

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Franklin SchoolOther names/site number: Franklin School 24CA1568Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 820 1st Avenue SWCity or town: Great Falls State: MT County: CascadeNot For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B X C D

MT SHPO	
Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Montana State Historic Preservation Officer</u>	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Franklin School
Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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 ☐

Franklin School
Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

2

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

2

1

Total

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling/apartment building

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVAL: Classical Revival; Neo-classical Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE, TERRA COTTA, CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Franklin School is located at 820 1st Avenue Southwest in Great Falls, Cascade County, Montana. The property consists of two separate buildings that together occupy roughly three quarters of an entire city block. Both built in the Neo-Classical style, the northernmost building dates to 1910 while a larger building on the southern end of the parcel dates to 1916 with two 1938 additions. The 1910 building occupies the northern half of the parcel with its primary elevation facing north towards 1st Avenue SW. The 1916 building, which occupies the southern end of the parcel, faces south toward 2nd Avenue SW. The two buildings, once connected by a historic hyphen and bridge which was removed in c.1990, are separated by a modern playground and parking lot. The two buildings associated with the Franklin School functioned for public education for Great Falls until 1985. Shortly after the school's closure, the buildings were sold to a private developer and converted into residential apartment buildings. The historic school buildings and subsequent additions were designed in the Neoclassical style, typical of early twentieth century school buildings.

Franklin School
Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT
County and State

Narrative Description

Setting

The Franklin School is situated in a largely residential area of Great Falls, approximately 1.5 miles from the commercial core of downtown. Immediately to the north is Rhodes Park, which occupies an entire city block. To the west, south, and east, circa 1900s-era 1-to-2-story residences make up much of the adjacent properties. Central Avenue, one block north, is a primary commercial thoroughfare that runs from east to west and connects to the east side of Great Falls via a bridge over the Missouri River.

The two school buildings are flanked by a mixture of paved parking lots and manicured greenspace. Paved parking lots also flank the 1910 building on its eastern and western sides. The eastern third of the block is occupied by a series of circa 1900s-era residential properties, separated from the subject property by the property line, defined mature trees plantings, and a short chain link fence on the southern end. Paved sidewalks and paths create a buffer around the school property connecting the primary entrances of the buildings to the street. The exterior sidewalks are also framed by manicured lawn and mature tree plantings. Grass buffers separate the sidewalk from the streets to the south, west, and north.

The 1910 Building—Exterior Description (one contributing building)

The 1910 building located on the northern half of the property is a three-story brick building completed in 1910. The first story is characterized by an approximately 9' tall, buff-colored rusticated sandstone base capped by smooth buff-colored stone that matches the stone used for the sills and keystones on upper stories. The remainder of the building is clad in a smooth red brick punctuated by historic window openings infilled with replacement vinyl windows. The building has a mostly square footprint and symmetrical massing with a flat roof surrounded by a brick parapet.

The north, primary elevation is anchored by a central principal entrance on the first floor. A smooth, buff-colored stone, low-gabled roofed portico extends forward from the primary façade. Originally an open-air entrance, the portico was infilled with divided light windows at some point during the period of significance. The north face of the enclosed portico is fixed with modern double doors situated underneath a historic divided light transom. Four historic window openings flank either side of the entrance, infilled with replacement vinyl windows. Windows on this floor have a somewhat asymmetrical arrangement, with the interior-most window standing alone and the final three evenly spaced in a group and centered on the western and eastern ends of the elevation. Above the entrance portico is a small transom window and segmental brick arch with a stone keystone. Second and third stories are identical in arrangement anchored in the center by a

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

round-arched window with a decorative brick arch, stone keystones, and stone sills. Directly above this central decorative window is a buff-colored terra cotta feature reading "Franklin School". A brick parapet, about 4' tall, is clad in matching red brick and has a non-original aluminum cap. In the center of the parapet on the north elevation is a decorative buff-colored terra cotta element resembling a crest with an inscription reading "1910." At the roofline above the third-floor windows is a non-original, aluminum, coved cornice that continues along all four building elevations. This cornice bumps up approximately 1' at the center of the north elevation to wrap the "Franklin School" historic sign. This jog in the cornice is repeated on the south elevation to accentuate the center bay. Similarly, parapets on the north and south elevations are stepped to provide architectural interest and indicate architectural features below.

The west elevation of the building follows the same general characteristics as the primary façade. The first story is composed of buff-colored rusticated sandstone with a smooth stone cap while the second and third stories are clad in brick. Fenestration is asymmetrical at the first story, consisting of seven unevenly spaced window openings with smooth buff-colored stone lintels in the form of a window hood. Original window openings are infilled with non-historic vinyl windows. Second and third stories are identical in window fenestration with the northern end containing paired window openings with stone sills. In the center, two smaller window openings are separate but organized with the same detail including a stone sill and brick segmental arch with a central stone keystone. The far southern end contains a bay of three large windows with a stone sill at both the second and third floors.

The east elevation of the building is similar in composition to the west elevation, both serving as secondary side elevations. The first story is finished with the same rusticated sandstone foundation, punctuated by seven unevenly spaced window openings infilled with non-historic vinyl replacement windows and stone lintels. Second and third stories are identical with a bank of three windows on the far northern end, a bank of two windows on the southern end, and two smaller evenly spaced windows in the center.

The south (rear) elevation is similar in composition to the north (primary) elevation. The first floor displays sandstone while the upper two stories are brick. The main portion of the building has a large central window topped with a fanlight, the lower section covered with a solid panel. Flanking both sides of the central window are evenly spaced window openings. While the window openings are original, the windows themselves are non-historic replacement units. An asymmetrically stepped center graces the central parapet with the west side characterized by a short chimney stack.

The central portion of the first and second story of the main block are obscured by a two-story projection original to the construction of the building. The smaller two-story projection has the same rusticated sandstone foundation cladding found on the rest of the building with a brick upper story. South elevation is clad with utilitarian fixtures. Two small awning windows set within segmental arch window openings with jack arches and stone keystones filled with hopper-style windows punctuate the elevation. The west elevation of the projection holds two pedestrian entry

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

doors, one slightly lower in elevation positioned near the main construction and a second just a few feet to the south in the projection itself. On the east projection wall, a metal fire staircase leads to a second story entrance with a second entry immediately below that accesses the ground floor of the projection.

1916 Building—Exterior Description (one contributing building)

Overall, this building bears some similar traits in design and material to its 1910 counterpart including a three-story height, rusticated stone foundation, and upper buff colored brick stories. Primary brick is lighter in color compared to the 1910 building and features some polychrome detailing throughout. The roof is flat and topped by a brick parapet with an aluminum cap. The building is comprised of three distinct sections, the central and original 1916 portion and western and eastern additions that date to 1938. The south elevation is the primary facade, which faces 2nd Avenue SW. Beginning on the far west end, which consists of the smaller west 1938 addition, the building displays a cast stone base with buff brick cladding the upper two stories. Two non-historic window openings are centered within the elevation. The first-floor window sits directly atop the stone base. Above is a tall wood infill panel between the first and second story windows. Another wood panel infills a space between the second floor window and a stone belt course that encircles the building. A rectangular piece of wood west of this window covers a former vent. This 1938 addition recesses to the east and houses one of the primary entrances into the building; the entrance is characterized by a simple flat-roofed stone portico with simple fluted square piers. The entrance door is a modern, double door with glazed transom and sidelights. The second story is dominated by a large bank of windows made up of three non-historic vinyl windows.

Moving east to the central and original 1916 portion of the building, this section is largely symmetrical in composition with the stone base and buff colored brick above. It consists of three bays with the central recessed entry bay flanked by a slightly projecting bay to each side. The central section is dominated on the first story by one of the original entrances to the building where two square piers support a simple pedimented covered entry constructed of cast stone. Original doors are replaced with non-historic vinyl windows. Moving to the second story, brown iron spot brick is used to create a decorative outline just below the second-floor windows. These consist of paired center windows flanked by individual window openings on either side. A buff-colored terra cotta panel reading “FRANKLIN SCHOOL” centers above the second floor. Third story window arrangement mimics the second floor. Above the third story windows is a non-original aluminum cornice that wraps all four elevations, similar to the 1910 building. Another buff-colored terra cotta panel that reads “A.D. – 1916” is located beneath a segmental arch at the center of the parapet. The flanking sides of this central bay are uniform in composition with lower story sandstone and brick above. Five evenly spaced window openings punctuate the elevation with non-historic vinyl windows. All windows on the original 1916 portion of the building have buff-colored cast stone sills and lintels.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Moving east, another recessed bay appears marking the west end of the 1938 eastern addition, which contains an additional entrance. The building façade behind the entrance is characterized by two vertical bays made up of paired window openings above non-historic Masonite panels. To the west of this recessed entrance, additional brown ironspot brick work is visible, framing the upper two stories of the original 1916 portion of the building, with terra cotta rosettes inset in two locations. The remaining section of this elevation is uniform in appearance with a cast stone base matching that on the west and buff brick upper stories. Windows on this addition extend down into the cast stone base at the first floor. Seven distinct vertical panels divide the space with paired non-historic windows below textured Masonite panels. These vertical bays of windows found on various sections of the 1938 additions are not historic and date to 1989, when the buildings were first converted into apartments. A stone belt course runs around the perimeter of this addition above the third floor windows uninterrupted. Like the remainder of the property, the parapet is capped with aluminum.

The west elevation is comprised largely of the west end of the 1938 addition but some portions of the 1916 section are visible slightly extending beyond the later historic addition. This elevation has a cast stone base with buff colored brick above. The elevation is characterized by five evenly spaced paired non-historic vinyl windows. First-floor windows sit directly atop the cast stone base and have brick rowlock headers. Second-floor windows have rowlock brick sills, and the head of the window sits directly below the stone belt course that runs around the entire perimeter of this addition uninterrupted. The parapet is capped in aluminum.

The east elevation largely comprises the 1938 east addition, but a small portion of the 1938 construction extends beyond the addition to the north. This elevation is similar to the south elevation with first-floor windows extending into the cast stone base, and buff colored brick above. Two centrally located vertical bays of windows flank a central second story entrance accessed by a metal staircase. Window openings are non-historic (dating to 1989) with vinyl windows over lower Masonite panels.

The north (rear) elevation faces toward the 1910 school building. The distinct 1916 and 1938 portions of the building are highly apparent on this elevation. Starting at the eastern end of the building is the eastern 1938 addition divided into three bays, the central bay projecting slightly behind the two flanking recessed bays. All three bays hold dominant textured Masonite panels between non-historic first, second, and third-floor windows. This portion of the north elevation lacks the cast stone base found on the south, west, and east elevations of the 1938 additions but does feature the stone belt course above the third story windows. On the western end of this section, abutting the original 1916 building, is an exterior entrance covered by a non-historic metal portico. The portico shelters a pair of modern glazed metal doors. Moving west is the 1916 central portion of the building. This section also stands three stories in height. The foundation of the 1916 portion is a rusticated stone with buff colored brick above. This 1916 construction features a recessed

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

central portion flanked by two large protruding brick chimney stacks. Flanking the stacks, the elevations to the east and west contain four evenly spaced window openings finished with non-historic vinyl replacement windows with stone sills and lintels. The non-historic aluminum cornice above the third-floor windows exists on this elevation although it is interrupted by the two chimneys. The central portion displays a paraged first story, which appears to have once housed a concrete block hyphen that connected the 1916 building to the 1910 building. The westernmost portion of the north elevation associated with the 1938 addition contains evenly spaced pairs of original window openings with non-historic vinyl windows, brick rowlock headers, and sills identical to the west elevation of this 1938 addition.

Interior Description – 1910 Building

The interior of the 1910 Franklin School building is comprised of a largely exposed basement and first and second floors with each floor characterized by a wide central corridor flanked on each side by former classrooms that currently function as apartment units. A primary stair is found on the northern end of the building with a secondary stair located on the south end that connects the first and second stories. An entrance vestibule is found at the far southern end. Each floor contains four equally sized units. The southern two-story section contains utilitarian rooms including laundry and leasing office on the first floor and storage and boiler room on the second floor.

Apartment finishes are largely non-historic with tile or carpet flooring, non-historic bathroom and kitchen finishes, drywall walls and ceilings. Corridor finishes include non-historic luxury vinyl tile (LVT) flooring in corridors and rubber treads on stairs. Walls and ceilings are drywall or plaster. Lighting appears to be non-historic throughout with overhead fluorescent lighting in corridors. Stairwells contain historic details with simple square balusters and railings. All drywall surfaces are painted.

Interior Description – 1916 Building

The interior of the 1916 Franklin School building is comprised of a largely exposed basement and first and second floors. Each floor is characterized by a central double loaded corridor flanked on either side by former classrooms that currently function as apartment units. Four major stairwells are found at intersections of the building additions, namely at the eastern and western ends of the 1916 building and the eastern and western ends of the eastern 1938 addition. The western 1938 portion, which originally housed a study hall and library, is divided into two apartments at each floor. The central 1916 portion that originally housed classrooms is divided into four evenly sized apartments units on each floor. The eastern 1938 section is separated by the only north-south corridor; this section originally housed a double-height gymnasium, now split into four evenly spaced units on each floor.¹

¹ Architectural Drawings for 1989 Apartment Renovation, Cooper/Roberts Architects, on file at the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Apartment finishes are largely non-historic with tile or carpet flooring, non-historic bathroom and kitchen finishes, drywall walls and ceilings. Corridor finishes include non-historic LVT flooring in corridors and rubber treads on stairs. Walls and ceilings are drywall or plaster with historic chair rail detailing visible. Lighting appears to be non-historic throughout with overhead fluorescent units in corridors. Stairwells contain historic details with simple square balusters and railings. All drywall surfaces are painted.

Outbuilding (one noncontributing building)

A small modern gambrel roofed shed is located in the parking lot on the east side of the property between the two school buildings.

Integrity

The Franklin School property retains sound integrity to illustrate its associations with its historic significance. In 1989, the buildings associated with the Franklin School campus were redeveloped as low-income housing. At this time, several changes were undertaken to accommodate the new use. These changes included the loss of a hyphen that once connected the 1910 and 1916 buildings, largescale window replacement, introduction of new window openings on the 1938 additions, and the insertion of apartment units into former classrooms and gymnasium spaces. Despite these non-historic alterations, the building retains integrity, easily conveying its historic antecedents as a campus of education.

The Franklin School displays excellent integrity of location and setting. The two contributing buildings associated with the school remain where built and the surrounding residential neighborhood largely retains its character. The immediate setting of the block still retains manicured green space, parking lots, and playgrounds, all in keeping with the character of a historic school property.

The Franklin School retains integrity of design, material, and workmanship. Exterior materials such as brick, sandstone, and terra cotta detailing remain intact and exposed. While windows have been replaced and new window openings introduced to accommodate the function of apartments, the overall exterior arrangement and rhythm of original window and door openings remains visible. On the interior, apartments appear to largely reuse the overall arrangement of classrooms by retaining the general circulation pattern of both buildings. Historic finishes can also still be seen in corridors and stairwells and the overall exterior of the building, making up a majority of the primary interior and exterior spaces.

The property retains integrity of feeling and association as an historic school facility. The exterior of the buildings and surrounding property continues to embody the appearance and stature associated with an historic school property. The property still presents as it did when the complex was completed in 1938, despite exterior alterations and interior rehabilitation into apartments dating to 1989 and beyond.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ETHNIC HERITAGE (NATIVE AMERICAN)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1910-1975

Significant Dates

1910

1916

1929

1939

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Donavan and Rhodes (1910, architects)

Bird & Van Teylingen (1910, portico enclosure architects)

George Maurey (1916, architect)

Cottier & Herrington (1938 additions, architect)

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

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

The Franklin School at 820 1st Avenue SW is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at a local level of significance under criteria A and C. Under Criterion A: History in the areas of Education, Ethnic Heritage (Native American), and Community Planning and Development for its association with the Public Works Administration (PWA). The Franklin School reflects early educational development in Great Falls, demonstrating the growth of the city's near west side following the turn of the twentieth century. It also relates an important piece of Native American educational history as a small number of rooms of the Franklin School housed segregated classrooms for Native American school children from the Hill 57 area of Great Falls. The 1938 additions to the complex help illustrate the growth of Great Falls in the New Deal era. These additions and updates to the school complex were largely funded by the PWA. During this time, new buildings were erected and existing buildings modernized throughout the city of Great Falls through critical government funding. The Franklin School property stands as a representative example of this movement. The two-building complex was built in a series of building campaigns between 1910 and 1938/1939 and operated for public education until 1985. At the time of its closure, it was the oldest and longest operating school building in the city.²

The property gains additional significance under Criterion C. Though altered by a late twentieth century conversion into apartments following the closure of the school, the subject property reflects the physical design dictated by modern, progressive developments in public school architecture at the time of construction. Although changes occurred to the buildings over the last century, both retain and exhibit their Neo-Classical heritage. As the neighborhood quickly outgrew the educational capacity of the original school building, city fathers moved forward and built a second school building immediately south of the 1910 construction, one that proved quite sympathetic to its northern counterpart. Wing additions added to the southern building in 1938/1939 stayed mostly true to the earlier construction sporting a Stripped Neo-Classical design.

The period of significance begins in 1910 with the construction of the first building and extends to 1975, marking the end of the historic period. Significant dates include the year 1910, reflecting the construction of the earliest building, 1916, representing the construction of the second building, 1929 notes the initial year Native American students enrolled in the school, and 1939, the year associated with the first use of the additions on the south building.

² Lance Lovell, "Franklin School alumni bid farewell to city's oldest school," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 7, 1985, page 11.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

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

Significance under Criterion A: History

Early Area History

The area now known as Great Falls has long been associated with a great number of indigenous groups prior to white exploration and settlement of the area dating back to the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805. Evidence indicates Native American occupation for at least the last 10,000 years.³ Non-native influences that included the arrival of the horse, fur trade, and accompanying diseases, began to impinge on the groups occupying the area by the 1700s, increasing in intensity through the following decades. The arrival of the horse brought a life-altering scope to the Native groups of the area that resulted in changes in social and demographic organization and subsistence.⁴ The fur trade facilitated exchange between the traders from the east and the local indigenous groups, each desiring something the other had. Unfortunately, as trade increased, so too did the exposure to white diseases with catastrophic effect. Local groups impacted by the white diseases included the Blackfoot and Piegan, two groups that joined forces to combat the Shoshone, who were eventually forced out of the area. Conflict among Native groups continued with the result that although other groups continued to use the area, such as the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Nez Perce, the Blackfoot eventually controlled the region, including the area around Great Falls.⁵

Growth and Development of Great Falls

Great Falls developed around the confluence of the Missouri and Sun Rivers, founded in 1883, and incorporated as a town in 1888. One of the most influential white settlers was Paris Gibson, a Maine-borne sheep rancher from the Minnesota Territory. With seed money from railroad owner James Hill, Gibson established a settlement in 1883. Gibson implemented many of the characteristics of his former home of Minneapolis into the planning of Great Falls, making a concerted effort to establish a well-rounded community with an extensive park system, setting aside an abundance of land for greenspace, as well as lining every major boulevard with a variety of trees.⁶

Naturally, this idyllic community attracted a great number of settlers along with the promise of jobs in industries like mineral smelting, power generation, agriculture, and ranching. By 1896, the city had "...more than 4,000 residents, two railroads, five banks, lumber and flour mills, a gas and

³ Lynelle A. Peterson and Scott Wagers, "Ethnohistorical and Historical Overview of Smelter Hills in Great Falls and the Surrounding Area," Ethnoscience, Inc. for EBI Consulting, Phoenix, AZ, November 2007, page 1.

⁴ Lynelle A. Peterson and Scott Wagers, "Ethnohistorical and Historical Overview of Smelter Hills in Great Falls and the Surrounding Area," Ethnoscience, Inc. for EBI Consulting, Phoenix, AZ, November 2007, page 3.

⁵ Lynelle A. Peterson and Scott Wagers, "Ethnohistorical and Historical Overview of Smelter Hills in Great Falls and the Surrounding Area," Ethnoscience, Inc. for EBI Consulting, Phoenix, AZ, November 2007, pages 5, 9.

⁶ "History," City of Great Falls, <https://greatfallsmt.net/community/history> accessed October 20, 2024.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

light company, trolley system, and other essential services...”⁷ Great Falls would continue to see growth well into the twentieth century. In particular, the Homestead Act of 1909, brought even more settlers to the area. Families with children led to increased demand for educational resources for school aged children. This demand was met by Gibson and his fellow town founders who responded accordingly to fill the educational needs. Gibson established a city school system just a few years prior to the incorporation of Great Falls and served as Chairman of the School Board from 1885 to 1887.⁸

Education in Great Falls (1895-1910)

The Montana Territory established its first public school districts in 1866. Great Falls established its school system in 1895. The first school building in the city was known as the Whittier Building, later known as Whittier Elementary School, which served as a general ungraded educational building for all the town’s students.⁹ By the early 1890s, the demand for additional educational facilities grew and the need for modern facilities, including separate elementary, junior high, and high school buildings, was recognized by the school board. Central High School was the city’s first purpose-built high school and was constructed in the Romanesque Revival style and completed in 1896.

By 1910, Great Falls and its school district continued its rapid growth and the need for new school infrastructure was evident. As one local newspaper reported that year: “The enrollment in the city schools for the month of October this year exceeds the enrollment for the corresponding month last year by 304.”¹⁰ By the end of the year, several new school buildings including many elementary schools, were established. At this point, the city boasted seven schools including Central High School, Washington, Whittier, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Lowell, and Franklin Schools, all described as “...modern and sanitary...” to the credit of the city.¹¹

Construction and Evolution of the Franklin School (1910-Present Day)

With the growth of the city’s west side, the need for a new school to serve the families west of the Missouri River was evident and the school district began plans for the subject property. Records indicate a building known as the Franklin School was constructed by at least 1898 with an enrollment of 209 pupils by 1906; however, that building appears nonextant. Newspaper accounts mention both buildings simultaneously indicating the new Franklin School was constructed in a

⁷ River’s Edge History Tour, Great Falls, Montana, City of Great Falls Historic Preservation Office.

⁸ John N. DeHaas, Susan W. Curtis and Fredric L. Quie, “Great Falls Central High School,” National Register Nomination Form, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1976), Section 8.

⁹ Philip Faccenda and Darrell Swanson, “Great Falls High School District,” National Register Nomination Form, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2013), Section 8. Newspaper accounts variously refer to the name of the school as “Whittier” and “Whitter.”

¹⁰ “Award Contract for New School Building,” *Great Falls Tribune*, October 7, 1910, page 10.

¹¹ “School Bells Will Ring This Morning,” *Great Falls Tribune*, September 6, 1910.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

different location than the original school that bore the name.¹² That the original Franklin School remained standing in 1916 is noted by its use for polling in the Great Falls newspaper.¹³

With the need to increase educational facilities, the design of the 1910 building, the northern building on the property, fell under the guidance of architects Donovan and Rhoads¹⁴ A "Notice To Contractors" appeared in August of 1910 for sealed proposals to construct the new building.¹⁵ The announcement noted plumbing to be included in the bid but not heating. Lease & Richards were awarded the contract as the builders for the 1910 building, and received the contract despite not submitting the lowest bid: "While their bid was not quite as low as one of the J.W. Wortman & Co. of Butte, the local firm has already demonstrated in the erection of the Hawthorne building that their work is satisfactory..."¹⁶ The brick used for the school was made locally in Great Falls, something the board considered, and all lumber supplied by the Mahon Robinson Lumber Company.¹⁷ The heating contract was awarded to W.G. McPherson Company.¹⁸ When all was said and done, the final cost of the Franklin School construction stood at \$35,000.¹⁹ Little coverage occurred regarding the progress of the building's construction after the award of the building contract.

The Franklin School primarily served students from the city's west side, which largely consisted of European immigrants. Many of the students who attended the Franklin School in the 1910s learned to speak English in its classrooms; much of the student body was made up of first-generation immigrants whose families recently moved to Great Falls in search of work in the city's burgeoning industries.²⁰

Throughout the 1910s, the school-aged population of Great Falls continued to grow, and the school district kept pace with additions and expansions throughout the city. In 1916, the entire city of Great Falls experienced rapid growth; issued permits totaled more than \$250,000 for the first six months, surpassing the total investment for the previous year.²¹ Many of these building permits

¹² "Spray of the Falls," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 28, 1898, page 3; "Enrollment of Nearly Twenty-Two Hundred," *Great Falls Tribune*, September 9, 1906, page 8.

¹³ "Precinct No. 2," *Great Falls Tribune*, March 16, 1916, page 13.

¹⁴ "Architects Quite Busy, Donovan & Rhodes and George Calvert Tell of Work Done Last Year and Prospects," *Great Falls Tribune*, January 3, 1911, page 7; "Notice to Contractor," *Great Falls Leader*, September 22, 1910.

¹⁵ "Notice To Contractors," *Great Falls Tribune*, August 12, 1910, page 9.

¹⁶ "Award Contract for New School Building," *Great Falls Tribune*, October 7, 1910, page 10.

¹⁷ "Award Contract for New School Building," *Great Falls Tribune*, October 7, 1910, page 10.

¹⁸ "Will Entertain Visiting Teachers," *Great Falls Tribune*, August 8, 1911, page 7.

¹⁹ "New Year Arrive Wirth Joy And A Big Noise," *Great Falls Daily Tribue*, January 1, 1911, page 6.

²⁰ Lance Lovell, "Franklin School alumni bid farewell to city's oldest school," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 7, 1985, page 11.

²¹ "June Heavy Month In Building Lines," *Great Falls Tribune*, July 4, 1916, page 6.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

were for small residences, but also included a hospital addition, a dairy plant, and an annex to Franklin School.

In 1915, the Great Falls School District acquired five lots throughout the city for the construction of new schools and the expansion of existing facilities, including the Franklin School.²² The lots for the Franklin School expansion were "...across the alley...on the west side, and will give that building almost the half block..." In February of 1916, the board reviewed preliminary sketches for the new building to site it south of the existing 1910 Franklin School.²³ The building was designed by school board architect George Maurey.²⁴ The building contractors were Rude and Searles while the heating contract was awarded to W.G. McPherson of Portland, Oregon.²⁵ The cost estimate for construction totaled \$38,202.²⁶ By June of 1916, the newspaper reported: "following two weeks of work...excavations have been completed, concrete has been poured for the footings, and work on the stone walls will be started next week..."²⁷ "The building will be a three-story structure, the plans calling for rock fashed (*sic*) Ashlar, with cut stone trimmings for the first story and brick trimmed with cement and stone for the second and third stories. There will be three main entrances on the first floor, one facing north and on each at the east and west sides."²⁸ Highlighting the new building on its west side was the planned construction of a "room to be devoted entirely to library purposes."²⁹ The new building connected to the existing building on the parcel.

The end of December witnessed the school trustees accepting the building with its opening scheduled for January 2 of the New Year (1917).³⁰ The final cost increased to \$45,000. With its construction, the new building was set to host six grades and boasted "two floors and the basement... 10 classrooms and two playrooms" that "will greatly facilitate the school work in that rapidly growing section of the city."³¹

By the 1930s, west side development in Great Falls continued to increase, as did the student body population at the Franklin School. At this time, a reported 718 children attended the school, the

²² "Secure Lots on West Side," *Great Falls Tribune*, February 2, 1915.

²³ "Will Reduce Fire Dangers," *Great Falls Tribune*, February 8, 1916, page 8.

²⁴ "To Start Work on New School," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 29, 1916.

²⁵ "Franklin Building Well Under Way," *Great Falls Daily Leader* June 29, 1916, page 8; "Special Notice," *Great Falls Tribune* November 26, 1916, page 22.

²⁶ Franklin Building Well Under Way, *Great Falls Daily Leader* June 29, 1916, page 8.

²⁷ "Franklin Building Well Under Way," *Great Falls Daily Leader* June 29, 1916, page 8.

²⁸ "Franklin Building Well Under Way," *Great Falls Daily Leader* June 29, 1916, page 8.

²⁹ "The Children's Department Is Important Feature Of Library," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 17, 1916, page 23.

³⁰ "School Board Accepts Annex," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 21, 1916, page 16.

³¹ "School Board Accepts Annex," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 12, 1916, page 16.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

only school available to serve a reported 491 homes in the immediate area.³² The estimated capacity for the facility at the time was significantly less than the number enrolled, only 600 children. Unfortunately, relief would not come until later that decade when critical government funding became available to communities across the country reeling from the effects of the Great Depression. In 1938, the school district applied for PWA funding to build new facilities throughout the city.³³ This investment in the Franklin School represents the broader growth of the city during this period under PWA funding. Nearly \$750,000 of investment was projected in 1938 and included projects like airports, civic centers, fairgrounds, and schools.³⁴

As the population grew and grade school curriculum expanded across the country, the need for additional devoted spaces to serve the student body at the Franklin School became evident. An increase in space was needed to keep up with educational demands and expectations sweeping the country during the first half of the twentieth century. This included providing students with a variety of learning spaces, both academically and physically, access to clean and sanitary facilities, and adequate lighting. To this end, the board pushed forward with the plan to construct extra space to the southern building with PWA money (the late 1930s additions).³⁵ The cost associated with the construction and other improvements was estimated at \$80,000. An associated bond election was soon set to match the federal funds.³⁶ Interestingly, early news reports only mention a western addition to the southern building.³⁷

The additions and the proposed improvements would meet the needs of expanding area:

The modern schooling calls for greater facilities than the older schools poses (*sic*). That is why the Franklin School, for one, needs an auditorium, a library, manual and domestic arts rooms. With such additional facilities many constructive activities are possible which cannot be given our west side young people under existing conditions. More space, better light, rooms adapted to more extended uses, special rooms for special services – all these are needed if the schools of today are to begin to meet today's needs.³⁸

Cottier & Herrington was selected as the architect.³⁹ An advertisement for bid appeared in November of 1938 for the plumbing and heating contract for the addition (still referred to as a

³² "West Side School Serving 500 Homes, Rooms Crowded," *Great Falls Tribune*, July 10, 1931, page 8.

³³ "District to Ask PWA Grant For New School Buildings," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 8, 1938, page 10.

³⁴ "Boost Great Falls Building Activities," *Great Falls Tribune*, November 11, 1938.

³⁵ "District to Ask PWA Grant For New School Buildings," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 8, 1938, page 10. Construction began in 1938 but not completed for student use until 1939.

³⁶ "170,000 Special School Bond Election Is Set for August 10," *Great Falls Tribune* July 21, 1938, page 1.

³⁷ "let Government Help Rebuild Our Schools," *Great Falls Leader*, August 2, 1938, page 4.

³⁸ "Heads of City Schools Urges Voters to Approve Bond Issue," *Great Falls Tribune*, August 3, 1938. Page 12.

³⁹ "Boost Great Falls Building Activities," *Great Falls Tribune*, November 11, 1938.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

single addition).⁴⁰ By the middle of December, E.L. Cowen's bid was accepted to serve as general contractor with an amount of \$52,169. The plumbing and heating contract went to M.L. Drake for \$7,503, and the electrical to Great Falls Recording Studios with a bid of \$2,990.⁴¹

On January 10, 1939, the City of Great Falls issued a building permit for the new additions that noted two construction efforts on opposite sides of the southern building: "...being erected under a PWA project, will consist of wings to be added on the east and west sides of the present structure."⁴² By April, "brick work on the Franklin school addition is about 40 percent finished."⁴³ The additions, built in a compatible neoclassical style, with differentiated yet historically sympathetic materials of stone and brick, included rooms devoted to an auditorium, a manual training room, a domestic science room, and a library.⁴⁴ Use of the new additions appeared to commence by September of the school year.⁴⁵ In November, the press noted, "...Franklin school additions are fireproof to a large extent...provided with the latest lighting features for protection of the eyes and all have large window areas...provided with the most modern gymnasium and athletic facilities to meet the physical needs of the students."⁴⁶

Native American Education and the Franklin School

In the early 1900s, an area of Great Falls known as Smelter Hill became the site of an indigenous community. The location attracted Little Shell Chippewa, Cree, and Gros Ventre, and included up to 20 families. The Little Shell Chippewa originally came from North Dakota; their saga included forced removal to Canada after they refused to sign the McCumber Agreement.⁴⁷ After returning to the United States, many moved to Great Falls seeking work, as did other Chippewa, Cree and Gros Ventre.

In 1920, many were driven from an area on the west side of the Missouri River within the Great Falls city limits. The group moved outside of town, many to Hill 57, which became a makeshift community that lacked utilities. Located on the west side of Great Falls, Hill 57 was home to numerous Native Americans living outside of reservations and not associated with a recognized tribe. The homes in the settlement were largely made from found materials and the area's vernacular architecture comprised a large informally planned community. Ultimately, the

⁴⁰ "Advertisement For Bids," *Great Falls Leader*, November 30, 1938, page 8.

⁴¹ "Cowen Is Low Bidder On general Contract For Franklin School," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 20, 1938, page 14.

⁴² "Franklin School Addition Permit Is Issued Here," *Great Falls Leader*, January 10, 1939, page 6.

⁴³ "City's Ninth PWA Project Starts Soon," *Great Falls Tribune*, April 13, 1939, page 1.

⁴⁴ "Boost Great Falls Building Activities," *Great Falls Tribune*, November 11, 1938.

⁴⁵ "New Schoolrooms in Use as New Terms Open," *Great Falls Tribune*, September 7, 1939, page 7; "To Hold Open House," *Great Falls Tribune*, September 24, 1939, page 20.

⁴⁶ "Fireproofing Stressed in PWA Building," *Great Falls Leader*, October 11, 1939, page 4.

⁴⁷ Lynelle A. Peterson and Scott Wagers, "Ethnohistorical and Historical Overview of Smelter Hills in Great Falls and the Surrounding Area," Ethnoscience, Inc. for EBI Consulting, Phoenix, AZ, November 2007, page 17.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

community became the poster child for the poverty and plight that Native American and indigenous populations had come to know by the mid-twentieth century. Hill 57 gained national acknowledgment through the efforts of Sister Providencia to raise awareness of the homeless Indian population.⁴⁸ These groups faced unimaginable hardship and existed in abject poverty.⁴⁹ One report from the 1960s described the dire conditions of the communities on the hill: “many small homes were jammed with 15 or more people; most area Indians worked seasonal jobs at best; and most area children were doing poorly in school, in part because of high absenteeism.”⁵⁰ For those children who did attend school, they travelled each day to class at the Franklin School.

The reasons for the dire conditions endured by those of Hill 57 were many. Jurisdiction proved a major issue. Agencies associated with the city, county, and state often denied relief believing it was the Federal government’s role and responsibility to assist these groups while the Federal government assumed no responsibility for off-reservation, unenrolled, or non-recognized Indians.⁵¹

Federal Indian policies of Termination and Relocation instituted in the 1950s furthered the plight of Indian landlessness and poverty. Termination meant the Federal government could abandon its trust responsibilities to certain tribes with the result that Tribes who lost the services and annuities previously held through treaties, were forced to liquidate their assets to survive. The termination of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe in 1953, witnessed some families relocating to Great Falls and Hill 57 to live with their already poverty-stricken relatives. As if the policy of Termination didn’t prove horrendous enough for these groups, the Relocation policy displaced families to cities, failing to provide any avenue toward durable survival. Nor did the Federal government expand assistance to states or counties to handle the increasing numbers of people in need.⁵² Through policies such as these, children of Hill 57 and similar nearby communities found their way to attend Franklin School.

As early as 1929, Hill 57 students attended Franklin School. Two rooms were apparently reserved for the children, organized under school superintendent I.W. Smith and approved by the Bureau

⁴⁸ Joan Bishop, “From Hill 57, Capitol Hill: ‘Making the Sparks Fly,’ Sister Providencia Tolan’s Drive on Behalf of Montana’s Off-Reservation Indians, 1950-1970,” *Montana the magazine of Western History* Vol 43 No. 3 (1993), page 17.

⁴⁹ Lynelle A. Peterson and Scott Wagers, “Ethnohistorical and Historical Overview of Smelter Hills in Great Falls and the Surrounding Area,” Ethnoscience, Inc. for EBI Consulting, Phoenix, AZ, November 2007, page 18.

⁵⁰ “Landless,” *Great Falls Tribune*, August 10, 1986.

⁵¹ Montana Historical Society, Montana Women’s History, “Sister Providencia, Advocate for Landless Indians,” <https://montanawomenshistory.org/sister-providencia-advocate-for-landless-indians/#more-2217>, accessed January 9, 2025.

⁵² Montana Historical Society, Montana Women’s History, “Sister Providencia, Advocate for Landless Indians,” <https://montanawomenshistory.org/sister-providencia-advocate-for-landless-indians/#more-2217>, accessed January 9, 2025.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

of Indian Affairs. Prior to the establishment of these classrooms, few Native American children from the Hill 57 area attended school at all.⁵³

The education of Native American children in Great Falls was a contentious topic and often referred to in local reporting as the “Indian School Problem.”⁵⁴ Although some Hill 57 students actively attended Franklin School, in 1938, a proposal was introduced to establish two classrooms in the proposed west side community hall and branch library for the “...instruction of Indian children...”.⁵⁵ Some individuals, including several city aldermen, opposed classrooms for Native American children in both buildings. Others favored establishing classrooms. Reportedly, hundreds of citizens showed up to protest this proposal at a city council meeting. The town was evidently divided, with opposing petitions circulating throughout the city – one in favor with 247 signatures and one opposed with approximately 500 signatures. Efforts had also occurred to establish a completely segregated school for Native American children, whose population of school-aged children increased from 21 to 57 between 1933 and 1938.⁵⁶ These efforts all proved unsuccessful and education for Native American children continued at the Franklin School. The classrooms used to educate the children from Hill 57 were referred to as “Opportunity Rooms,” where boys and girls learned different crafts and trades including dress making and carving in addition to a regular curriculum.⁵⁷

As early as 1944, allegations of unfair treatment of Native American pupils at the Franklin School became public. It was reported that the children were “...kept in separate rooms, have separate recess periods, and generally receive fewer educational advantages than the rest of the pupils.”⁵⁸ A subcommittee of the house Indian Affairs committee formed to investigate, and a series of hearings held in five western states to investigate Indian Affairs at the time. Segregation of the children was at the forefront of the discussion, to which witnesses testified.⁵⁹ Local groups, including the City Federation of Women’s Clubs and the First American Teepee Club, organized dedicated to improvements in this area and seeing that Native American children were given the same treatment as the white children. Ultimately, the allegations were denied by the local school district and dismissed as a local and state problem rather than a federal issue by the congressional committee.⁶⁰ Recent local news reports have again brought attention to this issue, stating that

⁵³ “City School Officials Deny Indian Pupils Mistreated,” *Great Falls Tribune*, August 5, 1944.

⁵⁴ “Indian School Problem Sent to Committee,” *Great Falls Tribune*, November 1, 1938.

⁵⁵ “Indian School Problem Sent to Committee,” *Great Falls Tribune*, November 1, 1938.

⁵⁶ “Indian School Problem Sent to Committee,” *Great Falls Tribune*, November 1, 1938.

⁵⁷ Montana Parade Special, *Great Falls Tribune*, May 23, 1943, page 13.

⁵⁸ “Falls Has Own Racial Problem,” *Great Falls Tribune*, August 3, 1944, page 1.

⁵⁹ “Falls Has Own Racial Problem,” *Great Falls Tribune*, August 3, 1944, page 1.

⁶⁰ “City School Officials Deny Indian Pupils Mistreated,” *Great Falls Tribune*, August 5, 1944.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Native American students were segregated and kept in the basement of the school including an area referred to as a “holding cell.”⁶¹

By 1951, segregation of Native American children at public schools in Great Falls had drawn to a close. Robert Farnsworth, Superintendent of Schools, reported to the school board trustees that no segregation of students existed by October of that year though he acknowledged that “in previous years a separate room for Indian students was maintained in the Franklin school.”⁶²

By 1954, the deplorable conditions faced by the Hill 57 residents, which included the children who attended Franklin School, continued. The *Great Falls Tribune* provided coverage of the city’s attempts to improve the conditions with many voicing their concerns and thoughts: “they are always putting it up to the Indians to assimilate, to make the adjustments. There would be no Indian problem if the whites would accept us.”⁶³ Reported discussions at this time mentioned the possibility of Congress passing “pending bills calling for lifting of federal supervision over the reservations.”⁶⁴ Blackfeet tribal councilman Iliff McKay stated that if this occurred with little thought, “the result may be many more Hill 57s.” Dorothy Bohn, the chairperson of the Community Council’s Indian Affairs Committee, noted one of the greatest acts of assistance by the Great Falls community for the occupants of Hill 57 was to “help them raise their standard of living and provide an education for their children.”⁶⁵

Succinctly encapsulating the economic predicament that faced families who lived on Hill 57 to make the bare minimum to survive and allow their children to attend school, the *Great Falls Tribune* stated, “The ‘contract’ system of doing jobs takes the family away for months at a time and the children miss considerable school. Children feel they will be laughed at for being behind their classmates and often drop out of school altogether.”⁶⁶

Additional issues also posed problems, namely the increase in discrimination as the entire student body aged. A former principal at Franklin School observed this effect firsthand : “white students accept their Indian classmates easily in the first two grades because kids don’t draw a color line that early... after they are in school for the first few years the Indian children find the attitude of their white friends changes...”.

⁶¹ “Ceremony in Great Falls honors Indigenous children who died in boarding schools,” <https://www.krtv.com/news/great-falls-news/honoring-indigenous-children-who-died-in-boarding-schools>, accessed January 8, 2025.

⁶² “Segregation In Schools Here Denied,” *Great Falls Tribune*, October 16, 1951, page 8.

⁶³ “Groups Studying Ways to Help Improve Conditions at Indian Settlements,” *Gret Falls Tribune*, February 21, 1954, page 55.

⁶⁴ “Groups Studying Ways to Help Improve Conditions at Indian Settlements,” *Gret Falls Tribune*, February 21, 1954, page 55.

⁶⁵ “Groups Studying Ways to Help Improve Conditions at Indian Settlements,” *Gret Falls Tribune*, February 21, 1954, page 55.

⁶⁶ “Groups Studying Ways to Help Improve Conditions at Indian Settlements,” *Gret Falls Tribune*, February 21, 1954, page 54.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

The end of segregated classes around 1950, appeared to yield a tangible and beneficial outcome: “there has been a marked improvement in relations between the Indian and white students.”⁶⁷ This belief was echoed by Elizabeth Kant, who instructed Native children for 12 years at Franklin School and stated, “it is unfortunate that children learn about the color line when they get out of the early grades and then practice discrimination.” Then pointing out the obvious, “Children can be cruel at times.”

Prior to the end of segregated classes, former Franklin School principal Jess Whitney estimated an enrollment of 80 to 85 Native American students “during his tenure” and proffered that number increased to 100 in 1954, attending both Franklin and Collins schools.⁶⁸ Whitney discussed “discontinuing segregation at the Franklin (*sic*) adding the Indian children at that school were considered the ‘best behaved’ group in the school.”

Unlike the histories of Native American Boarding Schools, the Franklin School represents a different component of the story of Native American education in the west, and one particularly important to those Native populations who only recently received Federal recognition. This is even more important when examining the impermanence of the Hill 57 community itself, as much of the built environment associated with the community no longer exists. When looking for traces of the history of the Hill 57’s occupants, the Franklin School stands out as an important local space where their stories remain.

The Franklin School and the New Deal Era

Like many communities across the country, Great Falls struggled throughout the Great Depression and benefited greatly from the programs of the New Deal. Beginning in the mid-1930s and continuing into the 1940s, the community was flooded with funding from the PWA, providing jobs to local workers and funding much needed infrastructure improvements.

The Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, known as the PWA, occurred via Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act on June 16, 1933. The Act called for billions of federal dollars focused on large-scale construction projects throughout the country ranging from dams to local civic or municipal buildings. The Act proved two-fold in its attempt to stabilize the economy through the rejuvenation of American industry and to create employment, both geared toward general public welfare. Over 34,000 projects found funding the following six years—this including a significant number of the new schools constructed during the 1930s.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ “Groups Studying Ways to Help Improve Conditions at Indian Settlements,” *Great Falls Tribune*, February 21, 1954, page 54.

⁶⁸ “Hill 57 ‘Landless’ Indians Cited as Local Problem,” *Great Falls Tribune*, February 9, 1954, page 1.

⁶⁹ The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, “Teaching Eleanor Roosevelt History: The Public Works Administration,” George Washington University, <http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/teaching/glossary/pwa.cfm>, accessed April 17, 2013.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Between its inception in 1933 and its termination in 1941 and spending that exceeded \$6 billion dollars, the PWA's goal to boost the economy and lower unemployment to pre-depression levels failed. However, while some of the aims of the Act fell below expectations, it still provided a positive impact to the nation through the employment of a large number of skilled workers, establishing large construction contracts, and increasing and bettering power generation, sanitation, and civic infrastructure for the country. Significantly, the PWA provided "the federal government with its first systematic network for the distribution of funds to localities, ensured that conservation would remain an element in the national discussion, and provided federal administrators with a broad amount of badly needed experience in public policy planning."⁷⁰

The program provided for up to 30% of a project's cost with funds allowable to cover material expenses and labor. Act amendments in 1935 allowed use of the grants for land acquisition, project management, and architectural and engineering fees.

Illustrating the impact of the PWA in Montana, the year 1937 witnessed approximately \$5,500,000 in PWA funding for construction alone. The funding spread across both new construction and additions to existing buildings, such as the additions on the south building of the Franklin School complex. Other projects included improvements to waterworks, drainage works, irrigation, sewers, public buildings, schoolhouses, and street paving. The grant application process proved exhaustive and time consuming.

The program was described by one local newspaper as "the program of public works designed to correct the economic ills, to provide employment, to rehabilitate areas in distress and most important to construct projects that will be regenerative, especially for irrigation, has met with favor by the people of Montana."⁷¹

Great Falls features many examples of lasting examples of PWA-era architecture. One notable example is the Civic Center, constructed in 1929 in the Art Deco style. Much of the funding for this building came from the program and the building still serves as the city's Civic Center to this day. New deal funding also started what would eventually become the Great Falls International Airport Improvement in 1937. The Montana Expo Park Buildings, built in 1937 and consisting of the Future Farmers building and a horse barn and a mercantile building were also the result of PWA funding.⁷² The non-extant Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind, constructed in 1936 was another building funded by the PWA.⁷³ The US Post Office and Courthouse Extension was completed in 1938 and still serves the community today. The original post office and courthouse was built in 1912; the New Deal extension was completed by the same architect who built the original sections, James Knox. This building was added to the National Register of Historic Places

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "Water Conservation Is Stressed by Public Works Administration," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 20, 1937.

⁷² "Living New Deal," Great Falls Sites, <https://livingnewdeal.org/us/mt/great-falls-mt/>, accessed January 30, 2025.

⁷³ Listed March 14, 1986, NR #86000681.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

in 1986.⁷⁴ School projects that received PWA funding other than the Franklin School included an expansion of the Roosevelt School and new construction of the Lowell and Whittier Schools.

The Franklin School illustrates how PWA funding was applied to educational facilities and is significant of this association in Great Falls as part of this larger movement across the country.

Daily Life at Franklin School

Like many schools, Franklin School served beyond the usual educational functions. It hosted recitals, Cub Scout meetings, PTA meetings and study groups, the showing of children's films, a mother's chorus, Girl Scout events to name only a few.⁷⁵ Franklin School also served routinely as a voting precinct.⁷⁶ Occasionally, the gymnasium found use by the local churches. Flooding in June of 1953 resulted in the Bethel Lutheran Church to move their gathering to the Franklin auditorium with Reverend Murk announcing, "everyone come as you are."⁷⁷

Events outside the usual happened upon occasion, such as when six Franklin School children were bitten by dogs within seconds of each other while on the playground.⁷⁸ The dog dilemma proved such a problem that on the day of the bitings, 14 dogs were reported roaming the playgrounds.

All in all though, the Franklin School complex operated and served its educational function with limited fanfare. Little news appeared in the papers outside of the usual goings-on during the 1960s and 1970s. Reporting consisted of the routine: PTA meetings, student participation in school events and projects, club meetings, and the school serving to host as a voting venue. The property commonly appeared in classifieds as a landmark to orient potential buyers of property in the surrounding area.

In 1975, Franklin School received two Native American teaching interns from the College of Great Falls.⁷⁹ The presence of the interns was two-fold, to obtain individualized training toward becoming teachers and also "that their presence in the classroom helps to create cultural awareness in all students."

⁷⁴ "Living New Deal," Great Falls Sites, <https://livingnewdeal.org/us/mt/great-falls-mt/>, accessed January 30, 2025.

⁷⁵ "David Konecny, 8, Gives Two Recitals," *Great Falls Tribune*, January 8, 1950, page 28; "Boy Scout News, Activities," *Great Falls Tribune*, March 20, 1950, page 7; "Franklin PTA Study Group," *Great Falls Tribune*, March 26, 1950, page 36; "Children's Film," *Great Falls Tribune*, March 27, 1950, page 7; "Mother's Chorus Meets Today at Franklin School," *Great Falls Tribune*, February 4, 1954, page 14; "Girl Scout Camping Caravan to Train Montana, Idaho Leaders Here May 19, 20," *Great Falls Tribune*, May 14, 1955, page 4;

⁷⁶ "School Board Approves Voting Precincts Plan," *Great Falls Tribune*, February 2, 1954, page 8.

⁷⁷ "Bethel Lutheran," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 6, 1953, page 3.

⁷⁸ "Sure Sign of Spring—Canines Running at large Stir Spirited Debate in City Council Meeting," *Great Falls Tribune*, March 24, 1953, page 8.

⁷⁹ "Indian interns attend session," *Great Falls Tribune*, August 22, 1975, page 10.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

In 1984, a proposal occurred to bus students from other areas to Franklin School. The proposal proved contentious as comments made by the parents of the kids slated to take the buses voiced opposition in apparently disparaging and condescending fashion. The comments resulted in a back-and-forth with the enraged populace of the Franklin neighborhood.⁸⁰

In 1985, a committee recommended closing Franklin School and selling the property.⁸¹ The closure would result in the Franklin students attending the West Junior High building. By May 24, a notice to sell the property appeared in the *Great Falls Tribune* and in June, the school officially closed its doors bringing an end to the property's use for education.⁸²

Architectural Significance

With a major push from Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, interest in the Neo-Classical Revival style gathered momentum with noted architects of the time designing many of the buildings used to house the exhibits.⁸³ The style proved popular in the United States through 1940 with its greatest popularity occurring from 1900 to 1929, a range that brackets the original 1910 construction of the Franklin School and the second 1916 construction effort to the south of the 1910 building.⁸⁴

Attributes associated with Neo-Classic design often include one to two-and-a-half story elevations, general symmetry with balanced facades and layouts that provides "a sense of calm and order," simplicity in form and color avoiding unnecessary ornamentation, flatter shading and lighting due to reduced projections and recesses, the use of round arches, flatter bas-relief elements, a balance of geometric shapes and straight lines, decorative surrounds on doorways, side-lights and transoms, and the use of double-hung window units (often in a variety of window configurations). Entries often feature pediments and triangular gables. Columns may appear in the style. The use of wings also occurred, though in the case of the Franklin School, their existence is owed to the two additions attached to the east and west walls of the 1916 building.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ "Rude comments," *Great Falls Tribune*, January 26, 1984, page 8.

⁸¹ "Franklin closure, sale recommended," *Great Falls Tribune*, May 11, 1985, page 1.

⁸² "Notice to Sell or Otherwise Dispose of Property of School District No. 1, Cascade County, Great Falls, Montana," *Great Falls Tribune*, May 24, 1985, page 20; "School principals transferred," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 8, 1985, page 8.

⁸³ Antique Homes Style, *Neoclassical Revival Style – 1895 to 1950*, <http://www.antiquehomestyle.com/styles/neoclassical.htm>, accessed April 4, 2023.

⁸⁴ *Architectural Styles of America and Europe*, Neoclassical Revival, <https://architecturestyles.org/neoclassical/>, accessed April 4, 2023.

⁸⁵ Indiana Department of Natural Resources, *Neo-Classical Revival Style*, <https://www.in.gov/dnr/historic-preservation/learn-about-topics/buildings-and-bridges/architectural-styles/neo-classical-revival-style/#:~:text=The%20Neo%2DClassical%20Revival%20style%20is%20identified%20by%20its%20use,projecting%20from%20the%20main%20structure>, accessed April 4, 2023; Architectural Course.org, "Neoclassical Architecture: Characteristics, History, and Modern Influence," <https://www.architecturecourses.org/learn/neoclassical-architecture>, accessed January 13, 2025.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

The 1938/1939 additions on the south building are best described as Stripped Neo-Classical—a style that displays understated or muted attributes typically associated with Classical or Neo-Classical architecture. The presentation leans toward exhibiting certain cues from the larger style but with even less ornamentation. This can occur for a variety of reasons, but cost may often be a consideration.

Although the two buildings that comprise the Franklin School display some alterations from their original construction, they easily retain sufficient integrity to impart their architectural roots. Both reflect the elevational standards associated with the style and present stunning symmetry and balance. Straight lines and geometric shapes dominate their appearance. While undoubtedly attractive, both present restrained ornamentation mostly limited to round arches and handsome foundational/lower story stone work. Although the window openings presently hold tri-part units, they originally boasted the double-hung units associated with the style. The main entries of both the 1910 and 1916 buildings remain, albeit, with some change, though both continue to present pediments and low-slope gables covering the doorway.

The property stands as a sound example of Neoclassical Revival-style architecture as applied to Great Falls public schools. To place the Franklin School in a clearer historical and architectural context, other Great Falls schools were examined from this period of development to compare and assess the Franklin School among both its National Register-listed and otherwise documented peers in Great Falls.⁸⁶

Of the extant school buildings in Great Falls, two are currently listed in the National Register and both served as the city's high school. The first and oldest was originally built as Central High School in 1896.⁸⁷ Designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, the school was eventually known as Paris Gibson Junior High and today operates as the Paris Gibson Square Art Museum; this building has undergone a number of alterations including the loss of a historic annex, loss of a prominent clock tower, and limited interior alterations to accommodate its new function as an art museum. Despite these alterations, the building still retains sufficient integrity to remain listed in the National Register.⁸⁸

The second National Register-listed building is Great Falls High School.⁸⁹ Constructed in 1930 in the Collegiate Gothic style, the campus continues to serve as the city's high school to this day. The school has excellent integrity but does have alterations similar to those found in the Franklin School. This includes downsized/reduced window openings and replacement windows throughout. The school also features several modern additions.

⁸⁶ "Great Falls Schools Showing their Age," *Great Falls Tribune*, May 26, 2015.

⁸⁷ Listed September 1, 1976, NR #760001120.

⁸⁸ "Great Falls Schools Showing their Age," *Great Falls Tribune*, May 26, 2015.

⁸⁹ Listed March 20, 2013, NR #13000097.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Of the purpose-built elementary schools or ungraded schools from the late nineteenth through the early decades of the twentieth century, several buildings are still extant. Many have been altered to varying degrees and many serve different functions than originally planned. These include the Washington School (built 1909, 1015 1st Avenue) which now serves as private office building; McKinley School (built 1906, 1601 6th Avenue N) now Great Falls Vineyard Church; Roosevelt School (built 1928, 2501 2nd Avenue), currently a healthcare facility; and Emerson Elementary (built 1916, 1220 3rd Avenue), which currently houses a head start program. Of the extant buildings, many contain heavily altered or downsized/infilled windows and modern additions. Both the original Longfellow and Lincoln schools have been replaced by new iterations, though the historic Whittier School at 305 8th Street North continues to stand and serve as an educational facility.

The Franklin School stands out among its peers as a fine example of a primary grade school in Great Falls. While the school has undergone notable interior alterations, the exterior integrity remains largely intact and expressive of the Neoclassical Revival style and illustrative of the growth of the school throughout its period of significance. The building also still exemplifies its historical association with the growth and development of educational institutions in Great Falls, as well as its association with PWA funding. Further, the Franklin School also appears to be one of the only public school buildings associated with Native American education in Great Falls.

Discussion of Architects

1910 Building: Donovan and Rhoads

Architect W.E. Donovan designed many buildings in Great Falls, Montana. He was born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1872, then moved to Helena, Montana in 1899 before moving to Great Falls shortly after. In Great Falls he is credited with designing the Elks' Temple, the Black Eagle School, The Herbert Strain home, the O. F. Wadsworth home and the home of Dr. F. J. Adams. Donovan was involved with the National Register-listed C.B. Power Bungalow in Wolf Creek, Montana after he took over from architect Robert C. Reamer who was occupied with projects in Yellowstone National Park.⁹⁰ This masterful example of the rustic Craftsman/Bungalow style survives as a bed and breakfast today. In 1915 Donovan moved to Chicago to make arrangements to manufacture a blueprint printing machine called the Two-Way Blue Print process.⁹¹ He died in Havre, Montana in 1924.⁹²

Burt L. Rhoads is listed in the 1910 Great Falls directory as residing on 3rd Avenue North and an Ida R. Rhoads is listed as the principal at Franklin School, also teaching 6th grade in 1910.⁹³ Further documentation places the Rhoads family in Kalispell, Montana in 1913 and then in

⁹⁰ John Phillips, "C. B. Power Bungalow," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995), Section 8.

⁹¹ "Makes Invention of Much Promise", *Great Falls Tribune*, December 30, 1915, Page 6.

⁹² "Donovan Dies of Stroke at Sister's Home", *Great Falls Tribune*, May 8, 1924, Page 9.

⁹³ "School Bells Will Ring This Morning", *Great Falls Tribune*, September 6, 1910, Page 10.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Denver as early as 1915.⁹⁴ In Denver, he became the Chief Engineer of the Gates Rubber Company, designing many of their factory buildings (since demolished). A known commission of Rhoads' in Denver is the threatened Carmen Court, a 1925 Pueblo Revival multi-unit building at 900 E. 1st Avenue (extant). Burt's older brother Harry Rhoads was a successful newspaper photographer in Denver for almost 70 years and his sister Hazel married Charles C. Gates of the Gates Rubber Company.⁹⁵

Donovan & Rhodes were very active in up-and-coming Great Falls in the years surrounding the original Franklin School building design and construction. Plans were being prepared by them in 1909 for a public market on the north side of Second Avenue south near Fifth Street.⁹⁶ A First Unitarian church in Great Falls they designed began construction in September of 1911.⁹⁷ The façade of the Alcazar theater (demolished) was redesigned by them in 1912 and said to rival anything in the line of moving picture fronts anywhere in the country.⁹⁸ They also designed a new front to Nate Wertheim & Co. in 1912, which included window displays and considered one of the most modern store fronts of its time.⁹⁹

1910 Portico Enclosure: Bird & Van Teylingen

The local history museum in Great Falls holds a file of a drawing for the front portico on the north side of the 1910 building signed by Bird & Van Teylingen. It details knee walls on the sides with fixed divided light windows above. The primary double doors on the north side have a transom above. This enclosure looks to have survived until the 1989-1990 remodel, as it appears on a circa 1990 photo taken around the time of the remodel.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ "Alice Rhoads Page", obituary, *The Missoulian*, April 15, 1991, Page 11.

⁹⁵ Community Planning and Development Memo Report of Findings for Certificate of Demolition Eligibility, Denver Community and Planning Department, March 24th 2020.

⁹⁶ "Plans for New Market Place", *The Great Falls Leader*, July 22, 1909.

⁹⁷ "Unitarians Dedicate New Church Sept. 24", *The Great Falls Leader*, September 16, 1911

⁹⁸ "Alcazar Is To Be Remodeled", *The Great Falls Leader*, January 10, 1912, page 2.

⁹⁹ "New Modern Store Front", *The Great Falls Leader*, July 31, 1912, page 8.

¹⁰⁰ "Enclosure of Front Porch for the Franklin School", *Bird & Van Teylingen*, Cascade County Historical Society. Undated.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

1916 Building: George Maurey (architect)

Very little is known about the life of architect George Maurey. However, he is mentioned in a 1984 article as a notable Great Falls architect who designed the Franklin School 1916 building and an addition to the Paris Gibson Junior High.¹⁰¹ Maurey appears in a 1919 article that places him in Great Falls still as a practicing architect.¹⁰²

1916 Building: Rude & Searles (builder/contractor)

Contractors Rude & Searles were very active in Great Falls and the surrounding smaller up-and-coming towns through the 1910s. They worked on the local high school and other elementary schools in Great Falls, in addition to the Franklin School.¹⁰³

1938: Cottier & Herrington (architect); E.L. Cowen (builder/contractor)

Arthur Kester Herrington, originally from Akron, Ohio, attended Montana State College from 1925-1927, receiving a degree in architecture. He worked as a draftsman for several firms in Great Falls beginning in 1928 before partnering with G. Gordon Cottier. After graduating from Montana State College in 1925 with a degree in engineering, Cottier helped design a new student residence at Montana State College in Bozeman, completed in 1934.¹⁰⁴

Glenn Gordon Cottier also graduated from Montana State College after which he gained employment in Milwaukee and San Francisco. He joined well known architect George Shanley assisting on the Columbus Hospital building in Great Falls. After his time with Shanley, Cottier worked with Harrington in Great Falls—several of the buildings at the Montana State Fairgrounds in Great Falls bear his design. By 1947, Cottier relocated to Washington State.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

The Franklin School at 820 1st Avenue SW is significant at the local level under Criterion A and Criterion C. The two-building complex was constructed over a series of building campaigns between 1910 and 1938 and operated as a public school until 1985. For decades, the Franklin School campus served elementary aged children from the city's west side. By the 1980s however, the school district struggled both financially and with dropping enrollment and schools across the district were being considered for closure. The idea of closing the Franklin School was floated early in 1985, and later that year the school board voted to close both the Franklin and Russel

¹⁰¹ "Building survey lists architects, contractors," *Great Falls Tribune*, March 25, 1984, page 132.

¹⁰² "Will Cut Wood From White Bear Above Town A Couple of Miles," *The Great Falls Leader*, December 6, 1919, page 10.

¹⁰³ "Trio of School House Contracts," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 19, 1917, page 13.

¹⁰⁴ "2 Falls Students Graduate From Montana State College," *Great Falls Tribune*, June 7, 1925, page 6.; "Mr. and Mrs. G. G. Cottier Leave for Bozeman," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 3, 1933, page 8.

¹⁰⁵ Biographical sketch on Glenn Gordon "Dode" Cottier, on file at the Montana State Historic Preservation office, Helena, MT.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

schools.¹⁰⁶ When Franklin closed its doors, it was noted as being the “city’s oldest school.”¹⁰⁷ One young student, a fourth grader who attended the school in its final year even said of her soon to be alma mater: “It’s an old school...its like a landmark or something.”¹⁰⁸

Shortly after the closure of the Franklin School, new uses were proposed to meet another growing need of the community: low-income housing. Before the end of the decade, plans were developed to turn the complex into apartments. During this time, several large-scale material changes were undertaken as part of the renovation. The apartments were again renovated in 2010-2011, largely following the same plans as the 1989 project. Today, the property continues to operate as the Franklin School Apartments.

Overall, the evolution of the building is a direct reflection of the growth and development of Great Falls and public-school education. The school is one of the few extant purpose-built elementary schools in Great Falls that cumulatively reflects multiple periods of growth in educational development in the city, beginning with early expansion of elementary education on the city’s west side, the growth through the first two decades of the 1900s, and finally into the New Deal era with PWA funded additions.

¹⁰⁶ Lance Lovell, “School board votes to close Russel, Franklin schools,” *Great Falls Tribune*, May 14, 1985, page 1.

¹⁰⁷ Lance Lovell, “Franklin School alumni bid farewell to city’s oldest school,” *Great Falls Tribune*, June 7, 1985, page 11.

¹⁰⁸ “Schools,” *Great Falls Tribune*, June 13, 1985, page 2.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Great Falls, Cascade County, Montana, 1929, 1950. Library of
Congress.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

[Approval Pending; NPS #48589]

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Franklin School
Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.5480

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	Latitude: 47.506794	Longitude: -111.327066
2	Latitude: 47.506788	Longitude: -111.325512
3	Latitude: 47.506788	Longitude: -111.325522
4	Latitude: 47.505947	Longitude: -111.327030

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

The Franklin School is located in northwestern Great Falls in T20N R3E S11, Lots 1 Block 577. The property is bounded to the north by 1st Avenue SW, south by 2nd Avenue SW, west by 9th Street SW, and west by a chain-link fence and a north-south trending alley that marks the eastern property line. See attached maps Section 9 pages 41 and 42; reference to these maps confirms that boundary.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Cascade County Parcel 3000, T20N R3E S11, Lots 1 Block 577 is the legal boundary description associated with the Franklin School and encompasses the land and buildings historically associated with the Franklin School.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Noel Weidner, Consultant
organization: Ryan, LLC
street & number: 227 W. Monroe Street Suite 4200
city or town: Chicago state: IL zip code: 60606
e-mail: noel.weidner@ryan
telephone: 708-556-3264
date: 12/11/2024

Property Owner: Kirk Bruce, Charles Street, LLC
Street & number: PO Box 725378
City or town: Berkley state: MI zip code: 48072
e-mail: kirk@a-developers.com
telephone: (248) 268-3289

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

1. **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
2. **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
3. **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: Montana

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

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

1 of ____.

See Continuation Sheets

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

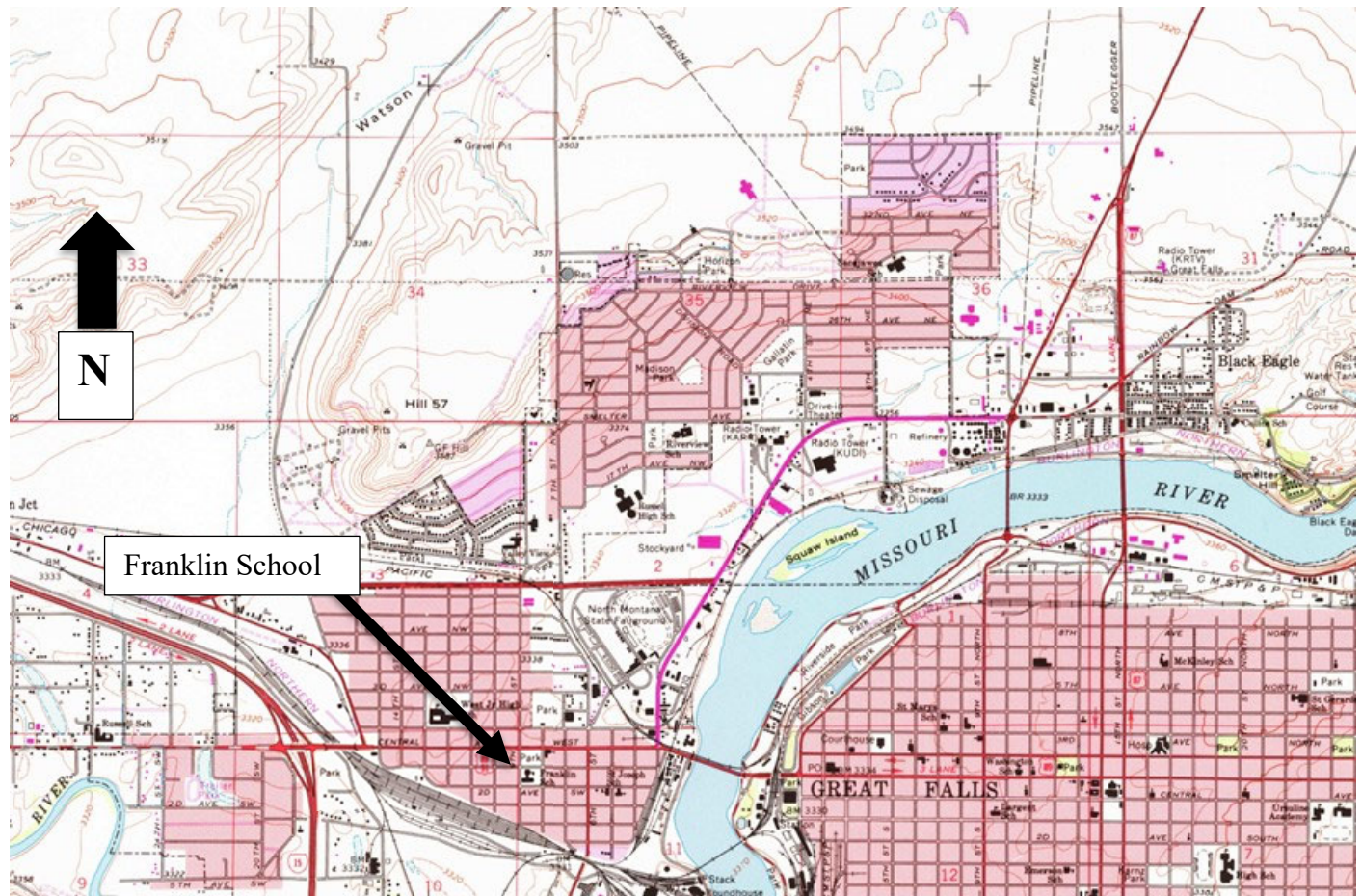
Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Maps, Aerials, and Blueprints



Location of Franklin School, found on the Northwest Great Falls 7.5' quadrangle map.

Latitudes and Longitudes presented below correspond to corner points presented on topographic and aerial maps, Section 9 pages 41 and 42

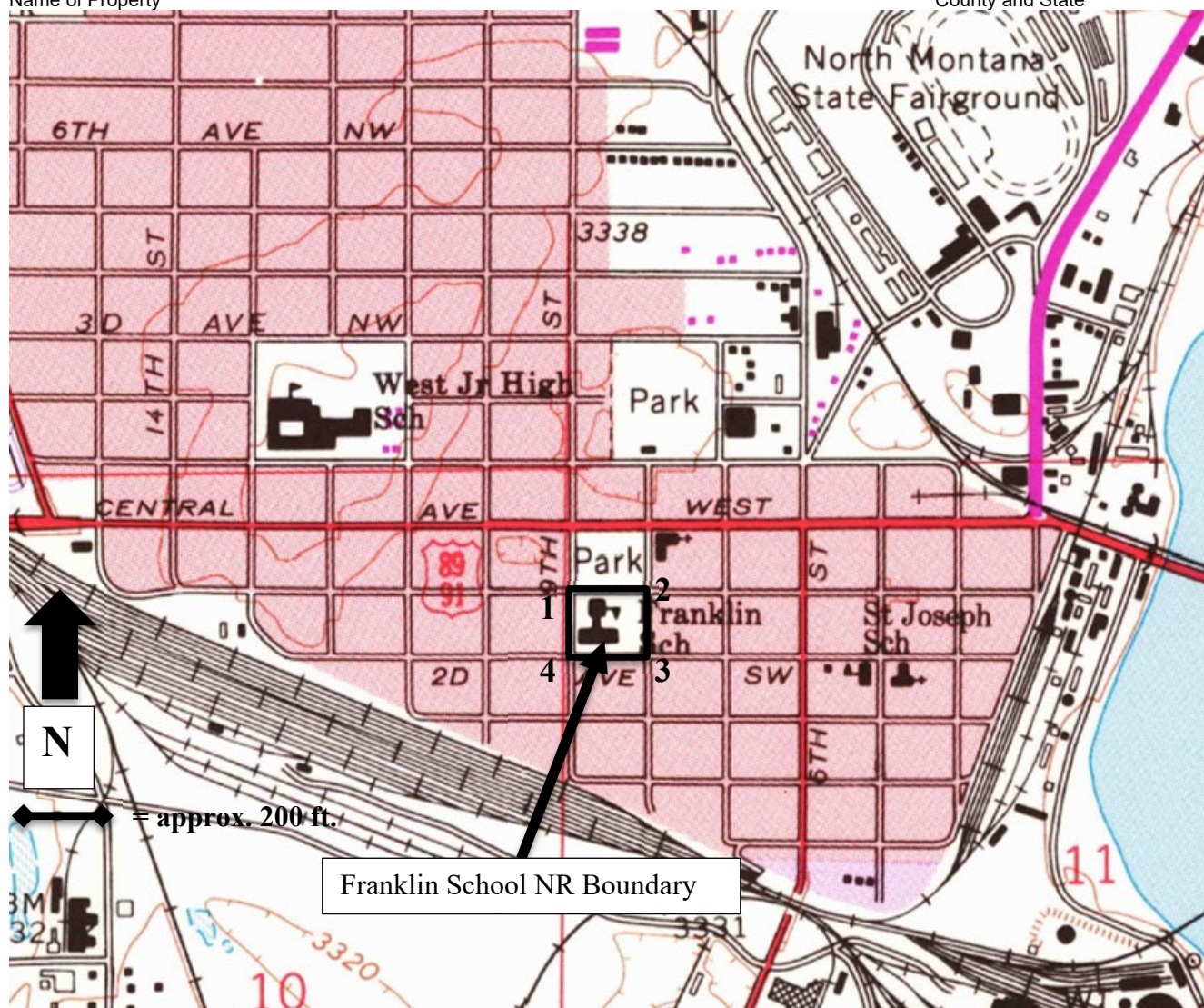
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2 Latitude: 47.506788	Longitude: -111.325512
3 Latitude: 47.506788	Longitude: -111.325522
4 Latitude: 47.505947	Longitude: -111.327030

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



Location of Franklin School. Found on the 7.5' Northwest Great Falls quadrangle map.

Latitudes and Longitudes presented below correspond to corner points presented on aerial map, Section 9 page 42.

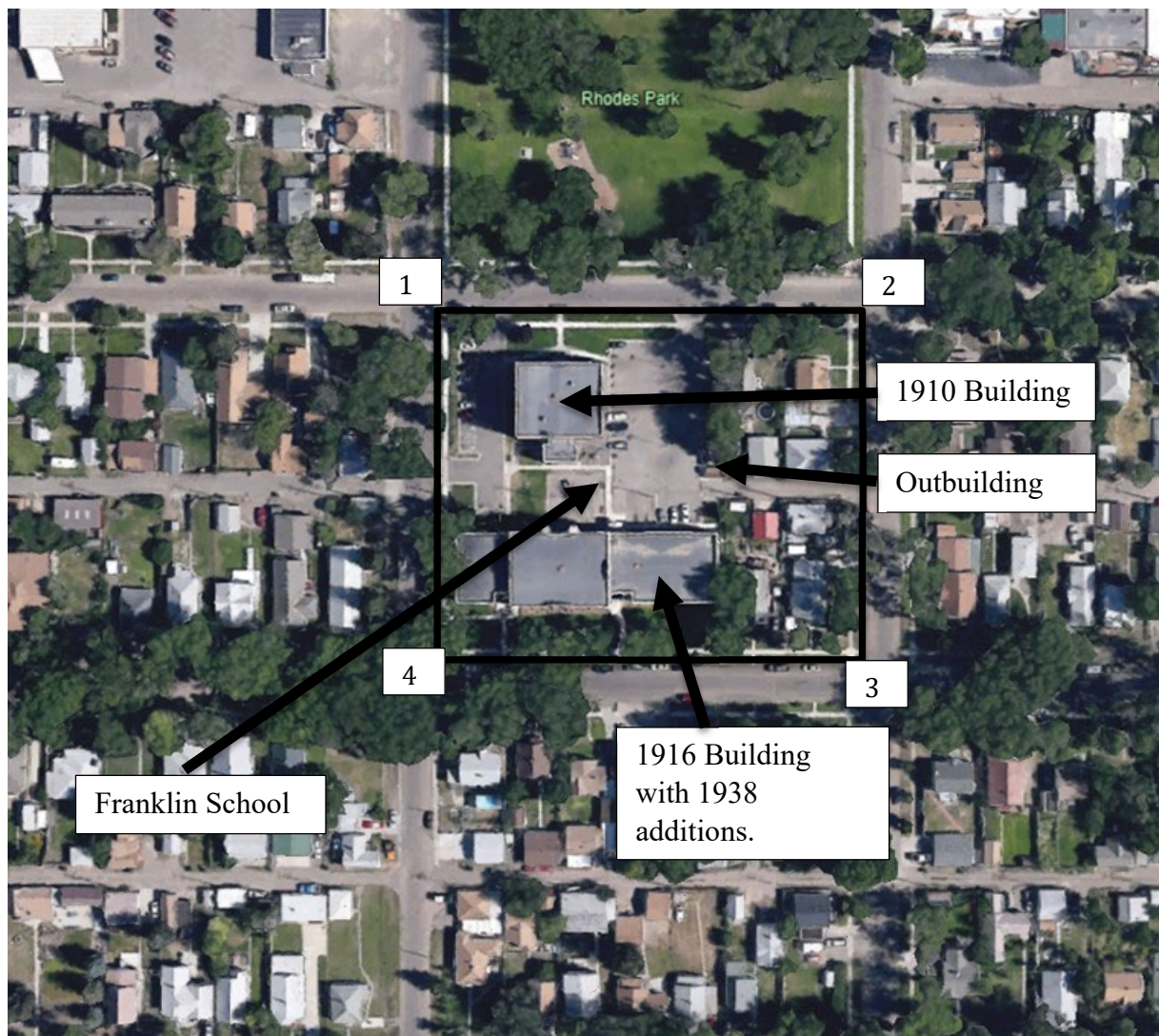
1 Latitude: 47.506794	Longitude: -111.327066
2 Latitude: 47.506788	Longitude: -111.325512
3 Latitude: 47.506788	Longitude: -111.325522
4 Latitude: 47.505947	Longitude: -111.327030


Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



Aerial View of location of Franklin School. 100 ft = 

1 Latitude: 47.506794

Longitude: -111.327066

2 Latitude: 47.506788

Longitude: -111.325512

3 Latitude: 47.506788

Longitude: -111.325522

4 Latitude: 47.505947

Longitude: -111.327030



Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



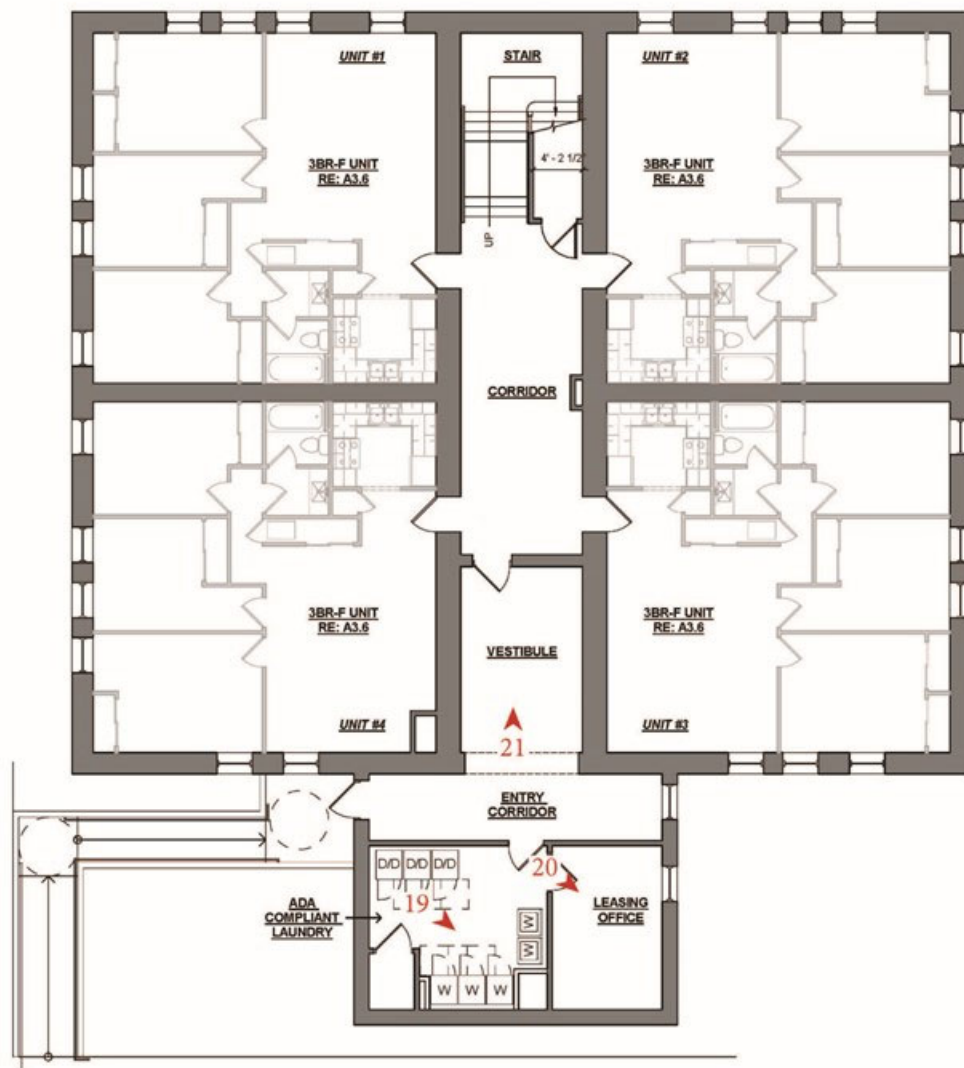
Aerial View and keyed site plan of Franklin School.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



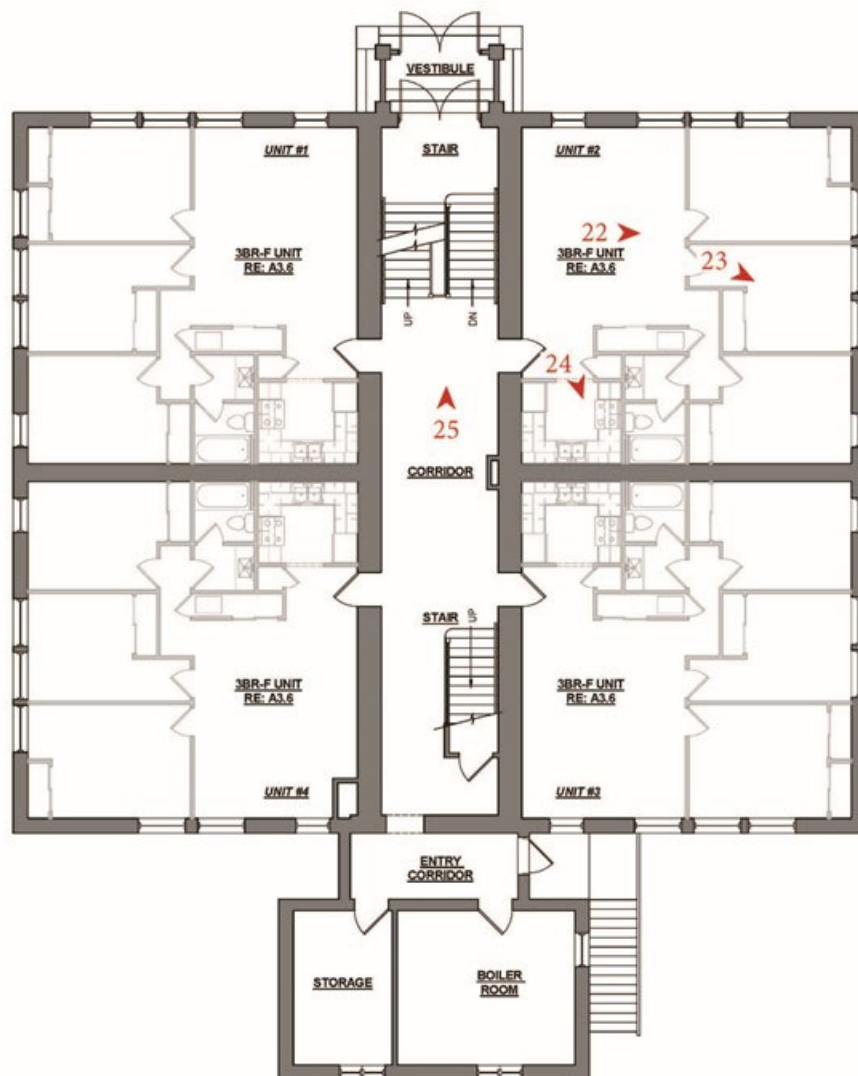
Franklin School. 1910 Building Floorplan, Basement. Courtesy of True Craft Architecture, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



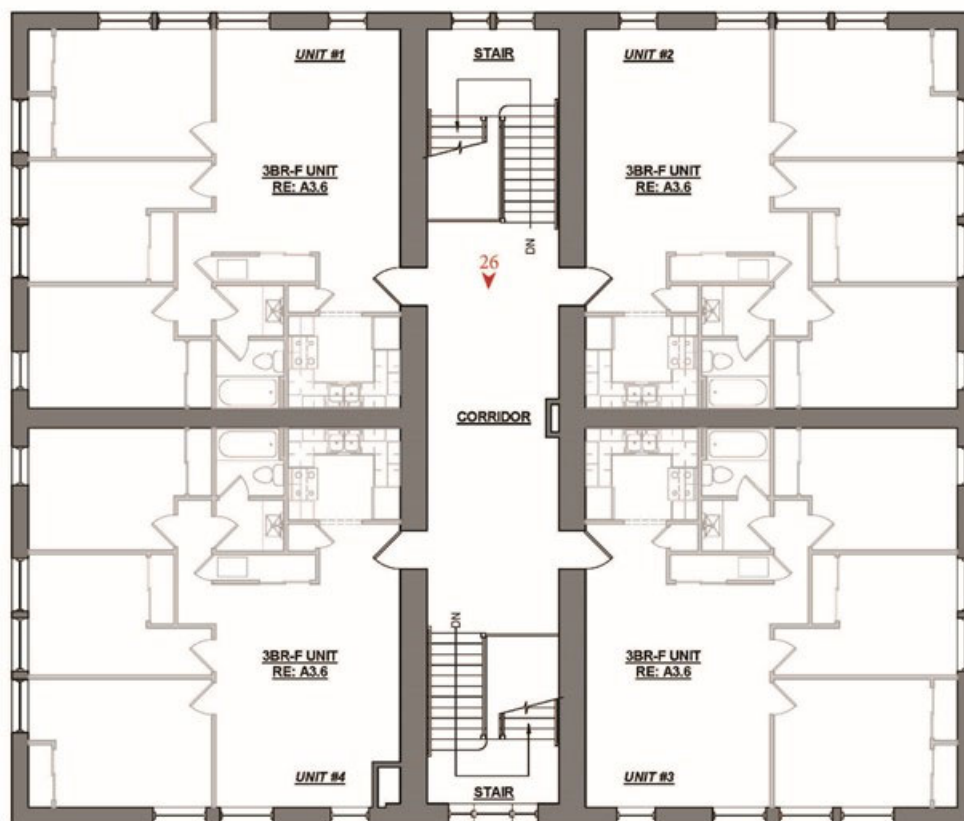
Franklin School. 1910 Building Floorplan, First Floor. Courtesy of True Craft Architecture, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



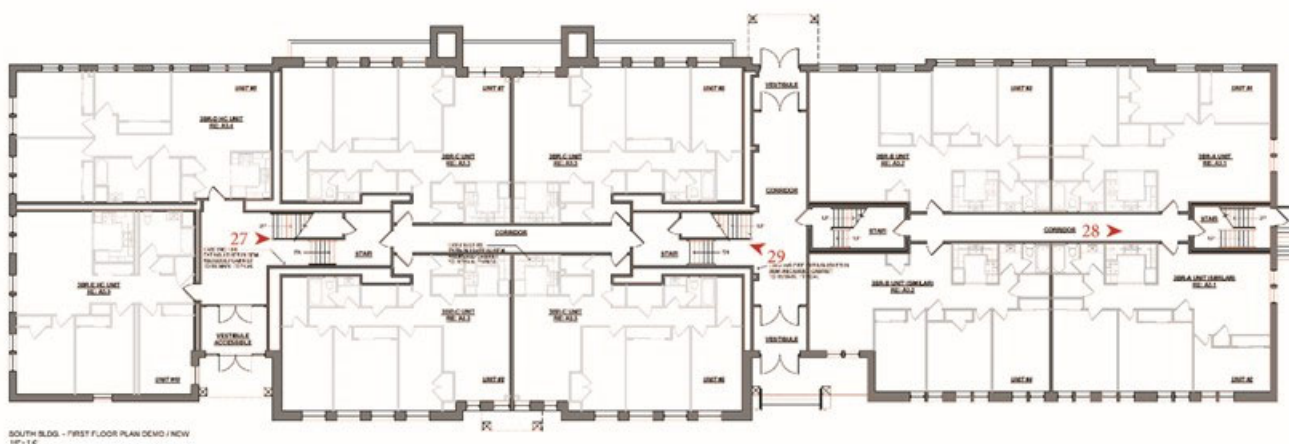
Franklin School. 1910 Building Floorplan, Second Floor. Courtesy of True Craft Architecture, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA.

Franklin School

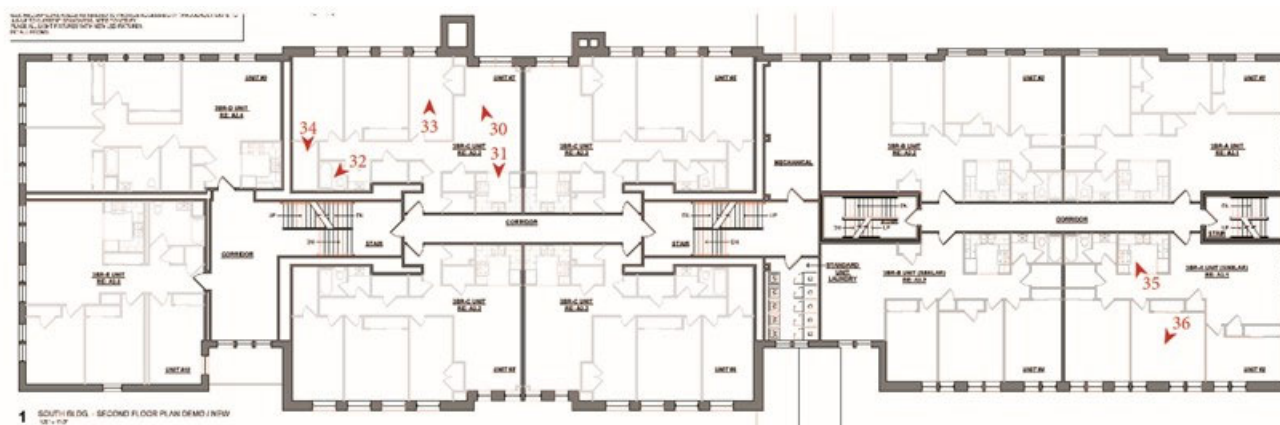
Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



Franklin School. 1916 Building Floorplan, First Floor. Courtesy of True Craft Architecture, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA.



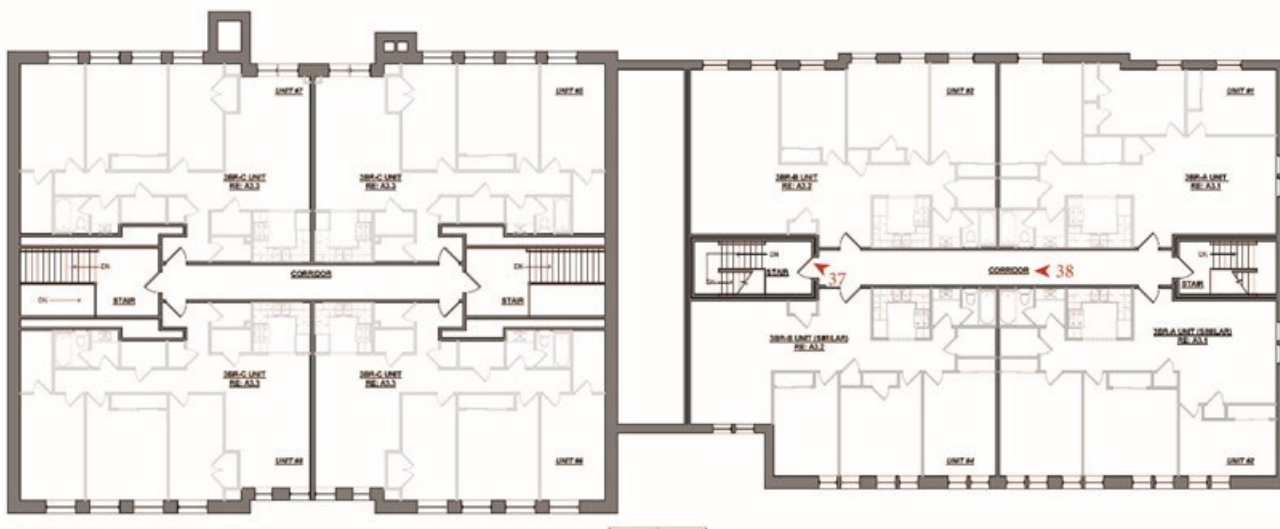
Franklin School. 1916 Building Floorplan, Second Floor. Courtesy of True Craft Architecture, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



Franklin School. 1916 Building Floorplan, Third Floor. Courtesy of True Craft Architecture, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA.

Franklin School
Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT
County and State



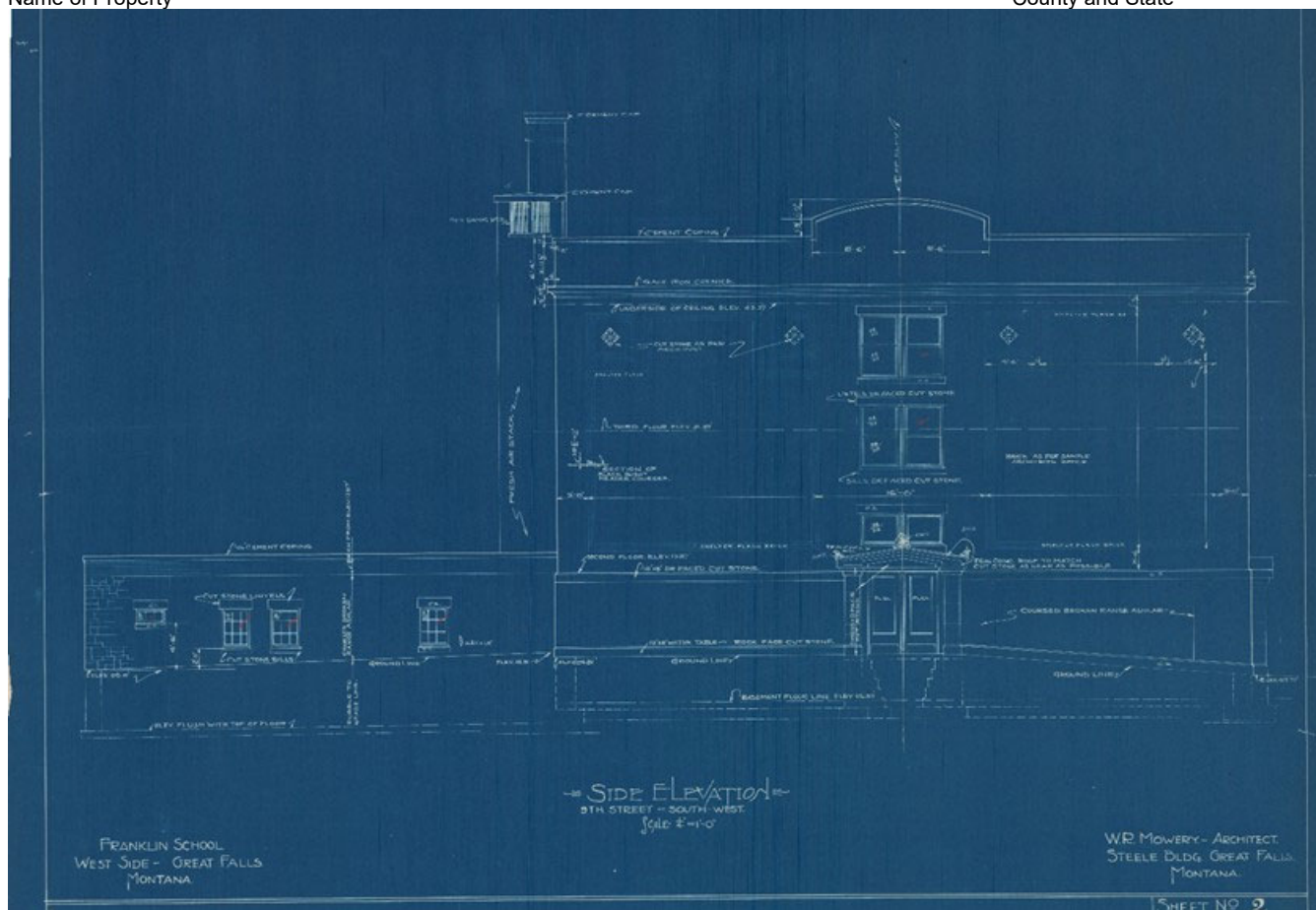
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, South Elevation. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State



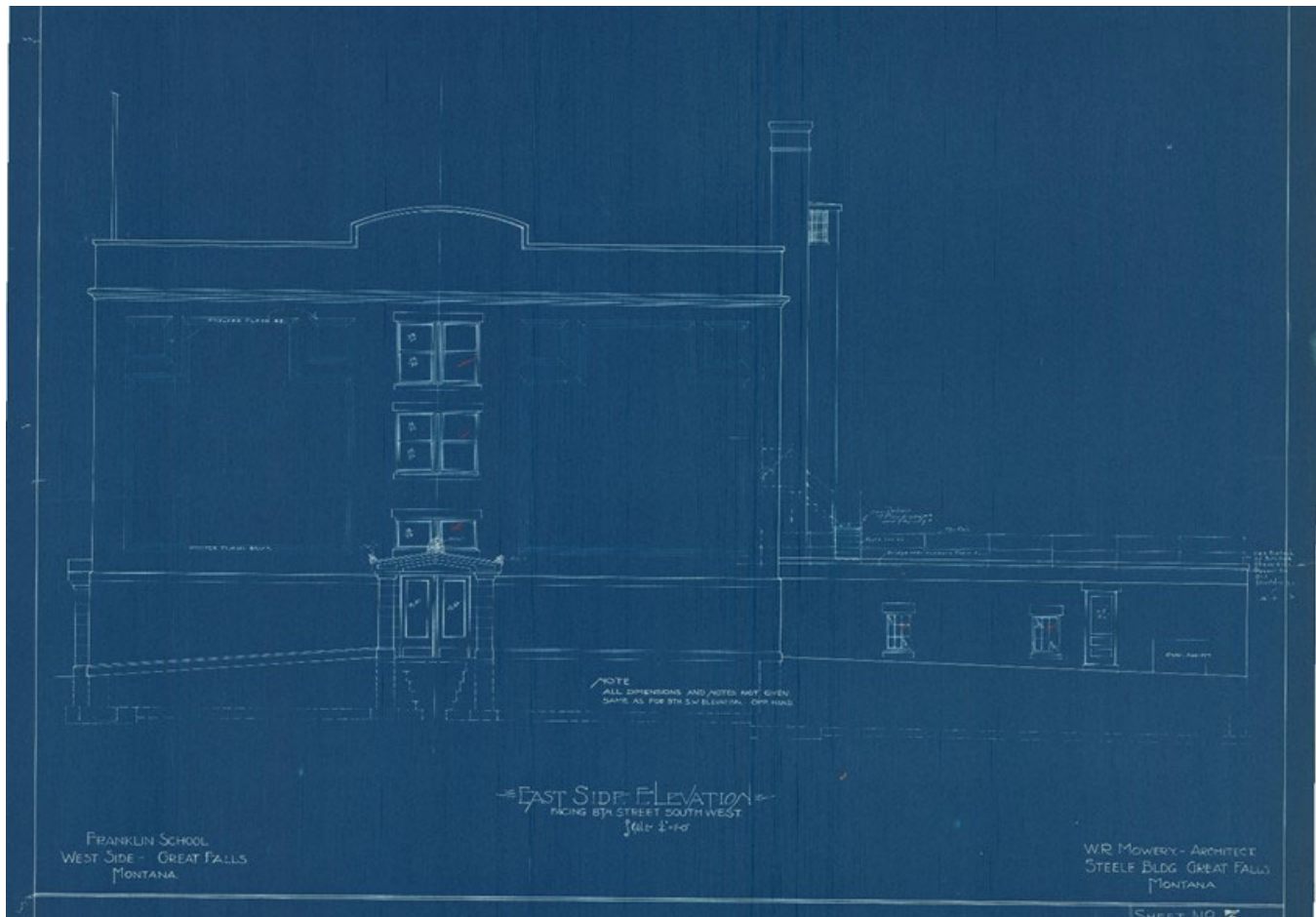
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, West Elevation. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



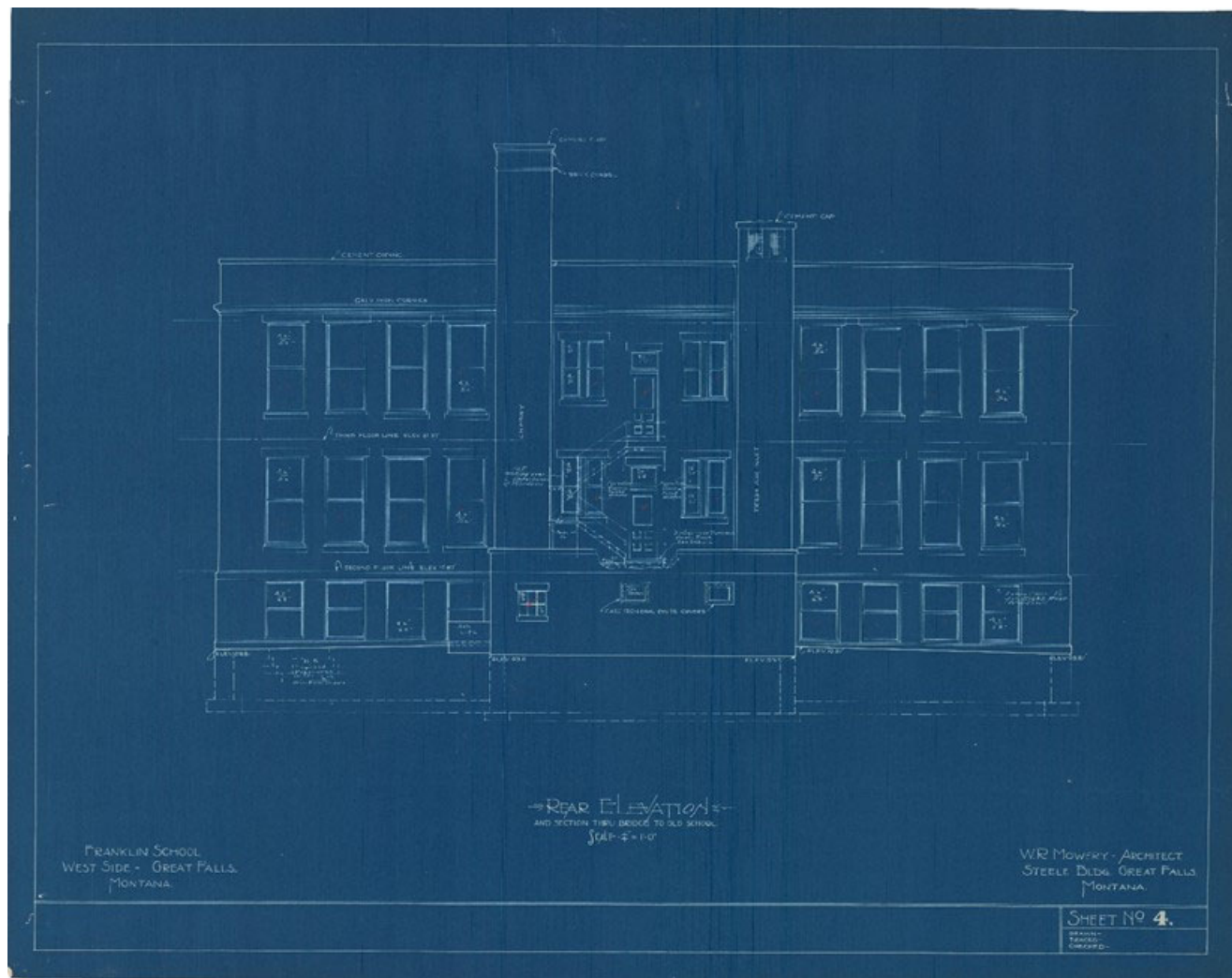
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, East Elevation. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



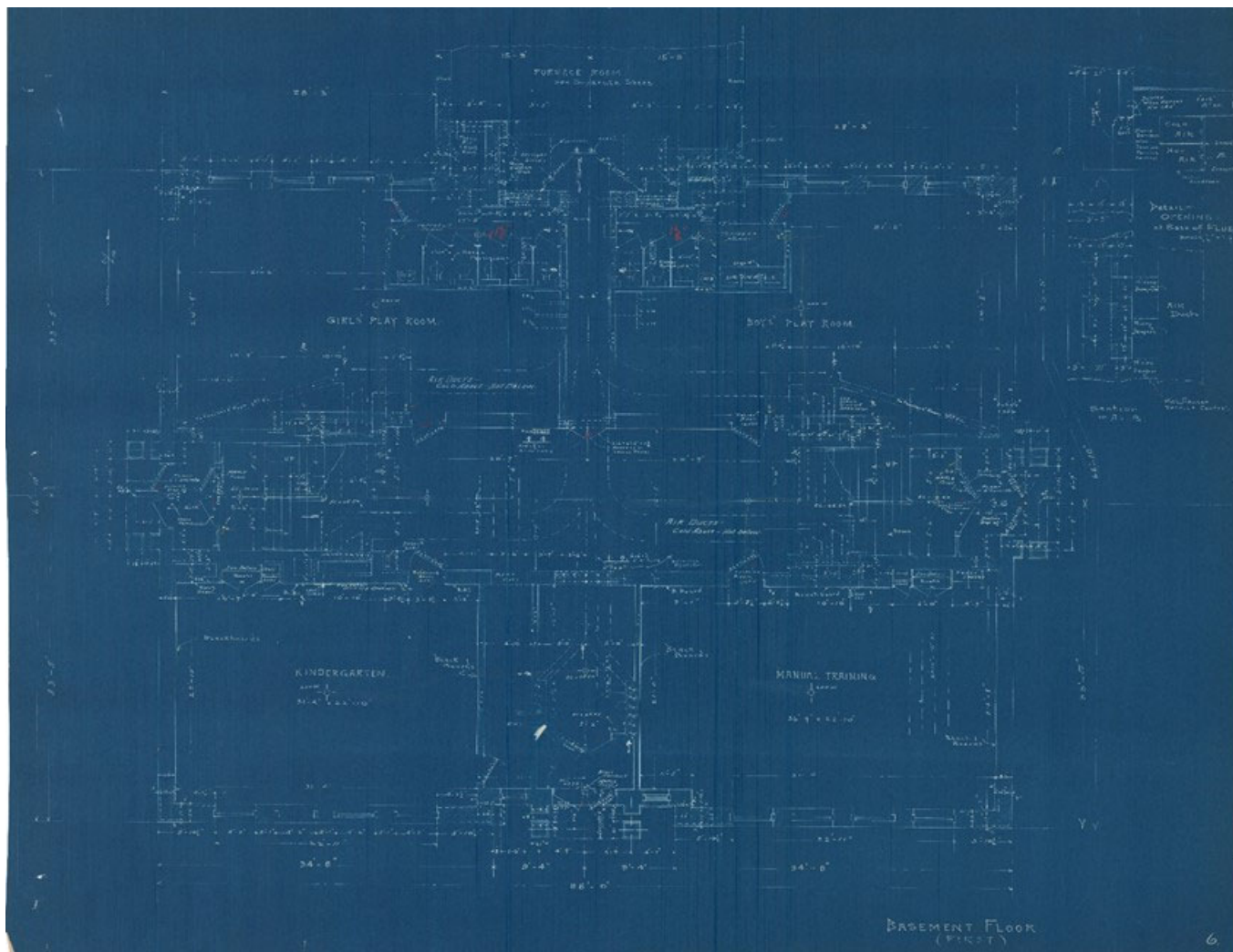
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, North Elevation. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



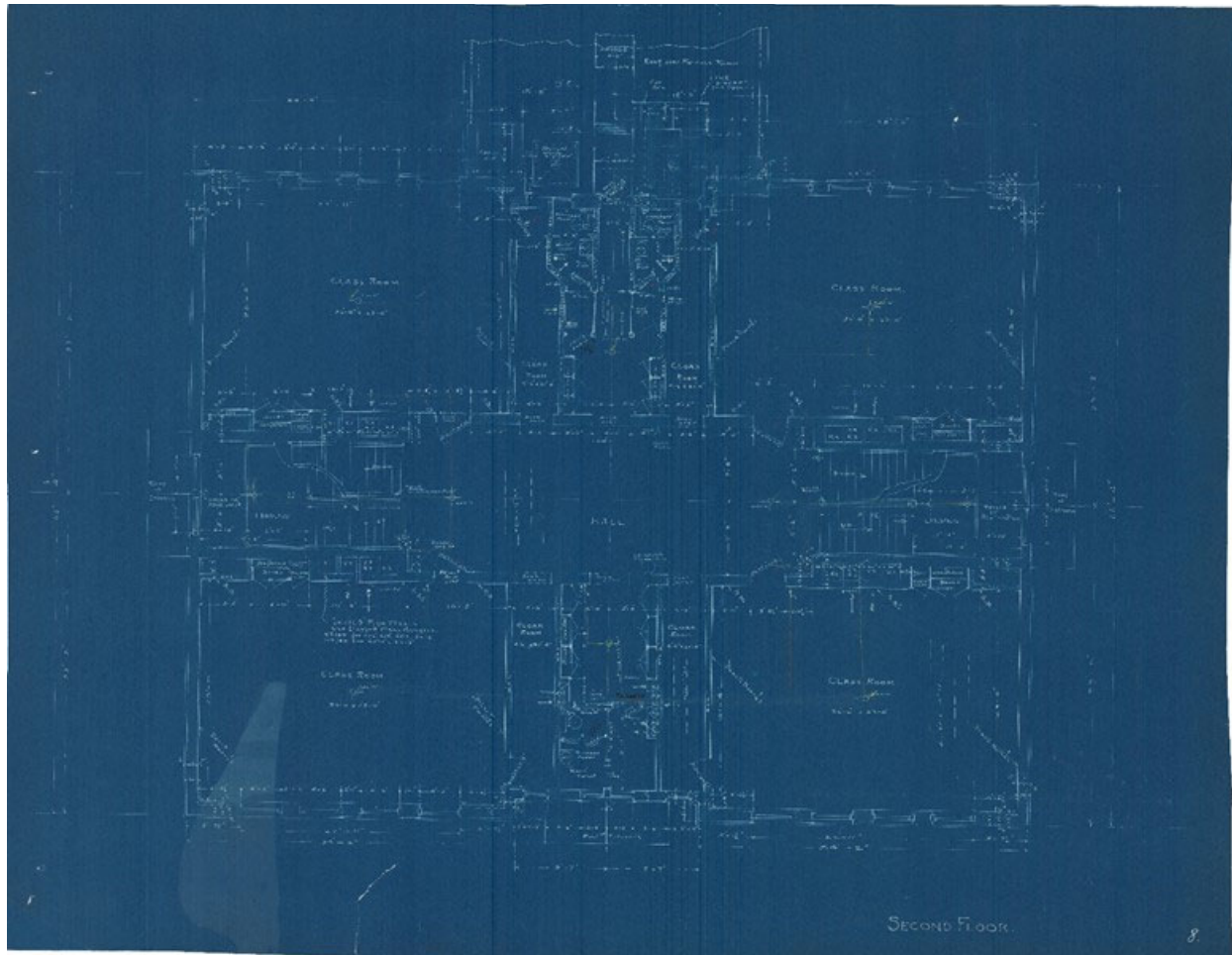
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, First (Basement) Floor. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



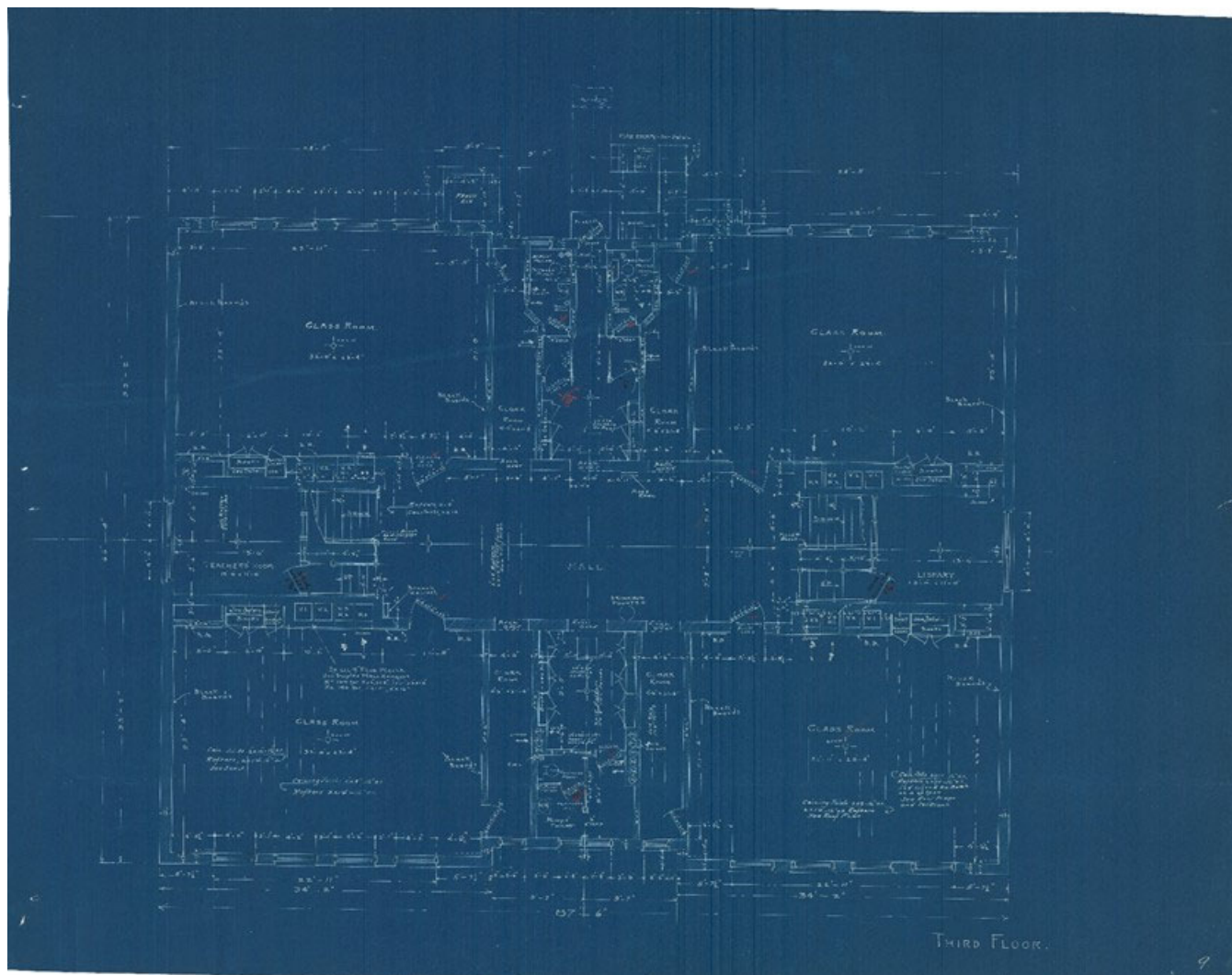
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, Second Floor. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



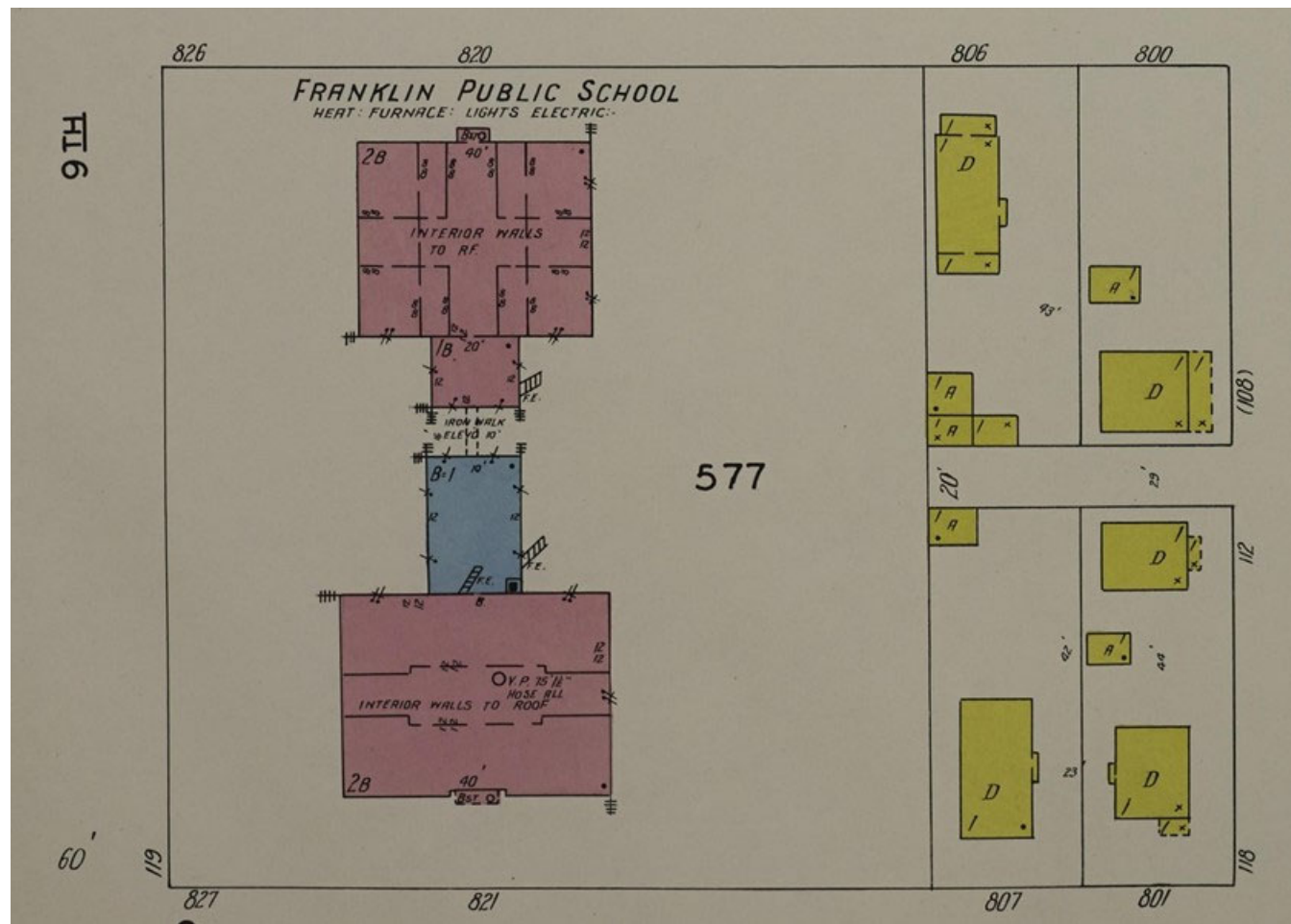
Franklin School, 1916 Building. Historic Blueprints, 1916, Third Floor. Courtesy of the City of Great Falls.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



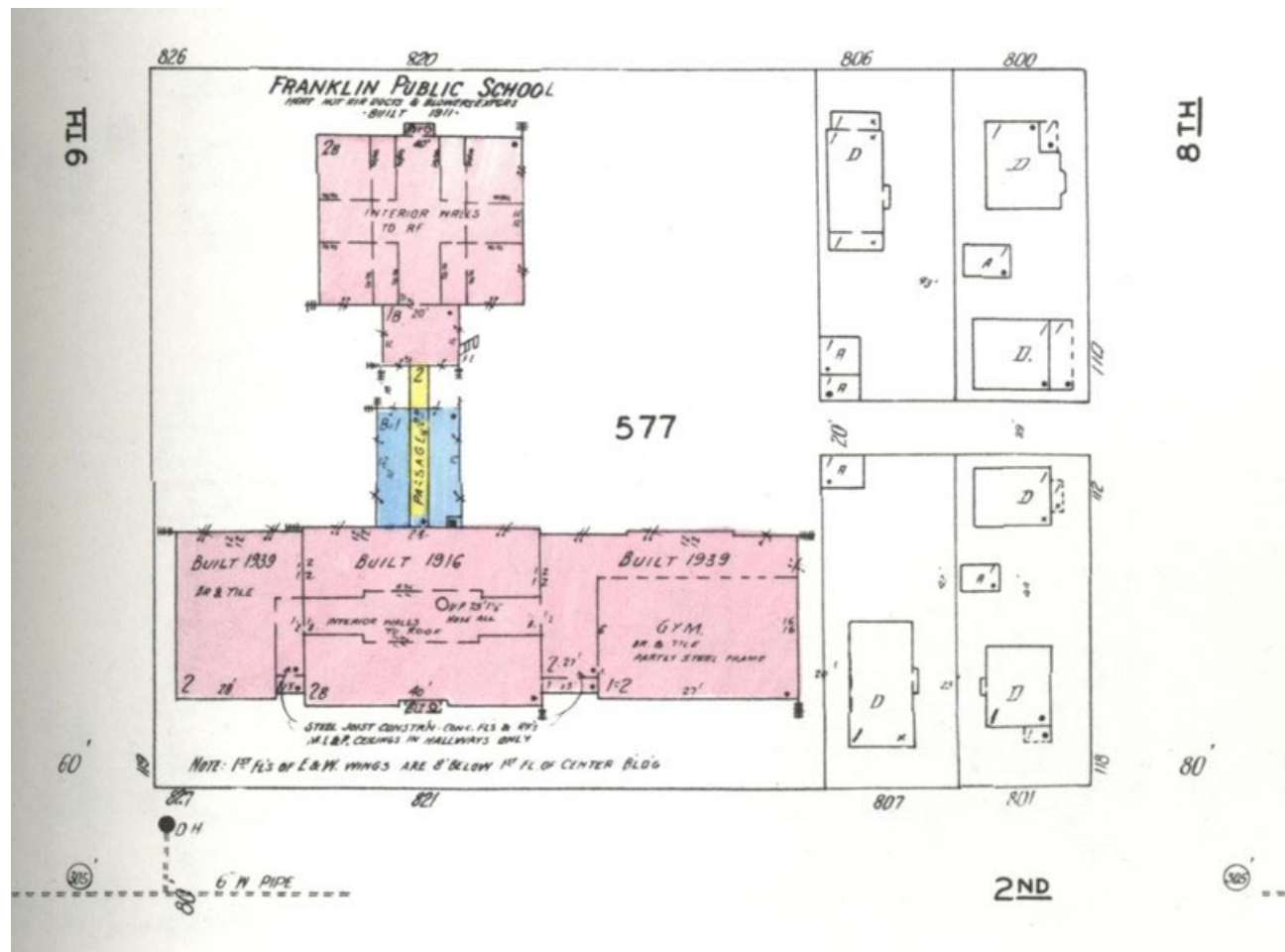
1929 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



1957 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

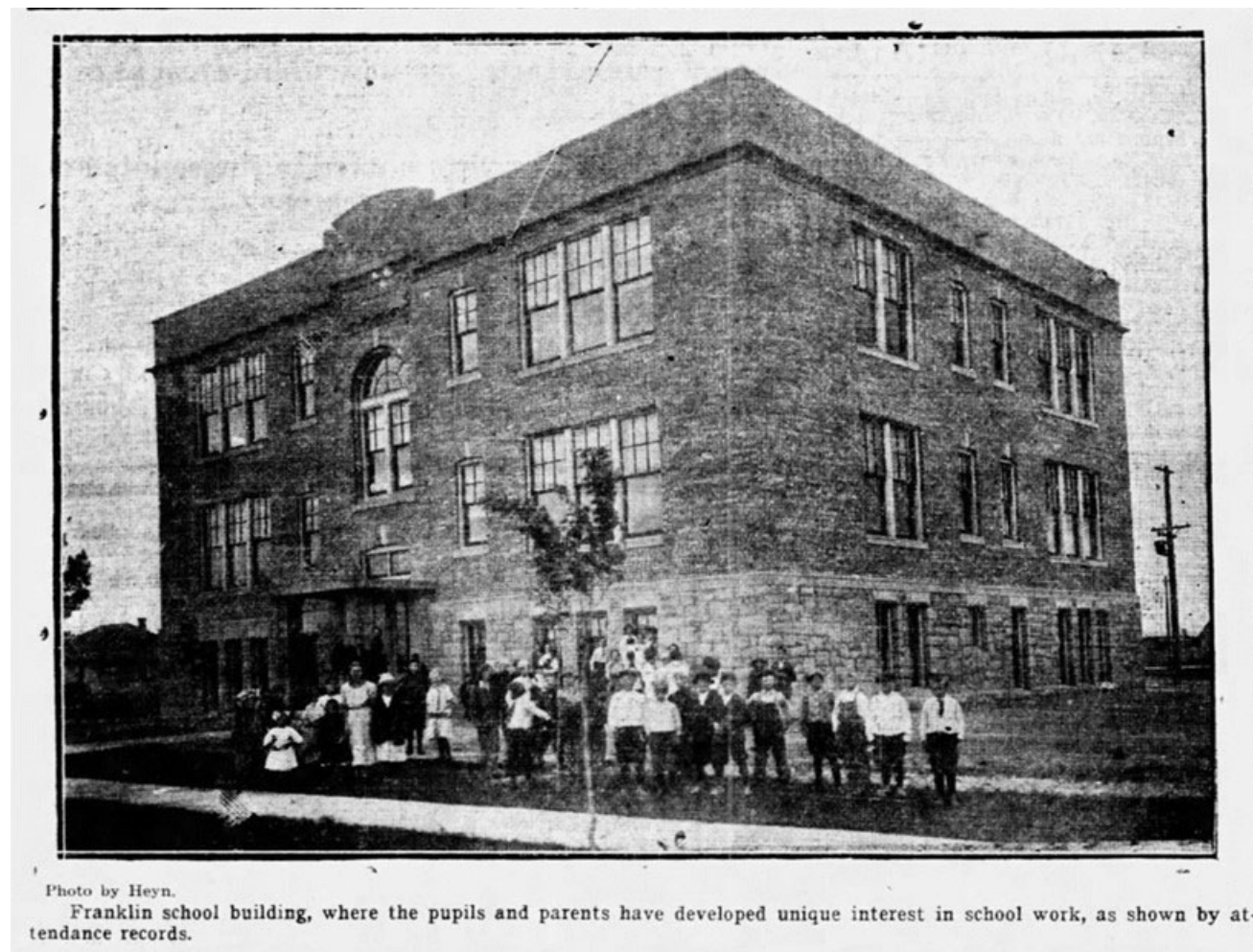
Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

Historic Photos



North and west elevations of the 1910 school building, view to the southeast, circa 1915. Courtesy of the *Great Falls Tribune*.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State

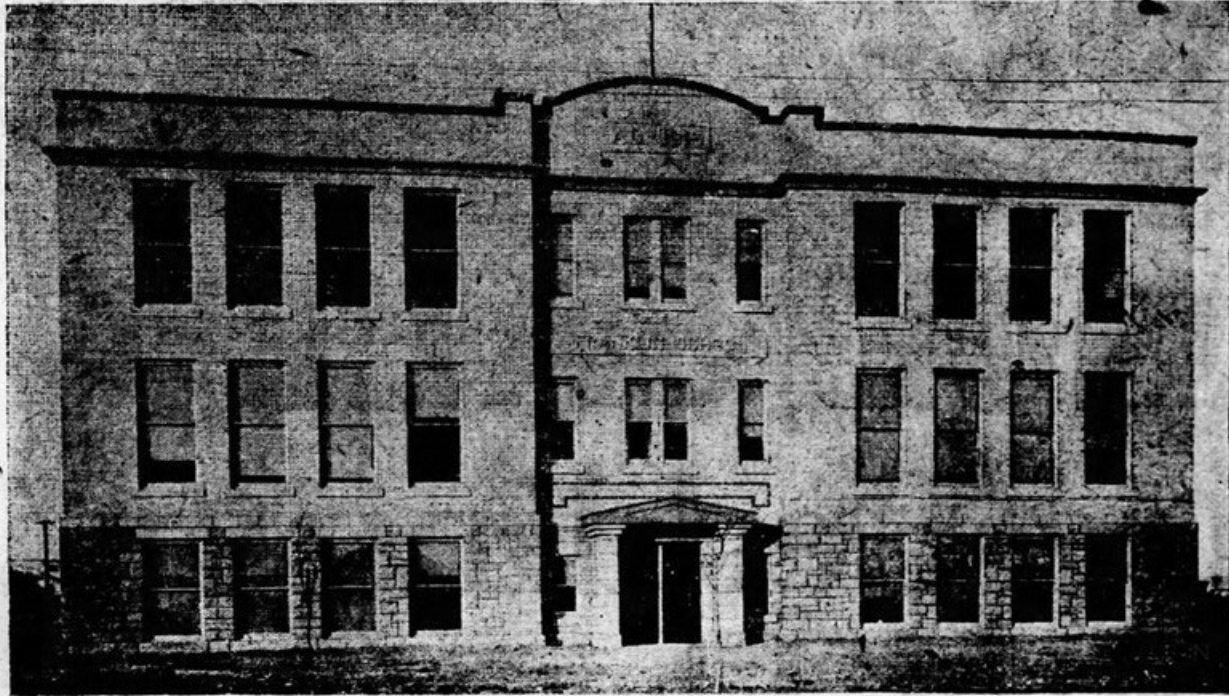


Photo by Heyn.

New Annex to the Franklin school on the west side of the Missouri river.

South elevation of the 1916 school building, view to the north, circa 1917. Courtesy of the *Great Falls Tribune*.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



North and west elevations of the 1910 and 1916 school buildings, view to the northwest, circa 1938.
Courtesy of Cascade County Historical Society.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State

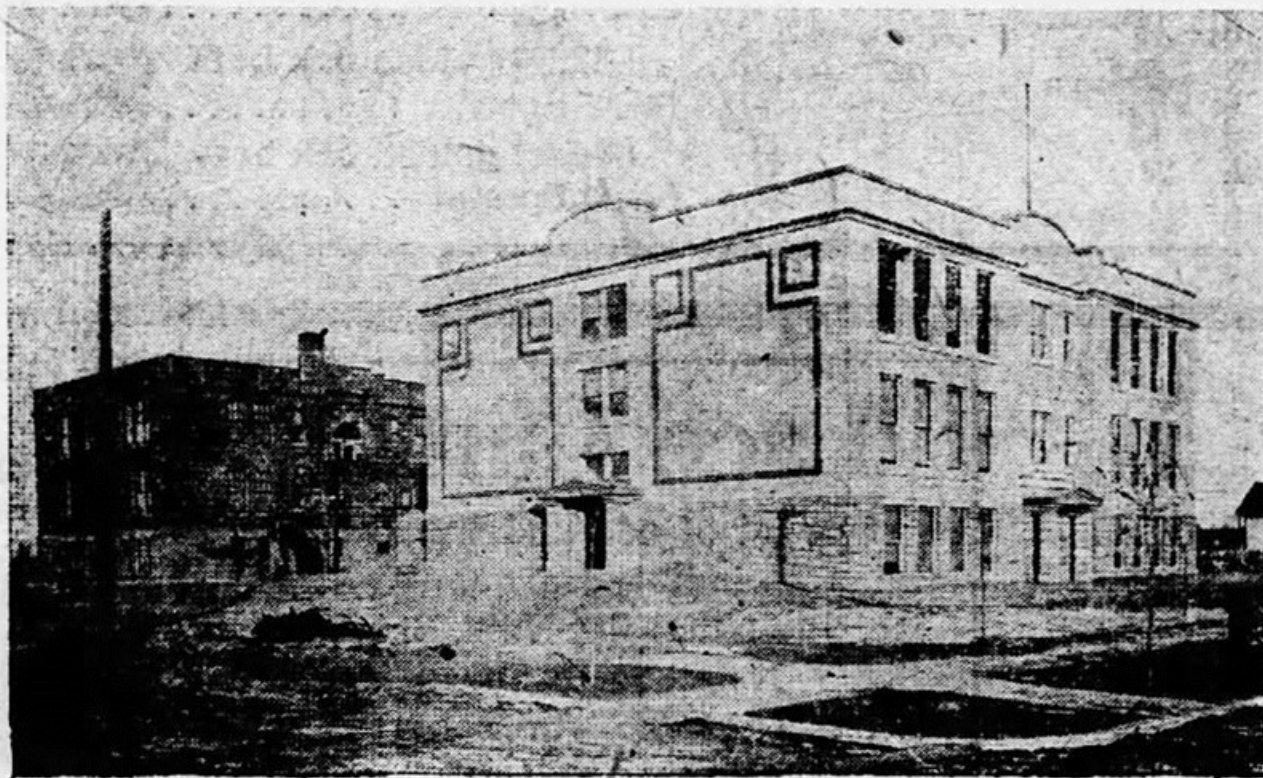


Photo by Heyn.

Franklin school plant as it appears since new annex is completed.

South and west elevations of the 1910 and 1916 school buildings, view to the northeast, circa 1917. Courtesy of the *Great Falls Tribune*.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Photos of Native American Classrooms at the Franklin School in 1943. Courtesy of the *Great Falls Tribune*.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



North elevations of the 1910 building, view to the southeast, circa 1990. Courtesy of Cascade County Historical Society.

Franklin School

Name of Property

Cascade Co., MT

County and State

National Register Photographs

Photo Log

All Photographs:

Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, north elevation, facing south.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0001.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, north elevation, facing southwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0002.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, south and east elevations, facing northwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0003.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, west and south elevations, facing northeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0004.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, south and west elevations, facing northeast .
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0005.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, north elevation, facing southeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0006.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, north elevation, facing southwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0007.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School
City or Vicinity: Great Falls
County: Cascade State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, west and south elevations, facing northeast.
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0008.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, south elevation, facing north.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0009.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, south elevation, facing northeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0010.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, south elevation, facing north.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0011.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, south entry, facing northwest

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0012.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, west elevation, facing southeast
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0013.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School
City or Vicinity: Great Falls
County: Cascade State: MT
Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker
Date Photographed: October 2024
Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, east elevation, facing northwest
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0014.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, east elevation from roof, facing northwest
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0015.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, east elevation, wall detail.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0016.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: Overview of property, noncontributing shed and north elevation of 1916 building, facing southeast MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0017.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: Overview of property, north elevation of 1916 building (left) and south elevation of 1910 building (right), facing southeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0018.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, basement, laundry, facing southeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0019.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, basement, office, facing southeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0020.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, basement, corridor, facing north.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0021.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, first floor, living room, facing east.

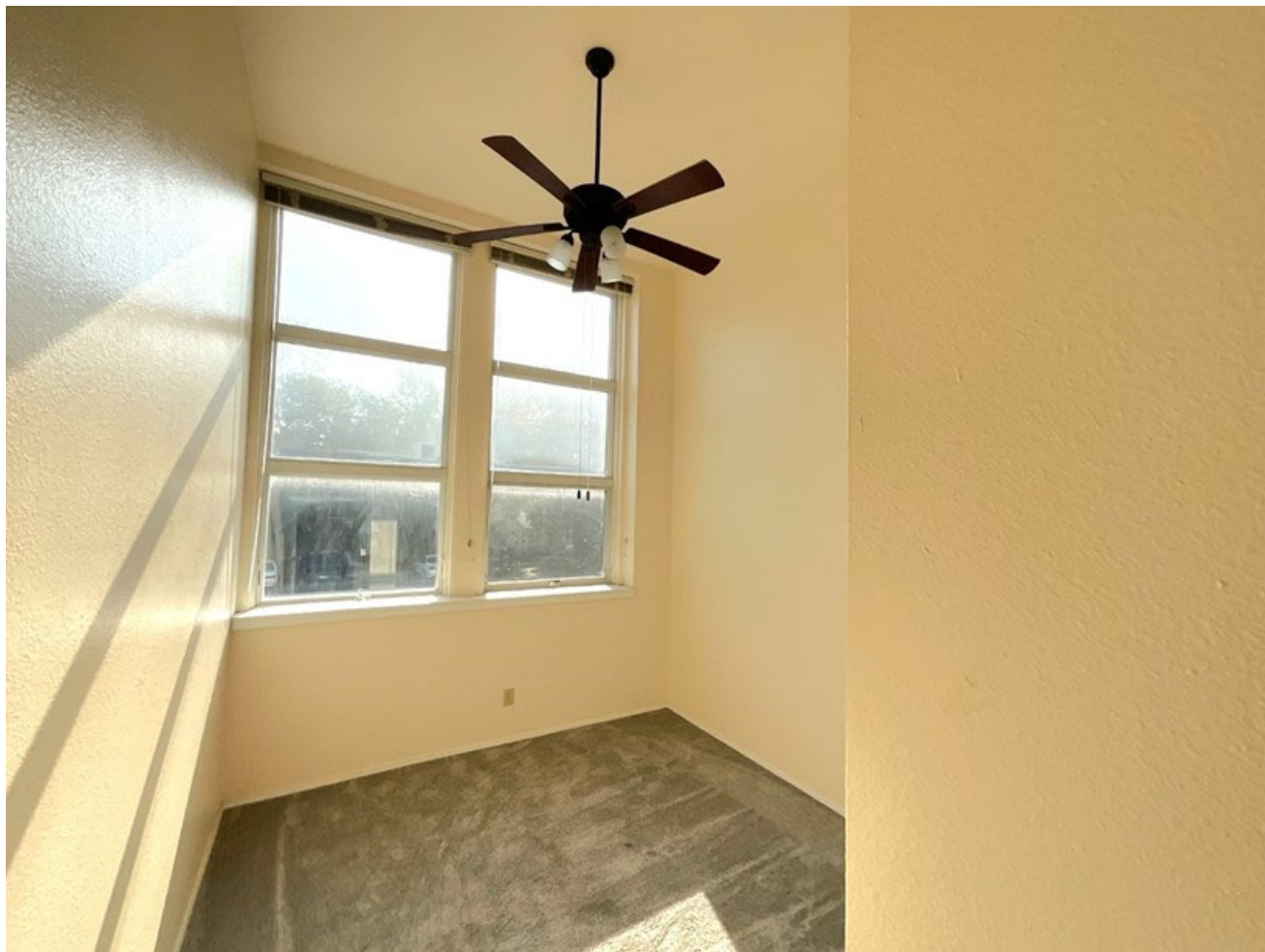
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0022.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, first floor, bedroom, facing southeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0023.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, first floor, kitchen, facing southeast.

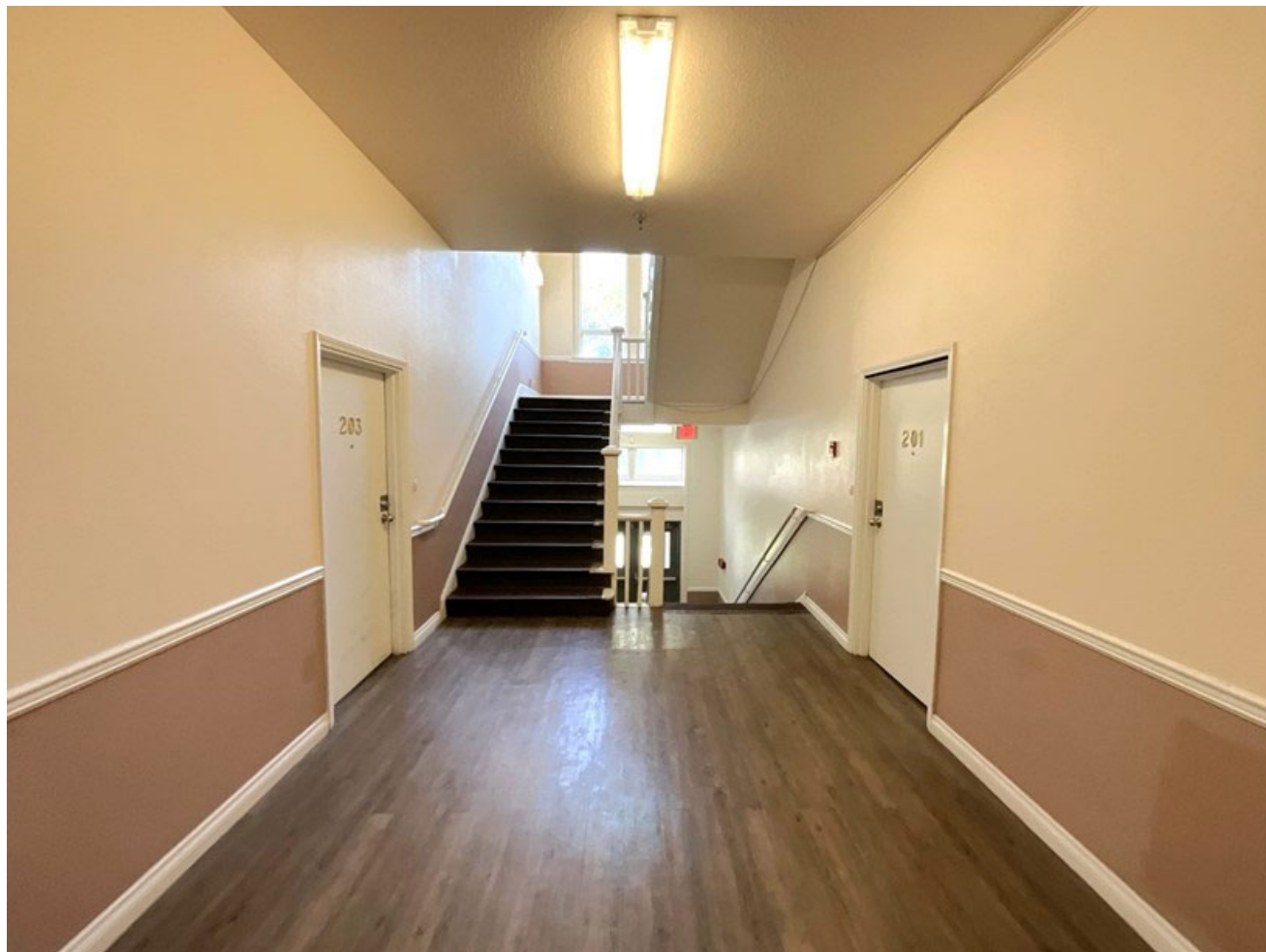
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0024.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, first floor, corridor & stairs, facing north.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0025.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1910 Building, second floor, corridor, facing south.

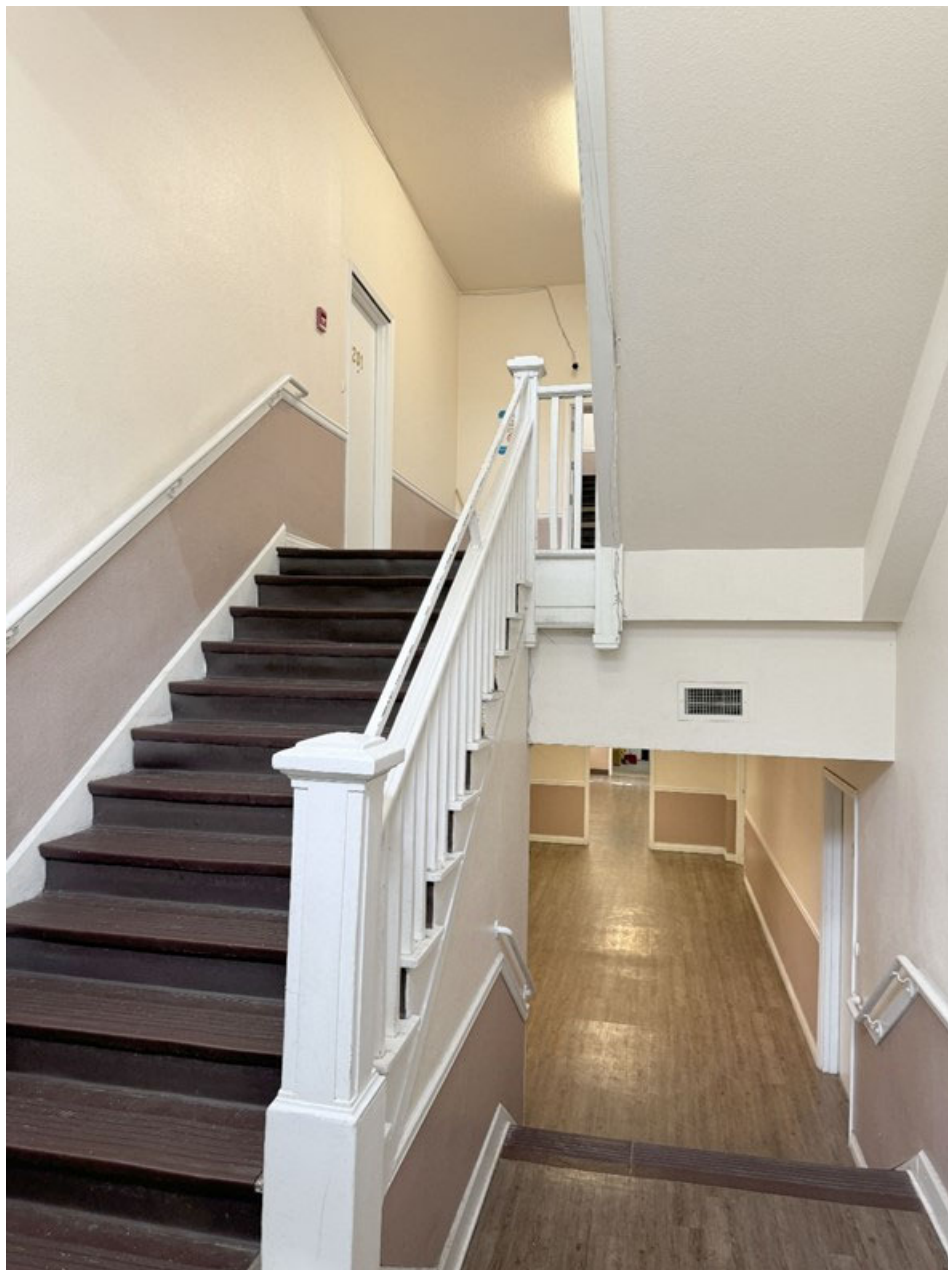
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0026.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, first floor, stairs, facing east.

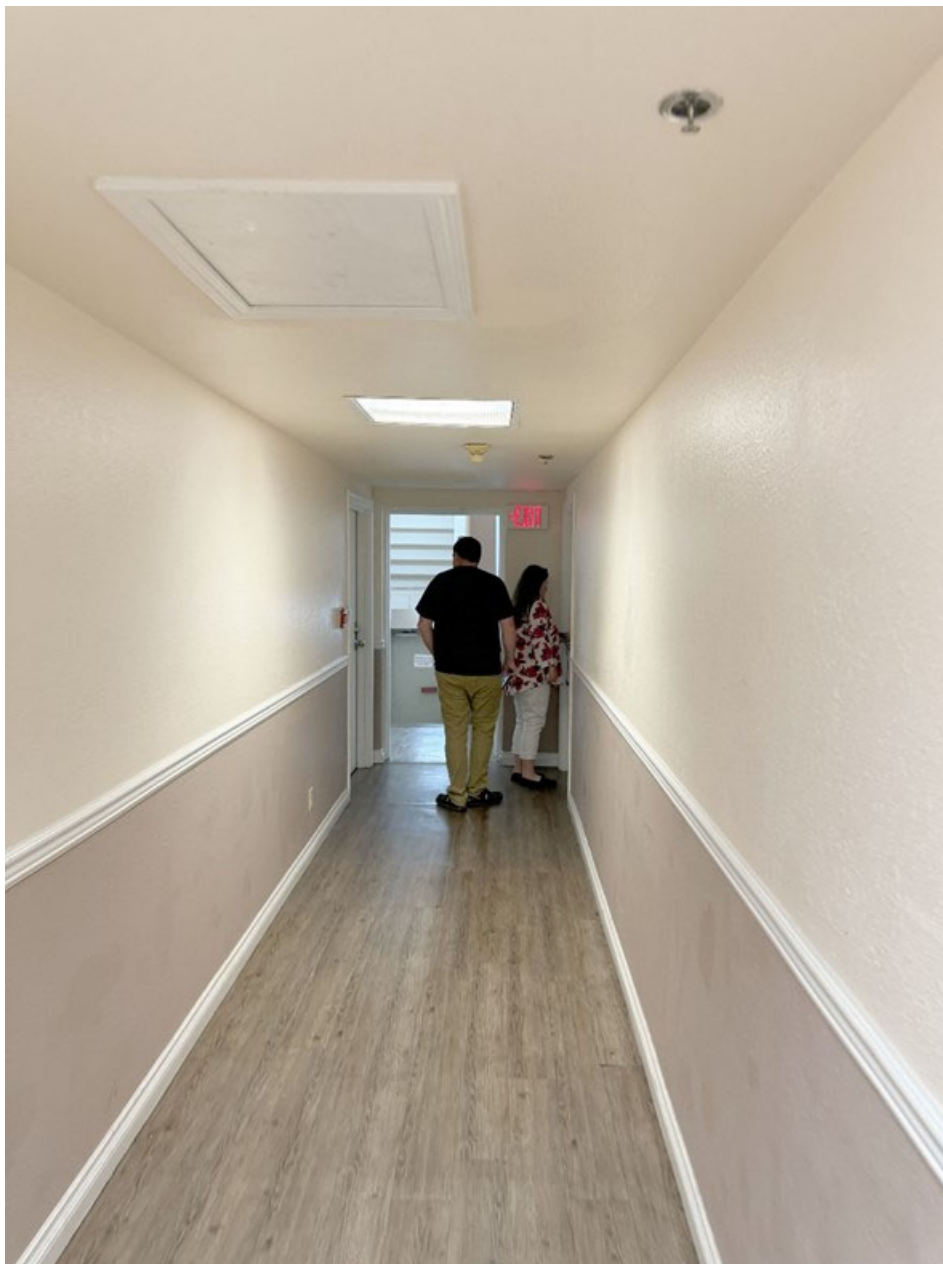
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0027.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, first floor, corridor, facing east.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0028.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, first floor, stairs, facing northwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0029.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, second floor, living room, facing northwest.
MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0030.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, second floor, kitchen, facing south.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0031.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, second floor, bathroom, southwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0032.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, second floor, bedroom, facing north.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0033.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, second floor, bedroom, facing south.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0034.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, second floor, kitchen, facing northwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0035.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, third floor, stairs, facing northwest.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0036.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: Garage north of school, west and north elevations, view to the southeast.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0037.

Franklin School

Cascade Co., MT

Name of Property

County and State



Name of Property: Franklin School

City or Vicinity: Great Falls

County: Cascade

State: MT

Photographer: Samantha Shoemaker

Date Photographed: October 2024

Description of Photograph: 1916 Building, third floor, corridor, facing west.

MT_CascadeCounty_FranklinSchool_0038.