



City Council Information Packet

May 30, 2024

Council Tentative Meeting Schedule

IP1. Council Tentative Meeting Schedule

June 6 Work Session

IP2. Work Session Agenda

IP3. Memo from Economic Development Coordinator: 21 S. Linn Street Public Input Summary

IP4. Memo from Grant Specialist: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update [Previously distributed as IP4 in the May 16 Info Packet]

IP5. Memo from City Manager: Review of Pending Work Session Topics [Previously distributed as IP5 in the May 16 Info Packet]

IP6. Pending City Council Work Session Topics

Miscellaneous

IP7. Memo from Senior Planner, Neighborhood & Development Services: Nomination to List the Iowa City Community Recreation Center in the National Register of Historic Places

IP8. Civil Service Examination: Housing Receptionist

IP9. Civil Service Examination: Mass Transit Operator

IP10. Civil Service Examination: Volunteer Program Assistant - Animal Services

Draft Minutes

IP11. Ad Hoc Truth & Reconciliation Commission: May 16



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Council Tentative Meeting Schedule

Attachments: [Council Tentative Meeting Schedule](#)



City Council Tentative Meeting Schedule

Subject to change

May 30, 2024

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Location</u>
Tuesday, June 4, 2024	3:30 PM	Special Formal	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	4:00 PM	Work Session (following Special Formal)	
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, June 18, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Monday, July 15, 2024	4:30 PM	Joint Entities Meeting Hosted by the City of North Liberty	TBD
Tuesday, July 16, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, August 6, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, August 20, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, September 3, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, October 1, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, October 15, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Monday, October 21, 2024	4:30 PM	Joint Entities Meeting Hosted by the City of University Heights	TBD
Monday, November 4, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, November 19, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	
Tuesday, December 10, 2024	4:00 PM	Work Session	City Hall, Emma J. Harvat Hall 410 E. Washington Street
	6:00 PM	Formal Meeting	



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Work Session Agenda

Attachments: [Work Session Agenda](#)

Subject to change as finalized by the City Clerk. For a final official copy, contact the City Clerk's Office 356-5041

If you will need disability-related accommodations in order to participate in this program/event, please contact Kellie Grace at 319-356-5041, kgrace@iowa-city.org. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

**Iowa City
City Council - Work Session
Agenda
Work Session
June 4, 2024 - 4:00 PM
Emma J. Harvat Hall
410 E. Washington Street
www.icgov.org**



City of Iowa City Land Acknowledgment can be found at:
icgov.org/landacknowledgement

Meeting Rules can be found at: icgov.org/meetingrules

You can watch the meeting on cable channel 4 (118.2 QAM) in Iowa City, University Heights and Coralville, or you can watch it online at any of the following websites:

- <https://citychannel4.com/live>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/citychannel4/live>
- <https://facebook.com/CityofIowaCity>

Following the 3:30 P.M. Special Formal Meeting

1. Review of public input regarding redevelopment of 21 S Linn
2. Quarterly American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA-SLRF) update [Deferred from 5/21/24]
3. Review of City Council Pending Work Session Topics [Deferred from 5/21/24]
4. Discuss funding organizations serving the immigrant community [Deferred from 5/21/24]
5. Clarification of Agenda Items
6. Information Packet Discussion [May 9, May 16, May 23, May 30]
Council direction needed on the following items:
 1. (5/30) IP7 - Memo from Senior Planner: Nomination to List the Iowa City Community Recreation Center in the National Register of Historic Places
7. University of Iowa Student Government (USG) Updates
8. Council updates on assigned boards, commissions, and committees



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Memo from Economic Development Coordinator: 21 S. Linn Street Public Input Summary

Attachments: [Memo from Economic Development Coordinator: 21 S. Linn Street Public Input Summary](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: May 30, 2024

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Rachel Kilburg, Economic Development Coordinator

Re: 21 S. Linn Street Public Input Summary

Background

In 2023, the City purchased the vacant lot at 21 S. Linn St. with the intent to lead a mixed-use redevelopment of this prominent downtown corner through a public/private partnership. The project will be facilitated through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that identifies City goals and project objectives and invites project proposals from prospective partners.

In December, staff completed a review of past RFP redevelopment processes with City Council. Staff next presented a plan for the initial public input period at the February 20, 2024 City Council work session. This public input phase employed a two-pronged approach of education and input. Through the education component, the City sought to (1) establish a transparent, shared understanding of the City's objectives and intent behind the mixed-use redevelopment project; (2) reinforce existing established plans and priorities; and (3) communicate the importance of long-term property tax revenue generated by the project. The goal of collecting public input was to understand the community's "user experience" in the downtown as well as specific desires for the redevelopment project. The results are intended to inform both the City's RFP goal-setting and the proposals submitted by development teams.

Incorporating Council's feedback from the February 20th work session, staff employed the following strategies to collect public input from March 27 – May 1, 2024:

- **Online survey** - available in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Mandarin.
- **Open House** public input sessions held from 6-7:30pm at the Iowa City Public Library on April 15, 2024 and the Pheasant Ridge Neighborhood Center on April 23, 2024.
- **E-mails** - residents encouraged to submit messages in their preferred language.
- **Mail/drop-off** of written comments to City Hall.
- **Hello Lamp Post** - interactive public input opportunity via text message, initiated from a QR code or texting a code posted at the site of 21 S. Linn St.

Opportunities to provide input were promoted through official City channels, including news releases, social media platforms, and Cable TV programs. Flyers were posted on City buses and disseminated through City partners (Iowa City Downtown District, South of 6 Business District, Think Iowa City, and Greater Iowa City, Inc.). Per City Council's request, input opportunities were also shared directly with the City's equity & diversity outreach list, the University of Iowa media office, and UI Student Government for further promotion with their target audiences.

Public Input Participation Summary

Total public input responses received between March 27 – May 1:

- 1,482 participants in the online survey, representing 5,928 responses to the four open-ended questions on the survey. (Includes 3 surveys completed in Spanish and 1 in Mandarin).
- 9 emails and 2 written comments
- 296 Hello Lamp Post respondents.
- Approximately 20 attendees at the Library Open House and five attendees at the Pheasant Ridge Open House

Across all public input opportunities, four core questions were posed to encourage thoughtful and productive feedback. City staff manually analyzed all public comments submitted via survey, e-mail or letter, in-person events, and Hello Lamp Post. Insights are compiled and summarized below (open house/mailed/written comments are incorporated into the Q4 summary only due to their nature of being more “open-ended”). For full transparency, the raw survey results, Hello Lamp Post comments, and emails/written comments are available online at www.icgov.org/21SLinn.

Public Input Response Summary

Q1: Do you visit Downtown Iowa City? Why or why not?

Of the 1,414 survey respondents and 151 Hello Lamp Post respondents who indicated they do visit downtown (approximates):

- 529 visit downtown for restaurants, coffee shops, and drinking establishments
- 446 like to shop downtown, with 66 specifically mentioning local/small business
- 393 mentioned they visit downtown for arts, cultural, and entertainment venues, programs, festivals, and events (including the Farmer’s Market).
- 212 work downtown
- 172 mentioned they visit the Library downtown
- 121 shared that they live downtown
- 105 noted they engage in general recreation downtown, such as hanging out in public spaces, using the pedestrian mall playground, or visiting public facilities such as the Senior or Rec Centers. 82 respondents also mentioned the downtown is great for socializing, people watching, and meeting up with friends.
- 73 respondents mentioned they visit downtown for educational purposes, either to attend classes, study, or participate in educational/academic-focused community events.
- 119 respondents highlighted the value of walkability of downtown and/or mentioning they enjoy taking walks downtown for exercise or leisure.
- The survey results demonstrated some level of age diversity in the responses, with 20 mentioning they use the senior center, 64 identifying themselves as University students, several sharing how they use downtown as a family/with children, and a handful suggesting ideas for those in the 30s age range.
- Other uses mentioned at lower numbers included attending church, banking, fitness/yoga, medical appointments, nightlife, visiting salons, and running errands.

Of the 71 respondents to Q1 who indicated they do not visit downtown, or do not visit as frequently as they like, comments included:

- 32 expressed frustrations related to parking

- 16 felt the downtown is too student-oriented and/or that there is not much to do for older adults.
- 11 felt the downtown was not safe or clean
- 9 mentioned downtown did not have shops that attracted them
- 8 shared that establishments focused on alcohol and vaping were too prevalent
- 7 felt the downtown is too crowded

Q2: What is 'missing' in our Downtown that would encourage you to come more often or stay longer?

Frequently mentioned themes include places that are open late and on weekends but are not alcohol-centered, more free and inexpensive activities, and more options in general that are less student-focused.

Public seating and greenery were the most commonly mentioned amenities. Other common amenities requested included bike and pedestrian facilities, expanded bus service, safety and cleanliness, public art, and dog-friendly amenities.

Of the 1,461 survey responses and 69 Hello Lamp Post responses, approximately...

- 355 mentioned park, green space, and gardens.
- 226 suggested shops or specific types of retail, with 51 mentioning a year-round market offering both produce and craft or boutique goods. 30 mentioned grocery stores, with full-service grocery stores and affordable groceries common themes.
- 220 suggested additional places to eat and/or drink, many shared specific restaurants or types of bars/restaurants they'd like to see. Outdoor patios and rooftop patios were a common theme.
- 164 mentioned non-alcohol focused interactive recreation or entertainment options that appeal to many ages; ideas included mini golf, skate rinks, pickleball, escape rooms, museums, arcades, athletic courts, yard games, pottery/candle/painting activities, etc.
- 129 commented on the need for additional, improved, or cheaper parking.
- At least 110 (others likely fall into this category but were not explicit so staff did not make assumptions) mentioned community spaces, social meeting places, and "third places" that are not bars and do not require spending money to use.
- 110 respondents requested more activities or options catering to families and children.
- 103 mentioned small- to mid-size music and entertainment venues.
- 64 mentioned housing, with affordable and missing middle housing a common theme.
- 59 mentioned an arts-focused use such as a gallery, studio space, maker space, or community arts space offering classes.

Q3: When you come downtown, how do you spend your time or where do you like to go?

Q3 responses were substantially similar to Q1 responses, with most respondents mentioning eating/drinking, shopping, running errands, or participating in entertainment and recreation activities such as visiting the library, attending a show, festival or event, or just hanging out.

Q4: Please share any other thoughts or desires you have for the future development at 21 S. Linn St.

Q4 responses largely reflected Q2 responses. The most common suggestions staff heard throughout the surveys, written comments, and open house sessions are listed below in order of most to least frequently mentioned (only includes suggestions with at least 20 mentions):

- Green space, park area, or gardens
- Housing, with the vast majority specifically mentioning affordable housing
- Micro-retail spaces, incubators, or “NewBo” style markets, with a focus on local and independent business
- Mixed use development
- Protection of the existing mural on the adjacent property
- Restaurants, bars, coffee shops, food courts, or food truck area
- Interactive recreation or entertainment attractions (i.e. mini golf, arcade, etc.)
- Parking
- Flexible community center or public gathering/event space
- Music or arts and entertainment venue
- Art-focused spaces such as galleries, studios, classrooms
- Family and kid-friendly elements
- Density
- Well-designed, character, and blends well with surrounding area
- Affordability remained a consistent and recurring theme throughout all suggestions.

The most common uses that respondents wanted to avoid in this development are listed below, again in order of frequency (only includes those with more than 20 mentions):

- Bar, vape shop, or liquor store
- Housing, with just over half specifically mentioning luxury or expensive housing
- High-rise/large building
- Parking

Key Takeaways

Staff is appreciative of everyone that took time to share feedback. Based on the wide variety of input, it is clear we cannot achieve everything that the community desires on this one site downtown. However, using important takeaways from this public input, we can pursue a project that both adds something new and of value, contributes to the long-term health of downtown in multiple respects (financial, built environment, opportunities for new uses, etc.), and leverages and enhances the strengths and assets that downtown already has.

It is important to note that there are many additional comments and ideas submitted that may not be clearly reflected in the summary above. This summary of public input responses focused on the most common responses in an attempt to summarize the wide array of input received. While consensus was neither anticipated nor achieved, staff's ultimate goal for this phase of public input was to collect insights that could (1) inform the RFP document; and (2) inspire responding development teams to incorporate community desires.

Additionally, there were many other comments received which fall beyond the scope and goals of this redevelopment project. Through the education component of this public input phase, staff

sought to be clear about types of uses that would and would not be considered at this corner. For example, although park and green space was a common response, the City's stated goal for this redevelopment is a mixed-use building. Any input which falls beyond the intent of this project is still valuable feedback in the context of general long-range City planning but will not be prioritized in the discussion of this particular project.

Instead, the key takeaways identified by staff consist of the *most common public comments that are also in alignment with the City's intent of a mixed-use redevelopment and the City Council's and Downtown District's strategic priorities*. Accordingly, staff have identified the following concepts as key takeaways which will inform the RFP goals:

- **Inviting to the public:** Foster an inclusive urban experience, in which the general public feels welcome to access space in the new development. Appeal to a variety of ages and increase options for spending time downtown.
- **Space for new opportunities (without compromising our strengths):** People come downtown for the arts and culture, fun public spaces, and wide selection of food and drink. However, they also desire new and unique opportunities which fill the "gaps" – retail; dining, entertainment, and other experiences that aren't alcohol-centric; and housing options that diversify the everyday users of downtown.
- **Authentic urban experience:** Achieve a redevelopment where the Downtown's character meets modern amenities; prioritizing economic viability, walkability and multi-modal transportation, safety and cleanliness, and interesting and engaging street-level design.
- **Consider geographic assets:** 21 S. Linn's shares close proximity with many key assets that were valued through the public input: the Tower Place Ramp for parking, the Library and Senior Center for civic connection, and the Englert, FilmScene at the Chauncey, and Studio 13 for arts and culture opportunities are all examples.

While these may be lofty objectives, staff is confident our community can achieve such a project since we have prior experience doing so. For example, the Chauncey development was designed with a strong pedestrian-level experience, created new, engaging spaces that welcome the public (both indoor and out), added new value (bowling, movies, coffee shop) while lifting up existing assets (FilmScene), and generated new modern office spaces, hotel units, and public housing and market-rate units, which all put feet in the street and contribute to the daytime vibrancy of the downtown. A similar example is the Hotel Vetro development, which again added modern office space, hotel units, and housing stock while also contributing a unique, new dining concept that serves for many as a social/public space and complements the pedestrian mall, Library, and playground area well.

Next Steps

Staff will present more on the RFP development at your June 4th work session. We welcome the Council's input at this time and will also present a draft RFP later this summer for full review and feedback before issuance.

Proposed Timeline for the Redevelopment of 21 S. Linn:

- December 2023: City Council review of past public-private development processes - *completed*
- Feb – May 2024: Conduct public engagement - *completed*

- June – Aug 2024: Develop Request for Proposals (RFP) document
- Sept – Oct 2024: Issue RFP
- Nov – Dec 2024: Begin proposal review process
- 2025: Selection of project partners and development of final project details



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Memo from Grant Specialist: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update [Previously distributed as IP4 in the May 16 Info Packet]

Attachments: [Memo from Grant Specialist: American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) Update \[Previously distributed as IP4 in the May 16 Info Packet\]](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: April 23, 2024
To: City Council
From: Sam Turnbull, Grant Specialist
Re: American Rescue Plan Act Update

The U.S. Treasury has allocated \$18.3 million to the City of Iowa City in local fiscal recovery funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The City has spent or encumbered approximately \$15.65 million to date. At the Sept. 7, 2021 Work Session, City Council signaled their support for the following expenditure priorities, categorized by emergent needs and strategic investments:

Program	2021 Est. Range	Funded	Expended	Status
Emergent Needs:				
Direct Payments to Eligible Adults	\$1 - \$1.5M	\$1,184,071.19	\$1,184,071.19	Complete
Eviction Prevention	\$1 - \$2M	\$1,137,710.00	\$307,389.28	In Progress
Housing Repair / Relocation	\$500k - \$1.5M	\$1,071,500.00	\$1,071,500.00	Complete
Emergency Non-Profit Assistance	\$500k - \$1M	\$485,000.00	\$401,325.57	In Progress
Strategic Investments:				
BIPOC Business Support Framework / Infrastructure	\$4 - \$6M	\$3,980,000	\$691,637.47	In Progress
Social Service Needs Assessment, Capital Planning & Seed Funding	\$3 - \$6M	\$3,000,000	\$13,125	In Progress
Affordable Housing Initiatives	\$2.5 - \$6M			In Development
Mental Health Services	\$1.5 - \$3M	\$939,082.00	\$760,656.61	In Progress
Workforce Development	\$1.5 - \$3M	\$1,285,239	\$406,759.41	In Progress
Climate Resiliency and Hazard Assessment Planning	\$500k - \$3M			No Longer Planned
Small Business, Arts, Culture, and Tourism Investments	\$1 - \$2M	Tourism Recovery: \$250,000 SSMID: \$500,000 (pending) Skate Park: \$500,000 (pending)	\$191,803.53	In Progress
Government Services and City Revenue Replacement	\$1 - \$3M	Utility Accounts: \$676,146.49 Lead Reduction: \$500,000 Retention Incentive: \$1,137,770.95 Admin. Cost: Actual	\$676,146.49 \$500,000 \$1,137,770.95 *\$133,866.26	Completed *Admin. Costs reported as incurred

Total 2021 Estimated Funding Range:	\$18 - \$38 million
City's ARPA Allocation:	\$18,325,190.00
ARPA Funds Encumbered (includes committed):	\$15,646,519.63
Total Unencumbered ARPA Funds (includes pending):	\$2,678,670.37

Program Status Update: Emergent Priorities

Direct Payments to Eligible Adults

Status: **Complete**

Amount Funded: \$1,184,071

The Johnson County Direct Assistance Program received 2,238 eligible applications from throughout Johnson County. Johnson County funded the first 1,428 applicants and the City of Iowa City funded 791 applicants (472 residing in Iowa City and 319 residing outside Iowa City).

Eviction Prevention

Status: **In Progress**

Amount Funded: \$1,137,710

Amount Expended: \$307,389.28

The pandemic created and exacerbated housing instability for many populations. Shelter House developed the Housing Stability Pilot program for ARPA-funded community eviction prevention that will extend and enhance previously allocated federal, state, and local dollars. Shelter House entered an agreement on January 10, 2023.

Housing Stability and Eviction Prevention services are now fully staffed. Seven households are enrolled in Risk Mitigation. To date Shelter House held three expungement clinics, one in April 2023, one in October 2023, and one in March 2024 with a total of 61 attendees and 129 records expunged. The Diversion Clinic has had 170 Forcible Entry and Detainer (FED) dismissals.

Forest View Relocation

Status: **Complete**

Amount Funded: \$1,071,500

As of February 1, 2023, all residents vacated by the deadline and were eligible for relocation assistance. In total, 80 Forest View residents received the full relocation amount of \$15,750. The Center for Worker Justice worked directly with residents to assist them in obtaining affordable housing opportunities.

Emergency Non-Profit Assistance

Status: **In Progress**

Amount Funded: \$485,000

Amount Expended: \$401,325.57

Nonprofit Operating Assistance: Applications for operating assistance were reviewed and \$400,000 in funding recommendations were approved by City Council at the October 18, 2022 meeting. Twelve non-profit agencies were awarded funding. All agreements have been finalized. Eleven of the projects have expended all their funds. Of the \$400,000 awarded to the twelve non-profits, \$42,944.39 remains unexpended.

Wage Theft: In coordination with commitments from Johnson County, Coralville, and North Liberty, Iowa City allocated \$85,000 over five years to the Center for Worker Justice for an expanded campaign to confront wage theft, promote worker rights, and hire a full-time Wage Theft Organizer. The CWJ Wage Theft program has expended \$44,269.96 to date, assisted 65 workers and recovered \$77,876.04 in lost wages since May 2022.

Program Status Update: Strategic Investments

BIPOC Business Support Framework & Infrastructure

Status: **In Progress**
Amount Funded: \$3,980,000
Amount Expended: \$691,637.47

In an effort to advance the recommendations in the [Inclusive Economic Development Plan](#), the City launched an APRA-funded inclusive economic development program for underestimated businesses and entrepreneurs located in Iowa City. On March 19, 2024 City Council approved subrecipient agreements with Dream Center (\$2.9 million- \$100,000 was previously awarded for technical assistance), Multicultural Development Center of Iowa (\$600,000), and Wright House of Fashion (\$100,000). On April 16, 2024 City Council approved subrecipient agreements with Dotlizhi LLC (\$100,000), Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County (\$80,000), and Tailored Tax and Accounting LLC (\$100,000).

To date, Dream Center acquired the building located at 611 Southgate Ave. on April 18, 2024. Wright House of Fashion has been able to make their Executive Director position a paid staff position. Multicultural Development Center has provided business coaching to 12 businesses and 2 businesses have received Technical Assistance grants.

Social Services Capital Funding Program

Status: **In Progress**
Amount Funded – Free Medical Clinic: \$1 million
Amount Expended: \$13,125
Amount Funded: \$2 million

With Council direction, staff developed a Non-Profit Capacity Building Capital Grant Program and released a Request for Statements of Interest in December 2022. Eight nonprofit agencies submitted a Statement of Interest for consideration under the program. The review committee held informational interviews with a set of applicants in February 2023 and developed preliminary funding recommendations, which were approved at the March 21, 2023 City Council meeting.

Next Steps: Two nonprofits, Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County and Iowa City Free Medical Clinic, received preliminary funding recommendations. At Council's December 12, 2023 meeting, they approved an agreement with Iowa City Free Medical Clinic for \$1,000,000 to renovate their facility. The planned renovations will increase the number of exam rooms available

to an increased number of volunteer practitioners, provide accessibility to the lower level, increase medical storage (including refrigerated medication), create a dental laboratory, create administrative offices, a multi-purpose room, and acquire related medical equipment to serve a growing number of uninsured and underinsured individuals seeking care. To date \$13,125 has been expended in architectural costs and construction is anticipated to begin this summer.

At Council's May 7, 2024 meeting, they approved an agreement with Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County for \$2,000,000 to acquire two buildings in the Towncrest neighborhood for a Family Resource Center and an Early Childhood Center. Renovation of the two buildings will start this summer. The Family Resource Center will house offices for administrative staff and family support workers, as well as conference/training rooms. The Early Childhood Center will have five licensed classrooms, for at least 50 early childcare slots, a library, computer lab, a multi-purpose space with a kitchen, and a large after-school classroom.

Affordable Housing Initiatives

Status: **Not Started**

In order to expand permanent affordable housing opportunities, staff is investigating use of funds to expand the publicly owned housing portfolio of the Iowa City Housing Authority. This may include property acquisition and/or the investigation of a community development corporation within the Housing Authority to increase future expansion capacity.

Next Steps: Staff recommends the balance of ARPA funds available, approximately \$1,678,700 be targeted to this purpose. The City is working with a realtor from the Affordable Homes Coalition to locate property to acquire. The City will own and manage these properties for permanent affordable housing.

Mental Health Services

Status: **In Progress**

Amount Funded: \$939,082

Amount Expended: \$760,656.61

City Council approved a subrecipient agreement with CommUnity at the February 15, 2022 meeting to expand Mobile Crisis Outreach in response to the exacerbated mental health impacts of the pandemic. Three Mobile Crisis Response counselors work full time providing emergency response. The fleet of eight Mobile Crisis Response vehicles has allowed the program to maintain an average response time of 22 minutes within Iowa City responding to a total of 1,047 calls this fiscal year.

Workforce Development

Status: **In Progress**

Amount Funded - Childcare Navigator (4Cs): \$100,000

Amount Expended: \$59,587.26

Amount Funded - Pre-Apprenticeship Program (UI Labor Center): \$435,239

Amount Expended: \$97,172.15

Amount Funded - Childcare Workforce Development: \$750,000

Amount Expended: \$250,000.00

Workforce Development: A \$435,239 agreement with the UI Labor Center for a pre-apprenticeship program targeting underserved populations in the building and construction trades was approved by Council on December 6th, 2022. 14 residents were enrolled in the FY23 cohort. Fifty percent of the graduates were employed in construction trades and/or apprenticeship programs within one year of graduating. 28 individuals graduated from the FY24 cohort. The FY25 cohort will be held February-March 2025 so that they will graduate as the Spring construction hiring begins.

Childcare Workforce Development: In June 2022, 4Cs and the Iowa City Area Business Partnership presented an update on regional childcare efforts and needs to City Council and recommended Council consider funding a childcare navigator position. 4Cs was awarded \$100,000 in ARPA funds for the navigator position. 4C's added a consultant focused on recruitment and navigation of the childcare workforce. The consultant serves the Starting Strong Program which has served 16 Iowa City providers, adding one new Iowa City provider. Four Training Sessions have been held with Starting Strong Providers. The consultant is also working with the ICCSD to develop a Child Development Associate program for high schoolers.

Childcare Wage Enhancement Program: Johnson County, Better Together 2030, and other community partners presented a proposed Childcare Wage Supplement Program at the March 7, 2023 City Council Work Session. Council approved the agreement at the June 6, 2023, providing \$750,000 over three years to support the Wage Enhancement Program. To date, the County has authorized payment of \$109,088.42 in wage enhancements to five childcare centers in Iowa City. A sixth Iowa City center was recently enrolled.

Climate Resilience and Hazard Assessment Planning

Status:

No Longer Planned

Staff will continue to utilize Emergency Levy fund balance and General Fund dollars to meet our Climate Action goals. Supplemental ARPA expenditures are no longer planned.

Next Steps: None.

Small Business, Arts & Culture, and Tourism Investments

Status: **In Progress**

Amount Funded: \$250,000

Amount Expended: \$191,803.53

At the June 6, 2022 City Council meeting, Council approved an agreement with Think Iowa City to replace \$125,000 in lost hotel/motel tax revenue due to COVID-19 and to develop and administer a \$125,000 tourism and visitor recovery grant program to spur tourism and economic activity in the Iowa City area. Of the \$125,000 available through the grant program, Think Iowa City has awarded six projects to date:

- \$7,500 to the Iowa Golden Gloves to host the 2023 Iowa Golden Gloves Championships boxing tournament in Iowa City, organized by the ICOR Boxing Club.
- \$15,000 to the Refocus Film Festival hosted by FilmScene in Iowa City in 2022 and 2023.

- \$30,000 to the Iowa City Downtown District to host the Winter Night Lights light display and winter programming in downtown Iowa City for 2023.
- \$5,000 to EntreFEST to host a two-day entrepreneurship and innovation conference in downtown Iowa City in June 2023.
- \$5,000 to The Black Voice Project to host the 2023 Juneteenth celebration downtown.
- \$5,000 to the Core4 cycling event that incorporates four fundamental surface types: gravel, b-roads, singletrack, and pavement. With 850 participants, plus spectators and support staff, the event brought over 1,200 people to Iowa City the weekend of August 19, 2023.

Think Iowa City continues to accept applications on a rolling basis.

Next Steps: Staff intends to move forward with two final activities that support the small business community, arts and culture, and tourism. The first would be a \$250,000 grant to each of the two Self-Supported Municipal Improvement Districts (SSMID) for a total of \$500,000 to provide flexible support to meet their organizational goals. This strategy is outlined in the Council's strategic plan to help area businesses and arts and culture continue to work together on recovery efforts. The SSMID agreements are anticipated to come before council in Spring 2024.

Secondly, staff would supplement the Skate Park Renovation Project in the CIP with a \$500,000 award to ensure that project can be carried out in a manner that provides maximum value to the community. Staff's previous efforts to secure grant funding for this project have not been successful and this award will allow the project to proceed. Once complete, the facility will be a regional tourism draw and a premiere community recreational amenity along the Iowa River. Public input is being gathered on the Skate Park design and the current schedule is for the project to be bid in September 2024 and awarded in November 2024.

Government Services and Revenue Replacement

Status: *In Progress*

Amount Expended: \$2,447,783.7

Utility Assistance Program

Council approved the resolution authorizing Utility Billing Revenue Replacement at their September 6, 2022 meeting, bringing utility accounts current as of June 1, 2022 and resuming regular collection procedures. The total cost for Utility Billing Revenue Replacement was \$676,146.49.

Administrative Expenses

Administrative expenses attributed to ARPA are paid through the interest derived from the City's receipt of ARPA funds. Total administrative costs incurred to date is \$133,866.26

Lead Reduction

Council approved the resolution authorizing \$500,000 for a City administered program to assist property owners with replacement of their lead water service lines at their November 6, 2023 meeting. This program will help qualifying property owners avoid unplanned, costly repairs and can be successfully launched without placing the burden on utility customers. The City hosted an Open House to raise awareness about the program on January 24, 2024. The program has enabled eight households to replace their lead or lead contaminated service lines to date. The related insurance program has been used by at least one household to replace their service line.

The City expects interest to pick up with notifications directly to customers about their lead lines and the upcoming construction season.

Workforce Retention Incentive

Council approved the resolution authorizing \$1,137,770.95 for worker retention incentive bonuses to employees in the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and Administrative, Confidential and Executive employee groups on December 12, 2023. The incentive is in response to an increase in turnover rates and a shrinking applicant pool for many critical positions. 515 employees received the bonus in December 2023.



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Memo from City Manager: Review of Pending Work Session Topics [Previously distributed as IP5 in the May 16 Info Packet]

Attachments: [Memo from City Manager: Review of Pending Work Session Topics](#)
[\[Previously distributed as IP5 in the May 16 Info Packet\]](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: May 15, 2024
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Geoff Fruin, City Manager
Re: Review of City Council Pending Work Session Topics

The City Council has a long-standing practice of identifying and publishing future work session discussion topics. In recent months, the City Council has added several items to the Pending List and it is unlikely that sufficient time can be dedicated to all topics in the short-term. In addition to the items on this list, there are likely staff generated items needing City Council direction that will arise from time to time. Examples of these types of topics that are anticipated in the next several months include 21 S. Linn RFP discussions, space needs study updates, and FY 2026 budget preparation. Finally, work session times also present opportunities to highlight City operations and capital investments being made in the community. If the City Council wishes to use any work session time for these types of updates, then you will need to budget time accordingly.

Attached to this memo is the current Pending List for your review. I encourage the Council to work to reduce the number of topics as greater focus will lead to more effective use of staff time and higher probability for successful outcomes. This could be done in several different ways, but here are two possible approaches for your consideration:

- Collectively review and edit the Pending List during any regular work session time
- Schedule a special Strategic Plan update work session to review progress and make any needed adjustments to the remaining action items. A revised Pending List would be a natural outcome of that process.

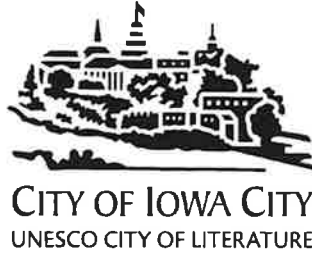


CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Pending City Council Work Session Topics

Attachments: [Pending City Council Work Session Topics](#)



PENDING CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION TOPICS

May 28, 2024

Currently Scheduled

- July 16 – Update related to the new tobacco permit moratorium
- July 16 – City Hall and Public Safety headquarters space need study update
- August 20 - Evaluate one-year progress of fare free transit

FY23-25 Strategic Plan Action Item Topics Requiring Council Discussion:

- Explore legal steps to discourage or prevent bad faith and predatory property investors
- Advance prioritized recommendations in the 2022 Affordable Housing Action Plan. Work with partners to undertake significant-scale affordable housing efforts
- Develop a vision statement for a singular regional transit system with metro Johnson County entities and obtain initial commitments to study a regional system from each entity's elected officials
- Evaluate with the State of Iowa reverting Dodge and Governor to 2-way streets

Other Topics:

- Consider a strategic plan decision-making framework
- Develop strategies to address equity gaps noted in the Parks Master Plan and plan for the equitable distribution of destination parks within an easy and safe distance of all residents.
- Discussion on the impact of land use decisions on long-term City financial health
- Discussion on City Charter
- Discussion of board and commission appointment process
- UNESCO City of Literature update
- License plate reader technology discussion
- Local Option Sales Tax and other alternative revenue streams discussion
- Affordable Housing discussion
- Update on efforts of the Childcare Coalition
- Air quality discussion
- Review of City grant programs (Social Justice Racial Equity, Climate Action, Public Art, and Aid to Agencies)
- Alternative crisis response discussion
- Historic preservation incentive discussion

Note: Some items on the Pending List may require staff research and information gathering prior to scheduling.



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Memo from Senior Planner, Neighborhood & Development Services: Nomination to List the Iowa City Community Recreation Center in the National Register of Historic Places

Attachments: [Memo from Senior Planner, Neighborhood & Development Services: Nomination to List the Iowa City Community Recreation Center in the National Register of Historic Places](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: May 29, 2024

To: Geoff Fruin, City Manager

From: Anne Russett, Senior Planner, Neighborhood & Development Services

Re: **Nomination to List the Iowa City Community Recreation Center in the National Register of Historic Places**

Background

On Monday, April 15, 2024, Urban Planning staff was notified by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that a nomination was submitted to the State to list the Iowa City Community Recreation Center (Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, 220 S. Gilbert St) in the National Register of Historic Places (Attachment 1). Urban Planning staff was notified because as a participant in the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to review and comment on nominations within its jurisdiction. The nomination was not initiated by the City or the Historic Preservation Commission, but rather by a member of the community.

National Register of Historic Places

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places is an honorific designation. The National Register does not, in and of itself, provide protections for listed resources. It also does not prevent the property owner from making changes to the interior or exterior or even demolishing the building.

One benefit of being listed in the National Register is that it can open opportunities for State and Federal funding. However, if a property owner takes federal money (e.g. grants or tax credits) the work must be completed following established guidelines for preservation.

Additionally, a project that uses federal funds or requires federal permitting can trigger Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. If the City proposed a project at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center that triggered the Section 106 process, the proposed project would be evaluated for adverse effects. Adverse effects are those that diminish characteristics qualifying a property for inclusion in the National Register. These could be internal or external modifications to the building. If the project results in an adverse effect to the historic property, the City would need to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement. This MOA would outline the steps the City would take to mitigate the adverse effects. Examples of mitigation include surveys of historic neighborhoods that had never been surveyed, documentation of historic buildings that were going to be demolished, educational events, signage/brochures, etc. Keep in mind that Section 106 could be triggered for buildings that are not listed in the National Register, but that are *eligible* for listing.

Listing in the National Register is different than being designated an Iowa City Historic Landmark. While local historic districts and landmarks provide protections for historic buildings and also add additional regulations, National Register listing does not. Specifically, local historic districts and landmarks require the historic review process for exterior modifications that require a regulated permit (e.g. mechanical or building permit). No review is required for buildings listed in the National Register unless the Section 106 review process is triggered.

Overview of Nomination Process

After a property is researched and evaluated and a nomination is prepared, the nomination is submitted to SHPO. Upon receipt of the nomination, SHPO will review it and work with the preparer to help improve the nomination. After SHPO's review, they notify the property owner of the nomination and also notify the CLG, if applicable. In this case, the City is both the property owner and the CLG. The nomination is then reviewed by the State Nomination Review Committee (SNRC), which is made up of professionals in architecture, archeology, and architectural history. If the nomination is approved by SNRC, it will be submitted to the National Park Service for final review and approval.

Here's a summary of where the nomination for the Iowa City Recreation Center is at in the process:

April 15, 2024	Urban Planning staff received notice from SHPO of the nomination as the CLG. As a CLG, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to review and comment on the nomination. Their role is to determine whether the nominated property meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance and integrity. The chief elected official also can review the nomination using the same approach as the HPC.
April 26, 2024	City of Iowa City notified of the nomination as the property owner.
May 22, 2024	HPC reviewed the nomination at a public meeting.
June 7, 2024	Deadline to submit the Certified Local Government National Register Nomination Evaluation Report Form. This form must be signed by the HPC Chair, the Chief Elected Official, and the Historic Preservation Planner. (Attachment 2)
June 14, 2024	SNRC meets to review the nomination.
TBD	Nomination forwarded to the National Park Service.

History of Iowa City Downtown Historic Surveys

Over the past couple of decades, the City has initiated two architectural surveys of downtown Iowa City. In 2001, Marlys Svendsen surveyed the Iowa City Central Business District. Her study area for the survey included the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center property. As part of the survey, she studied all properties for their eligibility within a historic district. She determined there were two historic districts in the study area, but neither of those potential historic districts included the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center site.

More recently, in 2017, the City hired Alexa McDowell to update Svendsen's survey. The study area for the 2017 survey did not include property east of S. Gilbert St, and therefore, the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center was not even included in the study boundaries.

Summary of Historic Preservation Commission's Review

On May 22, 2024, the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission conducted a public meeting to discuss the National Register Nomination for the Iowa City Community Recreation Center. Staff prepared a memo and provided numerous public comments to the Commission regarding the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center (Attachments 3 and 4). Staff also received a number of emails regarding the Recreation Center that were received too late to be provided to the Commission (Attachment 5).

By a vote of 8-0, the Commission found the Iowa City Community Recreation Center at 220 S. Gilbert Street eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic places in Criterion Category A (Historic Events) and C (Architecture) at the local level and meets the criteria for both significance and integrity.

The Commission also recommended that the State Nomination Review Committee consider the following comments:

1. Due to concerns related to modifications over time, the SNRC should carefully evaluate the Modernist elements of the design to determine if the building has enough integrity in this regard to remain eligible under Criterion C.
2. The caption for map 4 in the nomination should be modified because it implies that Marlys Svendsen's 2001 study found a historic district that included the Recreation Center. This would be a misinterpretation of the map from the 2001 study.

Next Steps

The City Council may provide comments to the SNRC on the nomination. Any comments from the City Council should be articulated at the June 4 Work Session and should focus on whether the nominated property meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance and integrity. At a minimum, the Certified Local Government National Register Nomination Evaluation Report Form must be signed by the chief elected official. The deadline for submitting this form is Friday, June 7, 2024.

Attachments:

1. Iowa City Community Recreation Center National Register Nomination
2. Certified Local Government National Register Nomination Evaluation Report Form
3. Staff Memo to Historic Preservation Commission regarding the Nomination
4. Correspondence Provided to Historic Preservation Commission
5. Late Correspondence

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Attachment 1.
Iowa City Community Recreation
Center National Register Nomination

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Iowa City Community Recreation Center

other names/site number Robert A. Lee Recreation Center; Iowa City Recreation Center

Name of Multiple Property Listing _____

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

2. Location

street & number 220 S. Gilbert St.

☐

not for publication

city or town Iowa City

☐

Vicinity

State Iowa

county Johnson

zip code 52240

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

<u>Iowa City Community Recreation Center</u>	<u>Johnson, Iowa</u>
Name of Property	County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	Buildings
0	0	Site
0	0	Structure
0	0	Object
1	0	Total

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION/CULTURE: Sports Facility

SOCIAL: Civic

GOVERNMENT: Municipal Building

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION/CULTURE: Sports Facility

SOCIAL: Civic

GOVERNMENT: Municipal Building

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Modern Movement

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick and concrete block

roof: Synthetics

other: Concrete: precast, prestressed roof beams

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The Iowa City Community Recreation Center, located on the west side of a single city block on South Gilbert Street in downtown Iowa City, Iowa, is a rectangular, two-level recreation building, which stands as an example of how the Modern Movement architectural style was adapted for use in a municipal building. Designed as part of a broader comprehensive plan for public architecture in Iowa City, which also included a new city hall, police station, and fire station, the community recreation center is situated on a city-owned parcel one block south of the city hall. Local architect Roland C. Wehner designed this public building in 1962 using organic design principles with an emphasis on functionalism, minimalist forms, and use of new materials and innovative construction techniques.

Built in 1963-64, the 45,478 square foot building's footprint covers more than an acre of land and was designed to account for the parcel's natural slope—the primary west façade appears as a single story along South Gilbert Street, while the rear east façade rises two stories above grade. The recreation center holds a series of spaces and amenities to support disparate wellness and exercise needs, including a gymnasium, natatorium, game/exercise room, social hall, arts and crafts areas, various meeting rooms, and administrative offices.

The Iowa City Community Recreation Center is locally significant under Criterion C as a representation of the mid-twentieth century Modern Movement architectural style of low, horizon-hugging profiles with cubic lines and efficient functionality of interior space resulting from modular design elements. Within the context of municipal buildings in Iowa City, this property is eligible under Criterion A as a significant example of how Modernism and careful, methodical city and comprehensive planning helped to change the broader built environment while also contributing an enduring and versatile structure for many generations of Iowa Citizens to use.

The building has good integrity and has retained much of its original appearance, feeling, and association with only minor alterations to design elements, setting, materials, and workmanship. It continues to serve the community as a recreational, cultural, social, and municipal building. Its central location and accessible design of interior spaces continue to make it Iowa City's most-used recreation facility.¹

¹ *City of Iowa City Recreation Facilities and Programs Comprehensive Master Plan*, October 18, 2022, Section 3, Page 18.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the property in a **Statement of Integrity**, and any future plans for the property under the subheading **Future Plans**.)

Neighborhood Setting and Current Exterior Appearance:

The Iowa City Community Recreation Center is located at the east edge of downtown Iowa City's Central Business District. The property is bounded by South Gilbert Street to the west, East Burlington Street to the south, Ralston Creek to the east, and College Street to the north. Historically, this neighborhood was mixed use and included a train depot, a bike shop, an automobile repair shop, the Elks Club (B.P.O.E.), and several private residences, all now non-extant. What remains from the past stands in stark contrast to the verticality of new construction in the district. Across South Gilbert Street to the west are several contemporary brick condominiums and apartment buildings that contain commercial space at the ground floor. The historic Trinity Episcopal Church, a remnant of the original neighborhood along South Gilbert Street, is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of College and Gilbert streets. Across East Burlington Street to the south and South Van Buren Street to the east are more contemporary apartment buildings, with a convenience station located at the northeast corner of the intersection. Across College Street and to the north of the recreation center is the Chauncey Building, a 2019 mix-use tower that encompasses luxury apartments, a hotel, and a non-profit movie theatre. A parking structure adjoins the Chauncey Building to the east. Approximately one block to the north is the Iowa City Civic Center with city hall, a police station, and a fire station—a complex designed as part of the same municipal planning phase started in the late 1950s and aimed at expanding public services.

Situated on a single city block, the Iowa City Community Recreation Center occupies the west half of the parcel, with the parking lot dividing the space between the building and Ralston Creek to the east. The parking lot on the building's east side connects to Burlington Street on the south and a municipal parking ramp on College Street to the north. The slanted elevation on the west side of the parcel determined the placement and layout of the building, with streets around the parcel sloping toward the southeast. The design of the northeast corner of the building needed to accommodate the existing foundation for the College Street bridge crossing between Gilbert Street and Van Buren Street.

Materials, Structure, and Construction: The Iowa City Community Recreation Center consists of masonry-bearing wall construction set atop reinforced, concrete-grade beams and wood piling. Floors at grade level are structural concrete, also supported by piling. In response to the poor soil conditions of the site, which was previously a creek bed, construction crews drove creosote-treated wood piles to provide a proper foundation for the Iowa City Community Recreation Center (Figure 1). Reinforced concrete-grade beams were poured in place to span between the wood piles and support the concrete block, load-bearing walls above. Prestressed, concrete single T-beams, measuring eight-feet wide, eighty-eight-feet long, and three-feet deep and weighing nineteen tons each, are used for the long roof spans over the gymnasium, swimming pool, and the social hall. The roof T-beams are anchored to the tall bearing walls in such a way as to brace the top of the wall without a rigid connection, allowing for minor movement.² These distinctive beams serve as both structural and decorative features (Figure 2).

Structural slabs of the upper floor area and other roof slabs are four-feet wide, thirty-two-feet long, and eight-inch deep, precast, prestressed concrete (Figure 3).³ The load-bearing walls are concrete block, plastered at some locations, and with a brick face at exterior walls. Interior, non-load-bearing partitions are comprised of steel studs with plastered walls. The coating on the flat roof is synthetic and the cornice and fascia are

² Fishbaugh, Jill. Memo from Roland C. Wehner, Iowa City, Iowa, July 27, 2023.

³ Ibid.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

galvanized metal painted brown. Horizontal gutters and vertical downspouts of galvanized metal control drainage. Downspouts appear on either side of the front entrance and in the corners of the building, tucked between brick projections. Canopies over the west and east entrances were modified when flat steel roof panels were placed over the original roof structure and T-beam roof supports.

Apart from the canopies, the roof of the building is comprised of precast, prestressed, concrete-core slabs supported by load-bearing walls (Figures 4-5). These shorter roof spans, such as those used over the handball court and upper-level administrative offices and meeting rooms, result in a lower roofline in front of the gym and pool, permitting clerestory windows to allow for natural lighting.⁴

EXTERIOR APPEARANCE

West façade: The building's front elevation, with its Main Entrance facing South Gilbert Street, spans the length of an entire city block. Horizontally emphasized, the single-story façade is built to a human scale—low to the ground apart from the distinctive entryway that interrupts an otherwise flat, linear roofline (Figure 6). With a narrow setback from the sidewalk and street, landscaping is limited to a small ornamental tree and a few bushes close to the building's west wall, apart from the northwest corner where more space is available for plantings.

The Main Entrance, as identified on the original floor plans, is situated off-center located closer to the north end of the building than the south end. On either side of the entrance, a double-layer brick wall projects outward five feet, creating a shelter-like space that reaches beyond the west wall to protect the entrance. The threshold or top step of the front entrance, though outside the building, features the same original terrazzo covering as the interior floors, comprised of marble chips in white cement, divided into four-foot squares and ground smooth. The lower two steps are concrete and the original wide metal handrail on the south side is attached to the brick side wall.

The distinctive feature of the Main Entrance is a cantilevered roof or canopy, which extended over the sidewalk until nearly flush with the curb, providing protection from the elements. The original accordion-fold shaped roof of the canopy is still extant, but has since been covered with a flat roof, box-like roof structure clad in aluminum (Figures 7-8). Circular light fixtures are placed in the ceiling underneath the canopy.

The greater height of the Main Entrance allows for two sets of double doors surrounded by windows extending upward to the roof line, which forms a glass curtain wall. Clerestory windows between each of the T-beams in the roof allow natural light into the building, as do the expansive row of floor-to-ceiling window bays to the south of the Main Entrance, which reinforce the notion of open, light-filled spaces that invite visitors to enter the building (Figure 9).

The city added a concrete accessibility ramp with black metal railing to the north side of the Main Entrance, which opens to a lobby on the upper level.⁵ The entire exterior threshold, or top step, and the south half of the concrete front steps remain in their historic configuration (Figure 10). An electrical wiring conduit for the mechanical operation of the accessible entrance doors was added to the outside of the wall that protrudes on the north side of the entrance. On each side of the building, non-contributing metal panels or signs promote activities in the building. Partially covering the center bay of windows in the main entrance, a laser-cut metal screen contains the word "gather," and an additional sign underneath includes the address in sans serif font, "220 south gilbert."

⁴ Fishbaugh, Memo from Wehner, July 27, 2023.

⁵ Bennett, Mary, Email from Nicole Davies, City of Iowa City Finance Director, October 31, 2023, regarding dates and expenditures for building alterations post-2013.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Exterior walls are concrete block with buff-colored brick veneer.⁶ The narrow bricks contribute to the horizontal emphasis of the façade. The north end of the west elevation features a windowless wall, which appears as one solid block or mass of bricks. Visible from Gilbert Street is the name of the building in large metal lettering on this portion of the west wall. At the northwest corner of the west side, an indentation in the building's footprint exists where the west wall intersects with the north wall. The west wall in this area is a solid mass of brick covering the windowless cubic form in the northeast corner of the building. Windows between the T-beams supporting the roof provide lighting inside this block which houses the gymnasium.

Beginning on the other side of the wall projection on the south side of the Main Entrance, the focus of the west elevation shifts to a continuous row of twenty bays of aluminum-clad windows, with five horizontal panels each that provide light to offices and meeting rooms. Originally intended as a wall of glass shielded by concrete block screens, the newer replacement windows are sympathetic in style, yet more energy-efficient and tinted to filter excess light from the west. A glass emergency exit door is located on the south end of a narrow terrace or walkway next to the row of windows on the west exterior wall. Lining the west side of the terrace or walkway are eighteen sections of metal posts formerly used to support a non-extant decorative concrete block screen. Painted a buff color, they correspond with the placement of window frames. The posts are painted with a buff color. Six circular light fixtures, original to the building, are mounted at regular intervals on the concrete ceiling over the terrace. Two concrete steps on the north end of the terrace or front door lead to the front sidewalk along Gilbert Street (Figures 11-12).

The pattern of using a solid mass of brickwork for a windowless block form is repeated on the west façade's far south corner. Clerestory windows between the T-beams supporting the roof provide lighting inside this block which houses the natatorium. The solid brick wall provides an accessible place for mounting gas and electric meters, water utility lines, and electrical junction boxes. An original circular light fixture or wall lantern is mounted nearby. Directly above this area, on the roof, are exhaust fans, pipes for ventilation, and other mechanical equipment.

Located at the southwest corner of the building, a concrete staircase with twelve steps and a metal railing connects to an entrance on the lower level of the south façade. Due to the indentation of the building's footprint, the west wall of the natatorium block can be seen in drawings of the west elevation.

South façade: Built into the western slope of the property, the scale and proportions of the south façade increase given the height of the natatorium block of twenty-four feet. The street view of the south elevation is dominated by the massive block housing the pool with an expansive bank of windows extending over twenty feet upward to the roof line and represents one of the most significant architectural features of the building. The large windows provide a view inside the building and allows natural light to illuminate the pool area along with more interior spaces on both levels. Originally, there were twelve vertical window bays in the upper part of the south wall, but now there are ten vertical windows bays, each subdivided horizontally into eight panels. On either end of the eight larger central window bays is a narrower window bay of the same height. The contiguous row of aluminum-clad windows, all in alignment with the south wall, have a larger bottom panel that matches the height of the doors, creating visual continuity. Using the same fenestration, the original windows were replaced after tornado damage in April 2008, but retain the overall aesthetic. The new windows are more energy efficient and have slightly tinted glass to filter ultraviolet light.

⁶ Bennett, Mary, Notes from August 6, 2023, Telephone Conversation; October 22, 2023; Roland C. Wehner, Iowa City, Iowa. Standard dimensions of available materials dictated the size of rooms and the building as Wehner's decisions about module design evolved to incorporate dimensions largely based on eight-inch and eight-foot increments. The length of each brick is 7 5/8 inches plus 3/8 inch of mortar equals eight inches. A height of a concrete block is 7 5/8 inches plus mortar equals eight inches. Plywood and sheetrock come in standard dimensions of four-by-eight feet.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

The roof over the eastern portion of the south façade has cantilevered T-beams connecting the west and east walls of the pool. Accenting this space are two-story protruding brick walls which extend eight feet from the south wall to frame either side of the natatorium. The west side of the west wall of the natatorium block extends twenty feet away from the south wall, creating a setback for the southwest corner of the building. The east side of the south façade also appears as a protruding wall which defines the pool area and accompanying outdoor terrace. Next to these wall projections, in direct alignment with the south wall and framing the bank of windows, are twelve-foot-wide solid brick walls. Mounted high on the brick wall on each side of the natatorium block are the original circular light fixtures. As elsewhere, the exterior walls are concrete blocks with buff-colored brick veneer.

Near the edge of the west and east brick walls that define the natatorium block are two separate glass emergency exit doors — one in the southeast and one in the southwest corners of the pool area. These doors provide access to a former outdoor concrete pool terrace, which is now enclosed by a solid wood and metal fencing with a swinging wooden door on the east side. Repurposed as a community/educational garden space, non-contributing structures such as raised planting beds, pergola, and trellis and hoop serve as support structures for growing seasonal produce. An exterior sign with laser-cut lettering on a metal screen reading “swim” is mounted on the upper windows.

On the lower level of the south façade, in the far southwest corner of the building, is another glass emergency exit door. A sidelight, or forty-inch-wide glass panel, is on the east side of the door. Next to this exit door is another exterior door providing access to a small concrete block storage room, though it is obscured by a chain link fence and other stored equipment and is only accessible to staff.

Built into the side of a sloping hillside, the upper level of the southwest corner of the building consists of a wall of windows and buff-colored bricks, connoting a separate interior section of the building. Three vertical window bays divided into five wide, horizontal sections combined with two vertical windows with narrower sections, helps to illuminate a meeting room facing Burlington Street (Figures 13-14).

East façade: The overall scale and proportions of the east side is differentiated from the low, horizontal lines of the west and north facades given the overall twenty-four-foot height, the massive two-story brick wall on the pool's east side, the prominence of the protruding T-beams along the top of the wall near the roofline, and another mass or block of brick-covered walls on the north end. A distinctive secondary entrance for the public, placed closer to the north end than the south end of the east façade, utilized the T-beam supports that bridge the center of the building between the upper and lower levels to form the cantilevered canopy over the east entrance. The overhangs contribute to the dynamic, geometric appearance of the building while clerestory windows between the T-beams allow natural light to enter the interior spaces. Six T-beams over the outdoor terrace form an overhanging canopy for the receiving dock, entrance, and half of the outdoor terrace on the east side. Large sections of aluminum-clad windows on both the upper and lower levels in this part of the east wall, along with the canopied entrance and terrace, are the east façade's main focal points (Figure 15).

Two sets of double glass emergency exit doors under the roof canopy provide access to the lower level and along with a continuous line of three window bays, a virtual wall of glass is created. Using the same fenestration, replacement windows on the upper level directly above the lower-level windows have four vertical window bays subdivided into four horizontal panels. These windows, as well as the windows tucked between roof T-beams, unify two stories in this portion of the east façade, providing visual relief from the solid brick walls on either side of the lower-level entrance. An exterior sign with laser-cut lettering on a metal screen reading “play” is mounted on the upper windows.

The footprint of the outdoor terrace and the original loading dock remain, but the appearance and functionality were modified in June 2013 to comply with safety and national ADA standards. The loading dock is fenced off

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

from the public entrance and broader steps were laid over the old terrace foundation. The four wide concrete steps face toward the south instead of the east and have a safety railing and fencing sheathed with aluminum. A concrete accessibility ramp was built on the east side of the terrace (Figures 16-17).⁷

On the south end of the east elevation, buff-colored brick veneer on the mostly windowless wall creates the visual effect of a massive rectangular block. The swimming pool's east exterior wall, because of its length and height, required pilasters for additional wind bracing and stability. The bracing could have been provided by filling cells of the concrete block with reinforcing rods and grout, but it was decided to use masonry pilasters instead, as the pilasters provided aesthetic enhancement to an otherwise plain wall and divides the south side of the wall neatly into eight bays. Each bay enclosed by the brick pilasters has two transom windows underneath the overhanging roof which illuminate the pool area.

On the north end of the east elevation, another enclosed block covered in buff-colored brick veneer forms the northeast corner of the building. The cantilevered roof of T-beams connected the west and east walls of the building's north section and clerestory windows at the roofline illuminate the lower-level gymnasium from both the east and west. The northeast corner of the building abuts the foundation of a bridge on College Street that crosses this valley. Underneath the bridge is a passage to a municipal parking ramp used by visitors to the Iowa City Community Recreation Center. The building's east side property line is bordered by a paved municipal parking lot that abuts the west bank of Ralston Creek.

North façade: Facing East College Street on the north side and the bridge that carries it over Ralston Creek's valley, the north façade is intimately scaled and horizontally focused, similar to the west (front) façade, with a windowless cubic block on one end. Built into the side of a hill, the actual base of the building's foundation in the northeast corner is not as visible or apparent to passing motorists and pedestrian onlookers. The northeast corner of the building abuts the bridge foundation below.

The northwest corner of the building features a square setback in the footprint, formed by a thirty-two-foot-long wall on the north side bordered by a thirty-two-foot-long wall on the west side of the solid block forming the northeast corner of the building. Except for this corner section, the rest of the north façade's exterior walls are composed of buff-colored brick veneer over concrete block. Located on the corner of a busy intersection, the focus of the northwest corner of the building is the glass curtain wall of floor-to-ceiling windows providing views of activities inside the building. Following the original fenestration, aluminum-clad windows are placed in three vertical bays that are divided into four wide, horizontal sections. A glass emergency exit door is located at the far west corner (Figure 18). A sign with laser-cut lettering for the word "art" is attached to the exterior, obscuring some windows.

Outside the north door is a greenspace with landscaping, a park bench, bicycle rack, and entrance to children's discovery garden bordered by a metal fence and sidewalk along College Street. Non-contributing structures such as an arched trellis serve as temporary garden structures and support the growth of seasonal plants.

INTERIOR SPACES

The original layout of the floor plan and primary design elements remain essentially the same as when the 45,478 square foot facility opened in 1964. Constructed on two levels, the building was designed with various rooms that could accommodate a wide range of recreational, administrative, and civic activities. Divided into upper and lower levels, each room or separate interior space was specifically tailored for a pre-identified function or could be adapted for multiple uses as shown on the original floor plans. Aspects of the Modern Movement employed by the architect include modular design based on standard sizes of available

⁷ Bennett, Mary, Email from Nicole Davies, October 31, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

construction material and building fabrication using innovative technologies such as precast, prestressed concrete T-beams and slabs; concrete block walls covered in brick or plaster; and durable industrial and synthetic materials for flooring and finishes. Prominent Modern Movement design elements are incorporated into the complex interior, which showcased vaulted ceilings and exposed roof beams, while the extensive use of exterior and interior glass walls contributes to the sense of spaciousness and provide clear views of the outside, reducing the division of interior and exterior spaces. Indirect lighting from clerestory windows placed between the T-beams in the roof connects the outdoors to the indoors, especially in the pool area and gymnasium on the lower level but also on the upper level where main entrance, lobby, lounge, and social hall spaces were designed to welcome visitors to the building. During the daytime, natural light fills the interior of nearly every room on both levels, unifying the various interior spaces (Figure 19).

UPPER LEVEL - CENTER

Main Entrance and Vestibule: The grand central entrance from Gilbert Street is composed of two sets of exterior glass doors, surrounded by windows on all sides, including overhead. The doors open to a vestibule, an area designed as a transition zone between the outdoor elements and the interior of the building. The buff-colored brick veneer from the exterior walls continues around the corner and along the interior south and north walls of the vestibule space. Metal heat radiators are mounted on the north and south walls. A plaque honoring Robert A. Lee, whom the building is named after, hangs on the south wall. Two more sets of double doors surrounded by windows open from the vestibule to a lobby, connecting visitors to other parts of the building via a central staircase and two hallways leading north and south and a lounge area for gathering. Floors in high-traffic areas like the entrance vestibule consist of the original terrazzo flooring (Figure 20).

Lobby: The entire west side of the lobby is a glass curtain wall from the floor to the clerestory windows under the roof beams and the main entrance and vestibule doors are flanked by sidelights. Integral to the original design the windows unify interior spaces and establish broad panoramic views of the outside. The public lobby in the center of the building serves as a connecting point to all parts of the interior, providing access to a staircase between the upper and lower levels and serving as the main access point to the Social Hall. Various smaller educational and activity-specific rooms are located along a hallway leading north and rooms for municipal business and public meetings are reached by a hallway leading south.

The buff-colored brick from the building's exterior and vestibule walls extends twenty inches along both the north and south interior wall of the Lobby. Evidence of more refined design elements—the interior use of the buff-colored exterior brick, plastered walls rather than concrete block walls, the original globe-shaped light fixtures hanging in the Lobby, terrazzo flooring, and wooden doors stained a dark brown—appears on the upper level, where room functions might include more formal municipal and public business. The original terrazzo flooring used in this high-traffic area, remains. Bulletin boards on the upper part of the south wall showcase informational posters while a locked glass wall case on the upper part of the north wall displays photographs, artwork, poetry, and other artistic creations. The door to a Men's Restroom is on the north side of the Lobby (Figure 21).

Lounge: The Lounge is a twenty-four by sixteen-foot open area and functions as a gathering space for visitors. The east wall is finished with plaster and has two glass doors that lead to the Social Hall. At the top of the wall, daylight enters from glass clerestory windows between the exposed roof T-beams supporting the roof over the center of the building. A glass curtain wall, a characteristic Modern Movement design element, runs along the south of the lounge, providing views of the pool observation balcony while creating a feeling of openness in the space. The curtain wall is comprised of twelve square glass panels, each measuring forty-by-forty inches, and reaches from floor-to-ceiling.

Modifications to the walls directly across the hallway resulted in an open counter and half-wall used as a Reception Desk, enclosed with floor-to-ceiling walls and the addition of a more secure entrance door to the

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Administrative Offices (Figures 22-23). The other sides of the Lounge space connect to open views of the lobby, main stairwell, and down either hallway. A wide, two-level staircase with terrazzo floor covering connects the upper and lower levels. It is surrounded by a stairwell with a vaulted ceiling made of plaster walls. Directly overhead, concrete structural slabs and roof T-beams in the ceiling are left exposed and painted or sprayed with acoustical plaster. As a central focal point for the Lounge floor, a square-shaped area is carpeted as it was originally. The rest of the flooring in this high-traffic area consists of the original terrazzo used throughout the building.

Social Hall: In direct alignment with the Main Entrance on the west side of the building, and adjacent to the Lobby's east wall, are a set of double glass entrance doors to the Social Hall. The frosted coating on the two glass doors prohibits a view inside and filters light into the Lobby. The largest room on the upper level measures sixty-two by seventy feet, with moving partitions that can divide the Social Hall and Stage area located toward the north wall. An emergency exit staircase in the northeast corner of the room leads to the east entrance on the lower level. At the top of the staircase is a swinging gate.

Horizontal clerestory windows above the entrance doors are fitted under the roof beams. Floor-to-ceiling windows are placed along the entire east wall, illuminating the room with natural light and offering clear views of the outside. Even more deliberate in terms of extra illumination and visual connections between interior spaces is the creation of an expansive curtain wall of interior windows along the Social Hall's entire south wall. As originally planned, these windows overlook the pool and are capable of accommodating spectators for competitive swim meets (Figure 24 and Figure 25).

The Social Hall is lit by overhead fluorescent light fixtures as well as the natural light that streams in from four clerestory window bays between the roof T-beams that run across the ceiling on both the east and west sides of the room. The concrete structural slabs and roof T-beams are painted or sprayed with acoustical plaster and left exposed. A band of dark green border vinyl tile around the edge of the room surrounds a field of gray twelve-inch square vinyl tiles covering the concrete floor. Storage areas for chairs and other items line the west wall. A small eight-by-eight-foot storage room was constructed in the southeast corner of this room around 2000.

Pool Observation Balcony: Adjacent to the lobby and intended as a visual extension of that space is a key link to one of the building's most significant features: the swimming pool on the lower level. Connected by windows along the entire north wall, the twenty-by-eight-foot observation balcony or cantilevered platform with a metal railing overlooks the pool area below (Figures 26-27). Accessed via a door on the east side of the South Hallway, the original wood entrance door has a forty-inch-wide glass panel or sidelight on the south side of the door. The exposed T-beams over the pool support the roof over this area. The original terrazzo floor remains.

Men's Restroom: Although part of the north wing, the wooden access door to a twelve-by-fourteen-foot Men's Restroom is located on the north wall of the Lobby. The buff-colored brick from the building's exterior and vestibule walls extends along the north interior wall of the Lobby, up to the door to this restroom. The windowless room, lit by overhead fluorescent light fixtures, contains one enclosed toilet stall and two urinals along the south wall and two sinks on the north wall. The original terrazzo floor remains.

Stairwell and Staircase: Around 2014, to comply with ADA rules and public safety codes, the main staircase, located in the center of the building at the north end of the Lounge, was modified. The open risers and framing of the main staircase were enclosed, with the height of each step riser lowered from six inches to four inches.⁸ The seventy-one-inch-wide terrazzo-covered concrete stairs lead from the upper level to the lower level and comprise two flights of eight stairs broken by an intermediate square landing. The first flight of stairs run from

⁸ Fishbaugh, Memo from Wehner, July 27, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

west to east where they meet the landing and then turn 90 degrees to the north where they reach the lower level. The coating on the stairs is a close match to the original terrazzo flooring elsewhere (Figure 28). Bushed stainless steel railings are installed on both sides of the stairs.

Elevator: Due to code changes relating to accessibility and safety, an elevator was added in the 1980s. Tucked in behind main staircase to the east, the elevator car, with gray twelve-inch squares of vinyl tile on the four-by-five-foot floor, opens toward the north on each floor. On the upper level, access to the elevator is gained by walking down the North Hallway a few feet where a small room appears on the east side of the hallway (Figure 29).

UPPER LEVEL – NORTH WING

North Hallway: The north hallway flooring is consistent with the original terrazzo flooring throughout the building. The hallway heads north, ending at the doorway to the Arts and Crafts Room, where the hallway's concrete floor is covered with twelve-inch square vinyl tiles.

Shop and Social Hall Backstage Entrance: The first opening on the east side of the North Hallway is a sixteen-by-twenty-four-foot area originally referred to as the Shop on the floor plans, but now provides access to the west wall of the Social Hall's backstage area via a double set of original wooden doors. The Shop area was reconfigured when an elevator was installed on the south side of the room. A band of dark green border vinyl tile around the edge of the room surrounds a field of gray, twelve-inch square vinyl tiles covering the concrete floor. The original two-foot square acoustical tile in the suspended ceilings are laid in an exposed grid system. A fluorescent light fixture appears in the ceiling. Adjacent to the Shop area and behind the west wall of the Social Hall is an attached storage area, measuring ten-by-sixteen foot, which has another double set of original wooden doors providing access to the Social Hall. Interior walls and non-load-bearing partitions in this area are steel studs, plastered and painted.

Staff Offices: On the north side of the Shop alcove are two staff offices created out of two, eight-by-ten-foot rooms originally designed to be Dressing Rooms. A full-length mirror is mounted on the north wall of the Shop area next to an office door. A utility sink and storage shelves also line the north wall of the Shop area between the office doors. Replacement vinyl tile planks matching the dark wood doors have been installed over the concrete floor. Interior walls and non-bearing partitions in this area are steel studs, plastered and painted. Fluorescent light fixtures and replacements for the original acoustical ceiling tiles are on the ceiling.

Gymnasium Observation Port: On the east side of the North Hallway is a Gymnasium Observation Port, a vertical opening in the concrete block featuring a window measuring twenty-one-and-one-half-inches by forty-five-and-one-fourth inches. The curvature of the Plexiglas permits a view across the entire gymnasium floor from above (Figure 30).

Maintenance Storage Room: On the west side of the North Hallway is a sixteen-by-nine-foot Maintenance Storage Room. The original wooden door has metal ventilation screens on the upper and lower part of the door. Interior partitions and non-load-bearing walls consist of metal studs and plaster. The east wall of this room has angular wall sections that were designed to alleviate congestion in the hallway. A drinking fountain mounted on the wall and a trash can are tucked into these side alcoves in the North Hallway. A fire extinguisher in a metal box with a glass window is mounted on the west hallway wall between the Women's Restroom and the Maintenance Storage Room.

Women's Restroom: On the west side of the hallway, the restroom measures twelve-by-twenty-four foot with an L-shaped entrance area on the east side. Three sinks and a counter are on the north wall and four toilet stalls, including one for people needing improved accessibility, on the south wall. A heat radiator hangs on the west wall as does a paper towel dispenser and a feminine product dispenser. Fluorescent light fixtures in the

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

ceiling and over the row of sinks illuminate this windowless room. The acoustical ceiling tiles are updated replacements. Interior partitions and non-load-bearing walls consist of metal studs and plaster. The original terrazzo floor of marble chips in white cement, divided into four-foot squares, remains.

Darkroom: The nine-by-ten-foot windowless room is now a staff office accessed from a door on the west side of the hallway. The maze-like entrance was designed to prevent excess light from entering the darkroom space. The rest of the original terrazzo floor, remains.

Arts and Crafts Room: At the end of the north hallway on the upper level, next to the darkroom, is a door leading into a large Arts and Crafts Room measuring thirty-two by forty feet. The original wood hallway door has a forty-inch-wide glass sidelight on the east side of the door. Directly ahead on the north wall of the room, a glass emergency exit door leads outside towards College Street on the north side of the building and combined with a wall of windows, the room is brightly illuminated with natural daylight. Movable tables and chairs occupy space in the center of the room. Cabinets, open shelving, and rolling storage carts tucked into cubbyholes are lined up against the walls. A long counter with a sink and convenient electrical outlets provides a work surface along the west wall of the room. Fluorescent light fixtures, replacements for the original acoustical ceiling tiles, and two ceiling fans appear over the center of the room. However, the far east side of the ceiling retains the original two-foot-square acoustical tile in the suspended ceilings, laid in an exposed grid system. The concrete floor is covered with twelve-inch square vinyl tiles (Figure 31).

Adjoining this large room on the south side is an eight-by-twelve-foot windowless Storage Room and a twelve-by-twenty-four-foot windowless Work Room, used as a pottery and ceramic studio. Both rooms are only accessible via interior doors on the south wall of the Arts and Craft Room. Shelves line the east, south, and north walls of the Work Room. There is no connecting door between these ancillary rooms. Overhead fluorescent light fixtures illuminate the rooms. The concrete floor is covered with twelve-inch square vinyl tiles.

UPPER LEVEL – SOUTH WING

South Hallway: Starting at the south end of the Lobby, which has terrazzo flooring, the surface of the South Hallway floor is covered with twelve-inch square vinyl tiles. The original two-foot-square acoustical tiles in the suspended ceilings are laid in an exposed grid system. Fluorescent light fixtures are mounted overhead. Except for the door to the Pool Balcony, all the doors are on the west side of the hallway. One metal door secures the administrative offices, but the rest of the individual doors in the hallway are original wood doors, stained in a dark color. A fire extinguisher in a metal box with a glass window and a recessed electrical panel in a metal case is mounted on the west wall of the hallway to the south of the door to the Administrative Offices (Figure 32).

Administrative Offices: Opposite the Lobby is a door on the west side of the hallway where a suite of Administrative Offices for the Parks and Recreation Department is located. Exterior windows line the west wall of the offices, while three glass sidelights on an interior wall, each measuring twenty-four inches wide, divide the suite of offices, allowing natural light from the west windows to enter the entire space. Two adjoining rooms on the west side of the suite have separate wooden doors with glass transoms above and sidelights measuring twenty-four inches wide. On the east side of the suite, staff workspaces are separated by half-walls, counters, and two small adjoining rooms on the west half. The original two-foot-square acoustical tiles in the suspended ceilings are laid in an exposed grid system. Overhead fluorescent lights and vents appear in the ceiling. Replacement vinyl tile planks matching the dark wood doors have been installed over the concrete floor (Figure 33).

Conference Room: Another prime example of open sight lines appears midway down the South Hallway where three, twenty-four-inch wide, floor-length sidelights allow light and views into a former Conference Room (Figure 34). Windows along two-thirds of the upper west wall bring natural light into the room. The

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

original two-foot square acoustical tiles in the suspended ceilings are laid in an exposed grid system. Overhead fluorescent lights and vents appear in the ceiling. Replacement vinyl tile planks matching the dark wood doors have been installed over the concrete floor.

Meeting Room A: The entire west wall of this twenty-by-thirty-two-foot room features floor-to-ceiling windows with light-filtering window screens. Visitors can enter via the west side of the South Hallway, where two original wooden doors are in the northeast and the southeast corners of the room. At the side of each door is a forty-inch-wide glass sidelight, which brings light from the hallway into the room and allows for views inside. The sidelight next to the south door is on the south side of the door and the sidelight for the north door is on the north side of the door. An opening for passing items back and forth from the kitchen is on the south wall, and a television monitor is mounted next to it. Tables, chairs, and portable audio-visual equipment are moved into the room as needed. Fluorescent light fixtures and replacements for the original acoustical ceiling tiles hang from the ceiling. A band of dark green border tile around the edge of the room surrounds a field of gray, twelve-inch square vinyl tiles covering the concrete floor.

Kitchen: Public access to the twenty-by-twelve-foot Kitchen is accessed via the last door on the west side of the South Hallway. An interior emergency exit door on the west wall leads to a short hallway and the metal exterior emergency exit door, which opens to the narrow outside terrace on the west side of the building. A fire extinguisher in a metal box with a glass window is mounted on the west wall. Both the east and west kitchen doors are original to the building. Made of wood, the doors have a small rectangular viewing window and a metal ventilation screen on the lower part of the door. Kitchen cabinets and drawers, countertops, a sink, an electric oven with stovetop, and a mounted microwave oven line the south wall of the room. On the north wall of the room, a refrigerator with overhead cupboards, another sink, and countertop appear. The north wall also features an original aluminum sliding panel above the sink, which covers an opening for passing items between the Kitchen and Meeting Room A. The original two-foot-square acoustical tiles in the suspended ceilings are laid in an exposed grid system. Overhead fluorescent lights and vents appear in the ceiling. A band of dark green border tile around the edge of the room surrounds a field of gray, twelve-inch square vinyl tiles covering the concrete floor. There are no windows in the Kitchen besides the small ones in the doors (Figure 35).

Meeting Room B: Located at the end of the South Hallway, the entire south wall of this twenty-four-by-thirty-two-foot room features floor-to-ceiling windows with light-filtering window screens. Next to the original wood door is a forty-inch-wide sidelight or glass panel that brings light into the room and allows a view inside. Fluorescent light fixtures and replacements for the original acoustical ceiling tiles are on the ceiling. A band of dark green border vinyl tile around the edge of the room surrounds a field of gray, twelve-inch square vinyl tiles covering the concrete floor. A television monitor is mounted on the west wall. Tables, chairs, and portable audio-visual equipment are moved into the room as needed. An original wooden emergency exit door leading to a back hallway is in the northwest corner of the room, providing access to a glass exterior emergency exit door, which opens to the narrow outside terrace on the west side of the building.

West Back Hallway and Emergency Exit Doors: Concealed from public view for the most part, a hallway twelve feet long in the southwest corner of the building's interior heads north towards a glass exterior emergency exit door, which leads to the narrow terrace on the west side of the building. Designed as an auxiliary exit and safety feature for occupants of the Kitchen and Meeting Room B, each original wooden door leading into the hallway has a small rectangular viewing window. The concrete floor is covered in twelve-inch square vinyl tiles.

LOWER LEVEL – CENTER

East Entrance: The original building footprint and basic floor plan remain the same, though specific room functions have changed over the years. Designed as the secondary "Teen" entrance to the building, most

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

patron traffic now enters through the east entrance to reach the popular Gymnasium and Swimming Pool. The Reception Desk was relocated to this area from the upper level. A double set of glass emergency ewxit doors lead to the outside Terrace.

Lower Lounge and Reception Desk: The set of double glass doors lead directly into an open space along the north wall designated as a Lounge, which is now outfitted with a large Reception Desk. In the northeast corner of this area is a metal door leading to the emergency exit staircase from the Social Hall on the upper level above this space. Another metal door on the east wall next to the entrance provides access to maintenance storage (Figure 36).

Exercise Room (former Game Room): Remodeled in a sympathetic manner in March 2015, the glass-walled enclosure allows the area to retain the sense of openness as in the original floor plan. Natural light from the east and south windows illuminates the space while allowing for views of both interior spaces and the outdoors. This center section of the lower level once featured a large Game Room, now repurposed as an Exercise Room with exercise equipment. Glass doors on the west side and glass walls on the north and west sides enclose an interior room occupying the major portion of this space. There are ten window panels on the north interior wall and ten panels on the west interior wall bordering this "room." Two double glass doors on the east side are emergency exit doors as originally planned. The concrete floor is carpeted (Figure 37).⁹

Staff Offices and West side of former Game Room space: Outside the enclosed area, on the west side of the former Game Room, is a sixteen-by-thirty-two-foot space with two ping pong tables. Arranged along the west wall of the room is a metal door leading to a sixteen-by-sixteen-foot room with spaces divided into staff offices and workspaces using interior partitions consisting of metal studs and plaster. The concrete floor outside the enclosed area and inside the offices is covered with twelve-inch square vinyl tiles. A metal door at the far end of the west wall leads to a staff office used by the swimming pool lifeguards. At the south end of this side of the former Game Room is a glass door providing direct access to the pool area (Figure 38).

Along the west wall, to the north of the staff office door and near the base of the staircase, is a row of four vertical glass windows, reaching from floor to ceiling. Each window measures forty inches across with a lower pane of forty-by-forty inches and an upper pane twice as tall. These windows open the space up by providing views of the stairwell and surrounding areas, and by allowing natural light to transmit between spaces on the lower level as well as the upper level (Figure 39).

Restrooms, Single User: In 2021, and in compliance with ADA rules and the need for equity, office space directly next to the main doors into the Gymnasium was repurposed as two single-use, gender-neutral restrooms. (Figure 40).¹⁰

LOWER LEVEL – SOUTH WING

Natatorium: The Iowa City Community Recreation Center's anchor is its 145,000-gallon indoor swimming pool. It sports six lanes, twenty-five yards long, in the main body with water ranging from three-and-one-third to five feet in depth. It also includes an attached ten-foot-deep diving well and a wading pool one-and-seven-tenths feet in depth. The wading pool measures eighteen by thirty feet and is fenced off to protect children and non-swimmers from the swimming lanes and deep end. The seventy-six feet long by sixty-three feet wide, L-shaped, concrete swimming pool tank is supported by creosote-treated wood pilings that were capped with concrete. This robust construction produced a pool that has not leaked to this day. The original diving board on the south end of the diving well is non-extant. The original Dex-O-Tex flooring finish on the pool deck and locker room floors was redone with compatible materials, although the coating required epoxy chemical composition to adhere to the old finish.

⁹ Bennett, Mary, Email from Nicole Davies, October 31, 2023.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

The expansive use of windows creates a glass curtain wall on the south side of the pool, offering views of the outside and allowing natural light to flood the space. The direct sunlight generates enough heat to warm the space and pool water on sunny days, reducing overall energy costs. Natural light also streams in from clerestory windows between the roof beams above, on both the east and west sides of the room with ceilings over twenty feet high. Concrete structural slabs and roof T-beams are painted or sprayed with acoustical plaster and left exposed as the finish on ceilings. Highly sound-absorbent acoustic units were applied in rectangular grid pattern on the pool walls. Overhead fluorescent light fixtures provide additional light to the space. Emergency exit doors are found in the southeast and southwest corners of the south wall of the pool area, providing access to the outside terrace and Burlington Street (Figure 41).

The north wall of the Natatorium also features an expansive set of windows on both the lower level and the upper level, offer views of activities elsewhere in the building. If needed, chairs and bleachers placed behind the windows on either level offer additional seating areas for pool spectators. Chairs facing the north side of the pool line the south wall of the Exercise Room and the north wall of the Natatorium near the wading pool area (Figure 42).

A metal door in the northwest corner of the natatorium opens to an eight-by-eight-foot storage room used for aquatic exercise gear, life jackets, and equipment. Also on the north wall is a ten-by-eight-foot room used as a lifeguard office. The office has glass windows on the upper half of the west and south walls of the room, as well as doors on both the south and west walls, which permit access to this room from the pool deck. A metal door on the north wall leads to a small staff restroom with a toilet and sink. A metal door on the east side of the pool office connects the natatorium to the area next to the west wall of the enclosed Exercise Room.

In 2021, a unisex, single-user restroom with accessible shower replaced the original men's and women's restrooms, which had previously existed as separate rooms along the west wall off the pool deck.¹¹ Towards the south side of the west wall, a metal door permits access to a Utility Room within the Boiler Room.

Patrons must pass through separate entrances from each Locker Room to reach the pool deck area from the west side. The East/West Hallway permits access to the Men's Locker Room and a South Hallway door leads into the Women's Locker Room.

Men's Locker Room: The Men's Locker Room door is on the south side of the East/West Hallway. The walls of this twenty-four-by-forty-foot room, including two large shower stalls, are painted concrete block. The concrete floors are covered with a protective epoxy-based coating. Concrete slabs form the ceiling. Fluorescent lights hang from the brackets on the ceiling as does a large horizontal heat radiator. Metal lockers line the north, west and south walls of the dressing area with four benches nearby. Mirrors, two sinks, two urinals, four toilet stalls, and a private dressing room are located on the south side of the room. To enter the pool area patrons must use a door in the southeast corner of the room, which opens to a maze-like entrance to the pool deck.

Women's Locker Rooms: The metal door to the Women's Locker Room is on the east side of the South Hallway. The walls of this twenty-four-by-forty-foot room, including six individual shower stalls, are painted concrete block. The concrete floors are covered with a protective epoxy-based coating. Concrete slabs form the ceiling. Fluorescent lights hang from the brackets on the ceiling as does a large horizontal heat radiator. Metal shelves line the east wall and lockers line the west wall of the dressing area with four benches nearby. A narrow shelf and two mirrors hang on an east wall in front of two private showers. Coat hooks, a clock, and fan hang on the south wall. Two sinks with mirrors above and two enclosed toilet stalls are in the anteroom area of the Locker Room, as is an accessible private shower and dressing room with a door. To enter the pool

¹¹ Ibid.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

area patrons must use a door in the northeast corner of the room, which opens to a maze-like entrance to the pool deck (Figure 43).

South Hallway, Lower Level: At the far west end of the lower level is the South Hallway leading directly to a glass emergency exit door leading towards Burlington Street. A glass panel on the east side of the door brings additional natural light into the space. Solid metal doors along the left side of the hallway lead to small utility rooms relating to locker room water pipes, the Women's Locker Room, and a mechanical room with a boiler. A small storage closet is located on the east side of the hallway near the exit door, but the access door is located outside the building to the east of the south exit door.

The east wall is painted concrete block, and the west wall is plaster over metal studs. No drop ceiling or acoustical tiles were ever planned for this space, so plumbing pipes are exposed overhead. The concrete slab ceiling is painted black. A heat radiator is mounted on the east wall and twelve-inch square vinyl tiles cover the concrete floor (Figure 44).

Boiler Room: The Boiler Room houses the pool's water filtering, chlorination/conditioning equipment, and pumps. Walls are painted concrete block. No drop ceiling or acoustical tiles were ever planned for this space. The boiler was replaced in May 2016.¹²

LOWER LEVEL – NORTH WING

Gymnasium: The main doors to the Gymnasium are located on the north wall of the Game Room. Direct access is also available via two emergency exit doors on the west wall of the Gymnasium leading directly to a north hallway located outside the room. The Gymnasium, measuring eighty-two by ninety-four feet, accommodates two full-size basketball courts and serves multiple functions relating to competitive sports, fitness, recreation, entertainment, and education (Figure 45).

Overhead fluorescent light fixtures provide illumination while natural light streams in from windows placed between the roof beams above on both the east and west sides of the high-ceiling room. Two sets of basketball hoops are mounted opposite each other on the east and west walls. Protective padding or mats are placed on the walls under the baskets on the east wall. A curtain hanging from a rail in the ceiling can be used to divide the room for use of two separate courts. A scoreboard and time clock are mounted on the upper part of the wall in the northeast and southeast corners. Exposed structural slabs are painted or sprayed with acoustical plaster and left exposed as finished ceilings in other areas. Highly sound-absorbent, acoustic panels were applied as a rectangular grid on the gym walls. Vertical acoustical panels were added to the upper walls and HVAC ductwork and pipes are suspended from the ceiling.

An Observation Port, a special curved window located high on the upper wall in the southwest corner of the Gymnasium, allows spectators to view the entire court from the upper level. Doors on the east wall provide access to storage rooms formerly used as an Exercise Room and Handball Court. Emergency exit doors are on the west wall of the Gymnasium.

Maple flooring on rubber cushions covers the Gymnasium floor.¹³ With forward thinking in terms of versatility and durability, the hardwood floor in the gymnasium was laid with five-and-a-fourth-inch thick boards instead of the usual thickness of three-fourth-inch board. This was done purposefully so the floor could be maintained by sanding and refinishing without causing excessive wear, but more importantly, it could withstand the rigors of roller skating, the scuffs of ordinary street shoes, and other intended uses of the space.¹⁴

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Wehner, Roland C., Community Recreation Center brochure, 1964.

¹⁴ Fishbaugh, Conversation with Wehner, March 18, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Storage Room (former Exercise Room): A set of double doors on the east wall of the gymnasium provides access to a twenty-four by thirty-six-foot room originally designated as an Exercise Room. Painted concrete block walls provide structural support and floor surfaces are concrete. In the northwest corner of the room, a staircase with three steps leads down to the room designed to be a Handball Court but is now used for storage. Metal safety rails surround the east and south sides of the stairwell. Three vertical water pipes, including hot water supply and return, extend from a midway point upward on the east wall. Overhead fluorescent light fixtures illuminate this windowless room. Previously, this high-ceiling room housed gymnastic equipment and exercise mats but now tables, old doors and fixtures from the building, and unused equipment are stored there.

Storage Room (former Handball Court): A twenty-four-by-forty-eight-foot room in the northeast corner of the building has been converted to an equipment storage room. As originally planned, the floor was lower in this room than anywhere else on the lower level to create higher ceilings to meet handball rules and regulations. Only accessible via a staircase inside a room off the east wall of the Gymnasium, the former Handball Court was decommissioned around 2018 due to changing fire and public safety codes. Concrete block structural walls have been covered with sheetrock and the ceiling is covered in acoustical tiles. Overhead fluorescent light fixtures illuminate this windowless room. A fire alarm is mounted on the west wall. A few pieces of sports equipment are stored in a room that is not used by staff or the public.

North Hallway, Lower Level: In the middle of the lower level, to the west of the Gymnasium, the North Hallway provides access to two separate emergency exit doors opening into the west side of the Gymnasium. Walls are painted concrete block and twelve-inch square vinyl tiles cover the concrete floor. Nine metal doors provide access to one room at the end of the hallway and four smaller rooms on the west side of the hallway. On the east side of the hallway is a Lactation Room (originally designated as an Office). A fire extinguisher in a metal box with a glass window is mounted on the east wall next to this room.

Storage Rooms on West Side of North Hallway: Designed to function as storage rooms, five windowless rooms with metal doors line the west side of the North Hallway.

East/West Hallway, Lower Level: This hallway connects the east and north portions of the building to the center stairwell and elevator area and toward rooms located to the west and south. Walls are painted concrete block, and twelve-inch square vinyl tiles cover the concrete floor. Doors to the Men's Locker Room are on the south side of the hall and doors to a Storage Room and the Weight Room are on the north side of the hall.

Storage Room: A windowless sixteen-by-ten-foot storage room is accessible from a metal door on the north side of the East/West Hallway.

Weight Room (former Rifle Range): The door to the Weight Room is on the north side of the East/West Hallway. Located in the space originally meant to function as a Rifle Range, the room measures eighty-foot long from north to south and fourteen feet wide. Walls are painted concrete block, and florescent light fixtures provide overhead light to this windowless room. Carpeting and exercise mats cover the floor while mirrors and personal weight stations line the walls on either side of the room. Two large fans are mounted on the east wall and HVAC ductwork hangs from the ceiling. No drop ceiling or acoustical tiles were ever planned for this space (Figure 46).

The outfitting of the Rifle Range was not part of the original interior design and was completed later when local law enforcement and a gun club developed the empty space. Targets were placed on the far north wall, with shooters behind counters on the south end of the room. No descriptions of the Rifle Range were found although the room has been adapted to other uses prior to becoming a Weight Room. Modifications were

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

made to the original Rifle Range when the function of the room changed to an Exercise Room from 2000 to 2015, with basic equipment like stationary bicycles, treadmills, and rowing machines.

ALTERATIONS – See Appendix A Table of Alterations

Exterior Changes: The footprint and primary functions of the building remain unchanged. Although alterations have taken place, the original design characteristics based on Modern Movement architectural style and methods persist in the building's distinctive visual identity. The most significant change, in terms of historical integrity, was the removal of the decorative concrete block screen, which accented a row of windows on the west façade and decorated the terrace near the east entrance. The reason for removal of the façade screen is unclear, but it appears the glazing behind it had changed over time, or the City preferred the aesthetics of the building's windows without the decorative blocks. Canopies over the west and east entrances were modified when flat roofs were placed over the original roof t-beams, which are still visible.

Interior Changes: The floor plan remains the same with most of the room functions remaining the same more than 50 years. In a few instances, the room functions have been adapted to reflect the changing social, health, and recreational preferences. The original design characteristics based on Modern Movement architectural style have been retained with interior spaces linked visually with the use of interior glass curtain walls and sidelights next to glass entrance and exit doors. Documentation of how spaces looked before and after these changes can be seen in images logged as Figures and Photographs.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Historic Integrity: This property retains the historic integrity of those features necessary to convey its significance in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

1. **Location:** The building remains at its original address, and therefore the integrity of the location is intact *and excellent*.
2. **Design:** The design is *excellent* as to footprint, form, plan, and interior room arrangement, although a glass partition has been added to the Game Room and a Reception Desk counter has been enclosed on the upper level and relocated to the lower level. Of greater importance is the loss of visual integrity after removal of the exterior concrete screens from the west façade (south of the main entrance) and from the terrace near the east entrance area, leaving the exterior with *good* but not excellent integrity. Nonetheless, the use of principles based on the Modern Movement in architectural style still define the most prominent design characteristics, and match some of the design elements present in Iowa City's nearby Civic Center complex, developed in tandem with the Iowa City Community Recreation Center.
3. **Setting:** The character of the setting is *good*, as it is centrally located in downtown Iowa City adjacent to convenient parking and Ralston Creek to the east; it remains surrounded by residential quarters, although these are now student apartments rather than single-family houses. The site of the building has been identified as a space for public recreation and municipal use since 1839.
4. **Materials:** Most of the building's structural and exterior materials remain *intact* and have *excellent* integrity. Though windows were changed by choice after tornado damage and to improve energy efficiency, they remain commercial types, made of similar or sympathetic aluminum framing and insulated glass, and they fill the same fenestration openings.
5. **Workmanship:** The workmanship is *excellent* with fine brickwork and precast, prestressed T-beams intact and exposed for public viewing and examination. The use of skilled labor and high-performance standards during construction meant no significant structural problems exist, nor are there deteriorating finishes on the interior or exterior, even after 50 years of active use.
6. **Feeling:** The feeling is *excellent* in reflecting the low, horizontal, and cubic lines of midcentury Modern Movement architecture. The building can evoke an emotional response or memory that cannot be expressed in words but is conveyed by familiar, unchanged spaces.
7. **Association:** The association is *excellent* and *intact* with the development of commercial precast, prestressed concrete construction of midcentury municipal and non-residential buildings. It is also demonstrated through Iowa City's history of and continued provision of services for its citizens with a community center at this location for approximately 100 years, as well as through its association with innovative architect Roland C. Wehner and retired recreation superintendent Robert A. Lee, both of whom were instrumental in the current facility's development.

Comparative Information – Prior SHPO Records

The Iowa City Recreation Center was evaluated in 2000 as a part of the "Iowa City Central Business District Study" (HABD #52-040). At that time, the building was less than 50 years old and was therefore determined ineligible for the National Register.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Community Planning/Development

Social History

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1964-1974

Significant Dates

1964 (construction date)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

Wehner, Roland C. (architect)

Viggo M. Jensen Company (builder)

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

Planned and constructed in the early 1960s as the third phase of a major, postwar civic improvement project, the Iowa City Community Recreation Center is locally significant and individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under both Criterion A and Criterion C. It derives its significance from its association with an important era of economic development in Iowa City that enabled the overdue completion of municipal and community construction projects, and from its character-defining Modern Movement-inspired architectural style and organic design concepts, which help to convey the specific time and place of its construction and connection with Iowa City's other municipal buildings. The Period of Significance for Criterion A is 1964 to 1974. The Period of Significance for Criterion C is 1964, reflecting the year the building was finished and placed in service.

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

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

Criterion A – Iowa City Community Recreation Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as an excellent local example of mid-twentieth-century architecture, community planning and development, social history, and recreation/entertainment. Built in 1964, it represents the construction of civic and municipal buildings following World War II when the economy was robust and was propelling the “Golden [economic] Age” of the 1950s forward into the 1960s. The American public was looking for additional recreation activities to fill the increasing amounts of leisure time available to them, while Iowa City was catching up on long-delayed municipal improvements. The City's first phase was construction of a new police and fire station in 1961, a much-needed replacement of a nineteenth-century precursor in existence since 1883. Phase 2, completed in 1962, was the administration/city hall building adjacent to the police and fire departments. Together, the two are referred to as Iowa City's Civic Center. Upon completion of these priority projects, the City turned to Phase 3, the community recreation center urgently anticipated by local residents after watching their Community building burn to the ground in 1955. A combination of community needs and growing community anticipation, then, intersected at a time of national prosperity, when all three projects were economically possible.

Criterion C – The Iowa City Community Recreation Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an excellent local example of Modern Movement municipal architecture. The building represents the architectural style low, horizon-hugging profiles with clean lines, little ornamentation, and functionality of interior space. Through its large windows, especially in the south side of the pool area, the plan merges interior space with the outdoors. The building also shows the mid-twentieth-century influence using the modular planning grid. The method of construction should also be deemed significant as an early example of modular construction employing precast, prestressed concrete applied to a civic building. In this building, the method is found in the enormous, exposed roof T-beams that project outward beyond the plane of the walls, and the roof panels. Using Modern Movement schematics and innovations, architect Roland C. Wehner combined aesthetic, functional, and decorative ideas into a custom design with distinctive characteristics and high artistic values. He maintained simplicity, open planning, massing of elements, and utilization of strong horizontal lines and cubic blocks. Drawing on standardized industrial materials as he aimed for versatility and durability, Wehner's modern concepts created an environmentally sound building that has stood the test of time and will serve several more generations of Iowa City recreation enthusiasts.¹⁵

¹⁵ Fishbaugh, Jill, Notes from in-person interview with Mary Bennett, Iowa City, Iowa, July 28, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Criterion A:

Early Planning for Recreation and Public Green Spaces in Iowa City

In the summer of 1839, Chauncey Swan hired Leander Judson to draw the first plat map of Iowa City so lots could be sold to finance the building of a capitol. The idealized plan resembled a Roman provincial town and situated lots on land directly east of a prominent bluff overlooking the Iowa River where the new capitol would be built. Swan envisioned a promenade along the river and a splendid capitol, with adequate space reserved for parks, schools, churches, and market centers in the vicinity of downtown. Laid out in an orderly fashion, the map became the template for developing Iowa City's institutions and downtown commercial district, years before the University of Iowa was established.¹⁶

Since the city's inception, recreation has been a key part of its plan. Open, green spaces for public parks and community recreation included a promenade along the Iowa River and the designation of College Green, one square block directly east of the downtown between Washington and College streets and bordered by Van Buren Street on the west and Dodge Street on the east (Map 1). Specific areas within the vicinity of downtown were designated for public use: South Market, North Market, Centre Market, and a square block next to Iowa Avenue simply referred to as "Park." Of note, is the parcel called South Market where the Iowa City Community Recreation Center now stands (Map 2). Looking backwards, it is remarkable this particular parcel has served the purpose it was intended for 184 years!¹⁷

The property appears on the 1868 bird's eye view, showing the slope of the hillside and Ralston Creek, which was prone to flooding, transecting it (Map 3). By the mid-1870s, the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad laid tracks on the west side of Ralston Creek and by the 1890s, "South Market was changed from a brush-covered localized dump to a railroad depot for both passengers and freight."¹⁸

In the Pleasure Ground period of American history dating from about 1850 to 1900, as leisure time for working-class city dwellers increased, people were interested in spaces for recreational activities and spending more time outdoors. Some were seeking respite from more heavily industrialized urban or commercial areas.¹⁹ Reflecting American intellectual life of the time, Transcendentalists, public health reformers, and others promoted the benefits of communing with nature.²⁰ The shores of the Iowa River were a prime gathering place, offering scenic areas for picnics or carriage rides; waterways for swimming, boating, fishing, or ice skating; woodlands and meadows for strolls along meandering paths; and gathering places for musical entertainment and the arts.

In 1906, the City purchased 78 acres from the Terrell Estate and established the largest public park in Iowa City along the riverfront across from North Dubuque Street. With a lovely oak savanna on the hilltop and level areas out in the open for playgrounds, fields, and shelters, the park was a popular place for all ages seeking outdoor recreation. A streetcar line brought residents to City Park beginning in 1909.²¹ In response to social reformers and new ideas about children's play and assimilation, a distinct period between 1900 and 1930 led

¹⁶ Bennett, Mary, *A Historian's Lament, Finials: A View of Downtown Iowa City*, compiled by Marybeth Slonneger. Iowa City, By Hand Press, 2015. Page 38.

¹⁷ *Map of Iowa City*, Drawn by L. [Leander] Judson, July 4, 1839. State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City); *Map of Iowa City and Its Environs*. Compiled and drawn by J. H. Millar. Bryan & Millar, Panora, Iowa. Illustrations by G.H. Yewell, Lithographed by W. Schuchman, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1854. State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City). For a time, residents parked their wagons and buggies in College Green even if the park was meant to be reserved for recreational purposes. The 1854 *Map of Iowa City and Its Environs* published by J.H. Millar also shows a public promenade along the Iowa River between Market Street on the north and extending towards Burlington Street on the south. Houses appear in this area in a bird's eye drawn in 1868 although access to the Iowa River was available in other locations even if not in public spaces.

¹⁸ Svendsen, Marlys A., *Survey and Evaluation of Central Business District, Iowa City, Iowa*. (HABD #52-040), 2001, Page E-7, E-13.

¹⁹ Jensen, Clayne R., and Steven P. Guthrie. *Outdoor Recreation in America*. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 2005. Table 3.1 "Typology of Urban Parks, 1850-1965."

²⁰ Persons, Stow. *American Minds: A History of Ideas*. Huntington, New York: Robert F. Krieger Publishing Company, 1975.

²¹ Mansheim, Gerald. *Iowa City, an illustrated History*. Norfolk, Virginia: The Donning Co., 1989. Pages 146, 164, 182, 184, 206.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

to more Reform Parks in urban areas, a push for municipal services to support the growth of parks, build facilities, and promote recreational opportunities for all (Figure 47).²²

Planning for a Community Recreation Center in the Civic Corridor

As Iowa City's Central Business District developed, "a civic corridor was established before World War I along the east edge anchored by City Hall, a new post office and public library and a group of new fraternal buildings,"²³ including a Masonic Temple and an Elks Club (B.O.P.E.) building (Map 4). "For the most part this trend saw private residences and vacant parcels replaced by buildings that served the public in one fashion or another."²⁴

The idea of locating a recreation center downtown as part of a civic corridor began in 1925. A group of citizens made a concerted plan to build municipal spaces that were specifically targeted for the improved health, wellness, and social good of the community. Members of the American Legion began to discuss the necessity of building a permanent home for their group and other community/recreational activities in Iowa City. A site at the southeast corner of the intersection of South Gilbert and East College streets was selected and plans and financing in partnership with the City were finalized in 1927. "On June 28, 1928, the Corner Stone of the American Legion Community Building was laid."²⁵ To the delight of the entire community, the new building opened on Veteran's Day, November 11, 1928 (Figure 48).²⁶

The "modern architecture" of the brick and stone building allowed for two floors below street level and featured a fifty-by-ninety-foot gymnasium or drill room, rifle range, handball court, a "giant" eighty-by-ninety foot ballroom or auditorium on the top floor, lounges, restrooms, and a kitchen and dining room large enough for 160 diners. Locker rooms for both men and women included steam and massage rooms. Spaces were dedicated for use by the National Guard, Boy Scouts, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and other civic activities.²⁷ The variety of functions and services available in this building became the impetus behind the design of future recreation centers constructed on this property.

Coinciding with national recreation movements and Iowa City's growing population, plans were in the works to install a second swimming pool in the vacant land adjacent to the south of the American Legion Community Building (Map 5).²⁸ Unfortunately, the American Legion Community Building was destroyed by fire on July 29, 1936, and construction of a proposed downtown swimming pool was postponed.²⁹

After the 1936 fire, Iowa City architect Henry L. Fisk immediately drew the plans for a similar recreation facility on the exact same site. As rebuilt, the facility, subsequently named the Community Building, was a long, hulking, two-story rectangular building, of brick construction with Classical Revival styling (Map 6). Its main entrance faced west onto Gilbert Street; the front door was trimmed in stone as were the windowsills. A simplified entablature terminated the brick walls at the roof, which was covered by a shallow-sloped, hipped

²² Jensen, Clayne R., and Steven P. Guthrie, 2005. Table 3.1 "Typology of Urban Parks, 1850-1965."

²³ Svendsen, Maryls A., 2001, Page E-71. Discussion of the civic corridor can be found on Pages E-61 to E-65, E-71 of Svendsen's 2001 report and is repeated in Alexa McDowell, *Survey and Evaluation Update Iowa City Central Business District*, Iowa City, Iowa, 2018, Pages E-50 to E-54. Established landmarks on the east side of downtown were the 19th century brick city hall (1881-1961) and the Beaux-Arts styled public library (1902), post office (1904), Masonic Temple (1914). The prominent Elks Club in Classical Revival or Colonial Revival style was completed in 1909. With a nod to Moderne Style, Architect Henry L. Fisk helped design the Iowa City *Press-Citizen* in 1937. The State Historical Society of Iowa, another public institution, was added to this civic corridor in 1957.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Page E-60.

²⁵ Clark, L.E., *History of Roy L. Chopek Post No 17 Iowa City, Iowa 1919-1942*, Page 65.

²⁶ *Daily Iowan*, November 11, 1928. A special dedication edition for American Legion Community Building includes various articles, an image of the auditorium, congratulations from contractors and businesses involved. The front page of the section reminds readers of the tenth anniversary of the end of World War I and that the American Legion "presents this beautiful community building to the people of Iowa City as a memorial – as a center for civic activities."

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Page 2.

²⁸ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Legion Group Endorses Pool, July 22, 1936.

²⁹ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Fire Might Bring End to Pool Project, July 31, 1936.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

form and clad in standing-seam metal. As with the predecessor American Legion Community Building, the new Community Building served as a gathering place for townspeople as well as University students for nearly twenty years as it had a large ballroom that was frequently used for roller skating parties, wedding dances, lectures, and concerts.

The desire for a municipal swimming pool persisted even though community members had long gravitated to the banks of the Iowa River, with stories of diving near the Park Road bridge or canoeists paddling upriver from the various boathouses located on the eastern shore. Local people routinely swam in the river and utilized various beaches at the river's edge for other recreational activities before a private outdoor pool called "The Big Dipper" opened on August 1, 1923. The for-profit pool, measuring one hundred and twenty-by-eighty foot, is believed to have closed around 1940, relegating swimmers back at the riverbank just as demand for a public pool steadily increased.³⁰ As time went on, the community became interested in expanding recreational opportunities for its citizens.³¹

In 1941, the City Council approved construction of a public swimming pool, but World War II diverted resources and reduced manpower, delaying those plans. "It took a tragedy to kick-start completion of the pool,"³² when 10-year-old Keith Howell, who could not swim, drowned June 5, 1946, in the Iowa River.³³ The establishment of the Coralville Dam and reservoir north of Iowa City made swimming in the river unsafe due to fluctuating water levels. The community rallied together and in June 1949 opened City Park Pool, a T-shaped 750,000-gallon pool, featuring nine 50-meter and six 25-yard lap lanes and three diving boards into the 14-foot diving well, located in an oak savanna on the west side of the Iowa River one mile north of downtown on the north side of Park Road.

Successful Planning for the Iowa City Community Recreation Center

When the downtown Community Building designed by Fisk was destroyed by fire on January 27, 1955, local leaders immediately began advocating for a new community recreation center (Figure 49).³⁴ "Iowa City has been fortunate in having such a structure as the Community Building," the local newspaper editor opined, "for it has filled innumerable civic needs through the years... There must be immediate consideration for the continuance of the fine recreation program. Iowa City cannot get along without that. Its great good has been established, and this city has become a finer place in which to live because of it."³⁵ Because insurance coverage was inadequate for replacement, "a situation that was being studied and action was being taken at the very moment of the fire," the editor further opined that "Iowa City must look and plan ahead and in so doing it will be realized that ways can be found to provide a new, even better Community Building."³⁶

At the time the Community Building burned in 1955, Robert A. Lee had been employed for four years, ultimately as the City's recreation superintendent, and knew firsthand the building's importance. "It was a magnet for the community with all the different activities going on."³⁷ According to Lee's son, his father spent the next few years working out of "little offices, just a few rooms" and "garner[ing] community support for a

³⁰ Brennan, Paul, "The history of public pools in Iowa City swimming hasn't always been accessible." *Little Village*. 8/14019.

³¹ Jensen and Guthrie, 2005. Table 3.1 "Typology of Urban Parks, 1850-1965." The evolution of community services matched the times as increased federal funding from Works Projects Administration (W.P.A.) led to construction of recreational facilities like gymnasiums and stadiums for high school sports. Multiple Iowa towns were able to build outdoor municipal swimming pools beginning in the mid-1930s. Jensen and Guthrie describe the 1930 to 1965 period as a time when Recreation Facility building expanded. Satisfying the recreational needs of suburban families and younger generations became a priority, although Iowa City's progress toward building a multi-purpose facility was delayed for three decades.

³² Clark, L.E., *History of Roy L. Chopek Post No 17*.

³³ *The Daily Iowan*, "Couldn't Swim—Youth Drowns While Playing in Flood Waters," June 6, 1947.

³⁴ *Iowa City Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan*, Executive Summary, Iowa City, Iowa. October 2008. All-American swimmer Irving B. Weber served as vice president of the Playground and Recreation Commission around the time the Iowa City Community Recreation Center was planned.

³⁵ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Progress Can Come from Community Building Ruins, January 29, 1955.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Bennett, Mary, Robert Lee interview, State Historical Society of Iowa [Iowa City], June 22, 2007.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

new facility.”³⁸ Lee, who died in 2013, retired in 1983 after a long 32-year career leading the recreation department. Soon after his retirement, the newest (and current) iteration of the City’s Community Recreation Building was renamed the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, an honor that “flabbergasted” Lee.³⁹

Lee was not alone in his efforts to see a replacement for the Community Building. Just a year after the fire, in March 1956, the City’s volunteer Playground and Recreation Commission (meeting at the Iowa City municipal airport for lack of other space) was lobbying for a new recreation building, calling the community’s need for the facility urgent. The Commission advanced numerous reasons the City Council should support a new building, including but not limited to the inadequate availability of school gymnasiums (only available in the evening), conflicting missions of the schools and recreation program, and shortcomings in the grade schools designed for younger children. The Commission noted, “It is a common sight to see teenagers down on their knees getting a drink from the low fountains. What coat hooks there are, are so low that they do not keep adult-size clothing up off the floor.”⁴⁰ It was not only that alternative facilities were inadequate, but also the need for a new recreation facility, already dire, was also increasing rapidly due to social and cultural factors. Some 6,000 people were using the old Community Building every month, but the post-war baby boom was bringing more children every year to use the City’s facilities. Recreational activities, the Commission argued, were necessary for the town’s residents to avoid becoming “afflicted with spectatoritis.” Further, recreation was “a positive force for helping teenagers adjust to adult responsibilities.” The Commission wanted the City Council to look toward the future, predicting 6,000 new children of school age by 1965, more leisure time because of labor-saving devices, and “a shorter work week of probably 35 hours.”⁴¹ According to Leland M. Roth, “In principle, all Americans were middle class or almost there,” and “flashy modern buildings for leisure were a conspicuous sign of American well-being.”⁴²

Expansion of Municipal Government Buildings Aids Fundraising

Despite the widespread call for a new recreation center, it was not until 1962 when the possibility became a reality. The expansion of a civic corridor along Gilbert Street had been in the planning stages for decades. “The issue of whether to build a new city hall had been a topic for public discussion since at least 1948 when a report by the city’s own planning commission urged construction of a new city hall and proposed several sites on which to do so” and “debate was brisk during the 1950s” about the need for new police and fire stations as well.⁴³ The City employed architects Henry L. Fisk and Roland C. Wehner, who prepared preliminary design ideas for municipal buildings on Gilbert and Washington streets in April 1959 (Figures 50-51). The City’s first invested in a new Civic Center municipal facility that opened in 1961 just down the street to serve as the fire and police headquarters and city hall.

Planned as a three-phase project, the recreation center was next in line, but funding it remained the hurdle. A large public audience attended the City Council’s meeting in early February 1962, an audience that overwhelmingly supported a “public fund drive to get a bigger community recreation center faster.”⁴⁴ One councilor was pessimistic about public fund drives, but so many community groups pressed for it that the City formed a committee to pursue it. Citizens asked the City Council to “think bigger” than the \$500,000 replacement plan. In March 1959, Fisk submitted a concept drawing of a recreation center for a proposed second site on Iowa Avenue, next to the Civic Center. Fisk used a minimalist cubic design, without ornamentation, but the structure was deemed too small (Figure 52). Much of the public discussion centered

³⁸ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, October, 19, 2013.

³⁹ Bennett, Lee interview, 2013.

⁴⁰ Playground and Recreation Commission, letter to the City Council, March 6, 1956. Roland C. Wehner Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Roth, Leland M., *Understanding Architecture: Its Elements, History, and Meaning*, Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2007, Pages 153, 182.

⁴³ Svendsen, Maryls A., 2001, page E-78.

⁴⁴ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Recreation Center Fund Drive Urged, February 9, 1962.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

around the importance of a swimming pool in the new recreation center because citizens wanted an indoor swimming pool that could be used year-round for fitness and swimming instruction. Other discussion for inclusion in the recreation center plans included a multiple-purpose craft room, a rifle range, handball courts, meeting/conference rooms, and a gymnasium.⁴⁵

Advantages listed to build the new recreation center on the old Community Building property included: "More land, 46,700 square feet, compared with 36,000 square feet for the Iowa Avenue site; easy segregation of facilities and separate accesses because of two-level construction; close to public library; possibility of indoor-outdoor swimming facility; no cost for land."⁴⁶ A preliminary drawing, provided by architect Roland C. Wehner of Fisk and Wehner, Architects, showed what type of building could be designed for the lot at Gilbert and College streets on which the old Community Building stood (Figure 53 and Figure 54).⁴⁷ The central location in a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood close to downtown followed principles of New Urbanism, which aims to avoid marginalization of "various groups, such as the 'underprivileged, children, and the elderly' who rarely own cars and often lack access to public transport."⁴⁸

Final Realization of the Plan for the Iowa City Community Recreation Center

By March 1962, the public fundraising was not meeting projected goals. By October, citizens circulated petitions calling for a bond issue. In December, the bond issue was presented to the voters and easily approved. With funding assured and architectural plans assembled, the City was set to move forward in 1963. The town's residents had already been widely polled the prior year as part of the design process, and the wishes and desires for the new building were well known after holding separate meetings for adults and teenagers. During those meetings, the Commission noted "interest [was] stressed in a swimming pool."⁴⁹ Additionally, the Commission, to generate enthusiasm and visualize what a new facility could be like, visited and studied other recreation centers, including the Fisher Community Recreation Building in Marshalltown.⁵⁰ Much earlier, the Commission had studied a national model for community recreation buildings and appeared to closely follow its recommendations on interior functions. Auditoriums, gymnasiums, locker rooms, a rifle range, club and meeting rooms, a craft room, and a swimming pool were all discussed. "There is a great demand for such facilities," the publication argued, "and they fill a very definite need."⁵¹ As further evidence of a growing demand, population figures for Iowa City point to periods of the town's expansion and increased student enrollment at the University of Iowa, even though the college students had their own facilities and programs.⁵² Throughout most of Iowa City's history, participation in recreational activities or attending events associated with the University of Iowa and its facilities has been constant, though not always accessible to all.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, College Hill Park Proposed as Site for Rec Center, March 7, 1962.

⁴⁷ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, One Idea for a Recreation Building, February 7, 1962.

⁴⁸ Roulrier, Scott M., *Shaping American Democracy: Landscapes and Urban Design*, Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, page 163.

⁴⁹ *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, February 9, 1962.

⁵⁰ Wehner, Roland C., *Master Plan – Part III* (unpublished transcript), Roland Wehner Collection. The Marshalltown building was constructed in 1958 and funded by a private corporation. Though the overall mass and exterior detail are different – it lacks the exposed structural roof T-beams of the Iowa City building – the Marshalltown building used a similar brick facing and presented the same low, horizontal appearance from the street. It was also centrally located in town, which was a similar situation for the Iowa City facility.

⁵¹ Planning a Community Recreation Building, National Recreation Association, 1955, Page 22.

⁵² Population figures came from Census of the Population:1950. Volume II: Characteristics of Population. Part 15 Iowa. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1952; Census of the Population:1960. Volume I: Characteristics of Population. Part 17 Iowa. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1961; Census of the Population:1970. Volume I: Characteristics of Population. Part 17 Iowa. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1973; Census of the Population:1980. Volume I: Characteristics of Population. Part 17 Iowa. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1982; Fourteenth Census of the United States. State Compendium Iowa. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924; and John A.T. Hull, Census of Iowa for 1880, with Other Historical and Statistical Data 1836-1880. Des Moines: F.M. Mills. Student enrollment figures for more recent decades are recorded by the University of Iowa at <https://www.lib.uiowa.edu/sc/archives/fag/fagenrollment/>

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

IOWA CITY POPULATION⁵³

Year	Population	Students
1854	2,570	
1860	5,214	
1870	5,914	
1880	7,123	
1890	7,016	
1900	7,987	
1910	10,091	
1920	11,267	
1930	15,340	
1940	17,182	
1950	27,212	13,044
1960	33,443	14,207
1970	46,850	20,604
1980	50,508	25,100
1990	59,735	28,045

There is little doubt that with its robust mid-century economy, the postwar nation was eager for relief from the long years of the Depression and Second World War. "With the first references to the Cold War in 1948, the government initiated a military and propaganda campaign of preparedness,"⁵⁴ so underground bomb shelters promised to offer protection, even if only a windowless room. And the future cultural revolution of the late sixties and early seventies was still over the horizon as the "baby boom" generation matured and raised their own families in need of recreation facilities. When it opened its doors in 1964, Iowa City's Community Recreation Center was one thread in this interregnum era of prosperity and optimism. As such, it reflected the growing and evolving national demand for the development of civic community recreation facilities as well as urban parks and outdoor recreation activities.⁵⁵

Accomplished as part of a larger phased and continuous plan to accommodate the needs of citizens in terms of recreation, public health, and community activities, the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center served as a focus for community activities for people of all ages, backgrounds, cultures, and abilities. Key programs provide year-round aquatics including swim lessons, aquacise classes, lap and recreational swimming, and lifeguard training; pickleball, basketball, and roller skating in the gymnasium; exercise and strength training with fitness equipment; arts and crafts classes, summer camps, social gatherings like Halloween parties or square dances, commission meetings, and more. Unlike other social halls or gathering places in Iowa City, this building was geared towards the entire community, not just students at the University of Iowa and attending the public schools or those citizens affiliated with religious or social groups with large meeting halls.

Within the period of significance of 1964 to 1974, which represents the 50-year threshold and beyond, subsequent developments have shown a strong and continuous desire by Iowa Citizens to create a vibrant parks and recreation programs.⁵⁶ Since 1974, the recreational offerings have been expanded immensely, and

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Roth, Leland M., *American Architecture: A History*, Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2007, Page 151.

⁵⁵ Hobsbawm, Eric, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1814-1991*, 1994. Even with population growth, the *Iowa City Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan* from 2008 reported how recreational spaces remained limited prior to 1964 when eight public parks existed in Iowa City: College Green, City Park, Black Springs Circle, Brookland, Court Hill, Creekside, Happy Hollow, and North Market Square. The total parkland inventory amounted to 129 acres, 107 of which were in City Park.

⁵⁶ *Iowa City Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan*, 2008. As the years passed several major recreation facilities were constructed or renovated, including: Mercer Park Aquatic Center, a cooperative project with the Iowa City Community School District (1988); a cooperative arrangement with the University of Iowa for joint use of the Hawkeye Softball Complex (1996); Iowa City Kickers Soccer Park (1997); Scanlon Gymnasium added to the Mercer Park Aquatic Center (1999); Riverside Festival Stage, home to Riverside Theatre's Annual Shakespeare Festival (2000); Iowa City Skate Park (2002); Thornberry Off-Leash Dog Park, in cooperation with Johnson County DogPAC (2006); Grant Wood Community Gym, another cooperative project with the School District (2006); Peninsula Park Disc Golf Course (2007). By 2008, the city managed over 1,600 acres of parkland/open space, which included 42 parks with 31

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

the centrally-located Iowa City Community Recreation Center continues to serve as the primary public recreation facility, with the swimming pool a major attraction. Changes to the surrounding neighborhood continued as properties were privatized and redeveloped, yet the Iowa City Community Recreation Center continued to function as a welcoming space open to all Iowa Citizens.

Criterion C:

The Influence of a Modernist Architect on Building Design

Roland C. Wehner, the architect selected to design the new Iowa City Community Recreation Center, first learned about Modern Movement principles and philosophies of design at Iowa State University where he earned a degree in Architecture in 1954.⁵⁷ After a year working at Dane D. Morgan and Associates in Burlington, Iowa, he moved to Iowa City where architect Henry L. Fisk hired him as an apprentice in 1956. Wehner obtained his architectural license in 1958, and when he became a junior partner with Fisk in 1960, the firm became Fisk and Wehner, Architects.

Wehner was further drawn to modern design ideologies through Fisk's first assignment for the young architect, which was to organize the many stacks of architectural magazines stored at the firm's office. Fisk wanted Wehner to review and keep only those issues that might be beneficial to the firm for future projects.⁵⁸ Wehner took this opportunity to expand his knowledge about working on a grid and using design modules and began thinking of ways to apply it to his work. Inspired by the proponents of the Modern Movement, Wehner went beyond these core ideas as his career evolved and he developed a distinctive identity for his design projects. Wehner's interest in merging sound engineering practices, artistic creativity, and practical efficiency in terms of technical design and use of materials provided the right attributes to elevate the quality and longevity of the buildings he designed.

In 1958, Iowa City hired Fisk and Wehner to oversee a large-scale, three-phase plan to reimagine city buildings using modern design principles and construction techniques. The initial concept drawings for a new Civic Center for Phase 1 included a Fire Station and Police Station, both completed in 1959. Phase 2 of these municipal improvement projects called for an administrative unit to replace a deteriorating city hall built in 1881. Completed in 1961, the Civic Center demonstrated success with a comprehensive, well-conceived plan for municipal buildings and public services, which ultimately led to the fulfillment of Phase 3 of the project. As with previous phases of the project, the Iowa City Community Recreation Center was planned to coordinate with the aesthetics and in function with these neighboring municipal buildings. The similar architectural style, buff-colored brick façade, and decorative elements can be seen even in the preliminary drawings (Figure 48 and Figure 49).

The Iowa City Community Recreation Center project was a continuation of work Wehner began in 1958 when the city hired the young architect's firm to design its three-phase, Civic Center, completing Phase 1, the fire and police station in 1959 and Phase 2, the city hall in 1961, as well as providing the city with complimentary sample designs for Phase 3, the future community recreation center. When he became a registered architect and junior partner with Fisk in 1960, the firm became Fisk and Wehner, Architects. When Fisk unexpectedly died on July 13, 1962, Wehner instantly found himself not only as the senior partner of the architectural firm,

playgrounds, 43 athletic fields, 45 park shelters, 75 community garden plots, over six miles of nature trails and other amenities such as tennis courts, basketball courts, bocce courts, horseshoe courts, dog park, disc golf, and hills for sledding in the winter months. The City's trail system had grown to include over 50 miles of multi-use trails.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Wehner was born November 28, 1931, in Hancock County, Illinois. Raised on an Iowa farm, he graduated as valedictorian of his Oakville (Iowa) High School class in 1949 and went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Iowa State University in 1954, where he was elected to Tau Sigma Delta, the national architecture scholastic honorary society.

⁵⁸ Fishbaugh, Jill, Interview with Roland C. Wehner, Coralville, Iowa, March 28, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

but in need of assistance for the firm's other work (Figure 57). He subsequently convinced his college classmate Harvey Henry to join the firm and renamed it Wehner and Henry, Architects.

According to Wehner recollections during a series of interviews in 2022 and 2023, the recreation center project provided another opportunity to draw a building on the planning grid and exercise his interest in modular design and planning.⁵⁹ He had already completed the design and building of his rural Iowa City residence in 1959 using this system. "For our family residence, I utilized an equilateral triangle module, four feet to each side. For the recreation center, the module was a square, four feet to each side. Precast concrete floor slabs were four-feet wide, precast concrete roof T-beams were eight-feet wide, and masonry work was easily coordinated within the module."⁶⁰ T-beams are an innovation that "gained prominence in the late 1950s...following the unprecedented construction activity after World War II, passage of the Interstate Highway Act in 1956, and steel shortages during the Korean War."⁶¹ Architects used this construction method in the early 1960s and are still using it today as concrete has many advantages over other materials.⁶²

The broad influence of Modernism and ties to the social/political agendas in the United States in the decades following World War II would have been hard to ignore in the early 1960s. Its application to civic architecture, however, does not appear to have been well documented or even studied, leaving the Wehner recreation building a rare confirmed non-residential Iowa building constructed on Modern Movement principles, an inspiration confirmed by the architect himself.⁶³ As Gwendolyn Wright and Scott M. Roulrier have noted in their books on modern architecture, the design of built spaces influences civic attitudes, including prospects for social equality and integration in America, and planners and architects can articulate a vision of democracy that creates conditions more favorable to human flourishing.⁶⁴ Wehner use of organic design principles allowed him to explore and create new interpretations of the Modern Movement while creating a welcoming space for the entire community. Working in concert with experienced city officials, local citizens, and civic leaders to determine what the municipality desired, Wehner designed a space that encourages recreation and social interaction. Moreover, the building offers evidence of Iowa City's broad interest in developing public infrastructure using Modern Movement principles.⁶⁵

In designing the Iowa City Community Recreation Center on a human scale, Wehner began by applying form-follows-function principles and concepts where relationships between site, materials, and the people who use the buildings are considered.⁶⁶ By using the natural sloping geography to his advantage, Wehner efficiently laid out the two-story structure allowing it to present as a long, low building from its west façade. He designed the structure using concrete, brick, and glass to achieve a natural harmony.⁶⁷ He also implemented the

⁵⁹ Full, Jan Olive, Roland C., Wehner Memo to Full, Iowa City, Iowa, June 4, 2022. Wehner developed and completed the Iowa City Community Recreation Center's conceptual design in February 1962, prior to Fisk's death (Figure 48). The firm operated with each architect solely responsible for their own individual projects. Wehner was assigned the fire and police stations, civic center, and recreation center projects. Fisk did not assist in the recreation center's actual design. He died July 13, 1962. The contract for architectural services was awarded in September 1962.

⁶⁰ Ibid. Wehner's Usonian-inspired residence was listed in the National Register in 2013, in a document that more fully details his use of organic concepts (Full, Wehner, "Roland and Marilyn, House," NRHP registration form, 2013). Wright himself designed seven Usonian residences in Iowa between 1943 and 1960 (Peterson and Christian, "Iowa Usonian Houses by Frank Lloyd Wright, 1945-1960," NRHP registration form, 1988).

⁶¹ Jester, Thomas C., *Twentieth-Century Building Materials: History and Conservation*, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1995, Pages 99, 100.

⁶² Fishbaugh, Notes from conversation with Wehner, March 18, 2023.

⁶³ Full, Jan Olive, Roland C., Wehner Memo to Full, Iowa City, Iowa, June 4, 2022.

⁶⁴ Wright, Gwendolyn, *USA Modern Architectures in History*, London, Reaktion, 2008, and Roulrier, Scott M., 2018.

⁶⁵ *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, Retired Architect Roland Wehner Left His Mark on Iowa City, August 26, 2022. Given the longevity of his career and productive years, which led to the proliferation of 1,300 well-documented projects, Wehner generated designs for multiple public buildings ranging from elementary schools and college buildings, fire and police stations, jails, and senior centers, to various private buildings like religious centers, hotels, commercial establishments, as well as private residences.

⁶⁶ Wright, Frank Lloyd, Kaufmann, Edgar, Ed., *An American Architecture*, New York: Horizon Press, Inc., 1955, Page 65-73.

⁶⁷ Wright, Frank Lloyd, *The Natural House*, 1954, Pages 27, 52-53.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Usonian ideas of simplicity, planning on a grid, and using a modular design. When asked about the architectural style of the building, Wehner said, "While many of the principles and concepts of Prairie and Usonian architecture were utilized in designing the Community Recreation Center, it does not necessarily look Prairie or Usonian. It looks like it looks because of the functions it accommodates; the character, opportunities and limitations presented by the site; and by the materials and structural components utilized. Some call that Organic Architecture. Organic Architecture is design process, not a style."⁶⁸ Regardless of the project, Wehner always used precision in his blend of engineering and art. As was his habit, he used a uniform template, a thoughtful attention to detail, and modern design principles combined with character defining elements to create an economically viable building of enduring value to the community in terms of versatility, adaptability, and long-term public investment.⁶⁹

Impact of Modern Movement Principles and Materials on Physical Design

As built, the Iowa City Community Recreation Center follows basic definitions of the Modern Movement as the design rejects historical styles in favor of pure utilitarian functionalism and the application of smooth industrial finishes.⁷⁰ The main footprint is a long, horizontal-hugging rectangle that adapts to the site (Map 7). According to the facility's promotional brochure to which Wehner contributed, "The slope of the site was used to advantage: 1) active and youth functions located on the lower floor are separated from the more quiet administration and adult area, located on the upper floor; 2) ground-level entrances to both floors; 3) pool on ground level allowed indoor-outdoor terrace; and 4) the large gymnasium is partially concealed, solving an aesthetic problem normally associated with this function."⁷¹

Wehner selected materials based on quality without extravagance, fire resistiveness, and ease of maintenance. The architect utilized prefabricated materials for much of the design, which resulted in cost-effective and efficient construction. For example, the use of precast, prestressed concrete and exposed roof T-beams not only defined the aesthetic and appearance of the building, but also reduced the ultimate build time, expense, and labor required. These materials also enabled cantilevering and large, uninterrupted expanses in rooms that allowed for the spaces to be used for a variety of recreational activities and accommodated adaptive reuse as needs changed over the years. Drawing on standardized industrial materials as he aimed for versatility and durability, Wehner's modern concepts created an environmentally sound building that has continued to serve Iowa Citians in the decades since its construction.

Wehner also used bright colors and natural tones to keep with the center's character. For example, as it originally looked, the Lounge reflected the Modern Movement interior design principles by showcasing an array of colors on walls and modern furniture for chairs, tables, or benches fabricated from molded plastic and metal or covered in vinyl upholstery.

The city recreation superintendent Robert A. Lee not only insisted on a downtown location for easy access and because it had always been downtown, but also in using glass "in both the interior and exterior to

⁶⁸ Fishbaugh, Jill, Roland C., Wehner Memo to Fishbaugh, Iowa City, Iowa, April 18, 2023.

⁶⁹ At this beginning stage in Wehner's career, he was immersed totally in "old school" manual drafting as he meticulously executed countless sketches, drawings, and schematics by hand using a ruler and pen or pencil. Later, he and the partners in his firm would be among the first to pioneer the use of computer assisted drafting (CAD software). A humble, soft-spoken man, he never sought special recognition from his peers though he was a valuable mentor to many. No official, full-length scholarly study of Iowa architects exists, but some comparisons can be made to the generation of architects with whom Wehner was associated. A more detailed analysis of information of Iowa architects and their buildings gathered by the state office of historic preservation might make this possible someday. However, in examining similar collections like those of J. Bradley Rust, Edward "Ned" Ashton, or Howard Burr, who also drew on design concepts advanced by the Modern Movement style, there are direct comparisons that can be made. Rust's skills were developed through practice, not a formal education and Ashton was trained as a civil engineer, not an architect. Burr also designed residences, banks, commercial buildings, and other structures in tune with the early trend toward structures with low, horizon lines and more practical interior spaces. Even with extensive collections housed at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City showing the range of projects completed by these individual architects, few can compare to Wehner's maturity of style and design process.

⁷⁰ Roth, 2007, page 360.

⁷¹ Wehner, brochure, 1964. Ibid.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

‘advertise,’ promote, and encourage recreation.”⁷² Furthermore, the architect, in using glass curtains, “quickly seized upon the free energy source and developed a technique of passive solar heating that exploited southerly orientations moderated though carefully calculated roof overhangs” or wall protrusions like found on the south façade.⁷³ Wehner also used the available space to expand the building’s footprint along the length of the city block’s west side (Figure 55-56).

Because of the repetition of the same or similar materials and colors used throughout the building, a strong sense of unity is obtained. The main theme of the building, created by exposing the large, precast, concrete roof structure, is immediately introduced at the dramatic front entrance, and carried through the main lobby into the adjacent social hall. Likewise, exposed aggregate concrete steps and floors at the front entrance match the terrazzo floors at the main lobby and the open-riser stairway leading to the lower level. Resilient tile floors adjacent to the terrazzo are of similar color and pattern. The feeling of unity is further enhanced by extensive use of glass, both for natural light at the exterior and for a sense of space and openness at the interior. Clerestory lighting, provided by translucent panels installed between the stems of the precast roof beams where they rest on the exterior walls at the gymnasium and the swimming pool, is particularly effective. Using curtain wall construction, large sections of glazing are possible. For example, wall-to-wall windows are provided at the arts and crafts room, meeting rooms, administrative offices, social hall, and the south exterior wall of the swimming pool. The south interior wall of the social hall, located on the main level, and the south interior wall of the game room, located on the lower level, which are common with and adjacent to the swimming pool, consists of glass in fixed frames.⁷⁴

These character-defining features have been retained and minimal to no floorplan modifications have been made in primary spaces. The interior spaces also followed inventive idea that from structure comes form and style showing the character of a building is formed by its functions,⁷⁵ befitting the diverse needs identified by the intensive community planning.

Summary

Iowa City Community Recreation Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as an excellent local example of mid-twentieth-century community planning and development for recreation/entertainment. Built in 1964, it represents the third phase of the construction of civic and municipal buildings in Iowa City during the 1960s. Moreover, the building met the desperate need for recreational facilities and a public pool following the loss of the former community center in 1955. The Iowa City Community Recreation Center serves as a hub for community activities for people of all ages, backgrounds, cultures, and abilities. The Iowa City Community Recreation Center is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an excellent local example of Modern Movement municipal architecture. The building represents the architectural style of low, horizon-hugging profiles with clean lines, little ornamentation, and functionality of interior space. Through its large windows the plan merges interior space with the outdoors and its use of prefabricated, industrial materials enabled increased open interior space and circulation, while also allowing for swift, cost-efficient construction. Using Modern Movement schematics and innovations, architect Roland C. Wehner combined aesthetic, functional, and decorative ideas into a custom design with distinctive characteristics and high artistic values.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Roth, 2007, Page 361.

⁷⁴ Fishbaugh. Memo from Wehner, July 27, 2023.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

LIST OF MAPS

1. Map of Iowa City, Drawn by L. [Leander] Judson, July 4, 1839, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).
2. "South Market" – to be reserved as a public space as designated in 1839 - is the present location of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center. *Map of Iowa City*, Drawn by L. [Leander] Judson, July 4, 1839, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).
3. The 1868 Bird's Eye View of Iowa City. The arrow points to the future location of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center on the west half of this parcel of land, bounded by Ralston Creek on the east. Drawn by A. Ruger, "Bird's Eye View of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa," Chicago Lithographing Company, Chicago, 1868.
4. Map of Iowa City showing survey boundaries for potential Downtown Historic District, including the block where the Iowa City Recreation Center is located north of Burlington Street, between Gilbert and Van Buren Streets. (A black rectangle added to the original map represents the Iowa City Recreation Center.) Svendsen, Maryls A., *Survey and Evaluation of Central Business District, Iowa City, Iowa*. (HABD #52-040), 2001.
5. Iowa City Fire Insurance Map, 1933, showing the location of the American Legion, Sanborn Map Company (Pelham, NY), 1933.
6. Iowa City Fire Insurance Map, 1954, showing the location of the Community Building used as a municipal recreation center prior to the construction of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center, Pelham New York Sanborn Map Company (Pelham, NY), 1954.
7. Iowa City Fire Insurance Map, 1964, showing the location of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center, Sanborn Map Company (Pelham, NY), 1964.

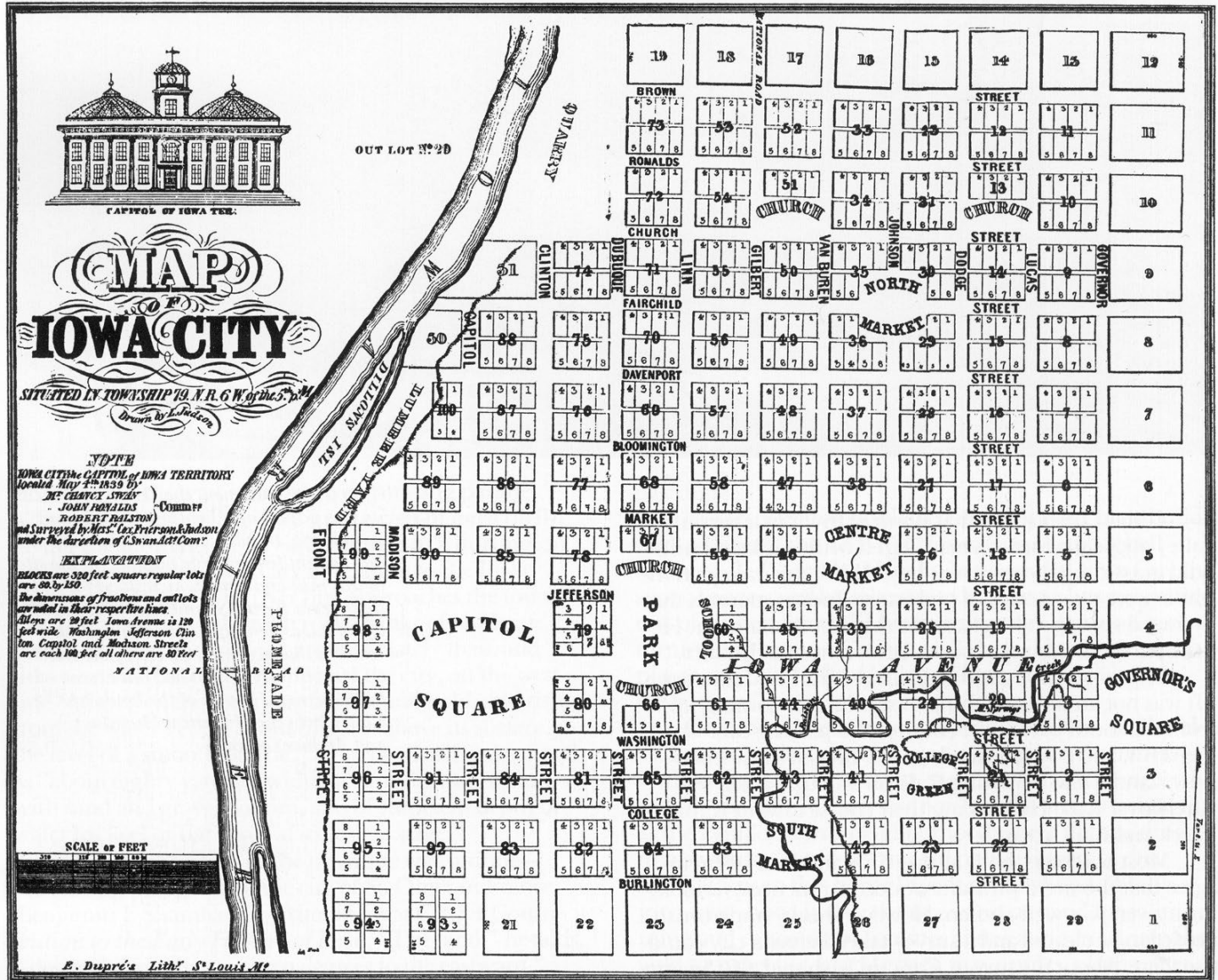
Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

MAPS



Map 1: Map of Iowa City, Drawn by L. [Leander] Judson, July 4, 1839, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Map 2: "South Market" – to be reserved as a public space as designated in 1839 - is the present location of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center. *Map of Iowa City*, Drawn by L. [Leander] Judson, July 4, 1839, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Map 3: The 1868 Bird's Eye View of Iowa City includes the area designated in 1839 as a public square called South Market. The arrow points to the future location of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center on the west half of this parcel of land, bounded by Ralston Creek on the east. Drawn by A. Ruger, "Bird's Eye View of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa," Chicago Lithographing Company, Chicago, 1868.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



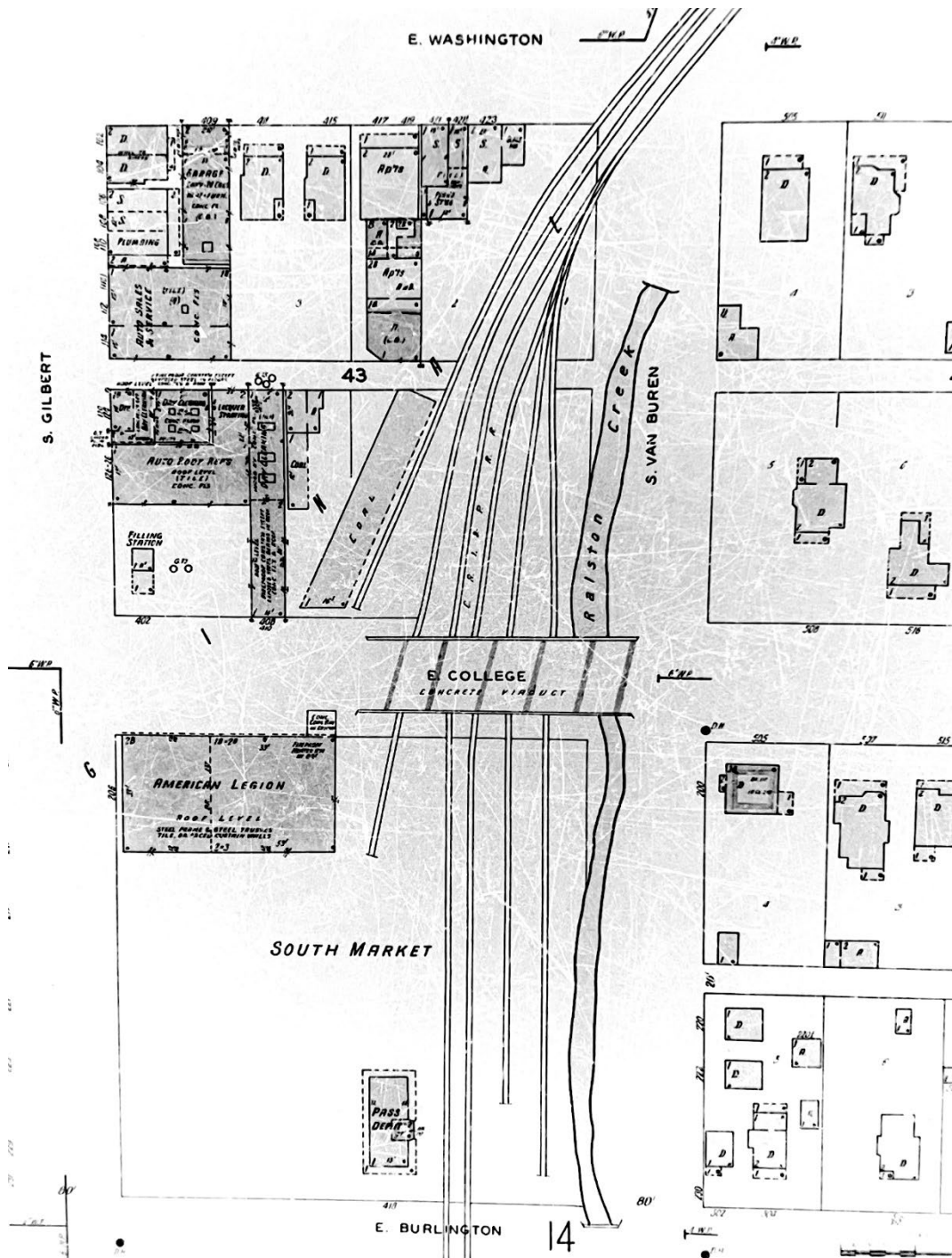
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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



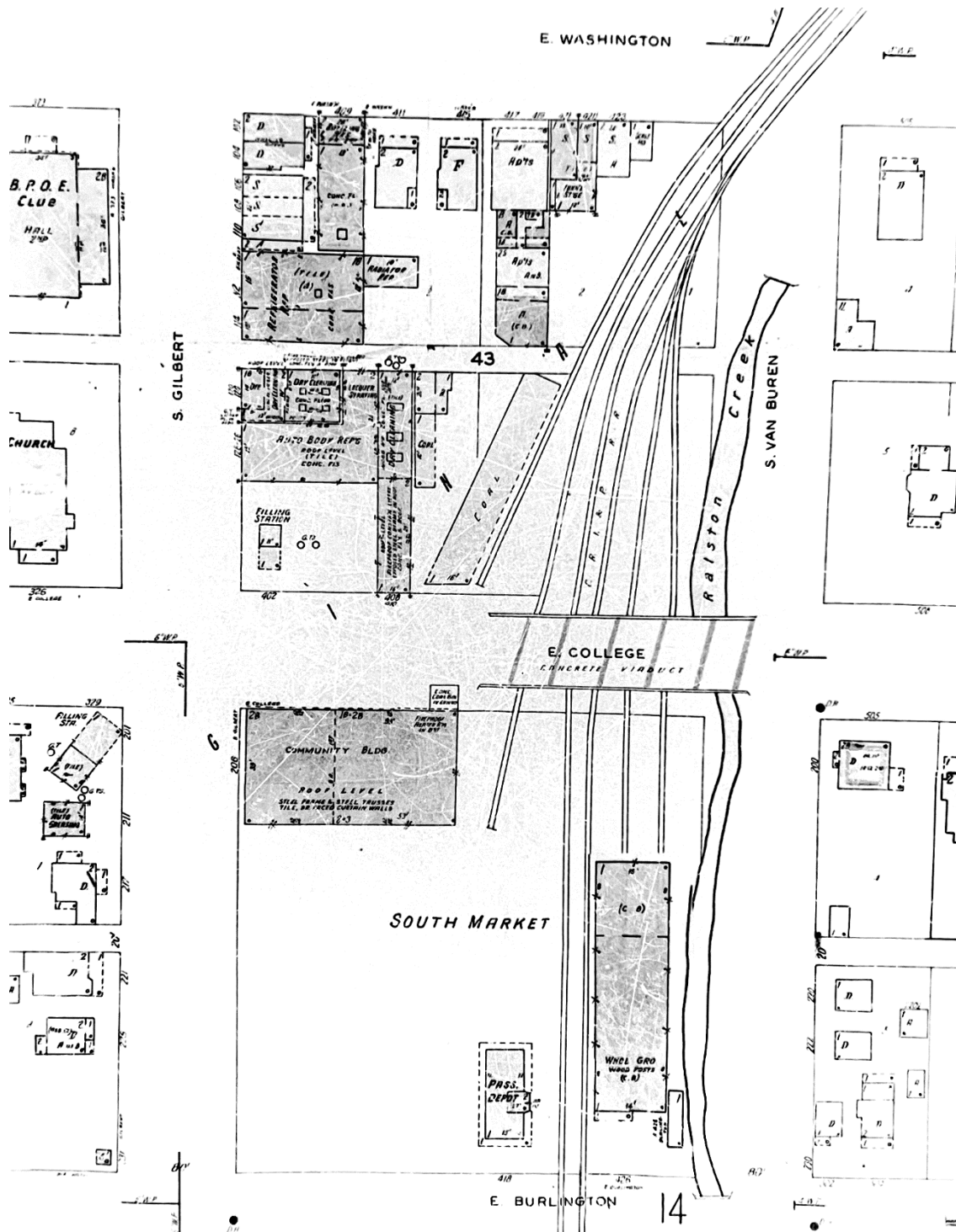
Map 5: Iowa City Fire Insurance Map, 1933, showing the location of the American Legion, Pelham New York: Sanborn Map Company, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



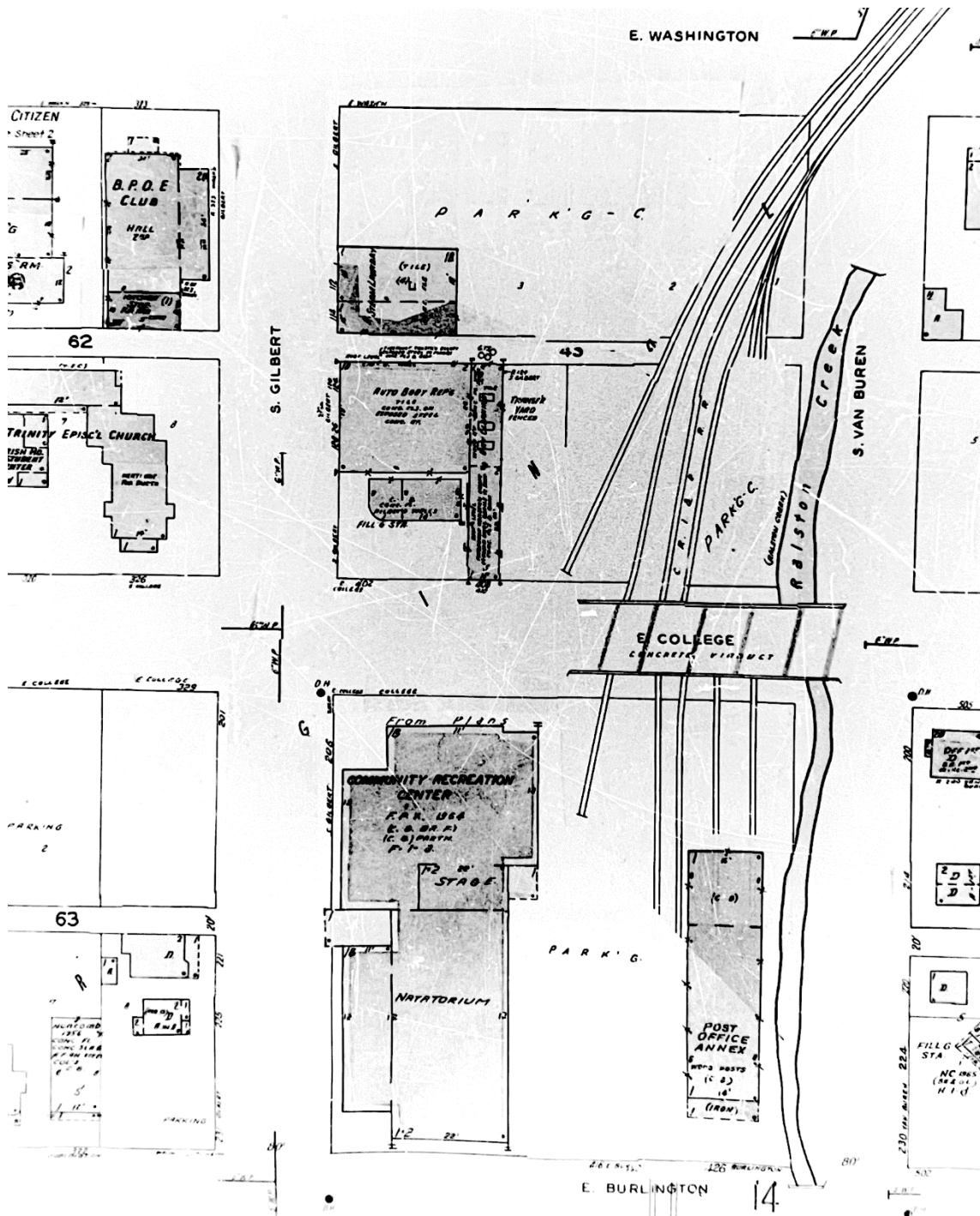
Map 6: Iowa City Fire Insurance Map, 1954, showing the location of the Community Building used as a municipal recreation center prior to the construction of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center, Pelham New York: Sanborn Map Company, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Map 7: Iowa City Fire Insurance Map, 1964, showing the location of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center, Pelham New York: Sanborn Map Company, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

INDEX OF FIGURES

EXTERIOR

Figure 1: Driving creosote-treated wood pilings for the pool basin. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1963.

Figure 2: Placing the precast, prestressed concrete T-Beams over the gymnasium's east wall. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1963.

Figure 3: Placing the concrete roof panel over the north end of the gymnasium. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1963.

Figure 4: Iowa City Community Recreation Center's west façade under construction. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1963.

Figure 5: Construction of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center, view from southwest looking northeast across the South Gilbert and Burlington streets intersection. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1963.

Figure 6: Main Entrance on Gilbert Street, view from west, looking east. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Figure 7: Iowa City Community Recreation Center's west façade, view from west looking east, c. 1964. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 8: Iowa City Community Recreation Center's west façade, oblique view from southwest looking northeast. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 9: Sidewalk view of Gilbert Street main entrance from north, looking south. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Figure 10: Sidewalk view of accessibility ramp and front steps at the Main Entrance on Gilbert Street from north, looking south. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Figure 11: Iowa City Community Recreation Center's west façade, view from south sidewalk looking north. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 12: View of west terrace platform after screen of decorative concrete blocks was removed, view from north looking south. Windows on the west side of the building appear on the left, and the remaining support pillars can be seen on the right. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Figure 13: Sidewalk view of building showing south community garden, view from corner of Gilbert Street (at left) and Burlington Street (at right), looking northeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Figure 14: Iowa City Community Recreation Center's south façade, view from south looking north. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 15: Iowa City Community Recreation Center's east façade, view from east looking west. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 16: Lower level entrance view from east parking lot looking northwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Figure 17: Parking lot view from northeast corner, view from East College Street bridge over Ralston Creek looking south-southwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Figure 18: East College Street edible classroom/educational garden, view from north, looking south-southeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

INTERIOR – UPPER LEVEL

Figure 19: The upper-level South Gilbert Street entrance view from east looking west. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 20: Gilbert Street main entrance, view from east looking west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 21: View of Gilbert Street entrance, Lobby, and enclosed Administrative Offices, from north looking south toward Meeting Room B at the end of the South Hallway. Jill Fishbaugh photo, April 2, 2023.

Figure 22: The upper-level Lobby from north looking south, with sunlight streaming in from South Gilbert Street main entrance and the original Reception Desk. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 23: The upper-level Lounge looking at the original Reception Desk. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 24: Social Hall, from northwest looking southeast toward the pool. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 25: A “sock hop” dance, c. 1965, held in the Social Hall, with the pool wall visible through the large windows. The teen girls are dancing, and the bored-looking boys sit on chairs at the edge. These adolescents appear to be high schoolers. There were also weekly Friday night dances, called “Paper Doll,” that dated to at least the 1930s and were first held in the ballroom of the old Community Building. The Friday night Paper Doll dances were a bit dressier, and the overhead lights were dimmed a bit (Jan Olive Full’s personal recollection). *Iowa City Press-Citizen* photo.

Figure 26: View from upper-level Pool Balcony or observation deck looking east. Note the precast concrete T-beams ceiling structure. Vertical acoustical panels were added to the upper walls. Glass artwork entitled “Dancing Water” glass artwork was mounted on the east natatorium wall. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 2019.

Figure 27: View of swimming pool from the original Pool Balcony or observation platform next to the upper-level Lobby, from the north looking south. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1960s.

Figure 28: Main staircase connecting upper and lower levels is designed to enclose the original open riser staircase, which no longer met standards of the ADA. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Figure 29: The elevator on the south wall of the Shop opens to an area on the east side of the North Hallway. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Figure 30: An Observation Port on the east side of the North Hallway provides bird’s-eye view of the gymnasium on the lower level. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Figure 31: Arts and Craft Room, from south looking northwest. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 32: View of South Hallway on upper level from the north looking south. The first door on the east (or left) opens to the Pool Observation Balcony and doors on the west (right) lead to Administrative Offices, a Kitchen, and Meeting Rooms A and B. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Figure 33: The Administrative Offices are divided in the middle by glass sidelights and transoms, which transmit light from the west façade windows. This view through the window in the security door is taken from the east looking west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 34: Interior of Conference Room as it originally looked with three vertical glass panels or sidelights next to the hallway door, view from east looking west. The original windows and decorative block that lined the west façade can be seen on the west wall of the room. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 35: Kitchen, view from corridor from east looking west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

INTERIOR – LOWER LEVEL

Figure 36: View of relocated Reception Desk in the lower level Lobby, looking east from the west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 37: An Exercise Room was placed in the former Game Room. The glass wall of windows overlooking the pool is original but the glass walls enclosing the exercise equipment are new. To the right, off camera, the west side of the room is still open and contains ping pong tables. View from northwest looking southeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Figure 38: Game Room as originally designed. Note wide open expanse of room with views of swimming pool through windows on the south side and daylight from the east entrance windows. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Figure 39: A wall of windows at the base of the main staircase permits natural light to fill the stairwell and spaces on both levels of the building. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Figure 40: On the west side of the Lobby and Reception Desk on the lower level are two restrooms that have been updated from separate men's and women's to unisex, single-user restrooms. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 24, 2023.

Figure 41: View of the swimming pool from north, looking south. Jill Fishbaugh photo, June 6, 2022.

Figure 42: View of the wading pool from southeast corner looking northwest; note the pool observation area from windows on the north wall, upper-level Social Hall, and Observation Balcony in far upper left corner. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Figure 43: View of women's locker room and showers from north looking south. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 44: View of lower level South Hallway corridor behind the locker rooms. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Figure 45: People playing pickleball in the Gymnasium, looking from the doorway on the south side towards the north wall. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 20, 2023.

Figure 46: View from south looking north of the former rifle range, which is now a Weight Room and home of the Get Strength Weightlifting Club. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

SECTION 8 – SIGNIFICANCE and HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Figure 47: “Typology of Urban Parks, 1850-1965,” Table 3.1, from Clayne R. Jensen and Steven P. Guthrie, *Outdoor Recreation in America*, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishers, 2005.

Figure 48: Image of the non-extant American Legion Community Building at time of dedication, *Daily Iowan*, November 11, 1928.

Figure 49: Fire destroys Iowa City Recreation Center’s predecessor building for the second time in 1955. Photo by Bud Lewis as appeared in *Iowa City, an Illustrated History* by Gerald Mansheim, published in Norfolk, Virginia, by the Donning Co. in 1989, page 187.

Figure 50: Architect Roland C. Wehner’s Civic Center sketch, March 24, 1959, from the Pattschull Collection.

Figure 51: Architect Roland C. Wehner’s Civic Center and Iowa City Recreation Center elevation drawings, April 13, 1959, from the Pattschull Collection housed at the State Historical Society in Iowa City. Note the proposed recreation center’s elevations.

Figure 52: Architect Henry L. Fisk’s concept drawing of the recreation center’s proposed second site on Iowa Avenue, the same block as Iowa City’s Civic Center (police and fire station and city hall), March 24, 1959, from the Pattschull Collection. This location was determined too small and not selected.

Figure 53: Architect Roland C. Wehner’s community building/recreation center concept drawing, February 1962.

Figure 54: Architect Roland C. Wehner’s architectural design for the Iowa City Community Recreation Center’s west entrance façade, c. 1962,

Figure 55: Architect Roland C. Wehner’s cross-section concept drawing looking north from Burlington Street side. Left to right: entrance into lobby/office corridor (with figures), hall and locker room area below the figures; pool with observation balcony and depth of shallow and deep ends illustrated; and, finally, the rear/east entrance with the ancillary handball/exercise room block beyond, c. 1962, from the Pattschull Collection.

Figure 56: Architect Roland C. Wehner’s recreation center cross-section drawings, 1962.

Figure 57: Photo of Roland C. Wehner at his drafting table holding daughter. Note architectural drawing of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center on upper left wall, c. 1962.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

FIGURES:



Figure 1: Driving creosote-treated wood pilings for the pool basin. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1963.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

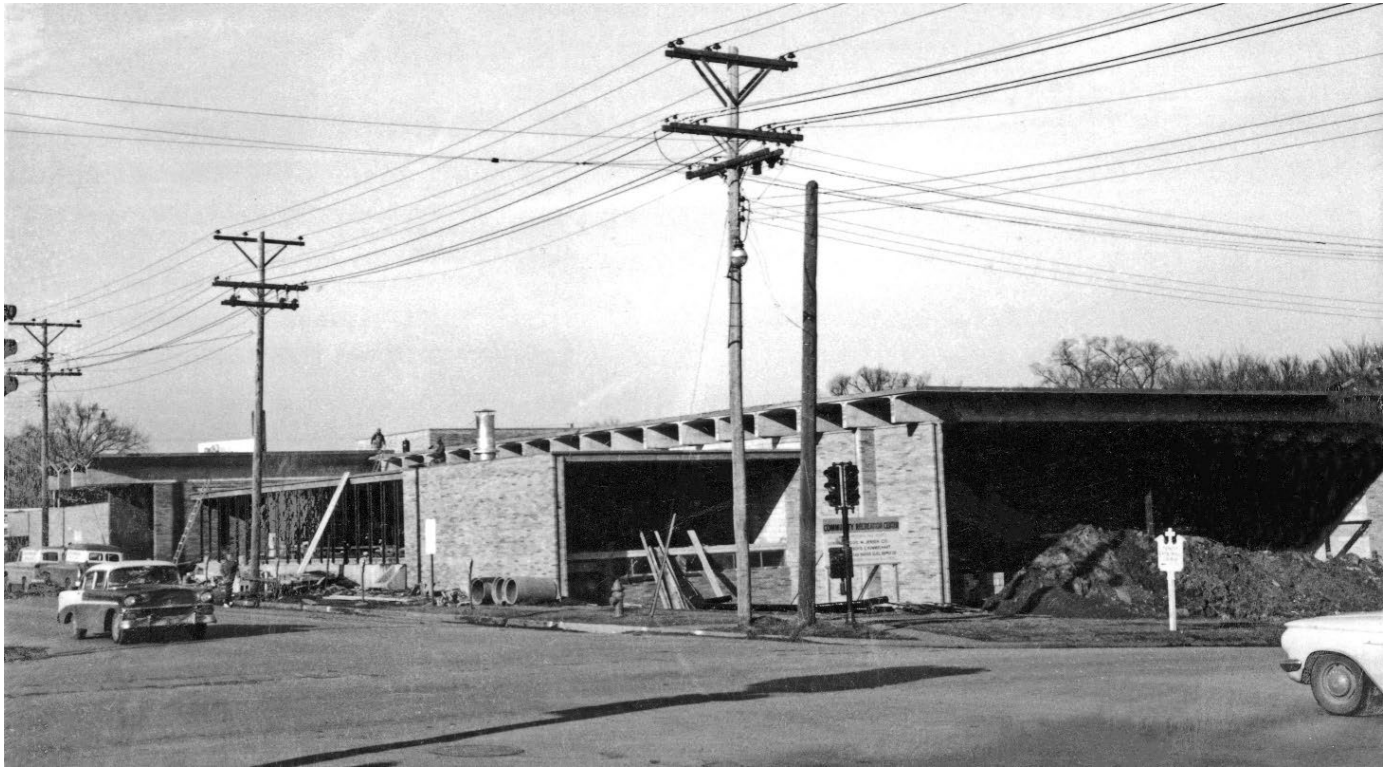


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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 9: Sidewalk view of Gilbert Street main entrance from south, looking north. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 16: Lower level entrance view from east parking lot looking northwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Figure 18: East College Street edible classroom/educational garden, view from north, looking south-southeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

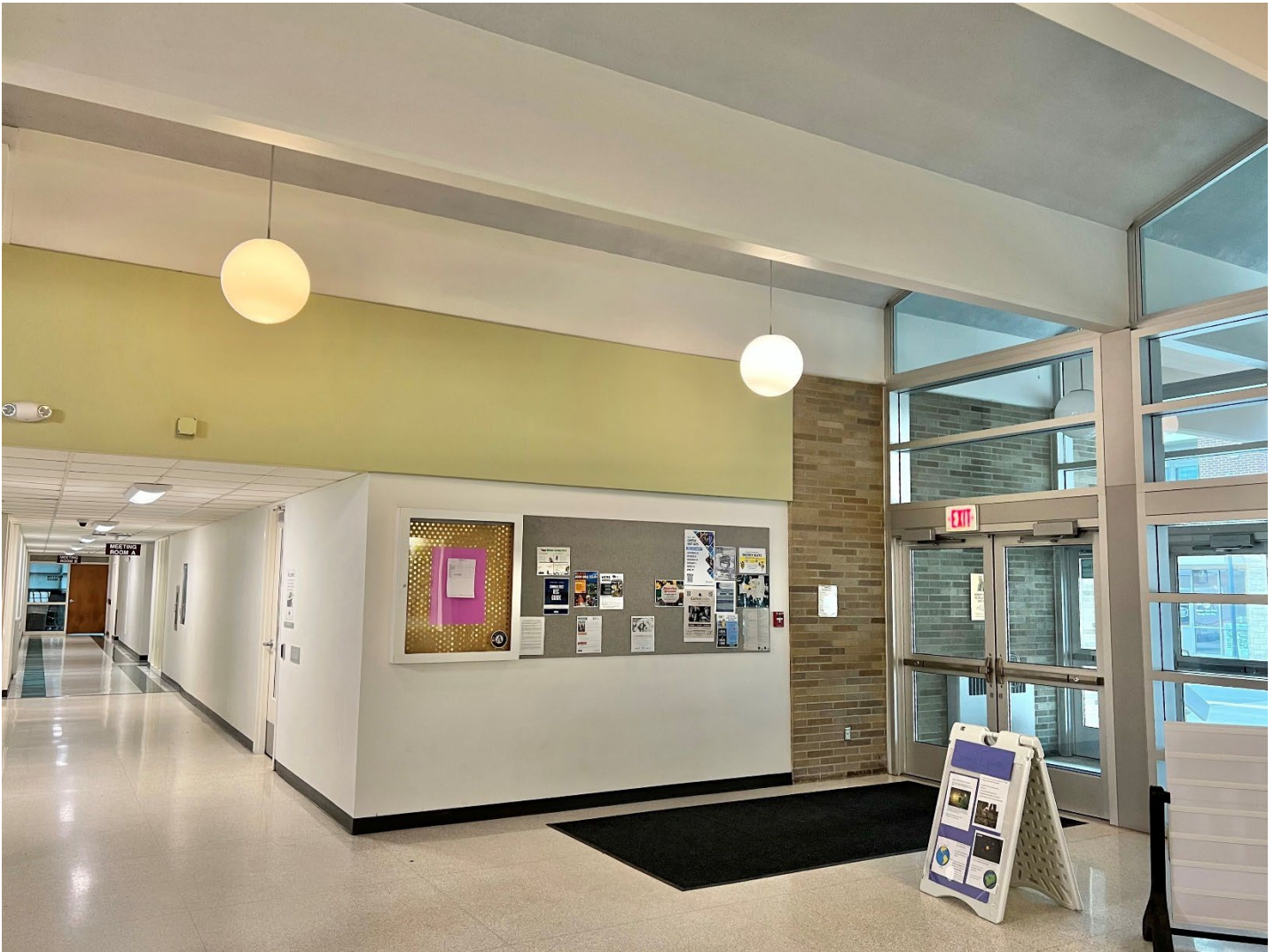


Figure 21: View of Gilbert Street entrance, Lobby, and enclosed Administrative Offices, from north looking south toward Meeting Room B at the end of the South Hallway. Jill Fishbaugh photo, April 2, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 22: The upper-level Lobby from north looking south, with sunlight streaming in from South Gilbert Street main entrance and the original Reception Desk. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 23: The upper-level Lounge looking at the original openings for Reception Desk on the right and the wall of Pool Balcony windows on the left. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 24: Social Hall, from northwest looking southeast toward the pool. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 25: A “sock hop” dance, c. 1965, held in the “social hall,” with the pool wall visible through the large windows. The teen girls are dancing, and the bored-looking boys sit on chairs at the edge. These adolescents appear to be high schoolers. There were also weekly Friday night dances, called “Paper Doll,” that dated to at least the 1930s and were first held in the ballroom of the old Community Building. The Friday night Paper Doll dances were a bit dressier, and the overhead lights were dimmed a bit (Jan Olive Full’s personal recollection). *Iowa City Press-Citizen* photo.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 32: View of South Hallway on upper level from the north looking south. The first door on the east (or left) opens to the Pool Observation Balcony and doors on the west (right) lead to Administrative Offices, a Kitchen, and Meeting Rooms A and B. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 34: Interior of Conference Room as it originally looked with three vertical glass panels or sidelights next to the hallway door, view from east looking west. The original windows and decorative block that lined the west façade can be seen on the west wall of the room. Roland C. Wehner photo, c. 1964.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 35: Kitchen, view from corridor from east looking west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 36: View of relocated Reception Desk in the lower level Lobby, looking east from the west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.



Figure 37: An Exercise Room was placed in the former Game Room. The glass wall of windows overlooking the pool is original but the glass walls enclosing the exercise equipment are new. To the right, off camera, the game room is still open and contains ping pong tables. View from northwest looking southeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 43: View of women's locker room and showers from north looking south. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 44: View of lower level South Hallway corridor behind the locker rooms. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 45: People playing pickleball in the Gymnasium, looking from the doorway on the south side towards the north wall. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 20, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center	Johnson County, Iowa
Name of Property	County and State

TABLE 3.1 Typology of Urban Parks, 1850–1965			
	Pleasure Ground (1850–1900)	Reform Park (1900–1930)	Recreation Facility (1930–1965)
Social goal	Public health and social reform	Social reform, children's play, assimilation	Recreation service
Activities	Strolling, carriage racking, bike riding, picnics, rowing, classical music, nondidactic education	Supervised play, gymnastics, crafts, Americanization classes, dancing, plays and pageants	Active recreation, basketball, tennis, team sports, spectator sports, swimming
Size	Very large, 1000+ acres	Small, city blocks	Small to medium, follow formula
Relation to city	Set in contrast	Accepts urban patterns	Suburban
Elements	Woodlands and meadow, curving paths, placid water bodies, rustic structures, limited floral displays	Sandlots, playgrounds, rectilinear paths, swimming pools, fieldhouses	Asphalt or grass play area, pools, rectilinear paths, standard play equipment
Promoters	Health reformers, transcendentalists, real estate interests	Social reformers, social workers, recreation workers	Politicians, bureaucrats, planners
Beneficiaries	All citydwellers (intended), upper-middle class (reality)	Children, immigrants, working class	Suburban families

Adapted from Galen Cranz and Michael Boland. "Defining the Sustainable Park: A Fifth Model for Urban Parks." *Landscape Journal*, (Vol. 23, No. 2, 2004): 102–140.

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

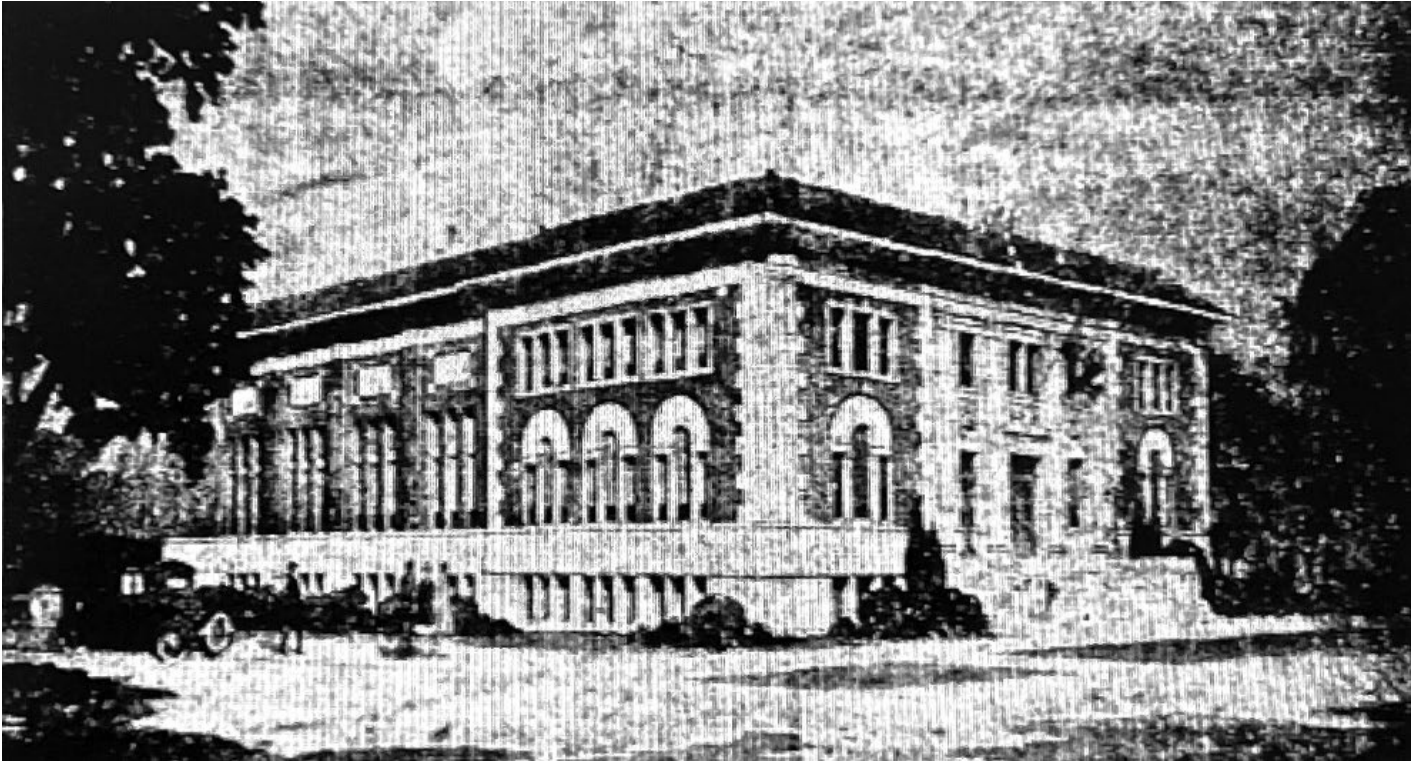


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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

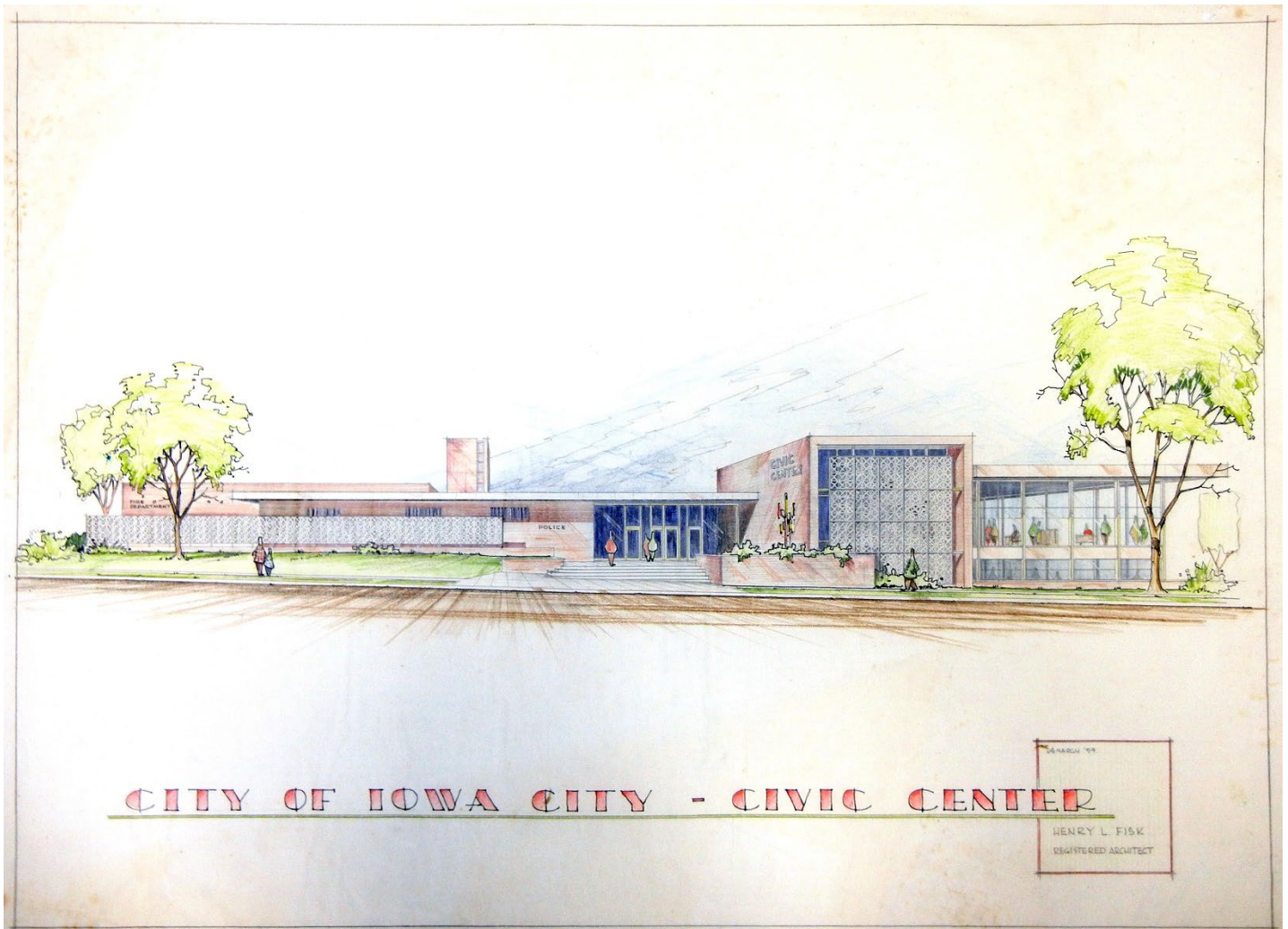


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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

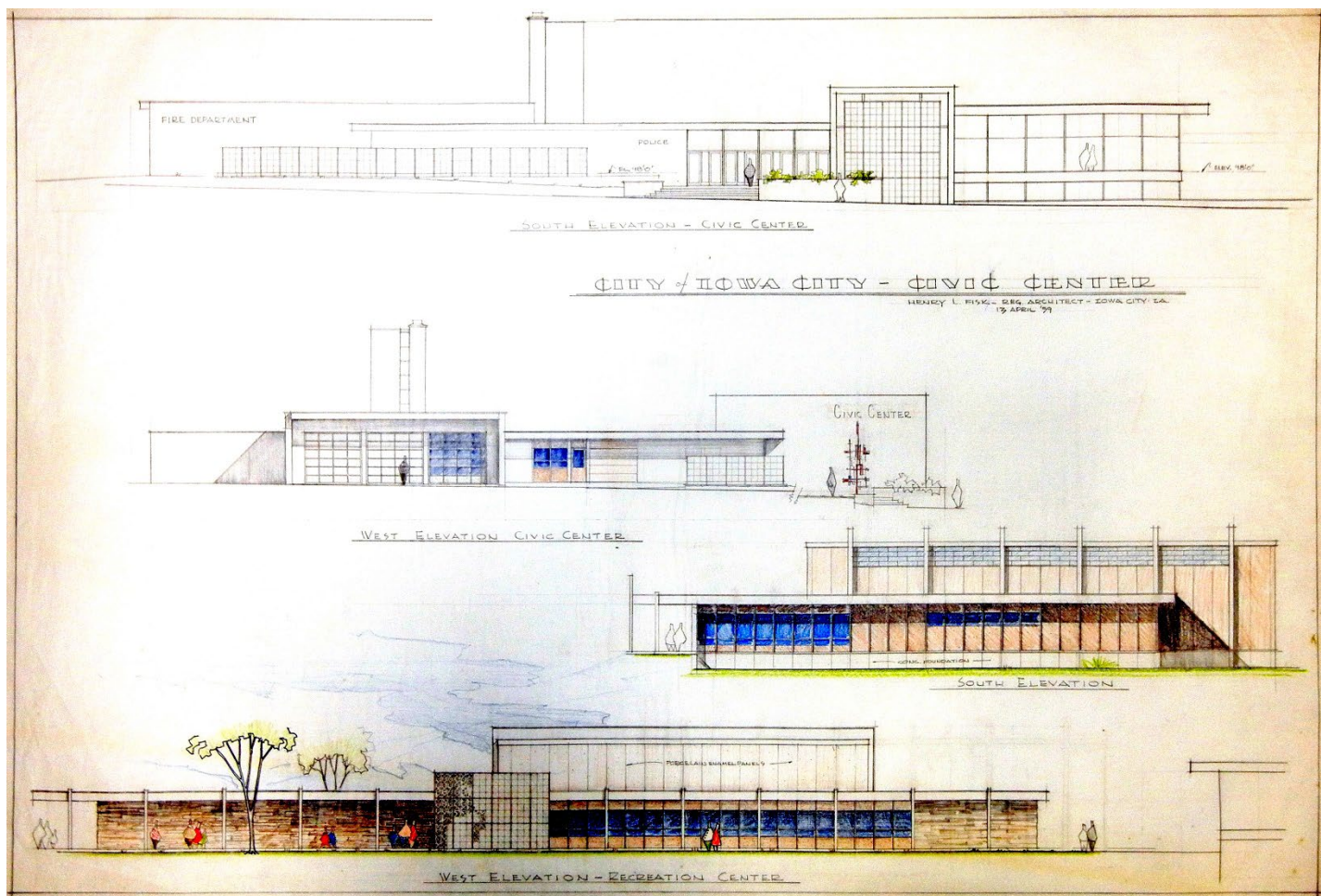


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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

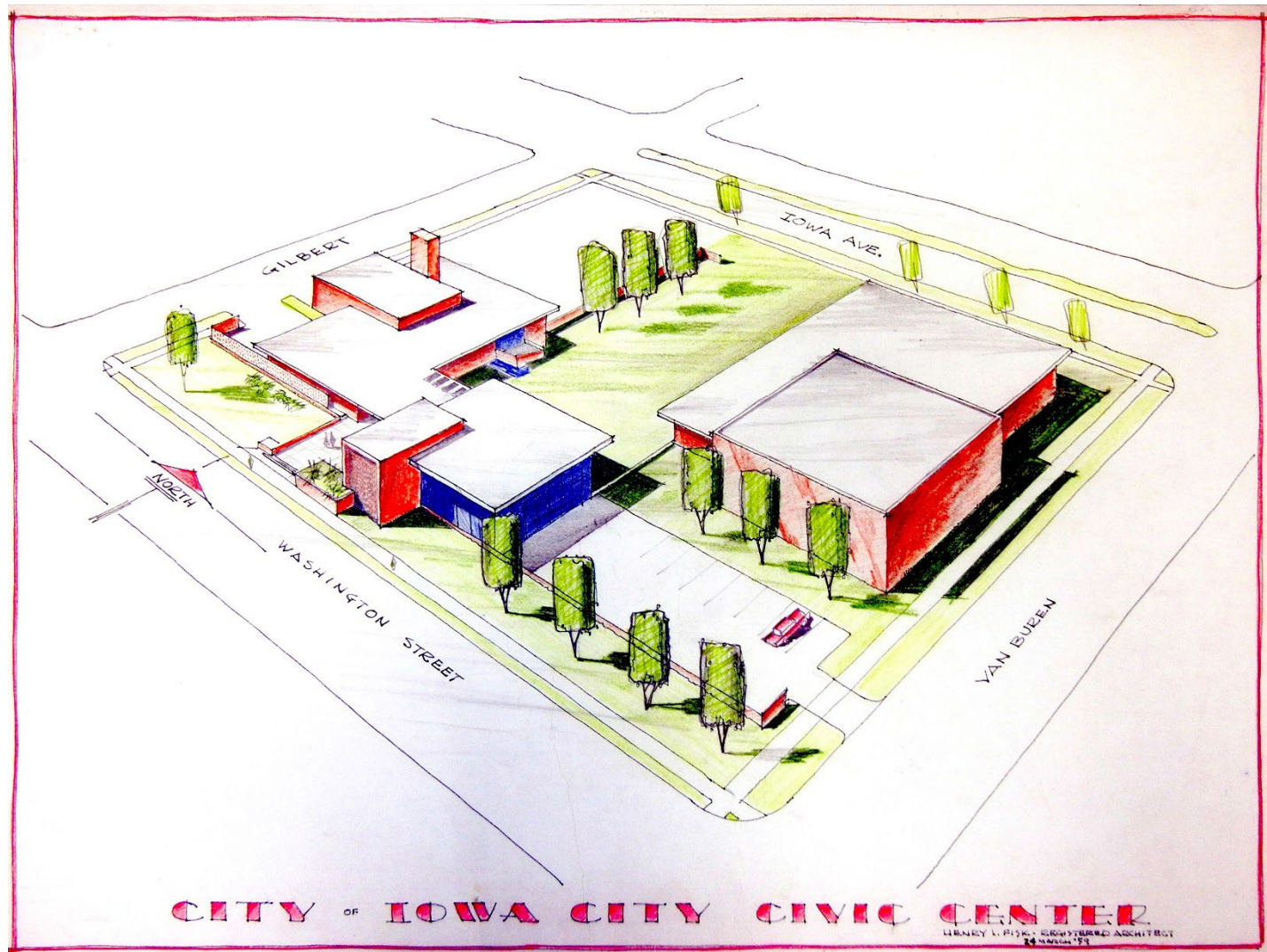


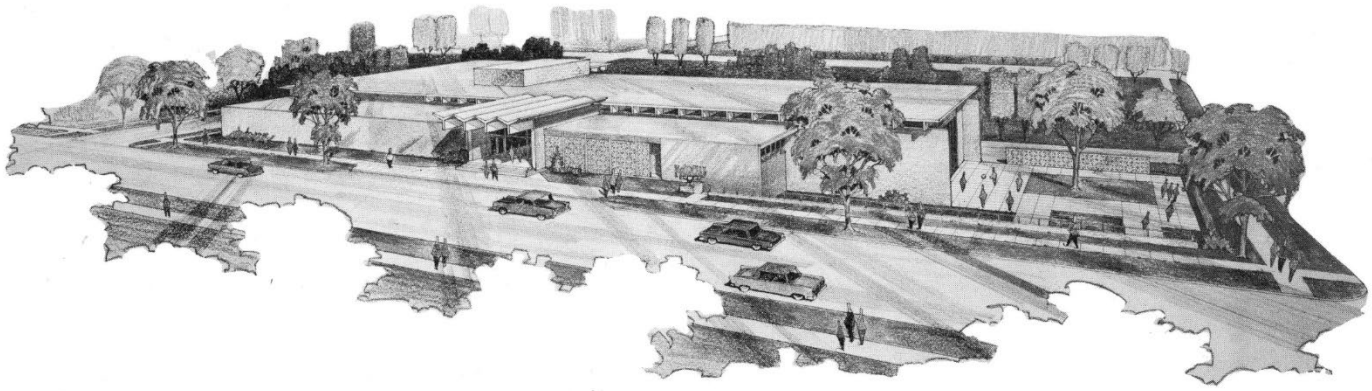
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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER
IOWA CITY IOWA

WEHNER AND HENRY • ARCHITECTS
IOWA CITY IOWA

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Figure 54: Architect Roland C. Wehner's architectural design of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center's west entrance façade, c. 1962.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

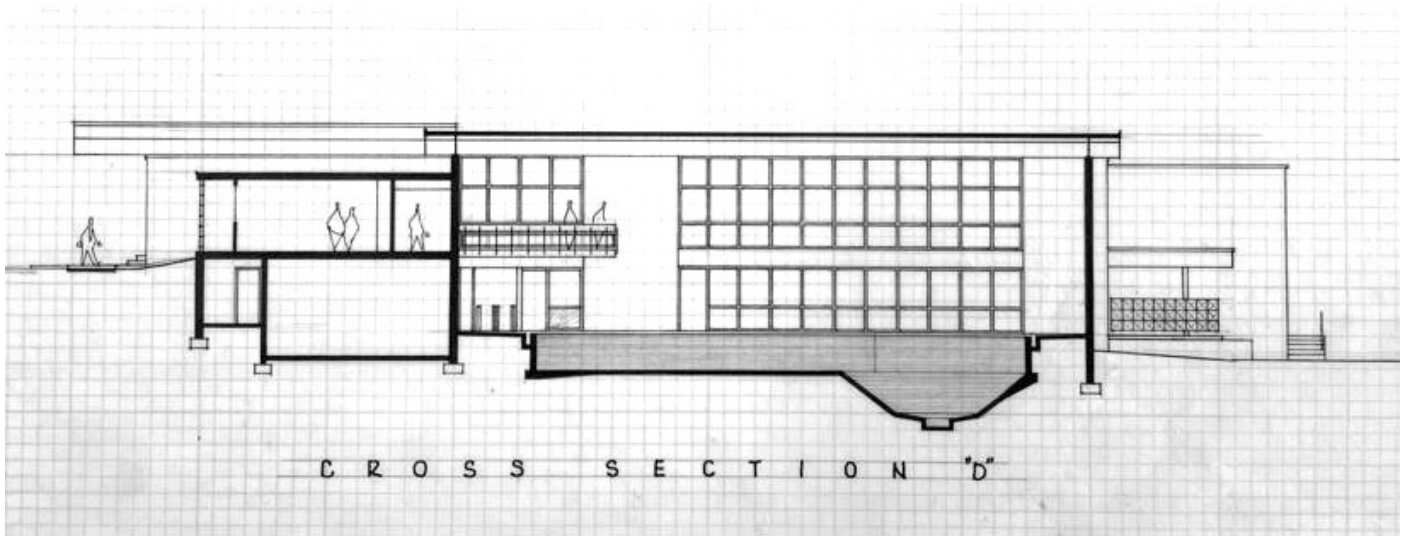


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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

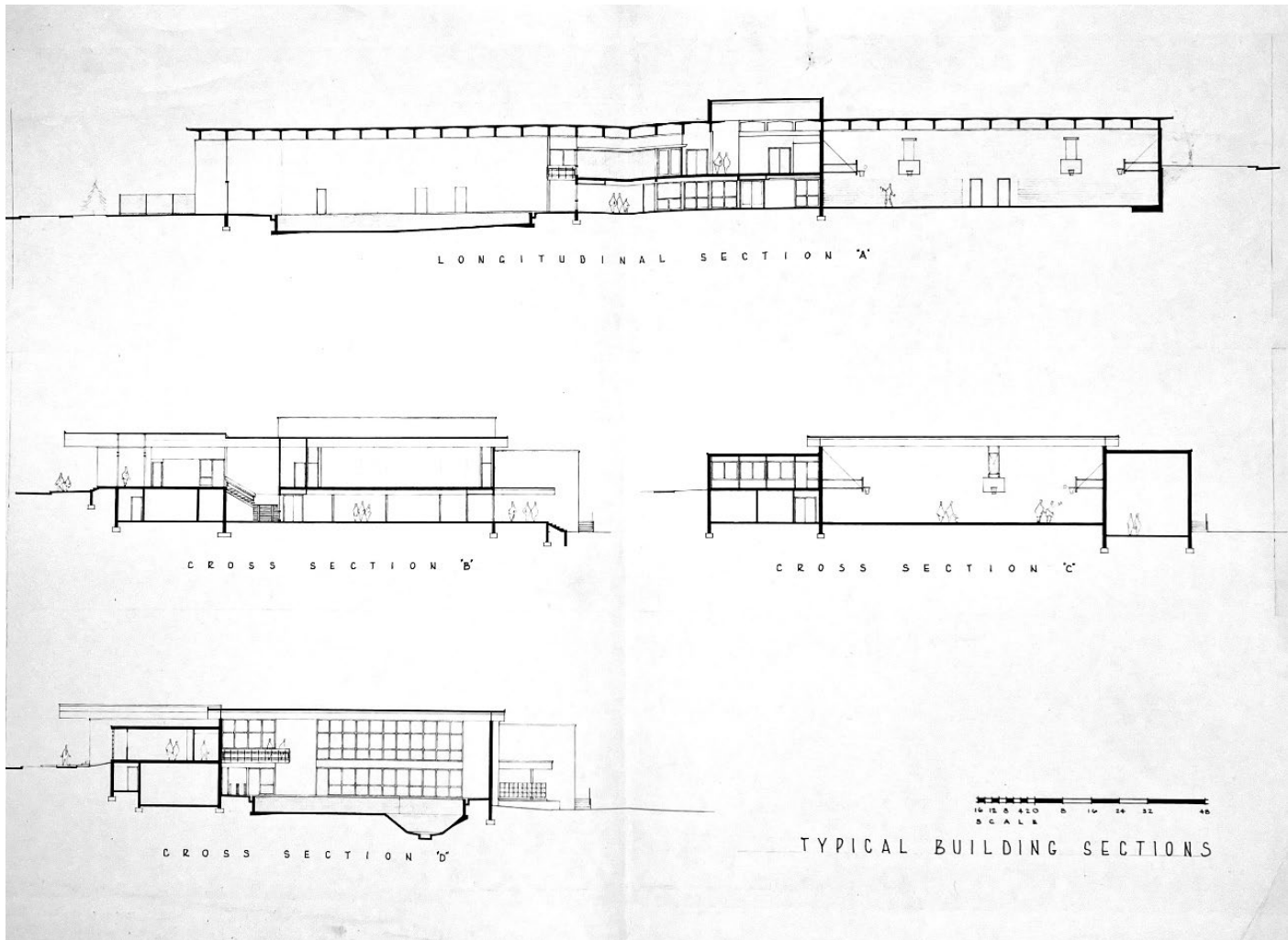


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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 57: Photo of Roland C. Wehner at his drafting table holding daughter. Note architectural drawing of the Iowa City Community Recreation Center on upper left wall. Photo by Marilyn Wehner, August 1962.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State

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Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State Agency
☐ Federal Agency
☐ Local Government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.351

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	41.659074	-91.530117	3		
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2			4		

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

Sited at the east edge of downtown Iowa City, the building sits on a slope leading down to Ralston Creek on the east and is bordered on that side by paved parking to the creek bed. To the south is busy Burlington Street, the former route of U.S. 6 through town, now lined with modern student apartments. On the north is East College Street and the bridge that carries it over the creek's valley. A contemporary high-rise of condominium and theater facilities is located directly across College Street. The historic Trinity Episcopal church is located northwest through the intersection of College and Gilbert streets. Gilbert Street borders the west formal façade of the recreation building, which is where its distinctive entrance is located. Student apartments fill the block across the street from the façade.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries above describe the city block upon which the building sits.

Parcel 1010458001; sec: 10, Twn: 79, Rng: 6. Legal description: Iowa City Iowa City (original town) South Market Square (Rec Building). Subdivision: Iowa City (Original Town).

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Bennett, assisted by Jan Olive Full, Ph.D., & Jill Fishbaugh date 1/22/2024

Organization _____ telephone 319-321-0233

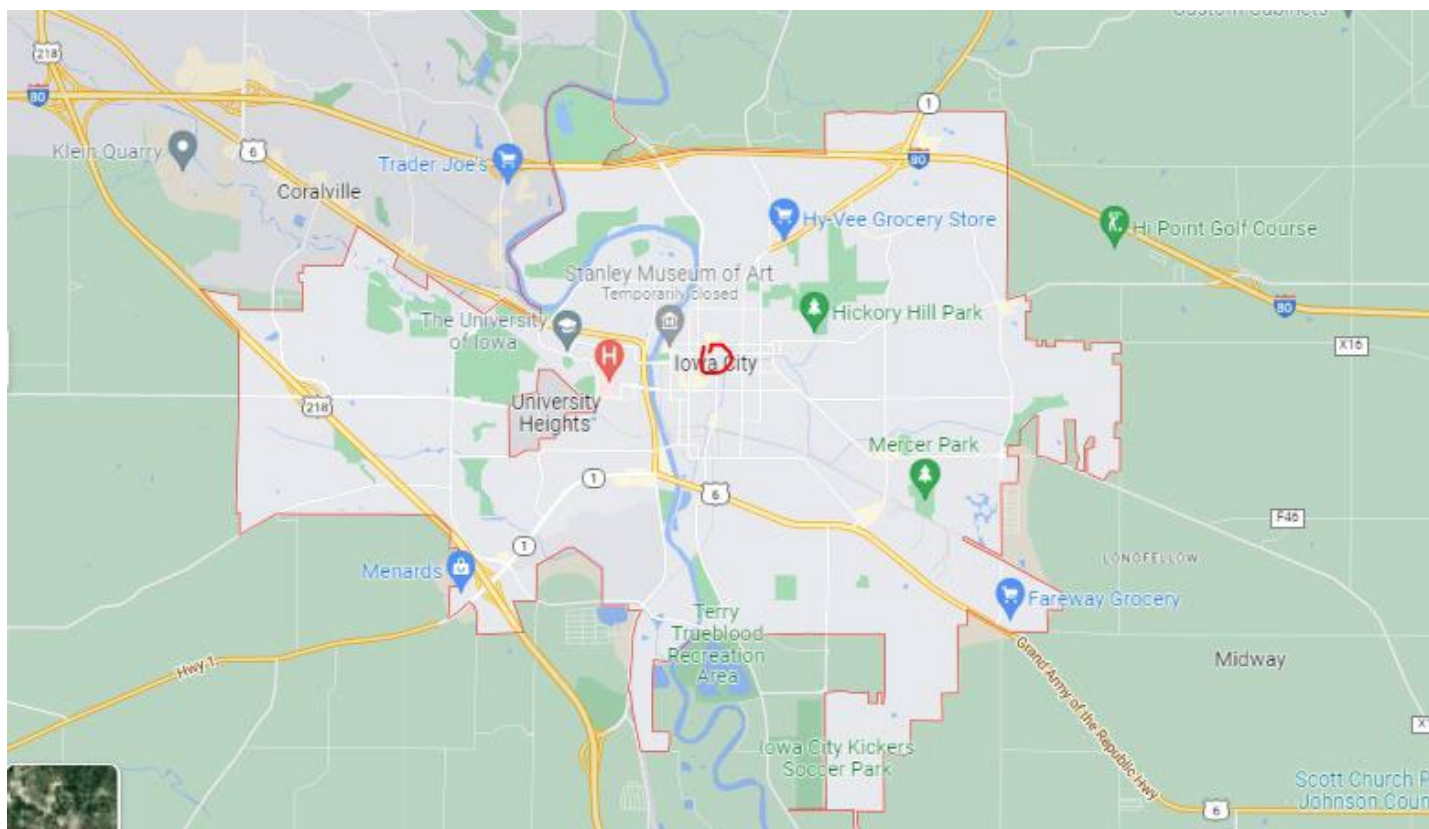
street & number 221 E College St, Apt 1103 email jill.fishbaugh@rocketmail.com

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52240

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)



Google Maps (N^ no scale)

Iowa City Community Recreation Center circled in red.

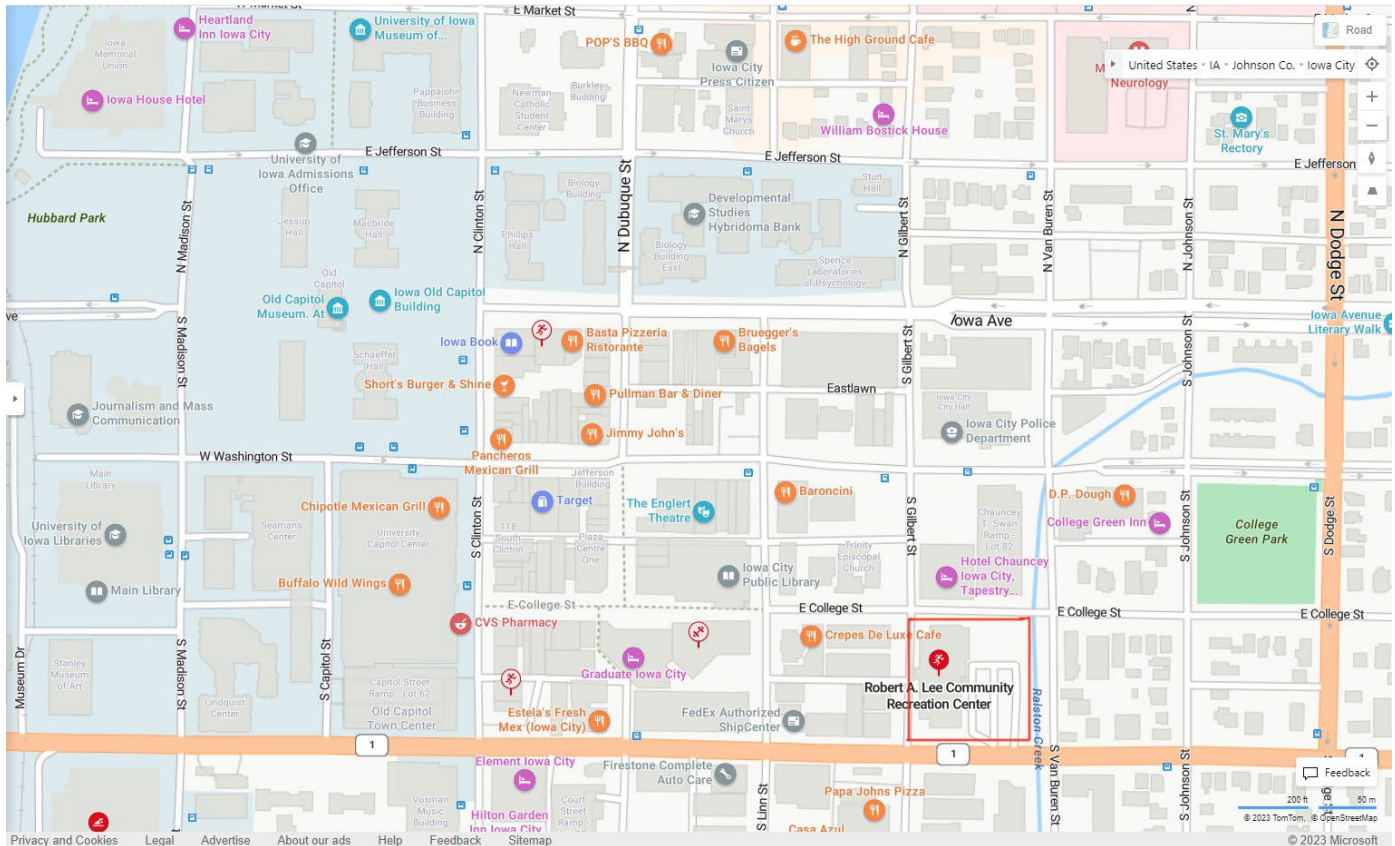
Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State

Local Location Map



Bing Maps (N^o scale)
Iowa City Community Recreation Center outlined in red.

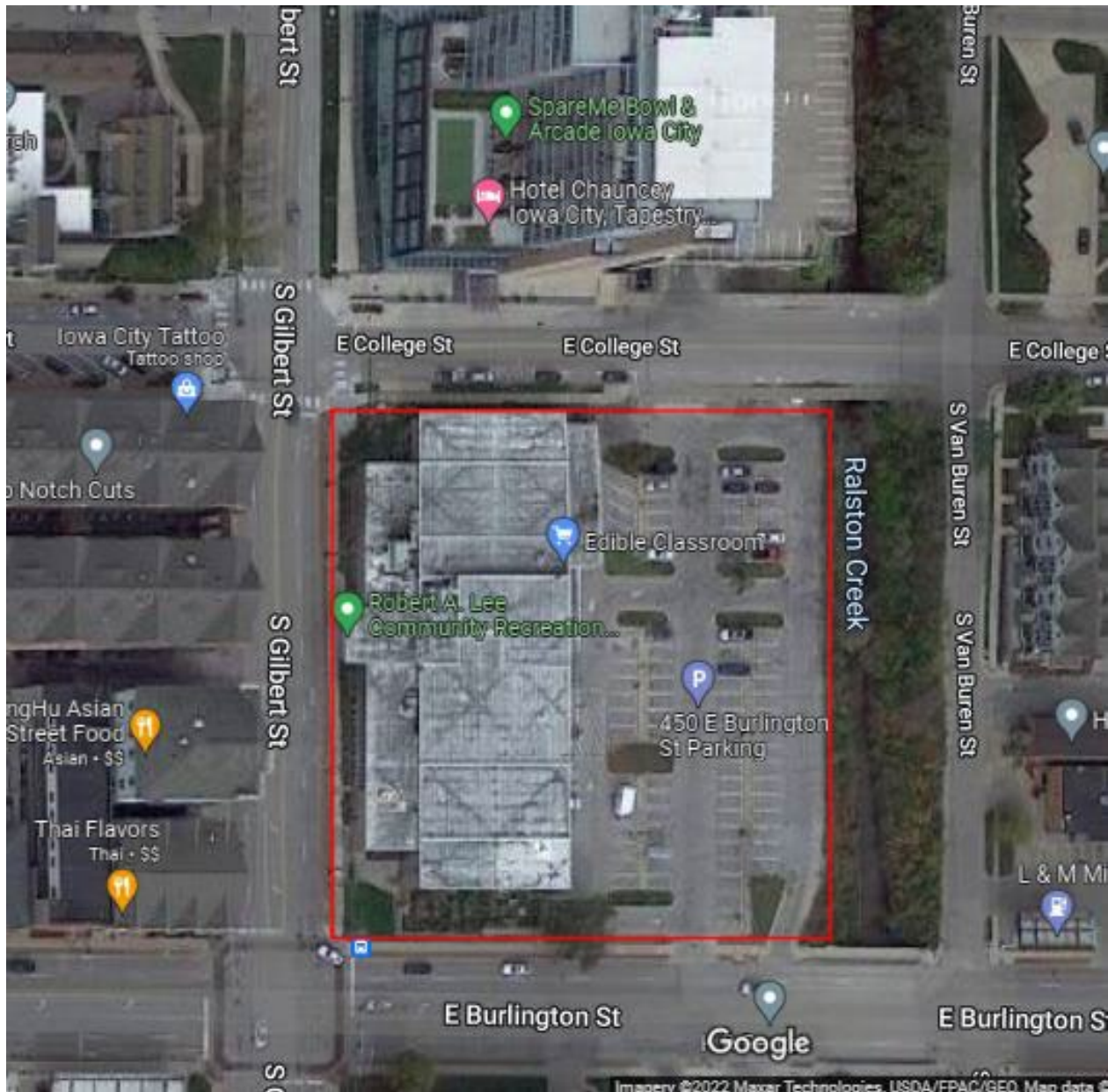
Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Site Plan



Google maps (N^ no scale)

The mass-blocks that fit together to form the Iowa City Community Recreation Center are clear from this aerial, as is the surrounding landscape.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

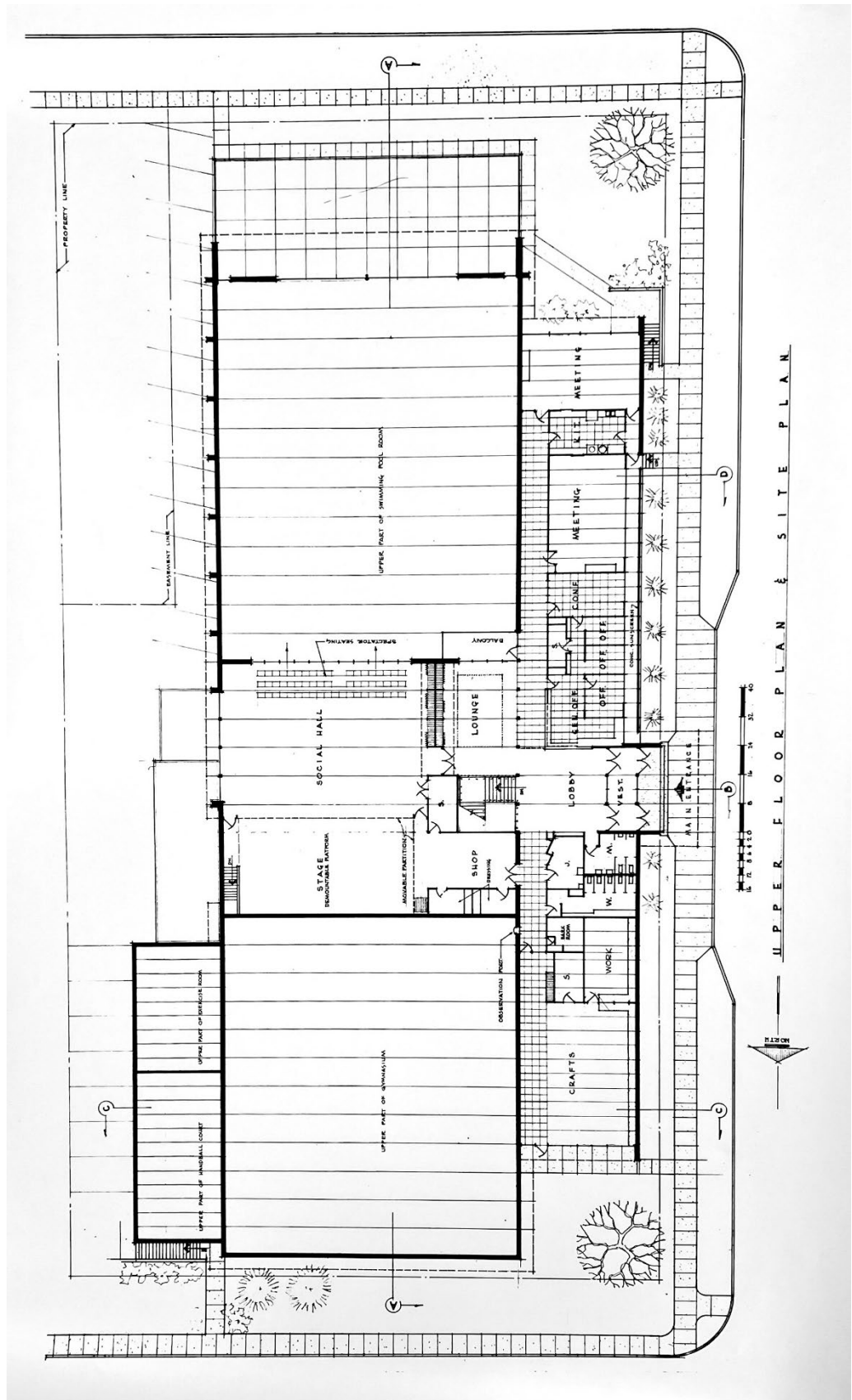
County and State

Floor Plans

Upper-level floor plan,
Roland C. Wehner architect,
c. 1964.

Plans as built remain the
same today.

See Appendix A -
Alterations for details.



Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

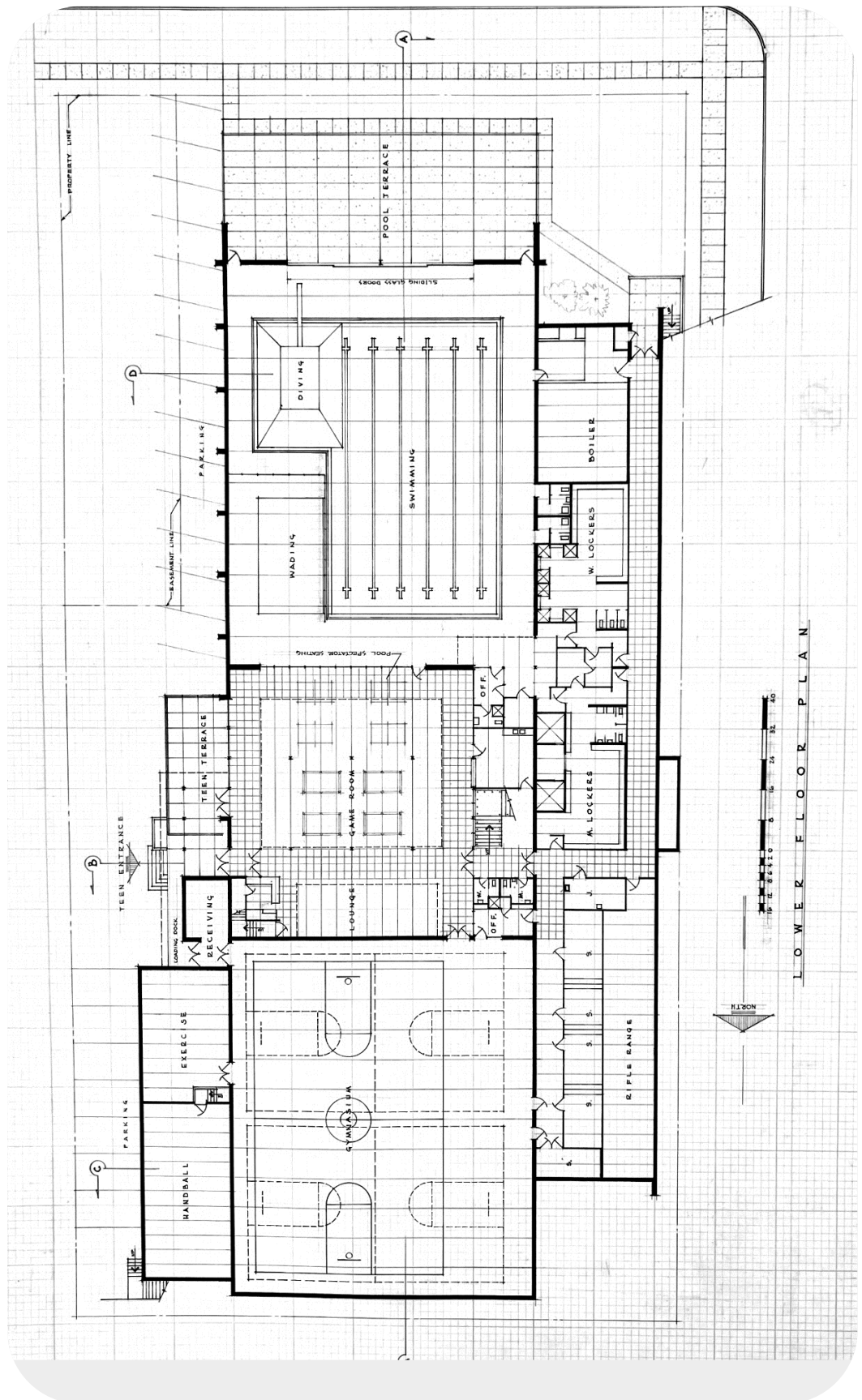
County and State

Floor Plans

Lower level floor plan,
Roland C. Wehner architect,
c. 1964.

Plans as built remain the
same today.

See Appendix A –
Alterations for details.



Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Photo Location Map (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Iowa City Community Recreation Center

City or Vicinity: Iowa City

County: Johnson **State:** IA

Photographer: Jan Olive Full, Jill Fishbaugh, and others as specified

Date Photographed: March 17, 2023 (unless otherwise specified)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

PHOTO LOG

EXTERIOR

Photo 01: Main Entrance on Gilbert Street, view from west, looking east. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 1.

Photo 02: Sidewalk view of accessibility ramp and front steps at the Main Entrance on Gilbert Street from north, looking south. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 2.

Photo 03: Sidewalk view of Gilbert Street main entrance from south, looking north. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 5.

Photo 04: Sidewalk view of building showing south community garden, view from corner of Gilbert Street (at left) and Burlington Street (at right), looking northeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 8.

Photo 05: Lower level entrance view from east parking lot, looking northwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 11.

Photo 06: Parking lot view from northeast corner, view from East College Street bridge over Ralston Creek, looking south-southwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 12.

Photo 07: East College Street edible classroom/educational garden, view from north, looking south-southeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023. Same as Figure 13.

INTERIOR – UPPER LEVEL

Photo 08: View of Gilbert Street Lounge from west, looking east toward the Social Hall. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 24, 2023.

Photo 09: View of Gilbert Street Lounge from east, looking southwest toward the pool and offices. Jill Fishbaugh photo, April 2, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Photo 10: Social Hall, from west wall looking east towards frosted glass entrance doors and two wooden doors to a storage room. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Photo 11: Emergency Exit staircase leading from the northeast corner of the upper-level Social Hall to a door in the northwest corner of the lower-level Lobby, directly next to the Emergency Exit doors at the east entrance. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Photo 12: View of main staircase from lower level, looking upwards towards the upper-level Lounge area on the other side of the metal railing. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Photo 13: The darkroom on the west side of the North Hallway became a staff office and the original terrazzo flooring was damaged when wall blocking light at the entrance to the room was torn down, Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Photo 14: Meeting Room A, view from corridor from east, looking west. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Photo 15: Meeting Room B, view from corridor from north, looking south. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Photo 16: Both Meeting Room B and the Kitchen have Emergency Exit doors leading to a back hallway, where an exterior Emergency Exit door opens to the narrow terrace next to windows on the west side of the building. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

INTERIOR – LOWER LEVEL

Photo 17: View of the wading pool from southeast corner looking northwest; note the pool observation area from windows on the north wall, upper-level Social Hall, and Observation Balcony in far upper left corner. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Photo 18: View of women's locker room and showers from south, looking north. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Photo 19: View of men's locker room from east, looking west. Mark Cannon photo, March 28, 2023.

Photo 20: View of lower-level North Hallway corridor behind the gymnasium. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Photo 21: Observation Port on upper west wall of gymnasium is accessible to spectators who want to view activities in the gymnasium from on the upper-level North Hallway. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Photo 22: View from west, looking southeast in the former Exercise room, now a storage area. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023

Photo 23: View from inside the former Exercise Room, looking north to the stairs and former Handball Court entrance, now a storage area. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Photo 24: View from south, looking north at the former Handball Court, now a storage area. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

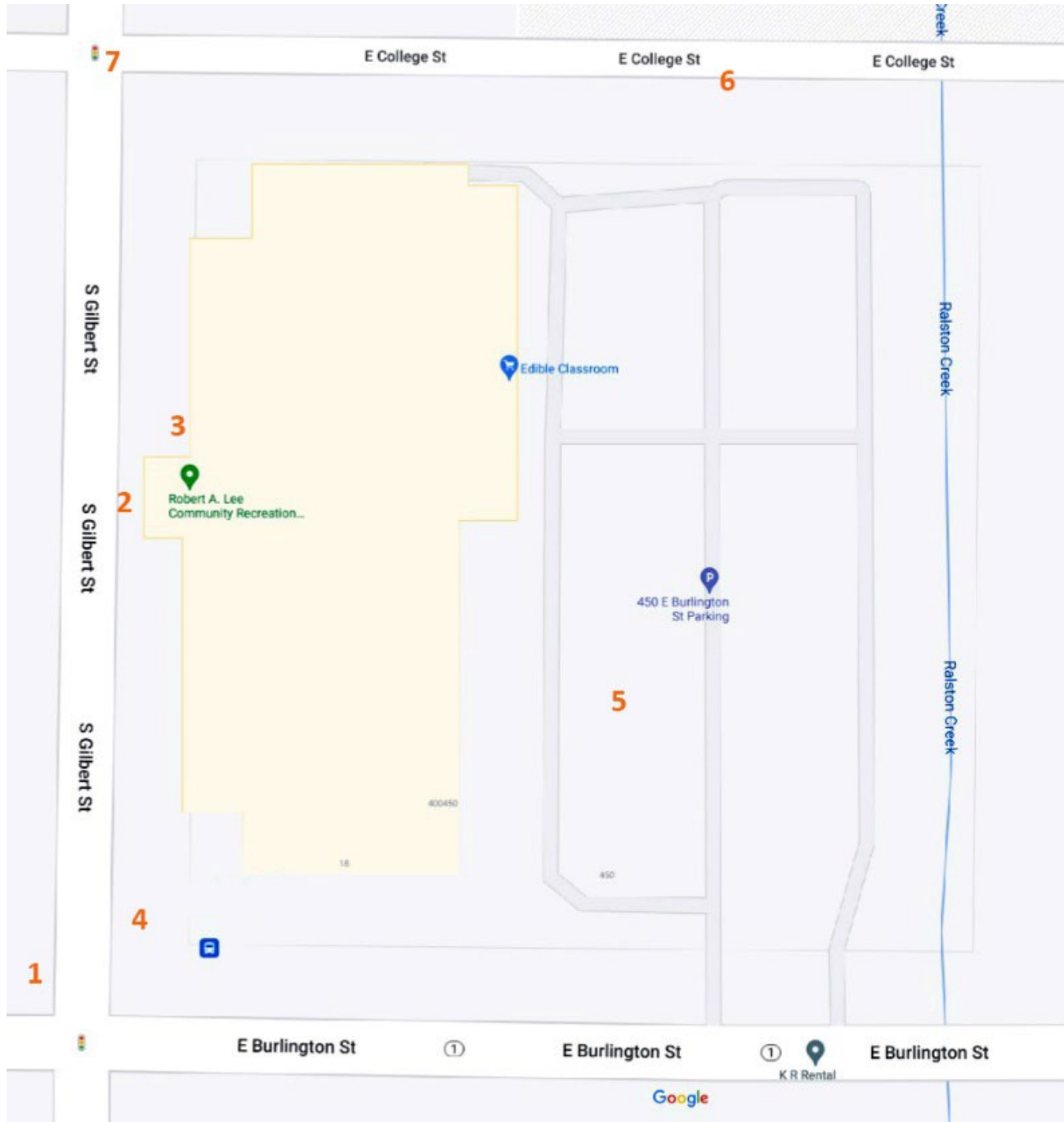
Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Exterior View Photo Location Sketch Map Key



N↑

Johnson County, Iowa
County and State

[illegible]

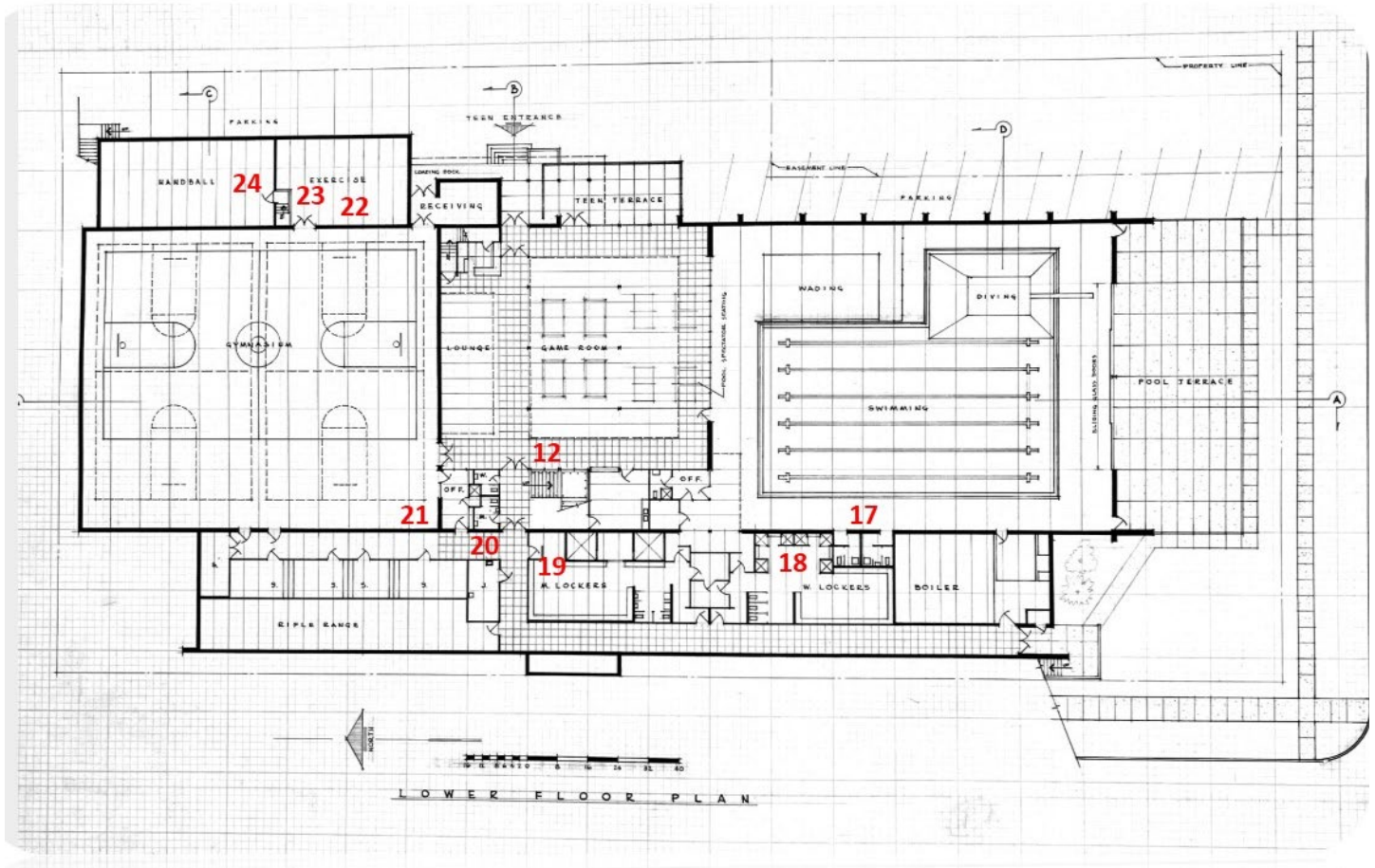
Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State

Interior View Lower-Level Photo Location Sketch Map Key



APPENDIX A: ALTERATIONS to Iowa City Community Recreation Center

TABLE ONE: ALTERATIONS - EXTERIOR

Original Feature	Reason for Change	Modifications	Photographs
UPPER LEVEL		WEST FAÇADE	
Front steps Main Entrance	Handicapped accessibility; ADA compliance	Handicapped accessible concrete ramp with metal handrails added on north side of entrance in 1980s; well-integrated as original terrazzo covering the entire threshold and three steps on south side of main entrance remains intact. Original handrail on the south side of the front steps remains.	Figure 6 2023 Figure 10 2023
Roof over Main Entrance	Maintenance required to mitigate draining issues and water damage from age of materials	A raised flat roof or cladding was added over the original exposed roof T-beams, creating a rectangular box-like cornice rather than the accordion-like shape. The trim for the concrete roof panels and counterflashing turned under at the edge of the cornice and roof fascia was galvanized steel that was painted brown, but has since been replaced by new metal materials.	Figure 6 2023 Figure 7 2023
Windows Main Entrance and Vestibule	Removed due to new window design necessitated by tornado damage plus City wanted energy-efficient	Original openings were re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and taller windowpanes on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in a sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 6 2023 Figure 20 2023 Figure 19 2023 Figure 21 2023 Figure 7 1964 Figure 8 1964
Windows Staff Offices, Conference Room, Meeting Room A	Removed due to new window design necessitated by tornado damage	Original openings were re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a more vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and a taller windowpane on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in a sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 6 2023 Figure 9 2023 Figure 12 2023 Figure 34 2023
Windows Transom between roof flanges	Maintain and update to allow additional natural light inside interior spaces.	Original white and black plastic covers over shallow flanges were replaced with clear, insulated glass wherever transoms were placed between the T-roof beam to create clerestory lighting such as the pool, gym, social hall, lobby, lounge, and east entrance canopy.	Figure 13 2023 Figure 18 2023 Figure 15 1964
Decorative Blocks for screening windows	Possible deterioration of mortar or decay of original concrete blocks at the edges or in the center design area. Coincided with replacement of windows after tornado.	Removal significantly altered a key exterior design element although the metal support framing was retained along the west side of a narrow terrace. The decorative concrete screens were originally designed to moderate the western afternoon sun exposure but were also a key visual accent on the west façade. The repetitive pattern in the screen appeared as a uniform mass, which contributed to the horizontal lines by hiding the windows from the street view. This provided a degree of privacy to occupants of the building yet allowed natural light into offices and meeting rooms. The custom pattern on each molded concrete block. A Cedar Rapids company fabricated a custom mold for casting the concrete blocks with an "X" inside a square. Evidently, the aesthetic value of preserving original building fabric was not fully appreciated at the time such a substantial change was made.	Figure 12 2023 Figure 7 1964 Figure 8 1964 Figure 11 1964 Figure 34 1964
Sign "Gather"	Promotion of facility.	Between the two Main Entrance doors is a metal sign with "Gather" in laser-cut lettering over a metal screen, which was added to the exterior wall in 2019. Non-contributing.	Figure 6 2023
UPPER LEVEL		SOUTH FAÇADE	
Windows Meeting Room B	Removed due to new window design necessitated by tornado damage.	Original openings were re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a more vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and taller windowpanes on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in a sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 9 2023 Figure 13 2023 Figure 11 1964
5Sign "Swim"	Promotion of facility.	In the center of wall of windows is a metal sign with "Gather" in laser-cut lettering over a metal screen, which was added to the exterior wall in 2019. Non-contributing.	Figure 13

Original Feature	Reason for Change	Modifications	Photographs
UPPER LEVEL		EAST FAÇADE	
Windows Transom between roof flanges	Maintain and update to allow additional natural light inside interior spaces.	Original white and black plastic covers over shallow roof flanges were replaced with clear, insulated glass wherever transoms were placed between the T-roof beam to create clerestory lighting such as the pool, gym, social hall, lobby, lounge, and east entrance canopy.	Figure 15 2023 Figure 17 2023 Figure 45 2023
Windows Social Hall	Removed due to new window design necessitated by tornado damage.	Original openings re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a more vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and taller windowpanes on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 16 2023 Figure 24 2023 Figure 15 1964 Figure 25 c.1965
UPPER LEVEL		NORTH FAÇADE	
Windows Arts and Craft Room	Removed due to new window design necessitated by tornado damage.	Original openings re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a more vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and taller windowpanes on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 31 2023
Fences Outdoor area	Repurposed as a community/educational garden space.	Children's discovery garden bordered by a metal fence next to sidewalk along College Street. Non-contributing structures like a trellis and hoop serve as temporary garden structures for supporting seasonal plants.	Figure 18 2023
Sign "Art"	Promotion of facility.	A metal sign with "Art" in laser-cut lettering over a metal screen was added to the exterior wall in 2019. Non-contributing.	Figure 18 2023
LOWER LEVEL		SOUTH FAÇADE	
Windows Natatorium	Removed due to new window design necessitated by tornado damage	Original openings re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a more vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and taller windowpanes on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 13 2023 Figure 26 2023 Figure 41 2023 Figure 14 1964 Figure 27 1964
Fences Terrace Outdoor area	Repurposed as a community/educational garden space.	Originally, a chain link fence surrounded a concrete pad, and even if replaced, sight lines towards the south end of the pool were free of obstruction. Around 2000, the terrace area was enclosed when metal and wood fences were installed, along with a gate. The lower portion of the wall of windows is somewhat blocked from view. Non-contributing temporary garden structures like raised planting boxes, a hoop, trellis, pergola, and canvas canopy were added to the space.	Figure 13 2023 Figure 14 1964
LOWER LEVEL		EAST FAÇADE	
Windows East Entrance Exercise Room	Replaced due to revised window design necessitated by tornado damage	Original openings re-utilized but windowpanes and framing are wider and divided with a horizontal emphasis. Originally, a glass wall in a more vertical configuration with square windowpanes on the bottom and taller windowpanes on top. Changes to the windows did not negatively impact the original design concept of bringing natural light into the space and creating open sight lines. Replaced in 2008 using aluminum-clad, tinted windows in sympathetic fenestration but with wider, more horizontal windowpanes.	Figure 16 2023 Figure 15 1964
Stairs and Ramp East Entrance	Handicapped accessibility; ADA compliance	Concrete stairs rebuilt in 2015. There are metal handrails along the sides of the wide stairs, which are now aligned toward the south instead of the east. A concrete handicapped accessibility ramp was built next to the foundation of terrace.	Photo 11 2023
Loading Dock East Entrance	Loading dock for unloading delivery trucks	A metal fence with aluminum screening was installed to partition off this area. Given the height of the dock on the east side of the terrace, a metal safety fence with a swinging door prevents non-staff from entering the loading dock space on the northeast corner of the terrace.	Figure 16 2023

Original Feature	Reason for Change	Modifications	Photographs
LOWER LEVEL			EAST FAÇADE
Decorative Blocks for screen and walls Terrace Outdoor area	Removed due to deterioration of the mortar or the blocks themselves.	Original decorative concrete blocks created half-walls for "Teen Terrace" outside the East Entrance. An architectural accent matching the west façade screening, the L-shaped row of decorative concrete blocks provided a protective safety barrier for the raised platform of the terrace. Replaced with metal fencing covered with aluminum screening, the footprint for the terrace remains the same.	Figure 16 2023 Figure 15 1964
Sign "Play"	Promotion of facility	A metal sign with "Play" in laser-cut lettering over a metal screen was added to the exterior wall in 2019.	Figure 16 2023

TABLE TWO: ALTERATIONS – INTERIOR

Original Function	Current Function	Modifications	Photographs
UPPER LEVEL – CENTER			
Reception Desk	Staff office space	Enclosed half-walls and openings rebuilt for security and privacy. Relocated to lower-level Lobby near east entrance.	Figure 21 2023 Figure 22 c. 1964 Figure 23 c. 1964
Lobby and Lounge	Lobby and Lounge	Appearance changed when walls for administrative offices were enclosed and original paint colors used for accents were changed from pumpkin orange, turquoise, aqua, yellow, brown, gold, and olive green to a uniform neutral tone of white or gray. The use of different colored panels on the bottom of the open Reception Desk served as a focal point to draw the visitor's attention to staff. The Modern Movement-type furnishings like the molded plastic chairs designed by Herman Miller were replaced.	Figure 20 2023 Figure 21 2023 Figure 19 c. 1964 Figure 22 c. 1964
Main Staircase between levels	Main Staircase between levels	Open risers of original staircase enclosed and rebuilt as concrete stairs with terrazzo flooring on steps and landing.	Figure 28 2023 Figure 39 2023
Social Hall Storage Closet	Social Hall Storage Closet	Small closet built in southeast corner of room.	Figure 24 2023
UPPER LEVEL – NORTH			
Elevator non-extant	Elevator	Single car elevator installed next to main staircase on lower level and around the corner from the north hallway off the lobby in former Shop area; meets ADA accessibility requirements	Figure 29 2023
Shop and Storage Room	Elevator, Shop and Storage Room	The Elevator shaft was placed in an opening next to the main stairwell with the car opening on the south wall of the Shop. The footprint remains the same for the Shop and Storage Room. A utility sink was added to the northeast corner of the Shop.	No images
Dressing Rooms	Staff offices	No change to footprint, walls, or doors; vinyl plank tiles on concrete floor	No image
Arts and Craft Room, Work Room, and Storage Room	Arts and Craft Room, Work Room, and Storage Room	Windows on north wall replaced but no changes to footprint, walls, doors, flooring, or portions of ceiling tiles. Used as classroom and studio space by artists who painted colorful images on cabinet doors.	Figure 31
Darkroom	Staff office	Darkroom entrance modified with removal of portion of L-shaped wall, which damaged the original terrazzo floor	Photo 13
UPPER LEVEL - SOUTH			
Administrative Offices	Administrative Offices	Originally, the south Lobby wall and north Lounge wall had openings which connected the Reception Desk area to the Administrative Offices. These openings in the walls were removed and one secure metal door provided access to the space. No changes were made to interior walls dividing office spaces, until a door was built on the south side to connect with the former Conference Room. Vinyl plank tiling replaced the original 12"-square tile,	Figure 21 2023 Figure 22 2023 Figure 23 c. 1964
Conference Room	Administrative Offices	Door to the Conference Room on the west side of South Hallway removed and replaced with door on north side of room connecting to the Administrative Offices. From this point on the wall towards the Lobby is one metal security door	Figure 32 2023 Figure 34 c. 1964

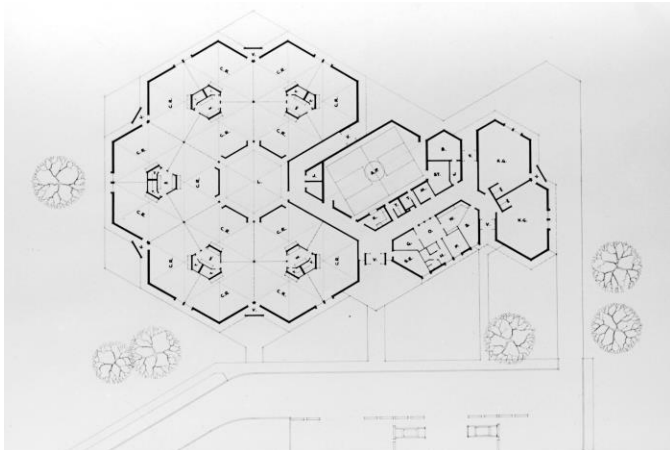
Original Function	Current Function	Modifications	Photographs
UPPER LEVEL - SOUTH			
Meeting Rooms A	Meeting Rooms A	Windows on west wall replaced and light-filtering pull-down window screens added; No changes to footprint.	Photo 14 2023
Kitchen	Kitchen	Appliances updated; No changes to footprint.	Figure 35 2023
Meeting Room B	Meeting Room B	Windows on south wall replaced and light-filtering pull-down window screens added; No changes to footprint.	Photo 15 2023
Pool Observation Balcony	Pool Observation Balcony	Protective safety barrier or railing replaced with to iron railing.	Figure 26 2023 Figure 42 2023 Figure 27 c. 1960s
LOWER LEVEL – SOUTH			
Pool Walls Acoustical Panels	Pool Walls Acoustical panels	Sound proofing panels added to upper walls, replacing original acoustical panels in checkerboard pattern and improved natural lighting with glass replacing white and black plastic closures between roof T-beams.	Figure 41 2023 Figure 42 2023
Pool deck and locker room flooring	Pool deck and locker room flooring	Dex-O-Tex floor coating re-coated with sympathetic material as part of maintenance of deck and locker room floors.	Figure 42 2023 Figure 43 2023
Pool deck Restrooms, Men's and Women's	Pool deck Restroom single-use uni-sex restroom and shower	Remodeled to meet ADA accessibility standards and improve equity and inclusion policies. A shower with seat, sink, toilet, safety hand bars, and changing table. New ceramic tile covers walls and Dex-O-Tex type floor coating remains.	Photo 17 2023
Pool Walls – No Artwork on Display	Pool Walls - Artwork on Display	Original glass artwork, entitled "Dancing Water," with twenty-two vertical panels placed in a sequential horizontal pattern on the upper east wall. Added as an Art in Public Buildings project.	Figure 26 2023
LOWER LEVEL – CENTER			
Lobby	Reception Desk in Lobby	Reception counter relocated from upper-level Lobby when additional space was needed for Administrative Offices and because of increased patron traffic at the East Entrance. Lobby space was previously used for smaller tables, vending machines, and racks of informational brochures.	Figure 36 2023
Game Room (non-extant)	Exercise Room	Glass walls subdivided the former Game Room space to create space for fitness equipment. Open area along west wall unchanged with access to staff offices on west wall and door to pool on south wall.; Reception counter added circa 2010	Figure 37 2023 Figure 38 c. 1964
Restrooms, Men's and Women's	Restrooms, single-use and uni-sex	No change to footprint. Remodeled to meet ADA accessibility standards and improve equity and inclusion policies. New sink, toilet, safety hand bars, ceramic tile covers walls, and rectangular floor tile.	Figure 40 2023
LOWER LEVEL – NORTH			
Gymnasium	Gymnasium	Sound proofing panels added to upper walls, replacing original acoustical panels in checkerboard pattern and improved natural lighting with glass replacing white and black plastic closures between roof T-beams.	Figure 45 2023
Exercise Room (non-extant)	Storage	No changes to footprint, walls, or ceiling; maple wood flooring with cushioning pads removed.	Photo 21
Handball courts (non-extant)	Storage	No changes to footprint; maple wood flooring with cushioning pads removed and wall covering changed to sheetrock.	Photo 22 Photo 23
Rifle Range (non-extant)	Weight room	No changes to footprint, walls, doors, or ceiling but carpet instead of 12" square vinyl tiles. No information available regarding interior furnishing when room functioned as a rifle range.	Figure 46 2023

APPENDIX B:

Architect Roland C. Wehner's Modular Design Projects

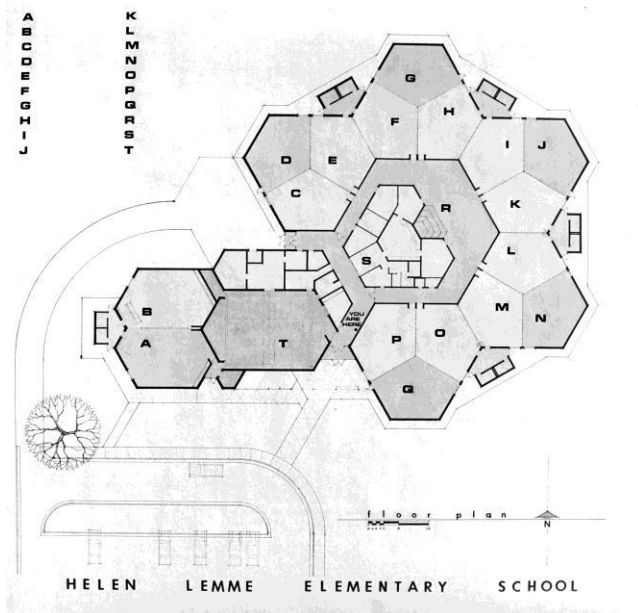
ERNEST HORN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Iowa City Community School District – 1968 design
4' triangular module



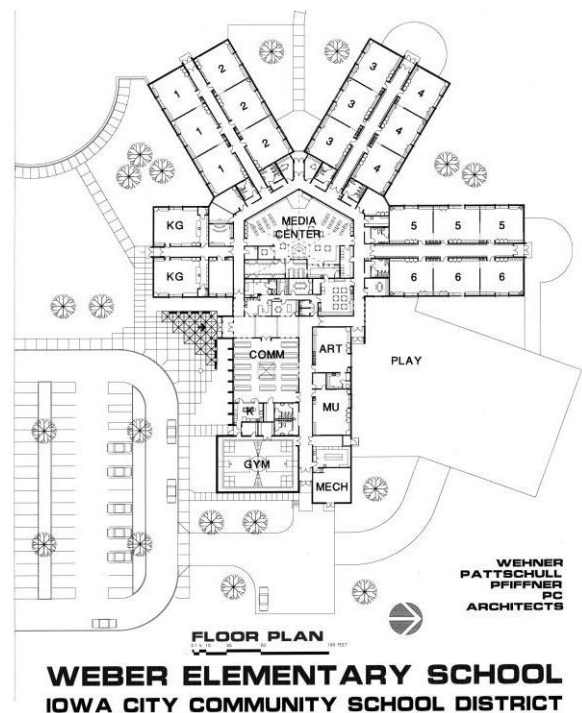
HELEN LEMME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Iowa City Community School District 1969 – design
4' triangular module



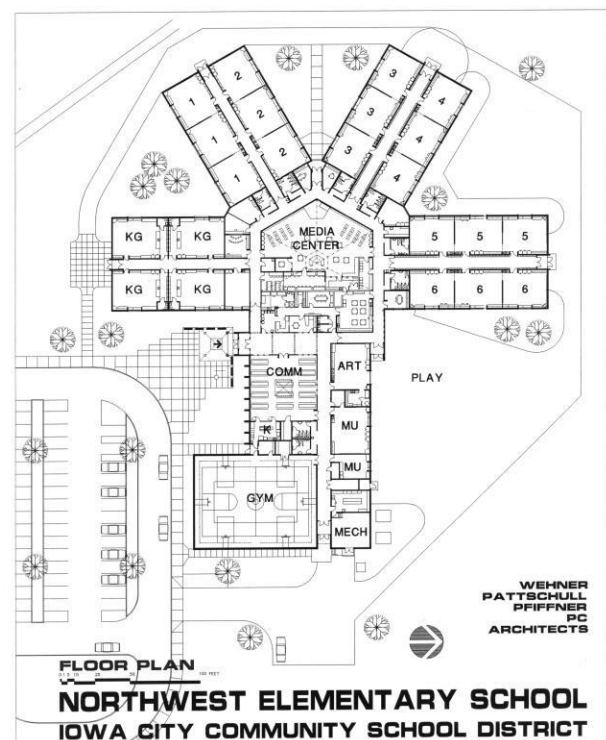
IRVING WEBER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Iowa City Community School District – 1992 design
4' triangular module at core, 4' square module at wings

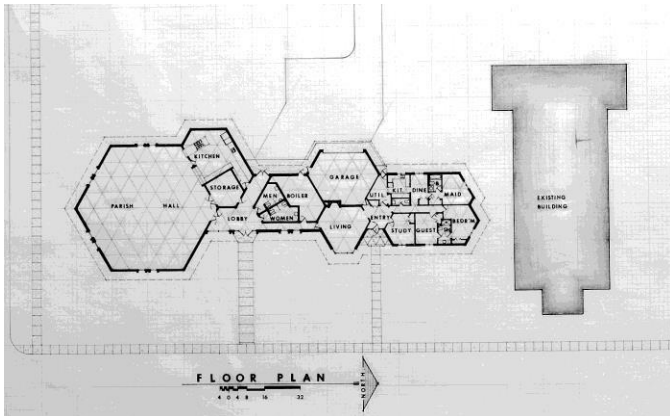


KATE WICKHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

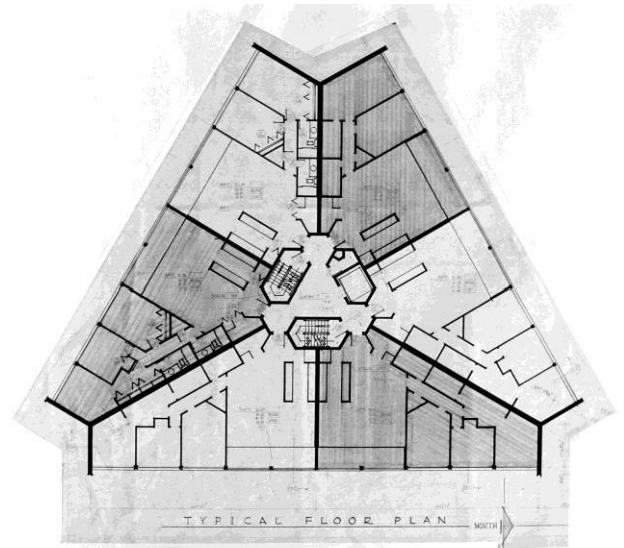
Iowa City Community School District – 1995 design
4' triangular module at core, 4' square module at wings



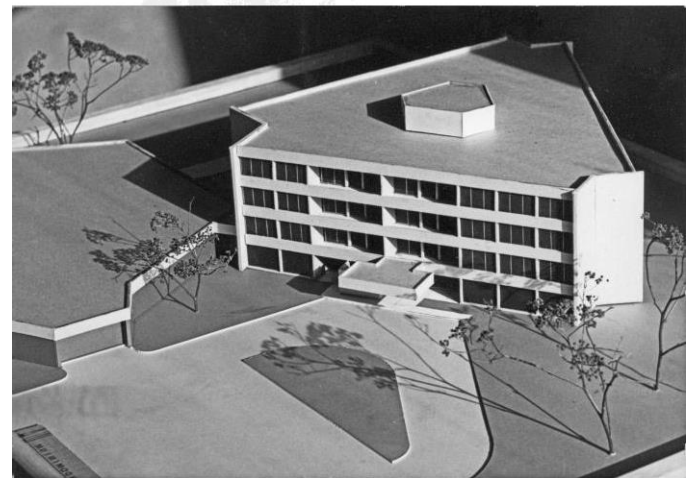
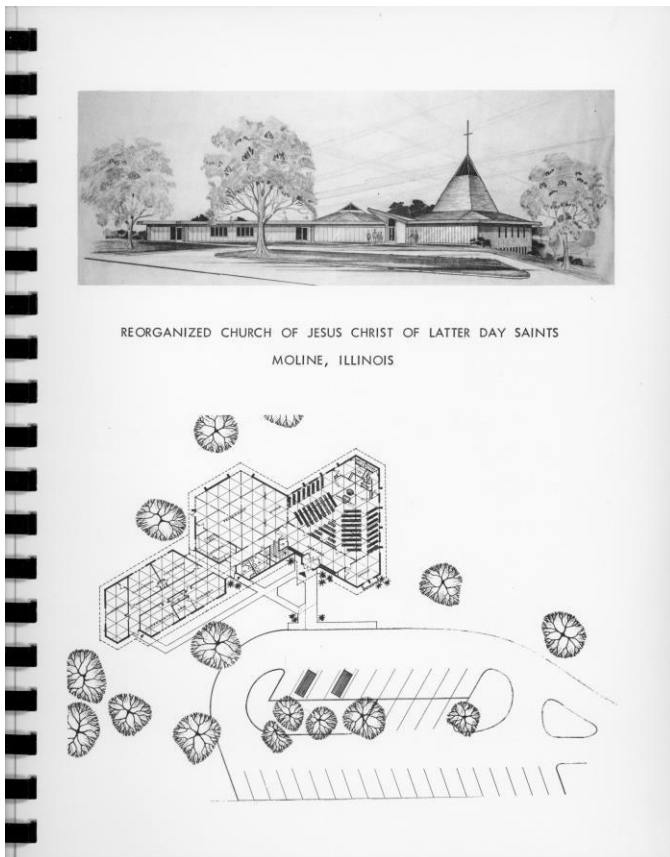
SAINT PATRICKS RECTORY & PARISH HALL
Marengo, Iowa – 1970 design
4' triangular module



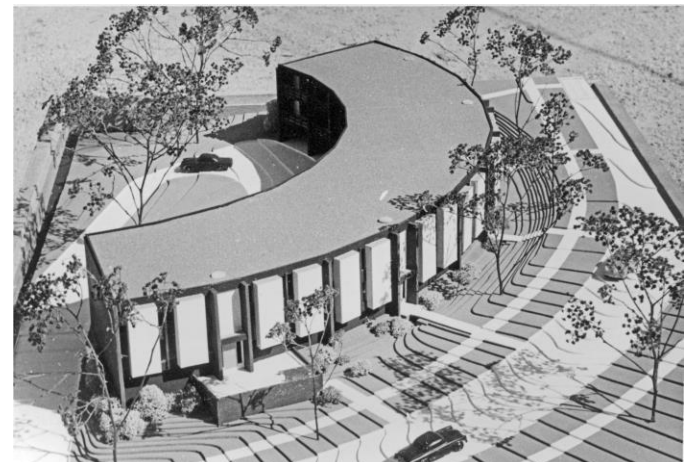
QUAIL CREEK CONDOMINIUM
North Liberty, Iowa – 1972 design
4' triangular module at core, 4' square module at perimeter



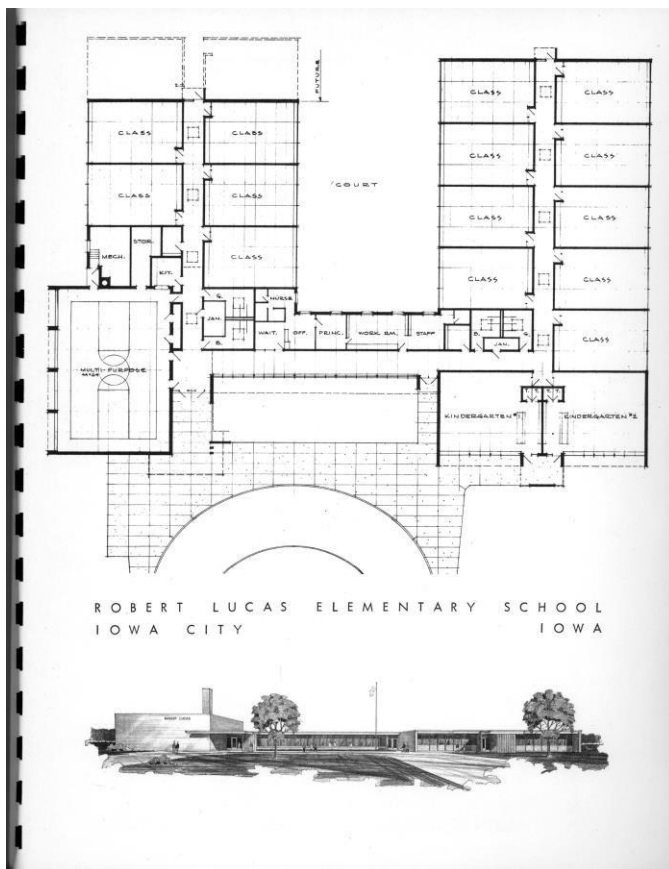
RLDS CHURCH –
Moline, Illinois – 1965 design
4' triangular module



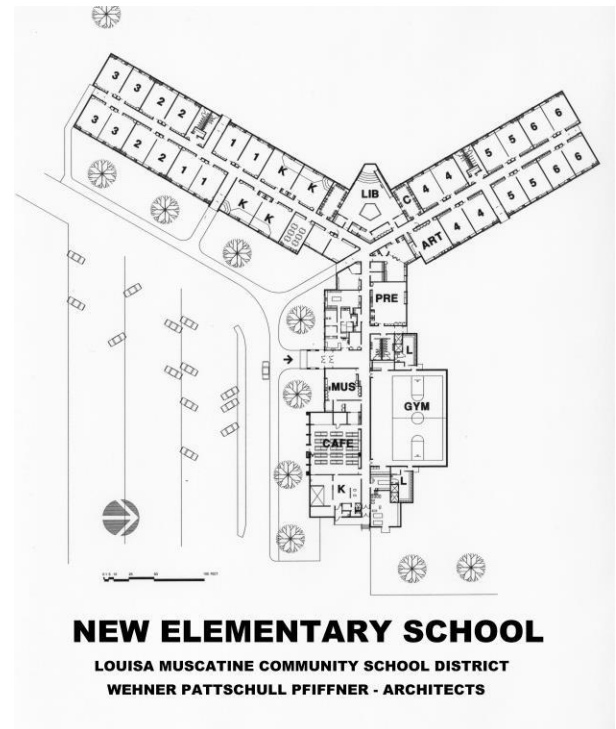
HEMICYCLE APARTMENTS
Crest Street, Iowa City, Iowa – 1965 design
Geometric/modular solution for challenging site



ROBERT LUCAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Iowa City Community School District 1961 – design
4' square module



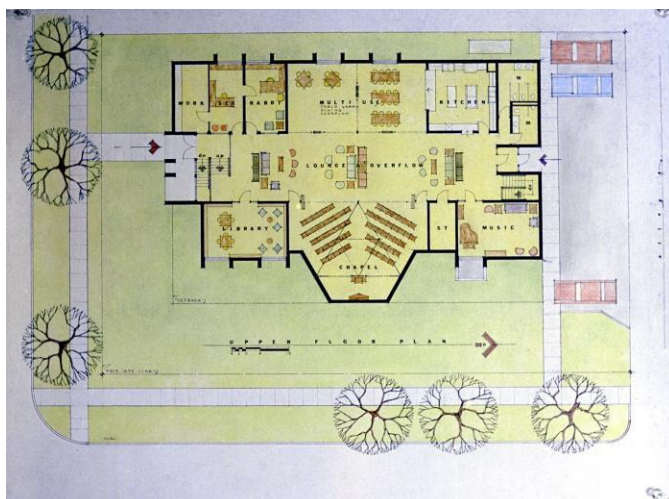
LOUISA-MUSCATINE ELEM. SCHOOL
Rural Letts, Iowa 1991 – design
triangular core, 4' square module at wings



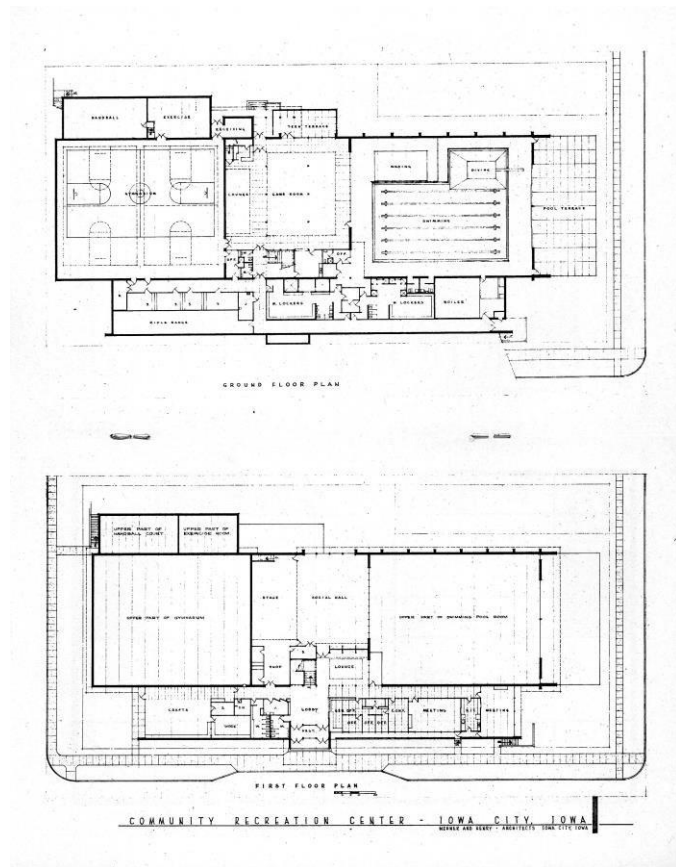
MIDDLE SCHOOL - DEWITT, IOWA
Central Community School District 1989 – design
4' square module



HILLEL HOUSE - STUDENT CENTER
Iowa City, Iowa – 1967 – design
4' square module - triangular module at chapel



COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER
Iowa City, Iowa – 1962 design
4' module, dictated by precast concrete structure



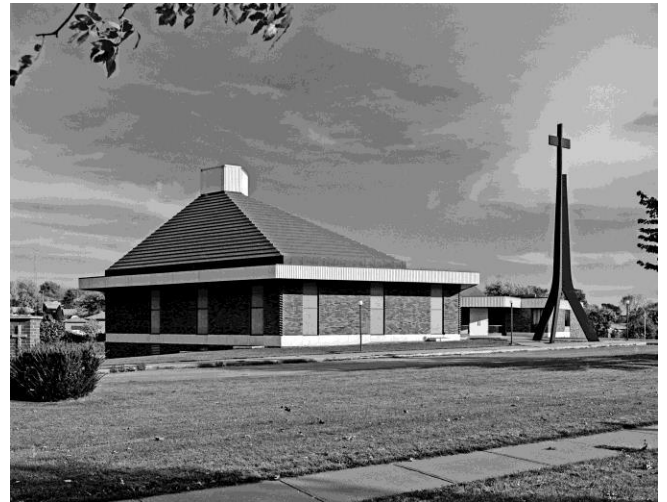
AMERICAN LEGION BUILDING
Lone Tree, Iowa – 1977 design
Hexagonal Floor Plan



OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Iowa City, Iowa – 1967 design

Hexagonal-shaped Sanctuary emphasizes “communal gathering” seating arrangement; Bermuda style terne metal roofing.



CLAY & GRETCHEN NARSHBARGER HOUSE

River Heights, Iowa City, Iowa – 1957 design

First house showing significant influence of Wright's Usonian style: flat roof, wide overhangs, single story no basement slab-on-grade, ribbon and casement windows, natural redwood, 120-degree corner at exterior walls for living room and bedroom.



APPENDIX C: Architect Roland C. Wehner's Projects Utilizing Precast Concrete Structural Elements

Key: Numbers represent first two digits as the year; second two digits as the project's number within that year. Original documents of all projects are in the Pattschull Collection housed at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

6307 Community Recreation Center, Iowa City, Iowa

Structural Floors: 4'-0" width precast concrete cored flat slabs

Structural Roofs: 8'-0" width, 36" depth, precast concrete single-tee beams. extend

Beams extend beyond exterior wall to provide pleasing detail; translucent plastic infill

Panels between the single-tee stems provide diffused light to adjacent interior space

6501 Iowa Book & Supply, downtown Iowa City, Iowa

Custom designed inverted U shape precast concrete door and window canopies

6502 RLDS Church, Moline, Illinois

Structural Floors: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs

6505 United Methodist Church Educational Wing, Wapello, Iowa

Structural Floors: precast concrete beams – left exposed at ceiling below

Structural Roofs: precast concrete beams – exposed, extended beyond exterior wall

6618 Lakeside Elementary School, Solon, Iowa

Precast Concrete Columns & Roof Beams, precast concrete filler and fascia panels

6704 First Christian Church, downtown Iowa City, Iowa

Structural Floors: precast concrete double-tee beams, left exposed at ceiling below

6706 Fire Station #1, Coralville, Iowa

Structural Floors: precast concrete double-tee beams, left exposed at ceiling below

Structural Roof: precast concrete double-tee beams, left exposed and extended beyond

The exterior wall to add detail and visual relief from an otherwise plain structure

6808 Hillel House – Jewish Student Center, Iowa City, Iowa

Structural Floors: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs, exposed as ceiling below

Structural Roofs: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs, exposed as ceiling below

7115 Highlander Inn, Iowa City, Iowa

Structural Floors: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs, exposed as ceiling below

Structural Roofs: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs, exposed as ceiling below

7207 Quail Creek Condominium, North Liberty, Iowa

Structural Floors & Roofs: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs

7802 Ecumenical Towers (Senior Housing) Iowa City, Iowa

Structural Floors & Roofs: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs

7838 Johnson County Jail II, Iowa City Iowa

Structural Floors & Roofs: 4'-0" width prestressed concrete cored flat slabs

8521 Coralville Indoor Swimming Pool, Coralville, Iowa

Roof Structure: precast concrete double-tee beams, left exposed at pool ceiling

Passive Solar Collector: precast concrete double-tee beams, turned upright to serve as the South wall of the pool area, and a component of the passive solar collector

APPENDIX D: Architect Roland C. Wehner's Notable Projects in the Iowa City Area

(The inventory of all commissions, consisting of The Pattschull Collection, includes Wehner projects located in Ames, Atlantic, Burlington, Cedar Rapids, DeWitt, Fort Madison, Wapello, Washington, West Liberty, Williamsburg, and numerous other Iowa communities.)

New Schools (ICCSd)

6104 Robert Lucas Elementary School
Additions 6701, 7205, 7418
6413 Liberty Township Elementary School (Hills)
6802 Ernest Horn Elementary School (University Heights)
Addition 7605
6813 Helen Lemme Elementary School
Addition 7407
9215 Irving Weber Elementary School
9431 Kate Wickham Elementary School
8511 Regina Elementary School

School Additions/Alterations (ICCSd)

6102, 8505 Mark Twain Elementary School
6103 Roosevelt Elementary School
6603, 8606 Hoover Elementary School
6811, 8608 Kirkwood Elementary School (Coralville)
6604, 6812, 8504, 9003, 9408 Penn Elementary School (North Liberty)
8217 City High Gymnasium
8218 West High Gymnasium
8503, 9430 West High School Classrooms
8714 Lincoln Elementary School
9004 Shimek Elementary School
9106 Central Elementary School Media Center (Coralville)
9216 Grant Wood Elementary School

Municipal/Governmental

5904 City of Iowa City Police & Fire Station
6017 City of Iowa City Civic Center (Administration Facility)
6307 City of Iowa City Recreation Center (Robert Lee)
6706 Coralville Fire Station (#1)
7015 Coralville Recreation Center
7108 City of Iowa City Southeast Fire Station
7801 Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center
7838 Johnson County Jail
8343 Coralville Fire Station (#2)
8415 Coralville Police Station
8521 Coralville Recreation Center Indoor Swimming Pool

Religious

5801 Wesley House – Methodist Student Center
6002 Trinity Christian Reformed Church
6704 First Christian Church (Sanctuary)
6710 Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (Sanctuary)
6808 Hillel House Jewish Student Center

7549 Coralville Methodist Church Addition
8621 Newman Catholic Student Center

Multi-Family Residential

6514 Hemicycle Apartments
7207 Quail Creek Condominium (North Liberty)
7802 Ecumenical Towers Senior Housing
8001 Atrium Village Senior Housing (Hills)

Single Family Residential

5606 Orris Residence
5606 Jim Swaner Residence
5701 Gelman Residence
5703 Davis Residence
5704 Harshbarger Residence
5800 Wehner Residence
5901 Petrick Residence
5903 Anderson Residence
5907 Holden Residence (Williamsburg)
6004 Priestersbach Residence
6005 Bush Residence
6107 Waite Residence
6112 Rigler Residence
6208 Doderer Residence
6513 Brown Residence
6705 Gause Residence
6707 Krebs Residence
6907 Jones Cottage

Miscellaneous

6012 Federal Land Bank
6305 Greenwood Acres Nursing Home
6501 Iowa Book & Supply Co
7115 Highlander Inn
7941 University of Iowa Law Library (Associate Architect)
8103 Hills Bank (Gilbert ST Branch)
8418 Hills Bank North Liberty Branch

Key

Numbers represent first two digits as the year; second two digits as the project's number within that year. Original documents of all projects are in The Pattschull Collection housed at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State

PHOTOS



Photo 01: Sidewalk view of Gilbert Street main entrance from south, looking north. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.



Photo 02: Main Entrance on Gilbert Street, view from west, looking east. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 03: Sidewalk view of accessible ramp and front steps at the Main Entrance on Gilbert Street from north, looking south. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 04: Sidewalk view of building showing south community garden, view from corner of Gilbert Street (at left) and Burlington Street (at right), looking northeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.



Photo 05: Lower level entrance view from east parking lot looking northwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 06: Parking lot view from northeast corner, view from East College Street bridge over Ralston Creek looking south-southwest. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.



Photo 07: East College Street edible classroom/educational garden, view from north, looking south-southeast. Jan Olive Full photo, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 08: View of Gilbert Street Lounge from west, looking east towards Social Hall. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 24, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 09: View of Gilbert Street Lounge from east, looking southeast toward pool and offices. Jill Fishbaugh photo, April 3, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 10: Social Hall, from west wall, looking east towards frosted glass entrance doors and two wooden doors to a storage room. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 11: Emergency Exit staircase leading from the northeast corner of the upper-level Social Hall to a door in the northwest corner of the lower-level lobby, directly next to the Emergency Exit doors at the east entrance. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 12: View of main staircase from lower level, looking upwards towards the Lounge area on the other side of the metal railing. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 13: The darkroom on the west side of the North Hallway became a staff office and the original terrazzo flooring was damaged when wall blocking light at the entrance to the room was torn down, Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 14: Meeting Room A, view from corridor from east, looking west. March 17, 2023, Jill Fishbaugh photo.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 15: Meeting Room B, view from corridor from north, looking south. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 16: Both Meeting Room B and the Kitchen have Emergency Exit doors leading to a back hallway, where an exterior Emergency Exit door opens to the narrow terrace next to windows on the west side of the building. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 17: View of the wading pool from southeast corner looking northwest; note the pool observation area from windows on the north wall, upper-level Social Hall, and Observation Balcony in far upper left corner. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 18: View of women's locker room and showers from south, looking north. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 19: View of men's locker room from east, looking west. Mark Cannon photo, March 28, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 20: View of lower-level North Hallway corridor behind the gymnasium. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 21, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 21: Observation Port on upper west wall of gymnasium is accessible to spectators who want to view activities in the gymnasium from on the upper-level North Hallway. Mary Bennett photo, October 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 22: View from west, looking southeast in the former Exercise room, now a storage area. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Photo 23: View from inside the former Exercise Room, looking north to the stairs and former Handball Court entrance, now a storage area. March 17, 2023, Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

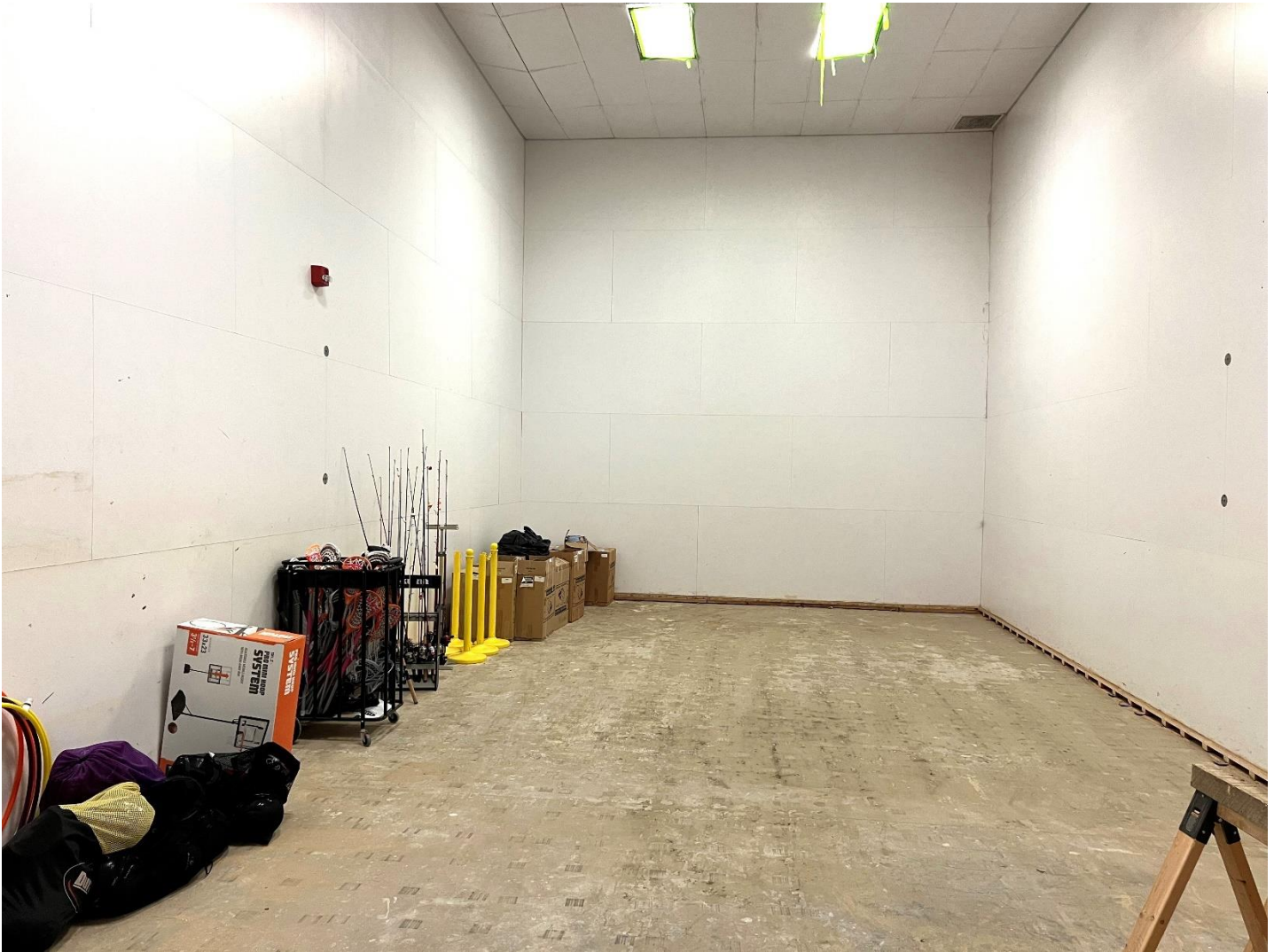


Photo 24: View from south, looking north at the former Handball Court, now a storage area. Jill Fishbaugh photo, March 17, 2023.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION EVALUATION REPORT FORM

As a participant in the Certified Local Government Program (CLG), the Historic Preservation Commission is required to review and comment on proposed National Register nominations of properties within its jurisdiction. The State is required to provide the CLG with a 60-day period for the review prior to a State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) meeting. This form must be received by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) five days in advance of the State Nomination Review Committee (SNRC) meeting. Send digital copies of completed forms to nationalregister@iowaeda.com.

(Please print clearly)

Historic Property Name: Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Address: 220 S. Gilbert Street, Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Certified Local Government Name: Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission

Date of public meeting for nomination review: May 22, 2024

Applicable Criteria: (Please Check the Appropriate Box)

☒ Criterion A (Historical Events)

☐ Criterion B (Important Person)

☒ Criterion C (Architecture)

☐ Criterion D (Archaeological)

Please check the following box that is appropriate to the nomination (Please print clearly).

☒ The Commission recommends that the property should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

☐ The Commission recommends that the property should not be listed in the National Register for the following reasons: _____

☐ The Commission chooses not to make a recommendation on this nomination for the following reasons: _____

☒ The Commission would like to make the following recommendations regarding the nomination: (use additional sheets if necessary): see attachment

Official Signatures Required Below

Historic Review Board Chair or Representative

Print Name: JORDAN SELLER-GREN

Signature: [Signature]

Approved ☒ Not Approved ☐

Chief Elected Official

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

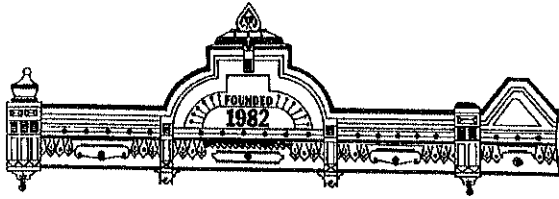
Approved ☐ Not Approved ☐

Professional Evaluation

Print Name: Jessica Bristow

Signature: [Signature]

Approved ☒ Not Approved ☐



Iowa City
Historic Preservation Commission
City Hall, 410 E Washington Street, Iowa City, IA, 52240

Memorandum

Date: May 28, 2024

To: State Nomination Review Committee

From: Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, Jordan Sellergren, Commission Chair

Re: 220 South Gilbert Street, Robert A. Lee Recreation Center nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

The Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission conducted a public meeting to discuss the National Register Nomination for the Iowa City Community Recreation Center, known locally as the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, at the regular May meeting.

By a vote of 8-0, the Commission found the Iowa City Community Recreation Center at 220 South Gilbert Street eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic places in Criterion Category A and C at the local level and meets the criteria for both significance and integrity.

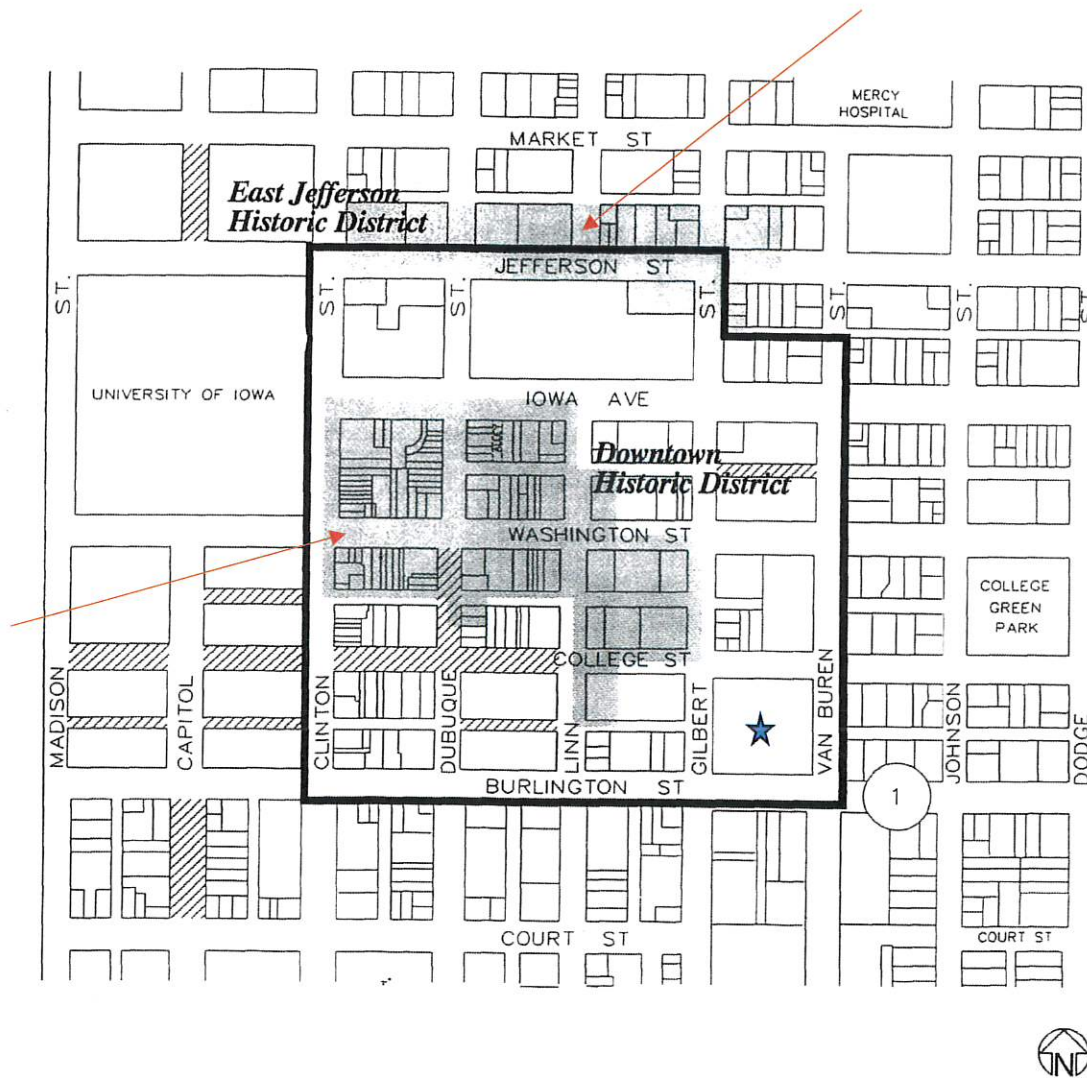
The Commission would like to include the following comments:

We would ask that the State Nomination Review Committee carefully evaluate the Modernist elements of the design to determine if the building has enough integrity in this regard to remain eligible under Criterion C.

Note that the caption for map 4 implies that the 2001 study found a historic district that included the Recreation Center. This would be a misinterpretation of the map from the study where the district areas are shaded, not outlined. Additional documentation to clarify this point is attached to this memo.

In 2001, Marlys Svendsen surveyed the Iowa City Central business district. She found two potential historic districts. The study map is shown below with her caption above it. Page 18 of "Survey and Evaluation of the Central Business District, Iowa City, Iowa" by Maryls Svendsen, 2001:

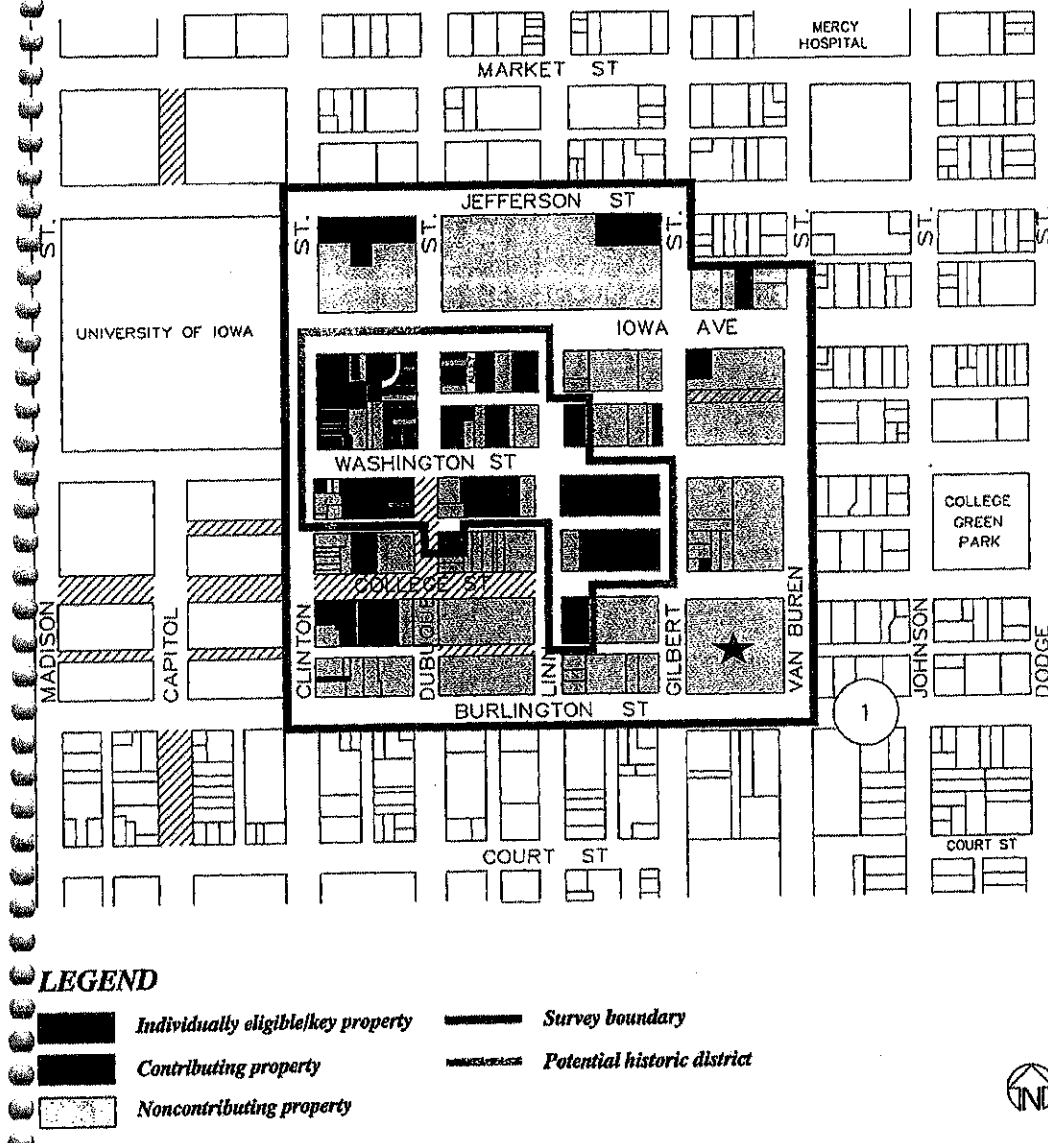
Figure 2: Map of Iowa City showing survey boundaries for potential Downtown Historic District and East Jefferson Street Historic District (shaded)



The black outline is the boundary for the 2001 study area. The gray shading, marked with arrows in red, are the two potential districts. Svendsen note that the boundaries are shaded in her caption. Note that the block between Gilbert and Van Buren and College and Burlington (marked here with a blue star added to the image) is not shown in the gray historic district boundary.

As a part of this study, Svendsen also marked individually eligible buildings. Page 19 of "Survey and Evaluation of the Central Business District, Iowa City, Iowa" by Marlys Svendsen, 2001:

Figure 3: Map of Central Business District Survey Area showing individual buildings potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Note that this same block does not include any individually eligible properties. The solid black survey boundary is also noted here and the downtown district is shown with a less solid boundary. In 2001, the RAL Rec Center was not yet 50 years old, the age by which most properties are considered historic and potentially eligible. Again, we have added a blue star to the image to show the location.

Page 36 of the current National Register Nomination for the RAL Recreation Center includes a copy of the map that Marlys included in her study (see below). However, in this reproduction, the caption appears to say that the potential historic district boundary is the black line since the caption states the boundary(ies) "including the block where the Iowa City Recreation Century is located..." As in the original study, the black outline is the area Marlys Svendsen studied in 2001. The grayed areas are the potential districts (both now NR listed but with slightly different boundaries). The block with the RAL Recreation Center is not in either boundary (marked here with blue star added to the image). Note that the black rectangle mention in the caption in parentheses has not been added to the map.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900

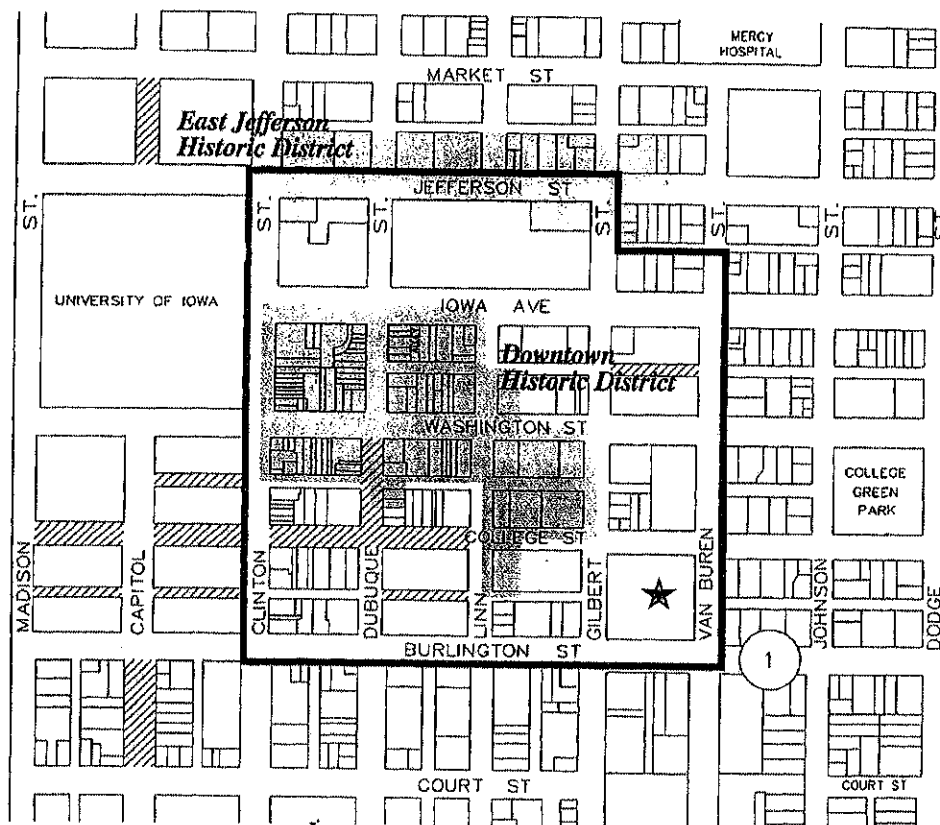
OMB No. 1024-0018

Iowa City Community Recreation Center

Johnson County, Iowa

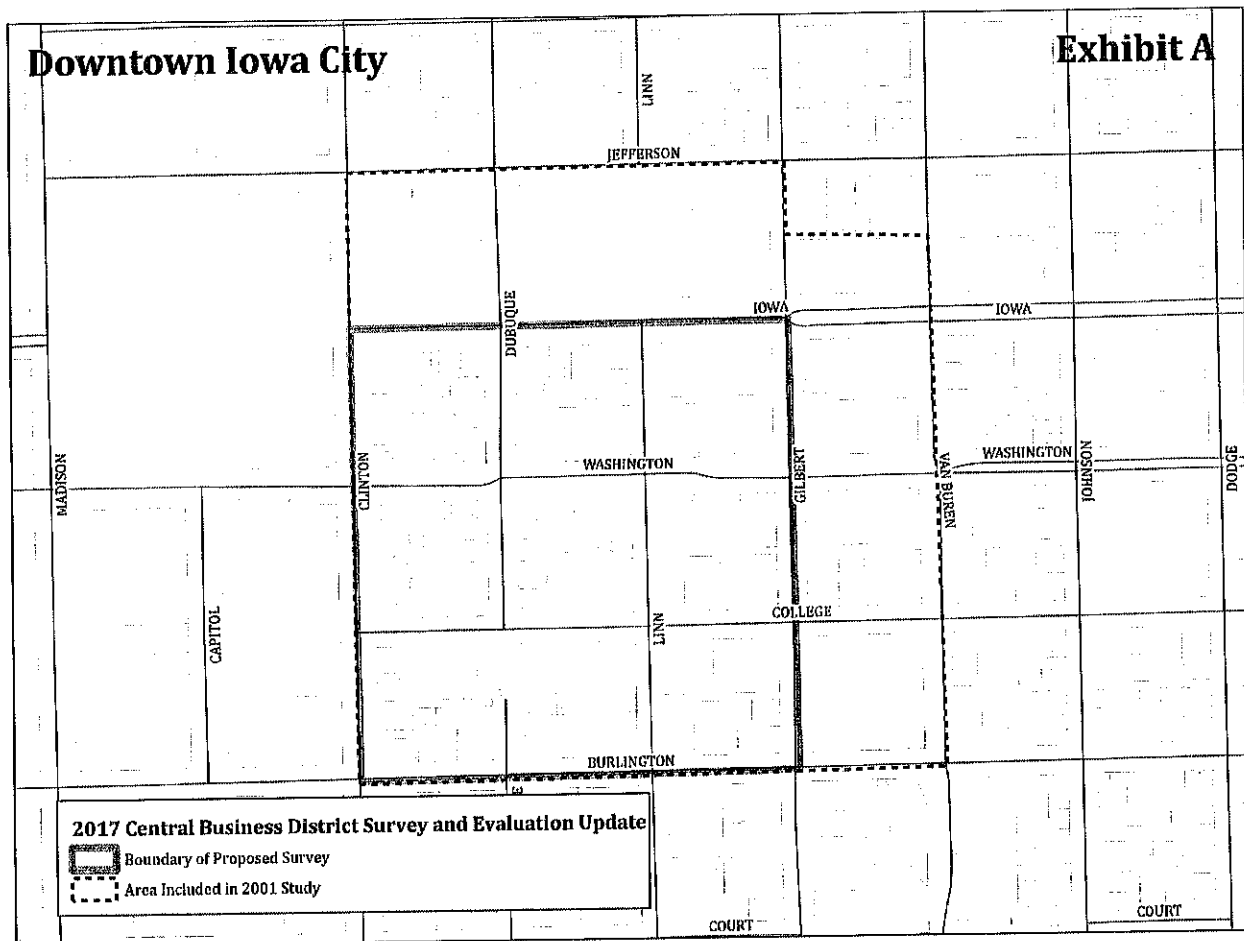
Name of Property

County and State

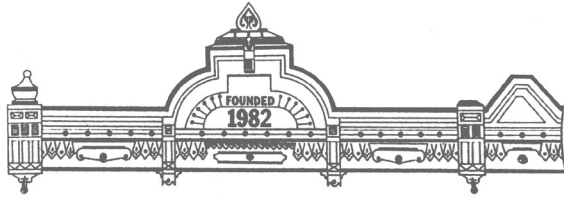


Map 4: Map of Iowa City showing survey boundaries for potential Downtown Historic District, including the block where the Iowa City Recreation Center is located north of Burlington Street, between Gilbert and Van Buren Streets. (A black rectangle added to the original map represents the Iowa City Recreation Center.) Svendsen, Marlys A., *Survey and Evaluation of Central Business District, Iowa City, Iowa*. HABD #52-040), 2001.

For her 2018 study of the Iowa City Central Business District, Alexa McDowell included the area proposed by the city. The map below was included in the request for proposals for the study update. The map includes Svendsen's original 2001 Study boundary (dashed) and the new study boundary (solid). The reason for the reduction in study area is that the Jefferson Street Historic District along the north side of the study was already listed in the National Register and the remaining area was either University owned, no longer had historic buildings, or at the time of the RFP were considered to have poor integrity and outside a potential period of significance for Iowa City's Downtown District.



Both Svendsen and McDowell discuss the Civic Corridor in their studies. The Civic Corridor consisted of the non-extant City Hall location at the NW corner of Linn and Washington, the Old Post Office (senior Center), and the Carnegie Library at the SE corner of Linn and College, as well as the nearby fraternal Hall. The new civic corridor including the new police and fire station, the new City Hall and the RAL are not included in the Civic Corridor discussion. While the final Nomination for the Iowa City Downtown Historic District did include the urban renewal changes from the 1970s, the new civic buildings, on the east side of Gilbert Street were not included in the district boundary and were not discussed as part of the process.



Iowa City
Historic Preservation Commission
City Hall, 410 E Washington Street, Iowa City, IA. 52240

Memorandum

Date: May 15, 2024
To: Historic Preservation Commission
From: Jessica Bristow, Historic Preservation Planner
Re: 220 South Gilbert Street, Robert A. Lee Recreation Center nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The State Nominations Review Committee will consider the property during their June 14, 2024 meeting. As a participant in the Certified Local Government Program, the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission is required to review the nomination and comment on the attached form. The Commission should determine whether the nominated property meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance and integrity. The National Park Service [Bulletin 15](#) provides additional information regarding the criteria for evaluation.

The Nomination finds that the property is eligible for listing on the National Register in two Criteria categories:

Criterion A: Event. A property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

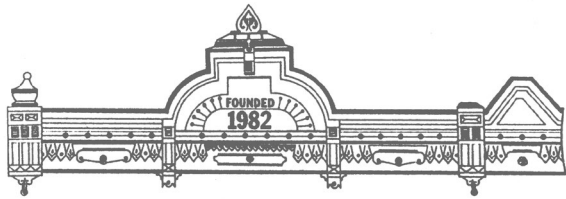
Criterion C: A property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic value

Building Description (Section 7 of the Nomination):

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center is a two-level, mostly rectangular building built as one component of a new civic corridor created in the 1960s which also includes the City Hall, Police Station and Fire Station located along south Gilbert Street, roughly a block east of the location of the historic City Hall (nonextant) and extending south to the recreation center location. The buildings, including the Recreation Center, were built in a Modern Movement architectural style. Local architect, Roland C. Wehner, designed the Recreation Center “in 1962 using organic design principles with an emphasis on functionalism, minimalist forms, and the use of new materials and innovative construction techniques,” as stated in the nomination (p.3).

The nomination describes the exterior and interior of the building, particularly highlighting the stylistic elements. The elements of the building that contribute to a significance under Criterion C are summarized,

Aspects of the Modern Movement employed by the architect include modular design based on standard sizes of available construction material and building fabrication using innovative technologies such as precast, prestressed concrete



T-beams and slabs; concrete block walls covered in brick or plaster; and durable industrial and synthetic materials for flooring and finishes. Prominent Modern Movement design elements are incorporated into the complex interior, which showcased vaulted ceilings and exposed roof beams, while the extensive use of exterior and interior glass walls contributes to the sense of spaciousness and provide clear views of the outside, reducing the division of interior and exterior spaces. Indirect lighting from clerestory windows placed between the T-beams in the roof connects the outdoors to the indoors, especially in the pool area and gymnasium on the lower level but also on the upper level where main entrance, lobby, lounge, and social hall spaces were designed to welcome visitors to the building. During the daytime, natural light fills the interior of nearly every room on both levels, unifying the various interior spaces (p. 9).

Properties that are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places must have sufficient integrity to convey its significance. In this case, since the property is eligible in Criterion C, there must be sufficient integrity related to is Modern Movement Style. Page 19 of the Nomination lists the seven aspects of integrity evaluated for a Nomination and includes an evaluation of the building in each area. The Nomination states that the building has good or excellent integrity in all 7 aspects, meaning that it has enough integrity to convey its significance.

Building Significance (Section 8 of the Nomination)

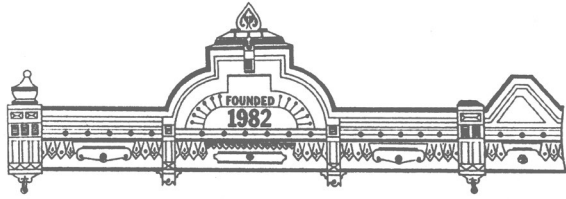
Each building nominated to the National Register has a period of significance, or a length of time in which the building was associated with the events or characteristics which qualify it for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. For the Iowa City Recreation Center, since the building is still in use for its original purpose and for which it is eligible, the period of significance extends from the year it was constructed, 1964, to 1974, which is 50 years ago (a cut-off age for something to be “historic”). The significant date during that period is the year in which it was built.

Criterion A: The Nomination first describes how the building is eligible under Criterion A, events. As described on page 21,

Iowa City Community Recreation Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as an excellent local example of mid-twentieth-century architecture, community planning and development, social history, and recreation/entertainment. Built in 1964, it represents the construction of civic and municipal buildings following World War II when the economy was robust and was propelling the “Golden [economic] Age” of the 1950s forward into the 1960s. The American public was looking for additional recreation activities to fill the increasing amounts of leisure time available to them, while Iowa City was catching up on long-delayed municipal improvements.

The Nomination includes a history of recreation buildings in Iowa City, including the destruction by fire of two earlier buildings. This section also describes the conditions in which the building was built, including a strong community desire to replace the previous facility, local and broad cultural needs for expanding recreation opportunities, and the construction of a new civic corridor.

Staff Comment on Criterion A: The Nomination carefully describes the community interest in recreation, the cultural movement and changes in recreation, and the local history of civic



buildings that influenced the design and construction of this building, in support of the building's significance under Criterion A. The building is located on a lot that was always a park or public land since the original city plat. During the post-WWII era of the building's planning and construction, recreation on a community scale was a growing focus for leisure-time activities and promoting good health. Iowa City had a long history of recreation centers and public pools. Past recreation centers in the location were destroyed by fires and the community continued to rebuild. In addition, a revamping of the civic corridor with Modern design principles linked the recreation center with the police/fire station and the city administration building, all designed as Modern Movement municipal architecture. Staff finds that the Nomination supports a significance under Criterion A in the areas of community planning and development, social history, and recreation/entertainment.

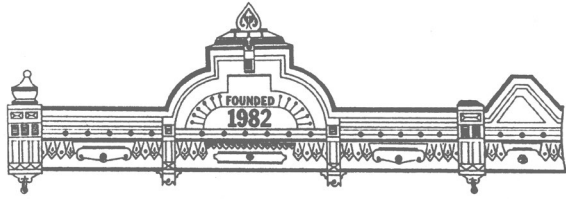
Criterion C: The Nomination first describes how the building is eligible under Criterion C for its architectural design. As described on page 21 of the Nomination,

The Iowa City Community Recreation Center is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an excellent local example of Modern Movement municipal architecture. The building represents the architectural style of low, horizon-hugging profiles with clean lines, little ornamentation, and functionality of interior space. Through its large windows the plan merges interior space with the outdoors and its use of prefabricated, industrial materials enabled increased open interior space and circulation, while also allowing for swift, cost-efficient construction. Using Modern Movement schematics and innovations, architect Roland C. Wehner combined aesthetic, functional, and decorative ideas into a custom design with distinctive characteristics and high artistic values.

The Nomination includes a history of the education and practice of architect, Roland C. Wehner, and his work in Modern Movement design. The use of a grid system and design modules based on geometric shapes were an important aspect of his designs. As the Nomination states on page 29, "Wehner began by applying form-follows-function principles and concepts where relationships between site, materials, and the people who use the buildings are considered. By using the natural sloping geography to his advantage, Wehner efficiently laid out the two-story structure allowing it to present as a long, low building from its west façade. He designed the structure using concrete, brick, and glass to achieve a natural harmony."

Staff Comment on Criterion C: There have been many alterations to the building over time, with some related to changing needs, ADA and code compliance, as well as community safety. Many of the changes are to be expected and do not negatively impact the historic character or integrity of the building. There are changes, however, that are concerning in these regards, especially where they alter the public perception or interaction with the building.

We can see in Figure 4, how the structural system helped determine the aesthetics of the design. The t-shaped roof structure is evident over the main building, but the modified T of the entry canopy is most prominent. In its original form (finished in Figures 7 and 8), this system forms a striking example of Modernist design aesthetics. This aesthetic is undermined by the alterations to the canopy which de-emphasized the structural system and created a top-heavy roof edge, a stark contrast to the original slim profile (Figure 6).



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The decorative concrete screening was another element of mass-produced modern material that allowed for light to penetrate while maintaining privacy for administrative offices. Located along the public sidewalk and the approach, this screen had an impact on how the public interacted with the architecture and how the building's aesthetics were brought to a human scale. The removal of this feature greatly impacted how the architecture is perceived by the community.

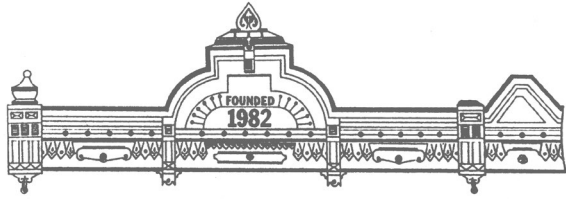
On the east side, where the secondary public entrance is located, the original design emphasized the stepped volumes and the roof planes with a repeat of the curtainwall of glass and panels and the concrete decorative screen (Figure 15). Like the main entry, the curtainwall has been changed as well as the entry canopy. The roof planes have been altered with the emphasis on the new fascia or roof edge instead of the T-shaped structure (Figure 16). The decorative concrete screen has been removed.

The curtain wall was a mixture of solid panels and glazing. The west and south walls have been modified to replace the solid panes with glazing. Considering the architect's goal of creating the curtainwall in the first place, this change does not appear to have as great an impact on the architecture as the removal of the screen that originally separated the curtainwall from the sidewalk along the west facade. The Nomination says that the architect had considerations for passive solar design in his use of curtainwall (p. 31). The use of solid panels in the curtainwall system may have been necessitated by a desire to reduce the solar heat gain of the system, to obscure views in specific areas, and/or to introduce a color into the façade. It also gave the glazing area a horizontal emphasis which worked with building form. The new modern curtainwall allows these goals to be achieved through glazing instead while also using new technology. It may also be the case that the original system had reached the end of its effective life. Because of these points, the impact of this change on the historic character of the building may be minor even though it does change the emphasis to the vertical because of the larger vertical mullions.

On the interior, one of the most impactful alterations is the alteration of the reception area inside the west entrance. Originally, the curtainwall materials extended into the building creating a glass and panel reception area along the south side of the main entrance. As one of the main points of contact between the public and city staff, this area literally brought the exterior Modern design elements directly into the building, and influenced how the public interacts with the architecture. While much of the original glazing configurations remain on the building interior, this important connection between the public, staff, and the architecture has been altered so that the wall is a simple sheetrock wall with a door. The glazing and public/staff contact has been replaced by a bulletin board and shallow display case. This change has greatly altered how this important reception area functions.

With the original design, all elements worked in concert with each other. The Modernist design of the building was evident in every detail. Now the building has changed so that some of the Modernist elements that are related to how the public views and interacts with the building have been altered so that they no longer read as Modernist but as contemporary instead. It is for this reason that staff has concerns about the building's eligibility under Criterion C. Staff does not find that the building lacks sufficient integrity to be listed, the concern is only with the specific elements described above.

Upon review of the nomination materials, staff finds that the Iowa City Recreation Center is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A. While staff has concerns over the



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integrity for Criterion C, it is unclear if these alterations compromise the building's eligibility under this Criterion. For this reason, staff recommends including these concerns in comments for the review committee.

Recommended Motion

Move to Recommend that the Iowa City Community Recreation Center at 220 South Gilbert Street is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic places in Criterion Category A and C at the local level and meets the criteria for both significance and integrity.

We would ask that the State Nomination Review Committee carefully evaluate the Modernist elements of the design to determine if the building has enough integrity in this regard to remain eligible under Criterion C.

Jessica Bristow

From: Paul Juhl <lhujpc@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2024 10:51 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: From Paul Juhl

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



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I would like to voice my support in favor of keeping a downtown pool facility. As a senior, I feel it is good to have a variety of options for exercise and water is one of the best.

Paul Juhl

Jessica Bristow

From: Stewart, Garrett <garrett-stewart@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2024 1:03 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Historical Importance of Downtown Recreation Center

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Dear Jessica Bristow—

I salute the work done to substantiate the historic importance of the Downtown Recreation Center, above and beyond its importance as a health as well as recreation boon to local residents.

It's not just that the building has, as described, a distinct, low-slung, cantilevered-roof look so evocative of minimalist Modernism at mid-20th century. Further, given the adjacent parking structure in the same sandstone color, the expert renovation made to the building itself after the tornado several years back, and the way even the Chauncey Tower has picked up on the striated sandstone look for the main unwindowed core of its masonry structure, the whole two-block-spanning complex is unusually well integrated, old with new.

Equally a force for social integration, community, wellness, and exercise maintenance are the gym facilities and especially the irreplaceable Robert A. Lee pool. I've been at more than one City Council meeting and heard the eloquence of many senior citizens stress how valuable it is to have such a centrally located facility. Even with my teaching schedule at the University, I still actually manage to use it every day of the week, conniving to find a time slot in which I am most likely to discover a lane free, given how populous its fans are (especially in this year's curtailed half-day hours).

In short, in reverse order of my emphasis above, this is both a treasured resource and an aesthetic asset for the City of Iowa City.

Yours most sincerely,

Garrett Stewart
James O. Freedman Professor of Letters
U Iowa

Jessica Bristow

From: Ellen Van Laere <elenavanlaere@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2024 1:44 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert E.Lee Recreation Center



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To Whom It May Concern: I am writing to show and share my support for the Robert E. Lee Rec. Ctr. I have taken classes, attended events, swam in the pool, and roller skated with my children there. My son played rec. league basketball there and both of my children attended summer programming there. We have frequented the center for inexpensive family entertainment and exercise on many occasions over the years. As more and more facilities move to the suburbs and nearer to new housing developments, they leave the downtown area deserted. The RAL Ctr. is accessible via public transportation, and is within walking distance for many. It is a solid and nicely designed structure in the heart of our downtown community. Have a heart, and keep it how and where it is for all of us to continue to enjoy and share with others. Thank you for listening. Ellen Van Laere, 827 Rundell St, Iowa City, IA 52240.

Jessica Bristow

From: Merchant, Mary L <mary-merchant@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Saturday, May 18, 2024 1:04 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Preservation of downtown rec center



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I am writing in support of preserving the downtown rec center I joined classes there when I moved to Iowa City in 1982. I enjoyed exercise and aquacicise classes and our kids took swimming lessons and craft classes. The center is a valuable resource for people of all ages and abilities The design of the building allows a variety of classes. There's easy access to the building and it is visible to people traveling by. There is no way to replace such a great resource. Mary Merchant

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Jessica Bristow

From: Rosalea Ragland <m.rosalea@ic.gov>
Sent: Saturday, May 18, 2024 1:43 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: RAL pool



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. **** Please support the effort to designate the RAL Recreation Center pool a historic landmark of Iowa City.

Years ago before I lived in IC, my husband and I traveled to IC to run in the annual fall hospice run. I still treasure my old t-shirts. RAL was the starting point. The place was bustling with activity. Traffic was blocked off, onlookers lined the route, cheering us on. It was wonderful, memorable.

Today, I'm no longer able to run. However, I can swim, water walk, meditate, and socialize in the pool whenever there is space. Everyone is welcome, no matter the age, fitness level or body shape. The staff keeps a close eye on us, giving us a steady sense of security.

The downtown location is perfect for us and for a landmark. This sacred space needs to be preserved for multiple reasons alongside the changes taking place today.

Please show your support for this important cause so we can preserve RAL as it means so much to many people today and in the future.

Thank you for your serious consideration.
Rosalea Ragland

Jessica Bristow

From: Alison McGoff <almcgoff@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 19, 2024 12:33 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert A. Lee Recreation Cener



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

This recreation center is vital to our community. Its prime location makes it accessible to people from all walks of life. On any given day you will find students, senior citizens, and families using the fitness center, swimming pool, or taking a class. Dance, photography, and swimming lessons, pickleball, ping pong, and basketball abound. Neuro diverse populations also benefit from a full range of recreational activities.

Well used bike racks and parking meter revenue are evidence of the popularity of this hub of activity. Passersby are drawn to and made welcome to explore two well tended edible gardens on the north and south sides.

RAL's visibility in the heart of the city sends the message that while Iowa City, the UNESCO city of literature, takes pride in its library, it also values wellness and recreational and social opportunities for all.

Sincerely,

Alison McGoff
A Happy Senior

Jessica Bristow

From: Blumberg, Mark S <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 9:00 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert A Lee Recreation Center



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Dear Ms. Bristow,

As a member of the Iowa City community for 32 years and a downtown resident, I write to voice my support for the nomination of the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

I hope this nomination gets the serious consideration it deserves.

Sincerely,
Mark Blumberg

Mark S. Blumberg, PhD
University of Iowa Distinguished Chair
Department Chair
Psychological and Brain Sciences
Iowa Neuroscience Institute
The University of Iowa
Lab: <https://blumberg.lab.uiowa.edu>

Jessica Bristow

From: Mitzi Read <msread8@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 2:51 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Cc: Mitzi Read
Subject: Public Support for Listing the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center on National Register of Historic Places

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



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Ms. Bristow,

Please forward the following public comments to all Historic Preservation Commissioners prior to their meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 22, 2024, as they pertain to item D on the published agenda. Please also provide confirmation that they have been directed as requested. Thank you for your assistance.

--Mitzi Read

May 20, 2024

Dear Historic Preservation Commissioners,

On behalf of my family, I am writing to express our support for listing Iowa City's Robert A. Lee Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places (agenda item D, May 22, 2024, Historic Preservation Commission meeting).

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, located at 220 South Gilbert Street in Iowa City, represents the ideal community rec center. It is a marvelous example of the underrepresented and sometimes under-appreciated Modern Movement architectural style and, for more than six decades, it has continued to bring together area residents of all ages and from all walks of life to a central location to build a healthy community, just as it was intended.

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center was a significant consideration when my family recently chose to move to Iowa City and make our new home within walking distance of downtown. We join the many other residents who have repeatedly shown a deep appreciation for all forms of artistry in public spaces. The unique qualities of its efficient simplicity and innately welcoming atmosphere filled with natural light and room to breathe, enable the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center to attract an incredibly diverse and joyful cross-section of our community. It is and has always been a special place where life-long connections and memories are made because it was designed to do exactly that, provide a sustaining place of community for all.

In response to comments in the City's 5/15/2024 memo describing how minor alterations to the building's interior and exterior have changed public perception or interaction with the building, we offer our considered feedback firsthand. While we cannot compare our current perceptions or interactions to what they might have been in 1962, after reviewing the nomination and historical images in their entirety, we can say with new eyes and fresh public perspective, that we do not find these adaptations to be any impediment whatsoever to our perceptions or interactions with the building's Modernist design principles as employed by the masterful hands of Mr. Wehner. If any of these minor elements have been diminished, it seems that a nominal amount of restoration would alleviate the City's concerns.

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center stands out as an excellent example to all other communities of how art and function in a historic public structure can coexist and flourish, as well as support the health and wellbeing of generations of Iowa City residents. So, it is with respect and admiration for architect Roland Wehner that **we convey our support for the listing of the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places** and thank him for facilitating our participation in the special community that continues to thrive within.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to preserve Iowa City's vibrant legacy of architecture and community-building.

Sincerely,

Mitzi Read

Iowa City

Jessica Bristow

From: Stapleton, Anne M <anne-stapleton@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2024 10:28 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Support for the Robert A Lee Recreation Center's inclusion on the National Register for Historic Places



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Dear Ms. Bristow,

I have included below a letter of support that I would like to have forwarded to the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, since they will be discussing the matter at tomorrow's meeting (agenda item D). I understand that you are the appropriate person to whom to forward my letter. If this is not true, please just let me know to whom I should send this. And thank you for your help in this matter.

Dear Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission,

I am writing to support the nomination of the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. I understand this is under consideration by the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission and think the Center is an outstanding candidate, due to its architecture, social history, and betterment of the Iowa City community at large.

The light-filled building welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy the spaces that include a multi-purpose community room, used for parties, celebrations, dances, and any number of purposes for a widely diverse population; a gymnasium and work-out areas for children and adults seeking recreational outlets, including an alluring ping-pong table for beginners and pros alike; meeting/studio rooms used for civic purposes, whether for crafting decisions that affect Iowa City's future or crafting interesting arts that provide lasting memories; and a swimming pool that provides immeasurable benefits and beckons all pool users with a beautiful sun-filled south window, especially enticing on cold winter days.

Although I and my family have used all of the Robert A Lee Recreation Center spaces in the 38 years we have lived in Iowa City, we have used the swimming pool the most frequently. I swim every week I am in Iowa City, and my children took swim lessons at the RAL Pool and continue to utilize the welcoming space. When my granddaughter visits from out of state, she always asks to go to the pool. The crowning jewel of this building and understated in appearance for those uninitiated to the pleasures it holds, the pool has drawn thousands of residents over the years to learn the important life-saving skills of swimming, to maintain vital daily health routines that require the oh-so-perfect conditions of space and temperature that the pool provides, and to enjoy the social and physical benefits that water activities provide.

Architect Roland Wehner provided Iowa City with a design that was perfect for the location and has withstood the test of time, so please support the nomination of this vital, city-centric structure!

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

All best,
Anne Stapleton

Jessica Bristow

From: Jeff Hogan <jdhabc@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2024 11:40 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert E. Lee Rec Center



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Hello Jill,

Before I proceed please forward my comments below to the Members of the Historic Preservation Committee.

I moved here about 20 months ago and have spent many hours at the Robert E Lee Rec Center. During that time I've come to feel the community atmosphere of the City of Iowa through meeting the regular visitors at the Center. I brought my grandchildren with me many times as well.

Selfishly, having the pool so close to my home is a wonderful convenience but even more important is what it means to the community. This has been my experience at Lee. Taking this facility away goes directly against what Iowa City seems to state re concerns about its citizenry.

Regards,

Jeff Hogan
1302 E. Court St
Iowa City, IA
512.851.3678

--

"The more you know, the more you know you don't know"

~Aristotle

Jessica Bristow

From: Jan Barnes <janbarnes66@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2024 12:32 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Downtown Rec center and Pool



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Ms. Bristow:

I am writing to communicate how vital the downtown pool and rec center is to many individuals. We average 12 to 20 individuals who attend water aerobic class and some bike or walk to participate in this workout. It is not only physically challenging but also a time to socialize. We have become great friends, we meet outside of class and are very supportive of one another. I have tried other water aerobics classes at Top Gym, North Liberty water aerobic classes and Coralville water aerobic classes and none compare to these classes. I look forward to these classes on Monday, Wednesday and some Fridays as a great challenge and they begin my days with energy and a positive attitude to my day. I must also mention that besides us water aerobic participants there is an average of 6-8 persons swimming laps and on Tuesday there is a water yoga class. This pool is vital to our community.

Also I must add some historical importance to this building as well. First off as an individual who grew up in this community my first thought is of the days when Paper Doll was held on Fridays for junior high and high school students. It was a fun event to see friends, dance and socialize. Also my then future husband was a swimmer and diver for West High School and I attended some of his swim meets. At that time I had no idea that we would meet up at our 5 year class reunion date and then marry. So I am sure you can see great memories are present in this building and despite any updates it still looks the same and has the same pleasant smell of pool water that was present in the 1960's and 70's. Please designate this site as a historical building. Also please forward to the HPC.

Thank you for your time, Jan Barnes
North Liberty Iowa

Jessica Bristow

From: Carin Crain <carinnylacrain@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 10:13 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert A Lee Rec Center



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Dear Ms. Bristow:

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center has become a vital part of my physical and mental wellbeing. Although I live closer to Mercer Park, I use the Robert A. Lee pool most days.

The aspects of the pool that attract me as the aspects that should qualify it for Historic Preservation protection. It's a classic mid century pool that's ideal for a variety of aquatic uses, lap swimming, wading, water walking, splashing, and water aerobics are all compatible with its design.

Moreover, its design for swimming could not be better. At different times of the day, depending on the sun, the reflection of the water seems to dance on the walls. Sunlight can pour into the upper windows creating a happy and sunny indoor environment, even when it's snowing outdoors. In short, the architect created an inspiring space that is not available anywhere else.

Moreover its design captures its mid-century construction as few other Iowa City buildings can. As a native of Los Angeles, a city which struggles to maintain its landmarks, I encourage you and the HPC to preserve the Robert A. Lee pool as the landmark and cultural gathering place it has become.

Ms. Bristow, would you please share this email with the HPC?

Thank you for considering my comments,

Carin Crain

Jessica Bristow

From: Brumm, Margaret A <margaret-brumm@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 11:39 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: HPC/forward for tonight's council meeting



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Hello Jennifer,

Will you please forward my comments to the members of HPC for this evening's City Council Meeting—thank you. I am sorry I am late.

I have used the Robert Lee Recreation Center since 1975. It is one of the benefits of living in a City like Iowa City. I was able to swim with both my pregnancies as lap swim and gymnastics for preschoolers were conveniently timed together for mothers --what a beautiful help it was. My children both completed the complete swimming lessons program at the Recreation Center in the 80's. I am currently a swim pass holder for the pool at the Robert A Lee Recreation Center.

Iowa City is unique in offering physical fitness to all income levels. It is unique in having a public fitness center centrally located. Like many social benefits, once taken away, they are hard to replace. The Recreation Center has been a source of so many wonderful memories. It is a place everyone knows within a year of moving to this city. The only reason I go downtown is because of the Iowa City Public Library and the Robert A Lee Recreation Center and the Iowa City Farmer's Market. It is important to continue offering a pool that is conveniently located with a temperature more conducive for the City's elder population. It is important to continue valuing the physical fitness needs of the community.

Thank you
Margaret Brumm

Jessica Bristow

From: Glenda Buenger <buengerg@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 11:52 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert A. Lee National Register



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Dear Jessica,

Please forward my letter (below) to the members of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Thank you!
Glenda Buenger

May 22, 2024

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Commission:

I am writing in support of placing the Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places.

Page 24 of the nomination document contains a quote from an *Iowa City Press-Citizen* editorial advocating immediate replacement of the community center after the original structure burned down in 1955. "Iowa City has been fortunate in having such a structure as the Community Building," it reads, "for it has filled innumerable civic needs through the years. . . . Its great good has been established, and this city has become a finer place in which to live because of it."

Fifty years later, these words are as true of our Robert A. Lee Community Center as the old Community Building it replaced. "A finer place" really resonated with me. I vividly remember the first time I walked around downtown Iowa City as a transfer student sometime in the mid-70s and spotted the recreation center. Wow! I thought. Iowa City is really something! The recreation center is right downtown, and there's a pool! I felt like I'd arrived at a place of significance, an educated, progressive place that knew how to do things. A finer place. Better still, the building itself had such presence and integrity. Its modern design was not the dull, predictable, numbing style of the modern buildings one so typically encounters. This building occupied its space like a wise grandparent: observant, never interfering, ready to give counsel if asked. But then, the drama of the Burlington Street side of the building, with its windows to the pool! Of course, I was a busy silly college student and never used the recreation center. But when I moved to Iowa City the second time in 2014, I bought a house within walking distance of downtown so I could walk my errands and use the Robert A. Lee facility. In contrast to the high rise constructions that have come to dominate downtown Iowa City, the Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center represents the core of Iowa City in its location, architecture, and service to an ever-diversifying community, and deserves to be placed on the National Register.

Please help make this happen.

Sincerely,

Glenda Buenger

318 S. Lucas St.
Iowa City

Jessica Bristow

From: Carin Crain <carinnylacrain@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 10:13 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert A Lee Rec Center



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

Dear Ms. Bristow:

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center has become a vital part of my physical and mental wellbeing. Although I live closer to Mercer Park, I use the Robert A. Lee pool most days.

The aspects of the pool that attract me as the aspects that should qualify it for Historic Preservation protection. It's a classic mid century pool that's ideal for a variety of aquatic uses, lap swimming, wading, water walking, splashing, and water aerobics are all compatible with its design.

Moreover, its design for swimming could not be better. At different times of the day, depending on the sun, the reflection of the water seems to dance on the walls. Sunlight can pour into the upper windows creating a happy and sunny indoor environment, even when it's snowing outdoors. In short, the architect created an inspiring space that is not available anywhere else.

Moreover its design captures its mid-century construction as few other Iowa City buildings can. As a native of Los Angeles, a city which struggles to maintain its landmarks, I encourage you and the HPC to preserve the Robert A. Lee pool as the landmark and cultural gathering place it has become.

Ms. Bristow, would you please share this email with the HPC?

Thank you for considering my comments,

Carin Crain

Jessica Bristow

From: Glenda Buenger <buengerg@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 11:52 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Robert A. Lee National Register



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

Dear Jessica,

Please forward my letter (below) to the members of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Thank you!
Glenda Buenger

May 22, 2024

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Commission:

I am writing in support of placing the Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places.

Page 24 of the nomination document contains a quote from an *Iowa City Press-Citizen* editorial advocating immediate replacement of the community center after the original structure burned down in 1955. "Iowa City has been fortunate in having such a structure as the Community Building," it reads, "for it has filled innumerable civic needs through the years. . . . Its great good has been established, and this city has become a finer place in which to live because of it."

Fifty years later, these words are as true of our Robert A. Lee Community Center as the old Community Building it replaced. "A finer place" really resonated with me. I vividly remember the first time I walked around downtown Iowa City as a transfer student sometime in the mid-70s and spotted the recreation center. Wow! I thought. Iowa City is really something! The recreation center is right downtown, and there's a pool! I felt like I'd arrived at a place of significance, an educated, progressive place that knew how to do things. A finer place. Better still, the building itself had such presence and integrity. Its modern design was not the dull, predictable, numbing style of the modern buildings one so typically encounters. This building occupied its space like a wise grandparent: observant, never interfering, ready to give counsel if asked. But then, the drama of the Burlington Street side of the building, with its windows to the pool! Of course, I was a busy silly college student and never used the recreation center. But when I moved to Iowa City the second time in 2014, I bought a house within walking distance of downtown so I could walk my errands and use the Robert A. Lee facility. In contrast to the high rise constructions that have come to dominate downtown Iowa City, the Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center represents the core of Iowa City in its location, architecture, and service to an ever-diversifying community, and deserves to be placed on the National Register.

Please help make this happen.

Sincerely,

Glenda Buenger

318 S. Lucas St.
Iowa City

Jessica Bristow

From: Brumm, Margaret A <margaret-brumm@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 11:39 AM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: HPC/forward for tonight's council meeting



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

Hello Jennifer,

Will you please forward my comments to the members of HPC for this evening's City Council Meeting—thank you. I am sorry I am late.

I have used the Robert Lee Recreation Center since 1975. It is one of the benefits of living in a City like Iowa City. I was able to swim with both my pregnancies as lap swim and gymnastics for preschoolers were conveniently timed together for mothers --what a beautiful help it was. My children both completed the complete swimming lessons program at the Recreation Center in the 80's. I am currently a swim pass holder for the pool at the Robert A Lee Recreation Center.

Iowa City is unique in offering physical fitness to all income levels. It is unique in having a public fitness center centrally located. Like many social benefits, once taken away, they are hard to replace. The Recreation Center has been a source of so many wonderful memories. It is a place everyone knows within a year of moving to this city. The only reason I go downtown is because of the Iowa City Public Library and the Robert A Lee Recreation Center and the Iowa City Farmer's Market. It is important to continue offering a pool that is conveniently located with a temperature more conducive for the City's elder population. It is important to continue valuing the physical fitness needs of the community.

Thank you
Margaret Brumm

Jessica Bristow

From: Marjie Caruth <marjie.caruth@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 3:51 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Placing Robert A Lee Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

I am writing in support of placing the Robert A Lee Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places.

My family and I have enjoyed and participated in many different activities and events at the Robert A Lee Recreation Center over the past fifty years. This incredible facility offers such a wonderful variety for all members of our community. The location is convenient and welcoming and essential in promoting Iowa City as the perfect place to live, grow, and learn for another 50 years or more!

I am hopeful that as the city's historic preservation planner, you will help protect our unique community asset. Please forward this email to all members of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marjie Caruth

Jessica Bristow

From: Mark McMullen <mcmullenmf@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 3:36 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Support of R.A. Lee Center National Register Nomination



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

To: Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission

I am a homeowner and have lived in Iowa City for nearly 14 years. I hope the commission will seriously consider accepting the nomination for the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. I have come to appreciate the varied architecture around Iowa City and the University of Iowa. The R.A. Lee Rec Center represents an important and significant part of that diversity. It is my understanding that the building was built in a mid-century modern style that was part of the Modern Movement of the 1960's. One of the reasons my wife and I moved to Iowa City was to be part of the Peninsula area, where we now live. That area was a close collaboration between the city and private development and we think the development has turned out to be a great place to live.

The materials and workmanship of the R.A. Lee Center are excellent and should be preserved. Society cannot only preserve buildings we view as "antiques"....contemporary design and development along with much older buildings creates a varied community that is a pleasure to live in. Please consider approving the nomination before the Historic Preservation Commissions.

Thank you,
Mark McMullen
5 White Oak Place
Iowa City

Jessica Bristow

From: MaryHelen Stefaniak <maryhelenstefaniak@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 5:22 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Supporting Historical preservation of RAL



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

To The Historic Preservation Commission:

I am writing in support of placing the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center on the National Register of Historic Places.

My own experience with RAL goes back to my family's first days in Iowa City back in 1982. That very first year, my three young children participated in a Halloween parade and party. In subsequent years--while we lived on Derwen Drive and later while we lived for two decades on South Dodge Street--the kids took their swimming lessons there, participated in Young Footlitter productions, and took a variety of classes ranging from clay sculpting to Sword-fighting (on stage). We've used just about every aspect of RAL--including roller skating in the gym and--for the adults in the family--participating in primary caucuses.

If there had been no indoor swimming pool in the central location downtown, I would never have learned to swim at age 40 after watching my kids' swimming lessons and squeezing my own 20-minute practice at RAL, which was only a few blocks from our house on S. Dodge Street, before I drove my 10 and 12-year-old daughters to school every morning. I would never have met Ellen Hickerson, a woman older than my mother who nevertheless became my all-time best friend in Iowa City after we met in the locker room at the pool.

The RAL pool locker room has to be one of the most important meeting places for individuals of widely divergent ages, economic status, races, and national origins! (Okay, so gender-wise, the locker room is not as divergent as other parts of the building.)

RAL is an extremely flexible place with unmatched resources anywhere nearby. It belongs in the heart of Iowa City, as evidence of our commitment to the community and our history.

We need to keep Iowa City's downtown recognizable as a community center and rich with its history of public places where diverse people can meet, work, and play together. Please help us avoid turning it into a forest of towering condo buildings!

Mary Helen Stefaniak
1501 Ridge Road
Iowa City, Iowa 52245

--

Mary Helen Stefaniak (she/her)
maryhelenstefaniak.com

Jessica Bristow

From: Reilly O'Gorman <rmog90@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 1:20 PM
To: Jessica Bristow
Subject: Letter of Support to RAL (please forward to HPC!)



**** This email originated outside of the City of Iowa City email system. Please take extra care opening any links or attachments. ****

I would like the following letter to be forwarded to members of the Historic Preservation Commission:

To Whom It May Concern,

The Robert A. Lee Recreation Center has played an important part in the lives of thousands of Iowa Citians since it's been opened. I see people from all walks of life use the facilities on a daily basis, ranging from using the pool to attending classes to playing pick up games in the gym to participating in group activities. It is in an accessible location not just for cars and people who live downtown, but for people who take the bus as well as walk and bike. It would be a shame if the city turned over the property to a developer who doesn't have the community's best interest at all and would turn it into more college student housing which is the last thing this town needs. What this town does need is an accessible community friendly recreation center that has served and will continue to serve the needs of the community, as long as the council does the right thing and save this building for future generations. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Reilly O'Gorman



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Civil Service Examination: Housing Receptionist

Attachments: [Civil Service Examination: Housing Receptionist](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY

410 East Washington Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240-1826
(319) 356-5000
(319) 356-5009 FAX
www.icgov.org

May 24, 2024

TO: The Honorable Mayor and the City Council

RE: Civil Service Entrance Examination – Housing Receptionist

Under the authority of the Civil Service Commission of Iowa City, Iowa, I do hereby certify the following named person(s) as eligible for the position of Housing Receptionist.

Madison Beauchamp Sanubari

Iowa City Civil Service Commission



Rick Wyss, Chair



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Civil Service Examination: Mass Transit Operator

Attachments: [Civil Service Examination: Mass Transit Operator](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY

410 East Washington Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240-1826
(319) 356-5000
(319) 356-5009 FAX
www.icgov.org

May 17, 2024

TO: The Honorable Mayor and the City Council

RE: Civil Service Entrance Examination – Mass Transit Operator

Under the authority of the Civil Service Commission of Iowa City, Iowa, I do hereby certify the following named person(s) as eligible for the position of Mass Transit Operator.

Cohen DeWitt

Iowa City Civil Service Commission



Rick Wyss, Chair



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Civil Service Examination: Volunteer Program Assistant - Animal Services

Attachments: [Civil Service Examination: Volunteer Program Assistant - Animal Services](#)



CITY OF IOWA CITY

410 East Washington Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240-1826
(319) 356-5000
(319) 356-5009 FAX
www.icgov.org

May 17, 2024

TO: The Honorable Mayor and the City Council

RE: Civil Service Entrance Examination – Volunteer Program Assistant – Animal Services

Under the authority of the Civil Service Commission of Iowa City, Iowa, I do hereby certify the following named person(s) as eligible for the position of Volunteer Program Assistant – Animal Services.

Jennifer Read

Iowa City Civil Service Commission



Rick Wyss, Chair



CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

May 30, 2024

Ad Hoc Truth & Reconciliation Commission: May 16

Attachments: [Ad Hoc Truth & Reconciliation Commission: May 16](#)

May 16, 2024

Draft Ad Hoc Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Minutes

Emma Harvat Hall, City Hall

Commissioners present: Amos Kiche, Cliff Johnson, Louis Tassinary, Chad Simmons, Chastity Dillard.

Commissioners on Zoom: Lubna Mohamed.

Commissioners not present: Wangui Gathua, Lauren Merritt.

Staff present: Redmond Jones, Stefanie Bowers.

Recommendation to City Council: No.

Meeting called to order: 7:06

Reading of Land Acknowledgement: Tassinary read the Land Acknowledgement.

Approval of minutes from May 2, 2024: Tassinary moved, and Johnson seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

Facilitators final report: Commissioner Simmons commented that he does not believe the final report should be sent to City Council. Simmons stated the final report made by the facilitators could be used to aid the Commission in creating their own final report due to the fact he believes the report only records half the work the TRC is looking to accomplish. Commissioner Dillard and Kiche agreed with the need to include more information in its final report. Commissioner Tassinary agreed with the need for additional information for a final report, but asked whether there were contractual obligations that would require the TRC to submit the facilitators final report. Simmons recommended that a letter be submitted to City Council acknowledging the facilitator's final report along with a message that there is additional work to report on in the future. Commissioners Tassinary and Johnson agreed with moving forward with submitting a letter. Dillard volunteered to write a letter that would later be shared with the Commission before submitting. It was agreed that the information going into the letter would include acknowledging the facilitator report and work/ information provided to the TRC and that the Commission will continue to consider that information as they continue to work based on their charter.

Commissioner Kiche suggested asking Think Peace for a letter that considers their thoughts on the training program and what they saw went well and what did not. Commissioner Tassinary shared that he felt there was a disconnect in information within the report, which Commissioner Dillard suggested reconciling with their own data in a final report. It was agreed amongst Commissioners that there needs to be more specifics when it comes to questions and answers regarding data that would lead to policy recommendations for a final report.

Redmond Jones confirmed it would be acceptable to explain to City Council that the report made by the facilitators is an addition to the work that the TRC is doing rather than the final data on the work that has been done.

Commissioner Tassinary volunteered to work through the facilitator's report to find ways to incorporate it moving forward. Commissioner Kiche also volunteered to help with the task.

Request for additional funds from City Council: Commissioner Simmons told Commissioners and staff that the two payments made to Cocoa Creative Agency that came off the TRC budget should be paid off of the City Manager budget because they were requests to the Agency from City staff and not a member of the TRC.

Commissioner Kiche reviewed the current budget and spending, noting there are no resources left for spending and future projects. Kiche provided Commissioners with a general expense report with an overview of possible fund allocations if additional money is granted. Along with the budget, the Commission considered the amount of time left for work to be done. A previous discussion on cutting back on the total number of topics/ areas to cover in the remaining six months was revisited. It was suggested to cut back on the number of topics to focus on due to a lack of time and resources. Commissioner Kiche brought up concerns that the Commission may be falling short to their commitment to implement change in the community. Commissioner Dillard believes there is still work to be done beyond the six-month period, which is what they hope to convince the City Council to keep the Commission going beyond the contractual end-date.

Upcoming Presentation to City Council: The next opportunity for the Commission to present to City Council is the 4th or the 18th of June. Simmons questioned why there still has not been a vote by City Council to consider additional funding to the TRC. Commissioners discussed their concerns with the Commission's budget and staff went over how the Commission operates under the rules of the City and City Council. Commissioner Simmons stated he would be making public comments at the next City Council meeting to bring up the concerns of budget and the future of the TRC. Commissioner Dillard suggested each Commissioner speak at the next City Council meeting during public comment to share their personal perspectives. Commissioner Kiche suggested providing a business model to the City Council in regards to increasing the budget in order for them to understand where and why the money will be used. Commissioner Dillard suggested that each commissioner reach out to six of the seven current City Council members.

Commissioner Johnson agreed to reach out to Mayor Teague, Commissioner Kiche agreed to reach out to Mayor Pro Tem Salih, Commissioner Dillard will reach out to Councilmembers Alter and Dunn, Commissioner Tassinary will reach out to Councilmember Shawn Harmsen, Commissioner Simmons will reach out to Councilmember Moe. Commissioner Simmons suggested for Commissioners to ask councilmembers to support a vote for the use of additional funds as soon as possible. Commissioner Mohamed will join commissioner Johnson in meeting with the Mayor.

Commissioner Simmons shared a presentation he put together Commissioner reviewed and made suggestions of what to include from this report when it comes to talking to City Council and sharing the document with them. Commissioner Kiche suggested to add some more details that would allow the City Council to see the general direction in which the TRC is headed without cornering the Commission and their efforts moving forward.

Next steps for phase three and four: It was suggested to get involved in community spaces like the Farmers Market, the Diversity Markets, and churches. It was also shared that a community member volunteered to provide up to 15 hours a week to assist the TRC with its work. The Commission considered different roles this person could help with including project management and data reporting. It was agreed to discuss further about ways to get involved and recognized in the community for future projects.

Announcements of commissioners: None.

Announcements of staff: None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 PM.

The full meeting video can be viewed at this [link](#).

**AD HOC TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMISSION
ATTENDANCE RECORD
YEAR 2024**

NAME	TERM EXP.	(Meeting Date)														
		1/4	1/25	2/1	2/15	3/7	3/14	3/18	3/20	3/21	4/4	5/2	5/16	6/6	6/20	7/18
Dillard	12/31/24	Z	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Gathua	12/31/24	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	A			
Kiche	12/31/24	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Johnson	12/31/24	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Vacant	12/31/24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
Merritt	12/31/24	P	Z	P	P	Z	P	P	P	P	P	P	A			
Muhammed	12/31/24	Z	Z	Z	A	A	A	A	P	P	R	R	Z			
Simmons	12/31/24	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	Z	P	P			
Tassinary	12/31/24	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P			

P = Present in person

A = Absent

Z = Zoom