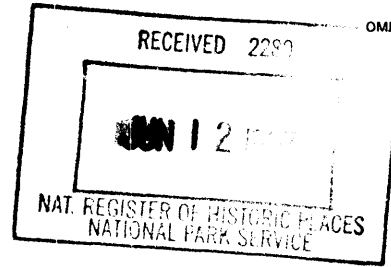


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



764

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Lava High School Gymnasium

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 202 W. Fife N/A not for publication

city or town Lava Hot Springs N/A vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Bannock code 005 zip code 83246

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. (\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

5/26/97

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper Edson R. Beall Date of Action 7/9/97

Lava High School Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Lava Hot Springs, Bannock County, Idaho  
City, County, and State

**5. Classification**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
RECREATION & CULTURE/sports facility

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
RECREATION & CULTURE/sports 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 brick  
roof asphalt  
other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Lava High School Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Lava Hot Springs, Bannock County, Idaho  
City, County, and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all 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.

### Contractor

- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

### Period of Significance

1934-1942

### Significant Dates

1934

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Miles E. Miller, Architect      Byrd Findlayson,

## Narrative Statement of Significance

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

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

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

South Bannock County Historical Society

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Lava High School Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Lava Hot Springs, Bannock County, Idaho  
City, County, and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property less than one acre

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

A 1/2 4/1/6/8/0/0 4/7/1/8/5/2/0  
Zone Easting Northing

B / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

C / / / / / / / / / /

D / / / / / / / / / /

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

**Boundary Justification**  
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Elizabeth Egleston  
organization Consultant date 7/15/96  
street & number 157 First Avenue #16 telephone (801) 359-6818  
city or town Salt Lake City state Utah zip code 84103

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and/or properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
- **Photographs:** Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.
- **Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

name Marsh Valley School District  
street & number P.O. Box 180 telephone 208 254-3306  
city or town Arimo state ID zip code 83214

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

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

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Name of Property Lava High School Gymnasium

County and State Bannock County, Idaho

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### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Lava High School gymnasium is situated on a hill at the southern edge of the small southeastern Idaho community of Lava Hot Springs. It is located in a residential neighborhood a few blocks from the commercial district. At the time of its construction in 1934 it was attached to a two-story building that was built in 1911 and served as the high school. In 1979 the high school was demolished and a one-story elementary school was built in its place; the gymnasium is now similarly attached to the elementary school building. One of two structures in Lava Hot Springs built under the aegis of the Public Works Administration (PWA), the gymnasium clearly conveys its association with this Depression-era program through its use and design.<sup>1</sup>

Oriented to the north, this brick structure has a concrete foundation and a flat roof. It is two stories high. The gymnasium itself measures 60 feet by 90 feet. To the north is an entry vestibule enclosing a foyer. It is also two stories in height but is slightly stepped down from the main building. The foyer contains a ticket booth and two storage rooms. Access to the foyer is gained through three single, metal doors. A two-story wing accommodating two classrooms is located at the southwest corner of the gymnasium.

The windows on the east and west elevations of the gym are arranged in long, narrow groups of three, divided by a thin column of bricks. Each window is demarcated by an arch of soldier bricks with a tympanum of bricks in running bond -- the same bond as the walls. The windows on the north walls of the entry vestibule are the most decorative as it comprises the "presentation" of the building to the street. Located in the upper story, the windows on this facade are an abstraction of Palladian design, as they are divided into thirds with the center window being the largest and most imposing. The windows on the classroom wing are rectangular but retain the long and narrow configuration seen in the gym. They are outlined by a continuous band of soldier bricks on the top and, like the gymnasium windows, have sills of soldier bricks placed on a slant. All of the windows are metal sash and are divided into multiple panes.

Decorative elements include cast concrete incised with cross-hatching in the upper portion of the wall; the concrete is interrupted by concrete coping and vertical concrete and brick pilasters. The most striking decorative feature is the cast-concrete bas relief located in the center of the entry vestibule that depict young men involved in track and field, football and basketball. In the upper portion of the entry vestibule the concrete has an ornamental design, with the word "GYMNASIUM" encised at the top.

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<sup>1</sup> The Community Memorial Hall, constructed in 1936, is the other PWA building in Lava Hot Springs.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Name of Property Lava High School Gymnasium

County and State Bannock County, Idaho

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Much of the original interior hardware is intact. A stage is located at the south end of the gymnasium. Little has occurred to disrupt the integrity of the interior. Exterior site features include a lawn and a concrete retaining wall. A parking lot is located behind the structure. With the exception of the boards that obscure most of the windows on the east and west elevations, the physical integrity of the structure is intact, and the historic quality of its setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association is evident.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Name of Property Lava High School Gymnasium

County and State Bannock County, Idaho

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located on a hill overlooking this resort community, the Lava High School gymnasium is locally significant under Criteria A and C. It is one of two structures in Lava Hot Springs constructed under the aegis of the Public Works Administration (PWA). It is associated with the continued development of this small southeastern Idaho town during the Great Depression. It also illustrates several primary developmental purposes of the PWA: to create jobs, generate local economic activity and to improve educational facilities nationwide. Architecturally, the Lava High School Gymnasium is significant as an excellent local example of late-Classical Revival design that was extensively used for public architecture throughout the United States during the 1930s.

#### Historical Significance

Lava Hot Springs is located about 35 miles southeast of Pocatello, the Bannock County seat. Although it has some connections to mining and farming, it has always derived its economic base from tourism. Visitors are attracted to local mineral springs for both recreational and therapeutic purposes. Many accounts state that the waters at Lava Hot Springs were used by Native Americans in the region who set the area aside as a neutral ground so that all tribes could enjoy the relaxing properties of the mineral springs. In the early part of the nineteenth century fur trappers and explorers were aware of the Springs, one of whom, Robert Dempsey, established a permanent camp a mile and a half west of the present town.<sup>2</sup> The waters were well-known to travellers bound for Oregon and California in the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>3</sup>

The present townsite was homesteaded in 1890 by English immigrants, John and Mary Hall. In 1902 the chiefs of the Bannock and Shoshone tribes ceded the Hot Springs and 280 acres of land on the north side of the Portneuf River to the U.S. Government. The site of the mineral springs continued to increase in popularity, and photographs dated as early as 1905 depict an extensive layout of tents and makeshift structures. After observing the growing popularity of the Hot Springs, John Hall surveyed the site into lots, streets, alleys, and blocks, filing the plat for the town originally called Hall City in 1911. In 1915 the village was officially incorporated as "Lava Hot Springs."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Olson and Frandsen.

<sup>3</sup> Leonard Arrington, History of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1994, vol. 1, p. 151.

<sup>4</sup> Ruth Ann Olson, Rebecca Frandsen, "Lava Hot Springs," from an article on file at the South Bannock County Historical Society, Lava Hot Springs, Idaho, p. 27.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Name of Property Lava High School Gymnasium

County and State Bannock County, Idaho

The town developed quickly after its incorporation; village minutes record the paving of streets and sidewalks, the issuance of licenses to 32 businesses in 1916, and an agreement with Utah Power and Light to provide electric power.<sup>5</sup> Pools and bathhouses were constructed to attract more visitors. Local historians Ruth Ann Olson and Rebecca Frandsen write that the first structure built over the Springs was of logs. In 1911 the first state appropriation of \$500 was granted by the legislature and a superintendent was appointed. Improvements continued to be made, and in 1918 the State Natatorium was established, featuring both indoor and outdoor baths. There was also a municipal bathhouse, known as the "Spa Plunge," so that tourists and residents had a variety of pools to use. The city of Lava Hot Springs established a sanitarium, which opened in 1925 and cost \$43,000 to build.<sup>6</sup> This was a logical step for a community whose economy was fueled by those seeking to assuage various ailments through hydrotherapy.

Idaho suffered economically throughout the 1920s as a result of low commodity prices; the Depression of the 1930s only exacerbated an already bad situation. Local histories state that Lava was immune to some degree because of its tourism attraction; however, an appeal by the mayor to President Franklin Roosevelt in 1933 indicates that the effects of the Great Depression were keenly felt in Lava. A.W. Hall requested funding to develop the springs as a health center similar to that of Warm Springs, Georgia, which had become renowned for its treatment of polio victims. Such development and interest on the part of the President did not occur, but in 1935 the State-owned baths became an autonomous state agency known as the Lava Hot Springs Foundation.<sup>7</sup>

One of the primary relief programs to arise out of the New Deal was the Public Works Administration (PWA). The Roosevelt Administration determined that a large infusion of Federal funds into depressed communities would provide an economic boost by creating work and improving local infrastructure. The PWA was organized in 1933 to provide Federal matching grants to local communities for the construction of new public facilities. Thousands of public buildings and other improvements were funded during the course of the PWA program from 1933 to 1942. One of the primary goals of the PWA was to improve educational facilities.

Providing good schooling in adequate buildings became increasingly difficult in Idaho during the Depression. According to Federal assessments of relief needs, Idaho was the sixth most adversely affected state in the nation. While the State ranked eighth in per capita Federal expenditures from 1933 to 1939, much of its Federal relief came from other relief agencies such as the Rural

<sup>5</sup> Minutes of the Lava Hot Springs Board of Trustees, December 23, 1916, on file at the South Bannock County Historical Society, Lava Hot Springs, Idaho.

<sup>6</sup> "Lava's Medical Heritage," text from an exhibit, on file at the South Bannock County Historical Society.

<sup>7</sup> Letter from A. Hall to Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 5, 1935, on file at the South Bannock County Historical Society.



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Electrification Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps. Never the less, out of the forty-eight states, Idaho was the fourth highest in receipt of PWA funding. Yet, out of eleven Western states, Idaho ranked ninth in the amount of PWA funds used for educational structures. Instead, a large portion of Idaho's PWA money was spent on improved irrigation facilities and the construction and renovation of city water and sewage systems.<sup>8</sup>

The funding for a gymnasium in a town as small as Lava, however, is illustrative of the fact that in many ways Idaho was progressive in the use of funds for education. According to an article entitled "Charting U.S. Education" in a 1936 issue of Architectural Forum, children in rural areas continued to comprise the bulk of the nation's student population; however, the majority of relief funds went to urban school districts. In Idaho, on the other hand, 65 percent of students attended school in rural districts and received 75 percent of capital outlay. In spite of the other priorities established for PWA funds in Idaho, seventy-eight school projects (including gymnasiums) were built through this program, assisting not only schools but also the construction industry.<sup>9</sup>

The Lava High School gymnasium was constructed in 1934 at a cost of \$42,000. The PWA funds were part of a grant package for Bannock County of \$456,000 to be allocated for buildings and roads.<sup>10</sup> In accordance with PWA requirements, the community had to provide at least 60 percent of the costs. Lava Hot Springs residents approved the issuance of \$30,000 in bonds by a vote of 174-9 in an election held in September 1933 in order to meet this requirement.<sup>11</sup> The Pocatello Tribune stated that the gymnasium was to be 90' x 60' with a 100-yard running track around the top balcony and that a new science lab and an auto mechanic and woodworking shop would also be added.<sup>12</sup> The gymnasium was connected to the existing school, which had been constructed in 1911.

The gymnasium was an important asset for the students and played a significant role as a gathering place for the community, both for Lava Hot Springs and the outlying rural areas. Indeed the 1935 edition of the high school yearbook was dedicated to the new gymnasium building. One former student, Marvin Roswell, who was in second grade at the time the gymnasium was completed, stated that, "It was quite a thing to have the gym, in its day it was one of the finest gyms in the

<sup>8</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, "Idaho and the Great Depression," Idaho Yesterdays 20 (Summer 1969): 7; "Charting U.S. Education," Architectural Forum 59 (January 1935): 9.

<sup>9</sup> "Charting U.S. Education," Architectural Forum, pp. 1-17.

<sup>10</sup> "Federal Aid of \$456,000 for Bannock County," Pocatello Tribune, July 19, 1933, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> "Reject Bids on Lava Building," Pocatello Tribune, December 3, 1933, p. 15.

<sup>12</sup> "Bids Open on Lava School," Pocatello Tribune, November 19, 1933, p. 8.

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County and State Bannock County, Idaho

state of Idaho.”<sup>13</sup> The 1911 structure was demolished in 1979 and a new elementary school was erected on the same site. Lava Hot Springs high school students now attend a consolidated school in Arimo, a few miles southwest of Lava Hot Springs. The gymnasium is still used for school activities, local sports programs and holiday events. It continues to convey its association with local community development made possible by Federal assistance provided to ease the Nation through the Great Depression.

### Architectural Significance

Architecturally, the Lava High School gymnasium is significant as an example of the late-Classical Revival style sometimes referred to as either "stripped" or "starved" Classical. This style, also referred to as PWA Classical, was used extensively for federal buildings and other public architecture beginning in the 1930s. The term "starved" Classical indicates both the retention of traditional motifs familiar to Americans in earlier public architecture and the infiltration of modernism. Classical Revival, and closely related styles such as Renaissance Revival and Colonial or Georgian Revival, had been the preferred decorative motif and design ethic for governmental buildings of all types since the mid-1890s. The Classical Revival style "White City" at the Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, had a particularly profound influence on planners and designers working in the public sphere. The Greek and Roman antecedents of this style, combined with the rational dignity and symmetry of Classical design, were particularly attractive in conveying the authority and stability of governmental institutions.

This design aesthetic, in one manifestation or another, remained the preferred alternative for public structures well into the 20th Century. In the 1930s other approaches, most notably the "modern" influence of Art Deco, Streamline Modern, and International styles, began to influence public architecture. When New Deal relief projects began to fund construction of new public buildings in 1933, both of these aesthetics were employed. The "stripped" Classical approach emerged at this time as a synthesis of both architectural trends, thereby creating "modern" architecture which also tapped into Classicism's traditional image of stability, dignity and authority. The "stripped" nature of these structures may also in part be due to the economic restraints present in the Depression economy.

The Lava High School gymnasium is an excellent example of the merger of Classical Revival architecture with the "modern" aesthetic. Classical characteristics of the gymnasium include the overall symmetry and balance, the indication of an entablature, the use of arches above the windows and the ornamented frieze over the entrance. However, these elements are flattened out and simplified; there is little relief and the wall planes are shallow. The gymnasium adheres to a

<sup>13</sup> "Old Lava High School Draws Many Memories," Idaho State Journal, October 9, 1979.

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Name of Property Lava High School Gymnasium

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description of this style provided by Lois Craig, "What resulted was a gaunt, underfed, "starved" classicism, denoted as much by ... the rhythm of wall and window as by vestigial columns."<sup>14</sup>

The Lava High School gymnasium was designed by Miles E. Miller of Salt Lake City, Utah.<sup>15</sup> Miller was a Salt Lake native and a graduate of both the Latter Day Saints University (later to become Brigham Young University) and of the architectural program at the University of Utah. He began a solo architectural practice in Salt Lake in 1908. In 1917 he formed a partnership with two other architects to inaugurate the firm of Miller, Woolley & Evans. Miller received a law degree from the LaSalle Extension University correspondence program and served two terms in the Utah Legislature from 1927-28 and 1932-33. Miller was an active member of the American Institute of Architects, serving on national committees and as Salt Lake City chapter president. Miller died in March of 1956 at the age of 69.<sup>16</sup>

Miller's practice was typical for a regional architect of good repute. He designed structures in Utah, Idaho, Colorado, and Wyoming. His commissions included public buildings, commercial structures, residences, and a large number of commissions for the LDS Church. Miller's design approach was typical of a general practice architect during the first half of the 20th Century. Miller designed buildings in a variety of styles popular during the time, utilizing Prairie, Tudor, and Classical modes.<sup>17</sup>

His design for the Lava High School gymnasium was typical of commissions executed by his firm and other regional architects in connection with New Deal construction projects. In this example, Miller chose a simplified Classical Revival design very much in keeping with the spartan and functional approach favored for public works projects erected in a time of financial austerity. Miller produced a very happy blending of the decorative and functional aesthetics to create a fine representative of its type and time.

### Conclusion

The Lava High School gymnasium is significant under Criterion A as it is associated with the growth and development of the community of Lava Hot Springs. It is the only remnant of the

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<sup>14</sup> Craig, The Federal Presence, p. 282.

<sup>15</sup> Onagawa, Eugene ed., The Lavonian, The Associated Students of Lava High School, Lava Hot Springs, ID, 1935, p.62.

<sup>16</sup> "Funeral Services Set Saturday for S.L. Architect, Ex-Solon" Deseret News, Mar. 30, 1956, B-7.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

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former Lava High School -- an institution central to the life of any small town in the first half of the 20th Century. Moreover, it is a tangible reminder of the impact that New Deal relief programs such as the PWA had on rural communities in Idaho and across the country. It is also significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of the late-Classical Revival style which illustrates the influence of the modern design aesthetic. It is also worthy of recognition as a representative work of a well-regarded regional architect who practiced in the area for more than 40 years.

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Name of Property Lava High School Gymnasium

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1-6, Block 6, W.J. Fife Addition, Hall City

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary description is the legal boundary that has historically been associated with the property.