

August 3, 2009

Ms. Gloria Betcher  
Ames HPC  
531 Hayward Ave  
Ames IA 50014-

**RE: Roosevelt School, 921 9th Street, Ames, Story County**

Dear Ms. Betcher:

The State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) plans to consider the property referenced above for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places during their October 9, 2009 meeting. As a participant in the Certified Local Government Program, Ames HPC is required to review and comment on proposed National Register nominations of properties within its jurisdiction. The State is required to provide you with a 60-day period for the review, unless we mutually agree to expedite the process. I am contacting you to ask that you initiate the review process for the Historic Preservation Commission. Enclosed are copies of the nomination, photographs, and the review form. The review process will require the following:

- ◆ The Historic Preservation Commission should review the nomination during one of their meetings. Send a formal invitation to the Mayor with a copy of the nomination. Send a formal invitation to the property owner/owners. If they are not familiar with the National Register, be sure to include an explanation. Make sure that a copy of the nomination is available for public review before the meeting. For example, leave a review copy at the courthouse or public library. Indicate in your meeting announcement that a review copy of the nomination is available and where the review copy can be found.
- ◆ The question to answer when reviewing the nomination is whether the nominated property meets the National Register of Historic Places significance criteria. If the Commission feels that the nomination makes the case for meeting significance criteria, the Commission should check the box recommending that the property be listed. If the Commission feels that the property does not meet the significance criteria, then check the box recommending that the property not be listed. The Mayor should use the same approach when reviewing the nomination.
- ◆ You might want to invite the individual who prepared the nomination to attend the public meeting and present the nomination. Keep a record of the meeting (copy of notice, agenda, minutes, list of attendees). At the conclusion of the meeting, the Commission should make a motion regarding their recommendation. The Chairman of the Commission will complete Item #1, the Commission's portion of the review form. Be sure to fill in the date of the public meeting, sign the signature line and record any comments that were made. If the Mayor attended the public meeting, inquire if he/she is prepared to complete Item #2 on the review form.

- ◆ In the event that the Mayor was unable to attend the meeting. The Commission Chairman should forward the Review form to the Mayor for review and comment. Have the Mayor sign the form and return it to the Historic Preservation Commission.
- ◆ Item #3 on the Review form asks for the review and comment of a preservation professional. If your commission does not have a professionally qualified historian or architectural historian who can complete this part of the form, you may leave Item #3 blank and I will arrange to have a State staff member complete that part of the form.
- ◆ After you have completed Items #1 through #2 (through #3 if a preservation professional is available), please make a copy of the completed review forms for your file and send the original copies of the completed forms to me.
- ◆ The Commission should keep the nomination and photographs. File them together in your inventory, as you will need the information for future reference. If a State preservation professional was needed to complete Item #3 on the review form, I will return a copy to the commission for filing.

If the Historic Preservation Commission and the Mayor disagree with one another on the property's National Register eligibility, both views will be presented to the SNRC for their consideration during review of the nomination. If both the Historic Preservation Commission (by Commission majority) and the Mayor do not consider the property eligible for National Register listing, we must halt the nomination. Be advised that when a nomination is halted, the property owner, the person who prepared the nomination or any interested party may appeal the decision. In addition, the nomination will still go forward to the National Park Service for an official "Determination of Eligibility."

Please contact Paul Mohr at 515/281-6826 with any questions or concerns regarding the CLG program or the process for this review.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Foster Hill  
Tax Incentive Programs Manager/  
National Register Coordinator

**CLG NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW**

**CLG Name** Ames **Date of Public Meeting**

**Property Name** Roosevelt School, 921 9th Street, Ames, Story County

1. For Historic Preservation Commission:

- Recommendation of National Register eligibility
- Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s) for recommendation:

2. For Chief Elected Local Official:

- Recommendation of National Register eligibility
- Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s) for recommendation:

3. Professional Evaluation:

- Recommendation of National Register eligibility
- Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s) for recommendation:

**RETURN TO:** State Historical Society of Iowa, ATTN: National Register Coordinator, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines, IA 50319

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

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

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Roosevelt School  
other names/site number Second Ward School; Roosevelt Elementary School; Iowa Site Inventory No. 85-00574

**2. Location**

street & number 921 9th Street not for publication N/A  
city or town Ames vicinity N/A  
state Iowa code IA county Story code 169 zip code 50010

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

|   |                     |                |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| I, hereby certify that this property is:                    | Signature of Keeper | Date of Action |
| <u>  </u> entered in the National Register                  | _____               | _____          |
| <u>  </u> See continuation sheet.                           |                     |                |
| <u>  </u> determined eligible for the National Register     | _____               | _____          |
| <u>  </u> See continuation sheet.                           |                     |                |
| <u>  </u> determined not eligible for the National Register | _____               | _____          |
| <u>  </u> removed from the National Register                | _____               | _____          |
| <u>  </u> other (explain): _____                            | _____               | _____          |

Roosevelt School  
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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)  
 private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)  
 building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
Contributing    Noncontributing  
  1               buildings  
  1               sites  
                   structures  
                   objects  
  2               Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

  N/A  

  N/A  

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
EDUCATION/school  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
VACANT/Not in Use  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Beaux Arts  
LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation   CONCRETE    
roof   METAL    
walls   BRICK    
  CONCRETE    
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**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.

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1923-1959

**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 a grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Significant Dates**

1923

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Kimball Bailie & Cowgill

Elvin and Company

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository:

Roosevelt School  
Name of Property

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 3 acres

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

|   | Zone  | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|-------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 15    | 448371  | 4653351  | 3    | _____   | _____    |
| 2 | _____ | _____   | _____    | 4    | _____   | _____    |

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jennifer Price and Leah D. Rogers/Consultants for Ames Smart Growth Alliance

organization Tallgrass Historians L.C. date July 23, 2009

street & number 2460 S. Riverside Drive telephone (319) 354-6722

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52246

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ames Community School District c/o Dr. Linda Beyea, Superintendent of Schools

street & number 415 Stanton Avenue telephone 515-268-6600

city or town Ames state IA zip code 50014

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

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

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**7. Narrative Description**

***Summary Paragraph***

Roosevelt School is located at 921 9th Street and fronts the street on its north side. The property is in-between Roosevelt Avenue to the east and Northwestern Avenue to the west in north-central Ames, Iowa. The nominated property is specifically 2.5 acres in size and consists of the original 1923 school and 1968 addition and the area of the original grassy field/playground area on the north side of the school building and extending east to Roosevelt Avenue. The property consists of Lots 9-12 of Block 26 of the College Park Addition 2nd North and Lots 1-8 and the east half of Lot 9 of Block 2 of Bairds Addition. The property was expanded after the period of significance (i.e., after 1959) to include what had formerly been house lots to the southeast and west sides; however, these portions of the current school property are not included within the nominated National Register boundary because they were not historically part of the school property. The neighborhood surrounding the school property consists of dwellings built mainly in the 1920s to the 1950s and may constitute a National Register-eligible historic district as yet undefined.<sup>1</sup> Roosevelt School was the anchor of this neighborhood. Current floor plans of the school (showing last use in 2005) for the basement, first floor, and second floor show a continuity of function and configuration with the original 1923 plans.<sup>2</sup> Classroom configuration on all floors of the 1923 building remains largely unaltered. In 1968, a two-story gymnasium and classroom building was built on the north wall of the north wing of the original 1923 school building. In 1996, sloped metal roofs were added to both the 1923 building and the 1968 addition. Other updates and alterations over the years have been confined mostly to exterior doors and windows and interior restrooms and electrical and ventilation systems. The Ames Board of Education closed Roosevelt School in 2005. The nominated property consists of the school building, including the 1923 original building and its 1968 gymnasium addition counted as a single contributing building, and the grassy lawn and playground area historically associated with the school counted as a single contributing site.

***School Exterior***

The site of Roosevelt School contains activity fields, a large playground area, and hard-surfaced parking areas. A significant number of mature trees exist, particularly at the perimeter of the site. At the time it was constructed, Roosevelt School was on the outskirts of the developed areas of Ames. The neighborhood grew around the school, with the school serving as both an attraction for residential development and as an anchor for the neighborhood as it expanded. As a result, the building is surrounded by bungalows and other small houses most having been constructed in the 1920s through the 1950s. In fact, during the period of significance for this property from 1923 to 1959, there were dwellings occupying the same block on the east and west sides of the school building and in close proximity to that building. Some of these dwellings were demolished by the 1980s and into the 1990s, with the school district adding these lots to the Roosevelt School property for additional outdoor activity areas and paved parking lots. By the time of the school's closing in 2005, the school property had expanded into all but the extreme west and northwestern lots of this block.

Roosevelt School faces south to 9th Street and is set back 52 feet from the south property line. The building is centered on lots 10, 11, and 12 of Block 26 of the College Park Addition 2nd North. The shape of the building plan is roughly an inverted letter T, wider than it is tall, with the cross bar being the front of the building. The building is a maximum of 144 feet wide by 93 feet deep. It is built of a reinforced-concrete frame structure with exterior masonry bearing walls above grade and resting on reinforced-concrete walls below grade. The lower basement level is partially above grade, with two full floors above. In 1996,

<sup>1</sup> William C. Page, "Reconnaissance Survey of the Historical and Architectural Resources of Ames." Report prepared for the City Planning and Housing Department, City of Ames, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Blueprints for the Second Ward School designed in 1923 by Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, architects, and the Roosevelt Elementary School Facilities Planning & Management Plans completed in 2008 by Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., of Ames, Iowa, on file Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa.



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a metal pitched roof was added over the flat roof of the 1923 building rising above but set back slightly from the original pedimented roofline. The original stepped and shaped pediment remains intact although metal capping now covers the original white stone coping on the pediment. A similar metal roof was also added over the roof of the 1968 addition at the same time.

The exterior walls consist of a polychrome brick veneer laid in a running bond, with simple relief and decorative detail produced by brick panels formed by rowlock borders and diamond patterns within the borders in the larger panels. The façade also features two projecting bays that flank the monumental front entry, with the door centered on the façade and featuring a white stone cornice overhang and scrolled console brackets. A white stone cornice is around the base of the pediment, which further features the school name and emblem centered over the front entry and made of white stone low-relief panels. A cornerstone inscribed with "1923" is at the southeast corner of the façade. The windows sills and watertable band are made of white stone. Bands of windows extend across the inset section of the façade, with the projecting ells being "blind" and lacking windows. The other sides of the building also feature bands of windows on the first and second floors. Four outside entry doors include: the main entry door in the central bay of the south façade; two rear access doors on either side of the north wing; and one on the east side of the gymnasium addition.

As noted above, the only modifications to the exterior of the original 1923 school building have consisted of: the 1968 gymnasium addition to the north side of the north wing of the building; the replacement and partial infill of the windows as part of an energy conservation effort in the late twentieth century; the replacement and partial infill of the front entry doors as part of this same effort; and the addition of a metal roof to the original flat roof in 1996. Although not in keeping with the overall character of the building, the window and door modifications do not appear to have been invasive to the building's masonry fabric. The windows could be restored to their original appearance using windows and doors compatible with the historic material and style of the original windows and doors. The 1968 gymnasium is not considered a major detraction from the overall integrity of the building because it was built of similar materials and in a design that was compatible with the original building design but still distinguishable as a later addition to the building.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the addition is set back from the sides so that it is not visible from the front view of the property and does not obscure much of the historic building. Because it is an attached addition, the gymnasium addition is not counted as a separate building.

***School Interior***

Inside the main entry door of the south-side central bay is a vestibule, enclosed by a partition of glass and wood, through which one accesses the first floor hallway. A memorial to Steven Lofgren by artist Christian Petersen was located to the side of this entry but was removed from the school in 2005 for safekeeping and is currently housed in the Christian Petersen Art Museum at Iowa State University. Steven Lofgren was a Roosevelt kindergarten student, who was killed by a car while crossing the street on his way to school on May 10, 1956. His family placed this memorial in the school, with the memorial dedicated on February 19, 1957.<sup>4</sup> Christian Petersen was artist in residence at Iowa State College and was commissioned to create sculptures and bas-reliefs by many institutions and private individuals throughout the Midwest. The commissioning of Petersen to create the Lofgren Memorial expressed the close bond the Lofgren family felt to their neighborhood school and the importance of Roosevelt School to the larger Ames Community.<sup>5</sup> The work was a bas-relief of the child, with the artist's intent to capture the essence of childhood in the boy's facial expression. Because the bas-relief is not currently in Roosevelt School, it is not counted as a contributing resource, but it could be considered a contributing object if it is returned to the school.

Two other original doorways are located on the north side on either side of the north wing. The original interior partitions are a

<sup>3</sup> For example, the gymnasium building is clad with a lighter, more orange-colored brick than the dark reds of the original building's bricks. The addition also features shorter rows of windows than on the main building.

<sup>4</sup> *Ames Daily Tribune*, May 10, 1956; February 21, 1957

<sup>5</sup> *Christian Petersen Remembered*, Patricia Lounsbury Bliss (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1986); *Christian Petersen Sculpture*, Lea Rosson LeLong (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 2000).

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combination of structural tile and gypsum block clad with plaster. Classroom configuration on all floors of the 1923 building remains largely unaltered. Furthermore, current floor plans of the school (showing room use in 2005) for the basement, first floor, and second floor show a continuity of function and configuration with the original 1923 plans. The original play rooms on the ground floor were last used as an art classroom and a daycare space. The original function of the play rooms was displaced when the gymnasium, or multi-purpose center, was added to the building in 1968.

The original basement plan had the boys' and girls' playrooms on either side of the basement flanking the plenum chamber and an east-west corridor and a boiler room, coal bin, fan room and two storerooms in the north wing of the basement. The internal ventilation system was served by a fan in the basement, which provided supply and return air to each classroom through a series of masonry shafts extending vertically through the building and making use of the plenum chamber, which is an enclosed space that runs lengthwise underneath the main core of the building. The plenum chamber contained air pressure inside that was greater than that of the outside atmosphere and helped force air upward through the ducts and helped stem incoming cold drafts. The heating system was a coal-fired system that was later upgraded, with the original coal bin built over by the 1968 gymnasium addition. The original heating system included a boiler, pipes, and radiators.

The first floor plan featured eight classrooms, with the two rooms on the west side of the main core having a folding door partition that allowed for a larger open auditorium space as needed. Also on the first floor was an office at the north end of the entry hall, boys' and girls' toilets on either side of the east-west hallway, and an entry vestibule at the main door. Each classroom had coat rooms, blackboards, and a bank of windows on one side.

The second floor plan was the same basic plan as the first floor having eight classrooms and two toilets, but also had two offices instead of one.

There is some attic space above the second floor ceiling that provided head room for maintenance workers on catwalks to service the pipes that led to the radiators on the second floor. The attic space was ventilated with roof vents, which would have helped keep the building cooler in warm weather. The attic also provided access to the roof.

By 2005, the interior use of the original building showed the basement-level playrooms being used for an art room and child care center; custodial and boiler rooms, a music & tradebooks room, a band room, a kitchen, storage room, and the gymnasium. The first floor had the kindergarten through third grade classrooms, with the kindergarten room occupying the two west classrooms where the original folding door partition was now removed. Also on the first floor were the boys' and girls' restrooms in their original locations, a custodial closet, the guidance office, the principal, nurse and general offices, and copy and work rooms. The second floor held the classrooms for grades four through six, the boys' and girls' restrooms, a speech room, resource and Extended Learning Program (ELP) rooms, an office, lounge, and lounge bathroom, the media office, and the media center.<sup>6</sup>

Interior remodeling projects completed throughout the building's life removed a number of the ventilation shafts in order to increase classroom size. Toilet rooms were also remodeled to update fixtures and provide handicapped accessibility. Some of the interior doors and frames were replaced to provide fire-rated corridors, and suspended acoustical ceilings and updated lighting were added to most of the classrooms.

Original interior details that remain intact include: much of the original varnished woodwork and door surrounds, some original wood-paneled doors and brass hardware, the glass and wood entry vestibule partition, the metal and wood stair rails, and some classroom details such as coat hooks and woodwork.

<sup>6</sup> Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., "Roosevelt Elementary School Facilities Planning & Management Plans," 2008, on file Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa.

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***Gymnasium Addition***

An addition, designed by Architects Rudi and DeKovic, of Ames, Iowa, was constructed in 1968, providing a music classroom, a gymnasium/cafeteria, media center, and administrative, conference, and support spaces.<sup>7</sup> The addition contains 10,625 gross square feet and was constructed using exterior masonry bearing walls, a precast concrete floor structure, interior masonry bearing walls, and a steel bar joist and metal deck roof structure. This addition extended the original north wing 82 feet to the north. Architecturally, the building takes its cues from the original building's massing and material but is recognizable as newer construction in the lighter color of the brick and the shorter bands of windows.

At the north end of the addition is the multi-purpose room, or gymnasium, 40 feet wide and two stories high. Its floor level is in the basement. Exterior walls are concrete block with exterior brick veneer. Interior bearing walls are concrete block. These bearing walls support the structural system of the first and second floors and the roof, which consists of pre-stressed reinforced-concrete double Ts spanning between the bearing walls. Interior non-bearing walls are partitions of metal studs with gypsum board finish. The basement rooms and the multi-purpose room do not have a suspended ceiling. Other rooms and corridors have suspended ceilings of acoustical tile. Windows are lacking in the multi-purpose room and the north stairwell. The media room, or library, has a few small windows on its north wall, but is lit mainly by skylights.

The basement of the addition also housed the gym office and storage rooms, girls' and boys' restrooms, a kitchen, and an instrumental music room, reflecting the needs of an expanding school curriculum. The first floor of the addition included the upper level of the gymnasium, the principal's office, the nurse's office, a general office, two storage rooms, a workroom, and a toilet. The second floor of the addition housed the media center over the gymnasium level, a library workroom, audiovisual room, two conference rooms, a lounge, and a toilet.

***Integrity Statement***

The Roosevelt School retains sufficient integrity under all seven of the aspects of integrity for consideration of National Register eligibility. Specifically, this property is the location of the original Roosevelt School and retains the configuration of the original school property, with the building sited in the southwest corner of the parcel and the playground and open space still along the north side of the parcel, albeit with modern playground equipment installed. The only modern intrusions on the original school property included: the 1968 addition to the rear of the school building, which reduced the playground area somewhat, and the construction of paved parking lots along the west side of the building and playground to accommodate changing modes of transportation in the modern era. The original school building has seen some modification in the modern era, primarily in the replacement/partial infill of the windows and exterior doors, the addition of a metal low-pitched gabled roof to the original flat roof, and the construction of the 1968 gymnasium addition. However, the window and door replacements did not impact the surrounding masonry structure or stone sills of the original openings and could be restored with windows and doors compatible with the originals. Likewise, the metal roof was setback from the façade and only partially obscures the original pediment of the building and does not appear to have involved the removal of original material from that pediment. The 1968 addition was designed to be compatible with the materials and design of the original building and only physically impacted the north side of the north wing of the original building. In general, the school building retains its original brickwork and white stone details and still presents a sufficient sense of time and place of the 1920s-50s era of public education. It also retains the feeling and association of this property as a historic school building even though it currently sits vacant and unused.

<sup>7</sup> Norman Rudi and Charles William DeKovic Jr. formed a partnership under the firm name of "Architects Rudi and DeKovic" in 1966, with offices at 400 Lechner Building in Ames ("Business News," *Ames Daily Tribune*, January 21, 1966.) Several other newspaper articles all consistently spell DeKovic's name with a capital "K," but other sources tend to spell it without the K capitalized. The 1968 blueprints simply list the firm's entire name in all capital letters.

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**8. Narrative Statement of Significance**

*Architect/Builder (continued):*  
Architects Rudi and DeKovic

**Summary Paragraph**

Roosevelt School in Ames, Iowa, is locally significant under Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places. Historically, from the time that it was first built in 1923 until its closure in 2005, Roosevelt School played a central role in the social, cultural, and educational life of northwest Ames and formed the anchor for the development of the surrounding 1920s-1950s residential neighborhood, serving as an elementary school, community center, park, and playground. The school also reflects important social ties between what was then Iowa State College and the wider community of Ames. Through Roosevelt School, Iowa State College faculty shared their professional expertise by serving on the school board's building committee and designing and overseeing the construction of the school. In addition, college faculty, staff, and students lived in the neighborhood surrounding the school, sending their children to the school the college helped build. Today, Roosevelt School retains its architectural and functional continuity with the neighborhood for which it was built. Architecturally, Roosevelt School embodies the distinctive features of influential Progressive-era schoolhouse architects, such as William B. Ittner. Unlike the stifling square boxes that characterized nineteenth-century schoolhouses, schoolhouses built during the 1910s and 1920s permitted ample sunlight, fresh air, and open space for the innovative subjects and learning conditions advocated by Progressive educators. Architectural style continued to be important to Progressive school architects, who believed schoolhouses "should represent the noblest architectural creations in the community."<sup>4</sup> Roosevelt School, with its Beaux Arts symmetry, patterned brickwork, and stone ornamentation, remains a well preserved example of the education and community ideals informing schoolhouse architecture in 1920s Iowa. The building is also considered architecturally significant for representing the work of the local architectural firm of Kimball, Bailie and Cowgill and specifically of architect, A.H. Kimball of that firm. The period of significance for the property is 1923-1959, representing the historic span of the school's operation from its construction in 1923 through 1959, which is the current closing date for National Register consideration for a historic property. During this period, Roosevelt School functioned as the elementary school for the city's Second Ward. The significant date is 1923 when Roosevelt School was constructed.

The following is largely taken from *A Proposal to Designate Roosevelt School as a Local Historic Landmark*, compiled in 2005 by Clare Cardinal-Pett, Tom Leslie, A.L.A., and James Pritchard, Ph.D. Additional information was provided by Wesley Shank, A.L.A. and Professor Emeritus of Iowa State University, David Gradwohl, Ph.D. and Professor Emeritus of Iowa State University, and a reconnaissance survey of Ames completed by William C. Page in 1992.

***Roosevelt School and Residential Growth in Ames, 1920s-1950s***

The City of Ames began in 1858 with the location of a campus for an agricultural college by the State of Iowa on the west side of Squaw Creek in Washington Township in Story County. Ames was platted as a railroad stop east of the creek and the campus in 1864. The city annexed the campus and the area in between in 1892. The college was originally known as the Iowa State Agricultural College and Model Farm but was designated in 1898 as the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (referred to herein as Iowa State College). On July 4, 1959, the name was officially changed to Iowa State University of Science and Technology and is currently referred to simply as Iowa State University or ISU.<sup>5</sup> While Ames was originally

<sup>4</sup> William B. Ittner, "School Architecture That Encourages Wider Use," *Addresses and Proceedings of the Sixtieth Annual Meeting of the National Education Association*, Volume LX (1922), 1483.

<sup>5</sup> Dorothy Kehlenbeck, compiler. *The Iowa State College: Chronology of important events of the first 100 years* (Ames, Iowa: Library, 1958); Earle D. Ross, *A History of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts*. (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State College Press, 1942).

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platted because of the railroad, its development from a town to a city and its continued vitality to the present day are due in large part to the presence of the university and its students and faculty.<sup>6</sup>

During the Progressive Era of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, Ames was propelled "into state prominence as a center of higher education." This reform movement was "led by college-trained professionals" and "sought to implement reform programs and policies conceived and developed in U.S. colleges."<sup>7</sup> "The expansion of markets for Midwestern agricultural produce and a stable price system brought with it a period of great prosperity."<sup>8</sup> Because of this prosperity, more students were able to attend college, and as a result, the population of Ames grew as well increasing by about 74% in the first decade of the twentieth century. This growth continued even through the Great Depression years, with a "boom time" for Ames in the years between the two world wars.

With the city's population expansion, came expansion of its physical limits, with suburban growth beginning in earnest with the annexation of the college campus in the early 1890s. Actual development of suburban plats for residential living was enhanced first by the extension of streetcar lines out from the city center in the 1890s-1910s and later by the advent of the automobile as the popular choice for personal transportation beginning in the early twentieth century. After World War II, the housing shortage for returning military personnel and their booming families resulted in the popularity of tract housing on suburban plats far from the city center that were accessible because of automobile. The College Park Addition, which was platted in 1893, was a suburb laid out soon after the Ames and College Railroad was put into service providing streetcar access to this plat. College Park Addition First North was also accessed by streetcar service; however, both plats developed at a slow rate "and required a long time for the lots to be developed."<sup>9</sup> However, by the 1920s, dwelling construction in these additions was advancing and the location of Roosevelt School in their vicinity in the early 1920s signals some vision on the part of the school board that this area would continue to grow. By placing the school in this outlying area, the school would itself serve as an attraction for residential settlement. In the process, the school would essentially help provide its own growing student enrollment but would also take some pressure off the overcrowded schools elsewhere in the city.

Roosevelt School received its first classes of students in January 1924. The "strictly modern" Second Ward School, as the school was first known, was the result of a community-wide effort that began almost a year and a half earlier. On September 23, 1922, the Ames Board of Education met to discuss "the crowded condition of the school buildings and the necessity of taking steps to submit to the voters of the city the proposition of a building program."<sup>10</sup> Professor T.R. Agg, Dean of Engineering at Iowa State College and chairman of the school board's building committee, publicly promoted a school bond issue as a prudent use of public money, by "attempting to provide reasonable, sensible, educational facilities for the children of Ames."<sup>11</sup> Other Ames community groups followed suit, including the Parent-Teachers Association, civic clubs of Ames, the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, and the art division of the Women's Club. All viewed the construction of a new schoolhouse as a vital service to the booming population of Ames in the early 1920s.<sup>12</sup>

On February 8, 1923, the bond issue passed, allowing the board to move ahead in the construction of a schoolhouse in the Second Ward.<sup>13</sup> Few homes existed in the vicinity of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Northwestern Avenue in 1923. The board was able to

<sup>6</sup> William C. Page, *Historical and Architectural Resources of Ames, Iowa, Reconnaissance Survey, Volume II*. (Report prepared for Department of Planning and Housing, City of Ames, Iowa, 1992), 29-31.

<sup>7</sup> Page, *Historical and Architectural Resources of Ames, Iowa*, 32.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, 91.

<sup>10</sup> September 23, 1922, page 321-2, Secretary's School Record, Volume 3 (July 1915-October 1925), Independent School District, Ames, Iowa.

<sup>11</sup> "Ames Will Vote on School Bond Issue Tomorrow," *Ames Daily Tribune*, February 7, 1923. From Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 85-00574, State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, Iowa.

<sup>12</sup> Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 85-00574.

<sup>13</sup> November 22, 1922 - February 12, 1923, pages 329-39, Secretary's School Record, Volume 3 (July 1915-October 1925), Independent School

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purchase a site for \$6,000 and consisting of 12 lots in two blocks providing sufficient space for a school building and outdoor playground and activity areas.<sup>14</sup> Of the five architects vying for the job, the board commissioned Iowa State College professor and architect Allan H. Kimball of Kimball Bailie & Cowgill, an Ames architectural firm, to draw up the plans.<sup>15</sup> A month later, the board accepted Kimball's plans for the new school. Kimball's school design called for "a two-story brick structure with cornices and doorways trimmed in white stone." The school would contain 16 classrooms, "and in all respects the building will be strictly modern." It would be fireproof, and all floors would be concrete overlaid with maple flooring. Two large playrooms, one for boys and one for girls, would be provided in the basement.<sup>16</sup> R.C. Elvin & Co. of Minneapolis won the bid for general contractor at a proposed cost of \$92,160.<sup>17</sup> The completion deadline was set at January 1, 1924, and generally appears to have been met given that the building opened as Roosevelt School on January 28, 1924.<sup>18</sup> The first year's enrollment of 329 students included kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade (two classes each).<sup>19</sup>

Roosevelt School created a release valve for the Ames school district during a period of intense population growth. In 1921, Ames had four elementary schools: Beardshear School at 9th and Carroll; Central School at 5th and Clark; Lincoln School at South 2nd Street and Kellogg; and Welch School at South Hyland.<sup>20</sup> Along with numerous additions and alterations to existing schools underway or in the planning stages, Roosevelt School was designed to accommodate 500 elementary students in a school district that was bursting at the seams. After the First Ward Welch School burned down just before the start of the fall semester in 1923, many students had been forced to attend school in half-day shifts or in various temporary locations, such as Iowa State College campus buildings and area churches. When Roosevelt School opened, the elementary students were moved from the old Central School, making room for more junior and senior high school students in that building.

Once built, Roosevelt School formed the anchor for the development and expansion of the surrounding neighborhood. With the construction of the Ames & College Railway streetcar line in 1891, Iowa State Agricultural College students, faculty, staff, and administrators started moving into the downtown area, mixing with non-college locals, and creating the cultural diversity of the downtown neighborhoods that still exists.<sup>21</sup> The street railway's successor, the Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern Railway interurban line, continued connecting town and campus from 1907 until 1929.<sup>22</sup> The residential area just north and west of the historic core of Ames grew in proportion to a dramatic Iowa State College enrollment increase after World War I. Indeed, between 1917 and 1927, fall enrollment at the college doubled.<sup>23</sup> The neighborhood south of Roosevelt School, platted in 1893 and 1900 (including the area south of the east-west rail lines), was named College Park, suggesting a link for this residential neighborhood to the college. The neighborhood west of the school and the Chicago & Northwestern railroad tracks was platted in two stages, first as "Chautauqua Park" in 1910 and then as "Ridgewood" in 1923.<sup>24</sup> *Ames Daily Tribune* advertisements for lots in Ridgewood let potential home buyers know, "a new grade school is now being built at the entrance

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District, Ames, Iowa. The bond issue also allowed the board to build and equip additions to the existing Beardshear and Welch schools.

<sup>14</sup> "Plans for New School Accepted by Directors," *Ames Daily Tribune*, March 28, 1923; "Award Contract for New School; Start Work Soon," *Ames Daily Tribune*, May 5, 1923.

<sup>15</sup> While the original blueprints for Roosevelt School list only the name of the architectural firm (Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill), an April 30, 1923, article in the *Ames Daily Tribune* specifically named "Professor A.H. Kimball" as the architect for the project.

<sup>16</sup> "Plans for New School Accepted by Directors," *Ames Daily Tribune*, March 28, 1923.

<sup>17</sup> "Award Contract for New School; Start Work Soon," *Ames Daily Tribune*, May 5, 1923.

<sup>18</sup> An article in the *Ames Daily Tribune* dated January 10, 1924, noted that the Second Ward School "may be named Roosevelt School," with the name of 9th Avenue to be changed to Roosevelt Avenue; "Roosevelt School is Opened this Morning," *Ames Daily Tribune*, January 28, 1924.

<sup>19</sup> "Roosevelt School is Opened this Morning," *Ames Daily Tribune*, January 28, 1924.

<sup>20</sup> *Ames City Directory*, January 1, 1922. Boone, Iowa: Mrs. M.W. Leaverton, Publisher, 1921, p. 96.

<sup>21</sup> At first called the "Motor Line," the train soon became affectionately known as the "Dinkey," sometimes also spelled "Dinky." Ames & College Railway Dinkey, Ames Historical Society (accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/exhibits/dinkey/dinkey\\_photos.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/exhibits/dinkey/dinkey_photos.htm) on April 29, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> Quick Facts about Ames, Iowa, Ames Historical Society (accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/ames\\_facts.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/ames_facts.htm) on April 29, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> Page, "Historical and Architectural Resources of Ames, Iowa," 38.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, 67.

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to Ridgewood's Addition."<sup>25</sup>

Although some Ames residents at the time considered the site at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Northwestern Avenue "too far out in the country," Roosevelt School acted as a beacon, attracting new residents, whose houses quickly filled the empty lots. Indeed, as Sanborn fire insurance maps and aerial photographs show, the school was a harbinger of residential development between Grand Avenue and Squaw Creek. With good access and a brand new public school, the area became a popular choice for college faculty. Indeed, Hodge Avenue was nicknamed "Professor's Row."<sup>26</sup>

Today the area is commonly referred to as the "Roosevelt Neighborhood." Roosevelt School served as not just an elementary school, but also as a community center, park, and playground. The social fabric of the neighborhood has changed very little, and many ISU faculty, students, staff, and administrators still live in the area. Even with the closure of Roosevelt School in 2005, the playground at the school continues to attract neighborhood children.

***Roosevelt School and Iowa State College (now Iowa State University)***

Roosevelt School represents important social ties forged between the campus community at Iowa State College and the broader Ames community during this period of growth. For example, T.R. Agg, a long-time Dean of Engineering was a member of the Ames Board of Education in 1923. As chairman of the building committee and then president of the board, Agg helped direct a fast-paced school building boom, supported by an Ames electorate that passed bond issue after bond issue with overwhelming support and voter turn out.<sup>27</sup>

Agg was chairman of the building committee when the board chose the Ames architectural firm of Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill to design Roosevelt School, with the local newspaper specifically naming A.H. Kimball of that firm as the architect for the school design.<sup>28</sup> Allan Holmes Kimball was founding head of the Iowa State College Department of Architectural Engineering and Rural Structures from 1917 until his death in 1946. He also served as Supervising Architect of Iowa State College's campus from 1915 to 1946. In addition to numerous campus buildings, Kimball designed many buildings in Ames, including the 1923 portion of the Iowa Highway Commission building in Ames, Saint John's Episcopal Church, Collegiate Methodist Church, several fraternity and sorority houses, and the 1930 Crawford School.<sup>29</sup> Also, the 1939-40 addition to the Ames Public Library, which more than doubled the size of the building, was the work of Kimball and his then-partner, Charles F. Bowers.<sup>30</sup>

Originally from California, A.H. Kimball held degrees from the University of California and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He studied architecture in France, England, and Italy and then taught architecture at the University of Illinois for one year before joining the ISC faculty of engineering as professor of structural design. He was also president of the Iowa Chapter of the AIA in 1918, 1919, and 1920. In 1950 an award was established in his honor for students in architecture at Iowa State University, based on outstanding service to the department community.<sup>31</sup>

In the early 1920s, Kimball's partners were Robert Mills Bailie and Clinton Cowgill. Bailie was an Iowa native from Storm Lake and a graduate of the University of Illinois, where he had been one of Kimball's students. After graduation, he worked

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<sup>25</sup> *Ames Daily Tribune*, various days, June 1923.

<sup>26</sup> For example, George Snedecor, Iowa State College's world famous pioneer in statistics, lived at 807 Hodge Avenue from 1922 until 1936.

<sup>27</sup> Grace Bauske, "Ames Community Schools," in *Ames Community History* (1964). History Files, Ames School District Office.

<sup>28</sup> "Fourteen Bids Received on Second Ward School," *Ames Daily Tribune*, April 30, 1923.

<sup>29</sup> H. Summerfield Day, *The Iowa State University Campus and Its Buildings* (Ames: Iowa State University, 1980).

<sup>30</sup> "Library's Well-Run Institution," *Ames Daily Tribune*, November 17, 1954. [Charles F. Bowers was at the time an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Engineering and held a B.S. from North Dakota Agricultural College (1926). He came to Iowa State College in 1928.]

<sup>31</sup> Wesley Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects*. University of Iowa Press, 1999, 96-7.

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for Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson for four years and then joined the faculty at Iowa State College. Cowgill was born in Sterling, Kansas, and studied at the University of Illinois. He began teaching at Iowa State College in 1920. In 1928, Cowgill left to become the first head of the Department of Architectural Engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.<sup>32</sup>

***Roosevelt School and Schoolhouse Architecture in the Progressive Era***

Roosevelt School is a good example of Progressive-era schoolhouse architecture in Iowa. Very generally, the Progressive Era (lasting roughly 1890-1930) defines a period of intense cultural response to the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the United States. Progressives could be found in nearly every profession of the time but very prominently in education. Broadly, Progressives sought, through systematic application of their expertise, to ameliorate of the worst effects of urbanization and industrialization on society. Progressive educators saw in their profession the means to mold self-reliant citizens for the modern age. Innovations in education, such as kindergarten and physical education, were based on a new educational theory, expressed most fully by John Dewey of the University of Chicago and Columbia University. Dewey believed the public school was "the chief remedy for the ills of society." "The school," Dewey reasoned, "should be a place where children are working rather than listening, learning life by living life, and becoming acquainted with social institutions and industrial processes by studying them." Through the use of muscles, sight, feeling, and hearing, and the employment of energy, originality, and initiative, children learned by doing. The theory was broad enough to be interpreted freely by professional educators, who advocated and created all sorts of teaching methods and learning conditions for schools.<sup>33</sup> Playgrounds, gymnasiums, and swimming pools proliferated in schools across the country. School laboratories and workshops allowed scientific experimentation and manual training to produce citizens ready for the industrial world. Because educators viewed these new learning conditions as necessities and not luxuries, the country's old school buildings quickly became obsolete.<sup>34</sup>

The nineteenth-century schoolhouse, in general, had a square boxy shape often with a prominent bell tower like a church steeple. It could be an uncomfortable place to spend any amount of time, being uninsulated and drafty and lacking adequate light and fresh air. After the turn of the twentieth century, three architects, John J. Donovan, Dwight Perkins, and William B. Ittner, emerged as leaders in innovative school design. As City Beautiful advocates, they felt that buildings should enhance their surroundings; as modern schoolhouse proponents they believed that school design should facilitate modern learning conditions.<sup>35</sup> The so-called "City Beautiful Movement" grew out of the Reform movements of the late nineteenth century and was strongly influenced by the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. The core belief of the City Beautiful Movement was that in creating a beautiful city, its inhabitants would be inspired to moral and civic virtue. The Reform movement itself, which "had been largely concerned with corruption in local government, exploitation of the laboring classes by big business, improvement in housing conditions in large cities, and other social causes, quickly embraced the concept of the city beautiful as an American goal."<sup>36</sup> The advocates of the City Beautiful sought to improve urban areas through aesthetic beautification, which would have a number of effects:

- 1) Social ills would be swept away, as the beauty of the city would inspire civic loyalty and moral rectitude in the impoverished;
- 2) American cities would be brought to cultural parity with their European competitors through the use of the European Beaux-Arts idiom; and
- 3) a more inviting city center still would not bring the upper classes back

<sup>32</sup> Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects*, 14, 47.

<sup>33</sup> Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, "Progressivism," From *The American History Series*, edited by John Hope Franklin and Abraham S. Eisenstadt (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1983, 90); Ellwood P. Cubberley, *Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919), 359-60.

<sup>34</sup> Link and McCormick, "Progressivism," 24; Albert M. Deyve, *Suggestions and Plans for Iowa Schoolhouses and Grounds* (Des Moines: Department of Public Instruction, 1916), 7.

<sup>35</sup> Deiber, *Town Schools for Iowa*, 12.

<sup>36</sup> Julie K. Rose, *City Beautiful: The 1901 Plan for Washington, D.C.* (University of Virginia Web Page, American Studies, 1996), 2.



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to live, but certainly to work and spend money in the urban areas.<sup>37</sup>

According to William B. Ittner: "A school architect who does not keep in constant touch with changes in educational objectives, with new types of organization and administration, and with the evolution and enrichment of the curriculum cannot successfully plan schools."<sup>38</sup> The most striking innovation of the new schoolhouse was in its layout. Instead of the massive square buildings of the previous century, modern schools had open floor plans that were L, I, or U shaped, with a main entrance that was the architectural focal point of the building. Another feature was the combined-use room, with moveable furniture and folding partition walls that helped to rid schoolhouses of much wasted space.<sup>39</sup>

In Iowa, Progressive educators saw a great need for public schoolhouse reform. As Henry Sabin, the State Superintendent of Schools in Iowa from 1888 through 1892 and 1894 through 1898 observed: "All over the state are school grounds, bare, dreary and desolate, without a tree to shelter the children from the winter's blast or the summer's sun . . . Outhouses with doors off the hinges, clapboards off the sides, defiled and defaced, a disgrace to a civilized community." He described the schools themselves as "poorly ventilated, poorly heated, and poorly maintained, which he related to school children's ill health."<sup>40</sup> Nearly twenty years later, Albert M. Deyoe, state superintendent of public instruction, reported similar findings, that there were "many schoolhouses in Iowa, including one-room buildings, that should be condemned as unfit for use for school purposes."<sup>41</sup> Thus in 1916, Deyoe produced a bulletin of suggestions and plans for building better schoolhouses, which incorporated many of the desirable conditions and equipment that all modern schoolhouses required, and included explicit advice on site selection, arrangement of rooms, window amount and placement, ventilation, stairways, corridors, blackboards, cloak rooms, seating, toilets, and drinking fountains.<sup>42</sup> World War I temporarily halted school construction in Iowa and elsewhere; however, construction resumed in earnest in the 1920s, with the Roosevelt School in Ames among the new school buildings in the state. In its design, the Ames Board of Education and architect, A.H. Kimball, certainly took note of the standards articulated by leading school architects and Iowa's own education officials. When it opened in 1924, Roosevelt School provided Ames schoolchildren with the city's first modern schoolhouse.

Besides being fireproof, Roosevelt School met numerous conditions considered essential in designing the modern schoolhouse, particularly in providing students with ample sunlight, fresh air, and room to play. The school was sited on the original property in such a way to make plenty of room for outdoor recreation space and play equipment.<sup>43</sup> Inside, the raised basement contained two playrooms – one for boys and one for girls – on the east and west sides. Such spaces were deemed essential in the socialization and physical development of children.

The school's original banked 12-over-12 double hung sash windows on the east and west walls provided abundant natural light and allowed for sufficient blackboard space on the window-less walls. All but four south-facing classrooms received either the morning or afternoon sunlight thought best for schoolchildren. The "blind" bays of the south façade emphatically blocked light from that direction, as south light was considered too constant for students and teachers could not regulate the

<sup>37</sup> Rose, *City Beautiful*, 2-3.

<sup>38</sup> W.B. Ittner, "The School Plant and the School," *The Journal of the National Education Association* 11:1 (January 1922), 5-6: Several factors drove the transformation of schoolhouses from collections of classrooms to total learning environments in the 1910s and 1920s. As Ittner wrote: "By far the most pronounced cause in the educational awakening has been the revelations of the world war" . . . which forced "the attention of all concerned to the seriousness of the neglect of certain fundamentals in education. Hence the recent marked attention upon health, recreation, manual occupations, and citizenship." These new demands, Ittner believed, required richer and more thoughtfully organized educational facilities than had been built in the past.

<sup>39</sup> Deiber, *Town Schools for Iowa*, 12.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1996), 122.

<sup>41</sup> Deyoe, *Suggestions and Plans*, 8.

<sup>42</sup> Deyoe, *Suggestions and Plans*, 7: Perhaps looking to the Iowa Highway Commission, which just one year earlier had been given control over bridge design for the state, the department of public instruction advocated for its own "special state school building architect to whom all plans and specifications for school buildings shall be submitted for approval."

<sup>43</sup> Deyoe, *Suggestions and Plans*, 10.

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shades “to prevent injurious pencils of light coming into the room.” North-facing windows, which never admitted direct sunlight, were avoided in Roosevelt School as well. Thus windows in the four classrooms in the north wing of the school faced east or west. The three school offices were located with windows on the undesirable south and north walls. As suggested, windows in each classroom were banked (placed as close together as possible) and tall, starting from less than four feet from the floor and reaching nearly the ceiling. It was believed that this particular window size and placement lessened “shadows that may otherwise be formed and also prevent[ed] any passing objects from destroying the direct interest of the children.” Double shades on the windows allowed teachers to “meet the rays of the sun” throughout the school day. As recommended, all classrooms received, for a part of each day, some direct sunlight as a disinfectant.<sup>44</sup>

Ventilation played a prominent role in designing the modern learning environment of Roosevelt School, as well. In addition to an abundance of windows, the building featured an internal ventilation system, which provided supply and return air to each classroom and helped block out cold drafts. Steam heat was supplied to the classroom radiators from a coal-fired furnace vented by a central chimney stack.<sup>45</sup>

Other modern features of Roosevelt School included: indoor toilets segregated by sex on the first and second floors; drinking fountains instead of the unsanitary shared drinking cups of the past; coat rooms inside each classroom; slate blackboards of sufficient size and height for each grade; and picture rail moldings in each classroom for hanging art work and other visual education aids.<sup>46</sup> An auditorium was provided on the west side of the main floor close to two outside entrances. The auditorium was made from two combined-use classrooms separated by folding partition doors during classroom use. The two rooms thus could be converted into one large room to serve as a school auditorium for public programs and gatherings. A stereopticon (early slide projector) outlet is shown in the 1923 plans just below the blackboard on the blind south wall of the auditorium.<sup>47</sup> Such efficiency of plan encouraged the wider use of the school by the community that school architects, such as Ittner, and other education officials advocated.<sup>48</sup>

### *Roosevelt School as Community Asset*

In 1900, a nationwide movement sought to beautify school buildings and grounds in order to refine the behavior and taste of the pupils. Although more visible as a national trend, Iowa’s schoolhouses reflected this goal in widely varying degrees.<sup>49</sup> By the 1920s, most believed as William B. Ittner did, that new schoolhouses should represent “the noblest architectural creations in the community.” If a school’s “interior plan is rich, well-balanced, and proportioned,” Ittner elaborated, “the exterior should evidence these qualities.” In so doing, the architect believed, schoolhouses would “constitute community assets both educationally and architecturally.”<sup>50</sup>

Roosevelt School generally exhibits the Beaux-Arts style that was *de rigueur* for institutional buildings throughout the Midwest in the 1920s. This style derived from the neo-classical (but eclectic) teachings of the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, and was a global indicator of taste and monumental dignity. From about 1850 until 1930, international students studying at the École were the primary vectors of its dissemination throughout Europe and the United States. Often termed “neo-classical revival” or linked to the City Beautiful movement, the Beaux-Arts approach relied primarily on the plan to generate

<sup>44</sup> Deyoe, *Suggestions and Plans*, 20-1; 26.

<sup>45</sup> Kimball Bailie & Cowgill, Architects, Ames, *Plans for Second Ward School for the Board of Education, Ames, Iowa*, 1923.

<sup>46</sup> Kimball Bailie & Cowgill, Architects, Ames, *Plans for Second Ward School for the Board of Education, Ames, Iowa*, 1923; Deyoe, *Suggestions and Plans*, 20, 26.

<sup>47</sup> Kimball Bailie & Cowgill, Architects, Ames, *Plans for Second Ward School for the Board of Education, Ames, Iowa*, 1923.

<sup>48</sup> Ittner, “School Architecture That Encourages Wider Use,” 1483.

<sup>49</sup> Keach Johnson, “The State of Elementary and Secondary Education in Iowa in 1900,” *Annals of Iowa* 49:1, 2 (Summer/Fall 1987): 27-8.

<sup>50</sup> Ittner, “School Architecture That Encourages Wider Use,” 1484.

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symmetrical, balanced, highly rhythmic building masses. Known as a *parti*, the basic plan of a Beaux Arts building will typically include a central hall on axis with the main entry, flanking wings that are symmetrical, a fenestration pattern that focuses attention on the central bays, and a relentless articulation of detail and building mass.<sup>51</sup>

The Beaux Arts infiltration into the Midwest came largely through Chicago, in particular during the decades following the 1893 Columbian Exposition. This fair was the crowning glory of American neo-classicism, and its influence was both vast and immediate. In Iowa, the firm of Proudfoot and Bird (later Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson) picked up influences from Chicago architect Daniel Burnham, designing neo-classical buildings throughout Des Moines and Iowa. Among their early works were courthouses for Dallas, Polk, and Jasper Counties (1902, 1906, and 1911 respectively; all still extant), Des Moines' City Hall (1910), and large churches throughout central Iowa. By far their greatest collection of Beaux Arts monuments, however, was at Iowa State University. Here, their buildings included: Beardshear Hall (1906), Engineering Hall (1900), Alumni Hall (1904), the Campanile (1922), and Parks Library (1928).<sup>52</sup>

Neo-classical was the style of choice for most institutional buildings in Iowa in the early 1900s, but Ames was, because of these examples, a major concentration. The inherent monumentality of the style and its connotations of both European respectability and urbane dignity lent themselves to a variety of programs that aspired to civic importance. Schools, libraries, and post offices, along with courthouses and university buildings, adopted these principles throughout the state from roughly 1890 until the mid-1930s. While ornamental programs ranged from English Gothic to Romanesque, the basic principles of Beaux Arts teaching are evident in civic buildings of the era including Proudfoot and Bird's Roosevelt High School (Des Moines, 1922). Closer to Roosevelt School, Ames' Chicago and Northwestern Railway Passenger Station (designed by Chicago architects Frost and Granger, 1900) and its Post Office (a rare later Beaux Arts scheme by Louis Simon, 1935) both display neo-classical composition and detail.<sup>53</sup>

School districts, of course, did not have the wealth of the railroads, county government, or universities. By necessity, schools and libraries reverted to a stripped-down version of the style that has its own unique hallmarks. Roosevelt School's plan is a classic Beaux Arts layout, with a broad central hall on axis with its front door, symmetrical massing, and regular fenestration on its main facades. Its detail, of white stone, is particularly good and remarkably well preserved for a building of its vintage. Entablatures, fascias, dados, and plinth rails all serve to give the building its overall neo-classical character, while leaving large expanses of less expensive brickwork to cover much of the exterior. The central entry bay features entablatures and finials surrounding the door that are characteristic of more monumental buildings of the style. The entry to Roosevelt School was indeed a source of pride to school officials and the community and functioned as the backdrop for formal class photographs throughout its history. The blind bays at the extreme east and west ends of the south façade (the function of which are described above) are elaborated with brick diamond pattern and relief, providing emphasis at the corners and continuing the rhythm of the central bays' fenestration. Practically, these blank end walls allow the flanking classrooms to "turn the corner" while giving them the same room shape and window layout as the classrooms in the center bay.<sup>54</sup>

The future of Roosevelt School is in question given its current vacant status. Ames Smart Growth Alliance (ASGA), a community non-profit, has mounted an effort to try and save the school from demolition and is promoting its renovation as an elementary school or other adaptive reuse. The current nomination is part of this ASGA effort.

<sup>51</sup> Clare Cardinal-Pett, Tom Leslie, and James Pritchard, "A Proposal to Designate Roosevelt School 1000 W. 9th Street, Ames, IA as a Local Historic Landmark," submitted on behalf of the Roosevelt Neighborhood and Residents of Ames, June 13, 2005.

<sup>52</sup> Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects*, 127-31; Cardinal-Pett, Leslie, and Pritchard, "A Proposal to Designate Roosevelt School."

<sup>53</sup> Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects*, 131; Cardinal-Pett, Leslie, and Pritchard, "A Proposal to Designate Roosevelt School." See also David Gebhard and Gerald Mansheim, *Buildings of Iowa* (New York: Oxford University Press/Society of Architectural Historians, 1993), 161, 163, 229-30.

<sup>54</sup> Cardinal-Pett, Leslie, and Pritchard, "A Proposal to Designate Roosevelt School."

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 9-12 of Block 26 of the College Park 2<sup>nd</sup> Addition North and Lots 1-8 and the east half of Lot 9 of Block 2 of Bairds Addition, all in the City of Ames, Story County, Iowa.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary is the legal description of the entire parcel historically associated with Roosevelt School including the 1923 school building, the 1968 gymnasium addition, and the school's playground and activity area.

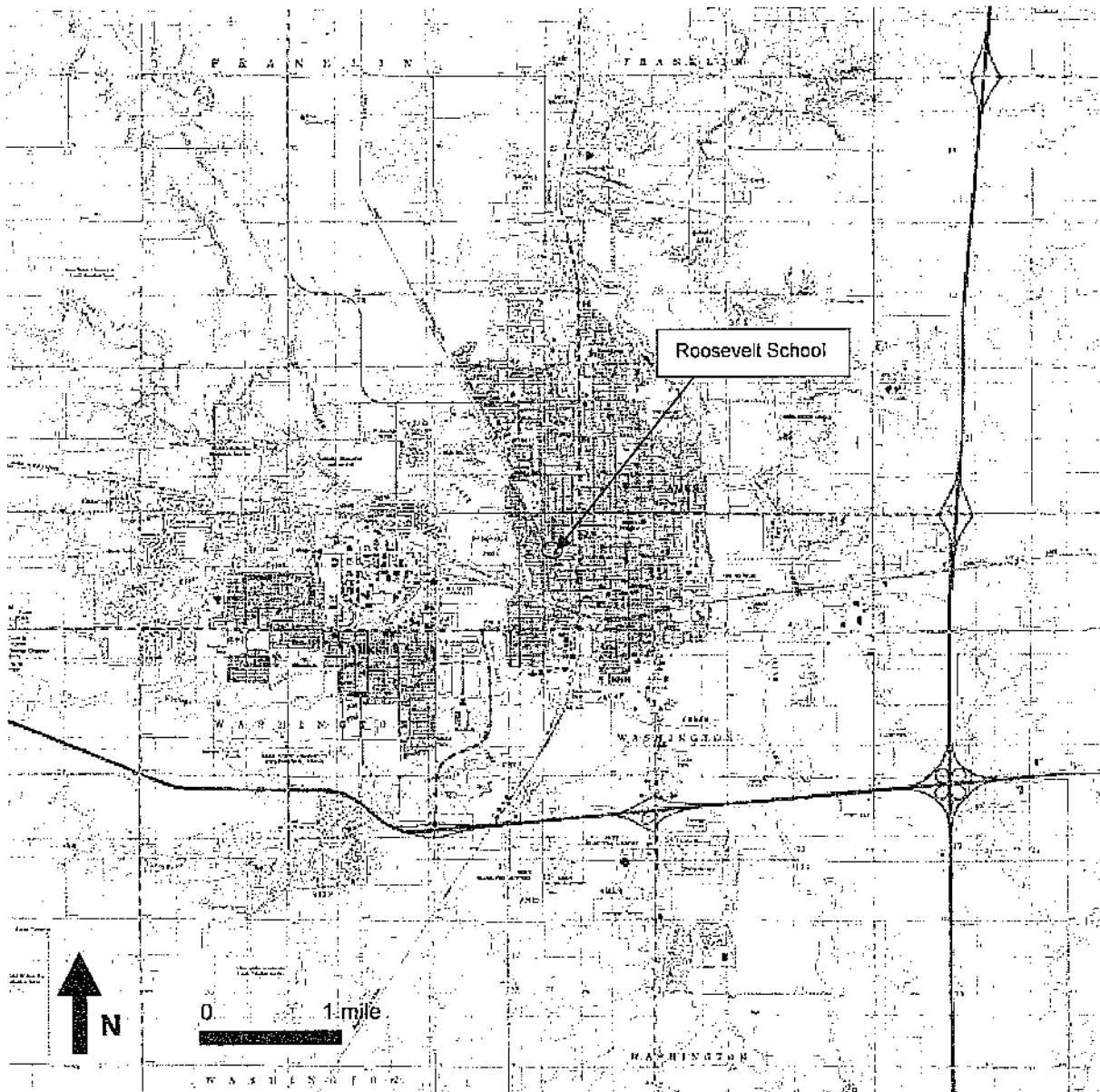
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**Topographic location of the City of Ames, Iowa showing the location of Roosevelt School (circled).**  
Source: USGS Ames East; digitized copy obtained from Iowa Geographic Map Server 2009

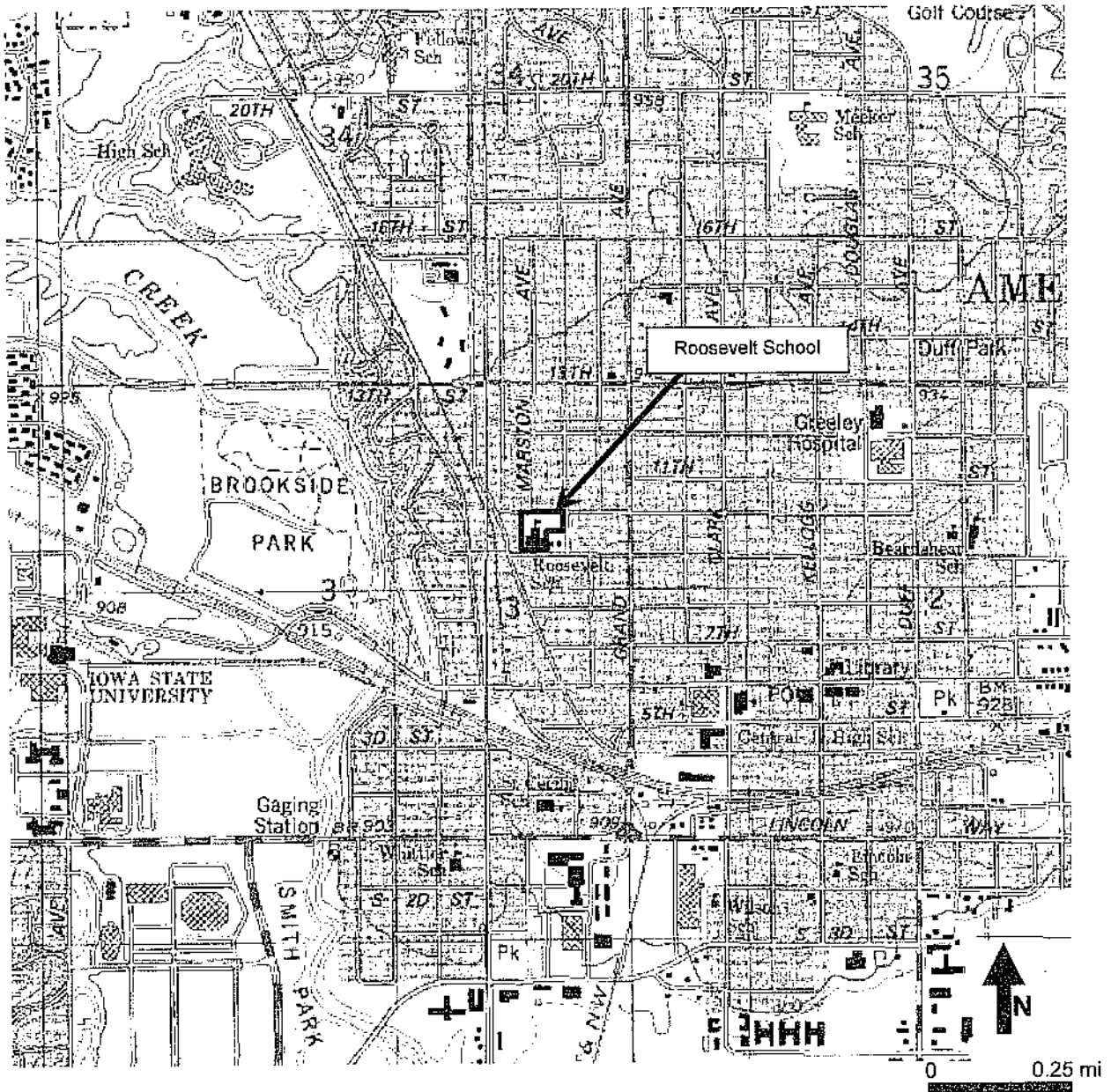
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**Detail of topographic map location of Roosevelt School showing National Register Boundary (black outline)**  
Source: USGS Ames East; digitized copy obtained from Iowa Geographic Map Server 2009



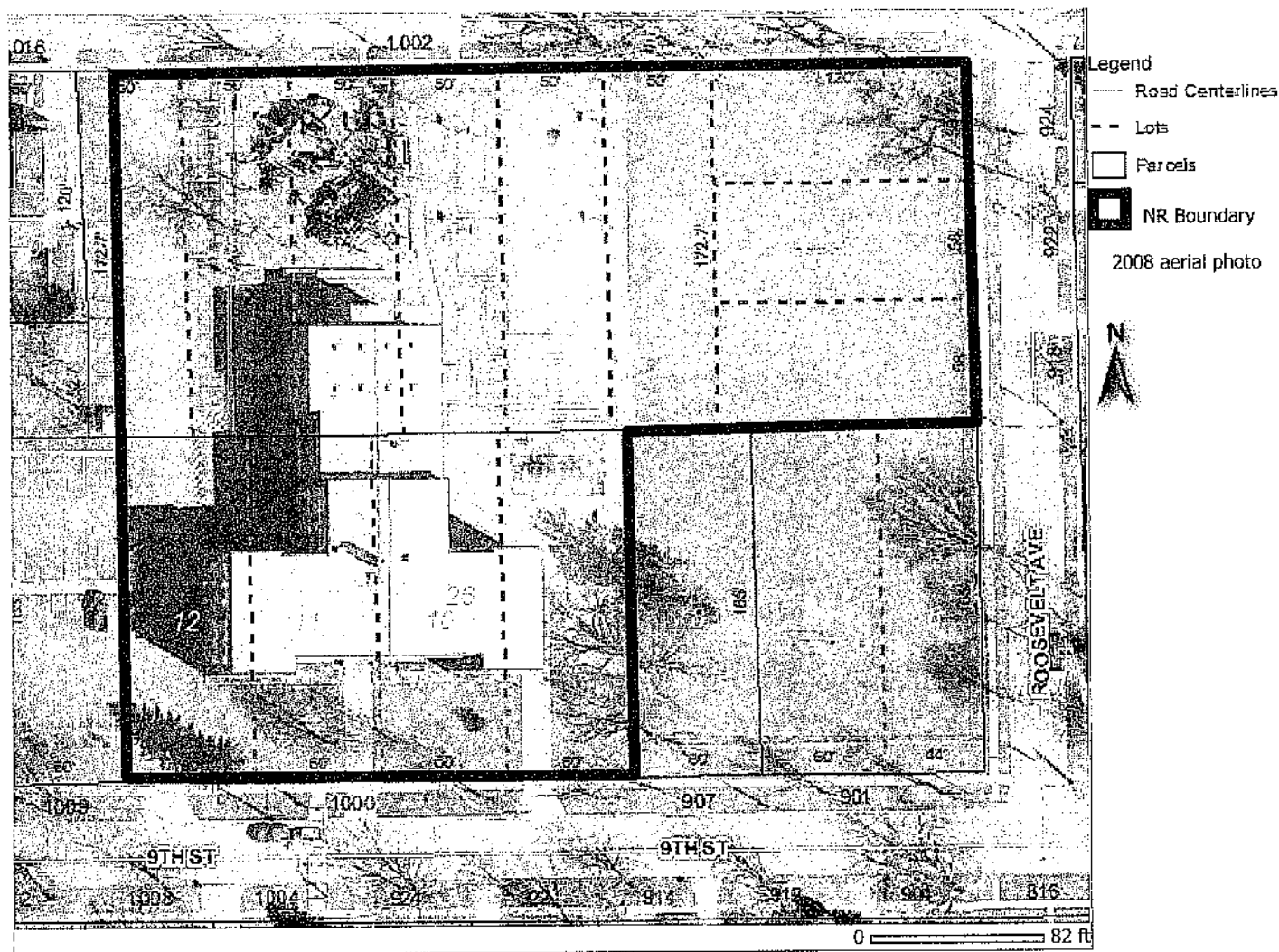
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**Aerial map location of Roosevelt School showing National Register Boundary (black outline)**

Source: Story County, IA/City of Ames Assessors' website accessed at <http://beacon.schneidercorp.com/?site=StoryCountyIA>,  
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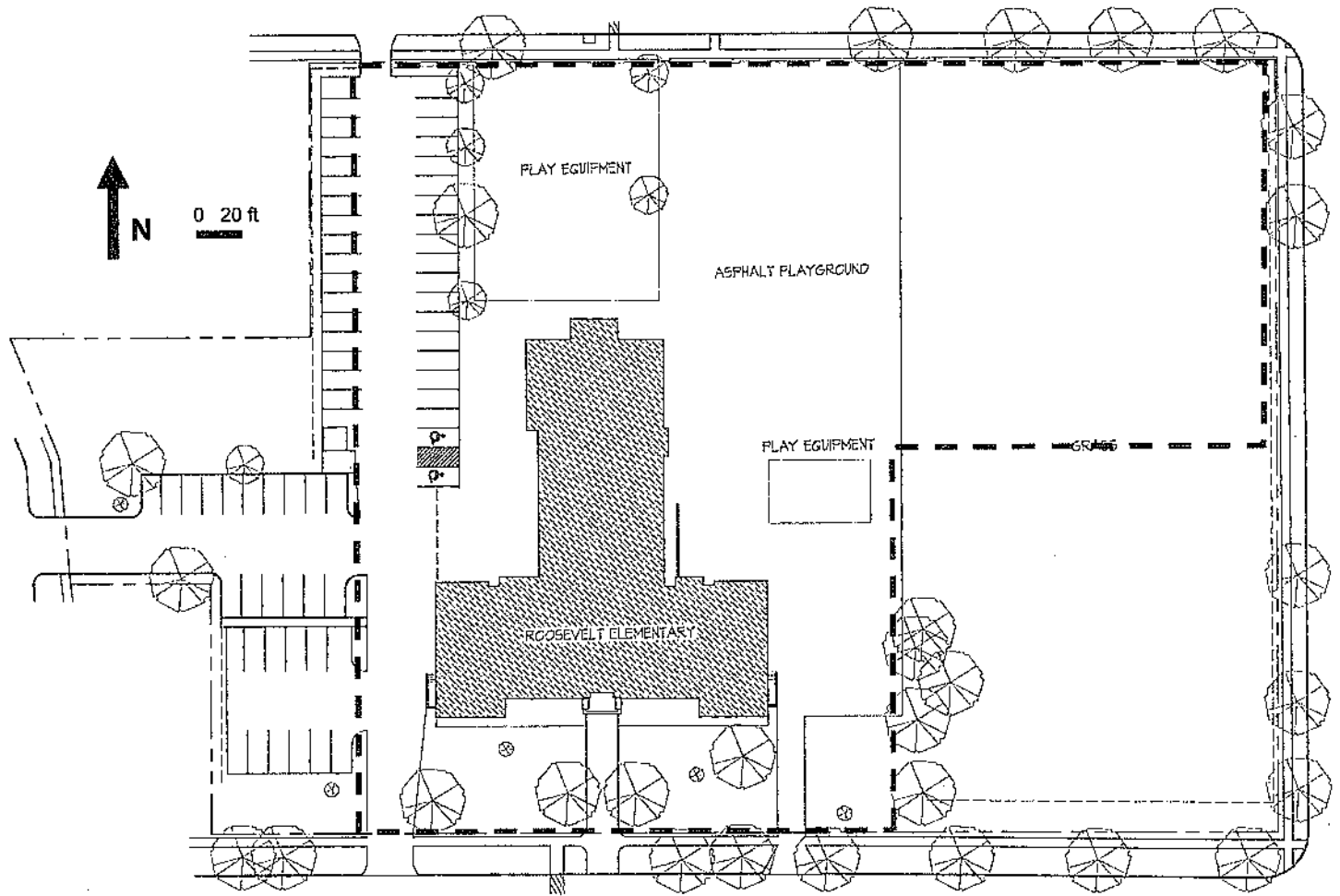
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**Current site plan showing National Register boundary (dashed line)**

Source: 2008 Facilities Planning and Management blueprints on file Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., Ames, Iowa)

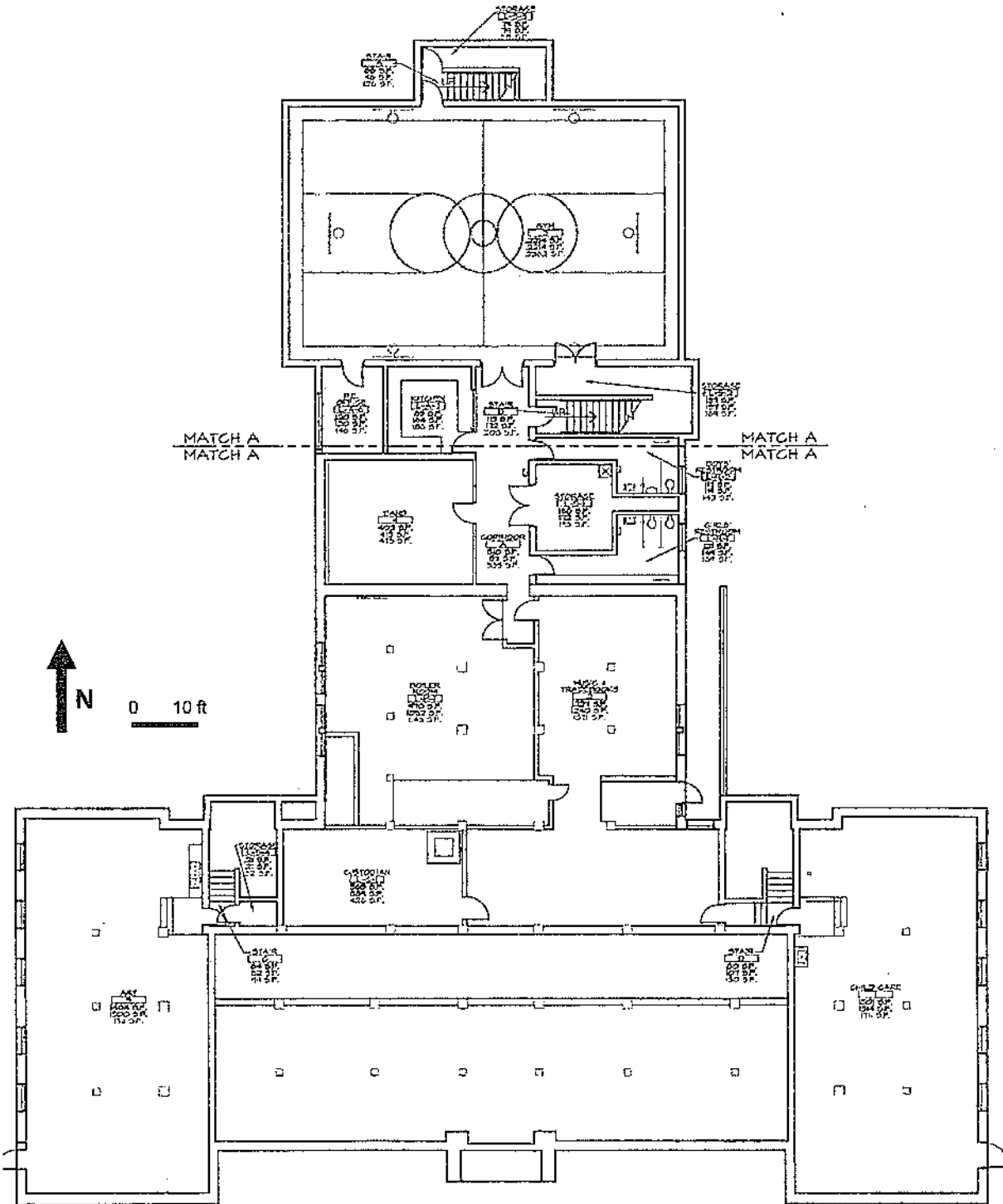
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**Current basement floor plan**

Source: 2008 Facilities Planning and Management blueprints on file Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., Ames, Iowa)

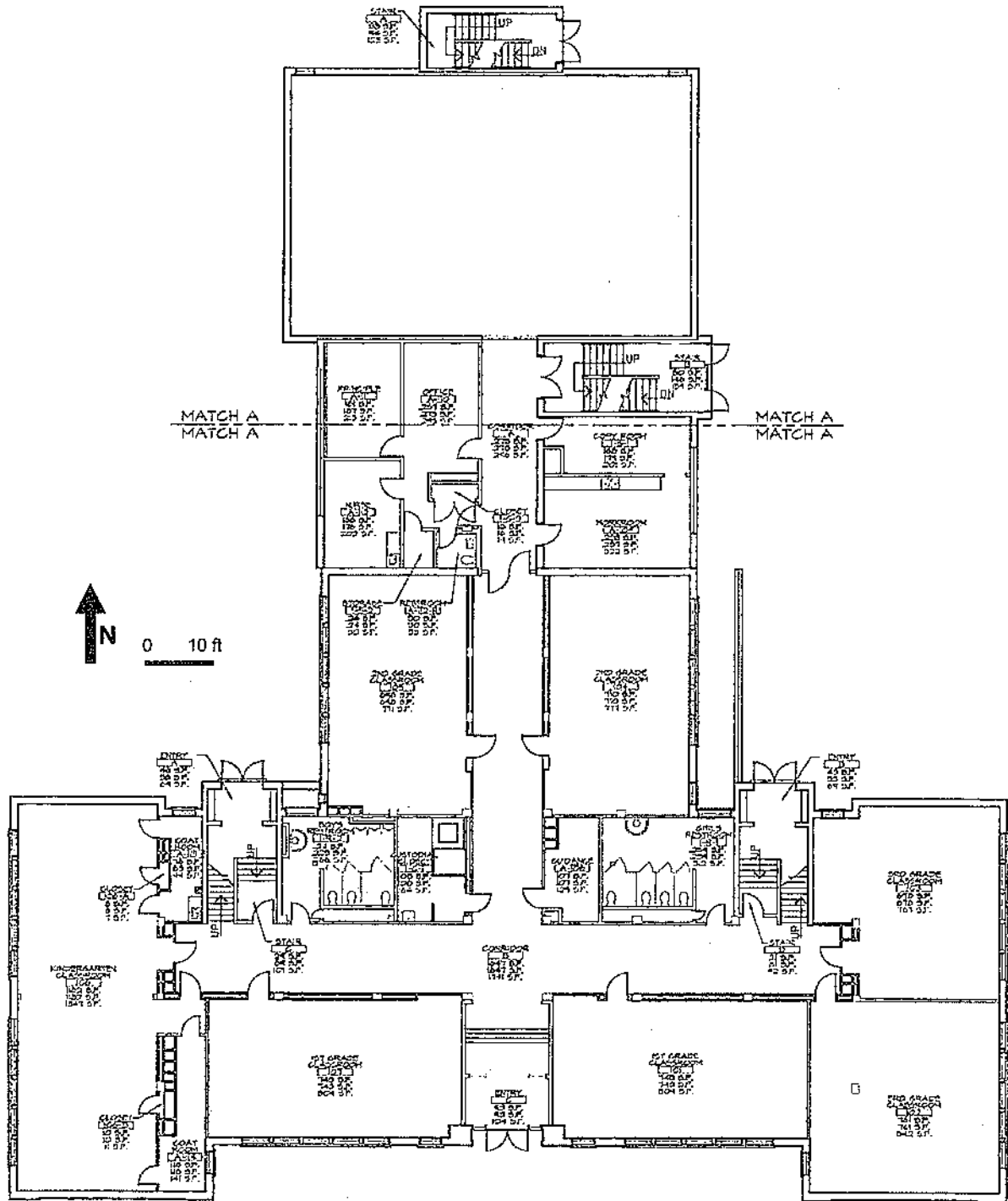
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**Current first floor plan**

Source: 2008 Facilities Planning and Management blueprints on file Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., Ames, Iowa)

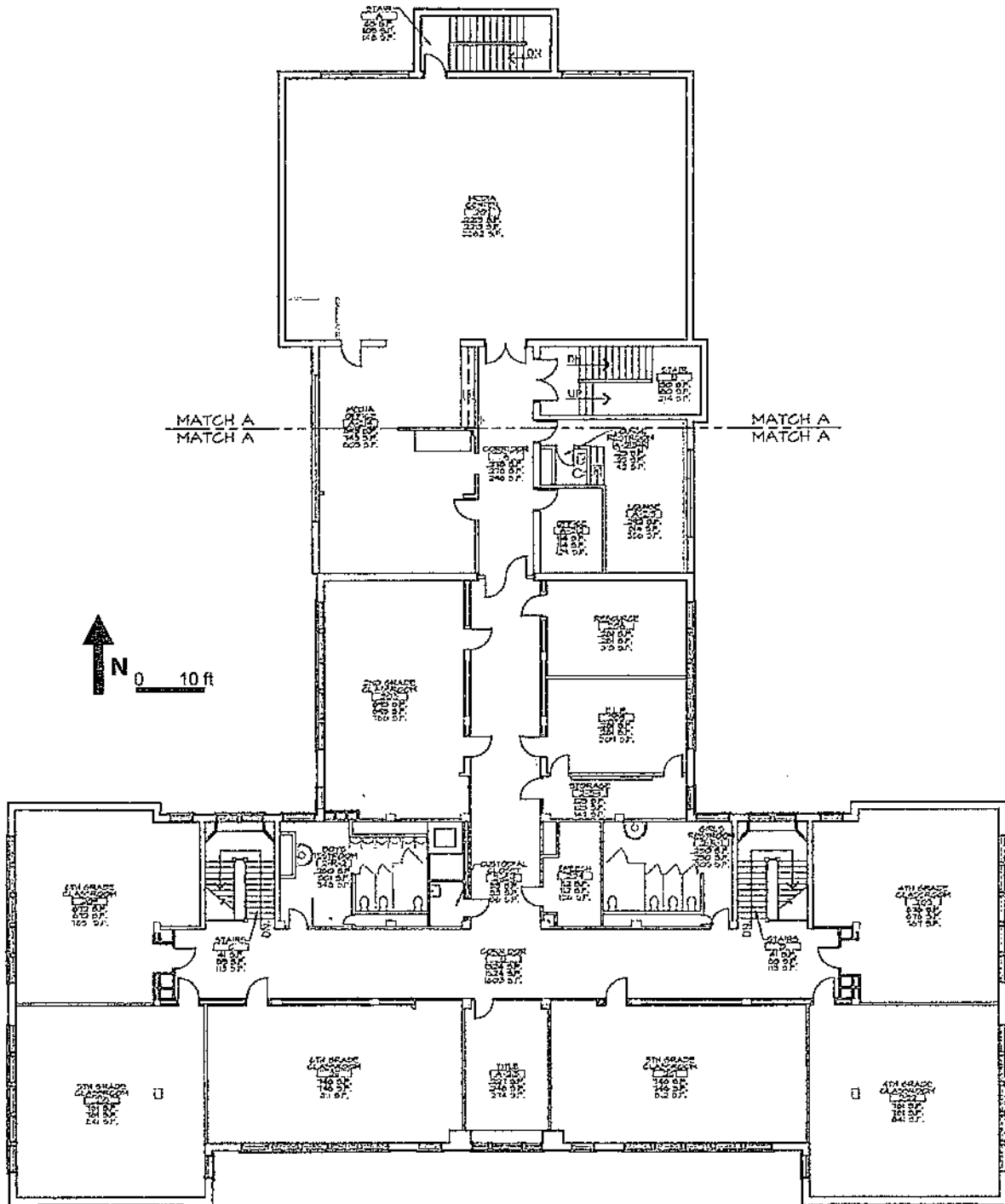
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Current second floor plan

Source: 2008 Facilities Planning and Management blueprints on file Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., Ames, Iowa)

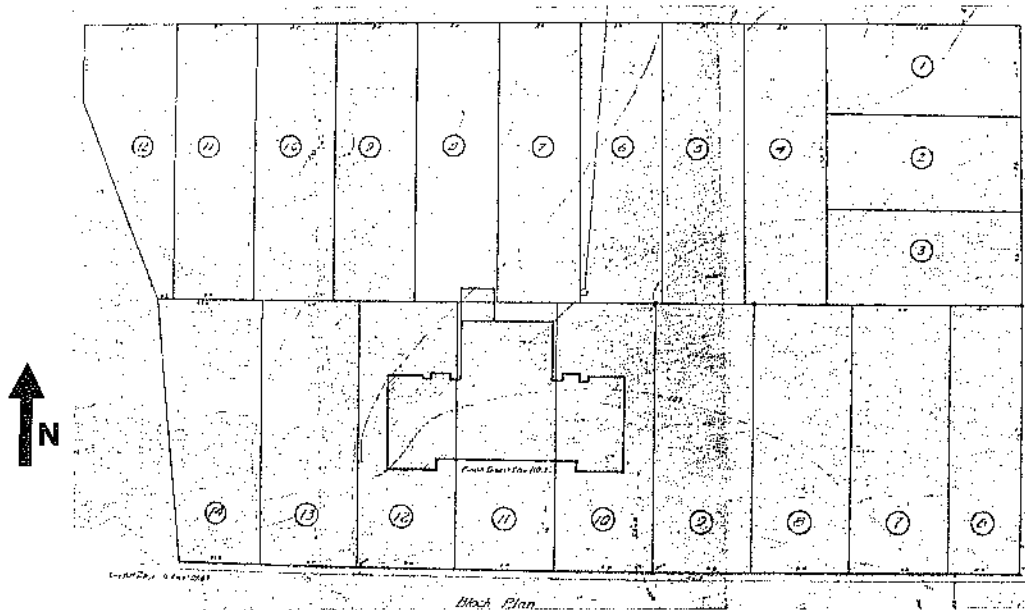
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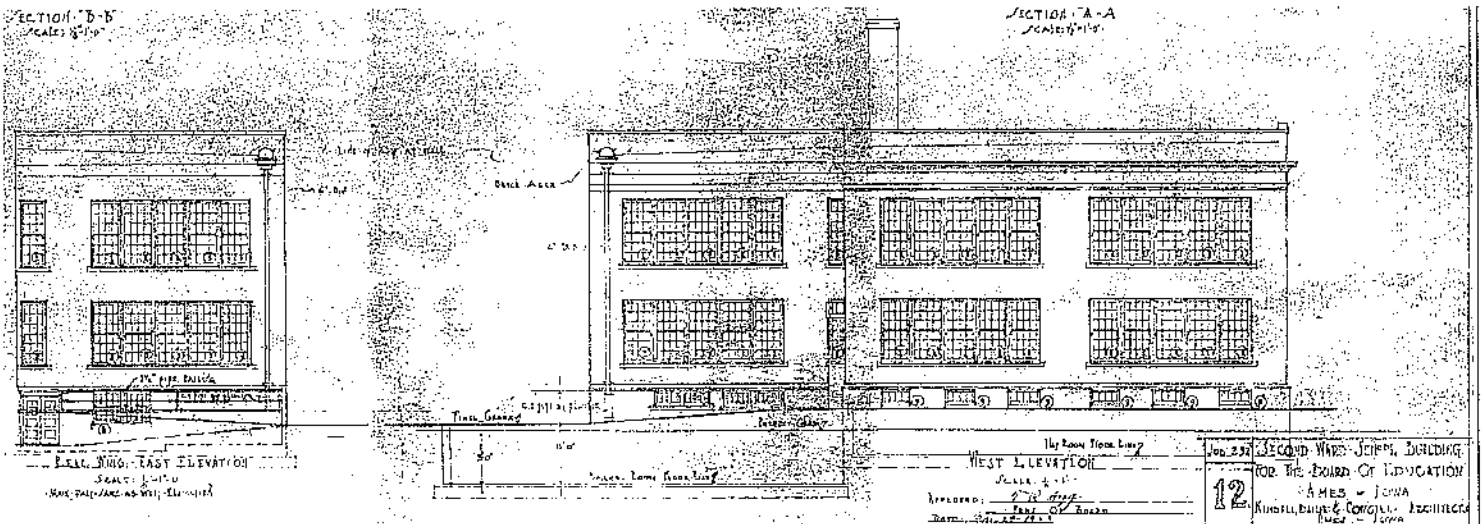
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**Original 1923 site plan for the Roosevelt School building**



**1923 West and East elevations of the original Roosevelt School building**

Source: Photocopies of original blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, Ames, Iowa)

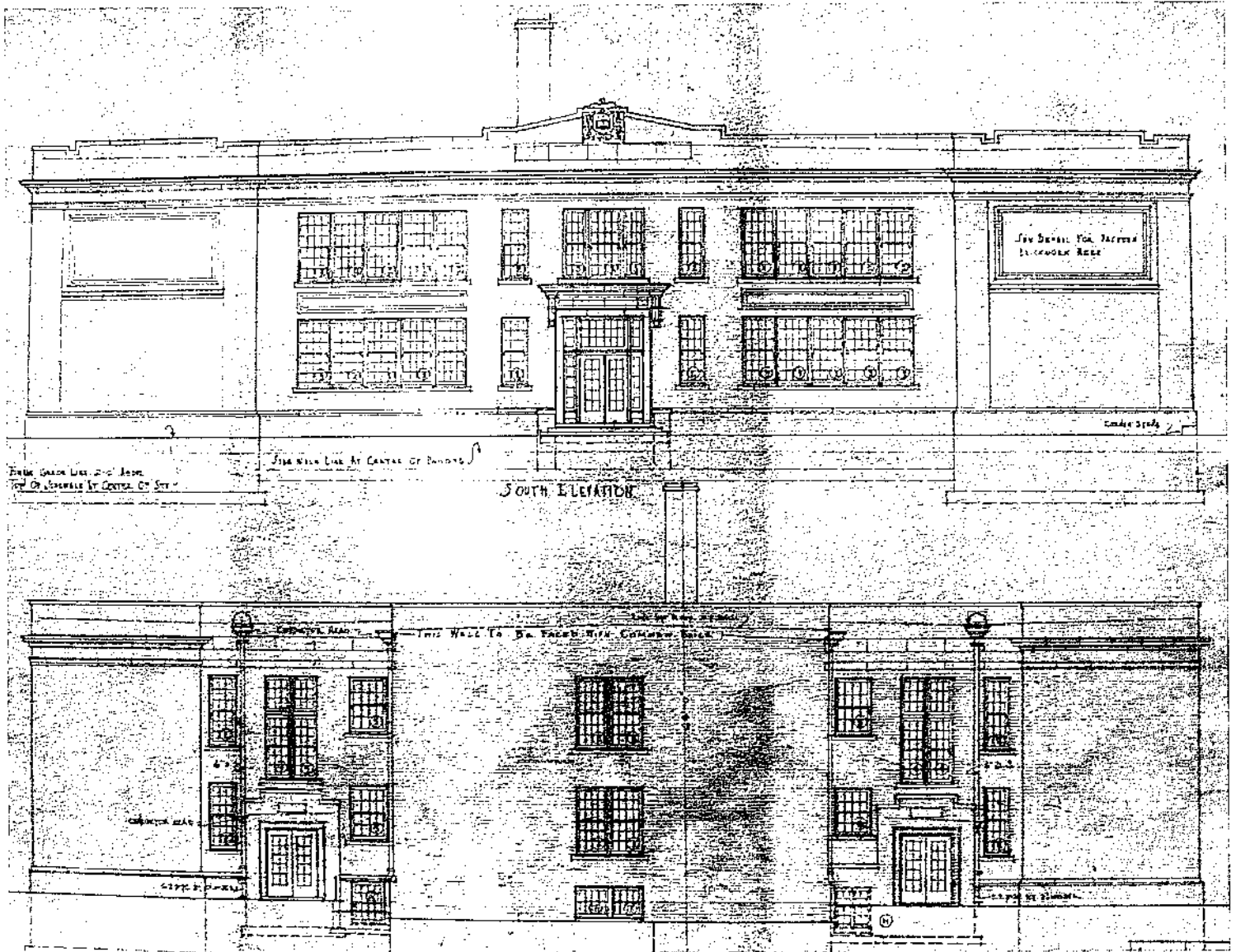
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1923 South and North elevations of original Roosevelt School building

Source: Photocopy of original blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, Ames, Iowa)

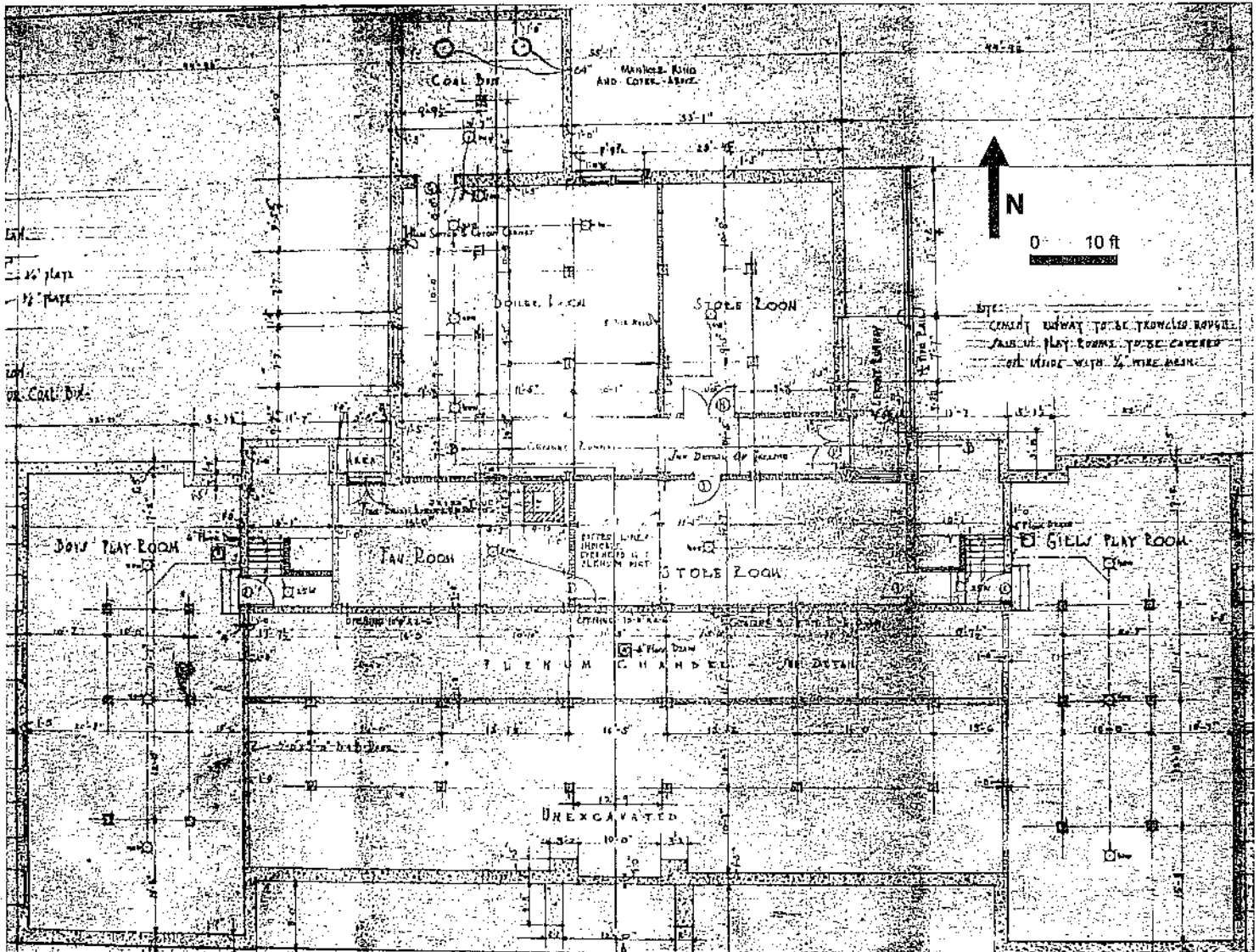
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**Basement floor plan for the 1923 Roosevelt School building**

Source: Photocopy of original blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, Ames, Iowa)



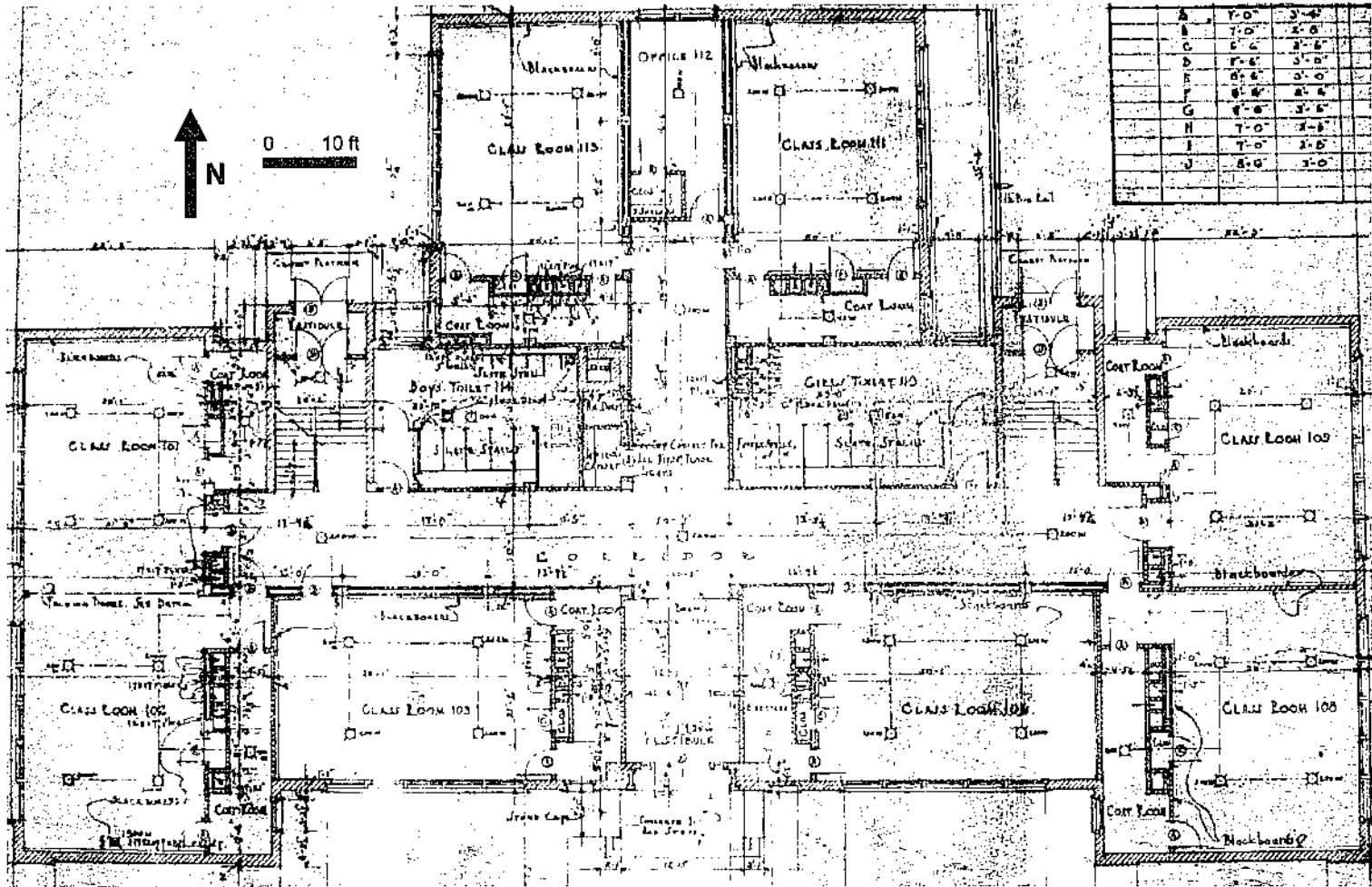
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First floor plan for the 1923 Roosevelt School building

Source: Photocopy of original blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, Ames, Iowa)

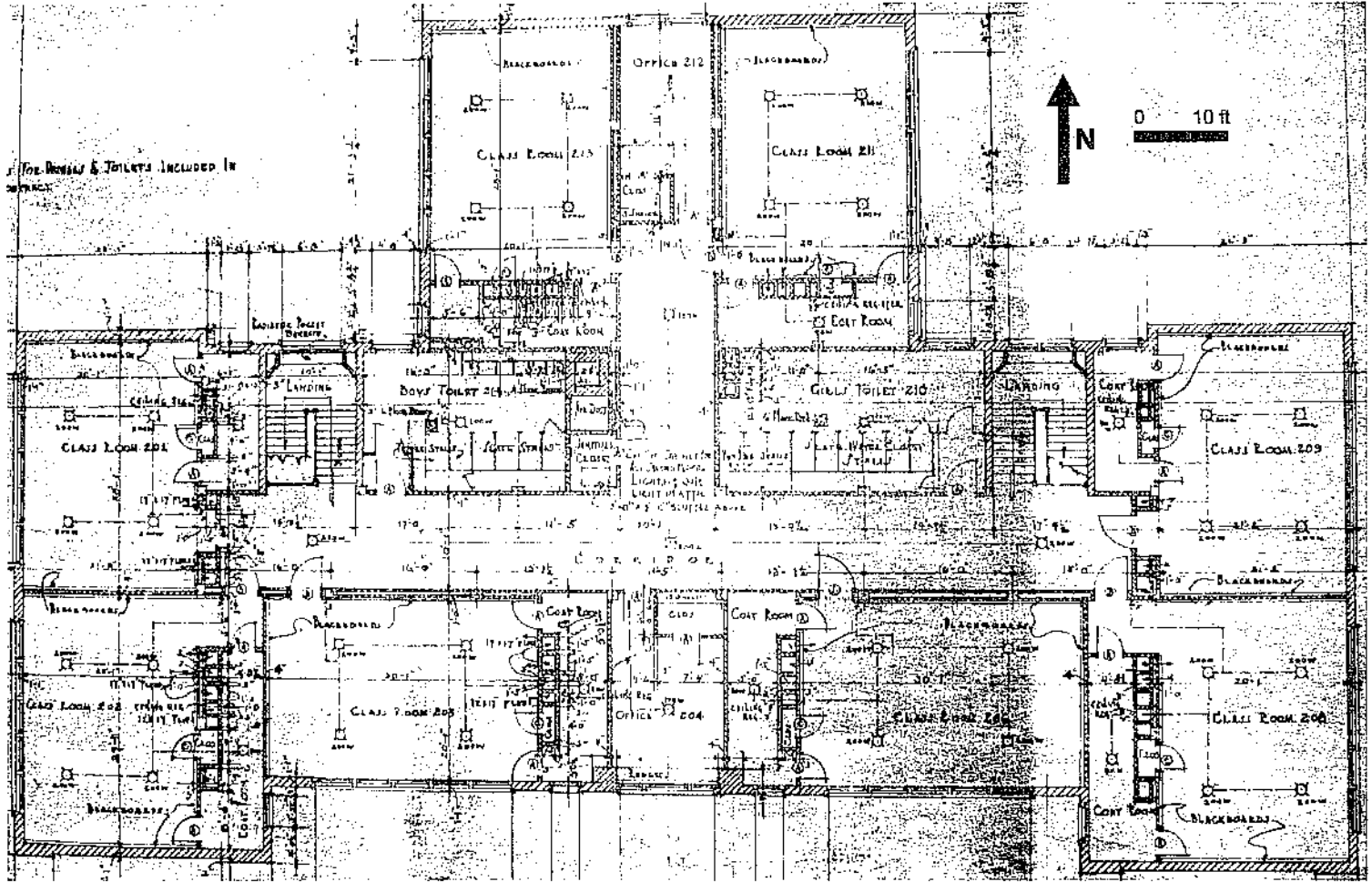
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**Second floor plan for the 1923 Roosevelt School building**

Source: Photocopy of original blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, Ames, Iowa)

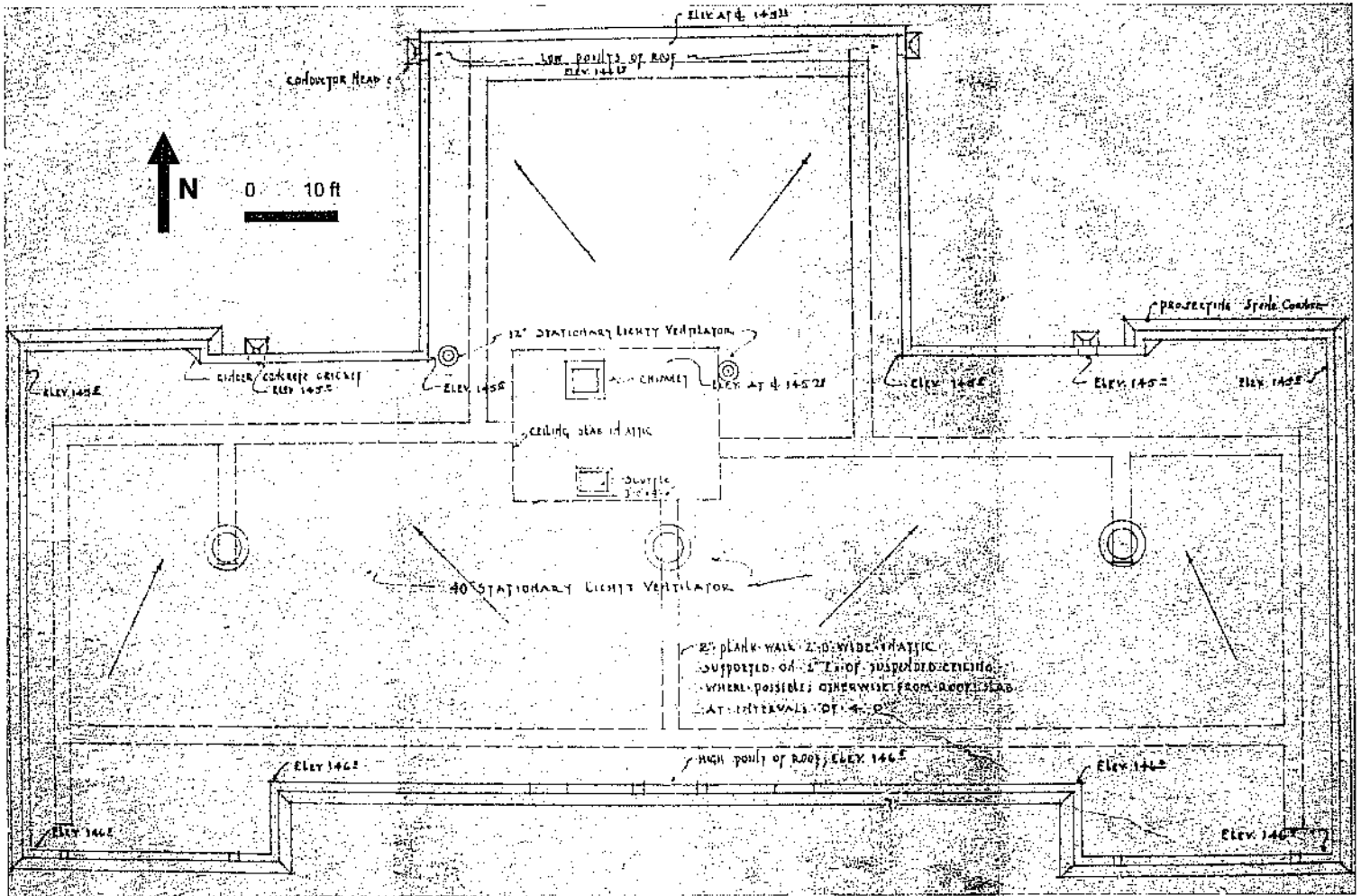
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**Roof plan for the 1923 Roosevelt School building**

Source: Photocopy of original blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Kimball, Bailie & Cowgill, Ames, Iowa)

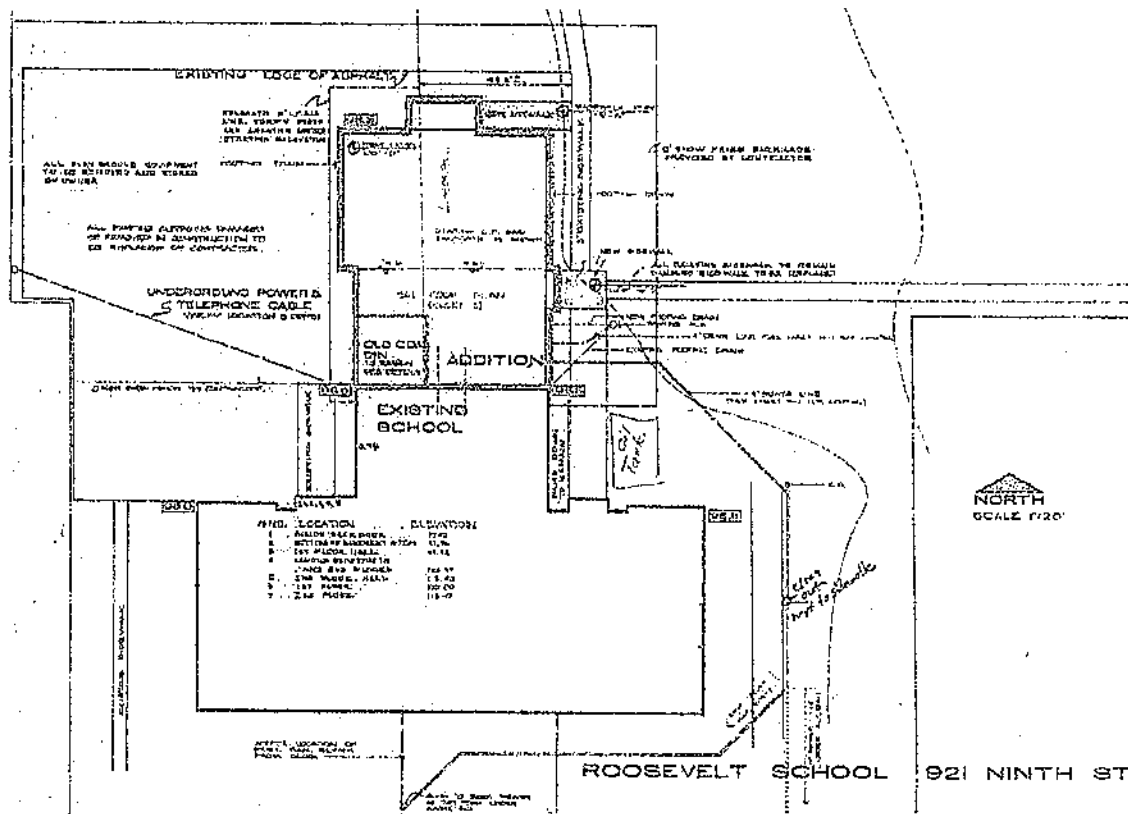
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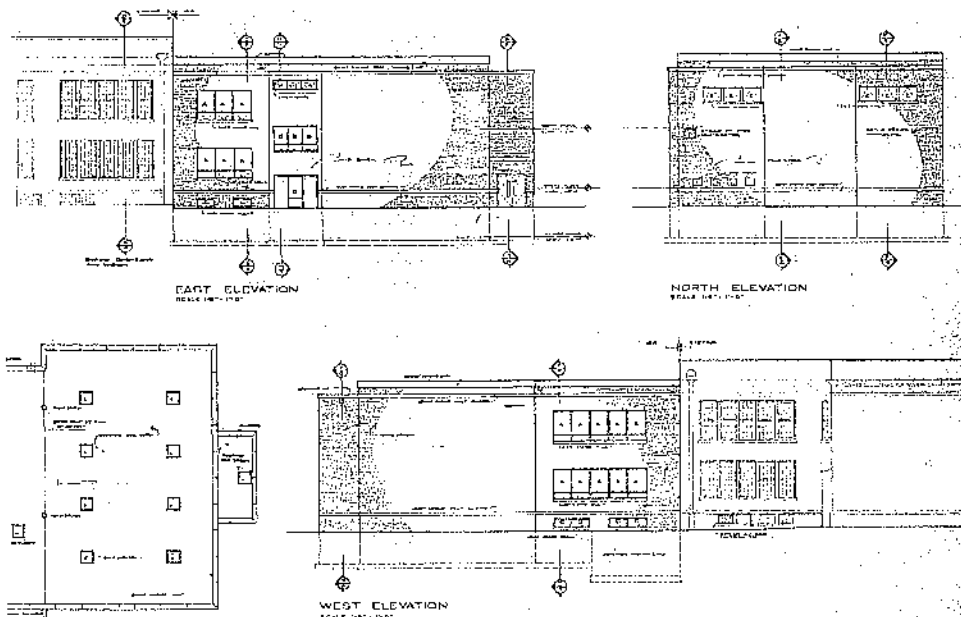
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Site plan showing 1968 addition to Roosevelt School building



Elevations of 1968 addition to Roosevelt School building

Source for both maps: Photocopy of 1968 blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Rudi and Dekovic, Ames, Iowa)

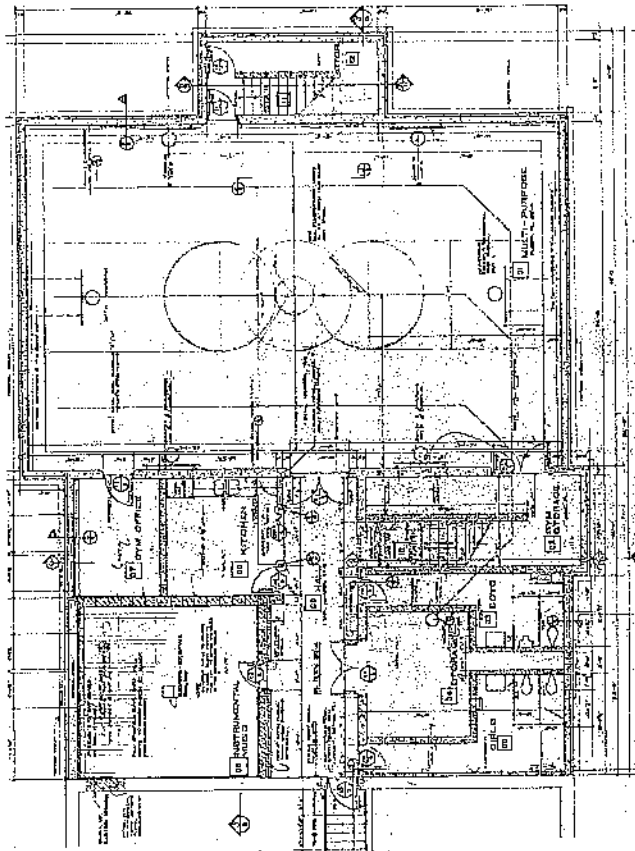
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**Basement floor plan for 1968 addition**

Source: Photocopy of 1968 blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Rudi and Dekovic, Ames, Iowa)

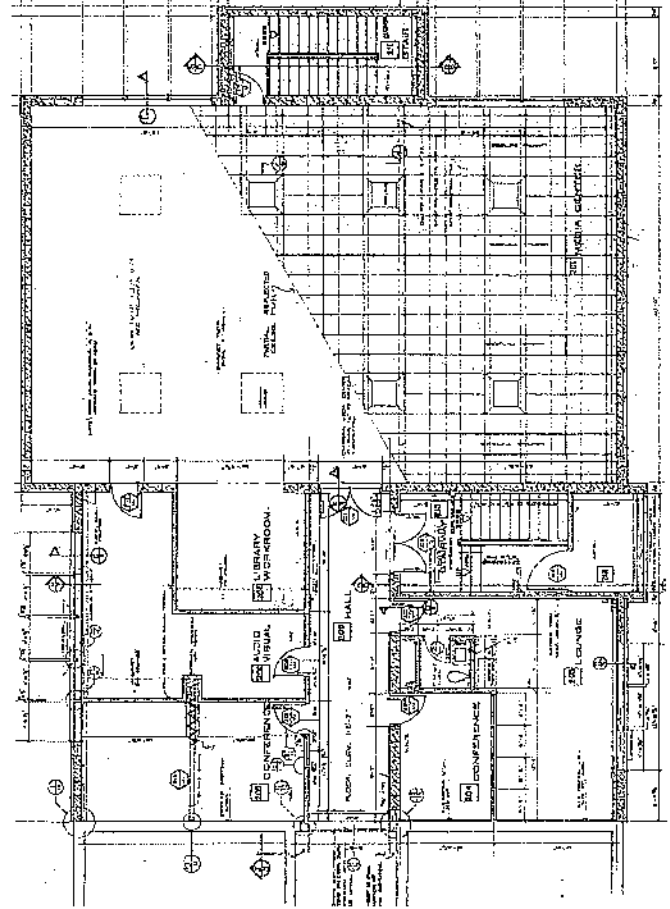
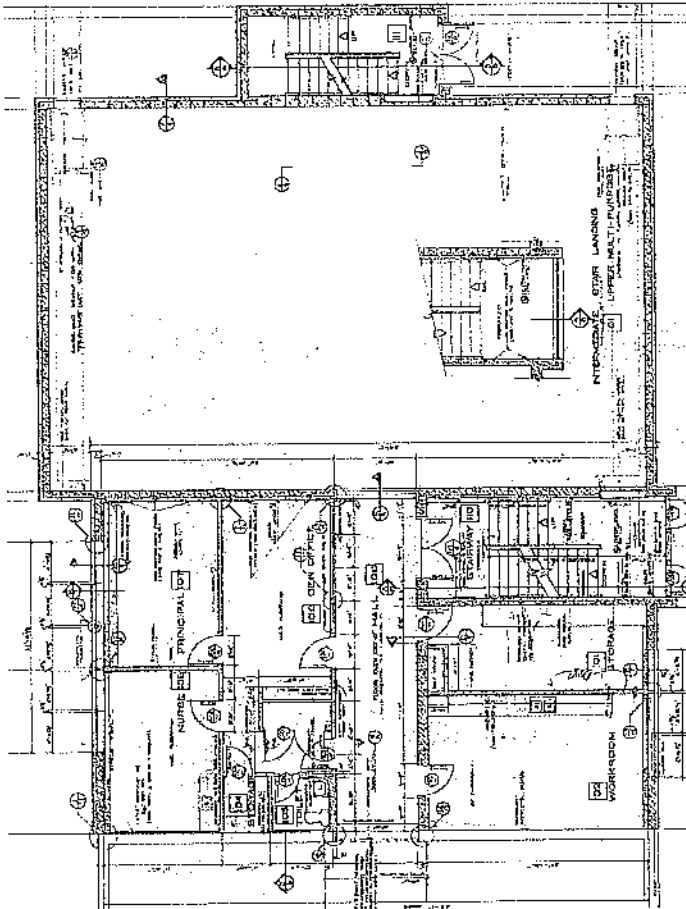
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**First floor plan for 1968 addition**

**Second floor plan for 1968 addition**

Source: Photocopy of 1968 blueprints on file with the Ames Community School District, Ames, Iowa  
(Rudi and Dekovic, Ames, Iowa)

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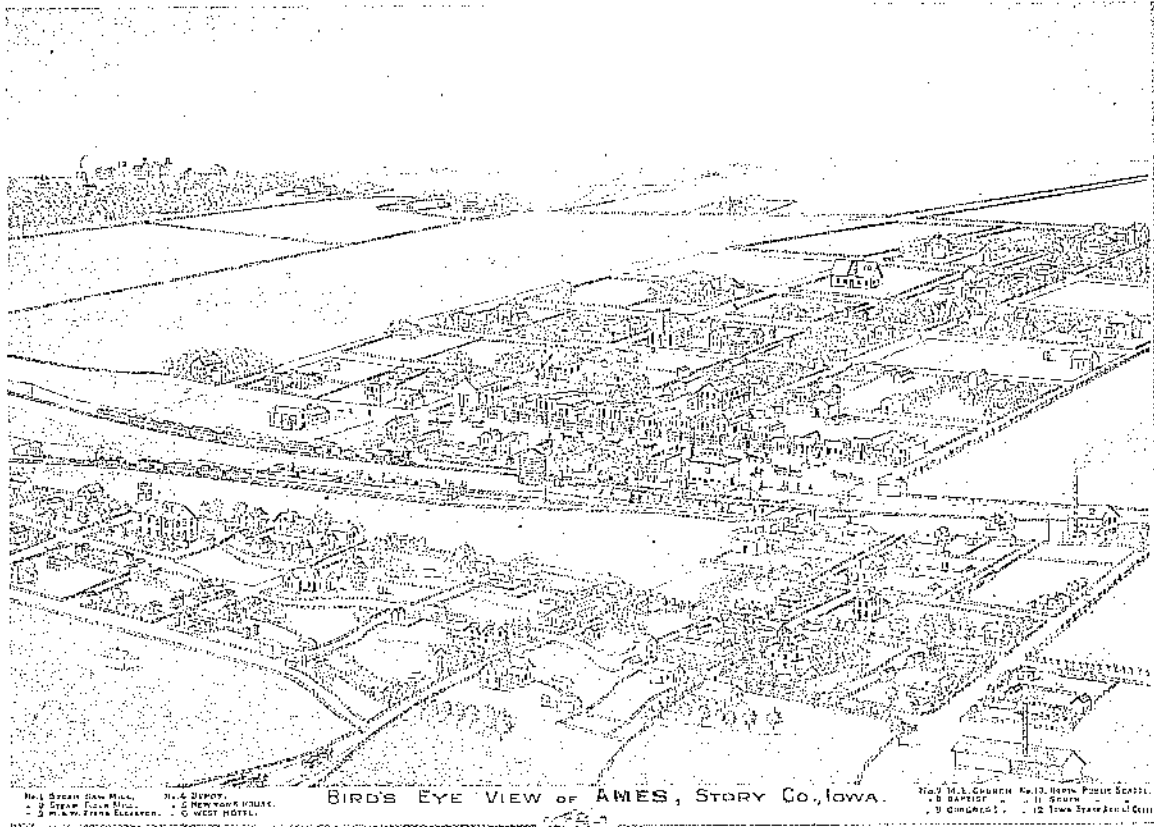
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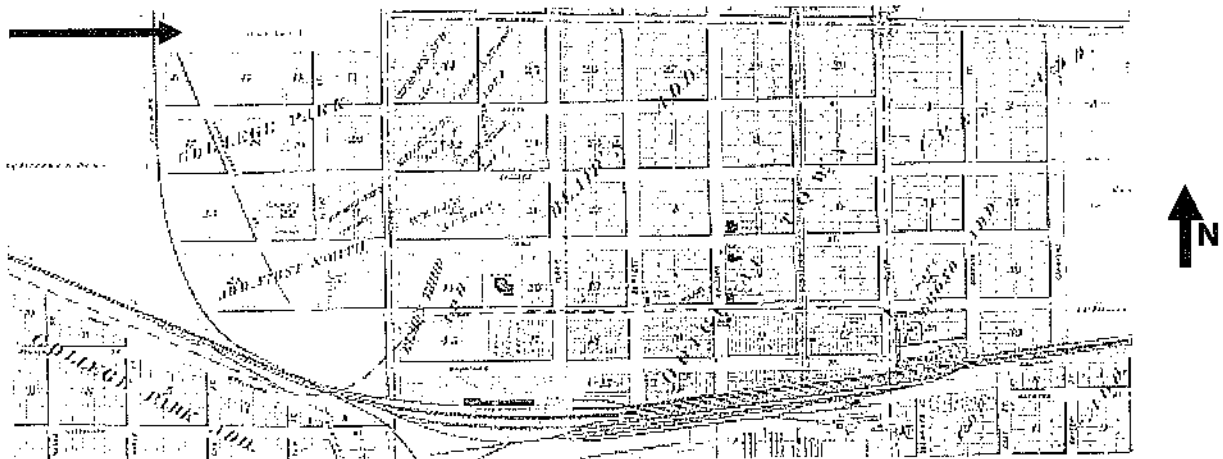
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**1875 bird's eye illustration of Ames.** Location of Roosevelt School was then open country side to northwest of the city. The buildings of what was then the Iowa State Agricultural College (now Iowa State University) are visible in the far upper left. Source: Andreas' *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa*, 1875; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009



**Map of north portion of Ames, Iowa, in 1902.** The Roosevelt School area (see arrow) was then part of Out Lot 1 in the upper left on the north side of the College Park Addition First North. Source: Huebinger's *1902 Plat Book of Story County, Iowa*; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009.

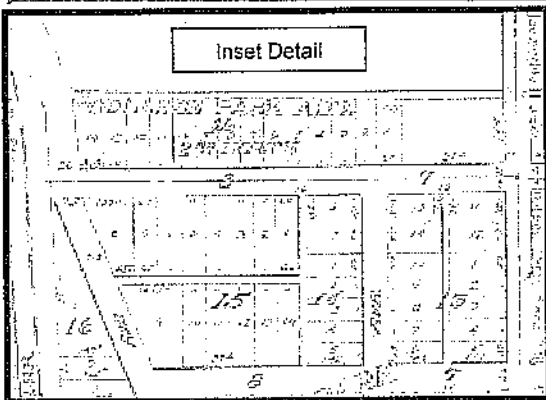
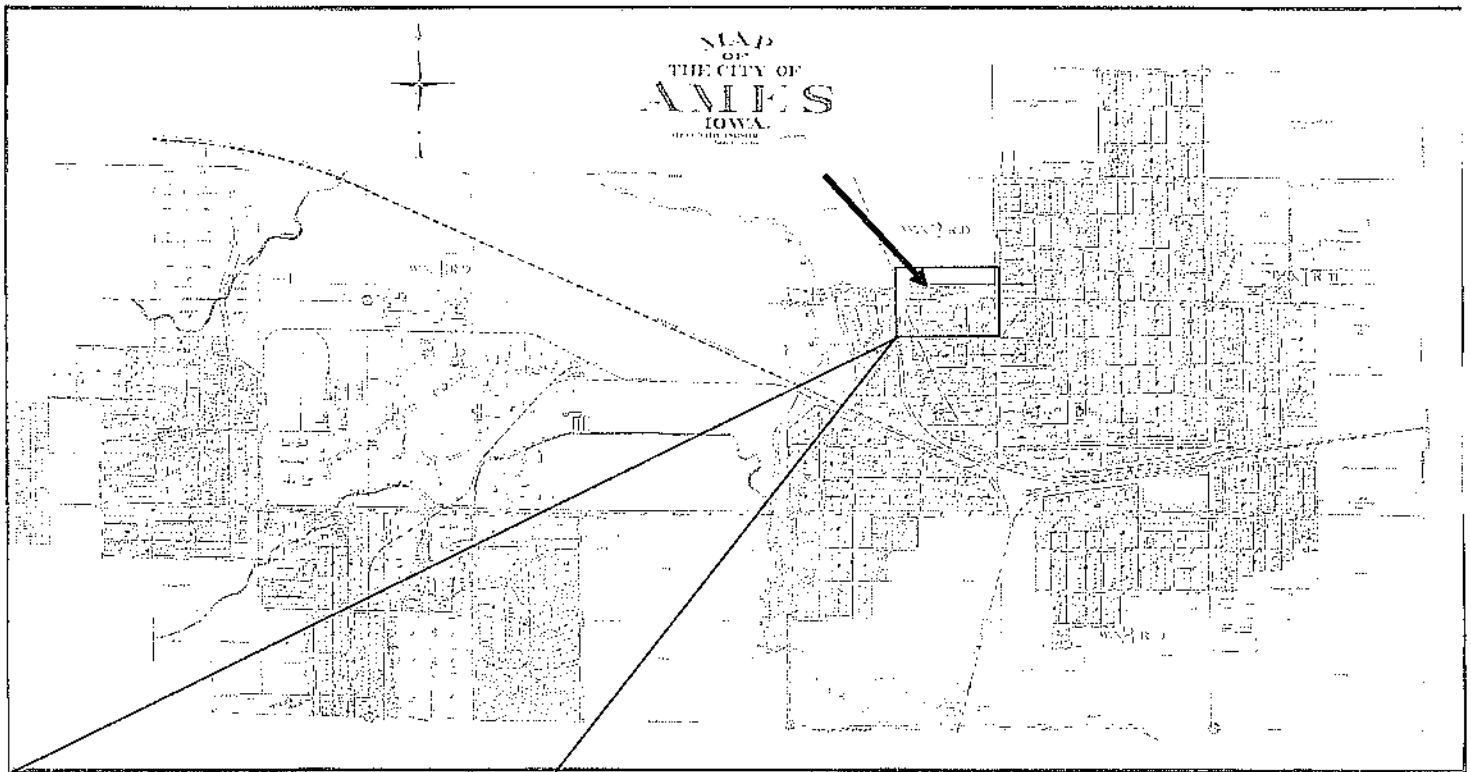
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**1916 map of Ames, Iowa.** The south half of the Roosevelt School area (see arrow) had been platted as part of College Park Addition 2nd North between 1912 and 1914. Source: Office of the City Engineer 1916; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009.



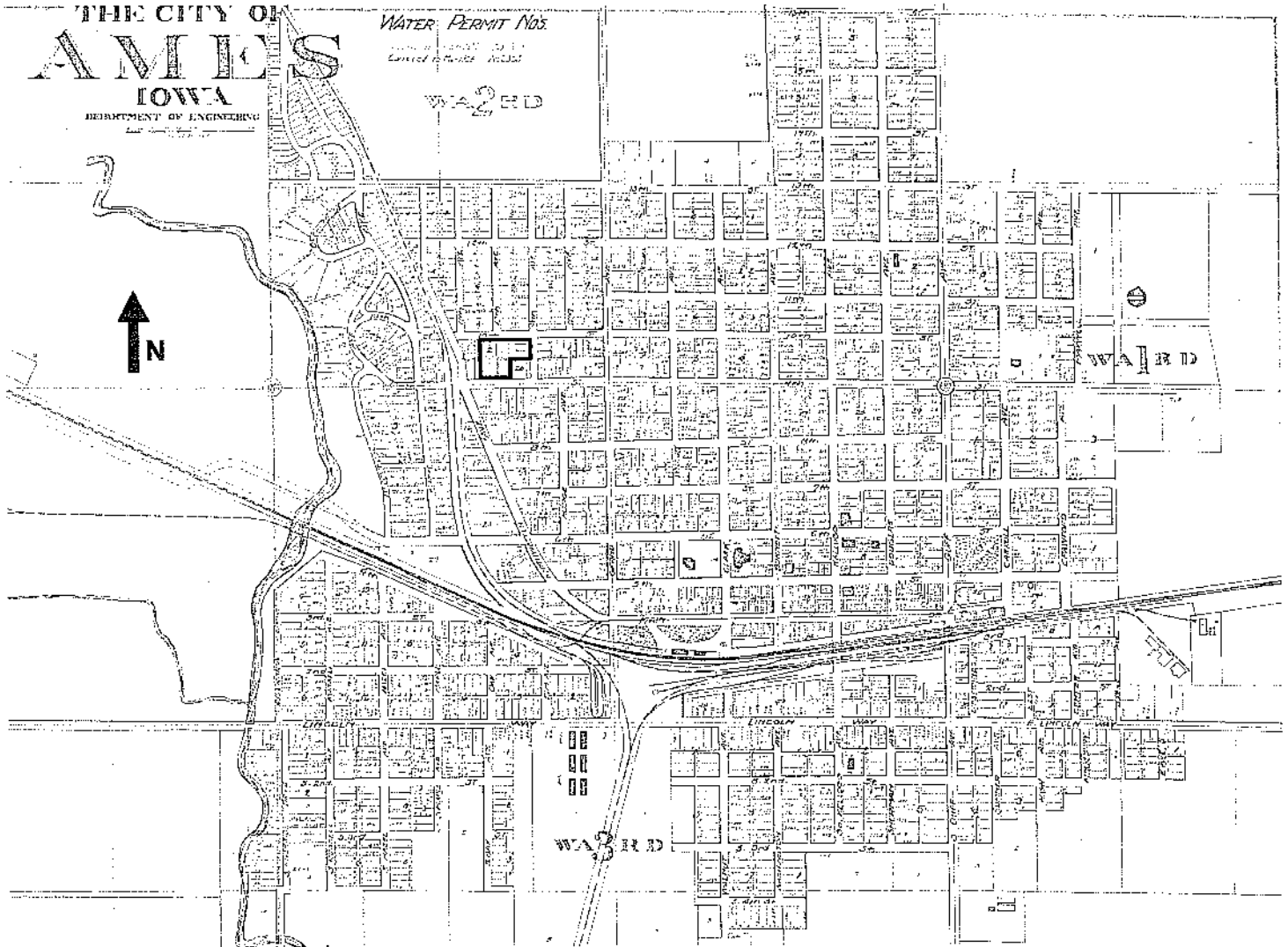
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**1926 Map of Ames Iowa.** By this time, the Roosevelt School location had been fully platted (outlined in black) and the area become engulfed by suburban plats. Source: Department of Engineering 1946; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009.

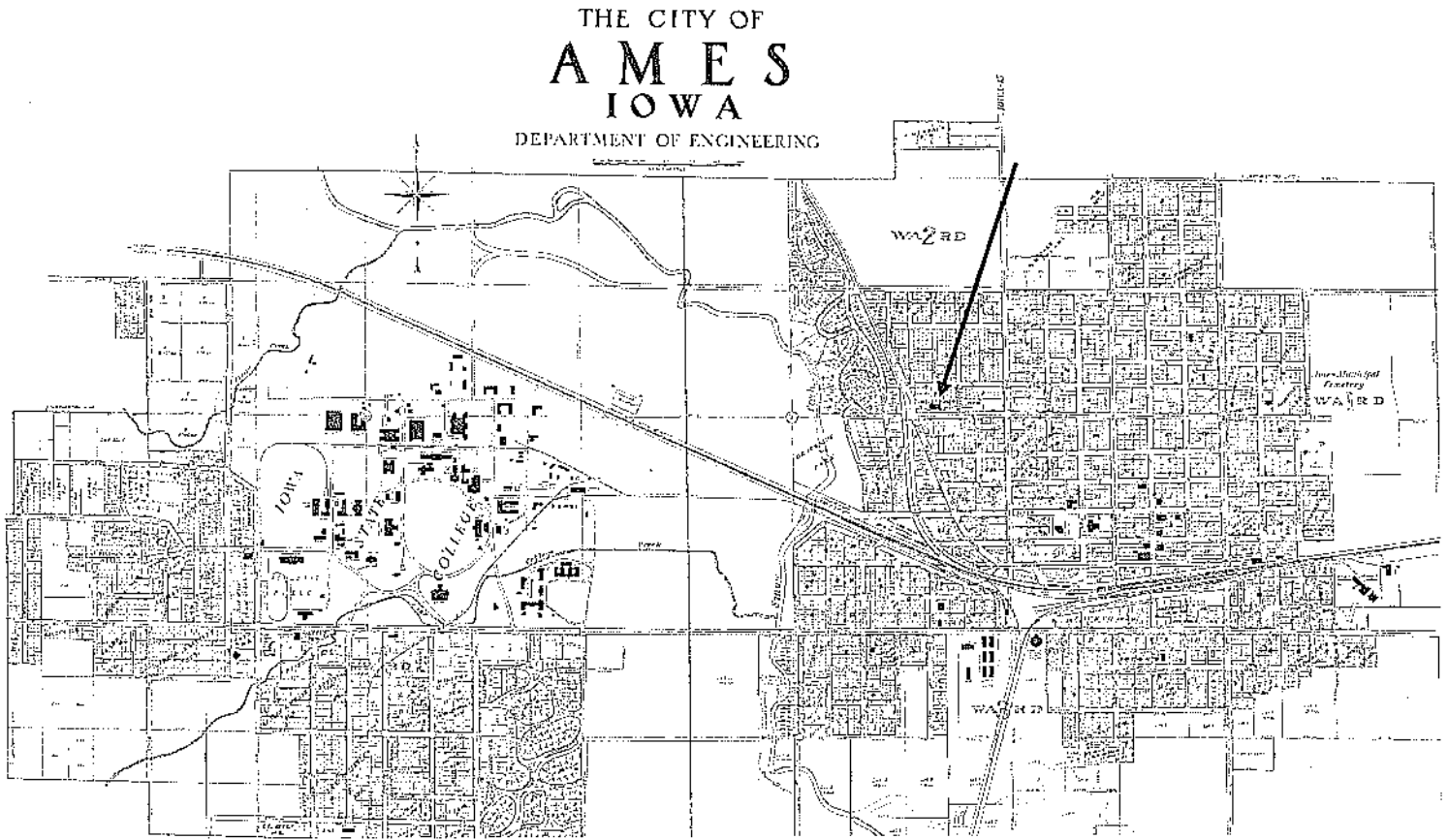
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**1930 Map of Ames, Iowa.** This map clearly shows the engulfment of the Roosevelt School location. The school is even highlighted in black on this map (see arrow). Source: Department of Engineering 1930; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009.

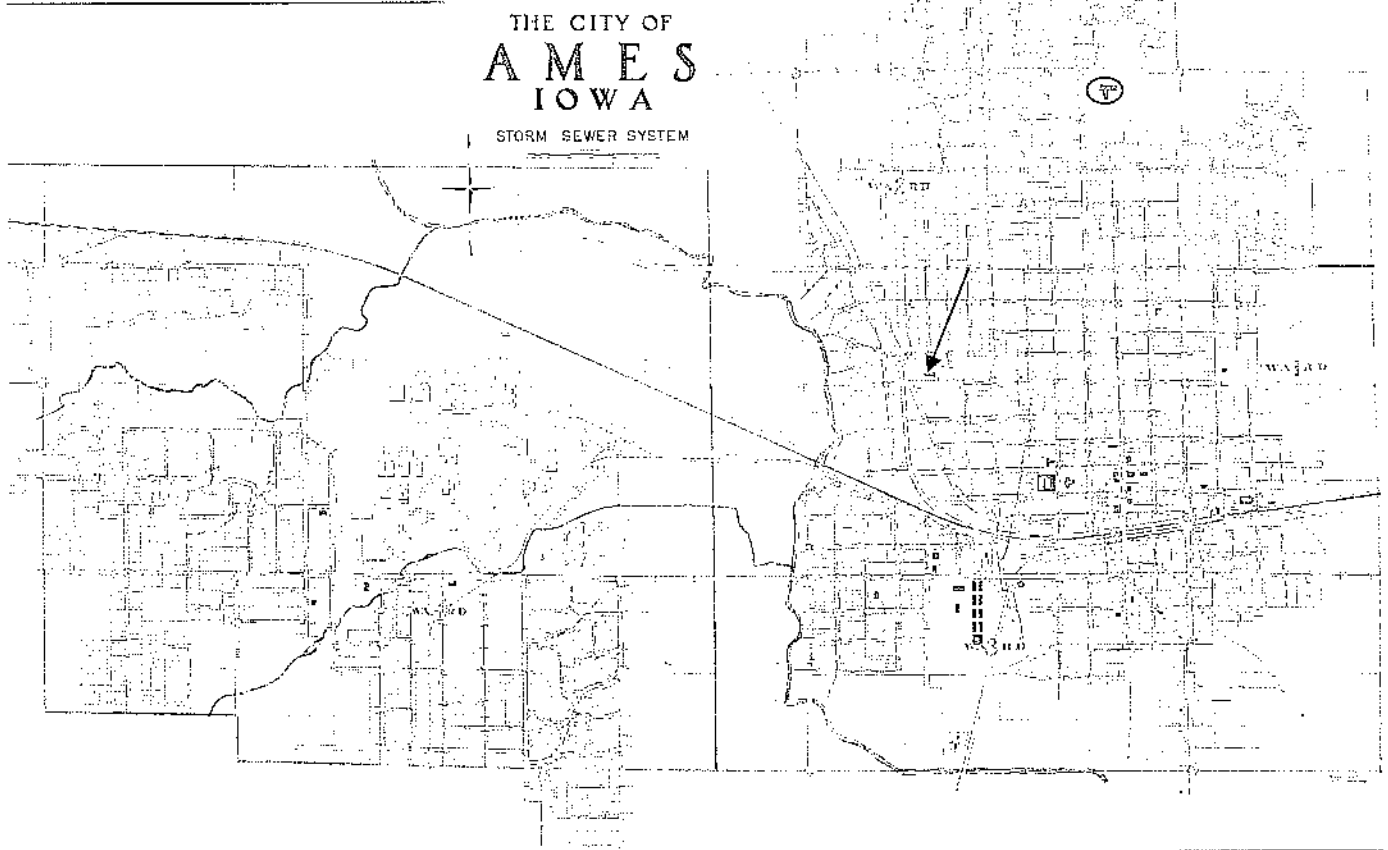
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**1957 Map of Ames, Iowa.** City now expanding well to the north of Roosevelt School location (see arrow). Location of a newer school to the northeast is circled. Source: Department of Engineering 1957; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009.

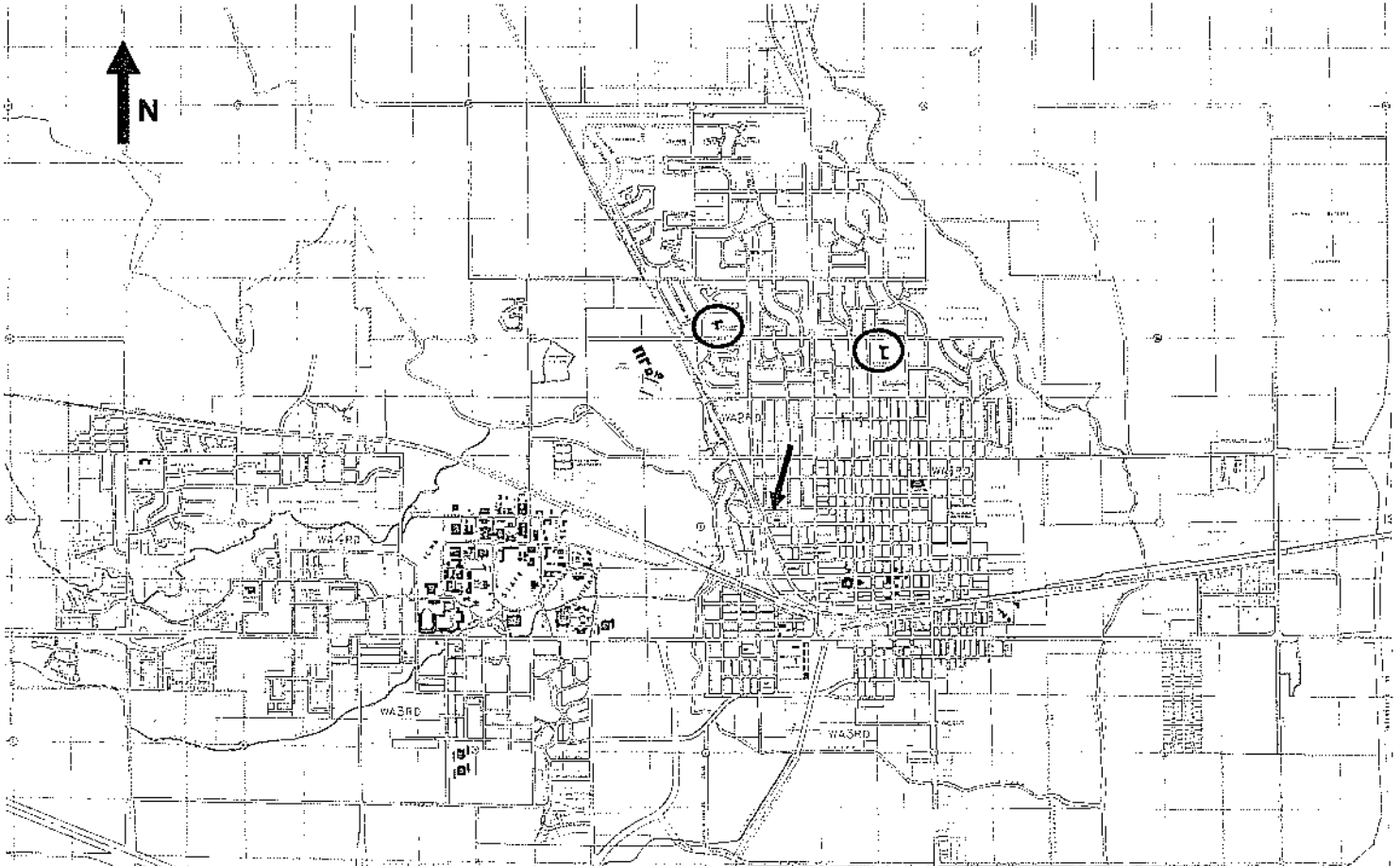
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**1969 Map of Ames, Iowa.** Shows location of newer schools (circled) to north of Roosevelt School (see arrow).  
Source: Map of the City of Ames, 1969; digitized copy obtained from Ames Historical Society website accessed at [http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902\\_storycounty\\_plat2.htm](http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/1902_storycounty_plat2.htm), June 1, 2009.

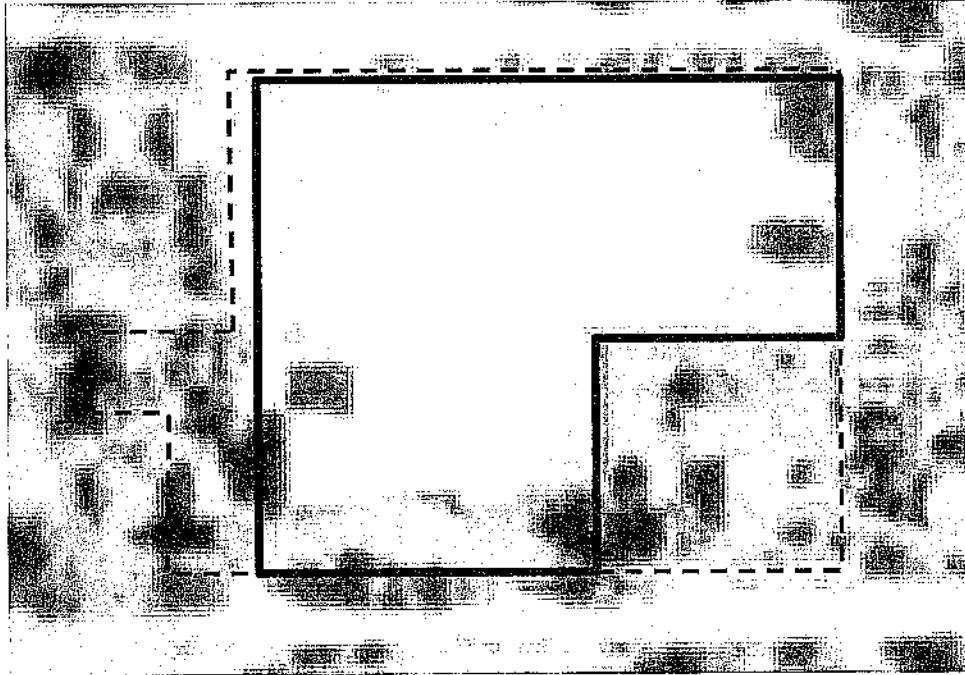
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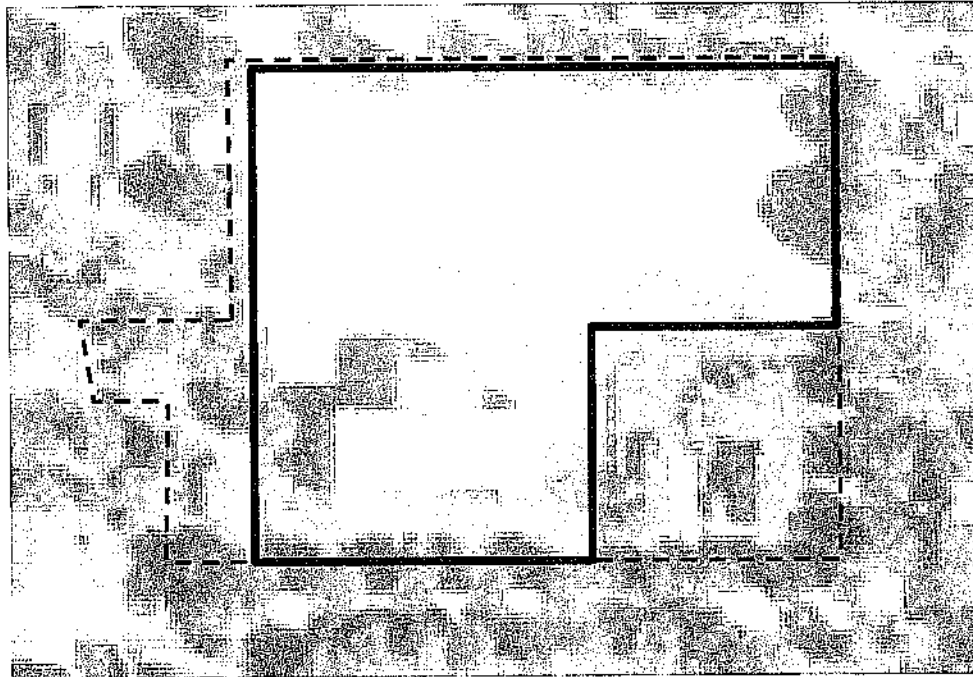
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

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1938 aerial. Source: Iowa Geographic Map Server, June 2009



1950s aerial. Source: Iowa Geographic Map Server, June 2009

-  = National Register boundary based on historic school property
-  = Current school property boundary

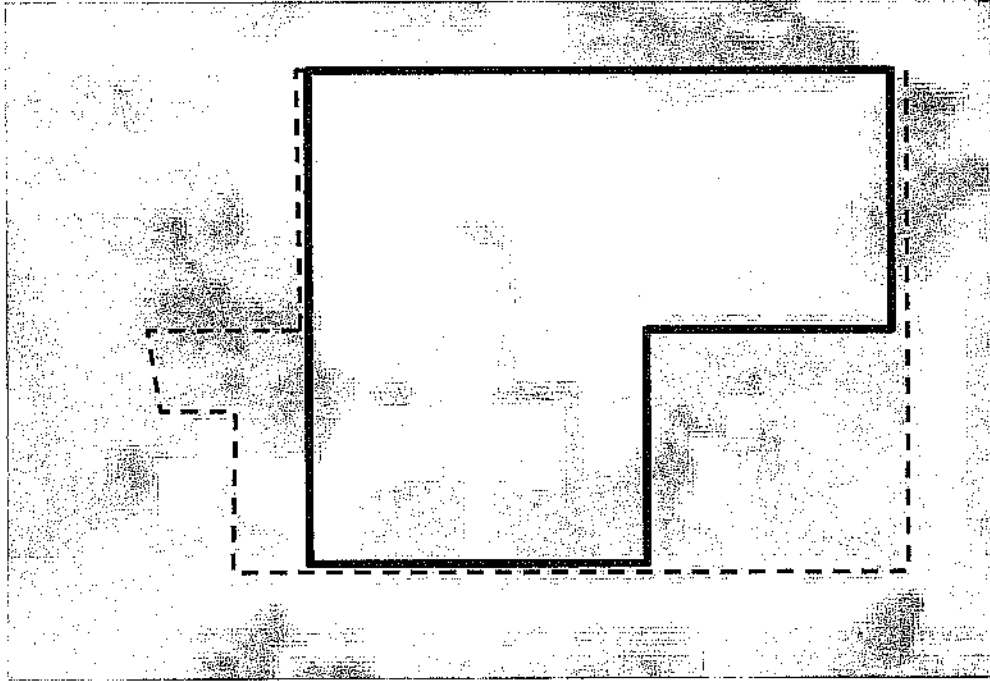
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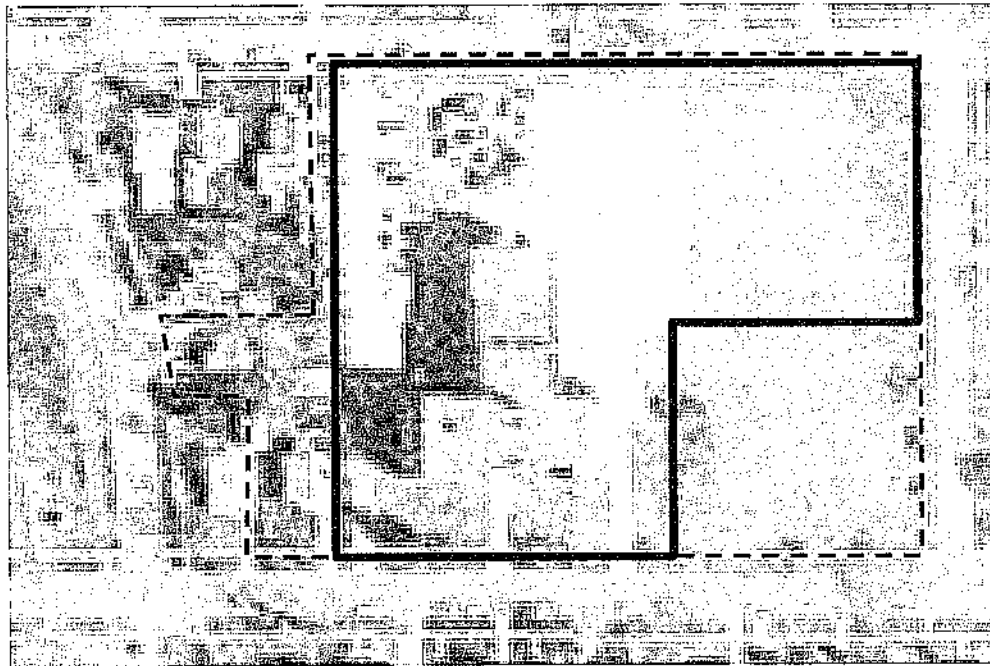
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1980s aerial. Source: Iowa Geographic Map Server, June 2009



1994 aerial. Source: Iowa Geographic Map Server, June 2009



- = National Register boundary based on historic school property
- = Current school property boundary

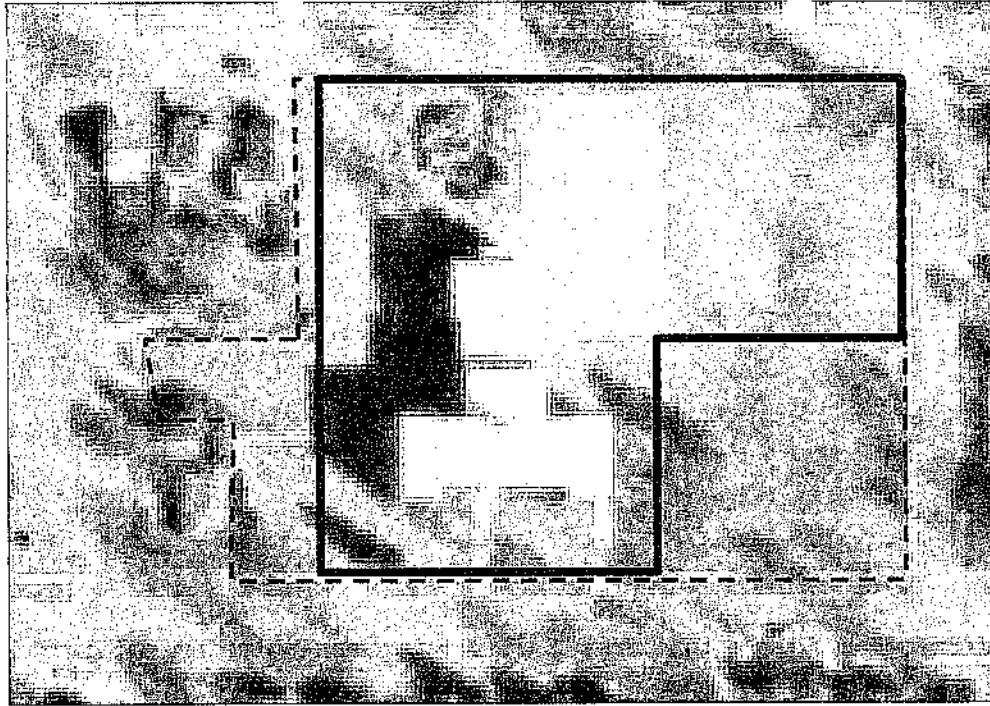
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2002 aerial. Source: Iowa Geographic Map Server, June 2009



2008 aerial. Source: Iowa Geographic Map Server, June 2009

-  = National Register boundary based on historic school property
-  = Current school property boundary

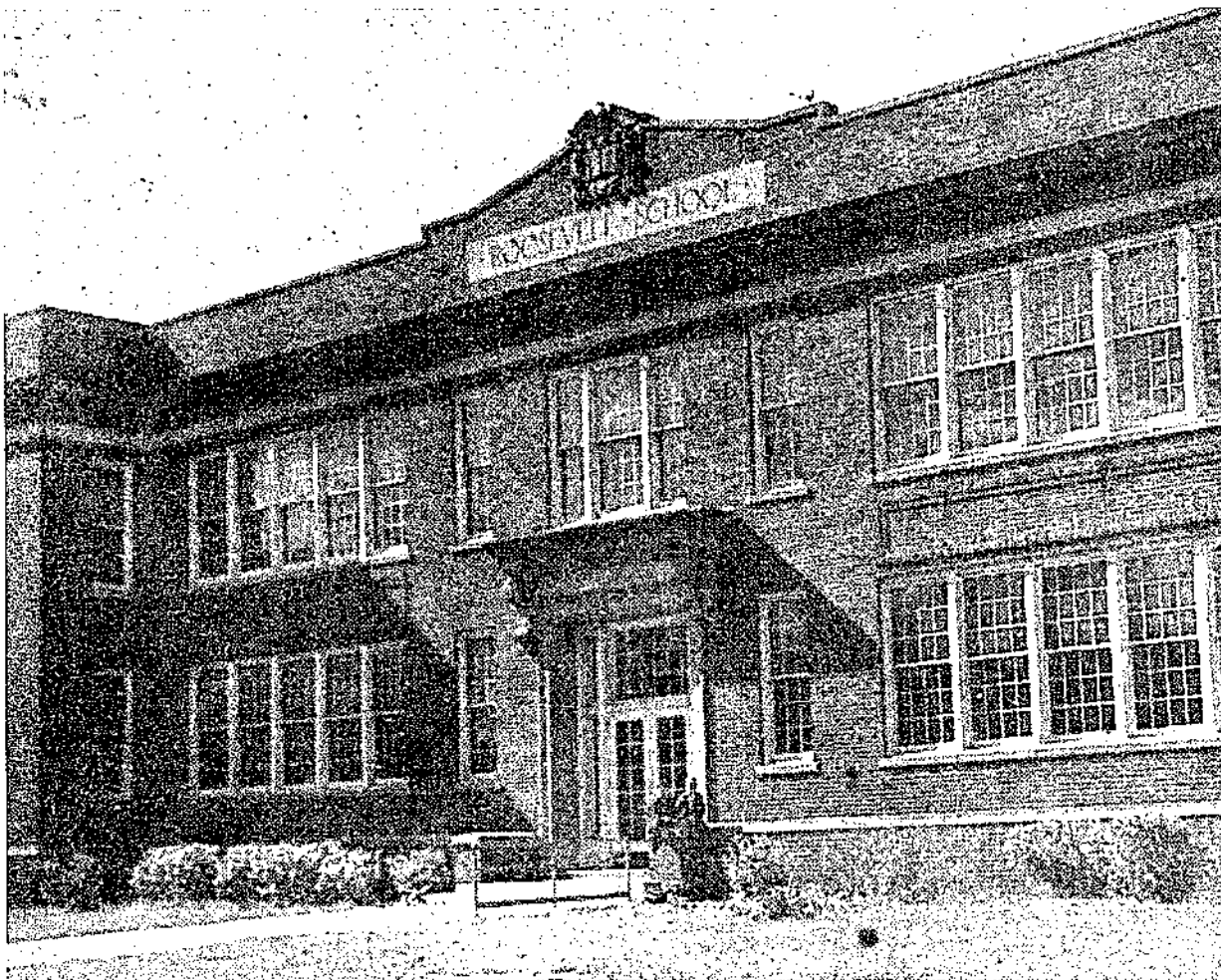
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**Roosevelt School, 1930s.**

Source: *Ames Community History* (Ames: Ames Centennial Boosters, 1964)



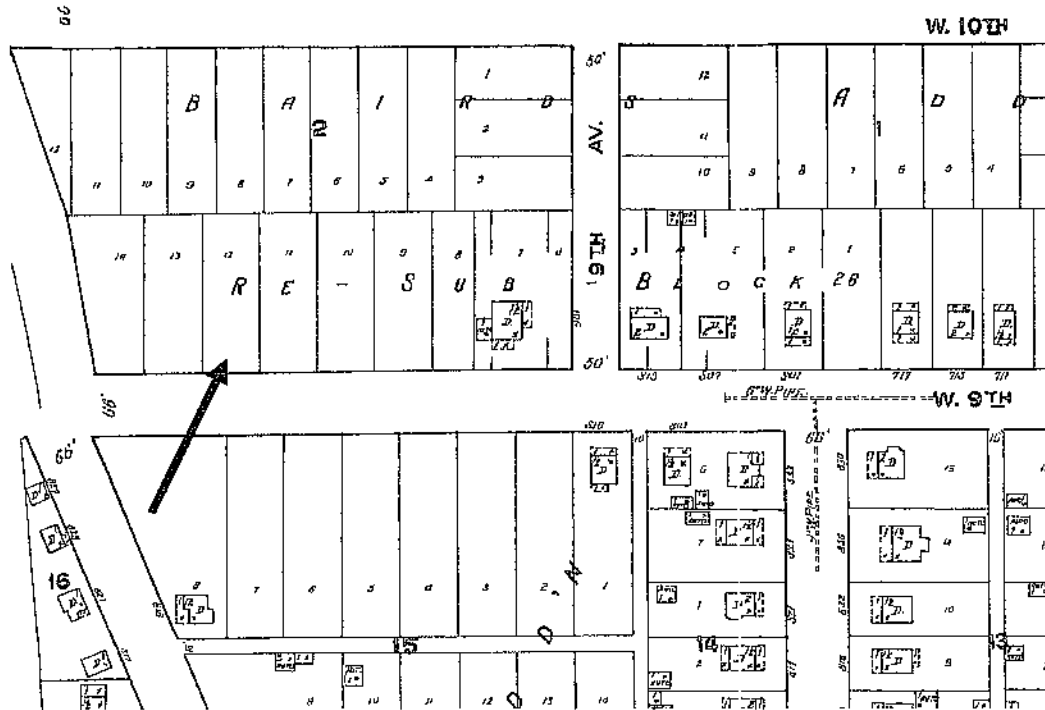
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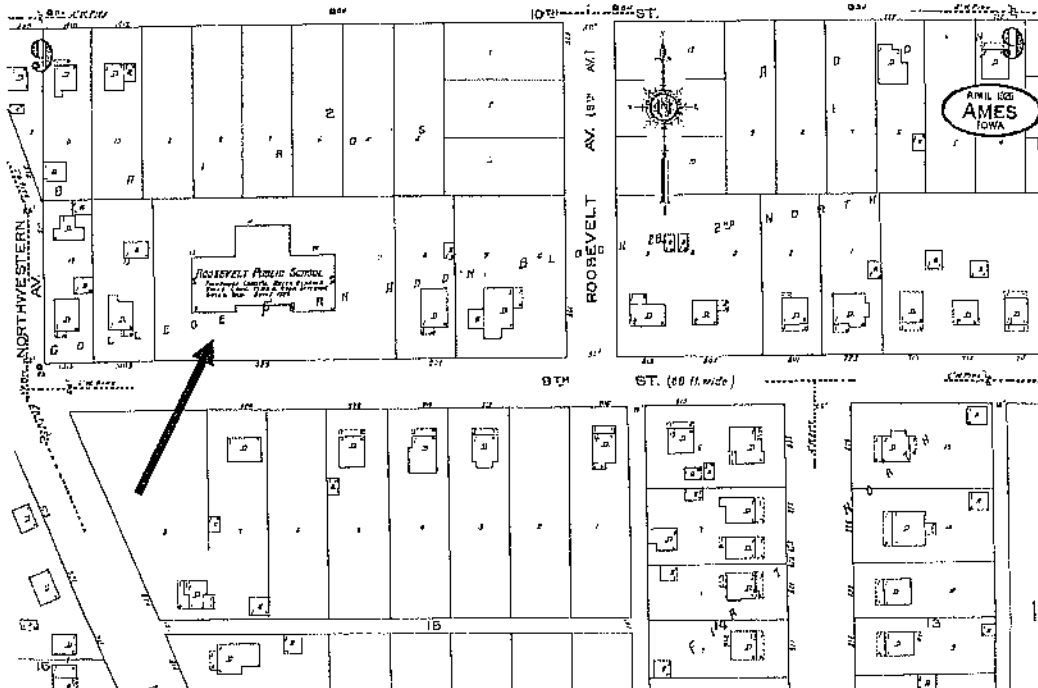
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Before Roosevelt was built. Source: Sanborn Map, 1920 (arrow points to school site)



Residential growth directly south and west just two years after Roosevelt School opened.  
Source: Sanborn Map, 1926

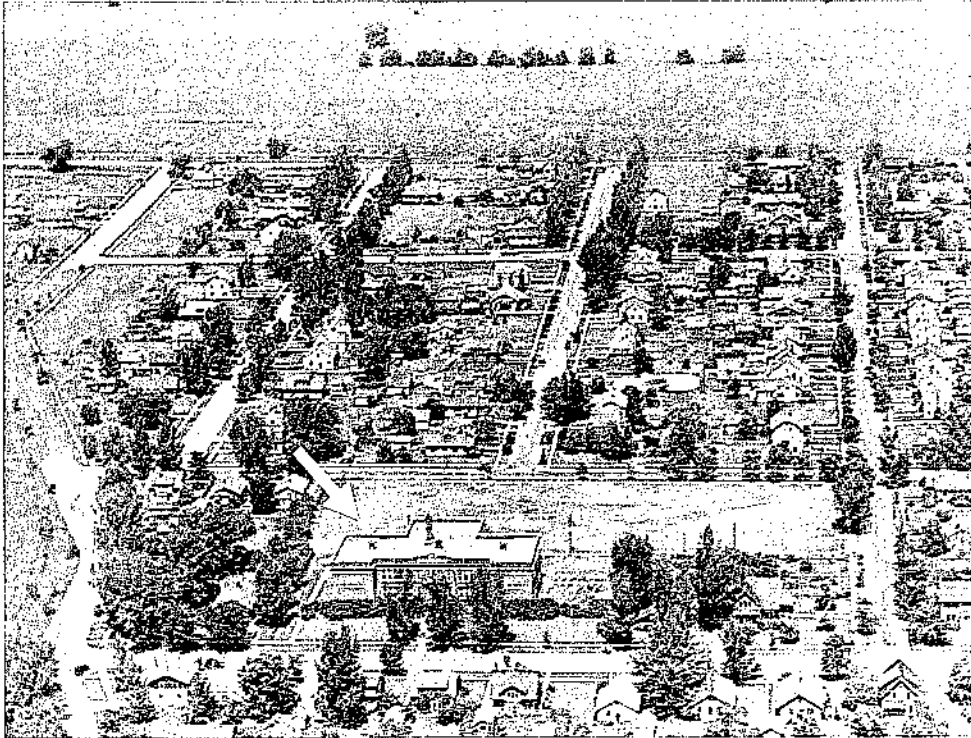
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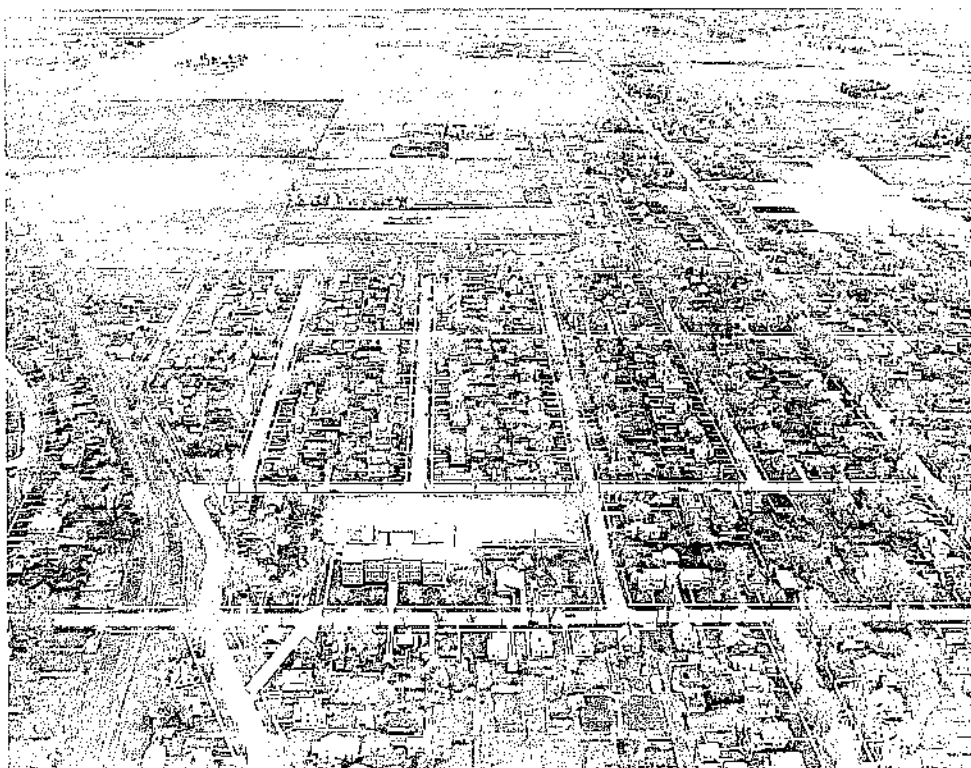
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**Aerial view looking North, 1938.**  
(white arrow points to Roosevelt School)  
Source: Farwell T. Brown Photographic  
Archive, Ames Public Library.



**Aerial view looking North, c.1945**  
(white arrow points to Roosevelt School)  
Source: Ames Tribune Photo, courtesy  
of Ames Historical Society,  
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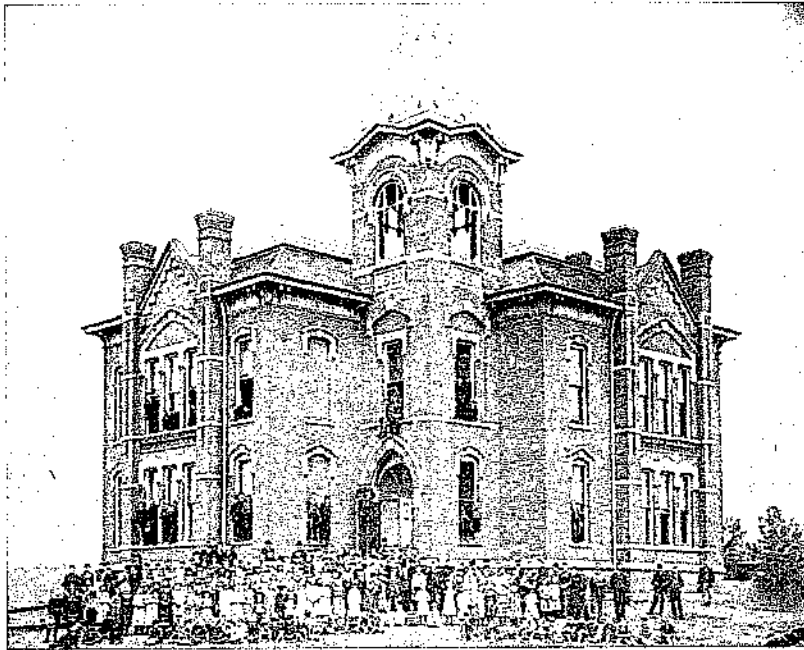
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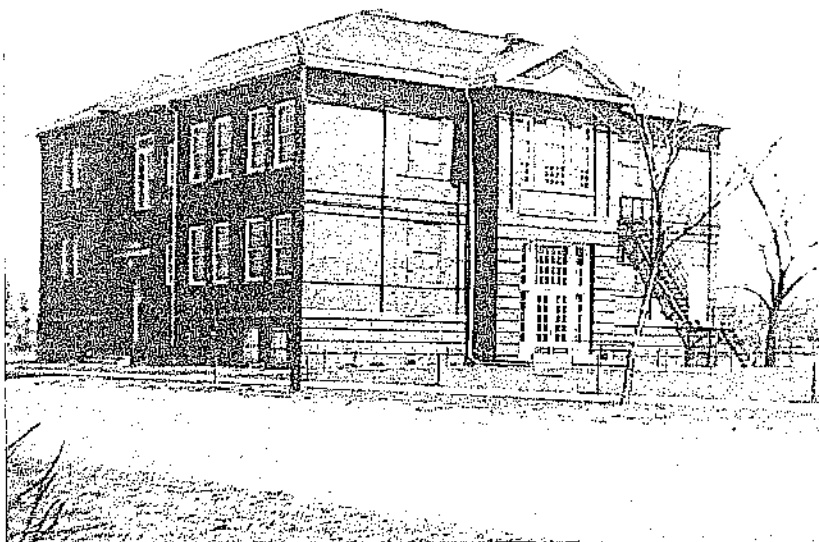
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**Older Schoolhouses in Ames**



**Central School, 1885.**

A typical nineteenth-century city school: a dark, drafty, square box with a bell tower  
Source: Farwell T. Brown Photographic Archive, Ames Public Library



**Beardshear School, built 1906.**

School attempted to improve on the nineteenth-century school and anticipated 1920s designs like Roosevelt School  
Source: Ames Tribune Photo, courtesy of Ames Historical Society, © Ames Tribune. All Rights Reserved

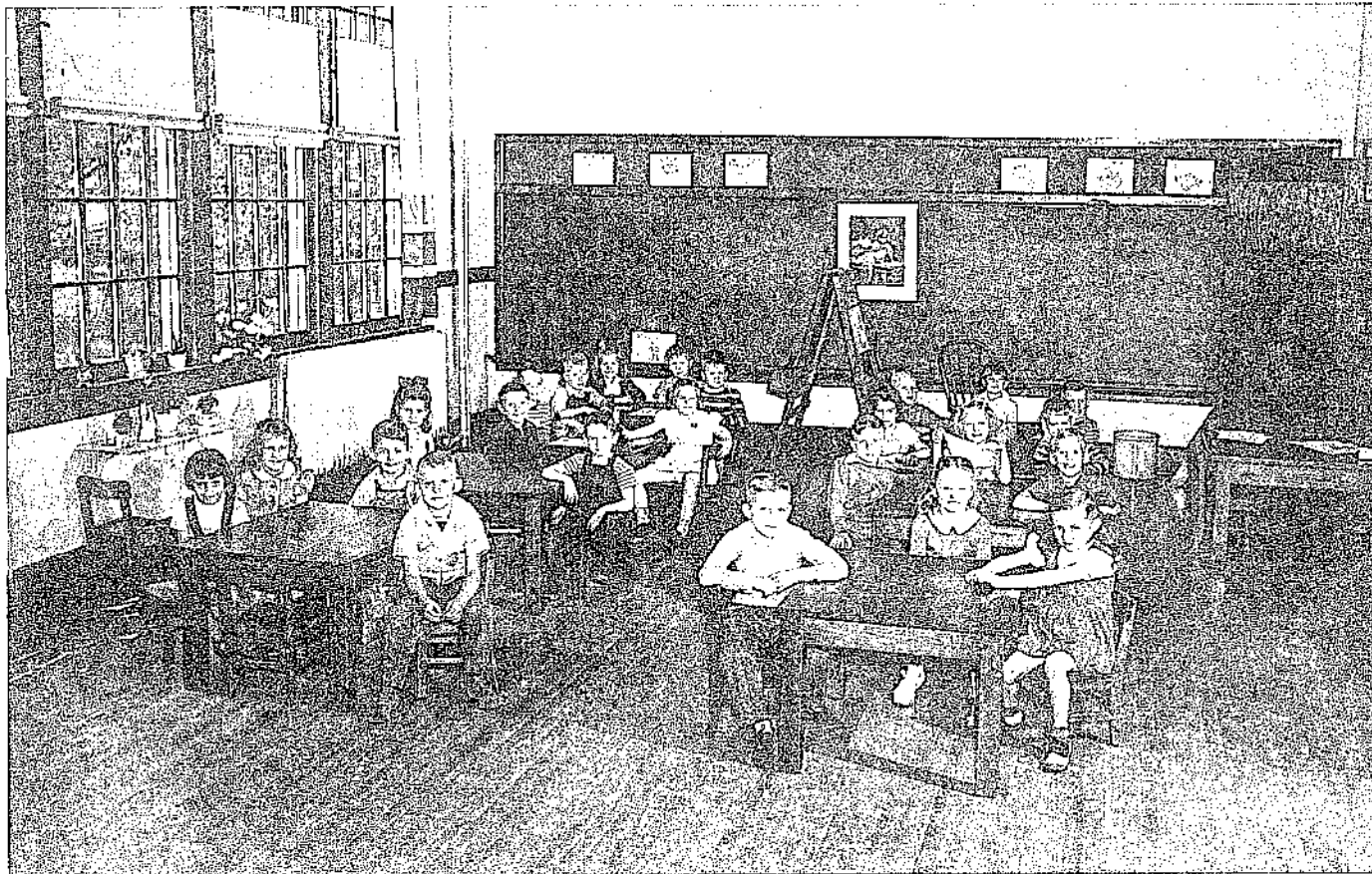
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**Roosevelt School kindergarten classroom, 1946**

Source: Photo courtesy F. Terrill Adams, Ames Historical Society.

Digital copy obtained from <http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/> on April 29, 2009.

This view of one of the kindergarten classrooms in Roosevelt School shows the desirable features of the modern classroom: tall banked windows with shades for sunlight and fresh air, a large slate blackboard, clean hard maple flooring, movable tables and chairs, and lots of space for active learning.

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**Roosevelt School, 1954.**

Source: Ames Tribune Photo, courtesy of Ames Historical Society, © Ames Tribune. All Rights Reserved.

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**Roosevelt School, 1957.**

Source: Ames Tribune Photo, courtesy of Ames Historical Society, © Ames Tribune. All Rights Reserved.

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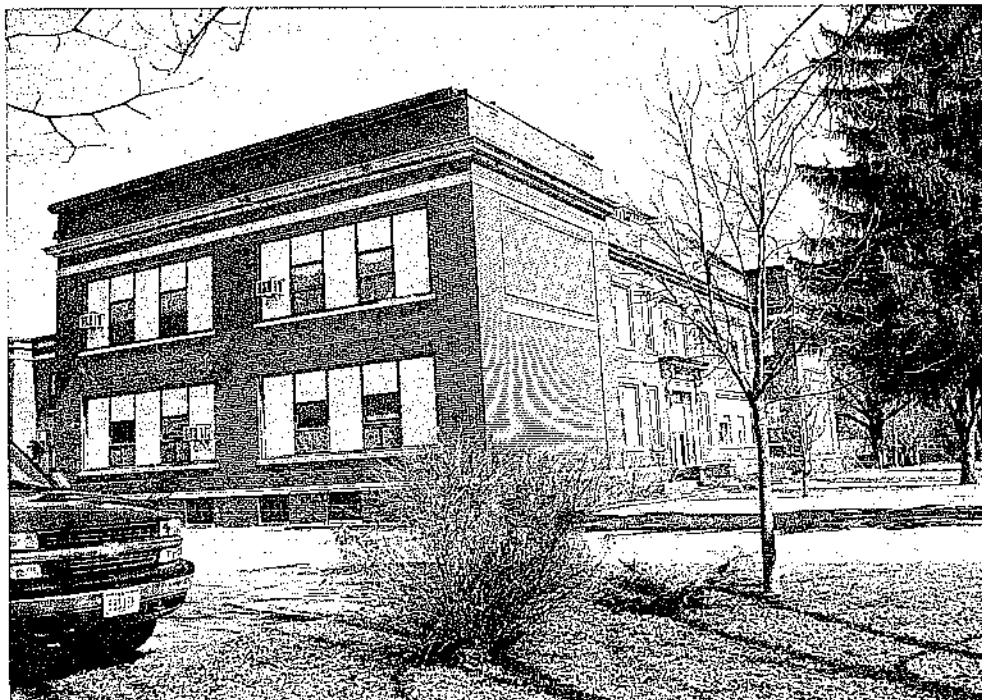
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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School. (Photographs taken: March 16, 2009)**



Original Roosevelt School building, View to the NW



Original Roosevelt School building, View to the NE

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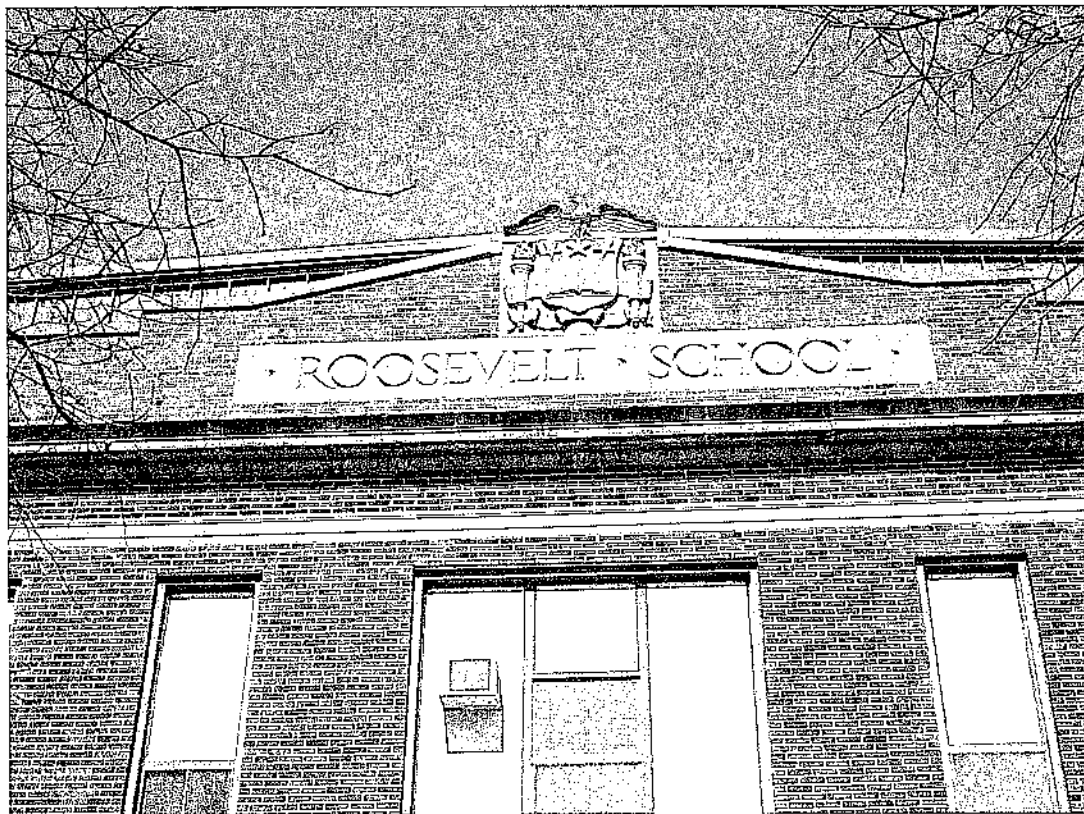
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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School. (Photographs taken: March 16, 2009)**



Cornerstone of original Roosevelt School building, View to the North



Detail of pediment name plaque and emblem on original Roosevelt School building, View to the North



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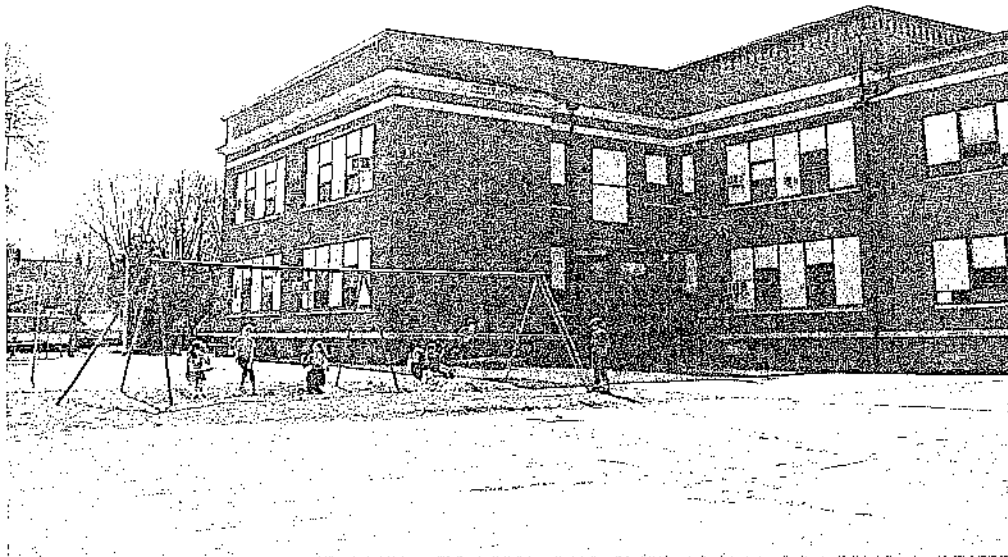
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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School. (Photographs taken: March 16, 2009)**



Rear of original Roosevelt School building, View to the SSW with 1968 gymnasium addition at far right.



Rear of original Roosevelt School building, View to the SE with 1968 gymnasium addition to left

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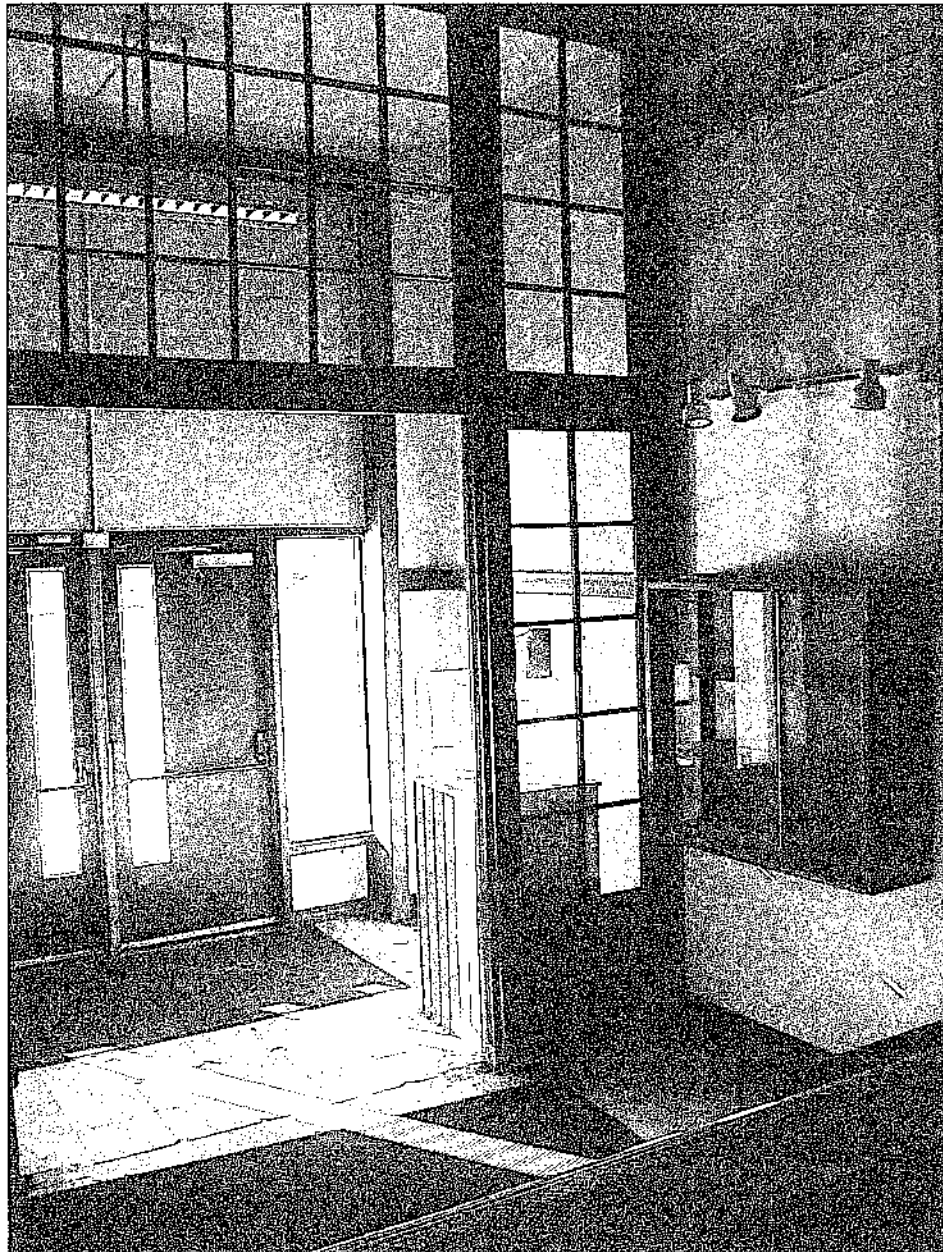
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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School. (Photographs taken: January 6, 2009)**



Interior of original Roosevelt School building looking at glass and wood vestibule partition,  
View to the SSW

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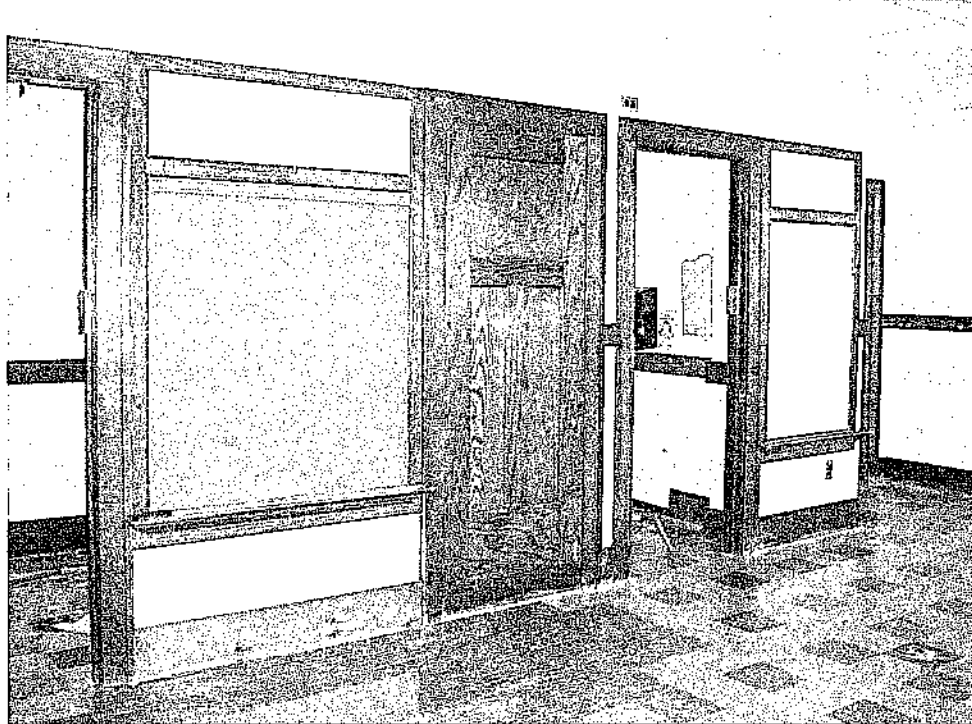
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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School.** (Photographs taken: January 6, 2009)



Interior of original Roosevelt School building showing original coat room/door and blackboard details



Interior of original Roosevelt School building corridor showing original woodwork

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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School. (Photographs taken: January 6, 2009)**



Interior stairwell of original Roosevelt School building showing original woodwork and metal and wood stair rails

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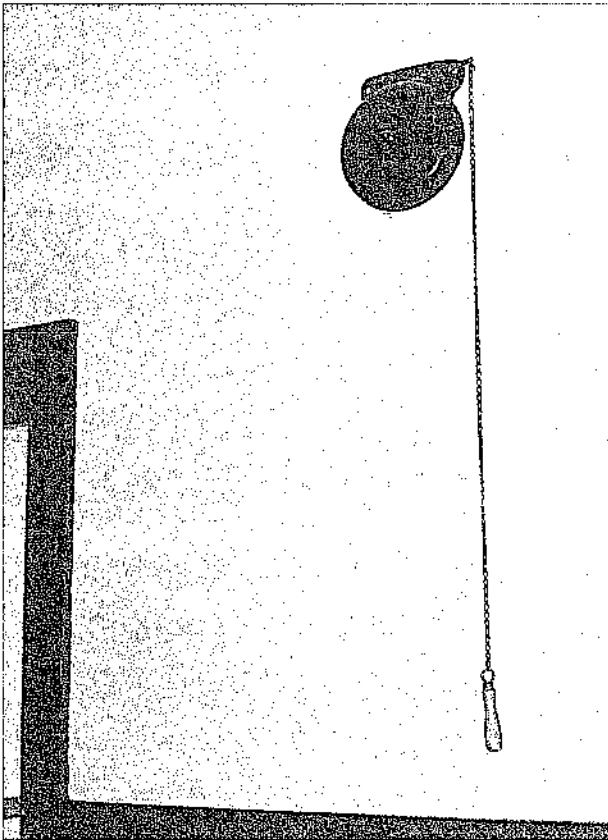
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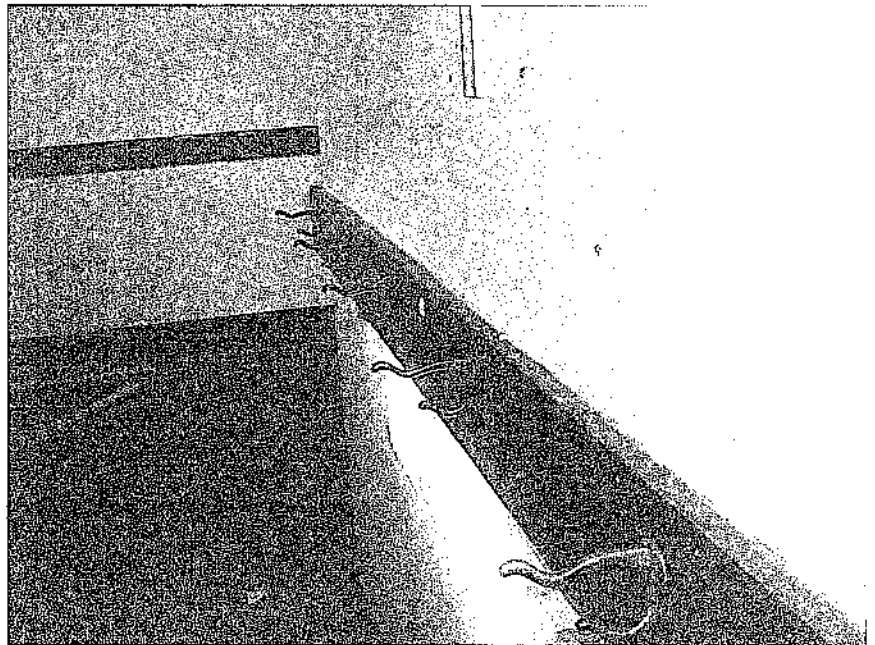
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**Current Photographs of Roosevelt School. (Photographs taken: January 6, 2009)**



hand-operated bell in original school building  
on second floor



coat hooks in original school building  
in kindergarten room

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**Photographs**

Photographers: Sue R. Crull, with assistance of David Gradwohl and Wesley Shank, all of Ames, Iowa

Date of Photographs: January 6 and March 16, 2009

Location of original negatives: Tallgrass Historians L.C., 2460 S. Riverside Drive, Iowa City, Iowa, 52246

| <u>Photo</u> | <u>Description</u>   |
|--------------|--|
| #1           | View of the front of the original Roosevelt School building, View to the NW                                    |
| #2           | View of the front of the original Roosevelt School building, View to the ENE                                   |
| #3           | View of the front of the original Roosevelt School building, View to the NE                                    |
| #4           | Detail of the façade of the original Roosevelt School building, View to the NE                                 |
| #5           | Detail of the pediment plaque and emblem above front entry, View to the North                                  |
| #6           | View of the rear of the Roosevelt School building showing original building and 1968 addition, View to the SSW |
| #7           | View of rear of original Roosevelt School building, View to the SW   |
| #8           | View of the rear of the Roosevelt School building showing original building and 1968 addition, View to the SSE |
| #9           | Interior of original Roosevelt School building showing entry vestibule partition, View to the SSW              |
| #10          | Interior of original Roosevelt School building showing boys' restroom door, View to the NE                     |
| #11          | Interior of original Roosevelt School building showing second floor stairwell, View to the NNW                 |
| #12          | Interior of original Roosevelt School building showing classroom detail, View to the SSE                       |

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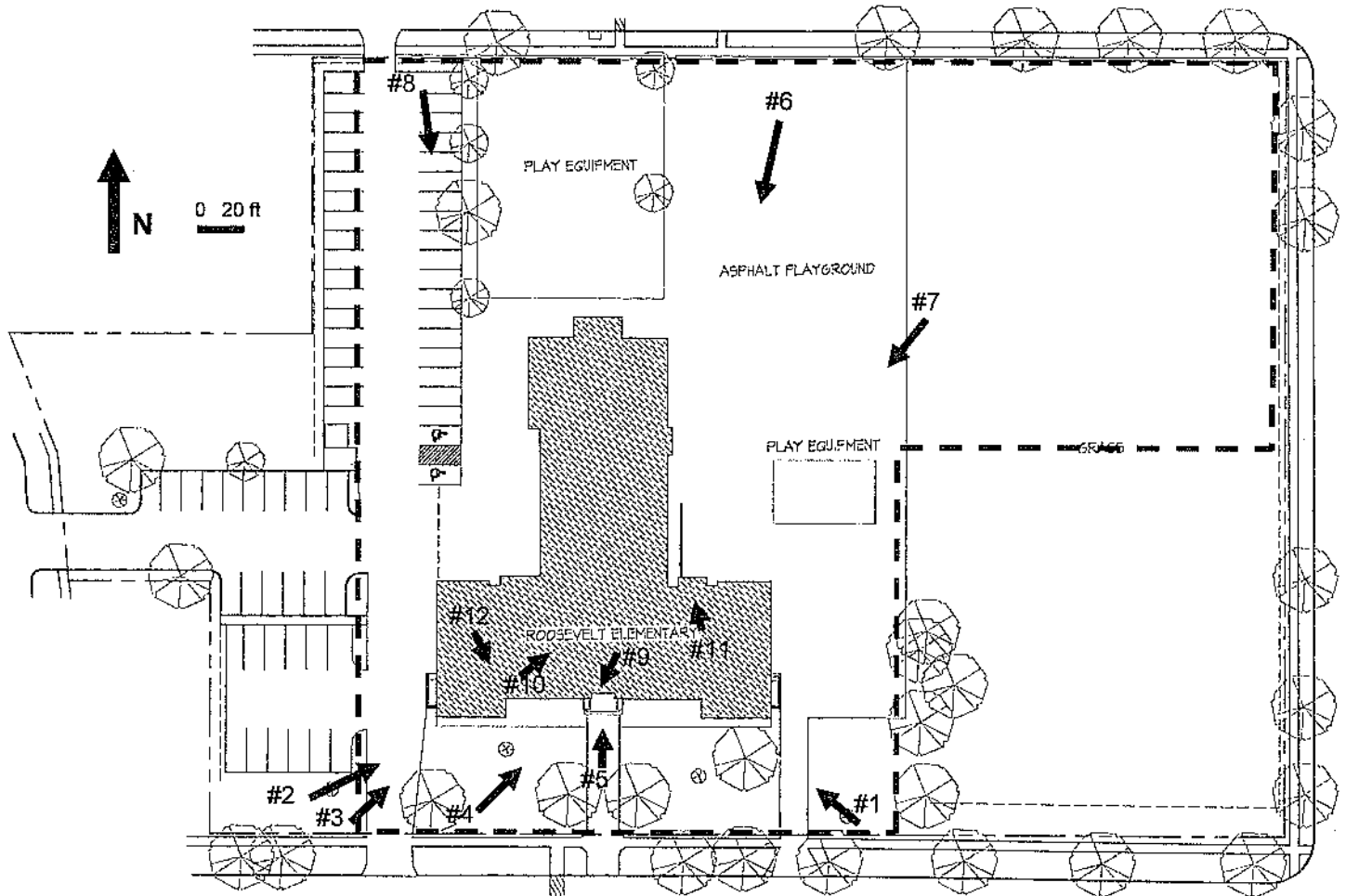
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Map Showing Photograph Views



Current site plan showing National Register boundary (dashed line) and photograph views  
Source for current site plan: Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., Ames, Iowa, 2008

