

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100002023


Date Listed: 1/29/2018

Property Name: Leon County Health Unit Building (Florida's New Deal Resources MPS)

County: Leon

State: FL

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

1-29-2018

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Criteria Considerations

Criteria Consideration "G" is hereby checked.

The period in which the building served as the state's Division of Youth Services, 1967-1971, marked an exceptionally significant time in correctional policy development. The administration and policy change relating to the treatment of youth offenders that was developed and implemented while the DYS occupied this building had long-lasting effects on Florida's correctional system. And, since this period lies entirely within the last fifty years, it satisfies Criteria Consideration G.

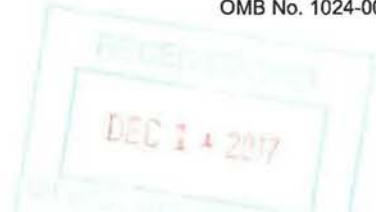
The Florida State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Leon County Health Unit Building

other names/site number Bloxham Annex/LE1811

2. Location

street & number 325 East Gaines Street N/A not for publication

city or town Tallahassee N/A vicinity

state Florida code FL county Leon code _____ zip code 32301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

[Signature] / SHRO Date 12/4/2017

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

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

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

1-29-2018

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

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

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

Name of related multiple property listings

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

Florida's New Deal Resources MPS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

HEALTHCARE: clinic

HEALTHCARE: medical office

GOVERNMENT: government office

SOCIAL: civic

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- HEALTH/MEDICINE
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
SOCIAL HISTORY
ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK
EDUCATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1941-1971

Significant Dates

1941

1965

Significant Person

GRAVES, LEANDER JOHNSON, M.D.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION, BUILDER

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of Repository

#

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

Summary

The Leon County Health Unit Building, located in downtown Tallahassee near Cascades Park, is a two-story cast concrete Art Moderne building with stucco exterior finish. The exterior of the building retains a high degree of integrity and aside from some changes such as replacement of windows looks very much as it did during its period of significance. The integrity of the interior has been altered, with carpeting applied to the flooring and the interior walls covered over with vinyl faux wood paneling, which has been applied over the original walls in a manner that they can be removed without permanently damaging the historic fabric of the building. There are also drop ceilings put in place on both levels. In the southwest room, there is some damage to the ceiling, wall, and flooring. Despite these changes, the building still retains sufficient integrity to qualify for listing in the National Register.

Setting

The Leon County Health Unit Building is located in the city of Tallahassee, Florida. Located within the Big Bend region, the city of Tallahassee serves as both the state capitol of Florida and the county seat of Leon County. It is also the home to two major state universities, Florida State University and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. The health unit building is located at the intersection of East Gaines Street and South Gadsden Street in an area heavily dominated by large governmental buildings. The building is located roughly a block away from Cascades Park, a large municipal park. The health building is one of three contemporary buildings, sharing a lot with the historic Works Progress Administration (WPA) Building to the west and located across Gadsden Street from the historic former Leon County Jail.

Physical Description

Exterior

The Health Department Building is a two-story cast concrete building with stucco exterior finish. It features a flat roof and rests on a poured concrete foundation. Fenestration consists primarily of 1/1 metal windows of various sizes. The second story windows feature distinctive stylized lintels and noticeable sills while the first story windows are plain with sills. There are two horizontal coping lines extending around the building near the roofline.

Main (North) Façade

The main façade has perhaps the most distinctive architectural detailing of the building's exterior (Photo 1). Facing Gaines Street, it features a prominent wood double door main entrance inset within the middle of the elevation. Above the door is a stylized vertical molding which extends above the roofline. There is also

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decorative porthole-shaped moldings and geometric motifs. Access to the main entrance is through a cast concrete stoop with metal railings. On the northwest corner of the building is a cornerstone (Photo 2).

West Elevation

The west elevation, which fronts South Gadsden Street, serves as a secondary façade for the building (Photo 3). There are two decorative pilasters extending to the second story. There is also decorative porthole-shaped moldings directly above the pilasters. There is a single wood door on the first story sheltered by a streamlined visor.

South (Rear) Elevation

The south (rear) elevation of the building features fenestration and decorative geometric motifs similar in appearance to those found on the main façade (Photo 4). The utility lines and air conditioning units are found on this elevation. On the west and west side of the elevation are scuppers and downspouts used for roof drainage.

East Elevation

The east elevation of the building is rather plain in appearance, with fenestration similar in appearance to the rest of the building. On this elevation is a prominent square chimney extending near the midpoint of the elevation and extending above the roofline.

Interior

First Floor

Access to the first floor of the building is through a lobby that opens into the main entrance (Photos 5-7). The main corridor wraps around the staircase, leading from the foyer to the southwest room. There are three rooms on the east side of the elevation and four rooms on the west side. There are also public restrooms for on the south end of the building (Photo 8). Access to the stairs is through an interior door that opens into the hallway. The flooring on this level has been covered over with carpeting and the interior walls consist of vinyl faux wood paneling, which has been applied over the original walls in a manner that they can be removed without permanently damaging the historic fabric of the building. There are also drop ceilings put in place. In the southwest room, there is some damage to the ceiling, wall, and flooring (Photo 9).

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Stairwell

There is a central stairwell and a two-flight staircase providing access between the first floor and ground floor. The original interior walls are visible in this area (Photo 10).

Ground Floor

The ground floor of the building is access from the staircase leading from the first floor (Photos 11-13). Unlike the first floor, there is no central hallway that wraps around the stairwell. The staircase opens into the north end of the floor into a small corridor. Access to south end is through other rooms. The flooring in this level, much like the first floor, is carpeted and has drop ceilings. The interior fabric is white gypsum board. The southwest room in this level, like the southwest room on the first floor, has seen some damage to it (Photo 14).

Alterations

The building has seen a number of alterations to it over the course of its history. Sometime likely after 1970, the interior of the first floor was covered over with faux wood paneling and the ground floor was covered over n gypsum board. Carpeting was put in place on both floors. Drop ceilings were added and the windows were replaced. Despite these interior changes, the exterior of the building retains a high degree of integrity.

Integrity

The building is still in its original location, hence it retains its integrity of location and association. The setting of the building has changed somewhat since its construction in 1939. It was originally located adjacent to a thriving historic African American neighborhood known as Smokey Hollow. This neighborhood was demolished in the 1950s, a victim of urban renewal and government expansion. It has since been partially replaced by Cascades Park. The health unit building was an extension of a preexisting concentration of government buildings to the north, and the building still retains its visual connection to these buildings. Hence, it retains sufficient integrity of setting. The exterior of the building retains a high degree of integrity, and the most important architectural features are retained. The interior integrity has been affected by the non-historic fabric and carpeting but these changes can be reversed without affecting the historic fabric. Hence the building retains sufficient integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

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Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

SUMMARY

The Leon County Health Unit Building is being listed under Criterion A at the state and local level for Health/Medicine and Government and at the local level for Ethnic Heritage: Black, Social History, and Education. The period of significance extends from 1941 until 1971, when the Division of Youth Services relocated. The building is significant under Criterion B at the local level for its association with Dr. Leander J. Graves, an important figure in the history of public health in the city of Tallahassee and Leon County. It is also being listed under Criterion C at the local level for Architecture. It is one of only three surviving Art Moderne buildings left in downtown Tallahassee. The building, which was built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), was the home of the Leon County Health Unit (LCHU) from 1941 until 1965. It also served as the home of the Leon County Welfare Association from 1941 until circa 1951. The building was the first in the state of Florida purpose-built for a local health unit. The LCHU, which was the oldest county health unit in continuous operation in Florida, was a major fixture in the community, assuming a vast array of public health responsibilities. The LCHU was unusual in that it employed an interracial staff and was open to both black and white residents. With the implementation of the Florida School Health program, the county health unit played a significant role in both countywide school nursing programs and in the coordination of special education needs for students with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities. The creation of local health units was considered a major turning point in the history of public health in the state. The units greatly increased the efficiency of public health programs through cooperation and shared funding between the different levels of government. After World War II, the responsibilities of the unit, now known as the county health department, expanded into mental health, cancer treatment, and occupational or industrial hygiene. The building housed the first county mental health clinic, then known as the Human Relations Institute, from 1947 until 1950. In 1954, one of the last polio epidemics in the United States struck the Tallahassee area. The county health department played a key role in fighting the outbreak, coordinating medical services, educating the public, and providing support to the hospitals in the area.

From 1967 to 1971, the Health Unit Building served as the first permanent home of the state Division of Youth Services. This agency ran the juvenile detention facilities in the state. It was during its brief tenure in the Health Unit Building that major changes took place in Florida juvenile detention facilities, including the integration of facilities, the creation of the first state-funded halfway house in Florida, the introduction of group therapy into juvenile facilities, and the elimination of corporal punishment.

The Leon County Health Unit Building contributes to the Florida's New Deal Resources MPS under Associated Historic Contexts: The New Deal in Florida, 1933-1943 and Associated Property Type F.1 Buildings.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT

Public Health in Florida

Prior to the creation of the Florida State Board of Health (SBH) in 1889, public health in the state was handled locally and was sporadic, often limited to simple quarantine measures for incoming ships. Like many other states at the time, Florida had a long history of epidemics that killed large numbers of people. The ports were especially vulnerable to outbreaks, as the influx of ships from around the world increased the risks of spreading diseases. Despite the clear need for cooperative effort, it was not until the 1870s that serious efforts were made to address public health concerns at the state level. Despite the lobbying efforts of the Florida Medical Association and concerned citizens, little leeway was made in creating a statewide public health agency until 1888, when a yellow fever epidemic swept through the city of Jacksonville. The general confusion and inadequacy of control measures failed to contain the epidemic within the city and it soon spread to surrounding communities. This convinced Governor Francis Fleming of the urgency of creating a centralized public health agency for the state, which took place the following year. The first state public health officer was Dr. Joseph Yates Porter, a military doctor who made a name for himself for his efforts in controlling yellow fever and cholera outbreaks in Key West.¹

The original focus of the SBH was epidemiological studies and the implementation and coordination of disease control and prevention measures, both of which remain important functions of the agency today. This included issuing reports and investigations, ordering and overseeing quarantines and evacuations, and mandating municipal and county authorities to record and report vital records and the presence of communicable diseases. By the early 20th century, the focus of the SBH expanded into public education, veterinary medicine, disaster relief, prenatal care, women's health issues, and pediatric health. The SBH also began directly operating hospitals and clinics. As the responsibilities of the organization expanded, there was a pressing need to establish local public health agencies. Due to financial difficulties and political wrangling, however, the legislation for the creation of local health units did not pass until 1931. The resulting legislation, known as the Florida Health Unit Law, provided for the creation of a "system of coordinated county health department services," composed of individual county health units (CHU), which were founded in conjunction with the SBH and the local county commissions. This legislation encouraged counties to improve the efficiency of local public health services through more effective coordination efforts and more efficient dispersal of state and federal funds. The Leon

¹ William J. Bigler, "Public Health in Florida – Yesteryear," *Florida Journal of Public Health* vol. 1, no. 3 (May 1989) [reprint] <http://www.fpha.org/resources/Documents/public%20health%20in%20florida-yesteryear.pdf>, p. 3-5.

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County Health Unit (LCHU) became the second of its kind in the state of Florida in 1931. Although the state was slow to adopt county health unit programs, by 1941, there were units in 32 counties across the state.²

Each county health unit was composed of at least one health officer, nurse, sanitary officer, and a clerk. These units were expected to administer programs in twelve areas of public health: maternal health, infant and preschool health, school health, adult health, cancer control, tuberculosis control, venereal disease control, industrial hygiene, dental hygiene, nutrition, community sanitation, and health education. The health officer was tasked with a wide variety of responsibilities, including the administration of all local health programs, the enforcement of health laws, conducting health surveys, and disease control measures such as quarantines, case finding, and hospitalization referrals of patients with communicable diseases. Public health nurses were often the most ubiquitous presence of public health in the state. They assisted the local public health officer in administering the programs and usually had the most day to day interaction with the public. Many of the educational programs offered by the CHU were taught by nurses. In rural areas, nurses were often the only public health officials regularly seen as they either made home visits or conducted remote clinics. The sanitary officer was responsible for inspecting sewage disposal, municipal water supplies, and food handling establishments. They were tasked with promoting proper food handling techniques, sewage disposal, and sanitary living conditions. The sanitation officer also inspected school grounds, tourist establishments, and recreational facilities, and oversaw pest control services.³

Public Health in Leon County Before 1931

Like many towns in Florida during the 19th century, Tallahassee and Leon County saw a number of outbreaks of diseases, most notably yellow fever. A particularly bad outbreak of the disease struck the city in 1841, killing an estimated 230 to 400 people in a town of only 1,600 residents. With an incomplete understanding of the causes of the disease, however, little could be done to stop its spread. A pervasive belief at the time was the disease was connected to bad air. As a result, a mass exodus from the town usually ensued whenever a health crisis such as a disease outbreak occurred, which often exacerbated the problem by spreading it to surrounding communities. Around this time, the city established five police commissioners and tasked them with the responsibility of assuring that privies were properly maintained and garbage removed from the streets. These commissioners were granted further powers to form what amounted to a board of health, consulting with physicians in the town to better stop the spread of yellow fever. As no one knew how the disease was spread, their suggestions were ineffective. To accommodate the sudden influx of deceased, the city expanded the municipal burial ground. All burials were mandated to be done within 24 hours and had to be overseen by a superintendent. Aside from this, nothing else was done by the city to combat the disease. Despite the fact that

² Bigler, "Public Health in Florida – Yesteryear," p. 4-10; Bill Bigler and Davis D. Janowski, *Florida's Public Health Heritage* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Health, 2016), p. 33.

³ *Florida Health Notes*, "What are County Health Departments and Units?" vol. 38, no. 5 (May 1946), p. 88-96.

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the city would be plagued by outbreaks of disease throughout the rest of the 19th century, little was done to improve public health on a governmental level until the late 19th century.⁴

In 1889, shortly after the creation of the State Board of Health, authorization was given for the creation of county boards of health, which replaced a similar law that passed in 1885.⁵ The measure never took off however and by 1897 it was shot down. As a result, the state board was forced to handle much of the local public health work through designated county sanitary agents. These agents worked at the local level in close communication with the state health officer and were crucial to the operation of the state board. The county sanitary agent of Leon County in the mid-1890s was Dr. Henry Palmer.⁶

Following World War I, the American Red Cross provided public health nurses "on a demonstration basis" to a number of communities, including Leon County. By 1925, however, the Red Cross recalled the nurse assigned to Leon County due to a lack of funding. Recognizing a community need, the Leon County Council of Women, which was a federation of women's clubs, took the lead in fundraising. The women were successful in raising enough money to convince the American Red Cross to once again provide a public health nurse but on the condition that the salary was provided by the community. The city of Tallahassee and Leon County provided assistance as well, offering an automobile and assisting with the funding of the nurse's salary.⁷

Although the public health nurse provided much needed service to the community, there was a growing realization of the need for something more substantial. In 1929, a group of concerned citizens formed the Leon County Health Association. Initially concerned with public health, they quickly realized the need for improved social services, changing their name to the Leon County Health and Welfare Association. Their first major project undertaken was for a comprehensive survey of both the health and welfare services provided in the county. The report shed light on the chaotic nature of the welfare services, which at this time was handled primarily through local civic organizations and churches, often with duplication of efforts and no central coordination. Their review of the public health services in the community was no better. Their report was supplemented by a grand jury investigation which gave a scathing review of the social services. By the end of 1929, as the stock market crashed and the Great Depression began, the deficiencies of the already underfunded social welfare program became more pronounced. This prompted the LCHA to schedule a massive public

⁴ Barbara Elizabeth Miller, "Tallahassee and the 1841 Yellow Fever Epidemic" (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1976), 74-78, 96-97; Jason Dehart, "Yellow Fever was the Scourge of Tallahassee and Surrounding Towns in 1841," *Tallahassee Magazine* (July-August 2011), <http://www.tallahassee.com/July-August-2011/Historicity>.

⁵ State Board of Health of Florida, "An Act to Provide for the Appointment of County Boards of Health in and for the Several Counties of the State of Florida," *First Annual Report of the State Board of Health of Florida* (Jacksonville, FL, 1890), 65-67.

⁶ State Board of Health of Florida, *Report of the Board of Health of the State of Florida for the Years 1895 and 1896* (Jacksonville, FL, 1897), 22.

⁷ Paul F. Hebert, "An Analysis of the Structure, Function, and Procedures of the Leon County Associated Charities, Tallahassee, Florida," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1952), 4.

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meeting, which was attended by representatives of nearly every major civic and religious organization in the county and representatives from the city, county, and state governments.⁸

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Leon County Welfare Association and FSCW Social Work Program

As a result of this meeting, the Leon County Welfare Association (LCWA) was formed. This was a private non-profit organization funded through a combination of local government spending, membership dues, and donations from individuals and organizations. The LCWA's stated purpose was very broadly defined: "The... purpose of the Association shall be to provide relief for and look after the sick, indigent or needy persons in Tallahassee and Leon county... It will also conduct and carry on general welfare work throughout the city and county."⁹ The LCWA provided much needed centralization and organization of the disparate charitable groups operating in the county and handled much of the casework and welfare duties of the city and county. The LCWA was also responsible for verifying eligibility of people requesting government assistance, a job that was especially important during the Great Depression.¹⁰

The original purpose of the LCWA was to handle both the public health and social welfare responsibilities of the city and county. As a result, the head of the organization, Helen Farrow, was a certified public health nurse. It quickly became apparent, however, that the work at hand was far more involved than could be capably handled by one person. After the founding of the Leon County Health Unit, the LCWA focused primarily on social work.¹¹ From its inception, the LCWA had a close working relationship with the Florida State College for Women (FSCW), now known as Florida State University. The sociology department under the leadership of Dr. Raymond Bellamy began offering courses in social work in the 1920s. By 1930, the college and the LCWA collaborated on a field work program designed to give third and fourth year undergraduate students practical experience in casework. The students formed the bulk of the workforce for the LCWA and operated under the supervision of Dr. Elinor Nims, a sociology professor under the employ of FSCW. The presence and foresight of the Florida State College for Women to offer their students to the LCWA during this period proved immeasurably valuable to both organizations. The program provided much needed staff support for the county welfare association. The implementation of this program was a major milestone for the fledgling social work program at FSCW. By 1934, the number of enrollees in social work courses more than doubled. By 1939, there were over 100 FSCW graduates employed in the social work field in the state of Florida alone.¹²

⁸ Hebert, 5-9.

⁹ Ibid., 9-10.

¹⁰ Ibid., 19-21.

¹¹ Ibid., 19-20.

¹² *Florida Flambeau*, "Inspection of Welfare Units Made by Class," 12 Oct 1934; *Florida Flambeau*, "College Joins Social Workers," 18 Aug 1939.

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Leon County Health Unit Establishment

The Leon County Health Unit was formally established on January 1, 1931. It was subsidized as a joint venture by the city of Tallahassee, Leon County, and the state of Florida. The unit found difficulties in securing proper facilities early on, moving between several different buildings, including the Demetree Building on Monroe Street, the basement of the Leon County High School, and a private residence on North Monroe Street. Despite these limitations, the unit was able to make significant progress, and managed to remain in continuous operation throughout this period, which was marked by significant financial difficulties for the community. Doctor Leander J. Graves was named director of the unit while Helen Farrow, director of the Leon County Welfare Association, was the nurse for the white people and Irene O'Dell McGreen was the nurse for the African American community. Ford L. Thompson was appointed as sanitary officer for Tallahassee while William R. Hendrix was named sanitary officer for the rural areas.¹³ By the end of 1933, the LCHU gave 128 health talks, made over 2,800 home visits, made over 1,700 meat and dairy inspections, treated over 1,000 cases of hookworm, tested over 400 cases of venereal diseases, provided immunization for over 2,000 people, and oversaw the installation of 287 pit toilets and 33 sewer connections. The unit also oversaw a massive mosquito control program that included over 99,000 inspections and the drainage of over 32,000 linear feet of road ditches, swamps, and ponds.¹⁴ The effectiveness of this program was such that by 1939, there was not a single death in the county from malaria, which director Leander Graves believed was the first time this ever happened.¹⁵

One of the primary functions of the LCHU was its role as the primary recorder of vital statistics in the county. The county health officer was also the local registrar of vital statistics, responsible for the reporting of all births, deaths, and diseases in the community. This was a function the unit continued to serve after it moved into the Health Unit Building.¹⁶

¹³ *Sunday News-Democrat*, "County Health Unit is Geared to New Service," 18 Aug 1940; *Florida Health Notes*, "Leon County Unit Established," vol. 23, no. 1 (January 1931), 35.

¹⁴ State Board of Health of Florida, *Thirty-Fourth Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1933* (Jacksonville, FL, 1934), 78-81.

¹⁵ L.J. Graves, "No Deaths from Malaria Reported in Leon County," *Florida Health Notes*, vol. 32, no. 3 (March 1940), 39.

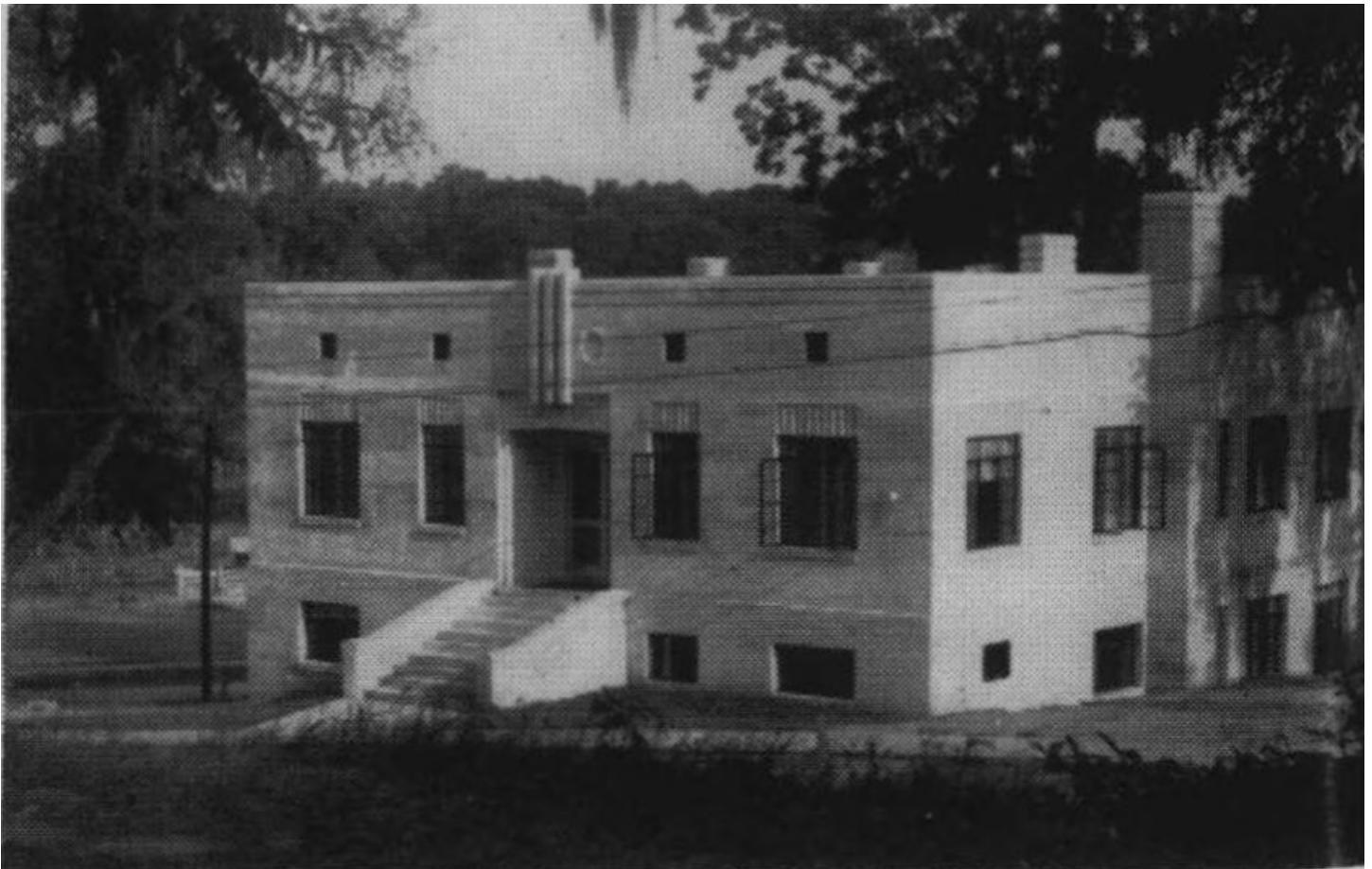
¹⁶ Albert Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1955), 92.

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Leon County Health Unit Building



View of Leon County Health Unit Building shortly after its construction in 1940
(Source: *Florida Health Notes* vol. 32, no. 9 (September 1940), 116)

The construction of the Leon County Health Unit Building marked a significant milestone in the fledgling local health unit program of the State Board of Health. Constructed with the aid of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the building was the first purpose-built edifice for a local county health unit. The LCHU occupied the first floor of the building while the county welfare association was located in the ground floor. Originally the building was all-white on both the interior and exterior. The opening of the new building had an immediate effect on allowing the health unit to expand its services. The prenatal clinic that had been suspended due to lack of facilities resumed, and was helping between 40 to 60 pregnant women a week within weeks of its

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reopening. The unit quickly expanded to offer clinics for preschool children, routine checkups of infants, medical examinations of new mothers, and syphilis examinations.¹⁷ By the end of 1941, the unit administered over 2,000 immunizations, received over 14,000 visits to the venereal disease clinic, admitted over 4,000 tuberculosis cases to the medical service, and made over 1,700 nursing visits for maternity services. In addition, over 10,000 food handling venues were registered with the sanitation officer for inspection and over 1,700 inspections of these establishments were made.¹⁸

By the time the building opened in 1941, the health unit had in addition to the director Leander Graves two sanitation inspectors, two white nurses, and three African American nurses. The interracial focus of the health unit was a very important component of its operations. The building was opened to both black and white residents of the county, albeit on alternating days. The white and African American nurses generally administered services and conducted outreach amongst their respective communities. For members of the African American community of Tallahassee, especially the adjacent Smokey Hollow neighborhood, the health unit was an important support organization, providing preventative medical care for the poor.

Leon County Welfare Association

After the LCWA moved into the Health Unit Building, the collaborations continued with FSCW. In 1942, the Welfare Association, working with FSCW, started a campaign to raise \$15,000 for “social rehabilitation.”¹⁹ By 1945, students under the direction of Caroline Blue conducted outreach to local schools, interviewed applicants for financial assistance, and worked as receptionists for both the LCWA and the State Board of Welfare in the Health Unit Building. Students devoted four hours a week to case work, which served as the foundation of their training.²⁰ In 1945, the LCWA, working in conjunction with the American Red Cross, founded the Community War Chest, aimed at both fundraising and at raising money for the war effort. Due in part to the influx of new donors brought in by the military, these fundraisers were successes. After the war, the Community War Chest became the Community Chest, which continued to function as a major community nonprofit support wing. By 1951, the welfare association, which changed its name to Leon County Associated Charities, moved nearby to the former WPA Building.²¹

¹⁷ *Sunday News-Democrat*, “County Health Unit is Geared to New Service,” 18 Aug 1940; *Daily Democrat*, “New Health Unit Structure Opened with Ceremonies,” 19 July 1940.

¹⁸ State Board of Health of Florida, *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1934* (Jacksonville, FL, 1935), 120, 123.

¹⁹ *Florida Flambeau*, “Dr. Moore Heads Welfare Campaign,” 2 Oct 1942.

²⁰ *Florida Flambeau*, “Students do Social Work,” 9 Mar 1945.

²¹ Hebert, “An Analysis of the Structure, Function, and Procedures of the Leon County Associated Charities, Tallahassee, Florida,” 22-25; R.L. Polk and Company, *Polk’s Tallahassee City Directory 1951* (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1951), 58.

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Prenatal Care



Nurse examining infant, ca. 1950s
(source: Florida Memory Project)

From its beginnings, the Leon County Health Unit played a major role in providing prenatal care services for the community. During this period, residents predominantly in the rural areas of the state, particularly African Americans, relied on midwives to deliver newborns. Most of the midwives operating in Florida at this time were African Americans. The city of Tallahassee was unusual in that there had been a nursing school for African Americans in full operation since 1904 at Florida A&M College. Despite this, the black midwives, especially in rural areas, had a great deal of interaction with public health nurses outside the school. In 1931, in an effort to decrease infant mortality rates, the state of Florida mandated that midwives operating in the state received certification in order to practice. In response, the State Board of Health established the Institute for Midwives, which was first held at Florida A&M in 1933. In the first institute alone, 234 midwives from 25

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counties attended the program. The African American nurse assigned to the LCHU, Irene McGreen, was an important collaborator in this first institute. As an extension of this program, there were classes and demonstrations held for the midwives at the local level, including in Leon County.²² By the time the Health Unit Building opened in 1941, approximately 65% of the births in the county were still handled by midwives, so outreach and educational efforts directed towards them was a major public health objective for the county health unit.²³ In addition to state law requiring certification, the city of Tallahassee passed a municipal ordinance requiring the city health officer to issue a permit for midwives to operate within city limits. Midwives were also mandated to issue reports to the county health unit after every delivery performed. This gave the health unit strong regulatory power over midwives in the area.²⁴

The Leon County Health Unit held weekly clinics for expectant mothers, with clinics held on separate days for white and black women. The service was open to all women in the community who were either pregnant or suspected pregnancy. On their first visit, they were given full medical evaluations and tested for a variety of medical conditions and diseases. The public health nurses also provided health education for the mothers and often provided follow up prenatal and postnatal home visits. This was a level of care that largely did not exist for indigent families in the community prior to the arrival of the county health unit.²⁵

²² Christine Ardalan, "Forging Professional Public Health Nursing in a Southern State: Florida's Public Health Nurses, 1889 to 1934" (PhD. Diss., Florida International University, 2012), 243-247.

²³ *Sunday News-Democrat*, "County Health Unit is Geared to New Service," 18 Aug 1940.

²⁴ Albert Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1955), 75.

²⁵ Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," 74-75.

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Florida School Health Program



Schoolchildren receiving polio shots, ca. 1955
(source: Florida Memory Project)

The connection between healthy living in children and their success both in the classroom and in adult life has long been noted by professionals in both the education and public health fields. By the 1930s, efforts were being made to standardize health education and to fully incorporate the local public health agencies within the schools. In 1939, the Florida State Department of Education and the State Board of Health jointly issued a bulletin titled “Florida’s School Health Program,” which was revised in 1943. It broke up the program into three general areas: Healthful School Living, Health Service, and Health Instruction. Healthful School Living

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involved maintaining a healthy environment for the children and included maintaining sanitary school grounds, encouraging good hygiene, physical education, and providing proper nutrition. Health Service included physical examinations, corrective plans of action accommodating handicapped children, and limiting the spread of communicable diseases. Health Education involved providing proper health instruction to children. In all of these areas, the local health units played a vital role in their implementation, either in an advisory role or through direct action.²⁶

The LCHU made education a top priority from its earliest stages. As early as 1933, the unit contacted every school principal in Leon County to discuss the implementation of health programs. They examined over 2,600 children and taught nutritional classes for 550 underweight children. By 1934, the LCHU oversaw the physical examinations of white students in Leon County schools, and were able to identify problems in children, which were primarily dental defects, tonsillitis, hearing problems, and poor eyesight. Similar work for black schools was subcontracted out to black physicians.²⁷ In 1941, the year the health unit building opened, the LCHU made 781 inspections, 635 examinations, 6 admissions to nursing services, and 200 nursing visits relating to school hygiene.²⁸

The local health unit had help in the execution of its school health program from a number of local charities. The Pilot Club, for instance provided audiometers and volunteer examiners to assist the nurses in inspecting children for hearing loss. They also provided hearing aids for children from poor families. The Lions Club provided similar assistance for visually impaired students.²⁹

Well Baby Conference

From the beginning, the Leon County Health Unit had an active focus on preventative healthcare for infants and young children. The opening of the building provided the unit with an opportunity to greatly expand its outreach in these areas. The unit had its own Well Baby Conference, which was held once a week. This was a service offered to infants under one year of age whose parents were unable to afford a visit to a pediatrician. Infants received medical checkups and immunization shots by a doctor. They were also screened for nutritional

²⁶ Florida State Department of Education and Florida State Board of Health, *Florida's School Health Program: Florida Program for Improvement of Schools*, Bulletin No. 4 (Tallahassee, FL, 1943), 8-14.

²⁷ State Board of Health of Florida, *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1934* (Jacksonville, FL, 1935), 23-24.

²⁸ Florida State Board of Health, *Forty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Health for the Year Ending December 31, 1941* (Jacksonville, FL, 1942), 122.

²⁹ Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," 78.

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deficiencies, physical and mental abnormalities, and communicable diseases.³⁰ The unit also provided health education to mothers, teaching them proper health care for young children and infants.³¹

Venereal Disease Clinic

One of the most important public health objectives of the health unit was the screening and treatment of venereal disease and public education on the subject. In 1941 alone, there were over 14,000 visits to the Leon County Health Unit for venereal disease control.³² In the early years of the health unit during the 1930s and into the 1940s, effective antibiotic treatment of syphilis was not widely available. As a result, the disease was very difficult to contain and often resulted in permanent disfigurement or death. The disease was exacerbated by the fact it could spread from mother to newborn child, and the mother often showed few signs of infection.³³ The social stigma associated with syphilis and other venereal diseases often discouraged people from getting tested. During World War II in particular, the large influx of servicemen into the state, including in Tallahassee, made venereal disease control especially important. By the mid-1940s, the widespread availability of antibiotics such as penicillin and streptomycin marked a huge turning point in the treatment of bacterial venereal diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea.³⁴ By the mid-1950s, the county's Venereal Disease Prevention and Control Center was operating clinics out of the health unit building six days a week. A US Public Health Service surgeon was assigned to the center as was a health field worker, who was tasked with important case finding responsibilities of tracking the potential causes and spread of venereal diseases.³⁵

Tuberculosis

One of the earliest priorities of the Leon County Health Unit was combating the spread of tuberculosis. The disease itself was especially problematic in the late 1930s, as it was one of the leading causes of death in the county. It was also a problem across the state, so much so that the State Board of Health created an entire division exclusively focusing on the disease. The Leon County unit was especially proactive in addressing the problem in the community, hosting special clinics, engaging in case finding, making home visits, giving medical referrals, and providing x-rays and medical supplies to those suspected of tuberculosis infection. Working closely with several support organizations such as the Ocklockonee Tuberculosis and Health

³⁰ T.K. Waering, M.D., "The Well Baby Conference," *Florida Health Notes*, vol. 36, no. 5 (May 1944), 87-88.

³¹ Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," 75-76.

³² Florida State Board of Health, *Forty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Health for the Year Ending December 31, 1941*, 120.

³³ For more information on the history of syphilis, please see: Bruce M. Rothschild, "History of Syphilis," *Clinical Infectious Diseases* vol. 40, no. 10 (May 2005), 1454-1463, <https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/40/10/1454/308400/History-of-Syphilis>.

³⁴ R.F. Sondag, M.D., "Venereal Disease Control," in Florida State Board of Health, *48th Annual Report State Board of Health* (Jacksonville, FL, 1947), 10.

³⁵ Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," 70-72.

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Association, they were exceedingly effective in helping to significantly reduce infection in the community. In 1941, there were over 4,000 individuals admitted to medical service for tuberculosis in Leon County. By 1950, the number admitted to medical and nursing services dropped to 84. By 1965, the number of active cases fell to 15.³⁶

Florida State-Wide Negro Health Committee

In 1942, health education programs amongst the African American community in Florida began through the efforts of the Afro-American and Central Life Insurance companies. The companies provided the funds for the printing of a series of health education pamphlets through Florida A&M College. The companies through their agents began actively promoting health education throughout the communities in which they served, distributing the literature amongst the African American residents. With interest aroused on the subject matter, the Florida Bureau of Health Education arranged for a series of conferences with recognized leaders of the local black communities. In February 1944, on National Social Hygiene Day, over 150 African Americans from around the state met at Bethune-Cookman College to form the State-Wide Negro Health Committee. The State-Wide Negro Health Committee played a major role in the development of health education in black schools in the state. The organization relied heavily on the local health units, utilizing their resources and facilities to help conduct outreach and educate black residents outside of the schools. Margaret L. Blake, who was hired by the State Board of Health as a consultant for their Negro program, served in an advisory capacity for the State-Wide Negro Health Committee.³⁷

Leon County Health Department

In 1944, the name of the Leon County Health Unit changed to the Leon County Health Department. After World War II, two major developments took place in Tallahassee that greatly expanded the reach of the local health unit. In addition to the expansion of the former Florida State College of Women into the coed FSU, the hospital facilities for both black and white residents in the city improved. In 1948, Tallahassee Memorial Hospital (TMH) opened. This was followed by the expansion of the medical facility at Florida A&M University, which was elevated to the status of a full hospital in 1951 following the construction of a new 105-bed brick building. Public health in the state also expanded into a number of new fields, including cancer treatment, mental health, and industrial health.

³⁶ Florida State Board of Health, *Forty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Health for the Year Ending December 31, 1941*, 120; Florida State Board of Health, *Annual Report State Board of Health State of Florida 1950* (Jacksonville, FL, 1951), 45; Florida State Board of Health, *Annual Report State board of Health State of Florida 1965* (Jacksonville, FL, 1966), 139.

³⁷ Margaret L. Blake, "Introduction to this Issue," *Florida Health Notes*, vol. 36, no. 6 (June 1944), 102-106; Richard V. Moore, "The Organization and Purposes of the State-Wide Negro Health Committee," *Florida Health Notes*, vol. 36, no. 6 (June 1944), 107-109.

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Mental Health Program/Human Relations Institute

In 1947, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Public Health Service, the State Board of Health started its Mental Health Program. When the program first started, there were six county mental health clinics in operation. Among the first six was in Leon County, which started in 1947 but was in full operation in 1948. By this time, the county health department and Florida State University (FSU) formed a collaborative venture known as the Human Relations Institute, which operated the mental health clinic for the county through the Health Unit Building.³⁸ The clinic consisted of a certified psychiatrist, a clinical psychologist, and a social worker all paid by FSU. The psychologist and social worker oversaw a staff of 9 students from the FSU clinical psychology and social work departments. In addition to receiving regular referrals in Leon County, the staff psychologist also spent three to five days a week in neighboring counties for two months out of the year. By the end of 1948, the nascent mental health clinic saw a total of 207 cases.³⁹ By 1950, the service area expanded into 13 surrounding counties, accounting for over 1/3 of the total 334 cases seen by the clinic. By this time, the clinic had its own electroencephalograph (EEG), which was moved to Tallahassee Memorial Hospital.⁴⁰ As the program expanded, it soon became apparent that it was outgrowing its space in the health unit building.⁴¹ By 1951, the number of cases grew to 414, including out-of-state referrals. By this time, staff from the clinic also held special “sub-clinics” at the Florida Industrial School for Boys in Marianna.⁴² As the clinic outgrew its facilities, it moved next door to the former WPA Building at 319 East Gaines Street in 1951, where it would remain until 1965.⁴³

Occupational Health/Industrial Hygiene

In 1946, the State Board of Health created the Division of Industrial Hygiene. The division was established as a result of a 1945 state legislative amendment to the Workmen’s Compensation Act, which was changed to include occupational diseases. This marked a significant expansion of the preexisting workmen’s compensation laws, which up until this point was primarily concerned with compensation for short term injuries. The amended law required the State Board of Health to work with the Florida Industrial Commission to undertake a statewide study of industrial diseases. The study found inadequate measures were being taken to protect workers at risk of

³⁸ Lowell S. Selling, M.D., “Mental Health Program,” in Florida State Board of Health, *48th Annual Report State Board of Health State of Florida: 1947* (Jacksonville, FL, 1948), 88-89.

³⁹ Frances E.M. Read, M.D., “Mental Health Program,” in Florida State Board of Health, *Florida State Board of Health 49th Annual Report* (Jacksonville, FL, 1949), 84-85.

⁴⁰ An EEG is a machine used to measure electrical activity in the brain.

⁴¹ Florida State Board of Health, “Mental Health Program,” in *Florida State Board of Health 1950 Annual Report* (Jacksonville, FL, 1951), 164-165.

⁴² Florida State Board of Health, “Mental Health Program,” in *Florida State Board of Health 1951 Annual Report* (Jacksonville, FL, 1952), 190-191.

⁴³ R.L. Polk & Company, *Polk’s Tallahassee City Directory 1951* (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1951), 58.

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developing industrial diseases, especially in the phosphate, citrus, and cigar industries. Although the responsibility of managing the program remained with the industrial commission, the Division of Industrial Hygiene played an important advisory role. The duties of the division expanded into conducting surveys and inspections of industrial plants. The division often relied upon the sanitarians in the local health units such as Leon County to help in their inspections.⁴⁴

Cancer Control Program

By the 1940s, public health concerns expanded into cancer detection and prevention measures. In 1947, the State Board of Health officially established the Cancer Control Program. The program quickly grew from just over 300 examinations in 1947 to over 1,149 by the end of 1949. By 1950, a local cancer control clinic known as the Leon County Tumor Clinic was opened in the city of Tallahassee. The clinic was based out of Tallahassee Memorial Hospital and by 1951 was fully certified as a cancer treatment center, servicing a 19-county area. It was operated as a joint venture between the State Board of Health and the Florida Division of the American Cancer Society. Its establishment was a significant milestone in cancer treatment for the area, marking the beginning of active local and state government participation in the fight against cancer in Tallahassee. By 1955, the clinic had its own director and secretary as well as a certified pathologist. The clinic was established for indigent cancer patients. It relied heavily on local doctors, who provided their services free of charge. The State Board of Health, operating through the Leon County Health Department, was responsible for payments of fees for x-rays, laboratory work, surgeries, radium treatments, and hospital bills. The Board also covered the salary of the secretary. The American Cancer Society provided funding for the administrative expenses of the clinic. Surgery or inpatient care was handled by TMH for white patients and FAMU Hospital for African American patients.⁴⁵

Tallahassee Polio Epidemic, 1954

Perhaps the biggest health scare that struck the city of Tallahassee during the health department's tenure in the Health Unit Building was in August 1954, when a polio epidemic struck the city. Between August and October of that year, there were 784 cases of polio in Leon County alone. The disease branched out into the surrounding areas as well, as Florida recorded over 1,700 cases of polio, the most ever reported in the state. The sudden influx of polio patients overwhelmed TMH, which sought help from the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Although most of the activity in treating the patients took place at TMH, it was Dr. Joseph Bistowish, the director of the Leon County Health Department, who took the lead in coordinating public health efforts and educating the public on polio. For his efforts, he was awarded a distinguished service award by the Tallahassee

⁴⁴ H.N. Doyle, "Industrial Hygiene," in *47th Annual Report State Board of Health, State of Florida: 1946* (Jacksonville, FL, 1947), 22-23.

⁴⁵ Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," 87-89.

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Junior Chamber of Commerce.⁴⁶ In the absence of a proper vaccine, the health agencies depended on gamma globulin, which did not cure polio but rather halted the spread of blood infections. The disease that struck Tallahassee was rather unusual in that there were no deaths reported and most of those afflicted were adults. This outbreak would become one of the last to occur in the United States, as the polio vaccine discovered by Jonas Salk became widely available the following year. The Leon County Health Department would become an important source of polio vaccinations in the city shortly afterwards.⁴⁷ By 1965, polio was completely eradicated from Leon County.

Health Unit/Health Department Building 1945-1965

When the Health Unit Building was constructed in the early 1940s, it was considered a model building for a local health unit in the state. In a 1945 report on the conditions of health unit buildings across the state, the Leon County Health Unit Building was classed among the top six in terms of adequacy of size and accommodations.⁴⁸ After World War II, however, as the health department's responsibilities expanded and the population in Leon County grew, it outgrew the building. By 1951, the Leon County Welfare Association and the Human Relations Institute relocated next door to the former WPA Building. The Sanitation Department also left the building by the 1950s. Due to the shortages of space, the department was often forced to conduct classes and large meetings offsite.⁴⁹ By the 1960s, the Sanitation Department and mental health clinic, which remained under the administrative control of the health department, outgrew their respective spaces. The 1965 city directory is the last in which the health department is shown as occupying the health unit building. By 1967, the county health department moved to 2965 Municipal Way, where it currently remains. The Health Unit Building was turned over to the state that same year.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Florida State Board of Health, "Bureau of Local Health Service," in *Annual Report State Board of Health State of Florida: 1954* (Jacksonville, FL, 1955), 32.

⁴⁷ Florida State Board of Health, "Bureau of Preventable Diseases," in *Annual Report State Board of Health State of Florida: 1954* (Jacksonville, FL, 1955), 63-64; Jason Dehart, "The 'Polio Team' of 1954," *Tallahassee Magazine* (March-April 2010); Gerald Ensley, "60 Years Ago, Polio Paralyzed Tallahassee," *Tallahassee Democrat*, November 18, 2014.

⁴⁸ Florida State Board of Health, "Health Buildings Listed in Three 'Condition' Groups," *Florida Health Notes* vol. 37, no. 3 (March 1945), 52.

⁴⁹ Markovitz, "Organization and Administration of the Leon County Health Unit," 63-64.

⁵⁰ Gerlad Ensley, "Proposed Development May Save Old Jail – or Not," *Tallahassee Democrat*, January 21, 2017; R.L. Polk & Company, *Polk's Tallahassee City Directory 1965* (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1965), 98.

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Florida Division of Child Training Schools/Division of Youth Services 1967-1971



Photo of Health Unit Building during tenure as Division of Youth Services headquarters, circa 1969
(source: Florida Memory project)

Starting in 1967, the building served as both the regional and central offices for the Florida Division of Child Training Schools (FDCTS) After-Care Program. The FDCTS had administrative responsibilities over juvenile detention facilities and reform schools in the state. The goal of the after-care program was to both provide supervision over children furloughed from these programs and to help in their transition back to society after their release, serving as juvenile parole program. Prior to the creation of the FDCTS in 1957, there was little to no centralization of services for juvenile delinquents, who were often forced before adult criminal courts. The FDCTS was originally based in the Florida Industrial School for Boys in Marianna, later renamed the Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys. The FDCTS became the Florida Division of Youth Services (DYS) in September 1967 and soon moved the central office for the entire division into the Health Unit Building. In 1969, the DYS was incorporated as its own division within the newly established Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services

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(HRS). During this time, the DYS was under the leadership of Oliver J. Keller, who would later go on to serve as the head of HRS.⁵¹

During its brief tenure in the Health Unit Building, the DYS accomplished a number of important goals. One of the founding principles of DYS was to provide more efficient and effective rehabilitation services for juvenile offenders. In its first year of existence, the DYS founded the Walter S. Criswell House in Tallahassee, the first state-funded halfway house in Florida. This house, which was open to boys, was a rehabilitation facility that utilized guided group therapy techniques. There was a growing realization that the isolation and often rough atmosphere of the training schools clearly did not work for many, if not most, of the children sentenced for lesser crimes such as running away or truancy. Emphasis was placed on opening group therapy facilities around the state designed to keep children closer to their friends and family at home. To manage this transition, the Department of Group Treatment, which operated out of the Health Unit Building, was created. The novelty of the Criswell House drew university attention. The first intern formally trained in guided group therapy techniques came from Florida A&M University and the first thesis written on the topic in Florida was produced by a graduate student from the University of Florida. The use of corporal punishment was also abolished in all juvenile detention facilities at this time, as was the notorious farm work going on at the Dozier School in Marianna.⁵²

Another major project undertaken by the DYS in its early years was overseeing the full integration of juvenile detention facilities in the state. Unequal treatment and facilities for African American youth offenders had long been a problem throughout the south, including in Florida. After years of delays, by the late 1960s the state of Florida began implementation of long overdue integration initiatives across all levels of government. At this time, there were four juvenile detention facilities in the state: the Florida School for Boys at Marianna, the Florida School for Boys at Okeechobee, the Florida School for Girls at Ocala, and the Florida School for Girls at Forest Hill. Although both boys' schools accepted black and white children, they were kept segregated in the facilities. The girl's school at Ocala was whites only and the Forest Hill "school" was really a program run through the state women's prison, Lowell Women's Prison, where black girls were housed. The process of desegregation of juvenile detention facilities began in the late 1960s and was largely complete, at least officially, by 1970.⁵³ By 1971, the DYS moved into the Florida Bank and Trust Building.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Division of Child Training Schools, *Florida Statutes*, Chapter 965.01(2) (1963); "United States Parole Commission," in Jimmy Carter, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Jimmy Carter, 1978* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1979), 1083.

⁵² Florida Division of Youth Services, *First Annual Report Division of Youth Services* (Tallahassee, FL, 1968), 7, 11-13, 16-20, 22-25.

⁵³ O. J. Keller, Jr., letter to P.A. Pacyna, March 27, 1970, <https://www.clearinghouse.net/chDocs/public/JI-FL-0001-0027.pdf>; Florida Division of Youth Services, *First Annual Report Division of Youth Services*, 19; Allen W. Imershein, Mary K. Pugh Mathis, and C. Aaron McNeese, *Who Cares About the Children? A Case Study of Policies and Practices* (Dix Hills, NY: General Hall, Inc., 1995), 89-90.

⁵⁴ Florida Sheriff's Association, "Directory of State Agencies," *The Sheriff's Star* vol. 15, no. 1 (March 1971), 33.

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Historic Context – Bloxham Annex Building, 1971-present

Following the departure of DYS, the Health Unit Building began a long and varied career as a general purpose state office building. By this time, the Florida Department of State had taken over the nearby former Leon County Jail, which was renamed the Bloxham Building. The adjacent former WPA Building was also taken over by the state. The Health Unit Building was used as office space for the Florida Department of General Service, the Florida Department of State, the Florida Department of Legal Affairs, and the Florida Inspector General's Office among others. By the late 1990s, the building fell vacant although it remained under state control. In 2015, the state officially sold the land which included the former Leon County Jail, the Health Unit Building, and the WPA Building to the City of Tallahassee's Community Redevelopment Agency, who currently own all three buildings.⁵⁵

Criterion B – Dr. Leander Johnson Graves

The person perhaps most associated with the development of public health in Leon County in its early years was Dr. Leander J. Graves (1882-1965). A native of Alabama, Dr. Graves graduated from Birmingham Medical College in 1910. He was involved with public health as early as 1906, serving as a field agent for the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) in Scottsboro, Alabama. By the 1920s, he was the health officer for Franklin County, Alabama, a position he held before arriving in Tallahassee. In addition to serving as the first city and county health officer for Tallahassee and Leon County and director of the County Health Unit from 1931 until 1943, Dr. Graves was also for a leader in the Florida Public Health Association, serving as president in 1941 and vice president in 1938. It was largely through his initiative or leadership that some of the most important local public health programs, such as school health, mosquito control, tuberculosis, maternal health, venereal disease control, health education, sanitation, and preschool health, were either implemented or expanded in Leon County.

Dr. Graves was particularly active in school health, mosquito control, and the fight against tuberculosis. Years before school health as a collaboration between the schools and the State Board of Health was an official state policy, the Leon County Health Unit actively sought out and worked with the local school district as early as 1931. It was largely through initiatives either implemented or expanded under his leadership that reported cases of malaria and tuberculosis dropped considerably in the county. Shortly after stepping down as director of the county health unit, Dr. Graves was named Director of the Florida Crippled Children's Commission (FCCC), which at the time was based in the state capital building. The FCCC was an important public health organization in its own right, providing services for children with congenital and orthopedic deformities that

⁵⁵ R.L. Polk & Company, *Polk's Tallahassee City Directory 1972* (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1972), 128; R.L. Polk & Company, *1975 Tallahassee City Directory* (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1975), 84; R.L. Polk & Company, *1979 Tallahassee City Directory* (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1979), 98.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 21 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

included case finding, diagnosis, treatment, and aftercare services. In 1950, Dr. Graves retired as director of the FCCC. He died in Tallahassee in 1965.⁵⁶

Although he was director of the unit for only two years while it occupied the building, the Health Unit Building is the most significant resource connected to the professional life of Dr. Graves. The construction of the building itself was one of the most significant achievements during his tenure. The building allowed for the expansion of the health unit's programs under Dr. Graves, most notably its various clinics opened for prenatal and postnatal care, preschool care, immunizations, venereal diseases, and school health. There were four buildings that housed the LCHU prior to its arrival in the health unit building: the Demetree Building at 120 East Jefferson Street, the old Leon County High School Building, a metal building near the old Leon County Jail, and "the Myers residence" on North Monroe Street. The Demetree Building, which was the original home of the LCHU, still stands and retains a high degree of integrity. The unit only stayed in this building briefly, however, and much of their work was offsite due to space limitations as they only occupied three rooms in the building. By the mid-1930s, the unit moved to the basement of the old Leon County High School, which has since been demolished and replaced by the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library. There were two other locations identified as the homes of the unit: "the Myers home on North Monroe" and a metal building near the old county jail at the corner of Gaines and Meridian streets which has since been demolished. The "Myers home" is possibly the home of Florrie M. Myers listed as residing on 423 North Monroe Street but it is not exactly certain. The FCCC, although a statewide organization with administrative offices in Tallahassee, did not have a large active presence in Tallahassee until district offices were established in the adjacent WPA Building in 1950. Hence, the Health Unit Building represents Dr. Graves' most significant direct work in the city.

Architectural Significance

The Leon County Health Unit Building is a locally significant example of Art Moderne architecture. The building features a smooth stucco exterior, flat roof, horizontal lines, independent flat cantilevered roofs over the rear and side entrance, and porthole shaped moldings, all character defining features of the Art Moderne Style. The building also displays some features of the Art Deco Style, including the prominent decorative vertical protrusion from the main façade and geometrical moldings above the windows and in the walls. The building itself lacks the glass block fenestration and rounded edges commonly found in the Art Moderne Style but still retains enough essential characteristics.

⁵⁶ Albert Burton Moore, *History of Alabama and Her People* vol. II (Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1927), 296; U.S. Public Health Service, "Studies and Demonstrations in Rural Sanitation," in *Official List of Commissioned and other Officers of the United States Public Health Service* (Washington, DC: USGPO, 1922), 38; *Florida Health Notes*, "Leon County Unit Established," 35; *Tallahassee Democrat*, "Dr. L.J. Graves Dead at 83; Headed FCCC," April 11, 1965.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 22 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

The health unit building is one of only three Art Moderne buildings still standing in downtown Tallahassee. The other two are the adjacent former Leon County Jail and the former WPA Building. The Leon County Jail has been heavily altered, and therefore is not considered eligible for listing in the National Register. The former WPA Building is also being listed on the National Register as an individual listing. Although the two buildings were both built by the WPA and are adjacent to each other and also share a similar history as one-time homes of the county mental health clinic and the county welfare office, they have both assumed significance in their own right to warrant individual listing. There is also not enough of a concentration beyond the two buildings to warrant a district listing.

**United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 2 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

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National Park Service**

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Section number 9 Page 3 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

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Section number 9 Page 4 Leon County Health Unit Building
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary encompasses a portion of lot 31 of parcel number 21-36-25-0000 in the Leon County Property Appraiser's records. Please see accompanying map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the land historically associated with the Leon County Health Unit Building.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number _____ Photos _____ Page 1

Photographs

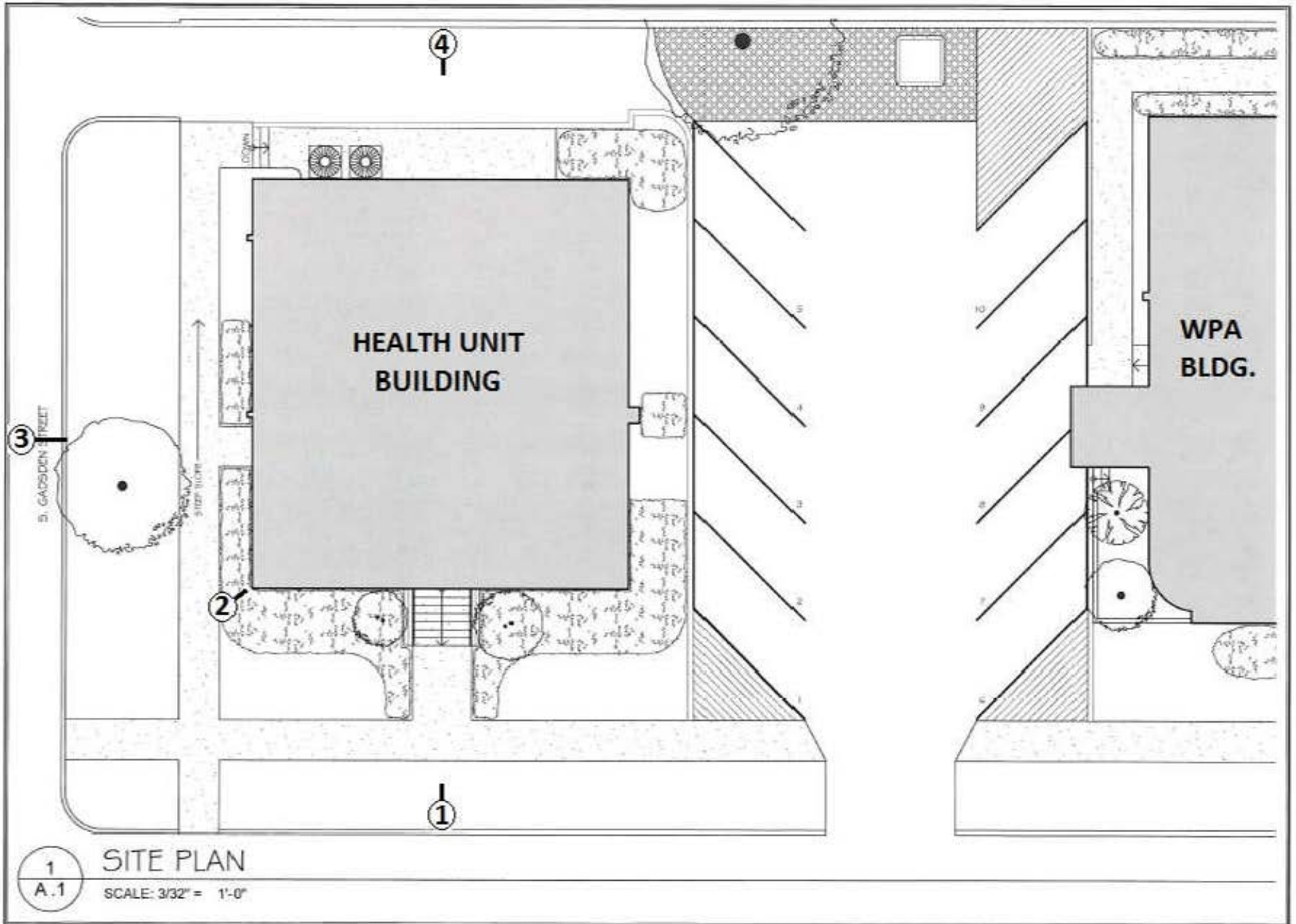
Name of Property: Leon County Health Unit Building

City of Vicinity: Tallahassee County: Leon State: Florida

Photographer: Andrew Waber Date Photographed: 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera.

1. Main (north) façade, facing south
2. Detail view of cornerstone, facing southwest
3. East elevation, facing west
4. South (rear) elevation, facing north
5. Interior view of first floor room, facing south
6. Interior view of first floor room, facing southwest
7. Interior view of first floor lobby, facing north
8. Interior view of first floor public restrooms, facing southwest
9. Interior view of first floor southwest corner room, facing southwest
10. Interior view of central staircase, facing south
11. Interior view of ground floor room, facing southwest
12. Interior view of ground floor corridor, facing south
13. Interior view of east entrance door, facing northeast
14. Interior view of ground floor southwest corner room, facing southwest



HEALTH UNIT BUILDING

WPA BLDG.

5. GARDEN STREET

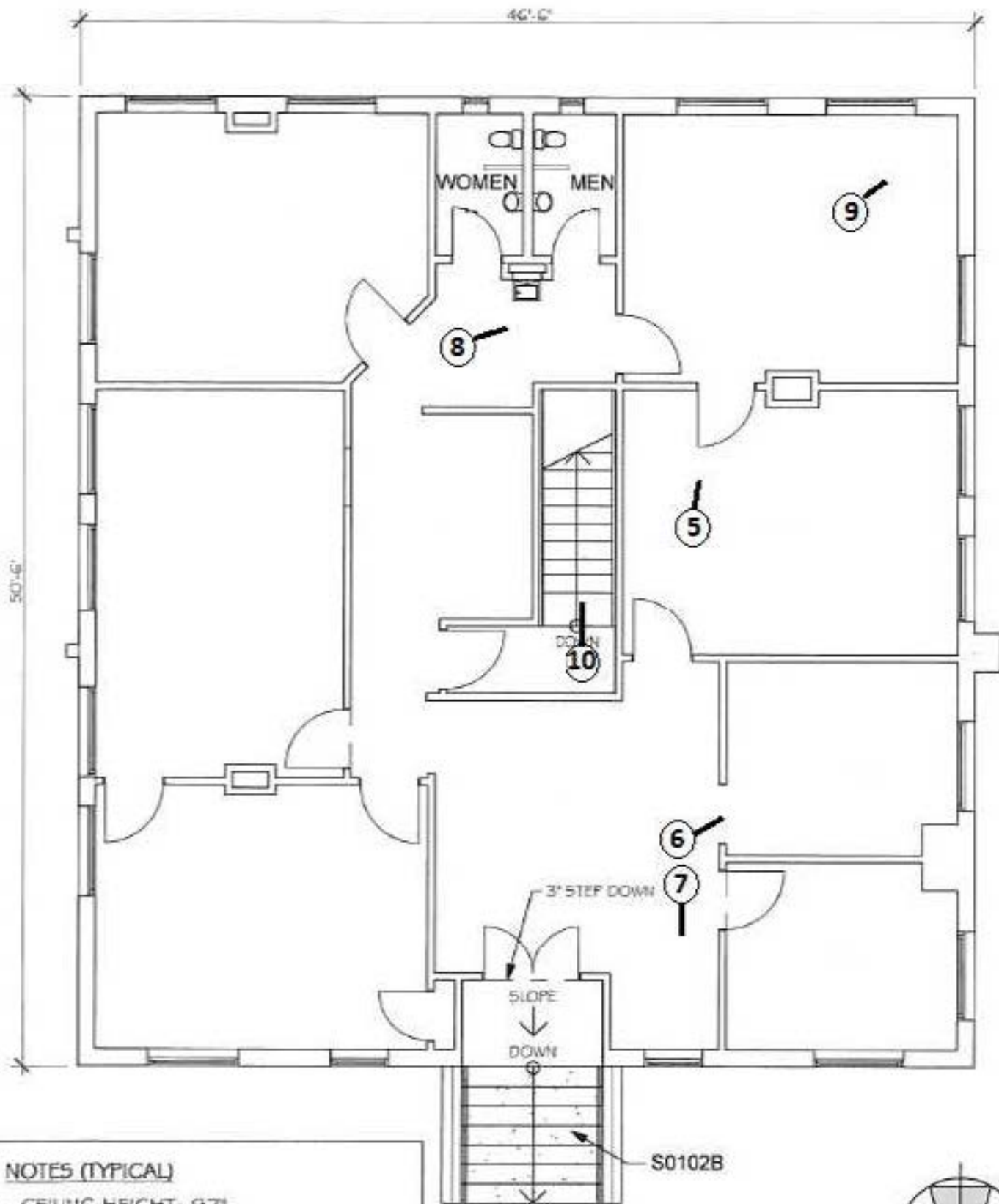
DOWN

STEP UP

1
A.1

SITE PLAN

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



NOTES (TYPICAL)

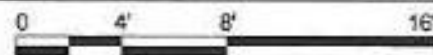
- CEILING HEIGHT: 9'7"
- CEILING 2x4 A.C.T.
- WALL BASE - 6" H CPT WITH PLASTIC CAP
- FLOORING - CPT
- WALLS - GYP BOARD AND PANELING

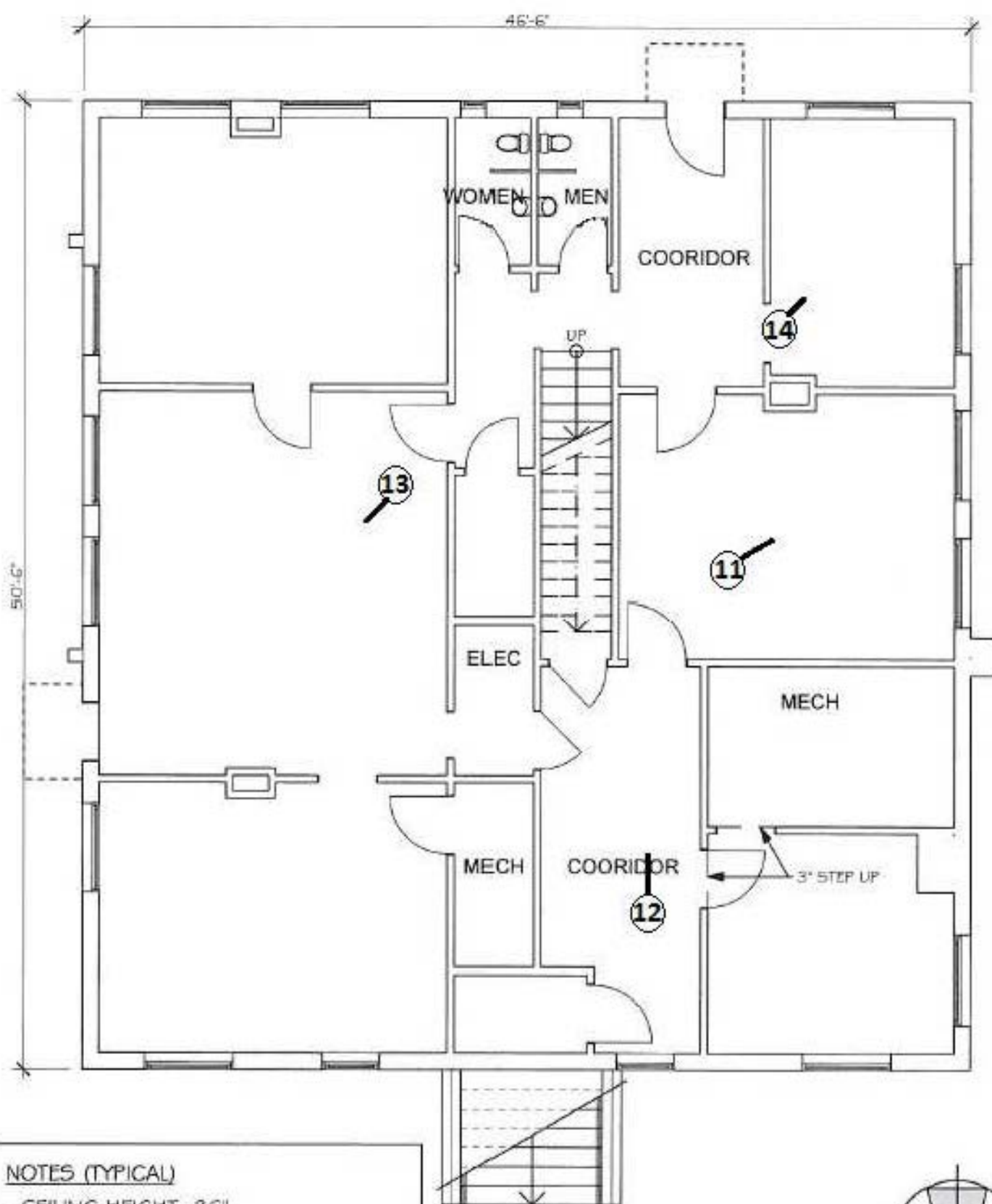


1
A.2

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"





NOTES (TYPICAL)

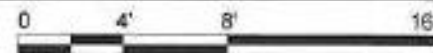
- CEILING HEIGHT: 86"
- CEILING 2x4 A.C.T.
- WALL BASE - 6" H CPT WITH PLASTIC CAP
- FLOORING - CPT, VINYL, CONCRETE
- WALLS - GYP BOARD AND PANELING



1
A.2

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Leon County Health Unit Building


325 East Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Leon Co., FL

UTM:
16R 761379 3370171

Latitude: 30.4353
Longitude: -84.2785

Datum: WGS84

Legend

 Proposed National Register Boundary

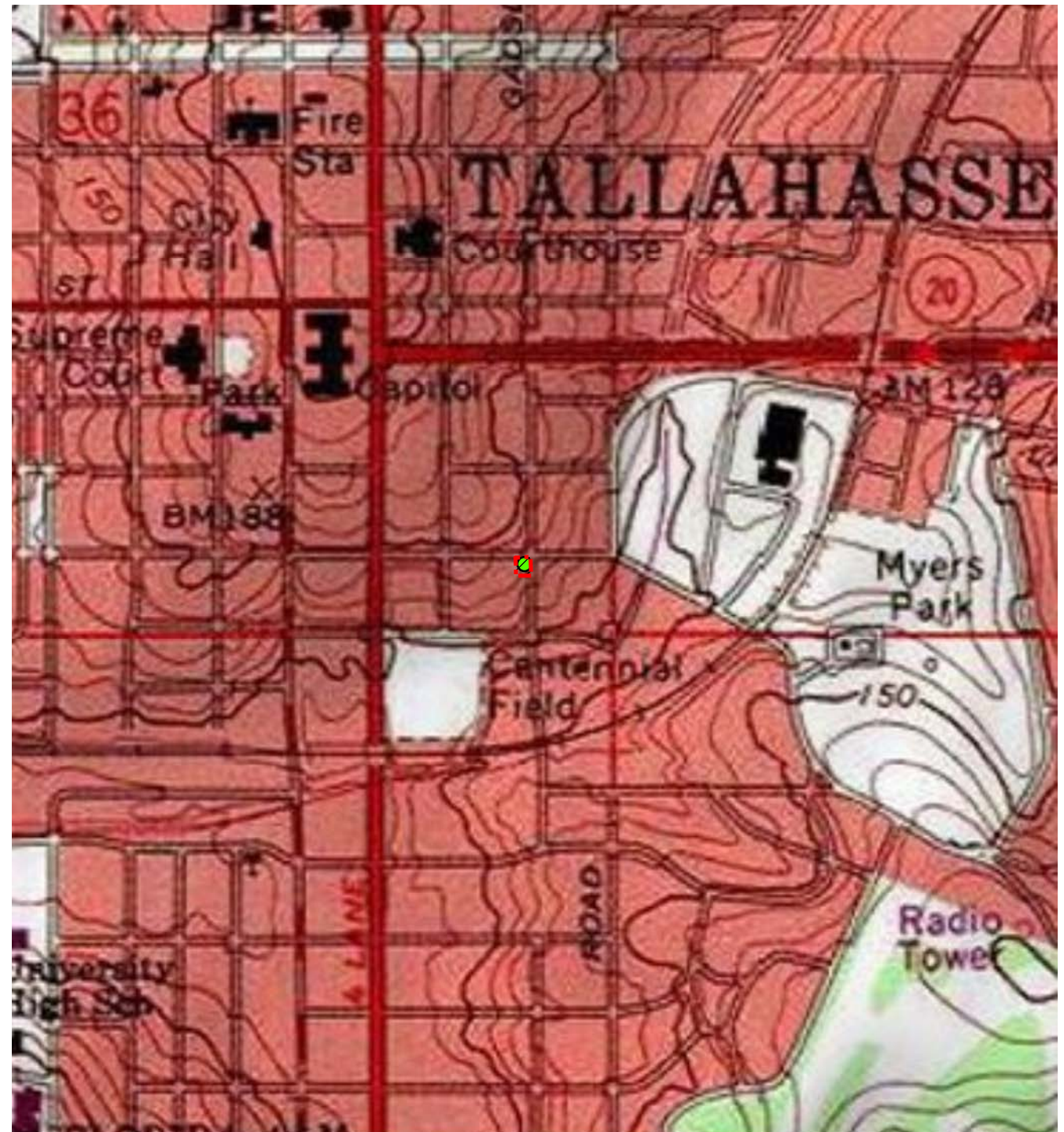
Date: 9/1/2017

1:10,000

0 425 850 1,700
Feet

0 105 210 420
Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community



Leon County Health Unit Building


325 East Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Leon Co., FL

UTM:
16R 761379 3370171

Latitude: 30.4353
Longitude: -84.2785

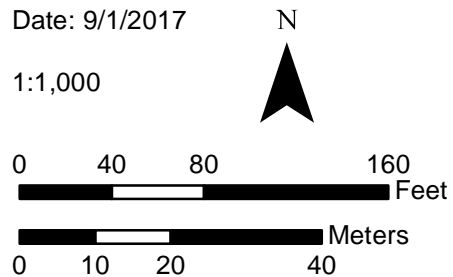
Datum: WGS84

Legend

 Proposed National Register Boundary

Date: 9/1/2017

1:1,000



Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community





325
D. Garfield Street
Blueberry Avenue, CA



LEON COUNTY BOARD
COMMISSIONERS
W.G. PHILIPS CHIEF
C.M. AUSLEY
J.R. WHEELER
C.B. ALLEN
H.M. BANNERMAN
PAUL V. LANG CLERK
W. LEVINS HALL ATTY.

LEON COUNTY HEALTH
UNIT
L.W. GRAVES M.D. DIRECTOR
1939
COUNTY COMMISSION
SPONSORS
CO-OPERATING WITH
U.S. WORK PROJECTS
ADMINISTRATION



WRONG
WAY







EXIT



WOMEN











EXIT

BOT





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 12/14/2017 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 1/29/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 1/29/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

**TALLAHASSEE-LEON COUNTY
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**

**423 EAST VIRGINIA STREET
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301
850-488-7334 (tel) 850-488-7333 (fax)**

November 14, 2017

Attention: Ruben A. Acosta
Survey and Registration Supervisor
Bureau of Historic Preservation
Division of Historical Resources
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

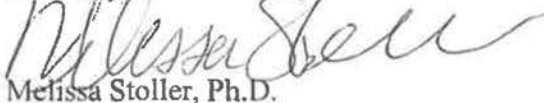
Re: National Register Nominations
WPA Building (LE1810), 319 E. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301 and Leon County
Health Unit Building (LE1811), 325 E. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Mr. Acosta:

I'm writing in regard to the nominations of the Leon County Health Unit Building and the WPA Building, located at 325 and 319 E. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL to the National Register of Historic Places. The Tallahassee-Leon County Architectural Review Board was unable to meet prior to the scheduled review of the above mentioned properties and was therefore unable to provide comment regarding listing. However all materials regarding the nominations were provided to board members. Following discussions with our board chair and vice chair, it was requested that as Tallahassee-Leon County Historic Preservation officer, I provide comment. The Tallahassee-Leon County Architectural Review board chair and vice chair, as well as myself, recognize that both the WPA Building and Leon County Health Unit Building meet criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is acknowledged that the Leon County Health Unit building is eligible under criteria A, B, and C and that the WPA Building is eligible under criteria A and C.

Thank you for your consideration of the Architectural Review Board's comments, and please let me know if any additional information is needed.

Sincerely,



Melissa Stoller, Ph.D.
Historic Preservation Officer/
TTHP Executive Director



November 28, 2017

Ruben A. Acosta, Survey & Registration Supervisor
Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historic Resources
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 S. Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Mr. Acosta:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed listing of the City of Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) owned properties at 319 and 325 E. Gaines Street in the National Register of Historic Places. While we understand and appreciate the contributions both buildings have made to the community over the years, we strongly object to having them listed in the National Register for the reasons outlined below.

As part of a more than three-year effort, these properties were acquired by the CRA from the State of Florida on August 2, 2017 to foster the redevelopment of what have been vacant properties since the mid to late-1990s into a residential and retail destination location adjacent to Cascades Park – a key part of our downtown redevelopment plan. These properties have been owned by the State since 1967, providing the State with ample opportunity to have the properties listed in the National Register if it was so inclined. Based on the State's actions towards the use and maintenance of these buildings during the past 20 years, it is clear the State was not interested in listing them in the National Register when they owned them. It seems insincere to now want to list the buildings when they have been owned by the CRA for less than four (4) months and we are in the process of selling the properties to a private developer who will build the mixed-use development envisioned by the CRA and City of Tallahassee.

The properties were not acquired from the State in 2015, as described in the respective National Register of Historic Places Registration for the two buildings, but on August 2, 2017 as part of the sale of the CRA-owned O'Connell property, a five-acre vacant parcel south of the Ronald L. Tucker Civic Center, to the State. The sale of the O'Connell property involved cash and the transfer of several state-owned properties to the CRA, including the Bloxham Annex property, where the subject buildings are located. At the time of the sale, the Bloxham Annex property was appraised at \$2,005,000 but it is likely the appraised value would have been lower if it had been encumbered by the National Register designation. If the buildings were added to the National Register when the discussions regarding the land sale and exchange were underway, we would have had an opportunity to negotiate sales terms that would have addressed any negative impact the designation would have had on the appraised value of the property. That opportunity is now lost.

In January 2017, following a Request for Proposals notice and evaluation, the CRA entered into a purchase and sales agreement with North American Properties to purchase and redevelop both the Firestone and Bloxham Annex properties as a mixed-use development with residential units, retail and restaurant space, office space, a boutique hotel, 229 public parking spaces, and various public spaces and features. The execution of the purchase and sales agreement is the most recent of a variety of actions that began several years ago to redevelop the Firestone and Bloxham Annex properties to promote more residential and retail opportunities in the downtown. Since the beginning of the discussions regarding the sale of the properties to the CRA, we have always been forthright about our plans to redevelop the properties. Various State agencies, including the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, have been fully aware of the planned redevelopment as well.

The sale of the properties to North American Properties is expected to occur in March or April 2018. North American Properties representatives have advised CRA staff that they would object to the National Register listing if they were the current owner of record of the properties. The CRA and North American Properties recognize the architectural appeal of the 319 E. Gaines Street. Unfortunately, its location in the middle of the Bloxham Annex block significantly limits the redevelopment potential of the property. However, North American Properties will retain the building at 325 E. Gaines Street as part of their development, perhaps providing some type of medical services. Although they will retain the exterior elements of the building, North American Properties is concerned that listing 325 E. Gaines Street may have a negative impact on any interior changes needed to the building to support a suitable use. They are also concerned listing the building will impact financing terms that were negotiated prior to the decision by the Division of Historic Resources to nominate the property for the National Register.

In addition to retaining 325 E. Gaines Street, North American Properties will incorporate various historic elements in the public plaza that will be part of the redevelopment of the Firestone property, which includes elements of the Old County Jail. The plaza will run from the northwest corner of Gaines and Gadsden Streets to the southeast corner of the Firestone property, ending at the entrance to the Capital City Amphitheater. The historic elements along the plaza will recognize and celebrate the positive impacts to education, public health, municipal services and the early civil rights movement that occurred at this intersection. The identification of the historical elements along the plaza is the result of a collaborative effort by North American Properties who organized the Community Historical User Group, which consists of historians and historic preservationists (including a representative from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources), architects, area residents, community activists, and interested citizens. Over the course of several months, members of the group met to discuss and evaluate historical elements of the properties, and submitted their memories and design ideas. North American Properties continues to work with the Historical User Group to design the Public Plaza to honor and serve the history of this corner.

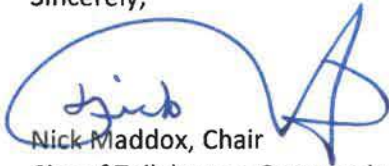
Despite our objections to the listing of 319 and 325 E. Gaines Street aside, it is important to note both the CRA and City of Tallahassee have made substantial commitments to retaining historic elements in and around Cascades Park. During the environmental cleanup of Cascades Park, large sections of the original Coquina wall that surrounded much of the original park were retained, historic uses of the park have been recognized and a feature noting the former Smokey Hollow neighborhood that occupied large areas east of the park has been added. The City and CRA have also spent more than \$2.1 million dollars to stabilize the exterior of the City's Old Electric Power Building located inside Cascade Park (and on the Local Register of Historic Places), which is now the Edison Restaurant. Finally, the City recently added the Old Waterworks Building, which is across the street from the subject properties, to the Local Register of Historic Places and has issued a Request for Proposals to purchase and revitalize the two

historic buildings and cistern on the property.

For the reasons describe above we strongly urge you to consider our objections and to not forward the registration forms to list 319 and 325 E. Gaines Street to the Keeper of the National Register.

If you have any questions, please call or email Rick McCraw, CRA Program Director, at 850-891-8352 or rick.mccraw@talgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Maddox", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Nick Maddox, Chair

City of Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency

cc: CRA Board
Vince Long, Leon County Administrator
Reese Goad, Acting City of Tallahassee City Manager



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RICK SCOTT
Governor

KEN DETZNER
Secretary of State

December 4, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief,
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Leon County Health Unit Building (FMSF#: 8LE01811), in Leon County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ruben A. Acosta
Supervisor, Survey & Registration
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures