than the primary flights that serve the ground through fourth floors. An additional new steel stair was added in the corridor of the fourth floor, which provides a second point of egress from the roof.

Corridors

The centralized, donut-shaped corridor, which acts as this building's inner ring, was originally found at each level of the building. Approximately twelve-feet tall with painted cement plaster walls, this corridor acts as the building's primary internal thoroughfare. At the ground level, the original corridor no longer remains and a new five-foot corridor provides a circulation path along the west and south sides of the building. The north and east sections of the original corridor have been absorbed into tenant spaces. The corridor at this level features a new Marmoleum floor, multiple entry points to tenant spaces, and a suspended ceiling with acoustical tiles and recessed florescent light fixtures. It also features entry points to two external pedestrian entrances and the primary and secondary interior staircases on the south and west elevations. Additionally, this corridor provides access to the two elevators—a consistent feature to each corridor on the building's four levels.

The second-level corridor is the only corridor to keep its donut-shaped design, where one can completely circumnavigate the floor via the corridor. (Photo 11) It measures eighteen feet wide at the south, west, and north. The corridor narrows to approximately six feet at the east where the building's new restrooms are located. Consistent in size and location at each second, third, and fourth levels these bathrooms act as the

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building's primary facilities for the tenant and event spaces. The narrowing of the corridor and the addition of the bathrooms were part of the scope of the 2014 rehabilitation. (Photo 12)

The second-floor corridor features orange linoleum flooring installed in the late 1970s and new Marmoleum flooring installed in 2014. The walls of this corridor feature recessed entry points to the restored classroom tenant spaces through wood doors (older but not original) with three-over-three lights in the upper half of the door panel. They also feature six-foot-tall, painted metal lockers on both sides of north corridor and outside wall of the east corridor.

Original stained trim bands can be found throughout the building's four levels. They are placed at eight feet and sixteen feet from the floor. Above the classroom doors, most trim bands still feature the original painted classroom numbering from the 1920s. The north leg of the second-floor corridor features additional trim work and glazing around two rooms that were formerly used as the student store and attendance office (rooms 202 and 203 on the site plan, respectively). Both of these rooms have a large operable window and transom over an interior counter. Room 202 also includes a glazed sidelight and transom over the door. All are trimmed in stained wood.

On the second floor, the corridor ring also accesses the school's auditorium at the center of the building through new acoustical wood double doors. These doors are found on the west interior wall and at the southwest and southeast corridor intersections. There are pairs of acoustical doors also at the northeast and northwest corridor intersections that access the stage.

The corridor ceiling features visible beams finished in cement plaster. On the west corridor legs of the second and third floors, the beams feature trim molding to give them more detail and the appearance of a coffered ceiling. Furthermore, walls of the west-corridor leg feature engaged pilasters in cement plaster with simple stepped capitals and plinth blocks. The other corridor legs do not feature trimmed beams or pilasters. Throughout, exposed fire sprinkler piping and heads can be seen. The ceiling also features new twelve-foot-long linear florescent light fixtures and pendent light fixtures with schoolhouse globes.

The third-level corridor parallels the dimensions of the second level on the west, east, and south. (Photo 13) However, the north leg was absorbed into the library space as part of remodel and expansion project in c. 1958, giving the third-floor corridor a U-shape. Like that of the second-level corridor, this corridor also features wood trim bands, new light fixtures, entrances to the main and secondary staircases, and lockers throughout. However, unlike the second-level corridor, this level features a pigmented magnesite floor. It has access to the auditorium's balcony level through new acoustical double doors at the southwest and southeast corridor intersections. It also features an 8' x 51' wood and glass display case on the interior west wall that was a gift of the Class of 1930-1931.

The fourth-level corridor is now in the shape of a "J," having been absorbed into remodeled classroom space on the north side of the building that occurred during the tenancy of the Child Services Center. With the restrooms taking up most of the east section, this corridor only has one intact segment remaining at the south. This segment is consistent with the primary design aesthetic, dimensions, and features as described in the second and third corridors except for its lockers, which are older than the ones found on the second and third floors or possibly original to the building. This corridor does not have public access to the auditorium or to the main staircase on the west elevation. However, like the other three corridors, it does feature access to all of the secondary half-turn staircases.

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Classrooms

The outer ring of rooms along Washington High School's window wall acts as its primary tenant spaces. These spaces—which once hosted classrooms, laboratories, learning commons, offices, and maintenance facilities—have been rehabilitated and converted into commercial office and retail spaces. Though many rooms have kept their original dimensions and interior features, they all have found a new purpose.

The building's ground level originally consisted of twelve spaces that housed the physics and general science laboratories, school cafeteria, restrooms, fan room, and other technical rooms. Over the years it experienced significant alteration by Portland Public Schools and, as part of the 2014 rehabilitation. It was converted into several large office and retail spaces. The southwest corner of the ground floor contains the only room that retains its original classroom configuration. All of the other spaces have been substantially enlarged, absorbing both the original corridor and outer ring of classrooms. They contain all new finishes including gypsum board walls and ceilings, new flooring, and light fixtures. There are also several utilitarian spaces along the south corridor, including a bicycle room with showers, trash room, and electrical room. The new restrooms are accessed from the west leg of the corridor directly across from the doors to the grand stair. As is the case in all of the building's restrooms, they feature black hexagon tile floors, wall-hung sinks, stainless steel toilet partitions, and wall-hung toilets.

The outer ring on the second level features eighteen rehabilitated tenant spaces. (Photo 14) This level once featured twenty spaces including classrooms, office spaces, and restrooms. It is the least altered floor of the building, as there has been limited reconfiguration of room sizes. Of the eighteen tenant spaces featured on this level, twelve are true to the building's 1923 original room dimensions that average an approximate size of 710 square feet.

The typical classroom features a bank of windows along the wall opposite the corridor with painted wood trim and a painted non-operable original radiator below the windows. The three other walls typically feature large slate chalkboards with chalk rails and a painted wood trim surround. In some cases, the slate was damaged by a later application of cork or tack board and was therefore replaced with white board in 2014. Most rooms feature their vintage school intercoms, thermostats, and IBM clocks, as well as built-in teacher's cabinet, which is typically located on the wall opposite the window wall. All rooms feature acoustical ceiling tile installed in 1956, new linear florescent light fixtures, and new carpet tile. A new exposed mechanical fail coil unit, duct run, and line sets are located tight to the ceiling corner opposite the window wall in all rooms throughout second and third floors.

Room 202 features extensive non-original but older wood-and-glass built-ins along with the aforementioned Formica counter and operable counter window. Room 203 features a smaller number of wood built-ins under its stainless steel counter. Room 214 was the principal's office and features an original built-in bookcase with multi-light wood doors on the north wall. Room 215—located within the projecting portico entry—once housed the teacher's lounge and features large lockers that appear to be original and built-in wood shelves and cabinets along the interior wall.

The third level originally featured the library, eleven classrooms, six administrative rooms, and two restrooms. It now comprises ten tenant spaces. These spaces consist of five that have kept their original classroom dimensions and are consistent with the interior features described on the second level. The area in the northwest corner of the third floor that once housed the library features trim moldings at the plastered beams, which provide a more richly-textured ceiling treatment.

The fourth level originally included classrooms, biology labs, and drafting rooms. Like the ground floor, it was heavily modified by the School District over the years. It now contains six rooms. The largest space wraps around the north and west, having absorbed twelve original rooms, as well as the west and north corridor. The

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remaining tenant spaces can be found on the east and south elevations of the outer ring. Like that of the rooms featured on the second and third levels, these spaces are truer to the original room sizes.

Overall, the Washington High School's outer ring of tenant spaces have clearly shown alterations since 1923; however 30% of the existing tenant spaces have kept their original classrooms dimensions. Of that collective 30%, over half of them are found on the building's second level.

Auditorium

Located at the heart of Washington High School is the 830-seat, two-story volume auditorium with attic and fly area above the stage. (Photos 15 & 16) The auditorium remains true to its historic volume and form, featuring a third-level U-shaped balcony with painted metal pipe railing. The proscenium was restored in 2014 and features a simple rectangular opening with trim bands and circular medallions in the upper corners. The stage itself was modified a number of times, but was returned to its original depth and arched apron in 2014.

The second floor of Washington High School provides multiple entrance points to the house seating area of the auditorium. Accessed by two aisles, the seating consists of a combination of original and new, theater-style chairs with returning seat bottoms. The older chairs have cushioned seats and wood backs (replacements from a date unknown) with original metal legs and side panels. At the aisles, these side panels feature original cast metal W's. These chairs represent most of the auditorium's seating. The newly added theater-style chairs occupy the first five rows of the continental seating and the first row of the auditorium's U-shaped balcony. The west and east balcony features three rows of seating on each side. The southern portion of the balcony has five seating sections that consist of four rows each. The original chairs at the balcony level have wood seat bottoms.

The main floor of the auditorium features recessed can lights for the house lights and theatrical lighting on ceiling trusses to illuminate the stage. The floor is carpeted at the house level and features polished concrete on the balcony. The cement plaster walls of both the house section and balcony are dressed in rectangular-shaped fabric acoustical panels trimmed with wood. Above the balcony is the auditorium's new acoustical ceiling that consists of black foam tiles.

Within the attic above the auditorium are the original steel truss system, suspended catwalks, mechanical ducting, and a gabled roof. Originally, the ceiling of the auditorium featured three large skylights that were illuminated via glazing in the gabled roof. Likely due the water intrusion, the gabled roof was covered with sheet metal, cutting off the light source to the auditorium. The auditorium-ceiling skylight originally featured rectangular fields of glass and decorative accents using the starburst muntin pattern featured at key exterior windows. When the ceiling was covered with acoustical ceiling tile in the 1950s, these skylights were also concealed and largely destroyed except for the primary mullions. When the previous ceiling tiles were removed in 2014, the skylight openings were left uncovered and their frames and mullions were painted.

Like most of the building's interior, the auditorium continues to offer much of its original aesthetic with updated modern amenities that support its current operation.

Alterations

As listed throughout the interior description, alterations to Washington High School's 1923 original plan and interior dimensions have occurred over the years. On some floors, these alterations have been extensive. However, the building still retains sufficient integrity to meet the requirements for a Criterion A nomination. With the retention of the donut-shaped plan on the second floor, many of the original classrooms and their unique school features, and the auditorium at the center of the building, the building continues to convey its significance as an important high school in the historical development of inner Southeast Portland.

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In addition to those described in the body of the document, there are a several primary alterations noted here.

From its construction until 1946, the school received no significant alterations. After this time, the building underwent multiple remodels. These alterations include new ceilings tiles and lights in 1956, alterations to the home economic, and metal and wood shops in 1957, and alterations to the cafeteria, library, and science rooms in 1958. Years later, from 1964-1979, this property experienced alterations to the auditorium and the construction of the building's first elevator on the west elevation. Along with the construction of the C Wing in 1960, classrooms were updated with new casework and laboratory facilities. The 1923 drawings by Houghtaling & Dougan indicate the building originally had substantial built-in custom casework in the science labs and other specialized learning spaces. The new classroom doors were likely installed at this time, as were the new lockers. In 1986, Washington High School experienced more changes in room sizes with the opening of the Child Services Center, including significant changes to the third-floor library area and the northwest section of the fourth floor.

As part of the 2014 rehabilitation and conversion to commercial uses, the already-altered ground and fourth floors were re-configured to accommodate larger office tenants. New restrooms were added in the east leg of the corridor on floors two through four, while the old restrooms were demolished and incorporated into tenant spaces. All mechanical and plumbing was updated in the building. New carpet and light fixtures were also installed.

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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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1923-1957

Significant Dates

1923-1924, Dates of construction

1957, Date of significant remodel

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Houghtaling & Dougan, architects

Period of Significance (justification)

The property's period of significance is 1923 to 1957. Construction commenced on the building in 1923—hence, the start of the period of significance. The year 1957 was selected as an end date as major campus improvements began in 1958. At the urging of parents, the School District made a renewed commitment to the high school with two large campus buildings being constructed in the International Style and substantial interior renovations to high school itself. However, over the next two decades, enrollment declined and eventually the school closed in 1981.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Washington High School is locally significant under Criterion A for its significant role in the development Portland's inner eastside and the community life of its residents and their children during the early 20th century. The building and campus are associated with the City of Portland's changing education system and school-building techniques and priorities during its period of significance from 1923 to 1957. In particular, this period was marked by the need for expanded school facilities; growing concerns around health and safety (with a particular focus on fire prevention); and school designs that offered optimal learning environments as espoused by education experts at the time. The history of Washington High School embodies the struggles of a young West Coast city attempting to establish its public education system within a rapidly-expanding population base. Its location, siting, campus development, architectural design, and construction reflect the priorities, values, and challenges of its time.

Additionally, this building is located within the boundaries and meets the registration requirements described in the multiple property listing, "*Portland Oregon's Eastside Historic and Architectural Resources, 1850-1938.*"

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Washington High School is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning & Development and Education. It is significant for its contribution to the development of Portland's eastside and the Buckman neighborhood, its longstanding relationship with the Portland community, and its reflection of local educational ideals. The property was listed as a City of Portland local landmark in 2013.

Washington High School and its four-block site are located east of the Willamette River in Portland's Buckman Neighborhood. Originally developed as part of the unconsolidated City of East Portland, this site has served as educational grounds dating back to 1867. Since that time, it has given rise to a continuous history of educational use with numerous school buildings on the campus, including the subject property built in 1923 at the height of its student population.

As it relates to the area of Community Planning and Development, Washington High School and its site are one of Portland's oldest educational institutions on the eastside to have maintained a consistent discourse with its surrounding context. Originally the campus of the Central School and its later expansion, this site set the tone for its role in shaping the local community through education. Significant to American democratic ideals, establishing a system of public education has been a key aspect of the history of our country's population centers. Portland's rapidly-growing citizenry created the demand for public education that in turn influenced the development of large parcels of land for school use, including the Washington High School site.

Although the community had its doubts about adding a new high school to this site after the turn of the 20th century, necessity overpowered their concerns and the first high school was built adjacent to the Central School (renamed the Hawthorne School) in 1905. While the high school was a striking edifice in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, the community voiced their disappointment in the first Washington High School's lack of fireproof technology and ability to provide adequate space for the education of their children, as the building soon became overcrowded.

In 1922, the school was destroyed in a highly publicized fire—an event that kept Washington High School in the community consciousness for years to come. As a result of the fire, support poured in from local social clubs and organizations who felt strongly about ensuring that students' education not be compromised by the loss of the building. The rebuilding effort placed a strain on a school district that was already struggling to keep up with a rapidly-increasing student population. They were without a district architect at that time and had to rely on an outside firm to design the replacement school, which was ultimately significantly more expensive to build than originally anticipated. These events have collectively given Washington High School and the site a continuous rapport with Portland and its Buckman neighborhood.

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As it relates to Education, Washington High School is a direct reflection of the educational ideals and priorities of its time. Built in 1923 on the same footprint as its 1905 predecessor, the most critical concern that Washington High School reflects is its fireproof construction. In 1911, Portland adopted a new building code requiring that schools be constructed with noncombustible materials. While the code proved to be difficult and costly to meet, the fire of 1922 demonstrated the importance of concrete buildings. Washington High School reflects those priorities not only with its poured-in-place concrete frame and clay tile walls, but furthermore with its off-site boilers and four exit stairwells enclosed with metal-framed wire glass and fireproof doors.

The 1923 Washington High School also expresses the values of Progressive Education Movement, which spanned from the 1880s to the 1920s. These are evident in its monumental form and Classical Revival details meant to inspire deep pride and confidence in public education. Furthermore, the historic uses that were accommodated in its interior plan express the movement's foundational belief that technology and industrialization could bring about increased progress and prosperity for the country. Like its predecessor that was also influenced by the Progressive Education Movement, the 1923 building features designated spaces for specialized instruction such as a library, science rooms, music and art rooms, and a large assembly space.

Overall, Washington High School is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Education for its contributions to the broad patterns of local history, development, and education.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Early Campus History & Neighborhood Context

The neighborhood campus development that preceded the construction of the 1923 Washington High School is essential to understanding the significance of the building and its impact on the development of Portland's eastside. Although much has changed since this property was originally acquired for educational purposes, the property itself has served and continues to reflect one of Portland's historically-significant educational grounds. Over time, it has reflected changes in Portland as a whole, such as its growth in population and the new educational philosophies that shaped the multiple school buildings on this property.

What is presently Portland's eastside originally began as three separate towns—Albina, East Portland, and Sellwood. Washington High School's site lies within the original plat of East Portland, dating to 1850. The town was incorporated in 1870 and later consolidated with Portland in 1891. The eastside experienced much of its early growth due to two primary technological advancements: the introduction of the railroad in 1886 and the construction of the 1887 Morrison Bridge with subsequent streetcar line in 1888.⁵ In 1880, the population of East Portland was 2,934 and by 1890 it had reached over 10,000. However, it was the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition that spawned unprecedented demographic growth in Portland and permanently shifted the City's population center to the eastside neighborhoods.⁶

One of the neighborhoods significantly affected by this growth was Portland's Buckman neighborhood—an area that originally extended from Grand Avenue to 28th Avenue and from Burnside Street to Hawthorne Boulevard. Washington High School is centrally located within these neighborhood boundaries. The area was named for Cyrus Buckman—an early settler who owned a large piece of land between Stark Street and Sullivan's Gulch. Fueled by the railroad, bridges, streetcars, and the Exposition, Buckman became a dense early twentieth-century streetcar suburb that was home to a rapidly-growing middle class in Portland, which included families with school-age children.

⁵ Timothy Askin, Ernestina Fuenmayor, and Carl Abbot, *National Register of Historic Places Form: Portland Oregon's Eastside Historic and Architectural Resources, 1850 – 1938* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 2012), E-6 - 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, E-7.

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The land upon which the nominated property sits was acquired for public school use in 1867.⁷ At that time, the only schoolhouse in East Portland was a “small shack” located on a lot at the corner of SE Oak and SE 11th Ave.⁸ When the School District announced they would call a vote to build a new schoolhouse on the same lot, Joseph Buchtel—a notable pioneer who came to Portland in 1852—pushed for the acquisition of a much larger site. Buchtel had visions of Portland as a great city and he was very active in progressive efforts.⁹ Enlisting the support of other “public-spirited men,” there were ultimately enough votes to obligate the School District to purchase two full blocks.¹⁰ The site he recommended was bounded by SE Stark St, SE Alder St, SE 14th Ave, and SE 13th Ave. It was still “in the timber” and many questioned why so much land was needed for school purposes.¹¹ Buchtel was an early proponent of outdoor play yards for children and believed that two blocks were needed to provide for both the school and its grounds.

The first school that was built on the site was a two-story, wood-frame grade school called “Central School.”¹² Like the current and earlier Washington High Schools, the Greek Revival-style Central School took advantage of its sloped site, facing west toward the Willamette River and downtown Portland. Enhancing its community prominence, the building was also aligned with the same east-west axis as Washington Street, which historically terminated at the property’s western edge. The school was likely strategically constructed in the middle of the two blocks to prevent the continuation of Washington Street from bisecting the school grounds—an issue that would arise in the early 20th Century after the 1867 schoolhouse was demolished.¹³ A high school program was added in 1883, but closed in 1891 when Portland, East Portland, and Albina were consolidated and all high school students attended Portland High School on the west side of the river.

The four-room Central School was soon insufficient for East Portland’s growing population and was replaced with a 2 ½ story wood-frame structure at the southeast corner of the campus.¹⁴ It was built in stages from 1897 to 1901 and featured a gymnasium on the second floor.¹⁵ At that time, an eastside high school was already being contemplated at that location and the Central School building was clearly sited on the campus to make room for another large building to the north. Buchtel objected to the plan to erect another large building on the site, stating: “Such action would negate the purpose of the voters who took great pains to provide the playground for the children and ought never to be taken.”¹⁶ When the new Central School was completed, a proposal was put forward to change its name. The grade school was named for prominent local citizen Dr. J. C. Hawthorne, for whom SE Hawthorne Boulevard is also named. Ironically, Hawthorne had organized to defeat the purchase of the grounds in 1867, as he believed the purchase of the two-block site to be economically imprudent.^{17,18}

Progressive Education Movement

The Progressive Education Movement played an influential role in the design of school buildings as Portland’s public education system was rapidly growing at the turn of the 20th century, including the designs of both the

⁷ “History of Hawthorne School,” *Oregonian*, December 26, 1904, 7.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Joseph Buchtel 84,” *Oregonian*, November 23, 1914, 7.

¹⁰ “Playground is Essential,” *Oregonian*, December 16, 1903, 11.

¹¹ “School Names Pour In,” *Oregonian*, October 15, 1915, 13.

¹² There were a number of early schools in present-day Portland called “Central School.” The one on the Washington High School site (located in the City of East Portland at the time) should not be confused with the Central School at SW 6th & Morrison, which was located in Portland proper.

¹³ “Playground is Essential,” *Oregonian*, December 16, 1903, 11.

¹⁴ The original building was kept during the construction of the new building and not demolished until sometime after 1901 per *Oregonian* articles at this time.

¹⁵ “Central School Next,” *Oregonian*, July 21, 1899, 5.

¹⁶ “Playground is Essential,” *Oregonian*, December 16, 1903, 11.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Although the name of the grade school changed, it continued to be frequently referred to as “Central School” throughout the first decade of the 20th Century.

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1905 and 1923 Washington High Schools. The movement, which spanned from the 1880s to the 1920s, grew out of a foundational belief that technology and industrialization could bring about increased progress and prosperity for the country. John Dewey was an important voice in the Progressive Education Movement and he put forth that the purpose of education was the realization of a student's full potential and the ability to use their learned skills for the greater good. High schools, for instance, shifted from being primarily preparatory institutions to places that could hone a skilled workforce. Dewey had specific notions regarding how education should take place within the classroom, and in particular, he was a proponent of hands-on learning and experiential education.

Professor Ellwood Cubberley was another significant voice that shaped Portland's schools during the Progressive Education Movement. In 1913 he came to Portland and conducted an extensive survey of the school system. The survey "resulted in a change of administration and started the city's schools to thinking of the child as an individual instead of part of a mass."¹⁹ Cubberley believed that too many children were being flunked; too much time was spent on rote learning, formal arithmetic, and technical grammar; and too much emphasis was placed on examinations and preparing for exams. Earlier in 1909, Cubberley laid the foundation for public schooling in America with his publication *In Changing Concepts of Education*. He put forth that universal education was indispensable to democracy and was an appropriate exercise of state power. Cubberley refocused school policy to include not just teaching children but also advancing public welfare and democratic institutions.

The influence of the Progressive Education Movement brought a change in the design of schools, as emphasis was placed on specialized instruction spaces such as libraries, gymnasiums, science rooms, music rooms, manual training spaces, and large multi-use spaces such as auditoriums. The implications of a more diverse set of educational offerings for the School District's architects was significant, as new types of classrooms were required to accommodate specialized uses, as well as incorporate the latest design thinking with respect to ventilation, day lighting, and fire safety.

The model school was considered to be one that avoided fire risks; provided sanitary indoor toilet rooms and sinks to wash hands; allowed for window ventilation to help prevent respiratory diseases; was designed to ensure abundant day lighting from one direction so as to prevent eye strain from cross-lighting; and provided moveable and adjustable furniture to prevent posture defects.²⁰ Exercise also became highly valued for its health benefits and would be included in school programming. The mild climate in Portland allowed for much of this to be conducted outdoors, and school yards and athletic fields would become high school campus staples. A 1919 article called "Portland—Its Superior Educational Advantages" touted the young men of Portland as "specimens of model physical strength and endurance" thanks to their high school gymnastic work.²¹ As an example, Washington High School alone sent 642 young men to fight in World War I—a statistic considered to be testament to the school's physical education curriculum.²²

While the school interiors were being planned to create optimal learning environments, the styles in which Portland's new school buildings were designed also had educational merit according to the thinking of the time. Colonial Revival, Collegiate Gothic, and Classical Revival styles were considered to be inspirational and educationally stimulating. Inscribed quotes were often included as part of the inspirational quality of the school buildings. The Progressive Education Movement and the architecture it influenced, like Washington High School, became significant expressions, signaling both a central importance in the community and Portland's growing prosperity as a major West Coast city.

¹⁹ Richard Nokes, "Our Schools: Critics of Methods Vocal Way Back When," *Oregonian*, June 5, 1950, 10.

²⁰ "Model School Shown," *Oregonian*, December 9, 1923, 75.

²¹ "Portland--Its Superior Educational Advantages," *Oregonian*, November 18, 1919, 19.

²² Of the 642 who served, 23 Washington High School students were killed in the war.

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East Side High School

During the early part of the 20th century many new school facilities were constructed in Portland, including the first high school east of the Willamette River on the Washington High School campus. In 1905, the number of school-aged children surpassed the School District's classroom capacity and the numbers only continued to grow. Plans to build East Side High School on the site were underway that very year. However, there were initially strong objections to building next to the Hawthorne School and "the crowding of 3,000 children within two city blocks."²³ There were fears that older children would tyrannize the younger ones. There were also concerns over the spread of germs and the fact that both schools would have to be shut down in the event of an epidemic. With only sixty feet planned between the buildings, the potential for a great fire was a great concern, especially given the current lack of capacity of the eastside fire station. Finally, there were objections over building the high school on the playground for the Hawthorne students: "This fact is not so noticeable now, as the neighborhood is not closely built up as yet, but the time will come, well inside of the lifetime of the present [school board] directors when they will have occasion for being sorry that they left no playground."²⁴ However, even with the opposition, the first of two high schools would be built on this site starting in 1905. But many of these early concerns would be a harbinger of things to come: The campus would later be the site of a major fire and the issue of sufficient outdoor space for students and tension between the high school and grade school uses would be a continuous topic of community conversation and debate.

The fifty-room 1905 high school was designed by district architect Thomas J. Jones. (See Figure 9) Estimated at \$100,000, it was to be "one of the most imposing structures in the city when completed."²⁵ Nearly square in plan with a standing-seam tin roof, the school was designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style using stone, brick, and terracotta. It featured a prominent central tower above the west entry. Bids were sought in September 1905 and construction started shortly thereafter.²⁶ However, progress on the structure was slow due to difficulties procuring the stone and heavy timbers.^{27,28} By summer 1906, it was still only one-third complete and high school students on the eastside were continuing to attend school at Portland High School on the westside, which was "literally crowded to the windows."^{29, 30} By January 1907, the building shell and first two floors were complete and high school students who lived south of Killingsworth Avenue (totaling about 500) began attending classes there in February.³¹ Those who lived north of Killingsworth continued to attend Portland High School while the eastside school was being completed, at which time attendance was expected to reach 1,000 students.³² In 1909, the school's name changed from East Side High School to Washington High School.³³ With most high schools in Portland being named for US Presidents, this school was named after George Washington.

Fireproof Schools

While the 1905 high school was under construction, a fundamental change in the construction of school buildings was brewing. As early as 1906, Portland's mayor called for the building of new "fireproof" schools. Several major school fires across the nation raised awareness of the dangers of frame buildings. In fact, not long after the 1905 Washington High School was finished, the Portland Association of Architects publically criticized its design and engineering. They held that if a "common sense style of building had been adopted instead of the monstrosities actually put up, a first-class fireproof building could have been erected for the

²³ "Objects to Site," *Oregonian*, April 12, 1905, 10.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ "New East-Side High School to Cost One Hundred Thousand Dollars," *Oregonian*, June 15, 1905, 11.

²⁶ "For East Side High School," *Oregonian*, September 1, 1905, 12.

²⁷ "Work is Delayed," *Oregonian*, July 25, 1906, 10.

²⁸ "High School Full," *Oregonian*, August 11, 1906, 9.

²⁹ "East Side High School Building Will Not Be Completed Until Next Year," *Oregonian*, July 24, 1906, 10.

³⁰ "High School Full," *Oregonian*, August 11, 1906, 9.

³¹ "Complete Upper Floors," *Oregonian*, January 39, 1907, 14.

³² "New High School Opens," *Oregonian*, February 11, 1907, 8.

³³ "Change in Names of High Schools" *Oregonian*, February 9, 1909, 10.

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same cost.” They were particularly concerned that the quality of sandstone used on the building would be treacherous in a fire, as it would “melt down like so much dirt.”³⁴ Various local advancement clubs joined the discussion of Portland’s unfit school buildings and pushed for all new schools to be built of fireproof materials. On January 1, 1911, a new building code was adopted, which proved to be a challenging and costly effort to implement.³⁵ In 1913, over half of Portland’s city budget went to funding the school system, with approximately \$1 million being spent on fireproof schools.³⁶ This, combined with the School District’s need for additional high schools, prompted them to initially rely on several of Portland’s most significant architecture firms to design fireproof buildings of reinforced concrete with brick facing.

The School District’s first concrete “fireproof” building was Fernwood School, designed by Ellis Lawrence and erected in 1911.³⁷ Lawrence would go on to design a fireproof combination boys’ gymnasium and domestic science department on the Washington High School campus in that same year. Built of reinforced concrete with cast stone details, a tiled roof, and copper cornices, Lawrence’s design was leading-edge and thoroughly modern for the time. With a state-of-the-art ventilation system, an “air washing” plant, and a central vacuum system, the building was considered to be one of the most modern in the City.^{38 39} Design elements from the gym—notably the starburst muntin pattern in the fenestration—were adopted by Houghtaling & Dougan in their design of the present Washington High School to tie the campus buildings together. The three-story gym replaced an 1897 wood-frame manual training building and was strategically located on the same axis as SE 13th Avenue, which terminated at the campus’s northern edge.⁴⁰ The domestic science department—where girls learned sewing and cooking—was on the ground floor and the second and third floors were used for the boys’ gymnasium. The high school girls continued to use the gymnasium in the Hawthorne School.

While new school buildings were required to be fireproof, other measures were taken to improve existing structures in the District. By 1911, standpipes had been installed in all the schools so that an extra water supply would be available in case of a fire. Hoses were onsite at most schools and it was commonplace for schools to have fire squads organized by older students.⁴¹ However, a great concern with frame buildings was the location of heating devices, petroleum fuel, and manual training equipment located in basements that made them a high risk for explosion and fire. Combined with the fact that basement stairways were typically located underneath the stairs to the upper floors, this created a shaft through which fire could easily travel. In 1912, eastside residents pressed the School Board to remove the boilers in the Hawthorne School, due to these very safety concerns.⁴² This led to the construction of a stand-alone boiler building with a smokestack that year. The boilers in the new gymnasium were also relocated to this building. At the time, the mechanical equipment for heating the high school was contained within its structure. However, when the new school was built in 1923, its heating was provided by equipment in the boiler building.

Unprecedented School Growth

The early 1900s saw major gains in student populations across the School District. Beginning in 1909, the School Board “had been pressed to almost impossible ends to cope with the situation” in providing new school buildings to house students.⁴³ Additions were put on older buildings and portables were erected to deal with overflow attendance. Portland’s Eastside in particular was being built out at rapid rate with thousands of new homes covering a significant geographic area. Students were traveling long distances to go to school and this

³⁴ “Criticised By Architects,” *Oregonian*, March 5, 1908, 11.

³⁵ “Code Adds to Cost,” *Oregonian*, July 17, 1910, 7.

³⁶ Entrix, *Portland Public Schools: Historic Building Assessment* (Portland Public Schools, 2009), 3-7.

³⁷ “Portland’s School Population Makes Big Gain in Past Year,” *Oregonian*, September 17, 1911, 9.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ “Building Is Started,” *Oregonian*, November 5, 1911, 8.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ “Portland’s School Population Makes Big Gain in Past Year,” *Oregonian*, September 17, 1911, 9.

⁴² “East Side Wins Point,” *Oregonian*, September 6, 1912, 7.

⁴³ “School Site Is Small,” *Oregonian*, November 7, 1909, 12.

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led to a burst of school construction. In 1911, the *Oregonian* reported that the eastside was fairly well supplied for the time being in terms of school facilities; however, given the rate of growth in the city, it was predicted that some buildings would need additions before too long.⁴⁴

By 1909, it was well recognized that the Washington High School campus was outgrowing the current land devoted to the campus and there was a strong desire to acquire additional land.⁴⁵ In addition to the Hawthorne School just to the south, the campus included a small manual training building constructed in 1897 immediately west of the grade school. This left virtually no open space for school sports and activities. The western half of the superblock was in private ownership and bisected by the thirty-foot-wide Washington Street. The blocks north and south of Washington Street were comprised of fourteen single-family homes and two, two-story apartment buildings.

Progressive citizens of East Portland pushed the School Board to take action to secure additional land for the Washington High School campus. The block immediate east of the high school—across the street on SE 14th Avenue—was vacant and felt to be the most likely candidate. However, the adjoining blocks to the west were determined to be better for school purposes, even though they were already built out. City Commissioner C. A. Bigelow was quoted in the *Oregonian* stating: “Washington High School is one of the finest and best equipped high school houses in the Northwest, but it is cramped for outside space. By all means, more ground ought to be secured, even if good round prices must be paid. Now is the time to act.”⁴⁶ Residents urged the School District to include funds to purchase grounds for an athletic field in their 1909 tax levy, but were not successful.⁴⁷ Their efforts were again thwarted in 1912.⁴⁸

Even Professor Ellwood Cubberley commented negatively on the campus site in his 1915 report on the state of Portland’s public schools: “The Washington High School will, before long, be found to be poorly located; the site is too small, and the building is also poorly adapted to modern high school needs. Eventually this can be sold, and a new site, out near Mt. Tabor, secured for a new high school.”⁴⁹

In 1913, attendance at Washington High School had outgrown the 1905 building and the school experienced the largest graduating class thus far in the history of Portland.⁵⁰ Some students who lived within the boundaries of the Washington High School serving area were required to attend Lincoln High School across the river, due to overcrowding at Washington.⁵¹ The needs of the high school students had also overwhelmed the rest of the campus, which still included the use of the Hawthorne Building as a grade school. In 1914, residents were “up in arms” over the fact that the identity of the Hawthorne School had been “virtually lost” by the use of the building for high school classes.⁵² When it was understood that even more rooms would be given to the high school in 1915, parents were irate and a delegation presented the School Board with a petition signed by 825 citizens to rebuild the Hawthorne School on another site, but they were unsuccessful.⁵³ At this time there were 1,000 Washington High School students and 800 Hawthorne students.⁵⁴ Additionally, the School Board still hoped, but had yet to secure the two blocks west of the property for the activities of the

⁴⁴ “Portland’s School Population Makes Big Gain in Past Year,” *Oregonian*, September 17, 1911, 9.

⁴⁵ “School Site Is Small,” *Oregonian*, November 7, 1909, 12.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ “Vote on School Tax Levy Asked,” *Oregonian*, December 27, 1909, 9.

⁴⁸ “Portland School Needs is \$1,000,000,” *Oregonian*, December 22, 1912, 7.

⁴⁹ Ellwood Patterson Cubberley, *The Portland Survey: A Textbook on City School Administration Based on Concrete Study* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book Co., 1915), 290.

⁵⁰ “Washington High School Has Record of 118 Graduates,” *Oregonian*, June 22, 1913, 8.

⁵¹ “One-Story School Is Plan (sic),” *Oregonian*, October 30, 1913, 9.

⁵² “Hawthorne Folks Astir,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1914, 5.

⁵³ “Pleaders Besiege Board for Schools,” *Oregonian*, November 20, 1914, 4.

⁵⁴ “School Removal Subject,” *Oregonian*, November 18, 1913, 13.

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high school.⁵⁵ There were no outdoor play areas on the campus and the grammar school pupils were using the vacant block across SE 14th Avenue for this purpose.⁵⁶

The Conflagration of 1922

The fall of 1922 again saw record enrollment for Washington High School at 1,757 registered students and sixty-four teachers.⁵⁷ The *Oregonian* noted that the campus was overcrowded even with the Hawthorne Building, Gymnasium, five portable buildings, and every available space in the main building being used.⁵⁸ During this time when the School District was struggling to meet the demands of increased enrollment on the eastside, a tragic four-alarm fire broke out at Washington High School shortly after midnight on October 25, 1922.⁵⁹ The fire spread rapidly throughout the building and it was entirely engulfed in flames by the time the fire department arrived at the scene. They attempted to make their hose connections on all sides of the building and control the fire, but were ultimately forced to retreat due to the strength of the blaze. Because of winds, the firefighters concentrated on preventing the neighboring Hawthorne School and surrounding dwellings from burning.

Every piece of firefighting equipment in Portland—except for one—was used to get the Washington High School conflagration under control.^{60,61} The firefighting efforts were greatly aided by the temporary donation of a new triple pumper that was in the salesrooms of A.G. Long Company. When the owner heard the general alarm, he brought the apparatus to the scene of the fire where it relieved several smaller pieces of equipment that were not powerful enough to send water into the building.⁶² In the end, the building's roof caved in and all that remained were portions of the blackened masonry of the exterior walls. The Washington High School fire was the largest and most expensive in 1922, with damages estimated at \$394,388.⁶³ It also resulted in the death of firefighter Oscar Benjamin "Ben" Gabriel, who was crushed when trying to outrun a falling gable end wall during the course of fighting the fire.^{64, 65}

The *Oregonian* ran a long, front-page article complete with three photographs of firefighters fighting the blaze in the middle of the night.⁶⁶ The fire marshal believed the conflagration was the work of an arsonist. A number of arson fires had broken out recently in Portland and the fire marshal believed Washington High School may have been the target of the same "firebug." The school had also been repeatedly vandalized by "hoodlum gangsters" who broke into the building at night via the fire escapes and neighborhood complaints were frequent.⁶⁷ The case was never officially solved. However, in 1925, firefighter Chester Buchtel confessed to over a \$1,000,000 of arson fires in Portland and became a key suspect in the Washington High School fire.⁶⁸ Ironically, Chester Buchtel was the grandson of Joseph Buchtel—the pioneer who organized the original purchase of the Washington High School grounds.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ "Unite 2 Schools It Is Suggested," *Oregonian*, November 23, 1913, 11.

⁵⁷ "Two of the Many Recent School Fires," *Fire and Water Engineering*, December 20, 1922, 1097, 1109-1110.

⁵⁸ Ted McGrath, "Portland High Schools Resume Activities For Fall Term," *Oregonian*, September 17, 1922, 6.

⁵⁹ "Two of the Many Recent School Fires," *Fire and Water Engineering*, December 20, 1922, 1097, 1109-1110.

⁶⁰ "Fire Equipment Asked," *Oregonian*, November 16, 1922, 28.

⁶¹ The magnitude of this fire and the fact that the City could not have handled a second fire on the same night, lead to a call to increase the capacity of the fire department. Previously there had been discussions of decreasing its funding.

⁶² "School Blaze Is Laid To Firebug," *Oregonian*, October 16, 1922, 1-4.

⁶³ "Fire Losses \$1,450,618," *Oregonian*, February 7, 1923, 12.

⁶⁴ "Honor Paid Heroes of City's Defense," *Oregonian*, May 2, 1926, 1.

⁶⁵ "Two of the Many Recent School Fires," *Fire and Water Engineering*, December 20, 1922, 1097, 1109-1110.

⁶⁶ "School Blaze Is Laid To Firebug," *Oregonian*, October 16, 1922, 1, 4.

⁶⁷ "Guards to Watch Portland Schools," *Oregonian*, October 27, 1922, 13.

⁶⁸ "Fireman Admits Incendiary Career," *Oregonian*, February 20, 1925, 12.

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The loss of the seventeen-year-old high school building created a burden for the School District that was “heavier than ever.”⁶⁹ Grant High School—which was to be a major school-building project for the district in 1923—was originally planned to relieve congestion at Washington and Jefferson. Now the School Board had to mobilize built resources to house Washington High School students *and* mobilize funds to erect an additional new school.

There was an immediate outpouring of community support in the days following the fire. The library board, YMCA, Portland Labor Council, Woodmen of the World, Masonic and Elks lodges, and numerous churches and synagogues sought to relieve the situation by offering temporary quarters and school supplies for students to continue their classes. However, the School District stated that it had “demonstrated that it is equal to an emergency—a big emergency” and they made plans to have most Washington High School students attend Lincoln High School on Portland’s westside.⁷⁰ The *Oregonian* ran a letter from the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Oregon who offered to provide books and school equipment for needy students. They wrote that this offer was “without regard to the race, creed or color, our sole thought in the matter being to maintain at all times the full and complete operation of our institutions and especially the free public schools.”⁷¹ Both the central library and the eastside branch library provided reference and textbooks for the use of students who lost their books in the fire. Central also dedicated two library rooms for the use of the students.⁷² The Portland Library Association noted the tragic loss of the library collection at Washington High School, as it had been “one of the largest collections of library books in the city.”⁷³

Approximately 300 freshmen remained on campus, taking classes in the Hawthorne Building and the gymnasium. All other students attended classes at Lincoln High School. Existing Lincoln students used their high school in the morning, while Washington students arrived in the afternoon. Their day was comprised of seven periods, thirty-five minutes each, from 12:30pm – 4:45pm. Pairs of students shared lockers at Lincoln, while both Washington and Lincoln students used the gymnasium on the Washington campus for sport practices. The shortened day required that “more studying than ever will now be done at home.”⁷⁴

The Second Washington High School

Planning for a new building was immediately announced the day after the fire.⁷⁵ At first, the land that the school occupied was considered too valuable for school purposes. Its close-in location was heavily developed and real estate values had skyrocketed since the 1905 high school was built. The neighborhood surrounding Washington High School was characterized as an “apartment district” by the *Oregonian*, which also included manufacturing facilities. Ten years earlier the newspaper wrote: “At the present rate of development this district will be completely occupied by this class of buildings within the next five years, and the present location of the Hawthorne and Washington High Schools will be in the center of this new development.”⁷⁶ The general opinion of the school board directors at the time was that Washington High School should be rebuilt farther to the east to adequately serve high school students who were currently traveling miles from outlying suburbs to take classes. The Sunnyside, Montavilla, and Mt. Tabor neighborhoods were all initially considered for the new school location.⁷⁷

If the fire had thoroughly destroyed the buildings on the school property, rebuilding likely would have occurred on a new site. However, it left the new gymnasium building—valued at \$120,000 in 1922—and the School

⁶⁹ “School Blaze Is Laid To Firebug,” *Oregonian*, October 16, 1922, 1, 4.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² “City News in Brief,” *Oregonian*, November 1, 1922, 13.

⁷³ Portland Library Association, *Annual Report*, 1922, 26.

⁷⁴ “Schools Normal Again,” *Oregonian*, October 28, 1922, 3.

⁷⁵ “School Blaze Is Laid To Firebug,” *Oregonian*, October 16, 1922, 1-4.

⁷⁶ “Unite 2 Schools It Is Suggested,” *Oregonian*, November 23, 1913, 11.

⁷⁷ “School Blaze Is Laid To Firebug,” *Oregonian*, October 16, 1922, 1-4.

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Board could not justify abandoning the asset or using it for other purposes: "The gymnasium virtually dictates the rebuilding of the school on its former foundation."⁷⁸ Rebuilding on the site was seen to have other economic advantages, as the District originally hoped to reconstruct for no more than the outlay of the insurance money. When built in 1905, the high school building cost \$239,366. It was insured for \$364,146,⁷⁹ which compensated for the increase in property values since its construction.⁸⁰ Initially, there was some hope that the masonry walls of the burned school could be salvaged and reused for the new building.⁸¹ Furthermore, they believed they could build a three-story building plus basement that would be as efficient as the former four-story building.⁸² To fund the rebuilding of the school, the School Board made plans to divert \$100,000 from their 1923 budget to combine with the insurance proceeds.⁸³

The year 1923 was to be a significant year for the School Board, with their chief items being the rebuilding of Washington High School and the construction of the new Grant High School. Additionally, 18-20 additions were proposed to grade schools throughout the city.⁸⁴ District Architect Floyd A. Naramore had resigned in 1919 to work as Seattle's school architect, leaving Portland's School District in a difficult position with a significant building program to accomplish. Naramore was originally hired in 1912 when the School District recognized the need for in-house expertise to deal with the design of fireproof buildings. In the aftermath of Naramore's departure, Portland Public Schools had to briefly rely on outside architects to design and manage much of the new construction, including Washington High School.

The notable firm of Houghtaling & Dougan was awarded the architecture contract for Washington High School, though not without public protest and newspaper coverage. The fact that Chester Houghtaling was a practicing Catholic and both Houghtaling and Dougan had been affiliated with the Knights of Columbus—a Catholic fraternal organization—raised concern from vocal anti-Catholic citizens. In 1922, Oregonians had looked to the public school system to help assimilate new groups of immigrants, leading to the passage of the Oregon Compulsory School Education Act, which required all children to attend public school without any option for private or parochial school. While it was ultimately struck down as unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1925, the Catholic Church's opposition to the compulsory school bill sparked concern and sometimes prejudice by those who were ardent supporters of public schools, including the Masons and the Ku Klux Klan. The *Oregonian* wrote: "The religious issue, which so often has cleft the school board into dissenting and embittered camps, was roused again last night when some sources of persons attacked the directors for their unanimous award of the Washington high school architectural contract to the firm of Houghtaling & Dugan [sic]."⁸⁵

Those in opposition to the hiring of Houghtaling & Dougan hoped to draw support from School Board members including Director George B. Thomas—an open opponent of the Catholic Church's influence on public schools and a one-time a Ku Klux Klan sympathizer. T.F. Drake—a Mason and Klansman—attended the school board meeting, asking, "Are we to employ men who will use the surplus money from such a contract to pursue the fight against the public school system?" However, Thomas and the other directors stood firm in their support of the architects. School Board Chairman Frank Shull stated: "These people were selected because they were believed to be competent, to be among the best architects in the city." Director Thomas reiterated his position against Catholic influence in the public schools as he saw it, but dissolved his previous relationship with the

⁷⁸ "Guards to Watch Portland Schools," *Oregonian*, October 27, 1922, 13.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ 1921 was the first year the School District had outside insurance for their properties. Previously they self-insured with a set-aside fund; however, the fund was continually tapped for other purposes and third-party insurance was considered a prudent strategy to protect their assets. Additionally, after the fire, the School District immediately instituted the use of night watchmen to protect their more valuable properties. Forty schools in the District were put under watch, totaling more than 50% of its real estate portfolio. However, these services were cut back to a minimum by the end of 1922, due to their high cost.

⁸¹ "Guards to Watch Portland Schools," *Oregonian*, October 27, 1922, 13.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ "Pledges Annoy Board," *Oregonian*, March 10, 1923, 2.

⁸⁴ "School Holiday at End," *Oregonian*, January 1, 1923, 12.

⁸⁵ "Religious Issue Again at Front," *Oregonian*, December 7, 1922, 4.

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Klan “as an institution of such intolerance that it is perilous to real Americanism.” While several school board members indicated that if the architectural award were to be reconsidered, they would change their votes based on the religious issue, the issuance of the contract was considered legally-binding and the architects went forward with their work on the design.

The School District moved with haste to accelerate the progress of the new school. In December 1922, the salvaging of building materials from the fire ruins began.⁸⁶ The following month the brick walls were razed to the foundations, which were planned for reuse. Some of the mechanical equipment was also salvaged from the 1905 building for reuse.⁸⁷ Houghtaling & Dougan progressed with the design at a rapid pace, taking approximately four months to prepare the plans and specifications. They were paid approximately \$35,000 for the design of the school.^{88 89}

Interestingly, even with the opportunity to build larger at Washington High School, the District chose not to do so. While the reason is never directly stated, cost appears to be a driving factor. The goal early on was to have as small a funding outlay as possible over and above the insurance proceeds to pay for the new facility. Even during the new school’s planning and design phase, it was known that the new school would be unable to house the full high school population under one roof and that the controversial use of the Hawthorne School for high school classes would be ongoing.⁹⁰

The fire at Washington High School exhausted the School District’s 1922 bond issue and cemented in the public’s mind the need for fireproof schools.⁹¹ In 1923, they were demanding new schools and fireproof buildings to replace the older structures.⁹² To finance their upcoming building program, the School Board proposed a significant \$7,500,000 bond measure.⁹³ The School District asserted that in order for Portland to remain a top city in the Pacific Northwest, it must take steps to “replace its ancient and dangerous schoolhouses with structures in keeping with the rest of the city.”⁹⁴ As an example of the deficiencies in the School District’s facilities, over 200 portables were in use in 1923. The School District did their own needs assessment to inform the \$7.5 million request while critics of the bond measure called for a third-party assessment. While the public wanted better and safer schools, the steep price tag and the lack of trust in the School District’s assessment and budgeting led to the failure of the measure in June 1923.

Houghtaling & Dougan completed the plans for the building in April 1923 when the estimated cost for the new structure was \$450,000.⁹⁵ (See Figure 10) The School Board made minor changes to the plans and then turned them over the school superintendent and the superintendent of properties to make additional eliminations to “cut the cost of the building as much as possible.”⁹⁶ Bids for the project came in at \$621,780, as reported by *The Oregonian*.⁹⁷ It appears that the School Board re-advertised the project a few months later to bidders after making further adjustments to the specifications, shaving \$46,000 in costs.⁹⁸ The firm of Parker &

⁸⁶ “Time Given Architect,” *Oregonian*, November 14, 1922, 4.

⁸⁷ “City News in Brief,” *Oregonian*, November 1, 1922, 13.

⁸⁸ “Washington High Contract is Let,” *Oregonian*, July 15, 1923, 15.

⁸⁹ After the design process was completed, but before construction had concluded on the building, Houghtaling and Dougan dissolved their partnership and Chester Houghtaling was successor to the firm. Washington High School construction pay application requests on Houghtaling & Dougan letterhead dated June 1925 are stamped with “C. A. Houghtaling successor to Houghtaling & Dougan.”

⁹⁰ “Mr. Clark Defends School Estimates,” *Oregonian*, May 27, 1923, 6.

⁹¹ “School Directors Move Cautiously,” *Oregonian*, March 1, 1923, 6.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ “Mr. Clark Defends School Estimates,” *Oregonian*, May 27, 1923, 6.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ “School Plans Are Ready,” *Oregonian*, April 22, 1923, 15.

⁹⁶ “School Bids Due Shortly,” *Oregonian*, April 29, 1923, 9.

⁹⁷ “Report and Recommendation of the Taxpayer’s League of Portland,” *Oregonian*, June 15, 1923, 13.

⁹⁸ “Washington High Contract is Let,” *Oregonian*, July 15, 1923, 15.

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Banfield was the low bidder and became the general contractor.⁹⁹ The School District signed separate contracts with the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing subcontractors. Despite costs above their original budget, the School Board rushed the construction of the new facility.¹⁰⁰ Parker & Banfield had promised to deliver the finished high school in 70 weeks.¹⁰¹

The building of the new school began with the concrete pours and steel beam construction in October 1923. The *Oregonian* described the concrete work as follows: "The mixed concrete is hoisted in a container by a donkey engine up a frame tower 150 feet high and poured into an inclined traveling tube which is connected temporarily to the wooden forms."¹⁰² Workers had already prepared the foundation of the old school to receive new column footings and new concrete walls. Railroad tracks were laid on the old foundations and used to reinforce the new basement concrete slab.¹⁰³ Thousands of bricks salvaged from the old building were originally planned for reuse.¹⁰⁴ However, this may not have been realized in light of the fact that Houghtaling & Dougan ultimately ended up specifying that Monroe brick—an Oregon product—be used.¹⁰⁵

The new fireproof, reinforced concrete high school was touted for its state-of-the-art design, despite the fact that it was largely constrained in plan by the original foundation of the 1905 building. With four levels, it used a very similar plan with an outer ring of classrooms accessed by corridors ranging in width from fourteen to eighteen feet, and a voluminous auditorium at the center of the building, accessed from the second and third levels. Even the programming of the classroom spaces was quite similar to the original building. The first level featured a cafeteria that could seat 400 students at a time. It had steam tables, refrigerators, and a fully-equipped kitchen. There were general science and physics laboratories and lecture rooms, as well as restrooms, storage, and a large mechanical room on the ground floor. The second level of the building was typically referred to as the "first floor." It featured the auditorium and dressing rooms; twelve classrooms; principal, vice principal, and dean's rooms; teacher's lounges; and restrooms. The third level housed the library, eleven classrooms, department heads' offices, an emergency room, and restrooms. Finally, the fourth level contained classrooms for industrial arts, freehand drawing, design, and mechanical drawing. It had chemistry and biology labs and lecture rooms, as well as a specimen room, five additional classrooms, and restrooms. Four enclosed exit stairs allowed for safe egress, although the building also had fire escapes.

Washington High School students were champions of their school and helped raised funds for the outfitting of the new building. They came before City Council on the afternoon of the fire, requesting use of the city auditorium for the senior class play, originally scheduled to be performed two weeks from that date.¹⁰⁶ They directed the proceeds of the play to go toward replacing the school library, which had been valued at \$10,000.¹⁰⁷ Professional actors also put on fundraising entertainment events for the benefit of the new library.¹⁰⁸ The first graduating class at the new high school donated \$200 of stage equipment to benefit the new auditorium—"an unusually large gift for a class to give."¹⁰⁹

Four new schools came online at the beginning of the school year in fall 1924, including Washington and Grant. Washington was to be ready "at least in part" for the new school year.¹¹⁰ Costs were reported at

⁹⁹ The firm was a nationally-prominent construction firm owned by Cyrus Jury Parker and Thomas Henry Banfield. They were also founders of Iron Firemen Manufacturing Company and Portland Wire & Iron Works. Banfield would go on to become Chairman of the State Highway Commission from 1943-50 and Portland's Banfield Freeway (Interstate 84) would eventually be named for him.

¹⁰⁰ "Cost Under Estimate," *Oregonian*, April 26, 1923, 6.

¹⁰¹ "Washington High Contract is Let," *Oregonian*, July 15, 1923, 15.

¹⁰² "Concrete Is Being Poured," *Oregonian*, October 21, 1923, 3.

¹⁰³ This was observed during the 2014 rehabilitation.

¹⁰⁴ "Building to Commence," *Oregonian*, August 24, 1923, 6.

¹⁰⁵ "School Plans Held Up," *Oregonian*, September 13, 1923, 2.

¹⁰⁶ "School Blaze Is Laid To Firebug," *Oregonian*, October 16, 1922, 1, 4.

¹⁰⁷ "Washington High School to Present Class Play Tonight in Auditorium," *Oregonian*, November 17, 1922, 6.

¹⁰⁸ "City High School Pupils Spend Busy Week in Study and Play," *Oregonian*, March 4, 1923, 10.

¹⁰⁹ "Graduating Class at Washington High Presents Class Play," *Oregonian*, May 17, 1925, 80.

¹¹⁰ "New Schools Finished," *Oregonian*, August 24, 1924, 11.

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completion totaling \$690,000.¹¹¹ As a comparison, Grant High School, which had been designed by Knighton & Howell, was also constructed of reinforced concrete with a brick veneer and cost \$500,000.¹¹²

In 1927, the School District was once again looking to address the issue of expanding the Washington High School campus to include an athletic field.¹¹³ They acquired approximately a block and a half to the west at a cost of \$52,200 in spring of 1928.¹¹⁴ Later that year, the District undertook condemnation proceedings to secure the final piece of land, with the seller eventually cooperating in a negotiated sale.¹¹⁵ In the summer of 1930, the grading of the athletic field and the construction of the retaining wall and fence that wrap the site were installed.¹¹⁶ (See Figures 11 & 12) The field was used primarily for athletic practices, although some track meets were held at the high school. When reported with other high school track times, those at Washington were noted as being different because of the comparatively short track.¹¹⁷

No major work was done on the Washington High School campus from the time the new school was constructed until 1946.¹¹⁸ The late 40s and early 50s saw small improvement projects, but still the Hawthorne School remained without replacement or substantial rehabilitation. For a long time it was thought that the high school's location at the edge of a business district would soon make it impractical and unnecessary as an educational facility. It was also believed that the school might be closed once construction on Madison High School was completed. So, for many years little money was invested because of its unstable future. However, enrollment surveys in 1957 showed that it was still needed, but would be a comparatively small school.¹¹⁹

The School District budgeted \$875,000 for improvements at Washington High School in 1958-60. The Board originally intended to renovate the campus, keeping all the existing buildings. However, parents protested strongly and the improvement plans became more extensive. The Hawthorne Building was razed in January 1958, a one-story International Style addition was added to the Boiler Building, and a new gymnasium was constructed immediately south of the high school along the eastern edge of the property. Drawings for the new gym were completed by architect Holman J. Barnes in January 1958—also in the International Style—and construction was completed in September 1959.¹²⁰ The high school also saw its first major interior remodel at this time, including alterations to home economics classrooms, the wood/metal shop, the cafeteria, and library.

The Ellis Lawrence gym was initially to be kept and remodeled, and the District carried out some improvements on the building between 1957 and 1958. However, the cramped campus ultimately led to its demise and a contract for demolition was awarded in 1960.¹²¹ In 1957, the Washington High School property was only 4.8 acres, whereas most other Portland high schools were ten to twenty-six acres. No home games were being played at Washington High School except for a few basketball games in the gym. With the new gym completed in 1959, the older structure was taking up valuable athletic space.

The final phase of the 1958-60 improvements was the building of a new cafeteria, music, and classroom wing. Again in the International Style, this new wing was connected at the original location of two second- and third-floor windows on the south end of the building's west façade. Construction began in late 1960 and the wing

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ "School Buildings' Unit Size Decided," *Oregonian*, April 5, 1927, 4.

¹¹⁴ "School Ground Bought," *Oregonian*, March 9, 1928, 7.

¹¹⁵ "Schools Will Add 7 Kindergartens," *Oregonian*, January 22, 1929, 20.

¹¹⁶ "Auditorium Contract Let," *Oregonian*, August 5, 1930, 3.

¹¹⁷ As reported by Kirk Ranzetta, PhD during discussions with the nomination preparer regarding his research on the high school as part of the historic assessment authored by Entrix in 2009.

¹¹⁸ According to an inventory of capital improvement and maintenance projects on file at Portland Public Schools conducted by the nomination preparer.

¹¹⁹ "Building Plans Wait Attention of Busy School Officials," *Oregonian*, April 7, 1957, 48.

¹²⁰ "Washington Gym Dedication Slated," *Oregonian*, September 27, 1959, 75.

¹²¹ "Contracts Add School," *Oregonian*, August 6, 1960, 5.

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cost \$538,737.¹²² Until its demolition in 2006, the “C Wing”—as it was known—greatly obscured the Classical Revival façade of the 1923 structure. (See Figure 13)

In 1964, an \$8 million bond levy was passed by the voters allowing the School District to purchase over an acre of land to the south of the existing campus for \$200,000 and construct an additional \$300,000 in site improvements.¹²³ However, this money had not been spent on the school by 1969 and parents were irate. A petition signed by 167 parents charged the School Board with “years of neglect and broken promises”¹²⁴ when it came to Washington High School. The following year the campus expanded further to the south and the School District built the Vocational Education Center Building for auto shop instruction. This building still stands on mid-block on SE Morrison Street between SE 12th and SE 14th Avenues.

In 1978, Monroe High School—an all-girls polytechnic sister school to Benson Polytechnic High School—merged with Washington High School and the school became known as Washington-Monroe High School. Not long after, the school experienced declining enrollment and closed its doors in 1981. Two years later the facility was reopened as the Children’s Service Center. This multipurpose facility served tenants that included a day care center, a vocational program for Native American youth, and the District’s continuing education center for at-risk pregnant girls. The Children’s Service Center closed in the 1990s and the building was vacant until it was purchased and rehabilitated by Venerable Group and Pacific Realty Associates in 2013-2014.

Notable alumni of Washington High School include Steven G. Bradbury, attorney, United State Department of Justice; former Oregon senator and governor Victor George Atiyeh; Bill Naito, longtime Portland businessman, historic property owner, and civic leader; chef and author James Beard; and Linus Pauling, two-time Nobel Prize winner. Pauling was awarded his diploma in 1962, 45 years after leaving Washington High School to attend Oregon State University.

Washington High School stands today not only as a reminder of Portland Public Schools’ increased school construction due to changing demographics during the first half of the 20th century, but also as a record of the City’s evolving philosophy of public education that emphasized fire safety, health, inspirational architecture, and child-centered learning in specialized classroom spaces.

Houghtaling & Dougan

While the first Washington High School featured Romanesque design influences, architects Houghtaling & Dougan pursued the more monumental Classical Revival style for the building’s replacement—a style they had executed previously in Portland with much success. The firm Houghtaling & Dougan was considered to be a versatile team and they designed many different types of buildings ranging from industrial warehouses to schools to major civic buildings.

The firm was formed in 1915 by Chester A. Houghtaling and Luther Lee Dougan. Chester Houghtaling, who had studied engineering at the Lewis Institute of Chicago, was the senior partner in the firm. He worked for various engineering firms in the Pacific Northwest and Canada before moving to Portland and opening his own office in 1913. Lee Dougan studied architecture at the Armour Institute of Technology in Chicago and also studied art and architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago. Some sources note that while in Chicago he briefly worked as an office boy for both Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan. When Dougan came to Portland, he worked briefly with A. E. Doyle and Aaron Gould in 1911, as well as for a number of construction firms before partnering with Houghtaling.

¹²² “School Board Praises Superintendent Edwards,” *Oregonian*, October 25, 1960, 36.

¹²³ “Schools Seek,” *Oregonian*, May 3, 1964, 43.

¹²⁴ “Irate Parents Charge High School Neglected,” *Oregonian*, February 1, 1969, 16.

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Dougan was considered the designer of the firm. His artistic abilities were well recognized not just in terms of architecture, but also for his watercolors and oils of birds and animals of the Pacific Northwest. The 1943 *Encyclopedia of Northwest Geography* identified Dougan as “one of the most versatile and talented figures in Portland life.”¹²⁵ Dougan also gained a reputation for his authoritative scholarship in architecture, which enabled him to draw upon the classical styles for building designs like Washington High School. Dougan's skill is not only evident in the overall composition of Washington High School, but also in the individual pieces of detailed ornamentation that he designed for the building.

From 1915-1925, the architectural partnership of Chester A. Houghtaling and Luther Lee Dougan created a body of work that spanned the state of Oregon. With examples in Portland, Corvallis, The Dalles, and Coos Bay, this body of work has helped define architecture throughout the state, as most of their existing works are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Among their most significant and prominent works are the Italian Renaissance-inspired Old Elks Temple (1922) and Medical Arts Building (1924) in Portland, and the Classical Revival-designed Marshfield Hotel (1925) in Coos Bay. Other notable National Register-listed buildings by Houghtaling & Dougan include the Jones Cash Store (1923) and the Auto Freight Transport Building of Oregon and Washington (1924) in Portland; the Hotel Benton (1925) in Corvallis; and The Dalles Civic Auditorium (1921) in The Dalles.

Washington High School and “Portland Oregon’s Eastside Historic and Architectural Resources, 1850-1938” Multiple Property Listing

Washington High School is being nominated under the umbrella of the Multiple Property Document—“Portland Oregon’s Eastside Historic and Architectural Resources, 1850-1938.” The building is one of only a small percentage of public resources in the study area and fulfills the registration requirements for the public and social building types, which includes schools. The MPD notes there are only three other schools in the study area, including the Buckman Grade School, Sunnyside Grade School, and Central Catholic High School. Collectively, these public and social resources reflect the civic attitudes and social concerns of the era.

Overview of Historic Context

Washington High School is located within the Buckman Neighborhood. The North Buckman Historic District was determined eligible for listing in the National Register under the MPD in 2013. North Buckman is the oldest and most intact residential portion of Portland’s first suburb (East Portland). With its close proximity to public transportation, the downtown core, employment opportunities, and affordable suburban housing, the Buckman area attracted residents from the City’s rapidly-growing and upwardly-mobile working and middle classes beginning in the late 1800s. The neighborhood was home to owner-occupants and to landlords living amongst their tenants. Between 1901 and 1914, Portland experienced explosive population growth that resulted in a residential building boom. The boom also necessitated the expansion of schools throughout the city, but especially the eastside. From 1862-1906 there was only one high school for the entire city. By 1907, East Side High School (later called Washington High School) opened its doors as the first high school east of the Willamette River. It burned in 1922 and was replaced with the current Washington High School, which continued to serve of the families of close-in Southeast Portland until its closure in 1981.

Registration Requirements

The multiple property document details the criteria and registration requirements for being included under this umbrella listing:

- An eligible resource must have been built between 1862 and 1938.
- It should retain sufficient integrity to evoke the character of its style or function type.

¹²⁵ Winfield Scott Downs, “Leigh Dougan,” *Encyclopedia of Northwest Geography* (New York: The American Historical Company, Inc., 1943).

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- It should be one of the best examples or most characteristic examples typifying that style or function.

Washington High School was built in 1923 and therefore meets the first registration requirement. While the building has some alterations, particularly on the interior, it retains sufficient integrity to meet the second registration requirement. Its functional type is clearly expressed through its massing, site orientation, entrance locations, fenestration, inspirational quotes, and interior plan type with a ring of classrooms, corridor, and central auditorium. The building also maintains the characteristics of its style, including symmetrical facades, classical details including columns, bas relief panels, caryatids, and so forth.

As the only public high school in the study area, it is the best example of its functional type in the MPD boundary area. Washington High School has been a significant public building in the community since the time of its construction. It was erected during a time when Portland's public school district was expanding its high school facilities to accommodate a growing population. Its history embodies Portland's growing concern for schools of fireproof construction, as well as educational facilities supporting the pedagogical advancements of the time.

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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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
 Name of repository: Multnomah County Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.8
 (Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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

1	<u>10 T</u> Zone	<u>527177.52</u> Easting	<u>5040660.90</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated area boundary consists of three city blocks. These blocks include: Block 261, which occupies the northwest section of the site at SE Stark Street and SE 12th Street; Block 282, which occupies the northeast section of the site at SE Stark Street and SE 14th Avenue; and Block 260, which occupies the southwest section of the site at SE Adler Street and SE 12th Avenue. This three-block area consists of the nominated property's original athletic field to the west in Blocks 261 and 260; and the nominated building in Block 282. The nominated area also includes vacated SE 13th Avenue, which is now the flagpole plaza and landscape area in front of the building, and vacated SE Washington Street, which originally bisected the blocks that now comprise the field. All blocks are located in the East Portland Addition in Portland, Oregon, Multnomah County. The nominated area boundary does not include the public sidewalks that surround the nominated area on SE Stark Street, SE 14th Avenue, SE Alder Street, or SE 12th Avenue, nor the parking lots in Block 283. This boundary area totals approximately 148,500 square feet.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Washington High School campus has a long history of public education use that dates back to 1867. The first high school was built in 1905, but burned in a fire in 1922. The nominated building was constructed as its replacement in 1923. Washington High School is located on the foundations of its predecessor and continues the tradition of a west-facing school, oriented toward downtown Portland and the Willamette River, rather than its adjacent streets.

As early as 1903, community members were urging the School District to expand what was a two-block campus to provide proper outdoor facilities for the students. The District began acquiring land to expand the campus an additional two blocks to the west of vacated SE 13th Avenue in 1928, with the final lot being purchased in 1929. Completing the four-block assemblage was a significant milestone for the School District and the community, and allowed for the creation of a formal athletic field and outdoor space for students—critical school amenities oft discussed in the historical record for this property.

During the majority of its period of significance, the building has been characterized by sweeping views from SE Stark Street and SE 12th Avenue across the athletic field to the building's monumental Classical Revival primary and flagpole plaza. While the Hawthorne School, boiler building, and the original gymnasium are no longer extant and have been replaced with parking lots, the flagpole plaza and the open athletic field are important elements of the property's integrity in that they establish the building's setting. Furthermore, they contribute to the historical significance of the high school function and reflect the basic physical conditions under which Washington High School developed during its period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jessica Engeman, Historic Preservation Specialist; Brandon J. Grilc, Preservationist
organization Venerable Group, Inc. date _____
street & number 70 NW Couch St., Suite 207 telephone (503) 943-6093
city or town Portland state OR zip code 97209
e-mail Jessica@venerableproperties.com; Brandonjgrilc@hotmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Washington High School

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** OR

Photographer: Jessica Engeman, Sally Painter, Brandon J. Grilc

Date Photographed: January 21, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photo 1 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0001)
West and south facades, athletic field, camera facing northeast.

Photo 2 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0002)
West facade, camera facing east.

Photo 3 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0003)
North and east facades, camera facing southwest.

Photo 4 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0004)
East facade, camera facing west.

Photo 5 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0005)
South and east facades, camera facing northwest.

Photo 6 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0006)
West entry vestibules, camera facing south.

Photo 7 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0007)
Grand stair, first and second floors, camera facing north.

Photo 8 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0008)
Grand stair, third floor, camera facing south.

Photo 9 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0009)
Third floor, grand stair enclosure, camera facing northwest.

Photo 10 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0010)
Second floor, southwest stairwell, camera facing south.

Photo 11 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0011)
Second floor, corridor showing original office, camera facing north.

Photo 12 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0012)
Second floor, corridor, adjacent to restrooms, camera facing north.

Photo 13 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0013)
Third floor, corridor, camera facing west.

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Photo 14 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0014)
Second floor, rehabilitated classroom, camera facing northwest.

Photo 15 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0015)
Auditorium stage, camera facing north.

Photo 16 of 16: (OR_MultnomahCounty_ WashingtonHighSchool _0016)
Auditorium seating, camera facing south.

United States Department of the Interior
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Washington High School

Name of Property

Multnomah Co., OR

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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- Figure 11:** Historic rendering of Washington High School from 1925 yearbook
- Figure 12:** Historic photo showing Washington High School and old gymnasium
- Figure 13:** Historic campus aerial, 1939
- Figure 14:** Historic photo c. 1960

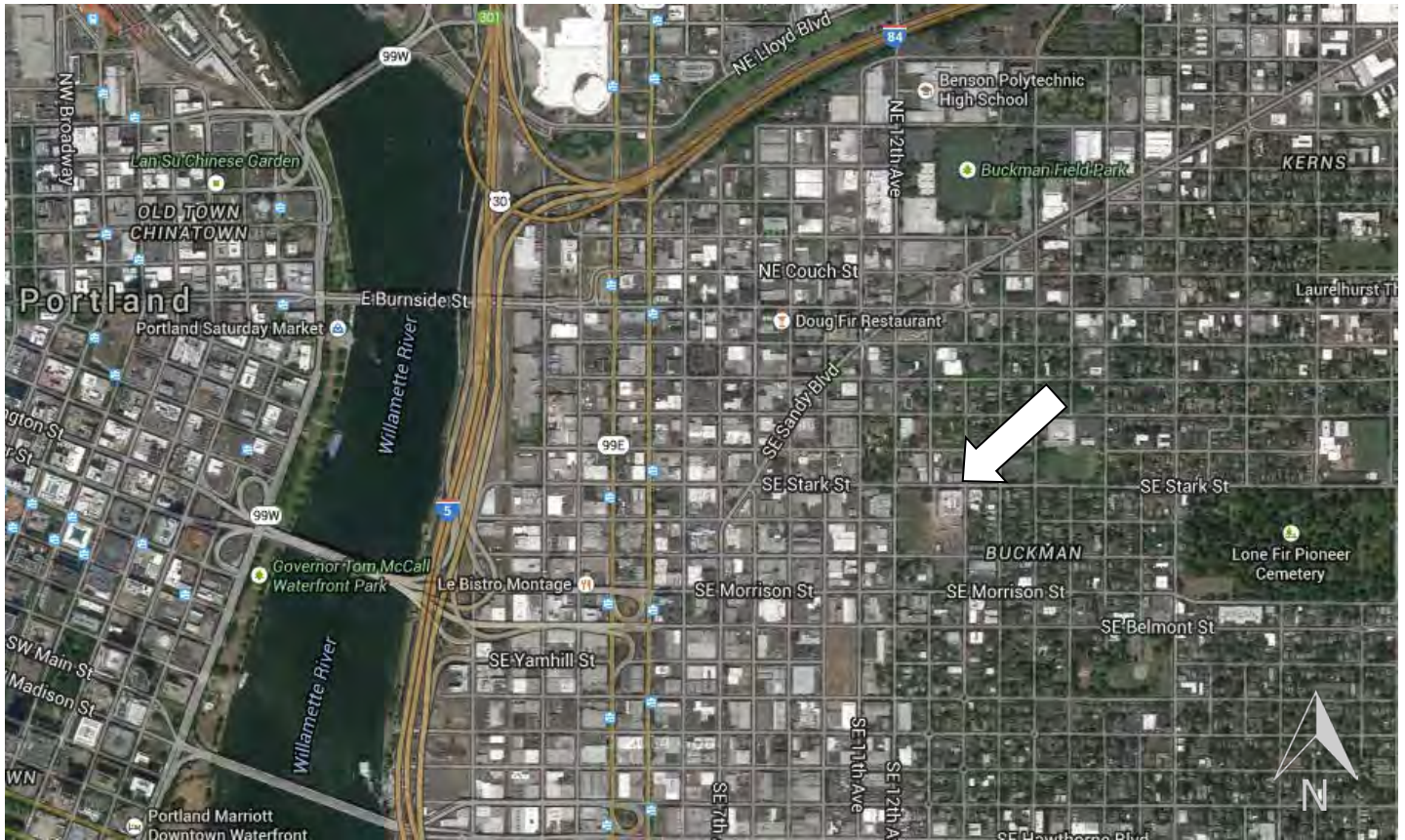
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N/A
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Figure 1: General location map with location of nominated property marked with an arrow. This map shows the property's relationship to major roads, such as SE Stark Street; Interstate 5 to the west, and Interstate 84 to the north. It also shows its proximity to the Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery to the east; Downtown, Portland to the west; and the Oregon Convention Center to the North.



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Figure 2: Detailed location map with location of nominated property marked in red. Washington High School is located in the northeast corner.



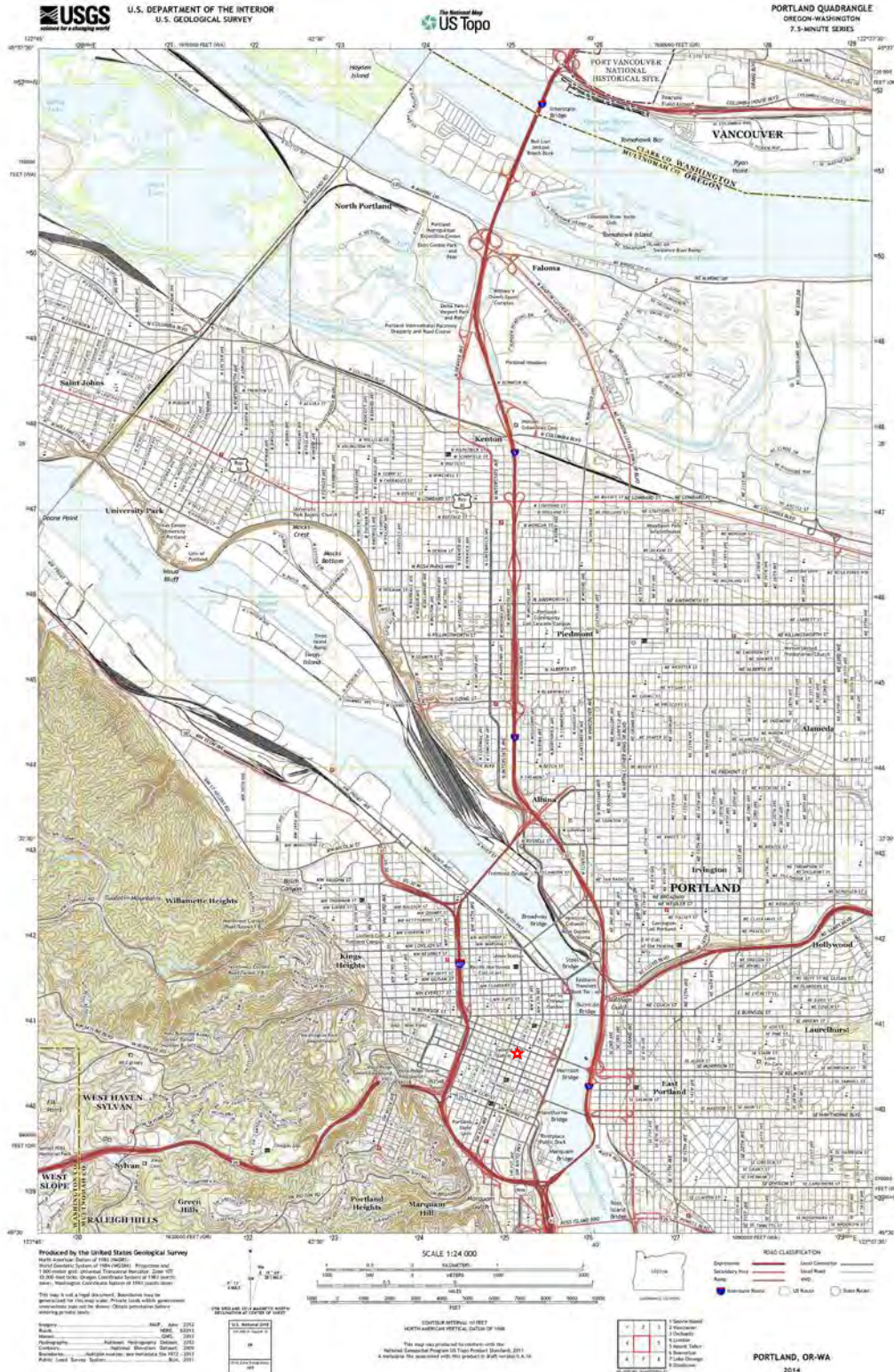
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Figure 3: USGS topographic map showing location of nominated property.



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Name of Property
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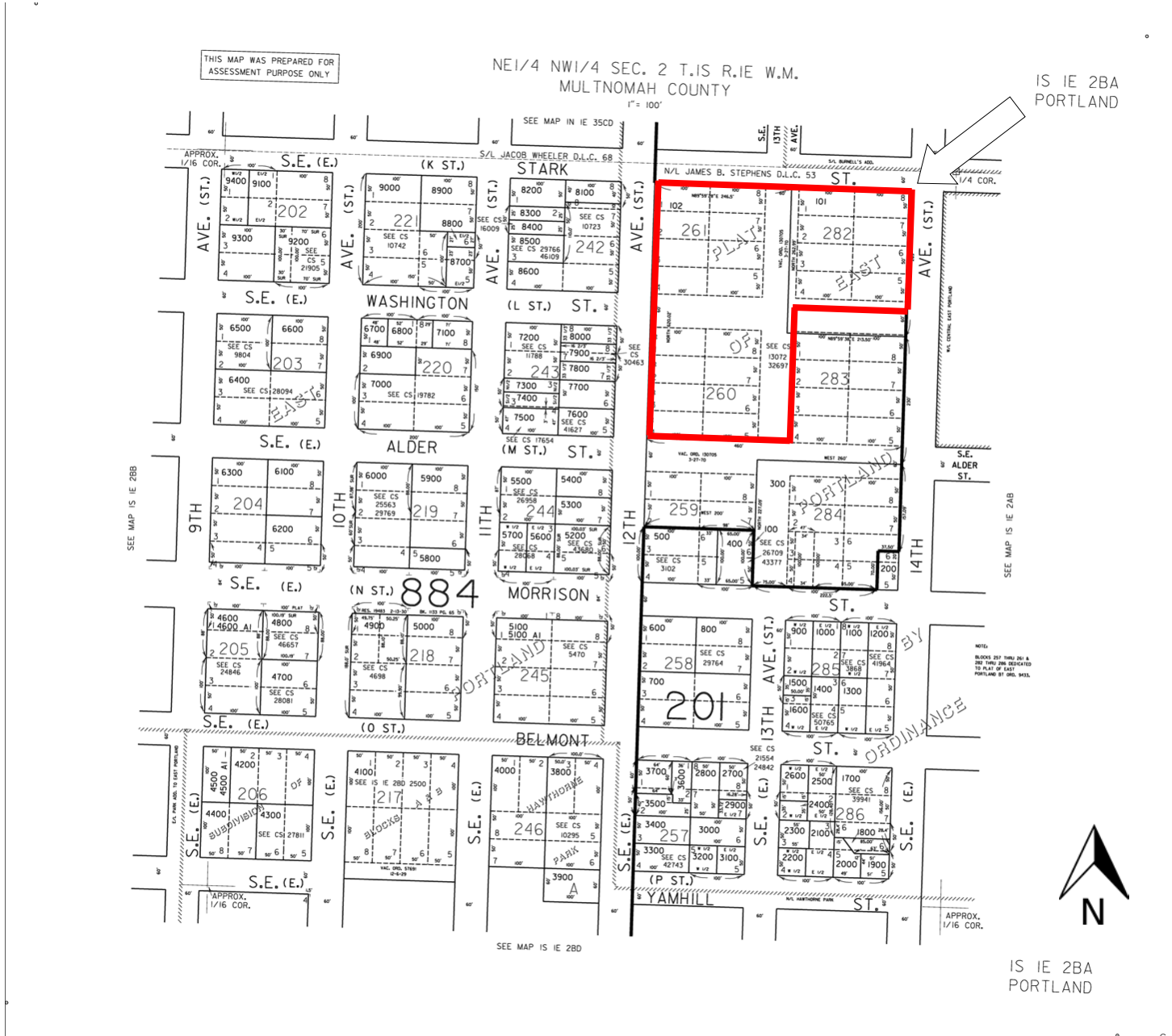
County and State

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Section number Documents Page 43

Figure 4: Tax lot and boundary map.



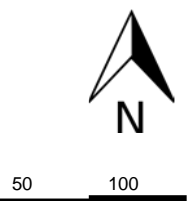
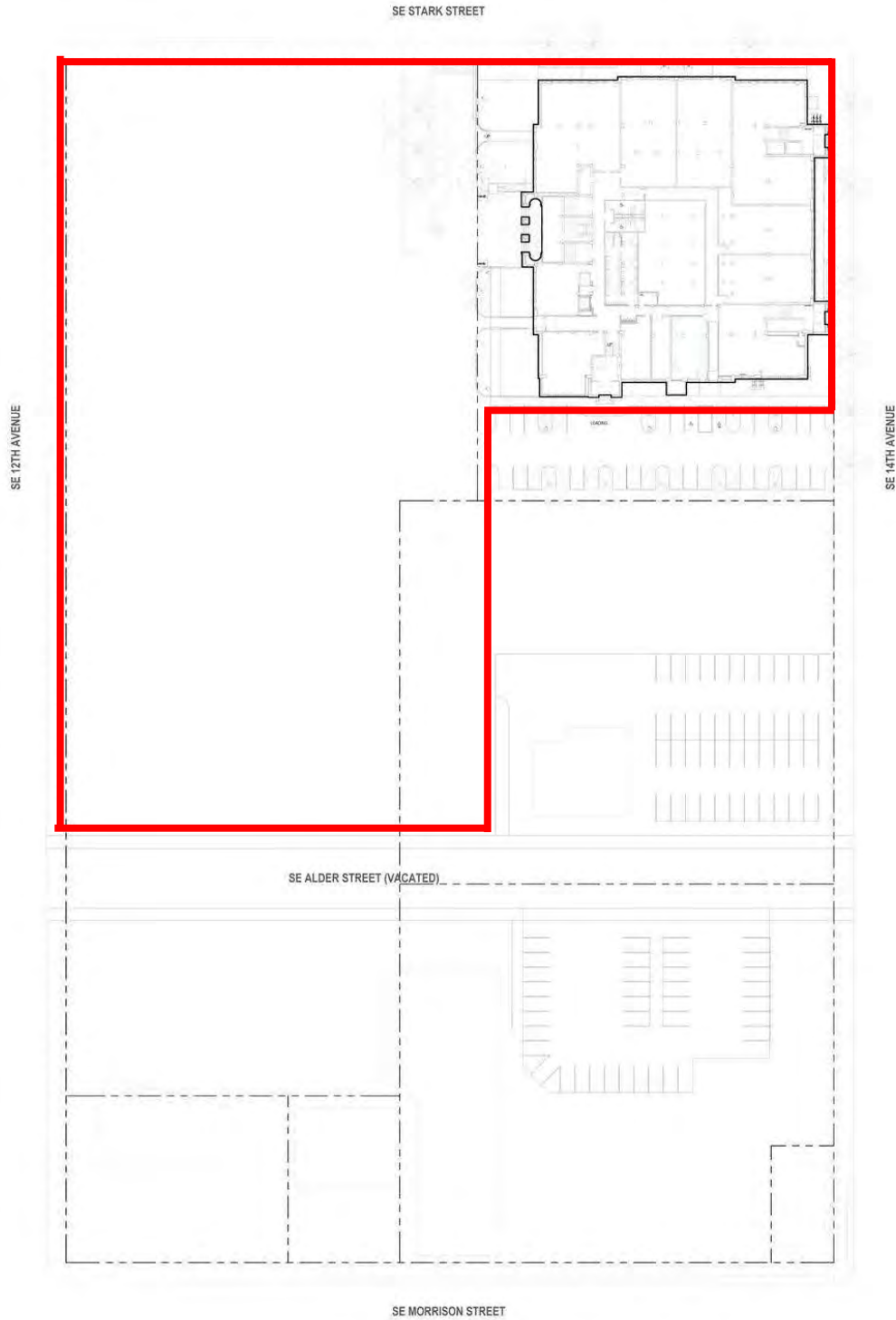
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Figure 5: Washington High School site plan. Nominated property marked in red.



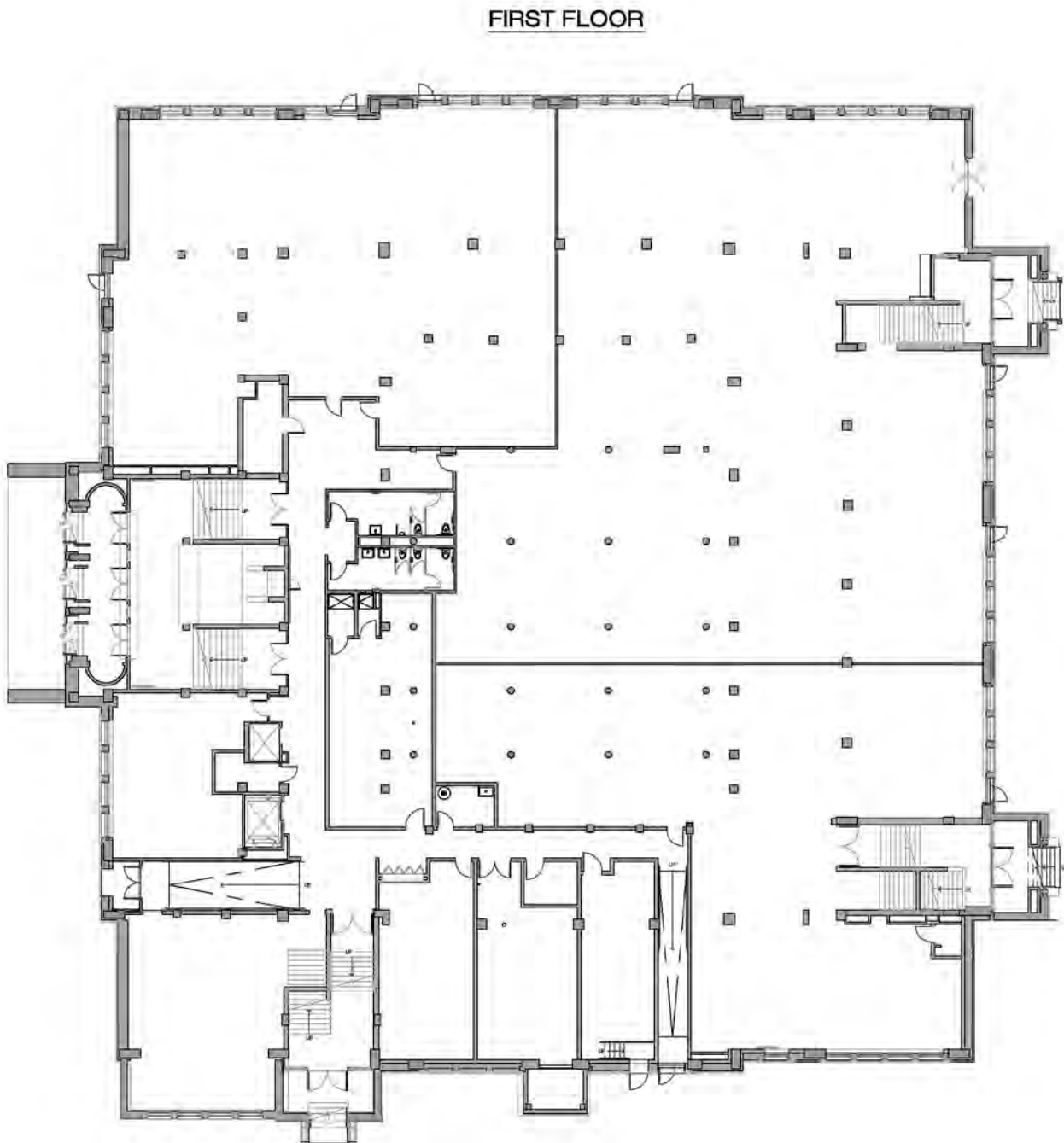
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Figure 6: Current Washington High School ground floor plan.



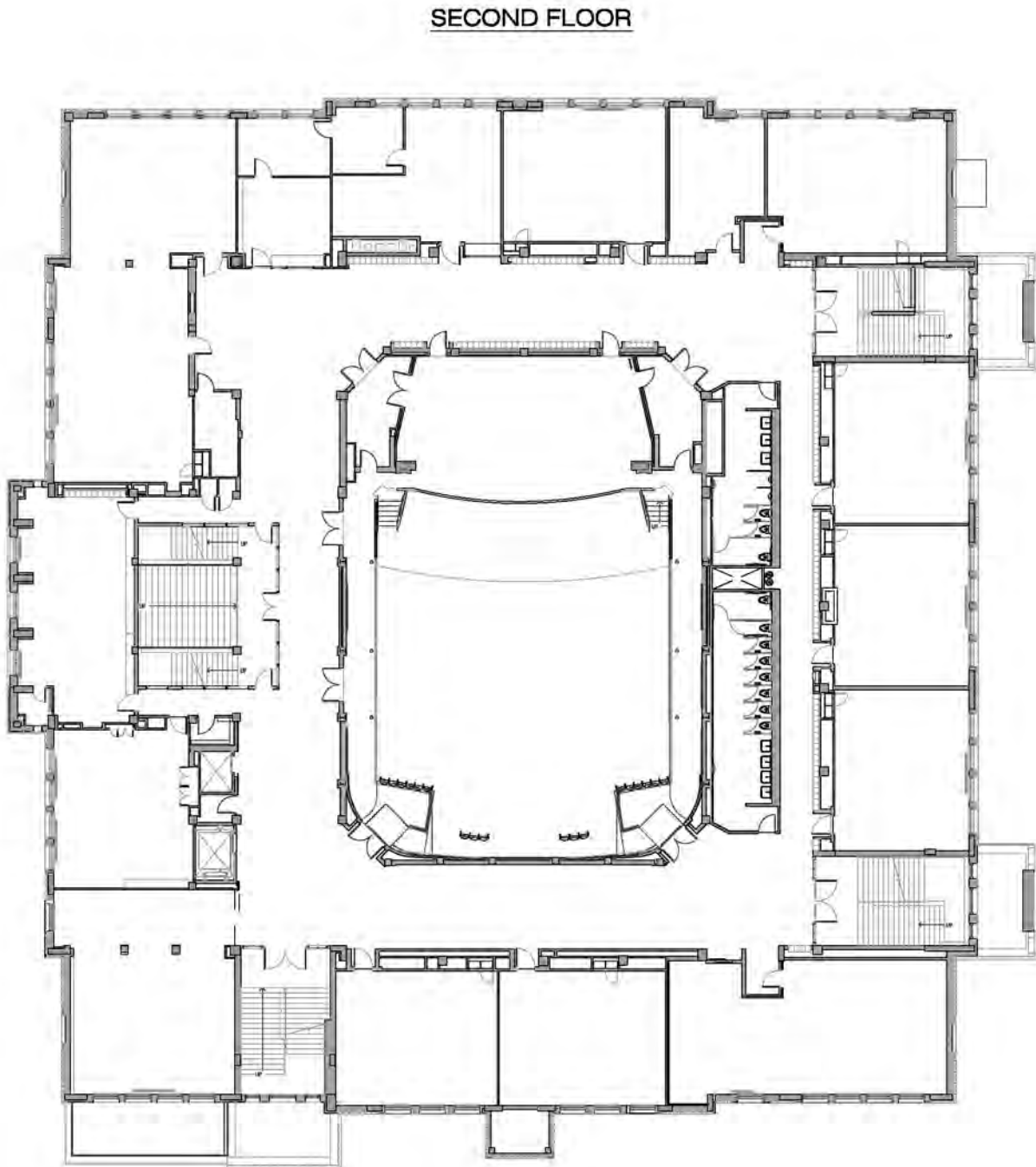
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Figure 7: Current Washington High School second floor plan.



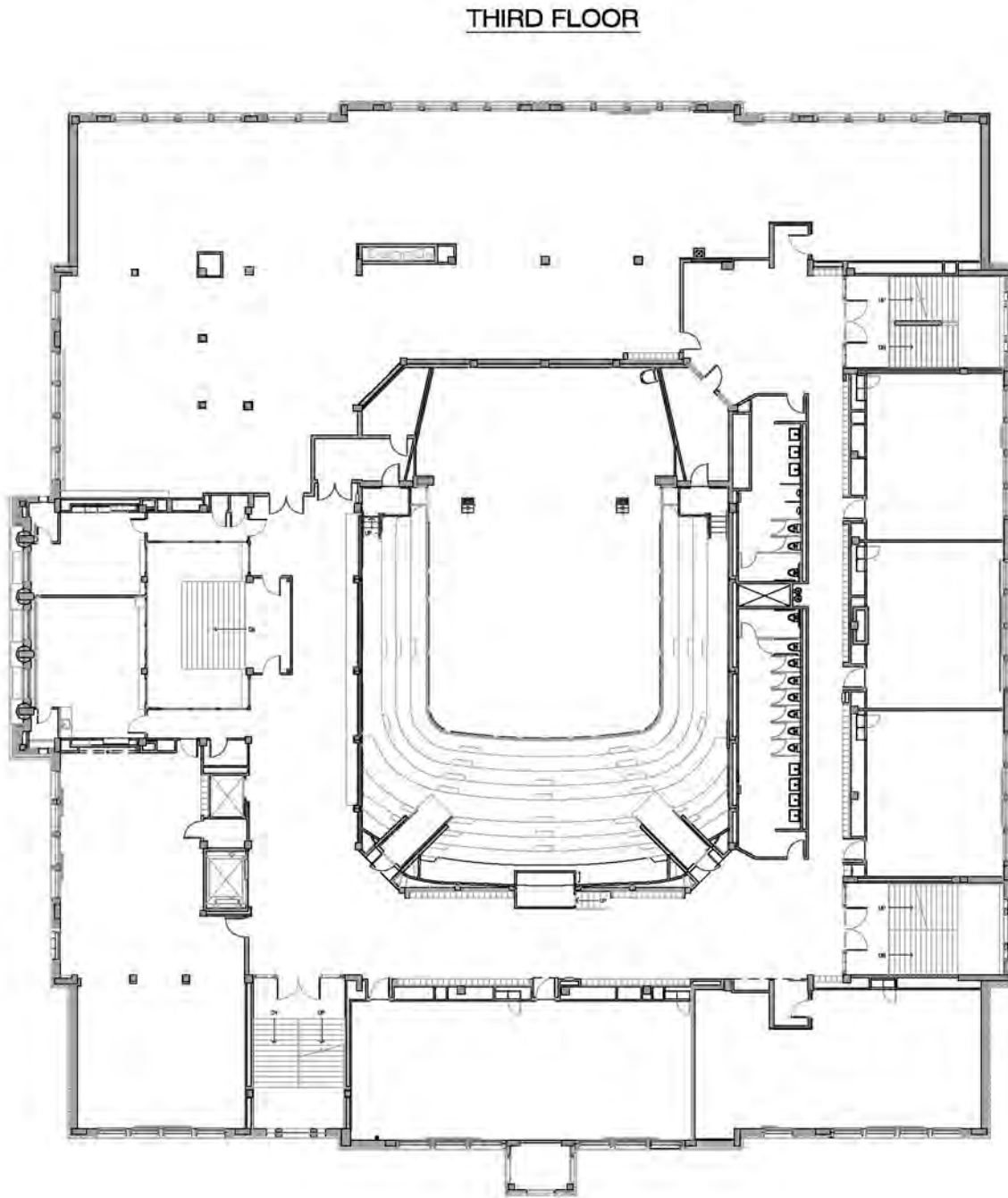
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Figure 8: Current Washington High School third floor plan.



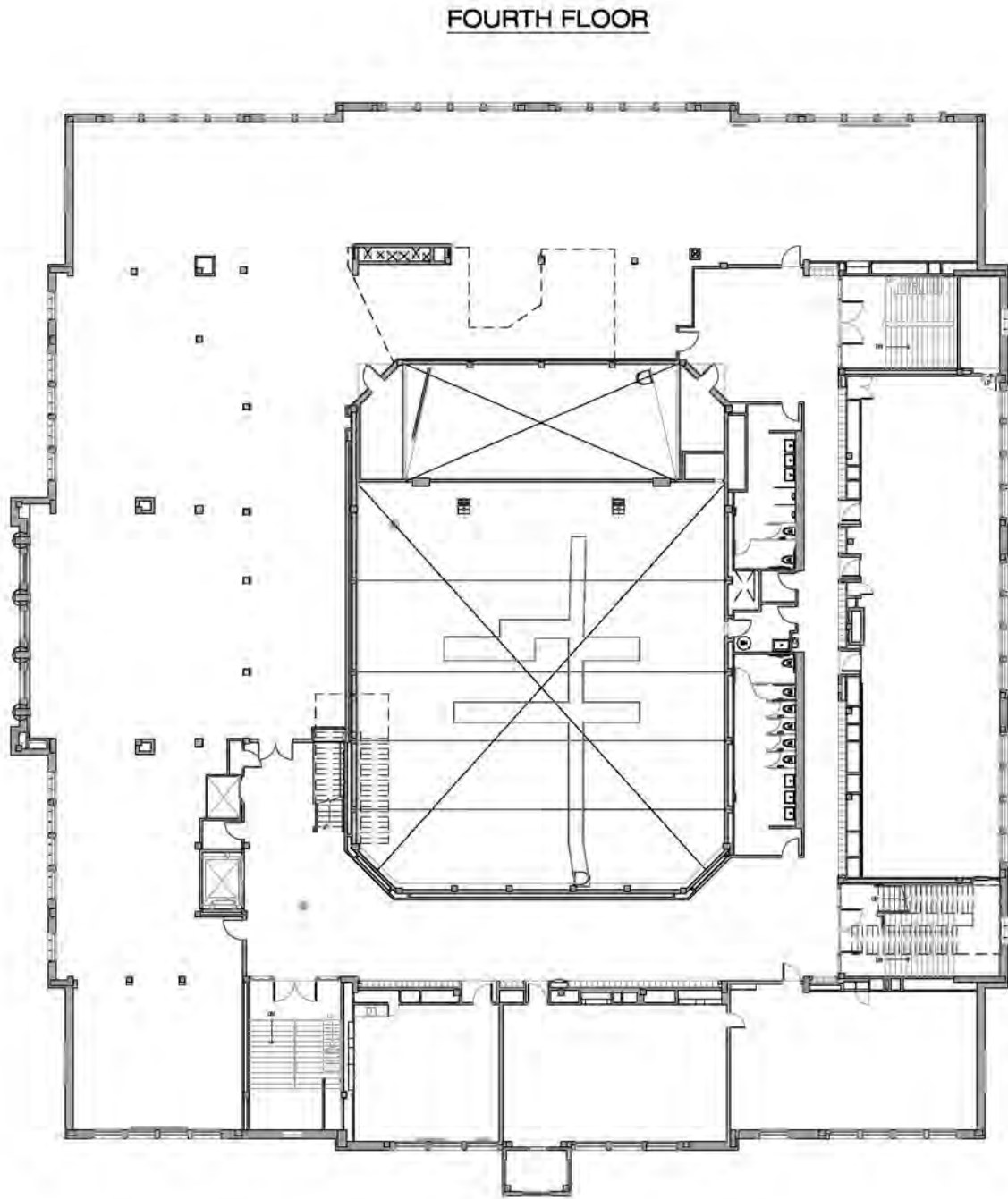
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Figure 9: Current Washington High School fourth floor plan.



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Figure 10: Postcard view of the first Washington High School (formerly East Side High School), c. 1910.



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Figure 11: Historic rendering of Washington High School, which first appeared in the 1925 yearbook.



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Figure 12: Historic photo showing Washington High School, boiler stack, and old gymnasium designed by Ellis Lawrence. Date of photo is unknown, but was taken after 1930 because the improvements to the athletic field have been made.



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Figure 13: Historic campus aerial dating to 1939 showing the 1923 Washington High School, 1912 Boiler Building, 1910 Gymnasium, 1897 Hawthorne Grade School, and the athletic field.



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Figure 14: Historic photo c. 1960 showing the International Style "C Wing" addition at the building's west façade.











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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Washington High School
NAME:

MULTIPLE Portland Eastside MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Multnomah

DATE RECEIVED: 9/25/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/19/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/03/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/10/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000779

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11.9.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St NE Ste C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

Phone (503) 986-0690

Fax (503) 986-0793

www.oregonheritage.org

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service



September 17, 2015

J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
USDOI National Park Service - Cultural Resources
1201 Eye Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Mr. Loether:

At the recommendation of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, I hereby nominate the following historic property to the National Register of Historic Places:

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
531 SE 14TH AVE
PORTLAND, MULTNOMAH COUNTY

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination listed above to the National Register of Historic Places.

We appreciate your consideration of this nomination. If questions arise, please contact Diana Painter, Architectural Historian, at (503) 986-0668.

Sincerely,

Christine Curran
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Encl.

