

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

3228  
DEC 27 1988

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Wadena Fire and City Hall  
other names/site number Wadena City Offices

**2. Location**

street & number	10 S.E. Bryant Ave.	<input type="checkbox"/> not for publication	N/A
city, town	Wadena	<input type="checkbox"/> vicinity	N/A
state	Minnesota	code MN	county Wadena

code 159 zip code 56482

**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	objects
		1	Total 0

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.*Nina M. Archabal*

12/19/88

Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal  
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

- removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*Delany Byer*Entered in the  
National Register

1/19/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## **6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/city hall, fire station

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/city hall

## **7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

RENAISSANCE REVIVAL

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

STUCCO

roof CONCRETE

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Wadena Fire and City Hall is a two-story, rectangular-shaped, red brick building located in the central business district, one-half block east of Jefferson Avenue, which is the primary north-south thoroughfare in the city. Completed in early January 1913, the building originally functioned as the municipal fire department and city offices for Wadena.

The first floor of the City Hall is symmetrically arranged and formal in its interpretation of the Renaissance Revival style. In the center is a large semicircular fixed glass opening featuring a corbeled brick arch and raised concrete keystone with the date "1912" inscribed. Original fire doors, as well as all of the building's windows, were replaced in ca.1965. Flanking the center arch are two small windows, one of which has been partially infilled with brick. Window sills are concrete and lintels are part of a concrete string course which extends across the middle of the first floor. Renaissance Revival-inspired detailing can be seen at each corner of the lower floor, where an aluminum and glass door with concrete surround is surmounted by a concrete hood that has decorative brackets. Above each hood is a small, semicircular fixed window with a corbeled brick arch and raised concrete keystone. A narrow concrete string course divides the ground floor from the second story.

Two pairs of 1/1 double hung sash windows set in a large recessed panel light the center area of the upper floor. A dentillated false cornice spans the width of the panel. Another 1/1 double hung window is located to the east side. A row of header bricks makes up the window lintels. The frieze is marked by a raised panel of bricks set in a herringbone pattern, and the crenelated parapet is capped with a narrow band of concrete. Rising above the southwest corner of the flat roof is an open bell tower that has a flared pyramidal roof supported by four brick columns. Festoons embellish each frieze of the bell tower.

The east wall of the building is covered with stucco that was applied in ca.1965. The second floor east elevation has seven tall window openings, most of which have been covered with panels. The west wall is pierced by five double hung sash on the upper story. The stuccoed rear wall has three former double hung windows that have been enclosed.

The interior underwent a remodeling in ca.1965, resulting in fluorescent light fixtures and new decorations. The original staircase remains intact.

## **8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance  
1912-1938

Significant Dates  
1912

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Snyder, Kirby T., architect

Harrison Bros., builders

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Wadena Fire and City Hall is historically significant under the statewide historic context "Railroad Construction and Agricultural Development, 1870s-1920s" for its representation of early twentieth century civic development as a multi-purpose building, and as a classic example of a public building type common to numerous small communities in Minnesota. During the early 1900s Wadena experienced rapid growth in its built environment -- the Fire and City Hall is one example of the construction boom. More importantly, other typical public buildings such as the library, sheriff's office, and jail are housed in the recently-constructed county courthouse. The Fire and City Hall is the only municipal building in Wadena from the post-1900 building era.

Wadena's original fire department was organized in 1883, operating for three years with a man-drawn cart and hand pump. Two years later, in response to an increasing number of fires, the city built a combination town hall and fire station, and by 1886 had purchased a hand engine for \$150, a hose truck for \$45, four hundred feet of hose for \$400, and a fire alarm for \$60. Despite the addition of this equipment, the worst fire in the city's history struck in 1888 resulting in the destruction of eighteen buildings. Toward the turn of the century, fewer fires occurred as masonry began to replace timber frame in building construction. But by 1911 city offices and the fire department had outgrown their facilities, prompting one fireman to plead for the construction of a new building in a letter to the local newspaper. City officials seriously began discussing the possibility of a new facility in late 1911, and the following summer the city purchased a lot measuring 32' wide and 60' deep on which they would erect a new fire and city hall. Lot size was crucial because the fire department required a minimum 50' depth for the proper maintenance of its hoses.

Erection of the new Fire and City Hall in 1912 represented just one facet of a major construction period in Wadena which covered about five years from 1910-15. Numerous public, commercial, and residential buildings were built during this span, indicating at the same time a degree of optimism and permanence within the community. A 2½-story brick high school designed by a Minneapolis architectural

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Wadena Fire and City Hall, Wadena, MN

Section number 8 Page 1

---

firm was built in 1909; two years later the owner of a downtown hotel announced plans to double its size; and the Peterson-Biddick Co., today an important regional seed business, opened as a wholesale produce dealer. In 1912 the Methodist and Congregational Churches built large religious edifices, and a year later the county erected their first permanent fairgrounds buildings. The Northern Pacific Railroad also affirmed plans to construct a new passenger depot in Wadena within a few years.

Minneapolis architect Kirby Snyder designed other Wadena buildings such as the 1914 Cozy Theater. In addition to the theater and Fire and City Hall in Wadena, Snyder drew plans for the Congregational Church as well as a public school in Louisburg. Snyder's design for the Fire and City Hall called for a compact building that today continues to visually convey the essence of the city's functions. All small town city halls were designed with a formalized front and embellished on the principal elevation. Other elements that emphasized the facade included the two-story height, and classical detailing. Despite the new windows and doors, the Wadena Fire and City Hall retains these essential architectural features and its overall integrity, thereby reducing the impact of the stucco on the east wall.

## **9. Major Bibliographical References**

Wadena Pioneer Journal 15 June 1911; 19 October 1911; 26 October 1911; 4 July 1912;  
1 July 1981

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Specify repository:

## **10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References

A | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 0 |  
Zone Easting Northing  
C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  
Zone Easting Northing  
D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies all of  
The South ten (10) feet of the East thirty-two (32) feet of Lot 8, Block 7, and the  
East thirty-two (32) feet of Lot 9 of Block 7 of the Original Townsite of Wadena.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the city lots that have historically been associated with  
the property.

See continuation sheet

## **11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Michael Koop /Historic Preservation Consultant  
organization N/A date July 1987  
street & number 615 Jackson St., NE telephone 612-623-8356  
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55413