

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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 PropertyHistoric name: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks AirportOther names/site number: Grand Forks Municipal Airport Administration (and Terminal) Building, Grand Forks International Airport, Brekke BuildingName of related multiple property listing: Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943**2. Location**Street & number: 802 N 43rd Street (previously accessed from present-day 42nd Street)City or town: Grand Forks State: ND County: Grand ForksNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**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_____
Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

ND SHPO

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

**State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

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Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☒

District ☐

Site ☐

Structure ☐

Object ☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
	(a non-historic storage shed)	sites
		structures
		objects
		Total

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: air-related; airport

GOVERNMENT: government office; municipal building

DEFENSE: air facility; flight training school

GOVERNMENT: correctional facility; police station/jail

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Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business; office building

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling; apartment building

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Streamlined Moderne (Art Moderne)

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: concrete; Walls: brick; Roof:
synthetic membrane

Narrative Description

Summary

The former Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport is located within city limits of Grand Forks (Grand Forks County), North Dakota. When first established, the airport site was located outside of the city limits, but today, Grand Forks has enveloped and heavily built over the former airport and landing field. Primarily a brick structure, the former airport Administration Building's rectangular massing combined with curving forms and horizontal emphasis accentuate the simple, graceful lines of the Streamline Moderne (Art Moderne) design. The Works Projects Administration-built structure, which started construction in 1941 for the city's burgeoning airport, matches the style of other WPA-built Moderne airport administration and terminal buildings that often had a squat profile, central tower element, and

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symmetrical “wings.” These stripped-down forms, influenced by the aerodynamic lines seen in the era’s aircraft, with geometric-based, simple ornamentation, reflect the innovation and evolution of aviation as it expanded into the upper Midwest. Although several alterations have been made to the original building’s design, most changes have been made to the interior. The basic scheme of the building’s exterior design, materials, and characteristics have been well-maintained, and the design’s integrity remains quite high. Today, the land of the original Grand Forks airport is indistinguishable from the urban fabric that surrounds it, but the former Administration Building remains a remnant of early aviation in the city.

Narrative Description

LOCATION AND SETTING

The historic former Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport (built 1941-1943), is located at 802 North 43rd Street in Grand Forks County, North Dakota. It is situated southeast of the present-day intersection of U.S. Highway 2 and Interstate 29. The former airport is located approximately two-and-a-half miles west-northwest of Downtown Grand Forks. Surrounded today by hotels, apartment buildings, and commercial businesses, the airport originally stood outside of the city limits, encircled by the airport’s landing field and agricultural land. The development of the Interstate Highway System and the city’s westward expansion in the 1960s contributed to the city’s decision to relocate the airport. After airport services were relocated, the original airport property was allocated for interstate right of way and subdivided into commercial, mobile home, and residential lots. The site of the former airport is now located within city limits and is heavily built over, making it indistinguishable from the urban fabric surrounding it with one exception: the former airport Administration Building is the last in situ remnant from the original Grand Forks Municipal Airport.

When Grand Forks airport services were transferred to a new location in the early 1960s, five miles west of the original airport, the original airport site was platted as the Airport Addition and subdivided with a new street (North 43rd Street) running north-south, just west of the former Administration Building. Today, the former Administration Building fronts facing west to North

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43rd Street, but, historically, this was the back side of the building that overlooked the tarmac.

The building originally was intended to front to the east, set back approximately five hundred feet from present-day North 42nd Street. Historic maps indicate that this was previously a county highway (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 6*). Working drawings of the building by architect Theodore B. Wells confirm that the east elevation was intended to be the primary elevation (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 28*). It is interesting to note that most photos from the building's period of significance were taken from the west on the airport's tarmac or from the air. Only two photographs taken of the east elevation were located during research (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 11 & 13*).

Presently, the driveway approach from North 43rd Street is marked with a stylized sign for Brekke Tours and Travel that looks like a B-52G/H tail.¹ Parking lots are located on both the west and east sides of the building. In the concrete parking lot west of the building that previously served as the airport tarmac, remnants of aircraft tie-down anchors can still be seen. The original horseshoe-shaped driveway and turn around that led to the airport from North 42nd Street still is evident as it encircles the Speedway Restaurant to the east and leads up to the east side of the former airport Administration Building. The yard area surrounding the building is mostly open and planted with grass, with several types of trees dispersed about the property. The building's foundation is mostly surrounded by landscaped planting beds.

The former Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, currently known as the Brekke Building, has been occupied by Brekke Tours and Travel since the 1970s. It is used primarily as an office building, with offices located on the main and upper levels. The lower (basement) level contains three apartments.

DESIGN, MATERIALS, AND CHARACTERISTICS

The former airport Administration Building is a brick structure approximately 110-feet wide by 50-feet deep. The building was used for airport and airline administrative offices as well as a terminal for passengers. The building has a squat profile with a central two-story tower element with single-story flanking "wings" on either side. The plan is simple and rectangular in form,

¹ Freeman, Paul. "Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields: North Dakota." Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields, 2019. Accessed March 25, 2020. http://www.airfields-freeman.com/ND/Airfields_ND.htm#grandforks.

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with gentle, curving forms seen in the large curved face of the two-story wall on the west elevation and rounded corners noted at the west-entry vestibules. It has flat (or low-slope) roofs concealed by raised parapets and is built over a concrete basement foundation. The flat roofs, bands of windows anchored by a continuous string course, and coping along the parapet all enhance the horizontal emphasis of the design. The architectural expression of stripped-down forms, smooth curved faces, rounded corners, long horizontal lines, and limited ornamentation accentuate the Streamline Moderne (or Art Moderne) design. This architectural style, which grew out of Art Deco design, was influenced by the aerodynamic lines seen in the aircraft and ships of the era. As such, the Administration Building was designed to embody the innovation and evolution of aviation as it expanded into the upper Midwest.

The west side, facing North 43rd Street, is presently regarded as the front elevation, although the east side was originally considered the primary elevation. The building can be divided into four compositional elements: a central two-story tower element flanked by two symmetrical single-level “wings” (all which were part of the original design built beginning in 1941) and an addition to the south. The addition, built in 1949, was designed and constructed in such a manner similar to the original design that it merges with the primary building nearly seamlessly.

The most notable feature of the west elevation is the large, two-story curved wall face. The main-level of this curved wall is comprised of light-faced buff-colored brick in a running bond, capped with cast stone coping that is a continuation of the parapet cap that runs continuously at the single story. Within this curved face is a horizontal band of windows accentuated by brown brick. There is a painted cast stone string (sill) course with seven courses of alternating recessed brick courses below the windows. A curved cantilevered precast concrete canopy above the windows minimally projects from the face of the building. The curved wall at the upper-level is inset slightly above the brick wall’s stone coping and is clad in metal board and batten profile siding that is a slightly lighter shade than the buff brick. Three pairs of windows are noted directly above the stone coping. A dark brown metal parapet cap tops the upper-level wall.

The upper portion of this two-story element turns the corners at the end of the curved wall face. The upper-level walls overlooking the main-level roofs are clad with lap siding that is the same color as the board and batten siding to the west. This upper-level is T-shaped in plan and

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steps inward as it continues to the east. At the southwest wall plane, there are two pairs of windows and a door to access the south roof. At the southeast inside corner, a metal ladder to access the second-level roof is observed near another pairing of windows. At the northwest upper-level wall, there are two pairs of windows and, at the northeast wall, a single window with an access door for the north roof.

Observed from west, the two-story massing is flanked on either side by two entry vestibules with rounded corners. The rounded corners are emphasized by a shallow recession from the brick of the primary wall planes where the curve begins. Concrete stairs (3 risers) with utilitarian metal handrails lead to the entries. The symmetrical entry vestibules each contain a slightly recessed, full-light hinged entry door with a wall light above the entry. The flat-roofed (or low-slope) entry vestibules, topped with metal parapet caps, are lower than the height of the adjacent single-story walls/parapet.

The symmetrical north and south single-story levels adjacent to the two-story element feature windows grouped and set in a ribbon band of contrasting brown brick with horizontal incised speed lines. A single window, adjacent to the vestibule, is united with a grouping of three windows at the outside corners at both the north and south portions of the original design. The horizontality is further reinforced by a continuous cast stone string (sill) course which is painted dark brown. The parapet is accentuated with an alternating pattern of four soldier course bricks and two lengths of recessed running bond brick. Additionally, a dark brown metal parapet cap conceals the original cast stone coping, as noted on a working drawing by Theodore B. Wells (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 28*). This original stone coping is still visible at the two-story massing.

The same design components seen in the original single-story design are repeated in the 1949 addition to the south side of the building. Set back from the west elevation approximately ten feet, the brown brick banding with horizontal recesses and continuous cast stone string (sill) course continues from the original structure with little indication they were not built simultaneously. A ramped entry leads to an additional full light-hinged entry door with a wall light above the entry that matches what is seen at the west-entry vestibules. Next to this door is a brick-outlined opening that appears to have once contained a large garage-style door (*Additional*

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Documentation, Fig. 20, and Fig. 21). This opening now contains a grouping of three windows infilled below with horizontal lap siding in dark brown.

At the south elevation, one can observe the south side of the curved vestibule, punctuated only by the scupper and downspout of its roof. The southwest corner of the original building has a paired window at the corner within the continued ribbon band of contrasting brick, horizontal recesses, and cast stone string (sill) course. The south wall of the addition has a single window within the continued ribbon band of contrasting brick, horizontal recesses, a cast stone string (sill) course, and a centered scupper and downspout. South of the building is a non-historic (noncontributing) storage shed.

The east side of the south addition has two single windows within the continued ribbon band of contrasting brick, horizontal recesses, and cast stone string (sill) course. An infilled opening is noted by the difference in brick selection (a buff blend and brown blend). The end of the original south side of the building can be noted by the single brick depth offset of the addition to the original structure.

Similar to the west elevation, the east side (originally designed as the primary elevation) is emphasized by the central two-story tower that projects from the single-story “wings” that flank it on both sides. The single-story levels adjacent to the two-story element show the continuation of the ribbon band of contrasting brick, horizontal recesses, and cast stone string (sill) course. A grouping of three windows echoes the outside corners as seen at the west elevation and is combined with two single windows, slightly separated before the ribbon band terminates at the inside corner where the two-story structure intersects the single-story “wings” and projects further east.

The full height of the two-story wall projection is comprised of light face brick in a running bond.² This central massing is emphasized by recessed corner treatments – a shallow recession of the brick from the primary wall planes – that appear as though the corners have been cut away. Centered in this two-story massing are a series of steps (three risers) flanked by concrete cheek

² Job Number 4110 Administration offices for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport, Grand Forks, North Dakota. Wells Denbrook Architectural Records. OGLMC 1487, Oversize Folder 23. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. Chester Fritz Library. University of North Dakota. The original Theodore B. Wells’s working drawings indicate this two-story wall was originally designed to have the brick in a Flemish bond, a more decorative brick pattern that would have lent additional visual quality to the elevation.

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walls with utilitarian metal handrails that lead to the building's original main entrance. Double storefront entry doors are set inside an angled recess accentuated by contrasting colored brick with stack bond brick "columns" and horizontal recessed bands. The entryway is topped with a precast cantilevered concrete canopy that minimally projects from the face of the building. Single windows, not as tall as what is seen in the horizontal banding throughout the rest of the building, are situated on each side of the entrance. Directly above the entry is a grouping of three windows detailed with an extended width sill and five horizontal darker recessed brick bands on either side that extend to match the width of the entrance below. The parapet is detailed with a continuous band of soldier bond brick detailed with a pattern of two recessed bricks separated by a single soldier brick that is flush with the primary wall plane.

At the north side of the building, the ribbon band of contrasting brick, horizontal recesses, and cast stone string (sill) course continues with two pairs of windows at the outside corners and a single window centered between. As seen in the rest of the single-story structure, the parapet is accentuated with the alternating pattern of four soldier course bricks with two lengths of recessed running bond brick and is topped with a dark brown metal parapet cap. Window well enclosures can be seen above grade at the east and north elevations.

The building's interior main-level, beyond the west-entry vestibules, is an office space divided into a reception area, open workspaces, a conference room, several private office rooms, break room and kitchenette, storage rooms, and mechanical spaces (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 35*). Double doors at the east side of this office space open to a small lobby and circulation space and east-entry vestibule. Two restrooms that serve both the main and upper levels and the stairwell are accessed from the lobby area. The second level opens to a main conference room. Four private office rooms and a break room and kitchenette are accessed from this main room. The basement level contains three apartments.

The building's interior has been remodeled several times at all three levels. Carpeting is found in all office spaces and at the stairs. Contemporary tile flooring is observed at the entry vestibules, lobby area, reception, stair landing, and restrooms. Walls are painted gypsum board or plaster in most areas except for board and batten paneling observed at the stairwell. All rooms have acoustical drop ceiling systems. Few of the building's interior finishes are original, but

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there are some remnants of the original design including Art Deco-style brass door pulls and push plates on the restroom doors and a five-panel door with original reed casing and plinth blocks that provides access under the stair at the basement level.

Although no photographs were located of the Administration Building's interior during the period of significance, the architectural specifications show that the building's present interior finishes are not dissimilar to the building's original finishes.³ The walls at the main and upper levels were plastered and painted, while the ceilings were either plastered and painted or finished with acoustical tile over gypsum sheathing. The specifications indicate that the majority of the main level's floors were asphalt tile and all upper-level floors were to be finished with maple flooring. It is unknown if the original flooring is present under the current carpeting. Interior millwork was noted as "plain red oak" at the first and second stories and "clear Fir" at the basement, although original casework was only observed at one door.

ALTERATIONS AND RENOVATIONS

The first identifiable alteration to the original design of the airport Administration Building was the south addition built in 1949.⁴ This addition's sensitive design reflected the original building in such a precise manner that the addition looks fully integrated into the building's original exterior. It appears that a vestibule at the south side of the building, as indicated on working elevation drawings by architect Theodore B. Wells (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 28*) and seen in early historic photographs (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 17*), was incorporated or removed when the south addition was constructed.

Building permit records from the City of Grand Forks indicate numerous alterations and renovations over the course of many years beginning in 1961.⁵ At that time, the issued building permit states that the building's interior was altered to provide an office in a portion of the

³ Specifications for #4110: Administration Building at the Grand Forks Airport, Grand Forks, North Dakota, August 1941. Wells Denbrook Architectural Records. OGLMC 1487, Box 2, Folder 13. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. Chester Fritz Library. University of North Dakota.

⁴ Midboe, Norman. "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport"; text of speech delivered by Midboe at the Grand Forks Aviator's Pioneer Banquet, February 28, 1976. Norman Midboe Papers. OGLMC 1518, Box 1, Folder 3. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. Chester Fritz Library. University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, 11.

⁵ City of Grand Forks, Inspections. File for 802 N 43rd St., Grand Forks, ND.

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building. It was also noted that a window was removed and a door was added, although it is unknown where these revisions occurred. These modifications were followed by additional alterations in March 1964, one month after the closure of the original municipal airport, with two permits issued for "Old Airport," which listed interior remodeling, rewiring, and plumbing, and an modifications to an exterior stairway to the basement (no longer extant).⁶

Prior to the sale of the property to Arne Brekke in December 1977, City of Grand Forks inspectors noted necessary repairs, including broken window panes, damage to interior finishes, and a portion of wall needing to be repaired after being cut out to facilitate the removal of large equipment by the police department. This may have occurred at the east elevation where presently an infilled opening is observed. After Brekke purchased the building, numerous building permits were issued for repairs and remodeling at all levels of the building (main, upper, and basement). Work included interior remodeling and refinishing, the addition of egress window wells, new exterior siding (at the upper-level), and window replacements. A mail flyer (date unknown) advertising office space for lease in the Brekke Building described a "completely remodeled [building] refurbished with quality carpet, wall coverings, acoustic ceiling tile, central air conditioning, and thermo pane windows."⁷

It can be determined by comparing historic photographs with those of the building in its current condition that the alterations that have been made at the building's exterior include covering of the building's original stucco with siding at the upper-level (the siding appears to have been applied/replaced multiple times as city assessment photographs from the 1990s show dark metal siding at the upper-level), the removal of the building's original multi-light windows with horizontal muntins (including downscaling the upper-level west windows), the replacement of the east and west entry doors, and the removal of a chimney. An exterior stair to the building's basement level is no longer present but is shown on Wells's working drawings on the north side and was also noted on a building permit in 1964. Interior spaces have been subdivided into offices, conference rooms, and apartments. Few of the building's interior finishes are extant in the building's present condition.

⁶ City of Grand Forks, Inspections.

⁷ City of Grand Forks, Inspections.

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A comparison of working drawings by architect Theodore B. Wells (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 28*), floor plans from the 1970s or 1980s (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 32, 33, & 34*), and the present plan configuration (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 25 & 36*) indicate the interior office spaces have been reworked numerous time throughout the building's history. The westmost administrative office spaces, however, and the core area around the east entry, stairs, and restrooms have changed very little over the years. The centralized large lobby on the main level functioned as the passenger terminal and waiting area (now subdivided into rooms and workspaces) and allowed travelers to overlook the tarmac through the curved west wall of windows. Additional airport offices were located at the upper-level, although these spaces have also been reworked. The upper level's original continuous band of windows was interrupted to divide three office spaces at the west curved wall.

Although the interior of the building has changed throughout time, most of these changes were made without disrupting most of the building's principal elements at the exterior. The replacement and alterations to the building's windows have been the most disruptive to the original design scheme. This is not uncommon, as windows are often removed or replaced in historic properties. Despite the fenestration changes in the Administration Building, the extant horizontal banding and window groupings continue to retain the building's historic character and key features as the structure has evolved. The basic scheme of the building's exterior design, materials, and Streamline Modern characteristics have been well-maintained, and the design's integrity remains quite high.

There were few corresponding WPA-built airport terminal buildings in the region, since most of the airports were too small to require such buildings. The Valley City Airport Terminal Building (1942) in Valley City, North Dakota is possibly the region's best extant example of a WPA Modern airport terminal. The terminal building, constructed of cast on-site concrete with raised and recessed horizontal banding, is similar in scale, massing, and form to the Grand Forks Administration Building. The Valley City Airport Terminal Building continues to be in use at the Barnes County Municipal Airport, is well maintained, and remains in an astonishingly unaltered

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condition.⁸ The municipal airport site remains outside city limits on the north side of Valley City surrounded by agricultural land and the abutting city to the south.

The surrounding site of the former Grand Fork Airport Administration building, in contrast, no longer reflects the context of the former airport. The redeveloped site arguably reduces the historic significance because the building has lost this specific relationship to its historic use. Yet, the way the former Airport Administration Building is distinctly different from other structures in the surrounding neighborhood highlights how the development of the Interstate Highway System and the city's westward expansion influenced the development of the city. Although the former Grand Forks Airport Administration Building is a fine example of a WPA Modern airport terminal, due to the present-day context of the site surrounding the property, the property is considered of local significance.

CONCLUSION

The former Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport is a fine example of a WPA-built Streamline Moderne (Art Moderne) airport terminal. The style, which is often seen in buildings related to transportation and movement, used simple, graceful lines similar to those seen in the aircraft and ships of the period. This former airport Administration Building's rectangular plan is simple, yet features aerodynamic forms seen in the curved west wall and rounded entry vestibules. The flat roofs, ribbon bands of windows with incised speed lines anchored by a continuous string course, and coping along the parapet all enhance the horizontal emphasis of the design. Although the present-day interior has been remodeled and minor alterations have been made to the building's exterior, the basic scheme of the original design has been retained. The building's design, materials, and construction were of high quality and have been well maintained through the years. The architectural expression of curving forms, long horizontal lines, and limited ornamentation embody the characteristics commonly seen in Streamline Moderne (Art Moderne) architecture and design. It is a simple, yet striking architectural symbol of Grand Forks' aviation history.

⁸ Martens, S. C., and R. L. Ramsay, *Buildings of North Dakota*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2015.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
MILITARY
ARCHITECTURE

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Period of Significance

1941-1964

Significant Dates

1941-1943 – Construction

1942-1944 – Military flight training, WWII

1949 – Addition added to the south

1964 – Airport closed, services moved to new location

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Theodore B. Wells (Architect)

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Statement of Significance Summary

The historic Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport is locally significant for its architectural design and its historical significance as a small city airport administration and terminal building in the Upper Midwest. The building (1941-1943), has significance under National Register Criterion “C” for its architecture and construction because it is an excellent, understated example of WPA Modern and Streamline Moderne architecture. Furthermore, the former Administration Building has significance under Criterion “A” as it is a notable example of a Works Projects Administration-built airport terminal that facilitated air travel to modernize and connect the community regionally and beyond. Additionally, the Grand Forks airport’s role in military aviation training contributed to national defense and war efforts. Although airport services were ultimately transferred to a new location and the Administration Building was repurposed, the structure remains a reminder of early aviation in Grand Forks at the site of the city’s original airport. Its modest and economical Streamline Moderne (Art Moderne) design is an embodiment of New Deal programs and of how such programs provided much needed work for the people in the community and helped transform modern America’s air transportation’s infrastructure leading up to and during a time of war.

Narrative Statement of Significance

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The former airport Administration Building has historically been referred to by several name variations. In the earliest record, Architect Theodore B. Wells’s working drawings of the building refer to it as, “an Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport.” The building, however, has also been called the Grand Forks (Municipal) Airport Administration Building, the Grand Forks (Municipal) Airport Terminal, or sometimes simply, the Grand Forks Municipal Airport. Additionally, the airport changed its name to the Grand Forks International Airport in 1946, which is yet another name the building has been called. Although the name of the airport has often been used interchangeably with the

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administration/terminal building, a distinction must be made between the airport (and landing field) and the administration/terminal building (the subject of this nomination).

The site of the former airport Administration Building is located within current city limits approximately two-and-a-half miles west-northwest of Downtown Grand Forks, the city's original commercial center. Grand Forks, North Dakota is centrally located in the Red River Valley in the Upper Midwest. The city is situated on the western bank of the Red River of the North, with neighboring East Grand Forks, Minnesota, positioned on the eastern bank. The two cities, often referred to as "the Forks," the "Grand Cities," or "Greater Grand Forks," are separated by the river and state boundary line, but they are often considered a combined metropolitan area.

The Administration Building was part of the first official airport (established in 1928) to serve Grand Forks and the surrounding area. It was reported in *The Winona Republican-Herald* in June 1928, that the Grand Forks Commercial Club paid landowner Reginald W. Smith \$500 for 160 acres (a quarter section) on the west side of Grand Forks, with a one-year option for the purpose of building a permanent airport for the city.⁹ The Commercial Club guaranteed \$100 with the Merchants Association, Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis clubs each contributing similar amounts.¹⁰ Steps were taken from the start to secure this land for an airport to be owned by the City of Grand Forks, but state laws at the time prohibited cities from purchasing land outside city limits for any purpose except public parks. A bill was drafted for the 1929 session of the legislature by the North Dakota League of Municipalities to allow cities to purchase land for airfields. Members of the aviation committee were not willing to delay the acquisition of an airport site, however, so the Commercial Club proceeded with negotiating for the purchase of the tract of land.

Prior to this, a mowed alfalfa patch in a field at the end of Cherry Street (southwest of town) had been used as the area's designated landing field. The site is likely to have been near what is

⁹ Godon, Vincent, Nancy Godon, and Kelly Kramlich. "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928." *Reshaping The Tornado Belt*, 2011-2020. <http://www.reshapingthetornadobelt.com/>.

¹⁰ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

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today the 1200 - 1500 blocks of Cherry Street.¹¹ Flying activities at the Cherry Street field were transferred the new airport as soon as the new field's condition was ready with a temporary runway. The proponents began improving the new landing field immediately after purchasing the new property, grading two runways, and constructing support facilities. The *Grand Forks Herald* reported that:

With a good flying field and airplanes established here, Grand Forks will be as well equipped for air travel as any city in this part of the northwest. It will be possible for a Grand Forks business man to leave the city early in the morning for the Twin Cities [Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota], transact business there during the day and return here in the evening, the trip taking about three hours each way.¹²

The airport officially opened on July 10, 1928. The following day featured the airfield's first big event: the landing of an Army Air Service Fokker Trimotor transporting notable aviation figures to attend the convention of the American Legion of North Dakota. On board were past national commanders of the American Legion, Hanford MacNider and Franklin D'Olier, as well as Assistant Secretary of War for Aviation, Trubee Davison. The plane was piloted by Captain Ira C. Eaker, a distinguished Pan-American Goodwill flyer.¹³

In November 1928, a guide for visiting aircraft was painted on the roof of the Grand Forks State Mill and Elevator, the only state-owned milling facility in the United States. Aviators flying over the city were directed to the landing field by yellow letters fifteen feet wide and twenty feet high that read "GRAND FORKS" and an that arrow pointed to the airport with the words "TWO MILES." (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 15*, mill visible in background). When the airport was first established, it was located approximately two miles west of town, surrounded by agricultural fields. The University of North Dakota campus was the closest neighboring developed area, approximately one mile southeast (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 7*).

Interest in the Grand Forks airport was boosted in May 1929 when it was a stop on the St. Paul-Winnipeg Goodwill Air tour. The tour, which included a stunt flying exhibition, drew

¹¹ Olson, Scott P. "A History of Pioneer Aviation History in Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1910-1941," June 3, 1997. Research Papers Written on North Dakota History Collection. OGLMC 263, Box 3, Folder 46. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, 5.

¹² Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

¹³ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

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thousands of spectators to the airport.¹⁴ Aviation at the airport showed steady growth over the summer of 1929 and into the fall. Local pilots were increasingly active, and the airport hosted many visiting aircraft. The Grand Forks Air Transport was formed and a training school for pilots opened. A hangar and office building were also constructed, making a sound basis for the establishment of aviation in the city. A propeller factory was also founded to locally equip planes with its products.

In October 1929, the City of Grand Forks initiated the purchase of the airfield, paying \$8,000 for the 160 acres already under development.¹⁵ The state legislature had passed the necessary laws enabling the city to secure the land for an airport. Coordination with the post office department was also critical to ensure the air field was within prescribed distance limits from post office (air mail was the primary commercial air industry). After the purchase of the city's airfield, city engineer E. L. Lium took over mapping out runways, directed the grading and leveling of the airfield, supervised the construction of buildings, and coordinated the construction of roads to the airfield where there had been none previously.

The following winter, the possibilities of winter flying in this latitude were demonstrated when the Arctic Air Patrol of the U.S. Army stopped in Grand Forks during its winter test flight from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Seattle, Washington, in January.¹⁶ Winter flying came with different challenges and this demonstration solidified the potential of year-round aviation in the northern states.

Early airlines to open services at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport included Canadian-American Airlines, which added Grand Forks as a stop on the Twin Cities to Winnipeg route in the summer of 1929. By the end of the year, Grand Forks was also added to its Winnipeg to Omaha mail route.¹⁷ Northwest Airways also extended the Chicago-St. Paul line to Winnipeg with passenger and mail service, adding Grand Forks as a stop in 1930.¹⁸ At the time, Northwest

¹⁴ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

¹⁵ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

¹⁶ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

¹⁷ Freeman, "Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields: North Dakota." Canadian-American, formed by investors in Minneapolis & Winnipeg with plans for major north-south operations, flew Travel Airs and also made stops at St Cloud, Alexandria, Fergus Falls & Fargo. It went bankrupt in January 1930.

¹⁸ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

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flights would terminate in Pembina, North Dakota, where Canadian aircraft from Winnipeg would land to pick up or drop off travelers.

At the time, the Grand Forks Municipal Airport was praised for its “splendid drainage,” being well-graded and marked for guidance, enabling pilots to take off and land during “practically all sorts of weather,” and for being at “an excellent location near the right-of-way of the Great Northern railroad.”¹⁹ The *Grand Forks Herald* also reported in February 1931 that air company officials and government inspectors had stated that “few cities have better airport possibilities than Grand Forks.”²⁰

Years later, those recalling the past did not remember the early airport so favorably. The Grand Forks International Airport’s 50th Anniversary celebratory insert in the *Grand Forks Herald* stated, “For years the runway was nothing more than a well drained and leveled landing strip in a field.” Norman Midboe, who worked at the airport from 1941 to 1984, recalled in his speech at the Grand Forks Aviator’s Pioneer Banquet in 1976 that “the airport remained a small and rough field with a gully running through it, a dump ground situated on one side of it, and, of course, a power line on one edge of the field” throughout most of the thirties.²¹ The “gully” Midboe referred to can be seen on the 1934 USGS topo map (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 1*). This early record depicts the airport as a square property outline, labeled simply as “Landing Field,” with a single building situated on its east side.

In the mid-thirties, city officials realized the need for a better airport. In 1935, Northwest Airlines terminated stops at Grand Forks because of the “bad condition of the airport.”²² The city acquired additional land, bringing the total airport acreage to over 250 acres, and made considerable improvements between 1936 and 1941 with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) which was renamed the Works Projects Administration in 1939 after federal government reorganization. Improvements included removal of the city’s old dump ground, filling in the large “gully” and other drainage improvements, installing fencing, leveling ground for runways and taxiways, surfacing runways with an oil seal coat, and installing

¹⁹ Godon, “Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928.”

²⁰ Godon, “Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928.”

²¹ Midboe, “Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport,” 1.

²² Midboe, “Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport,” 2.

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boundary lighting.²³ The *Bismarck Tribune* reported on May 13, 1937, that Grand Forks was planning to build the “largest airport in the northwest” if Works Progress Administration officials approved the county’s application for a \$250,000 improvement and enlargement project at the municipal airport.²⁴

Aviation activities continued to increase at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport in the early 1940s including commercial air service that required improved runways to accommodate larger aircraft. On August 31, 1941, improvements at the airport reached a stage where the city saw fit to have dedication ceremonies.²⁵ Northwest Airlines again deemed the airport safe for air carrier operations and inaugurated service into Grand Forks again during the summer of 1942.

The WPA’s ongoing efforts at airports throughout the country to support national defense and the increased flight operations in Grand Forks allowed for an official administration and terminal building to be built in the early 1940s (subject of this nomination). Construction of the Administration Building reportedly started in the fall and continued throughout the winter and spring and into early summer. Sources differ, however, between its being built in 1941 to 1942 or 1942 to 1943. Norman Midboe asserted that construction of the new administration and terminal building began in the fall of 1941 and was completed in the early summer months of 1942.²⁶ He also stated that the large 100-foot by 150-foot round top aircraft storage hangar (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 14*) was constructed at the same time. Working drawings by architect Theodore B. Wells are dated September 1941 and the specifications include advertisements for bids to be received by August 29, 1941. However, City of Grand Forks building permits issued for later alterations and the Grand Forks International Airport’s 50th Anniversary celebratory insert in the *Grand Forks Herald* indicate a construction date of 1943.²⁷ Midboe acknowledged that water and sewer systems were not completed for the

²³ Midboe, “Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport,” 2.

²⁴ “Grand Forks Plans to Build Biggest Airport.” *The Bismarck Tribune*. May 13, 1937, 4. Accessed April 11, 2020. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85042243/1937-05-13/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1789&index=0&rows=20&words=airport+largest+northwest&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1963&proxtext=%22largest+airport+in+the+northwest%22&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1,4>.

²⁵ Midboe, “Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport,” 3.

²⁶ Midboe, “Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport,” 5.

²⁷ City of Grand Forks, Inspections and “Grand Forks International Airport: 1964-2014,” *Grand Forks Herald*, 2014. Norman Midboe Papers. OGLMC 1518, Box 1, Folder 4. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. Chester Fritz Library. University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

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administration/terminal building and hangar until 1943.²⁸ Thus, it is plausible that construction began in the fall of 1941 into 1942, but that the building was not considered finished until 1943, when the water and sewer systems were completed.

Northwest Airlines reportedly moved its services into the new Administration Building as soon as their operations area was completed. The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) operated out of the second level of the building.²⁹ The airport café became operational in August 1942, although water was hauled in until July 1943, when the water and sewer services were completed in the building.

New air services continued develop at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport including the pioneering agricultural (and aviation) business, Delta Air Corporation, which conducted the area's first aerial dusting operations for treating crops in the area in August 1942.³⁰ Delta continued dusting operations in the area for two more seasons. This was an important innovation for the region, as the Red River Valley has some of the most fertile farmland in the world and agriculture contributes significantly to the area's economy. Fleets of aircraft dusters traveled to Grand Forks every summer to dust potato crops throughout the Red River Valley, before local entrepreneurs started up their own aerial dusting companies.

Major improvements in 1943 at the airport included building up three runways, constructing new taxiways, completing a drainage system, and providing the concrete aprons at the terminal building (a surviving portion presently serves as the former Administration Building's parking lot) and at the large hangar. The airfield was closed from August 10 to October 12, and airline services were suspended, while some of these improvements were completed. Most flight school activities were carried out on a nearby auxiliary field.

On January 1, 1946, the Grand Forks Municipal Airport received designation as a Port of Entry for Canada.³¹ After receiving this designation, the airport's name changed to the Grand Forks International Airport. Numerous small and large aircraft made use of the airport's facilities around this time as Grand Forks was the only official Port of Entry for Canada in the area.

²⁸ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 6.

²⁹ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 4.

³⁰ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 7.

³¹ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 10.

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Traffic across the border increased each year. Norman Midboe affirmed that the Administration Building was expanded to the south in 1949 in order to provide Northwest Airlines with heated equipment storage, as well as to provide United States Customs with inspection space for the increased number of passengers flying in and out of Canada.

The airport was a critical hub for moving mail, goods, people, and services into the region. When one of the largest floods in the area's recorded history occurred in the spring of 1950, the airport played a crucial role as it received cargo from the United States Coast Guard to aid in flood relief services (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 20*). Although the floodwaters did not reach the airport, overland flooding affected large areas of the city and surrounding areas. A Coast Guard helicopter was stationed at the airport for several weeks to complete rescue work and support the area as it recovered from the flood.

Airport improvements in 1950 included paving the horseshoe-shaped driveway (still extant today) leading up to the airport from the east in concrete, upgrading runway lights, and adding an equipment maintenance building for repair work and for storing snow removal equipment. The airport's growth continued when Wisconsin Central Airlines, later known as North Central Airlines, initiated service into Grand Forks in June 1952, flying between the Twin Cities and Grand Forks. The increased service required the construction of another hangar to accommodate the private aircraft that was displaced by the new airline. Wisconsin Central Airlines later added services from Grand Forks to Omaha in June 1957 and to Minot in April 1959 (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 27*).

The size of commercial airplanes increased over time and eventually the larger aircraft became too large to use the Grand Forks runways, especially during the region's spring and fall wet seasons. The runways became inadequate for landing any aircraft larger than a DC-3 and even those were often too heavy to land during the spring thaw.³² The issues with runway conditions first started becoming apparent in the spring of 1952. Midboe stated, "Closing the airport every spring became a yearly ritual from then on with the exception of a couple of years when we were lucky."³³ Even the taxiway providing access to the terminal building had to be

³² "Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014."

³³ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 12.

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closed for a while because of damage caused by the heavier aircraft (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 21*).

In the years 1956 to 1961, Northwest Airlines was operating DC-4s that caused rapid deterioration of the runways because of the excessive weight of the aircraft. In the Annual Report 1958-1959, airport manager Carl J. Admunson informed city officials, "The runways broke up very badly last spring, and it was a real project to get them back in useable condition but [they are] still in need of more repairing. The runways were even getting unsafe for the DC-3 aircraft."³⁴ Norman Midboe, the airport assistant manager at the time, later recalled that "considerable money, time, and effort went into repairing runways each year." He recollected that when Northwest switched to using DC-6's in 1961 and Lockheed Electra aircraft in 1962, the additional weight of these aircraft damaged the runways so badly that the ruts left every time these planes landed had to be leveled and filled with hot asphalt.³⁵ Because the airport lacked suitable runways for the larger commercial aircraft, passengers began driving to Fargo, approximately eighty miles south, in order to travel aboard the larger aircraft.³⁶ Moreover, maintaining a safe airport for light aircraft became increasingly difficult because of the runways' ruts and uneven surfaces.

Meanwhile, the City of Grand Forks was experiencing continued growth that was pushing the city's boundaries further west and south. In the late 1950s, while city leaders weighed the expense to upgrade and lengthen the runways to accommodate larger aircraft, the State Highway Department offered over \$567,000 for a portion of the airport to be used as the right-of-way for a new Interstate Highway System as part of a bridge-highway-airport "package."³⁷ This offer caused much controversy within the Grand Forks community, but, ultimately, in 1961, all fourteen city council members voted to construct a new airport five miles west of the original airport. The State Highway Department's offer was lowered to \$440,000 in 1962, causing

³⁴ "Grand Forks International Airport Annual Report 1958-1959." Oscar Lunseth Papers. OGLMC 372, Box 7, Folder 2. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

³⁵ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 13.

³⁶ "Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014."

³⁷ "Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014."

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additional local contention, but the city was able to secure enough funding to move forward with the construction of the new airport at a different location.³⁸

The new airport was nearing completion in November 1963, but the new terminal building was not yet ready. *Grand Forks Herald* reporter, Lloyd C. Tinnes, wrote in November 1963 that Northwest Airlines manager Howard Peterson was preparing “for the shift of flight service from the bumpy old one to the new slick one.” Northwest switched its services to the new airport location before the new terminal was completed. The company transported passengers by bus back and forth between the original airport Administration Building and a temporary trailer at the new airport from November 15, 1963, until February 1, 1964, when the new airport became fully operational.³⁹ North Central, the only other airline serving Grand Forks in 1963 and 1964, operated smaller planes and continued to use the old airport until February 1. When the new airport opened, Northwest and North Central airlines were operating a total of twelve flights daily and sixty-five private aircraft were relocated.⁴⁰

Together with flight services and operations being transferred to the new airport, the 100-foot by 150-foot round top storage hangar from the original airport was moved to the new airport in 1968. It reportedly took 112 rubber-tired wheels and two days to move the structure five miles down U.S. Highway 2. As it sat overnight, just north of Highway 2, a strong wind blew out the building’s entire back wall. Despite this, the remaining leg of the move was successful, and the building was placed on a prepared foundation at the new airport. The building was remodeled with a new metal roof and was leased to the University of North Dakota’s growing flight program.⁴¹ This relocated remnant of Grand Forks’ original airport is still in use today.

Another vestige of the original Grand Forks Municipal Airport is presently found at the campus of the University of North Dakota, approximately a half mile south of its original airport location. The Grand Forks Municipal Airport Beacon Tower has been erected west of the Transportation Building on the grounds of the John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences.

³⁸ “Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014.”

³⁹ “Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014.”

⁴⁰ “Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014.”

⁴¹ “Grand Forks International Airport: 1964 – 2014.” In 1968 at the Grand Forks International Airport, John D. Odegard started flight school utilizing the moved-in round top storage hangar. The school evolved into The University of North Dakota’s John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences.

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Formerly used for guiding pilots, the Beacon Tower was built as a one of the airport's Federal Works Progress Administration projects and dedicated in 1941. The Beacon Tower originally stood east of the Administration Building within the horseshoe-shaped driveway (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 11, 15, & 16*). In 1964, after the first airport's closure, the tower was moved to a home in the Riverside neighborhood of Grand Forks. Its presence was rediscovered following the 1997 Red River Flood and was moved to the University of North Dakota campus in 2002.⁴²

After all aviation services were relocated to the new airport location, the former airport Administration Building was repurposed as a police station. Although little information is available about this period of the building's history, a tax assessment summary lists the property as "Old Terminal Bldg, New Police Dept" under the ownership of the City of Grand Forks.⁴³ This document lists the assessment summary from 1973 to 1977 as "exempt." It is unclear whether or not these were the years the building was used as a police station, but a city inspection record from November 1977 indicates that the former airport Administration Building had been used as a police station.⁴⁴ Subsequently, a mail flyer advertising office space for lease described the Brekke Building as the "former Grand Forks Airport Terminal and Police Station."⁴⁵ Employees at Brekke Travel familiar with the building's history, anecdotally report that the basement housed holding cells when the building was used as a police station.

The former airport Administration Building was purchased from the City of Grand Forks by Arne Brekke in 1977 and renamed the "Brekke Building." Arne Brekke operated a travel company out of the building and leased additional office and apartment spaces on the main, upper, and basement levels. Today, Brekke Tours and Travel occupies the entire main-level. The upper-level is leased to another travel company and the basement level has been developed into three residential apartments.

⁴² University of North Dakota, "Sites 2C @ UND" (2013). *UND Publications*. 38.<https://commons.und.edu/und-books/38>.

⁴³ City of Grand Forks, Assessing Office. File for 802 N 43rd St., Grand Forks, ND.

⁴⁴ City of Grand Forks, Inspections.

⁴⁵ City of Grand Forks, Inspections.

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ROLE IN TRANSPORTATION

Grand Forks has been called “the Heart of North America” because it is located at the geographical center of the continent.⁴⁶ Because of its central location, Grand Forks was an important point in transportation in the Upper Midwest for many years. From ox-cart trails, steamboats, stagecoaches, railroads, automobiles, to aviation, transportation evolved with and helped shape this city. Settlement of the area has been tied to the early modes of transportation, principally steamboats and railroads, as they helped to promote America’s westward expansion. Later, the city stood at the crossroads of an emerging highway system: U.S. 81, the Meridian Highway, and U.S. Highway (or Route) 2, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Highway. With developments in transportation, Grand Forks consistently seems to embrace change and to be poised to invest in new transportation networks and infrastructure. Aviation has been no exception.

North Dakota has been credited as being an “early adopter” for anything pertaining to aviation.⁴⁷ The first introduction of aviation to Grand Forks residents occurred at the Grand Forks Fair on July 19, 1910, during the Grand Forks Air Meet exhibition. Recorded as the first aeronautical event in North Dakota, the event featured Archibald Hoxsey’s flight demonstration in his Wright Model B before a crowd of spectators. Hoxsey was a member of the Wright Exhibition Team. This group of early pilots, trained by aviation pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright, traveled across the country performing aerial shows and setting altitude and endurance records. Hoxsey’s Grand Forks flights garnered headlines in the local newspaper for four straight days and attracted huge audiences to the fair.⁴⁸

The following year, the city hosted the 1911 State Fair, during which Philip O. Parmelee, another Wright Exhibition Team member, gave another flight demonstration. That same year, Grand Forks pilot Thomas McGoe, “premier birdman of the Northwest,” successfully flew the

⁴⁶ Ralph H. Burke Associates. *Survey and Master Plan for Grand Forks International Airport*. City of Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1961.

⁴⁷ Hamilton, Penny Rafferty. “Flying Through North Dakota Aviation History.” *Aviation Quarterly* 2020, Winter 2020. North Dakota Aviation Council. Accessed April 11, 2020. <https://ndacaero.com/2020/03/05/flying-through-north-dakota-aviation-history/>.

⁴⁸ Godon, “Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928.”

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first North Dakota-designed and -built aircraft named the Kenworth-McGoey flying machine.⁴⁹

In that flight, he also became the second North Dakota resident to successfully fly an aircraft.⁵⁰

His successful flight It became a common occurrence for fairs and other large venues to host “air exhibitions.” Author Penny Rafferty Hamilton revealed that in these early years of flight, “aeroplanes were viewed more for their entertainment value than for commerce.”⁵¹ Such demonstrations captured the attention of the entire country and people paid to attend even minor demonstrations. For the next thirty years, the exhibition flying teams, barnstormers, stuntmen, and pilots offering rides for entertainment were a major aspect of aviation.

There were attempts to use early airplanes for more practical purposes, but the technology was still in its infancy and aircraft could not yet compete with the railroad network that stretched across America carrying passengers, mail, and freight. Airports were few and far between, often consisting of just a few acres of leveled sod, and air travel was considered uncomfortable and loud. Moreover, the speed of the aircraft was not much greater than that of trains, especially when allocating the time required for refueling stops on long journeys.

It was the First World War that changed aviation and allowed flying to come into its own. Aviation technology evolved rapidly during World War I from rudimentary machines to more modern, powerful aircraft. According to American historian Richard Hallion, there were over fifty different aircraft designs during World War I, with five distinct technological generations.⁵² By the end of the war, aircraft had reached a degree of sophistication that set the stage for continued developments in aviation.

Interest in flying boomed after World War I when the pilots and airplanes from the war came back to the States and the Air Mail Act of 1925 facilitated the creation of the commercial airline industry. Despite the technological advancements and increased usage, however, aviation remained a dangerous business. A series of air tours throughout the country were used to assure

⁴⁹ Hoffbeck, Steve. "Tom McGoey: North Dakota's Pioneer Aviator," December 11, 1991 Research Papers Written on North Dakota History Collection. OGLMC 263, Box 3, Folder 25. Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

⁵⁰ Hamilton, “Flying Through North Dakota Aviation History.” The first flight was by Robert "Lucky Bob" St. Henry at the Fargo Fairgrounds on June 9, 1911 for 12,000 spectators – a city that at the time had a population of 14,331 according to census records.

⁵¹ Hamilton, “Flying Through North Dakota Aviation History.”

⁵² “Viewpoint: How WW1 Changed Aviation Forever.” *BBC News*, October 20, 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-29612707>.

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people of the dependability of airplanes for commercial air travel and for delivering the mail.⁵³

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Grand Forks was a stop on several air tours, including the 1925 Air Mail Tour to stimulate interest in the proposed air mail service between the Twin Cities and Chicago. Crowds in Grand Forks cheered the pilots who delivered the first air mail between the Twin Cities and Winnipeg in 1929.⁵⁴ With time, interest increased in air mail and commerce, and later travel, and towns rushed to develop airfields to participate in the burgeoning air industry.

The *Grand Forks Herald* reported on Sunday, February 1, 1931, that residents of Grand Forks first began to think seriously about this new mode of transportation in 1927. The Grand Forks Commercial Club had maintained an aviation committee for a couple of years prior to that, but it had done little more than note the spread of air mail and commercial lines over the nation. By 1927, the possibilities of commercial flights had been well established and Grand Forks leaders realized that the city must provide for a new transportation development. The Commercial Club's interest was further encouraged by Northwest Airways chief pilot and general manager Charles "Speed" Holman, when he spoke at a meeting in March of 1928 stressing the need for an airport in Grand Forks.⁵⁵ In June of 1928, the land was purchased for an airport and aviation activity was relocated from the improvised Cherry Street field to the city's first established airfield by July. Despite state laws at the time that prohibited cities from purchasing land outside city limits for any purpose except public parks, steps were taken from the outset to secure this land for an airport to be owned by the City of Grand Forks. By 1929, when the city of Grand Forks could purchase the airfield, considerable work had already been completed to establish an adequate and modern landing field.

Despite the Great Depression, in the late 1920s and 1930s, air transportation still experienced remarkable growth and change throughout America. Aviation technology continued to advance and improve while solid infrastructure started to take shape with the support of regulatory reforms through the Post Office and Air Commerce departments. When passenger services developed and expanded, aviation became critical to an area as a key mode of transportation. Grand Forks' airport grew steadily as it connected Grand Forks to major regional cities,

⁵³ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

⁵⁴ Freeman, "Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields: North Dakota." Canadian

⁵⁵ Olson, Scott P. "A History of Pioneer Aviation History in Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1910-1941," 6.

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including the Twin Cities in Minnesota and Winnipeg, Manitoba, in Canada, and linked Grand Forks to the air routes that spread across the country (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 26*). The airport aided in Grand Fork's economic growth as it increased the flow of goods and services, connected people, promoted tourism, and provided aid and assistance following the region's periodic major floods.

The world of transportation advanced and reached new heights in technology in the 1920s and 1930s. Automobiles became affordable with the invention of the assembly line, trains and ships became more efficient, with oil replacing coal fired steam engines, and airplanes and airships such as Zeppelins and Dirigibles, expanded air travel. Design expressions influenced by aerodynamics and ballistics drew from the influences of machine-age engineering and filtered into architecture, furniture, and industrial design. The modern age of machines filtered into the lives of many as Streamline Moderne (or Art Moderne) design gained prominence. The stripped-down forms, clean lines, smooth curved faces, rounded corners, and limited ornamentation embodied the innovation. The design of the Administration Building drew from this modernization and embodied the progress of transportation in the upper Midwest.

With World War II, aviation technology boomed again, although most planes were fighters and bombers. Commercial airlines worked closely with the military, and new innovations in air transport helped to move troops and to keep supplies moving from the production chain to the front. Postwar aviation in America was revolutionized by the new technology and civil aviation grew apace. New airliners were built, providing unprecedented comfort for passengers, the ability to carry more people at swifter speeds, and flew greater distances. Air travel in the postwar era proved more profitable for airlines and several new airlines emerged. Air travel soon became available to more people as fares declined with the increased competition. The advancements in air travel connected Grand Forks to the rest of the Midwest and beyond during a time when rail service was declining, but before America's Interstate Highway System was established.

Ultimately, the authorized construction of the Interstate Highway System was one of the major factors that played into the relocation of the Grand Forks airport to a new location, five miles west of the original airport. After President Dwight Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid

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Highway Act of 1956, a 41,000-mile “National System of Interstate and Defense Highways” was designed to provide the country with a network of high-speed roads. The new system would, according to Eisenhower, eliminate unsafe roads, inefficient routes, traffic jams and all the other things that got in the way of “speedy, safe transcontinental travel.” The controlled-access expressways required overpasses and underpasses instead of intersections. The North Dakota State Highway Department proposed that the new interstate would bisect the Grand Forks airfield, along the north-south runway, in order to connect with U.S. Highway 2, which ran along the northern border of the airport. The Highway Department’s proposal came at a time when the airport’s infrastructure was obsolete and failing, site constraints were limiting runway lengths and expansion options, and significant improvements were required to keep the existing airport operational. Ultimately, in 1961, the city council voted to relocate and construct a new airport five miles west of the original airport, proceed with construction of the new interstate, I-29, and make improvements to U.S. Highway 2 that included constructing a new bridge crossing the Red River.

ROLE IN POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

When aviation activity increased following World War I and air mail encouraged commercial aviation, industry leaders understood the future potential of aviation, but believed that federal action to improve and maintain safety standards would be required for long-term success. At their urging, the Air Commerce Act was passed in 1926 and the United States government became more involved with airports. This act required the Secretary of Commerce to foster air commerce under a new Aeronautics Branch and it included provisions for the licensing, inspection, and operation of aircraft, the licensing of pilots and of mechanics engaged in aircraft work, and the operation and extension of the airways system begun by postal authorities.⁵⁶ The Aeronautics Branch assumed primary responsibility for aviation oversight and it was empowered to make plans for the orderly development and location of landing areas. The Act, however, specifically barred the use of federal money for building or maintaining airports. Despite this

⁵⁶ “Government Funding of Airports.” *US Centennial of Flight Commission*. Accessed April 16, 2020. https://www.centennialofflight.net/essay/Government_Role/govt_funding/POL11.htm.

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limitation, the growth of aviation encouraged by the Act led to more private airport development.

Even though the Act attempted to set standards, adherence to many aspects of the system was voluntary and all airport projects continued to be originated at the local, level leaving much of the decision making to local authorities.

Although nearly every part of North Dakota proved to have land suitable for landing fields, early airport development was largely delayed in most of the state's communities until airport improvement work was propelled by New Deal programs and international events leading up to World War II. Before this, airports were primarily regarded as a local responsibility. Thus, North Dakota's earliest airports were built, operated, and maintained by local communities.

Between 1925 and 1930 several spurts in municipal airport building occurred across the country, fueled by promoters of aviation (tours).⁵⁷ Municipal airport land procurement and construction costs were usually financed by bond drives or by cities requiring the airports pay for themselves once in operation (it is probable that most public airports at the time had yet to meet expenses, much less make a profit).⁵⁸ By the 1930s, most of North Dakota's larger towns and cities had airports (in various stages of development), while many small towns had only a landing field unsuitable for commercial air craft.

The work relief programs of the depression proved to be a boon to airport construction in North Dakota and nationwide. When Franklin D. Roosevelt became the thirty-second U.S. President in 1933, the country was in the depths of the Great Depression. The Roosevelt administration's recovery program was titled the New Deal, a series of experimental laws and programs designed to rejuvenate the economy, reshape the public landscape. and put the American people back to work. During this time, the federal government began a massive effort to provide funding for civil works. From 1933 to 1943, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the Works Progress (later Works Projects) Administration (WPA) employed

⁵⁷ *Civil Aeronautics Journal*, Volumes 7-8 (1946). Civil Aeronautics Administration Information and Statistics Service, United States. Digitized from the New York Public Library, May 29, 2018. *Google Books*, https://books.google.com/books?id=gRdtQjVaPgkC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false, 59-60.

⁵⁸ Bednarek, Janet Rose Daly. *America's Airports: Airfield Development, 1918-1947*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2001. Accessed April 11, 2020. *Google Books*, <https://books.google.com/books?id=Q7YIp8f69rMC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>, 79.

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millions of jobless men and women and reshaped America's public landscape, architecture, and infrastructure. The impact of these New Deal agencies was immense and long-lasting. New schools; hospitals; courthouses; libraries; public parks; and public works infrastructure, such as storm drains, sanitary sewer lines, roads, bridges, airfields, dams, and powerhouses were built across America.

President Roosevelt also understood and valued the importance of aviation for the nation's recovery. Within months of his inauguration, Roosevelt established the Civil Works Administration (CWA), allocating \$11.5 million for airport construction.⁵⁹ By the spring of 1934, these funds provided labor for 943 airport projects, including 585 new airports, with most of the funding provided to smaller communities.⁶⁰ In May 1934, the *Bismarck Tribune* forecasted that by June 1934, with the completion of the airport program under the Civil Works Administration, North Dakota would have more airports per capita than any other state in the union. In North Dakota, funds were expended or allotted to 51 airports for construction or improvements, exceeding a cost of \$180,000 by mid-April 1934, and as many as 1,270 men were employed in the program. The Grand Forks Airport was allotted \$8,235.40 during this period.⁶¹

Federal support increased later in 1935 when the Works Progress Administration was launched as part of a "Second New Deal" that emphasized a new work program. A Division of Airways and Airports was established under the WPA's chief engineer who supervised all airport projects. Surveyors, engineers, and architects across the country collaborated on a massive renewal of America's aerial network. Field surveys by WPA officials in thirty-eight states determined which existing airports needed to be improved or brought up to date, and where new airports were planned and built.⁶² Federal relief programs, including the CWA and WPA, provided for the development, enlargement, and improvement of airports throughout the country.

Aviation regulatory agencies cooperated with these programs. On July 1, 1934, the name of the Aeronautics Branch was changed to the Bureau of Air Commerce to reflect the growing

⁵⁹ "Government Funding of Airports."

⁶⁰ "Government Funding of Airports."

⁶¹ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

⁶² Gordon, Alastair. *Naked Airport: A Cultural History of the World's Most Revolutionary Structure*. Henry Holt and Company Press, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2020. *Google Books*, <https://books.google.com/books?id=IUEGAwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>, 98.

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importance of aviation to the nation.⁶³ The Bureau encouraged the establishment of the first air traffic control towers to improve airport safety, but local authorities still continued to operate the airports' control centers until 1936, when the Bureau took over the air traffic control centers. And, although all airport projects were still initiated at the local level, in order to receive funding, all projects had to receive the approval of both the WPA and the Bureau of Air Commerce.

On June 23, 1938, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 into law. The act transferred nonmilitary federal aviation responsibilities from the Bureau of Air Commerce to a new, independent agency, the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA). By this act, the government's role in civil aviation was expanded by giving the CAA power to implement improvements for commercial and military uses of airports nationwide, regulate airline fares, determine the routes individual carriers served, and establish an Air Safety Board. The CAA also attempted to standardize design for small air terminals. Several surviving air terminals, from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Mesa, Arizona, still bear these characteristic hallmarks.⁶⁴

Several agencies aided in constructing and improving municipal airports across the country including the FERA, CWA, WPA, and the CAA. Aid was provided for the construction and improvement of hangars and other airport buildings, construction or reconstruction of runways, installation of drainage and lighting systems, excavation and grading work, and airfield marking work.

Although airport improvements were considered valuable work under federal relief programs, the importance of airport projects increased near the end of the Great Depression when attention was focused on defense projects in preparation for World War II. Federal legislation enacted between 1939 and 1944 authorized the Development of Landing Areas for National Defense (DLAND) and the Development of Civil Landing Areas (DCLA) programs. In September 1939, war broke out in Europe prompting Congress to appropriate \$40 million for DLAND. The Work Projects Administration and the CAA jointly administered the DLAND

⁶³ "A Brief History of the FAA." Federal Aviation Administration. *US Department of Transportation*, Last modified January 4, 2017. https://www.faa.gov/about/history/brief_history/.

⁶⁴ Martens, Steve. *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931–1943*, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation, 2010.

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programs. Under DLAND, the Secretaries of War, Commerce, and the Navy approved expenditures for airports. By 1941, the Army Air Corps had begun directing aid to 986 airports.⁶⁵

The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) spent \$363 million to construct and repair airfields in the United States.⁶⁶ The CAA attempted to design and locate those airports so they would be available for civilian use after the war. Following World War II, 500 of these airports were declared surplus and turned over to cities, counties, and states to manage.

In North Dakota, a modest amount of airport development work was accomplished under the FERA, CWA, and WPA programs. The *1943 Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-43* noted that eight new or improved airport buildings (terminals or hangars) were constructed in the state. The final report also listed two newly constructed or improved airport landing fields, plus twelve improved airfields. The cumulative WPA investment recorded for North Dakota was \$1,447,872 for airport and airfield improvements. In addition to the Grand Forks Municipal Airport, other WPA-built and -improved airports in the region included airfields in Portal and Bismarck and air terminals in Fargo and Valley City.⁶⁷

New Deal agencies such as the WPA and CAA aided in improving the Grand Forks Municipal Airport between 1936 and 1941. The details of the work completed under these agencies are uncertain, but probably included completion of the new Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, the large round top hangar, and numerous runway and airfield improvements. In August 1941, the Civil Aeronautics Administration reported that Grand Forks was one of 288 airports approved for construction or improvement projects by a board consisting of the Secretaries of War, Navy, and Commerce as necessary to the national defense. Of these approved projects, the work on 216 of the projects was by contract, 87 were executed by the WPA, and 15 involved both WPA and contract work. The WPA in Grand Forks was still actively working at the airport with approved funding released in 1941, but the airport had also received private contracts utilizing personnel of the Army Corps of Engineers that same year. It is undetermined whether the Administration Building was constructed by WPA workers, contract workers, or a combination of both.

⁶⁵ "Government Funding of Airports."

⁶⁶ "Government Funding of Airports."

⁶⁷ Martens, *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota*.

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In 1946, the CAA reported that in twenty years, the number of airports in the United States had increased tenfold.⁶⁸ In 1926, the CAA (referred to then as the Aeronautics Branch) was founded, there were about 400 airfields in the United States listed as “reliable despite rotation of crops.” At the time, only three had paved runways. By 1946, there were over 4,000 airfields, most with paved runways, lighting for night operations, and control towers. Much of the growth was to the credit of agencies such as the Civil Works Agency, the Public Works Administration, and the Works Progress Administration. In the article, “Laying Foundations: New Deal Public Works and Aviation Infrastructure,” M. Houston Johnson V states that is conceivable that these agencies built or improved almost every contemporary United States airport, creating the foundations of America’s modern air transport network.⁶⁹ Additionally, the groundwork was laid for the realization that national defense required a strong system of airports, and this realization led to more major federal support for airport construction, such as that provided under the Federal Airport Act of 1946.

Much more than just make-work endeavors, the efforts of the work relief programs reflected the New Dealers’ desire to use public works to undertake worthwhile projects. These government policies highlight the sophistication with which the New Deal promoted economic development rooted at the local level. These programs put men and women to work at projects that would not have been possible without federal funding. Airport terminals, runways, hangars, and countless other aviation-related improvements represent some of the New Deal’s most significant legacies, highlighting the Roosevelt administration’s vital contributions to aeronautical development.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

WPA projects in North Dakota are particularly distinctive as visible examples of design priorities, style, and material selection during the Depression era. Characteristics of Moderne

⁶⁸ *Civil Aeronautics Journal*, Volumes 7 (1946). Civil Aeronautics Administration Information and Statistics Service, United States. Digitized from the New York Public Library, May 29, 2018. *Google Books*, https://books.google.com/books?id=gRdtQjVaPgkC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false, 60.

⁶⁹ Johnson V, M. Houston. "Laying Foundations: New Deal Public Works and Aviation Infrastructure." *Journal of Policy History* 30, no. 4 (2018): 695-726. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/703059>.

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styling are apparent on numerous projects with which the WPA was involved. Because of its far-reaching scope and the substantial numbers of projects completed in virtually every part of North Dakota, the WPA was arguably one of the most important works programs of the Depression era.⁷⁰

WPA-funded aviation projects provided an opportunity for architects to create beautiful, yet functional, buildings that assured travelers that air travel was “safe and substantial” while also epitomizing modernity and progress.⁷¹ Nationally, early WPA-sponsored airports often tended to imitate regional sources of architecture, such as El Paso’s Spanish Colonial-influenced stucco and stone terminal building or Albuquerque’s Pueblo inspired adobe and timber terminal. Many WPA airports, however, went in a modern direction, usually in the Deco streamlined look sometimes referred to as PWA or WPA Modern, with the designation depending on the sponsoring agency. WPA Modern airport terminals were built at Cleveland, Houston, Detroit, Little Rock, and Newark. These airports often had squat profiles, with central towers and symmetrical “wings.”⁷²

This style of WPA Modern airport terminal was developed in several towns and cities in North Dakota, including the Bismarck Municipal Airport (1936), Barnes County Municipal Airport (Valley City, 1942), and the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport (1941). The Grand Forks airport can also be considered as one of the last airports constructed in what is often regarded as “Depression Architecture.” Its modest, streamlined, and economical WPA Modern/Streamline Moderne architectural design embodies how New Deal programs, including the WPA, helped to transform American air transportation infrastructure in North Dakota, while supporting the local community by putting people to work. Simplified designs were encouraged in the interest of utilizing a higher proportion of unskilled or semi-skilled labor and conserving material costs. Under the WPA, cash grants were awarded from the federal agency for labor, but the local sponsor was obligated to provide as much

⁷⁰ Martens, *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota*.

⁷¹ Airport design has been used to reflect the status, innovation, and regional identity of major social centers throughout aviation history. Grand Forks has seen two additional terminal designs after the original Grand Forks Municipal Airport (subject of this nomination) was closed, including the 1964 terminal (with subsequent additions; demolished in 2012) and the 2011 Byron L. Dorgan Terminal.

⁷² Gordon, *Naked Airport: A Cultural History of the World's Most Revolutionary Structure*, 102.

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material and design guidance as was feasible. Essentially, each project's local sponsors were obligated to provide the cost of all materials and design services, while the federal agency contributed the cost of labor, so projects that were "labor-intensive" were preferred over those that were "material intensive."⁷³

The architectural expression of gently curving forms and long horizontal lines seen in the former Administration Building reflect Art Moderne or Streamline Moderne design. Streamlined design drew from Art Deco architecture and design and borrowed concepts influenced by the curvilinear appearance of airplanes and ocean liners. The influence of streamlined design was translated into a new design expression for architecture, railroad locomotives, automobiles, and household appliances and objects in the late 1920s and 1930s. Streamline Moderne, heralded at the 1939 New York World's Fair as the "new American style," was characterized by horizontal and curvilinear lines denoting motion while rejecting ornamentation. Similar in many ways to Art Deco, balance and proportion extended into regularity and repetition. Detailing and embellishment came from contrasting materials and color or shapes and light/shadows. However, Streamline was even more pared down than the Art Deco that preceded it. Art Deco designs, especially in their earlier forms, conveyed luxury with expensive materials and exquisite craftsmanship for exclusive clientele, but Art Moderne and Streamline Moderne were curtailed and simplified for a broader audience: America's middle-class.

In the Grand Forks airport Administration Building, the Streamline Moderne design is reinforced through the smooth brick cladding with long, accentuated horizontal bands, incised speed lines, and curving forms. The building's simple decorative interest comes from the use of precise lines, shade and shadow from recessed courses of brick, a continuous cast stone sill course, contrasting colored brick, and a sense of motion reinforced by curvaceous, rounded forms. The design was well-thought-out and precise. Its simplicity is orchestrated through geometry utilizing the expression of a basic material palette. Yet, its simplicity should not be confused with artlessness. A design of this distinction requires considerable knowledge and training of an architect knowledgeable in Art Deco/Art Moderne styles.

⁷³ Martens, *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota*.

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It should be noted that two local architects prepared distinctly different design schemes for the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, both of which are on file in the University of North Dakota's Chester Fritz Library in the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. Architect Theodore B. Wells's Moderne design is clearly recognizable in the working drawings of the building's elevations and construction details as the Administration Building in its current condition (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 28*). Specifications for Wells's design are also available. However, Joseph Bell DeRemer's proposed design, also in a Moderne/Art Deco style, does not match what was built in either elevation or plan (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 30 & 31*).

In Steve Martens's 2015 historic context study, *Theodore B. Wells and the Firm of Wells-Denbrook Architects in North Dakota; 1923-1978*, Wells is identified as the architect of "Job Number 4110: the Administration Offices for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport, Grand Forks, North Dakota." Credit, however, has been assigned to the wrong architect in multiple other studies. Steve Martens's, in *Multiple Property Listing: Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943* (2010), assigned credit to Joseph Bell DeRemer, and Michelle L. Dennis's in *Joseph Bell DeRemer and Samuel Teel DeRemer Architects in North Dakota* (2012) credited Samuel Teel DeRemer (Joseph's son and partner). Martens and Dennis both acknowledged that the existing building did not match the DeRemer design proposal, although the authors suggested this was due to "adaptive reuse" or being altered. Instead, it was Wells's design that was accepted whilst DeRemer's proposal was rejected.

It is plausible that both architects were asked to prepare proposals for the design of a new administration and terminal building for the Grand Forks Municipal Airport. Well-versed in a variety of architectural styles, Theodore B. Wells (1889-1976) established his architectural practice in Grand Forks in 1923. There are several WPA-funded projects in the region that reflect Wells's knowledge and skill with Art Deco and Moderne architecture, including structures built between 1936-1938 at the Grand Forks Fairgrounds (NRHP 2009), the 1938 Park River City Hall and Auditorium, the 1940 Walsh County Courthouse (MPS 1985), and the 1937 Edinburg Auditorium (NRHP 2013).

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Joseph Bell DeRemer (1871–1944) spent most of his career in Grand Forks after moving from New Jersey. He, too, was experienced in several architectural styles, but his work reflected more modern styles, including Art Deco and Moderne, after he formed a partnership with his son Samuel Teel DeRemer in 1920.

Both architects' work demonstrate familiarity with Art Deco and Moderne motifs. Evidence clearly indicates, however, that Wells's design was selected for the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport. As the architect of record, Theodore B. Wells's Streamline Moderne design was modest, yet still demonstrated the expectations of what the City of Grand Forks, WPA Administrators, and local sponsors were looking for. It is unknown who designed the addition to the building's south end, but the design and detailing match that of the original Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport.

ROLE IN MILITARY DEFENSE

The work accomplished through WPA projects contributed both directly and indirectly to national defense. Much of the work the WPA had completed between 1935 and 1940 had prepared the nation for a rapid move to a military footing. The reconditioning of buildings and utilities completed at Army, Navy, and Coast Guard facilities directly benefited the nation's defense. But the peacetime work of constructing and improving civil airports and improving the nation's highways and roads was also recognized later as being of great military value.

As the second world war approached, WPA-funded projects became increasingly defense related. On June 6, 1940, Colonel Francis C. Harrington (WPA Commissioner) turned the focus of the WPA to seventy-three project types that the Army and Navy considered "of first importance" to national defense. These included work at Navy yards, major military reservations, military airports, and civil airports located in strategic areas.⁷⁴ By the time the United States entered World War II in December 1941, the WPA had directed its efforts as far as possible to benefit the nation in case of war.

⁷⁴ Taylor, Nick. *American-Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work*. New York, NY: Random House, 2008. <https://erenow.net/modern/american-made-enduring-legacy-of-the-wpa/>.

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Municipal projects for the construction and improvement of the nation's airports proved necessary to defense industries. The WPA airport program can be divided into two phases of activity: that which preceded and that which followed the declaration of a national defense emergency. The early civil airport projects were subject to the same general requirements and policies of all other WPA work. During the second phase of the airport program, however, the WPA was called upon to conduct an accelerated program of airport construction and complete improvements in strategic areas throughout the country. The "*Final Report on the WPA Program*" reported that in the eight years of the program, WPA workers constructed 350 new landing fields and improved or enlarged nearly twice that number. They constructed and improved 5,925 linear feet of runways, 1,129 linear feet of taxi strips, and many square yards of aprons and turning circles. Nearly 1,200 airport buildings were constructed and 2,800 were reconstructed or improved.⁷⁵

The contributions of WPA workers at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport spanned both prewar and active defense-readiness periods. Between 1936 and 1941, prewar WPA activities at the Grand Forks airport included removing the city's old dump ground, improving drainage, installing fencing, leveling and improving runways, improving taxis and aprons, installing boundary lighting, and constructing several buildings including the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport.⁷⁶

When the United States became involved in World War II following attacks on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, all civil airports were closed for a short time. The Grand Forks airport conformed to new regulations issued by the CAA that required that any airports wishing to remain open be guarded twenty-four hours a day and that all departing aircraft had to be cleared by appointed flight clearance officers. Most of the area's pilots joined the Civil Air Patrol (CAP).⁷⁷ These pilots were required to have a CAP detail on their aircraft and to obtain a picture ID if they intended to fly private aircraft. All aircraft owners were also required to store their

⁷⁵ U.S. Works Progress Administration. *Final Report on the WPA Program*, 1935-43. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, 51.

⁷⁶ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 2.

⁷⁷ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 5.

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aircraft at an approved airport, which brought an influx of aircraft to the Grand Forks Municipal Airport from the surrounding towns and farms.⁷⁸

Although the Grand Forks airport was far from the front lines of World War II, it still contributed to the war effort. The Grand Forks airport was used as a fueling stop for many of the Cessna Bobcat aircraft as the Cessna Aircraft Corporation ferried them into Canada. This was the aircraft used by the Canadian Air Force when training navigators and pilots during World War II.

The Grand Forks airport's most notable role in the war efforts, however, was flight training. The United States Army Air Force (USAAF), previously called the United States Army Air Corps until June 1941, established numerous airfields throughout the Midwest with the purpose of training pilots and aircrews of USAAF fighters and bombers. Flight training and flight schools had already been established at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport as early as 1929. The *Grand Forks Herald* reported in May 1929 that "The first of June will bring a host of students to the city to take instructions under George Lowes, chief pilot of the Aeronautical corporation."⁷⁹ It reported that at least fifty students were anticipated to receive air diplomas that year, before winter weather set in, including two students from Iowa and a female pilot-in-training, a Miss Richardson of Parshall, North Dakota.⁸⁰ When defense and preparing for potential war became a national priority in the late 1930s, Grand Forks already had a solid base for training future pilots.

Lester Jolly became involved with the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP), which was subsidized by the federal government in 1937. On August 19, 1939, the federal government announced it would sponsor air training at the University of North Dakota.⁸¹ Jolly later launched a Glider Training Program with the University of North Dakota in July 1942.⁸² Initially, Lester Jolly operated the Jolly Flying School (also referred to as Jolly Flying Service) out of one of the airport's leased hangars, providing primary and advanced flight instruction. The hangar provided storage for aircraft, an office, and a classroom. The University provided academic training and housing and the flight training was provided by the Jolly Flying Service under a contract with the

⁷⁸ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 5.

⁷⁹ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

⁸⁰ Godon, "Grand Forks Municipal Airport Began in 1928."

⁸¹ Olson, Scott P. "A History of Pioneer Aviation History in Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1910-1941," 14.

⁸² Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 5.

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United States Army.⁸³ The Glider Training Program's focus was to train students to be glider pilots and become proficient in the operation of gliders in various types of towed and soaring flight, both day and night, and in servicing gliders in the field. The airport's Administration Building was used as the base of operations for the Glider Training Program, with the program personnel occupying the second floor. Maintenance of the 120 aircraft used in the program was also conducted at the airport.

The Glider Training Program originated from Flying Training Command planners who recognized the need for six thousand trained glider pilots. Initially, only four training bases nationally were in operation, so a burst of school openings took place over the summer of 1942. Schools were established in eleven states, including nine schools in the upper Midwest; one in North Dakota, one in South Dakota, four in Minnesota, two in Wisconsin, and one in Iowa.⁸⁴ Preparations for the schools were made so quickly that farmers' fields were cut, plowed, smoothed, and rolled to prepare landing fields. In Grand Forks, flight training was conducted from six auxiliary fields at remote locations, at least one of which was a cornfield, cut and plowed to provide space for training.⁸⁵ While the program was in operation, the airport was a busy place. Norman Midboe recalled seeing "all forms of Army vehicles almost completely filling the road between the University [of North Dakota] and the airport and seeing the 120 tandem Pipers and Taylorcrafts coming in formation flights and landing at the airport."⁸⁶ The program was short-lived as it was terminated in the early part of 1943. When the program was operating, glider pilot students at the Grand Forks airport flew approximately 11,000 hours without serious incident.⁸⁷

In 1943, the Jolly Flying Service ran the War Training Service (WTS) program from the Grand Forks Municipal Airport, which involved the operation of approximately thirty aircraft, twenty-five flight instructors, and administrative personnel. The program was primarily a screening program for potential pilot candidates. Each applicant of the Army Air Force was

⁸³ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 5.

⁸⁴ Grim, J. Norman. *To Fly the Gentle Giants: The Training of U.S. WW II Glider Pilots*. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2009. Accessed April 16, 2020. *Google Books*, <https://books.google.com/books?id=5A0OoNw58IsC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>, 128.

⁸⁵ Grim, *To Fly the Gentle Giants: The Training of U.S. WW II Glider Pilots*, 141.

⁸⁶ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 6.

⁸⁷ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 6.

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given ten hours of dual instruction to determine whether the student should be recommended for additional flight training in the Army Air Force. The WTS program was largely phased out in the summer of 1944. Again, the Grand Forks program provided thousands of hours flown without serious incident.⁸⁸ In the historic photo of Grand Forks Municipal Airport, ca. July 1943, flight instructors were shown standing at attention on the aircraft apron (west) side of the Administration Building (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 12*). All the instructors shown were involved with the government-sponsored War Training Service flight training program at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport during World War II.

After the war, several of the WTS program flight instructors remained in Grand Forks as flight school operators. Aviation education based out of the Grand Forks airport has continued and grown over time. In 1968, at the new Grand Forks International Airport, John D. Odegard started a flight school based out of the round top storage hangar that had been moved from the original airport. The school evolved into The University of North Dakota's John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences. Today, the school maintains a large and growing campus at the airport. Thousands of students from all over the world have been trained and educated in the school's many aerospace related programs. The College of Aerospace Sciences has become the second-largest degree-granting college at the University of North Dakota.⁸⁹ The John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences now operates one of the largest fleets of civilian flight training aircraft in North America. The Grand Forks airport has proved its support and cultivation of aviation education and training throughout the years.

CONCLUSION

The historic Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport is locally significant for its architectural design and its historical role as part of a small city airport in the Upper Midwest. The building (1941-1943), has significance under National Register Criterion "C" for its architecture and construction because it is an excellent, understated example of WPA Modern and Streamline Moderne architecture. Its design was an architectural

⁸⁸ Midboe, "Airport History: Old Grand Forks International Airport," 8.

⁸⁹ "John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences." *UND Aerospace - University of North Dakota*. Accessed April 15, 2020. <https://aero.und.edu/>.

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statement of aviation's progress and modernity in the region. Furthermore, the Administration Building has significance under Criterion "A" as it was associated with the city's role in aviation transportation, New Deal work relief programs, and military defense. A notable example of a Works Projects Administration-built airport terminal and administration building, the airport connected the community regionally and beyond via aviation transportation and military aviation training. Although one who drives past the former airport Administration Building today may not know of its historic function, it is distinctly different from other structures in the surrounding neighborhood. Once its history is made known, however, the pieces of its story that still remain, such as the tarmac, tie-down remnants, and the horseshoe-shaped driveway, will enable the interpretation of what the building used to be and the role it played. Although airport services were ultimately transferred to a new location, the building was repurposed, and the surrounding site developed, the former Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport remains a reminder of early aviation in Grand Forks at the site of the city's original airport. Its modest and economical Streamline Moderne design is an embodiment of New Deal programs and of how such programs helped transform modern America's air transportation's infrastructure leading up to and during a time of war while strengthening the local community.

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Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, ND

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☒ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: University of North Dakota Chester Fritz Library, Elwyn B.
Robinson Department of Special Collections

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acres

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: 47.927680 N Longitude: 97.090411 W

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, ND

County and State

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The boundary of the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport is County Parcel Number 44111500005004 encompassing Lot H, Block 2 of Airport Addition (a replat of Block 2 Lots H & J, a replat of Airport Addition) to the city of Grand Forks, in Grand Forks County, North Dakota (*Additional Documentation, Fig. 4*).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport includes the city lot retaining the former airport Administration Building. The complete area historically associated with the airport and landing field has been excluded because it has been subdivided, re-platted multiple times, and developed into interstate right-of way, commercial, and residential lots.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Agatha Frisby - Prairie Centre Architecture (consultant)
(prairiecentresearch@gmail.com)
organization: for the Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission
street & number: Grand Forks City Hall, 255 N. 4th Street, P.O. Box 5200
city or town: Grand Forks state: ND zip code: 58206-5200
e-mail GFHPC@grandforksgov.com
telephone: 701-787-3756
date: October 16, 2020

Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Grand Forks, ND

Name of Property

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: West (present-day front) and north (side) exterior elevations, photographer facing southeast

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0001

Photo 1 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Grand Forks, ND

Name of Property

County and State

Description of view: West (present-day front) exterior elevation, photographer facing
northeast

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0002

Photo 2 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks
Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: Overall west (present-day front) exterior elevation and parking lot
(former tarmac) with remnants of aircraft tie-down anchors, photographer facing
northeast

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0003

Photo 3 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks
Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: Detail of west (present-day front) exterior elevation, photographer
facing northeast

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0004

Photo 4 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks
Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: South (side) exterior elevation, photographer facing north

Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Grand Forks, ND

Name of Property

County and State

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0005

Photo 5 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks
Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: Overall east (present-day rear) exterior elevation and south (side)
elevation with parking lot and former main airport horseshoe-shaped driveway,
photographer facing northwest

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0006

Photo 6 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks
Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: East (present-day rear) exterior elevation, photographer facing west

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0007

Photo 7 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks
Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: East (present-day rear) exterior elevation and north (side) elevation,
photographer facing southwest

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0008

Administration Building for the City of Grand
Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Grand Forks, ND

Name of Property

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Photo 8 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: Detail of east (present-day rear) exterior elevation and north (side) elevation, photographer facing southwest

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0009

Photo 9 of 10.

Name of Property: Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Agatha Frisby

Date Photographed: April 20, 2020

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

Description of view: North (side) exterior elevation, photographer facing south

Image ID: ND_Grand Forks County_ Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport_0010

Photo 10 of 10.

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.

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National Park Service

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Administration Building for the City of
Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, North Dakota

County and State

Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota,
1931-1943

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

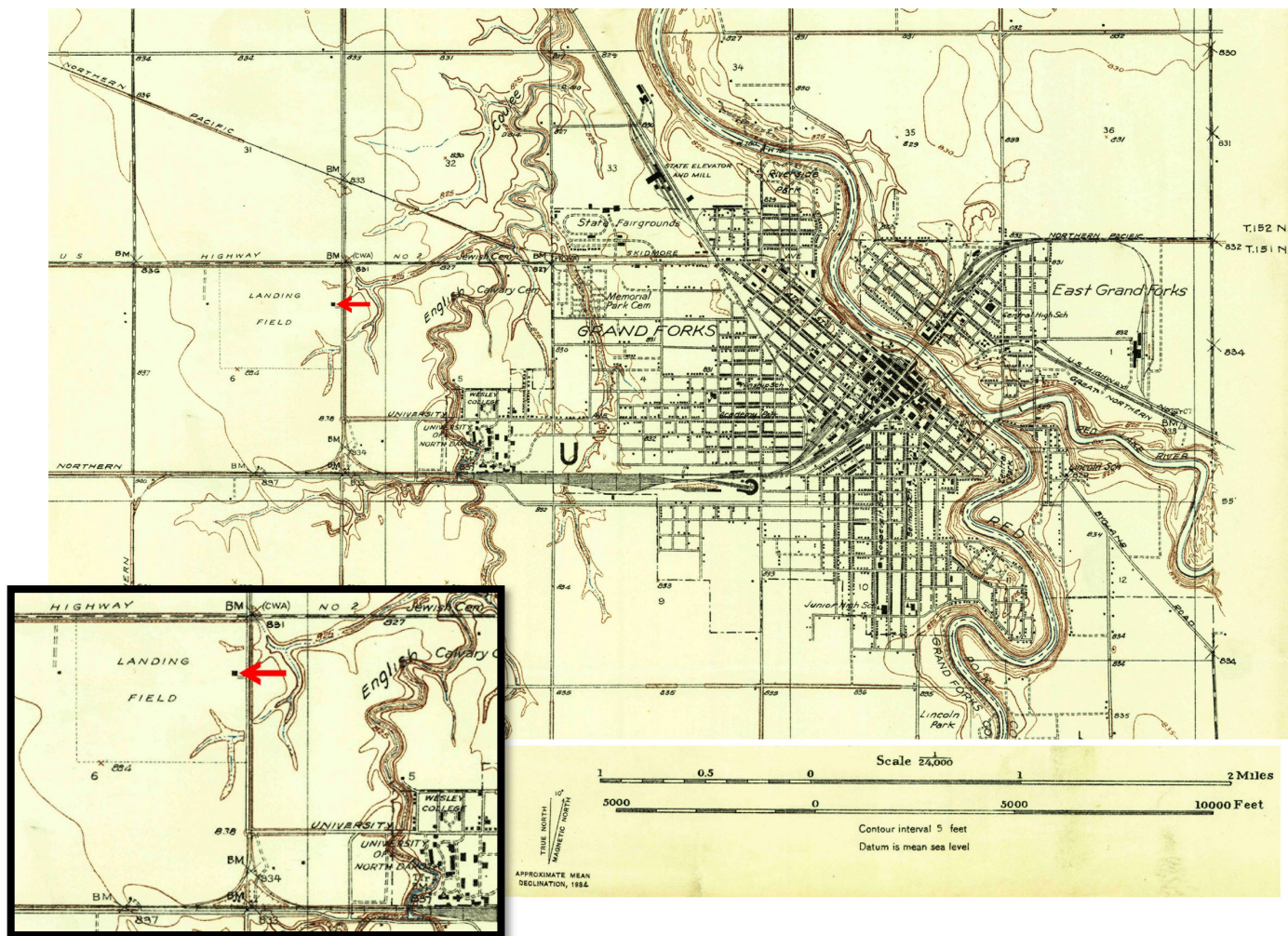


Fig. 1: USGS 1934 Topographic Map 1:24000 map for Grand Forks, ND, excerpt (Site of a building at the Grand Forks Municipal Airport indicated by black dot with red arrow although date is prior to construction of the Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport)

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Page 2

Administration Building for the City of
 Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, North Dakota

County and State

Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota,
 1931-1943

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

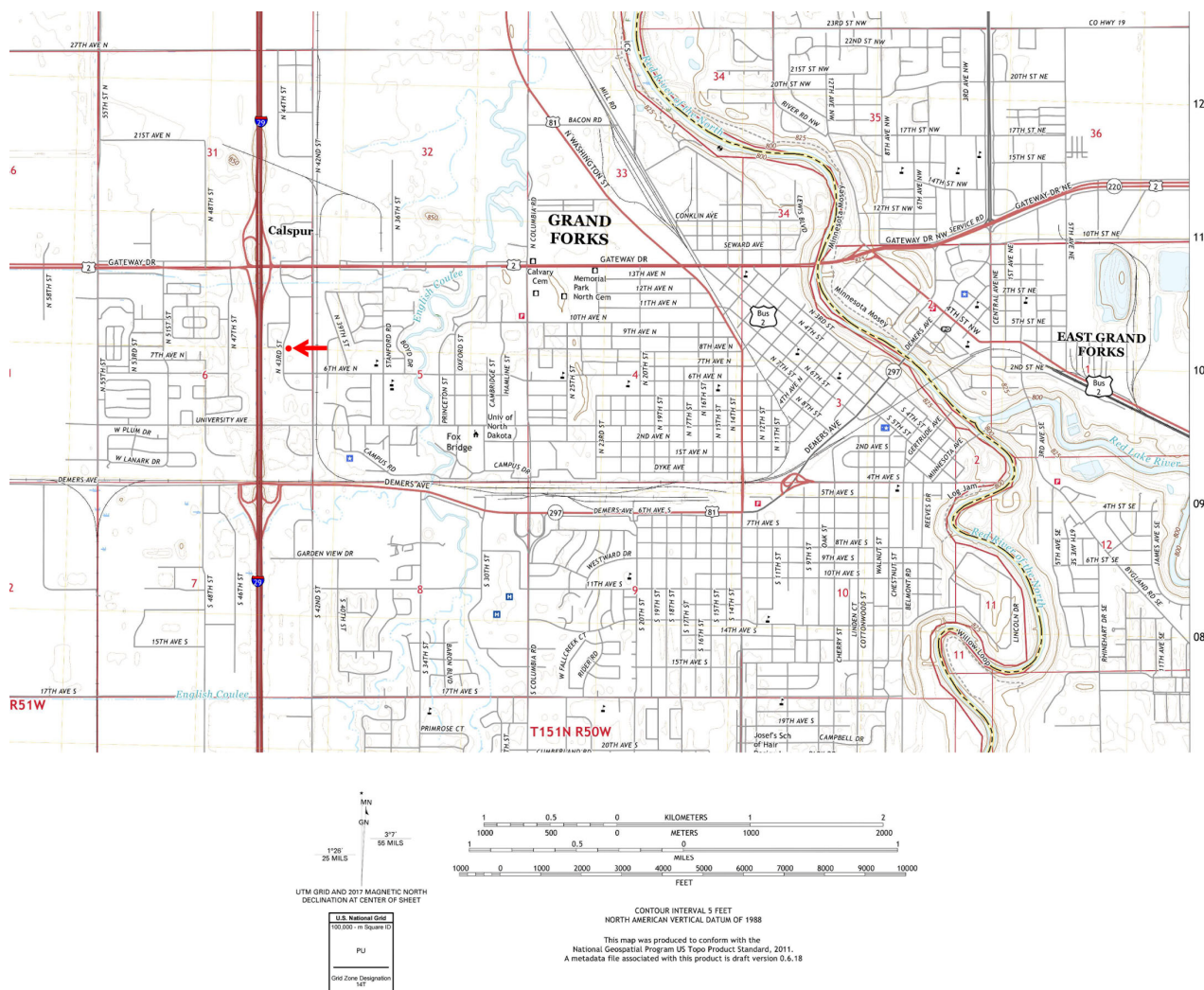


Fig. 2: USGS 2017 Topographic Map 7.5-minute map for Grand Forks, ND, excerpt (Site of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport indicated by red dot and arrow)

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Section number Additional documentation

Page 3

Administration Building for the City of
Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, North Dakota

County and State

Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota,
1931-1943

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

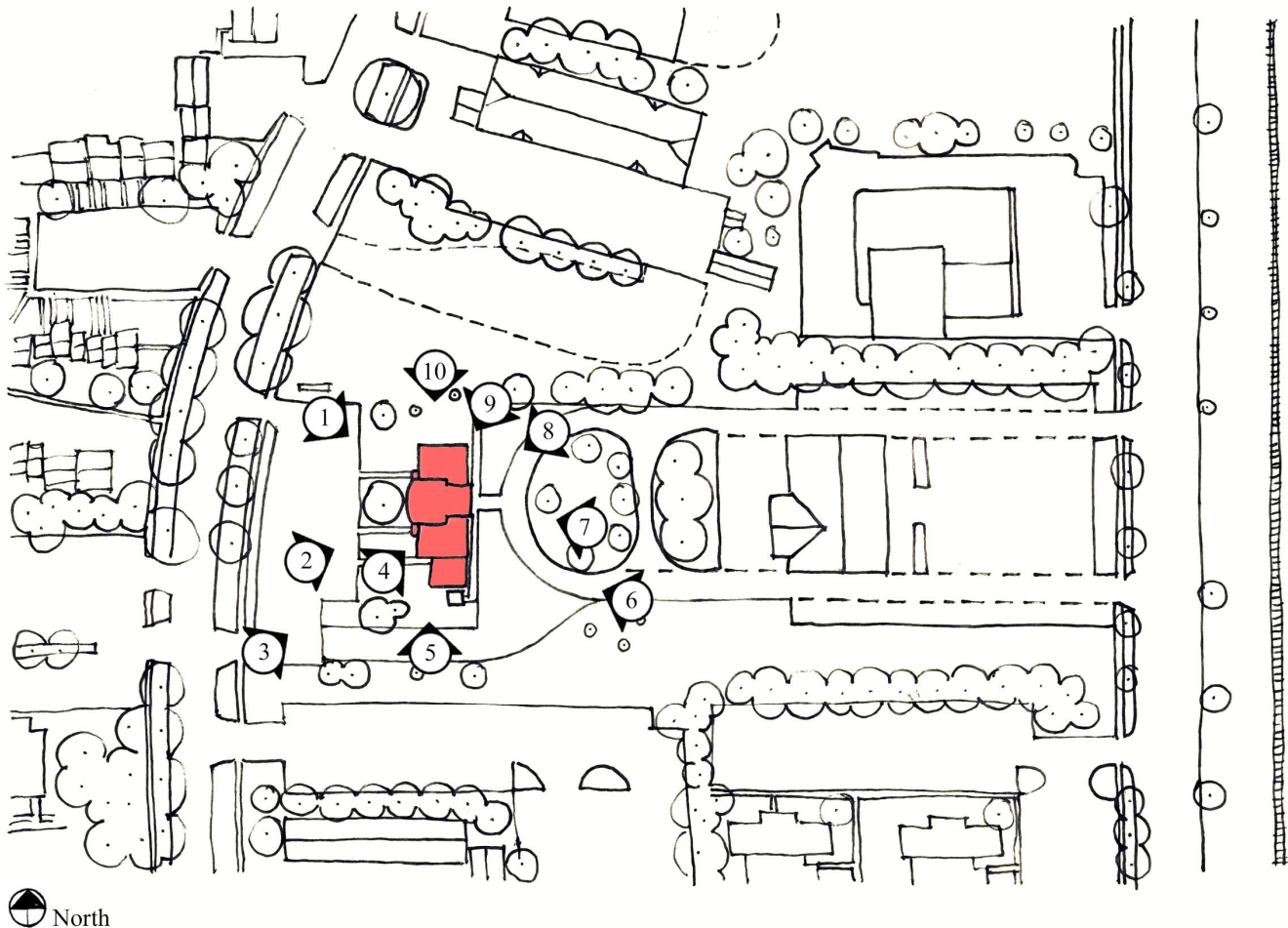


Fig. 3: Sketch map of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport site and surrounding area with reference photo standpoints indicated

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional documentation

Page 4

Administration Building for the City of
Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, North Dakota

County and State

Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota,
1931-1943

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

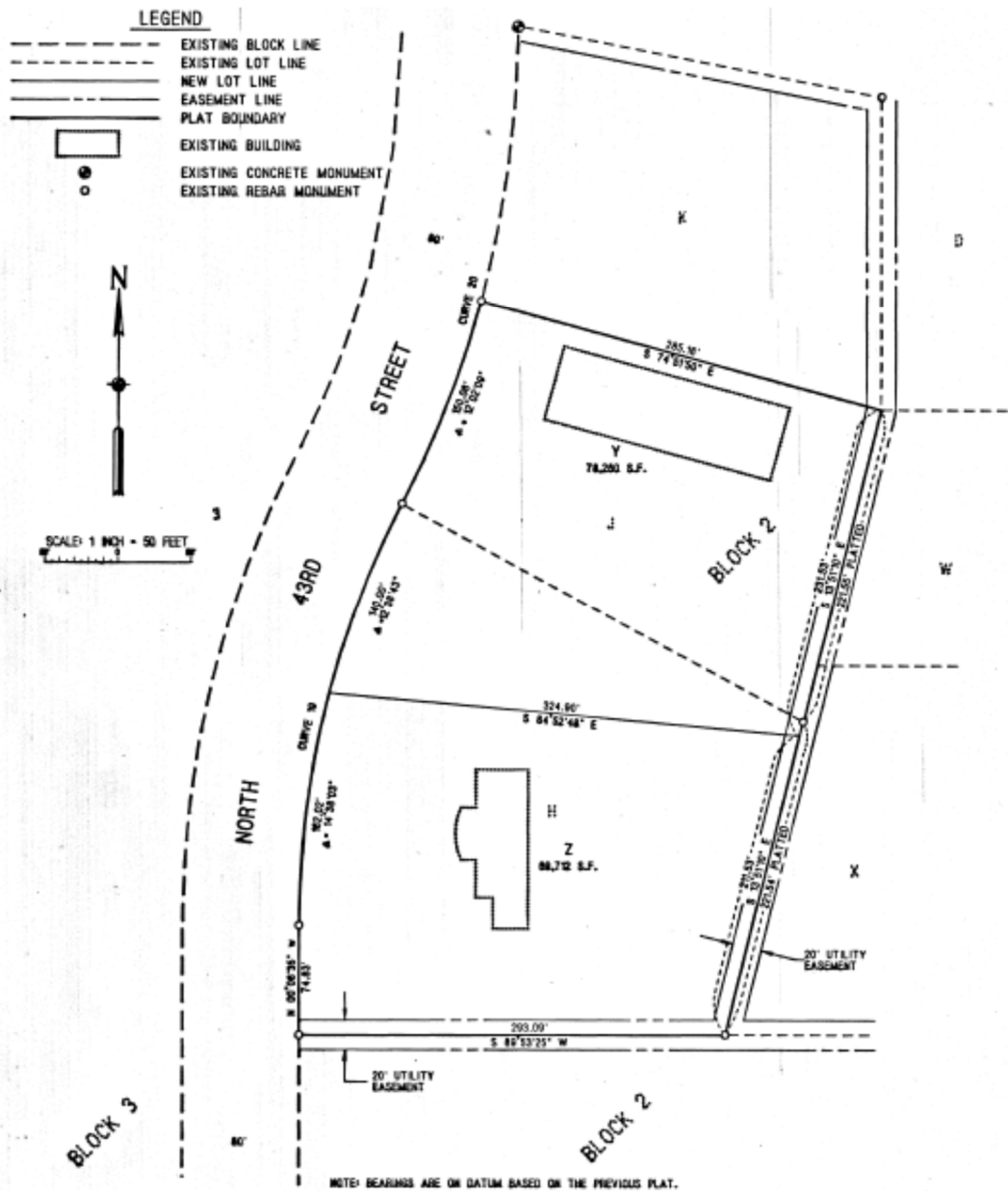


Fig. 4: Plat map (verbal boundary description) of Lot H & J, Block 2 of a replat of Block 2 and Lots 4, 5, & 6, Block 3, replat of Airport Addition to the City of Grand Forks, North Dakota, Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport footprint shown on Lot H (City of Grand Forks)

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Administration Building for the City of
Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, North Dakota

County and State

Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota,
1931-1943

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

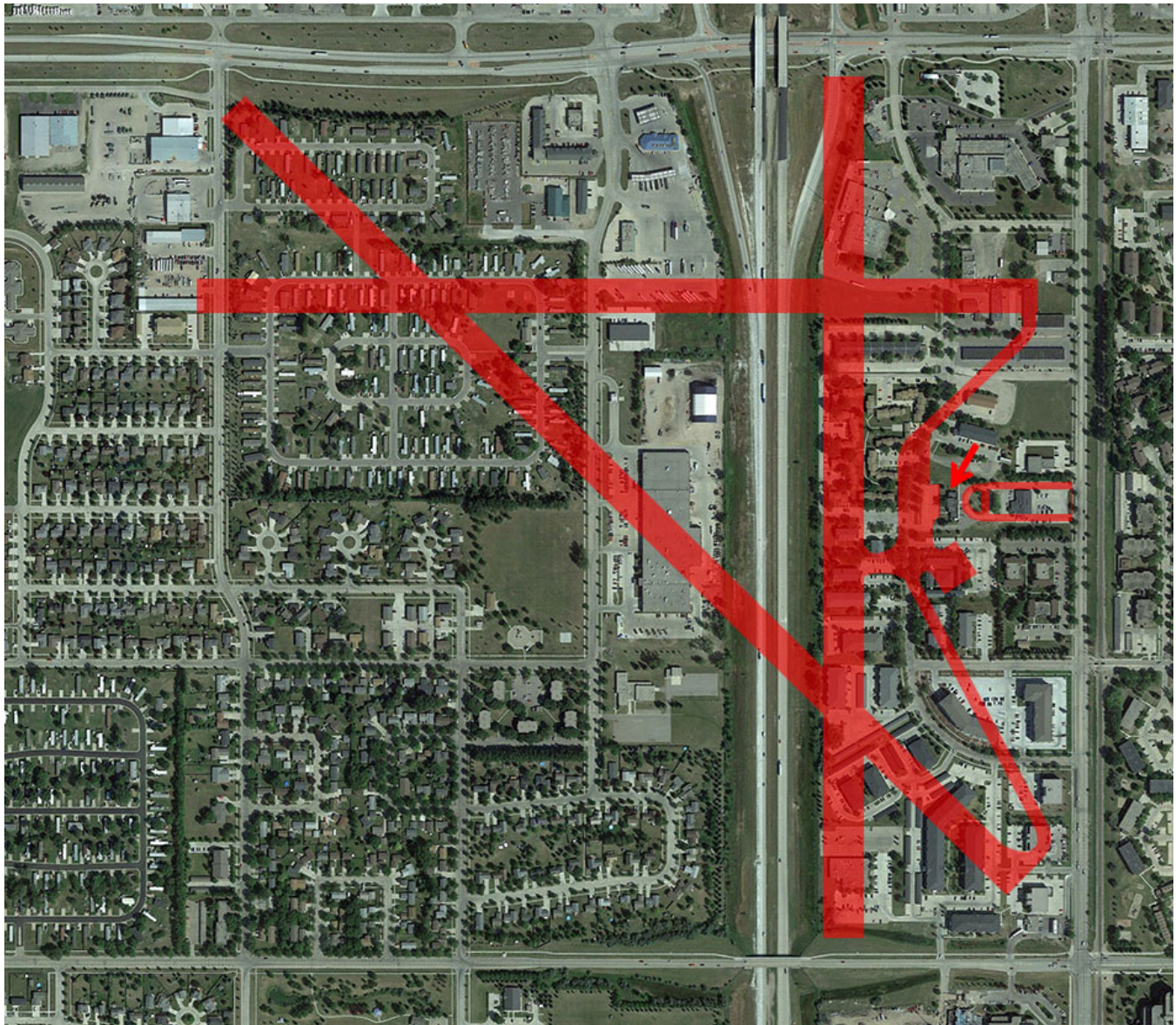


Fig. 5: Present-day aerial view of site with overlay of approximate runway & paving locations, location of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport indicated by arrow (Google Earth image [2015] w/ author's overlay)

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Page 6

Administration Building for the City of
Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport

Name of Property

Grand Forks, North Dakota

County and State

Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota,
1931-1943

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

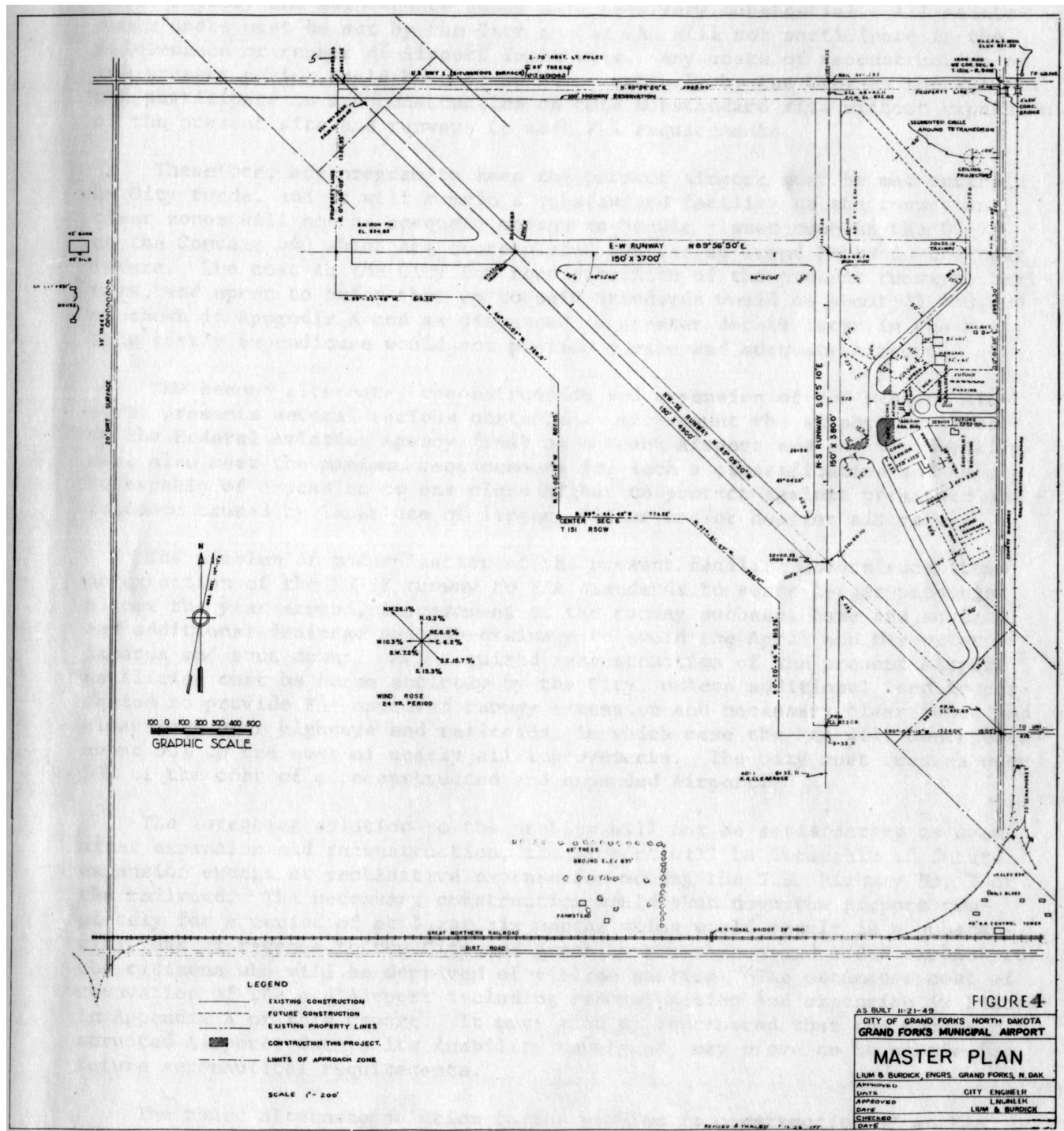


Fig. 6: Grand Forks Municipal Airport Master Plan, ca. 1956 (Grand Forks Master Plan, 1961)

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Fig. 7: Grand Forks Community Fact Sheet City Map showing proximity of airport [Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport indicated by red dot & arrow] with the city Grand Forks and University of North Dakota campus [outlined in green at enlarged area], 1958 (Community Fact Sheet City Map, 1958)

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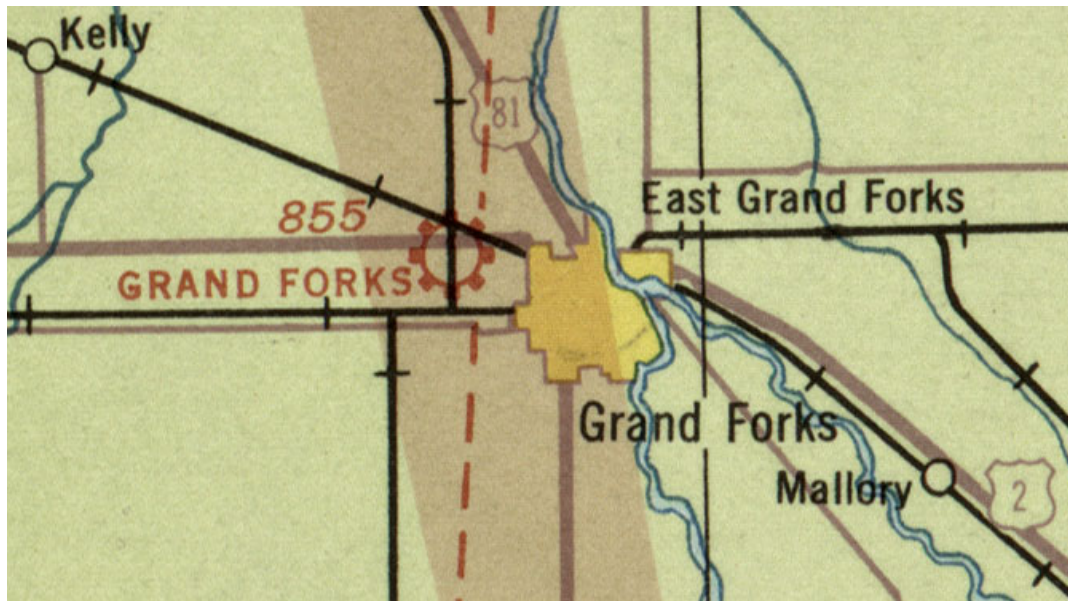


Fig. 8: Earliest located aeronautical chart depiction of the Grand Forks Municipal Airport, Fargo Sectional Chart, 1935. (United States Federal Aviation Administration)

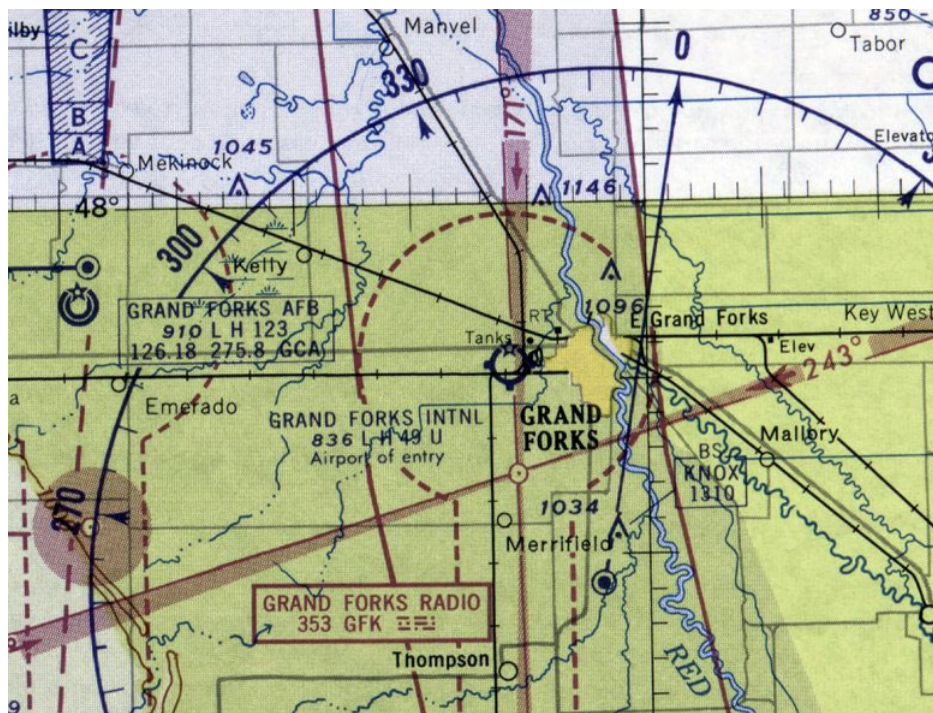


Fig. 9: Last located aeronautical chart depiction of the Grand Forks Municipal Airport before airport was relocated, Fargo Sectional Chart, 1960. (United States Federal Aviation Administration)

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Fig. 10: Historic aerial photo of University of North Dakota and the Grand Forks Municipal Airport from the east, summer 1943, (Charles Gaede Papers)

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Fig. 11: Historic photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport from the east (presumably from present-day North 42rd Street), ca. July 1943 (Frances Kannowski Papers)



Fig. 12: Historic photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, Flight instructors standing at attention on the aircraft apron (west) side of terminal building, ca. July 1943 (Midboe Collection)

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Fig. 13: Historic photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, Jolly Flying School ("C.T.D. Flying Gang") gather on the drive approach (east) side of terminal building, ca. Feb. 1944 (Charles Gaede Papers)

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Fig. 14: Historic aerial photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport and hangars, ca. early 1940s (Freeman, 2019)

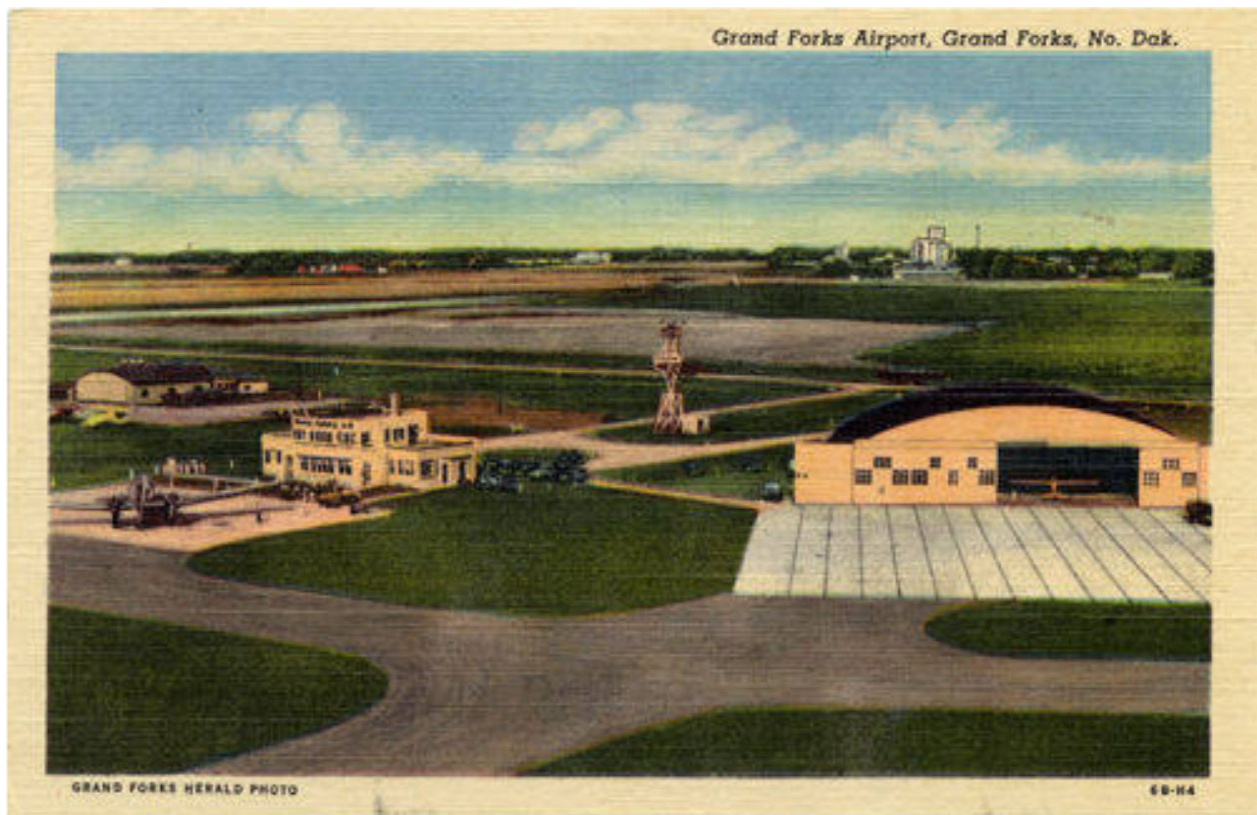


Fig. 15: Historic postcard of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport and hangar with the State Mill and Elevator visible in the background, ca. 1946 (Fred Schneider Papers)

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Fig. 16: Historic aerial photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport and hangar, ca. 1946 (Midboe Collection)



Fig. 17: Historic aerial photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, ca. 1947 (Midboe Collection)

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Fig. 18: Historic aerial photo of Grand Forks Municipal Airport and runways, ca. 1944-45 (Midboe Collection)

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Fig. 19: Historic photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks Airport with a Lockheed Lodestar aircraft owned by R.G. LeTourneau, Inc. parked west of the terminal building, no date (Midboe Collection)



Fig. 20: Historic aerial photo of Grand Forks Municipal Airport showing the airport during spring flooding, ca. Spring 1950 (Midboe Collection)

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Fig. 21: Historic aerial photo of Grand Forks Municipal Airport showing damage to part of the taxiway that provided access to the terminal building, ca. Fall 1950 (Midboe Collection)



Fig. 22: Historic aerial photo of Grand Forks Municipal Airport, ca. 1950 (Midboe Collection)

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Fig. 23: Historic photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport with a Martin 202 type aircraft Northwest Airlines and passengers in preparation for boarding the aircraft through the retractable rear stairway, no date (Midboe Collection)



Fig. 24: Historic photo of Administration Building for the City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport, ca. 1950s (Freeman, 2019)

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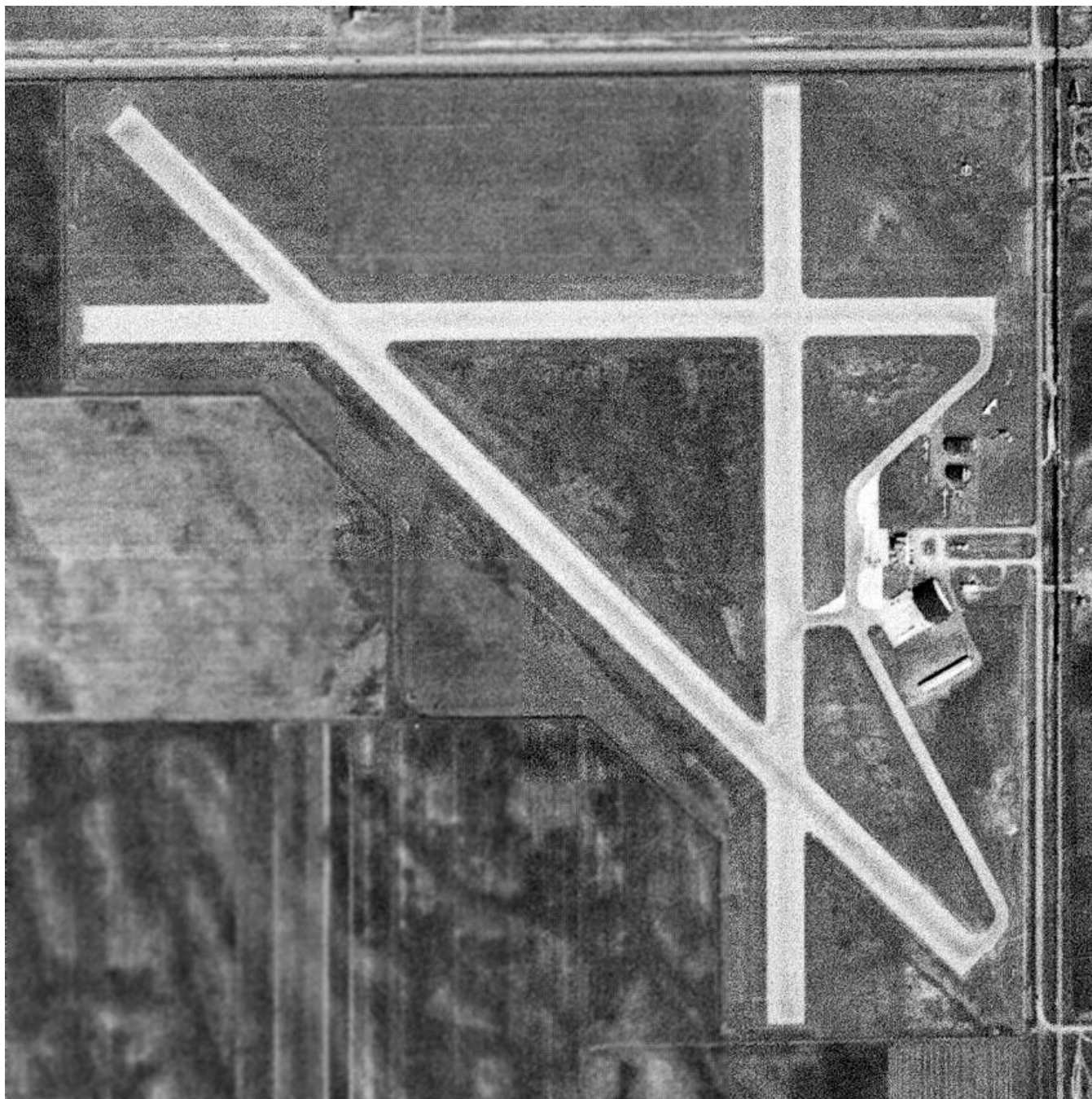


Fig. 25: Historic USGS aerial view of Grand Forks Municipal Airport, ca. Sept. 10, 1952 (Freeman, 2019)

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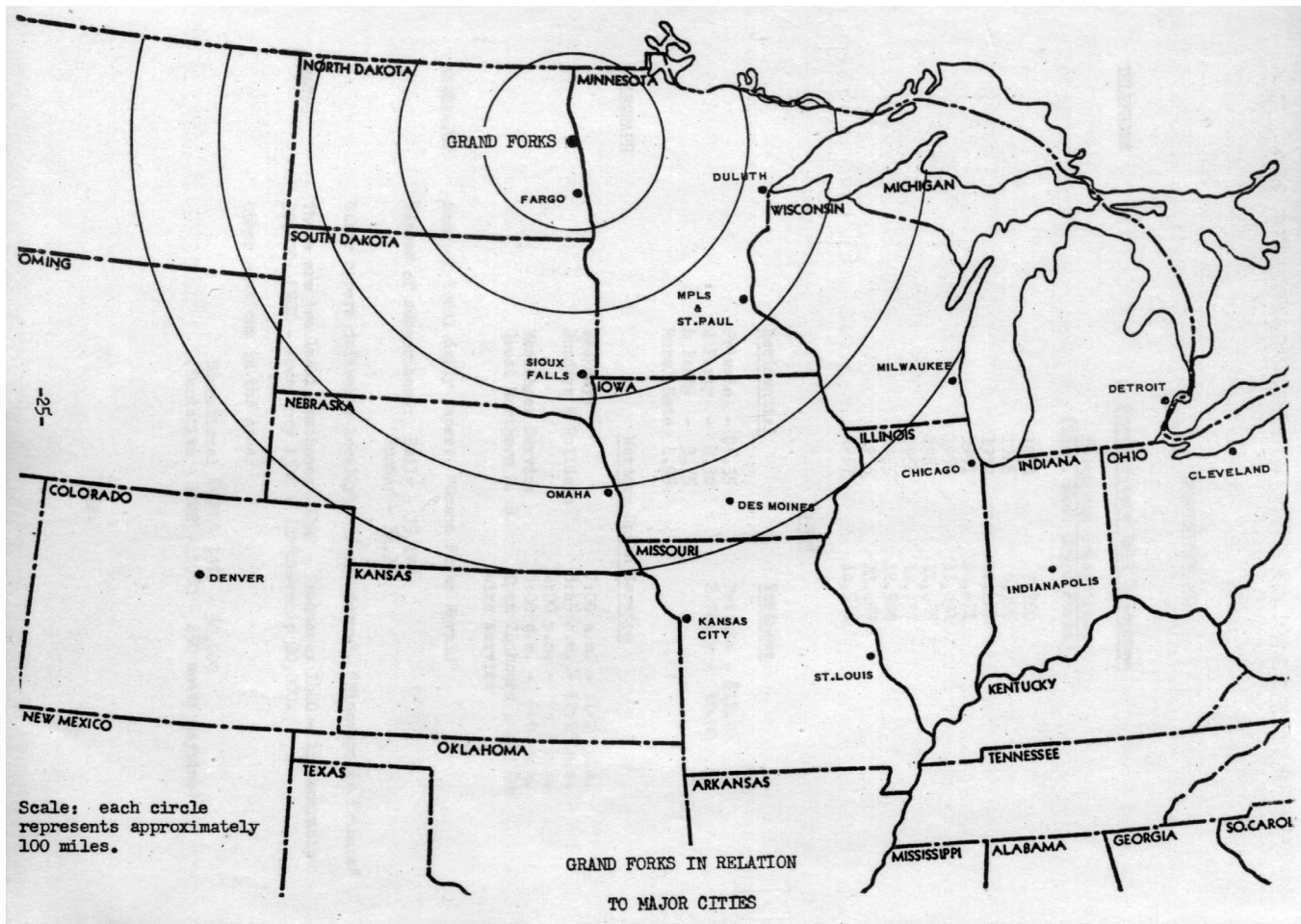


Fig. 26: Regional Map showing Grand Forks [Airport] in relation to other major U.S. Cities, 1958 (Community Fact Sheet City Map, 1958)

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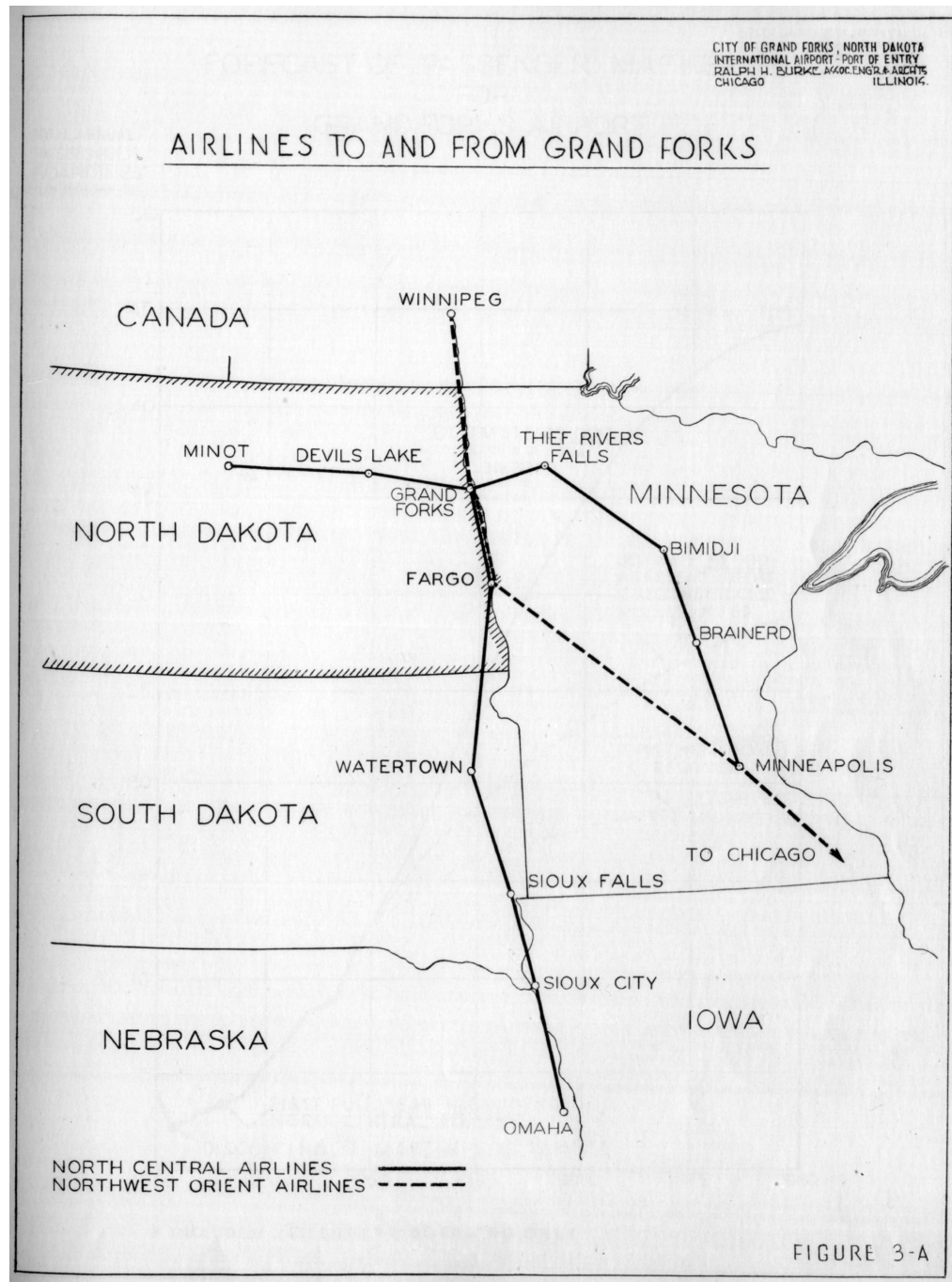


Fig. 27: Airlines to and from Grand Forks, 1961. (Grand Forks Master Plan, 1961)

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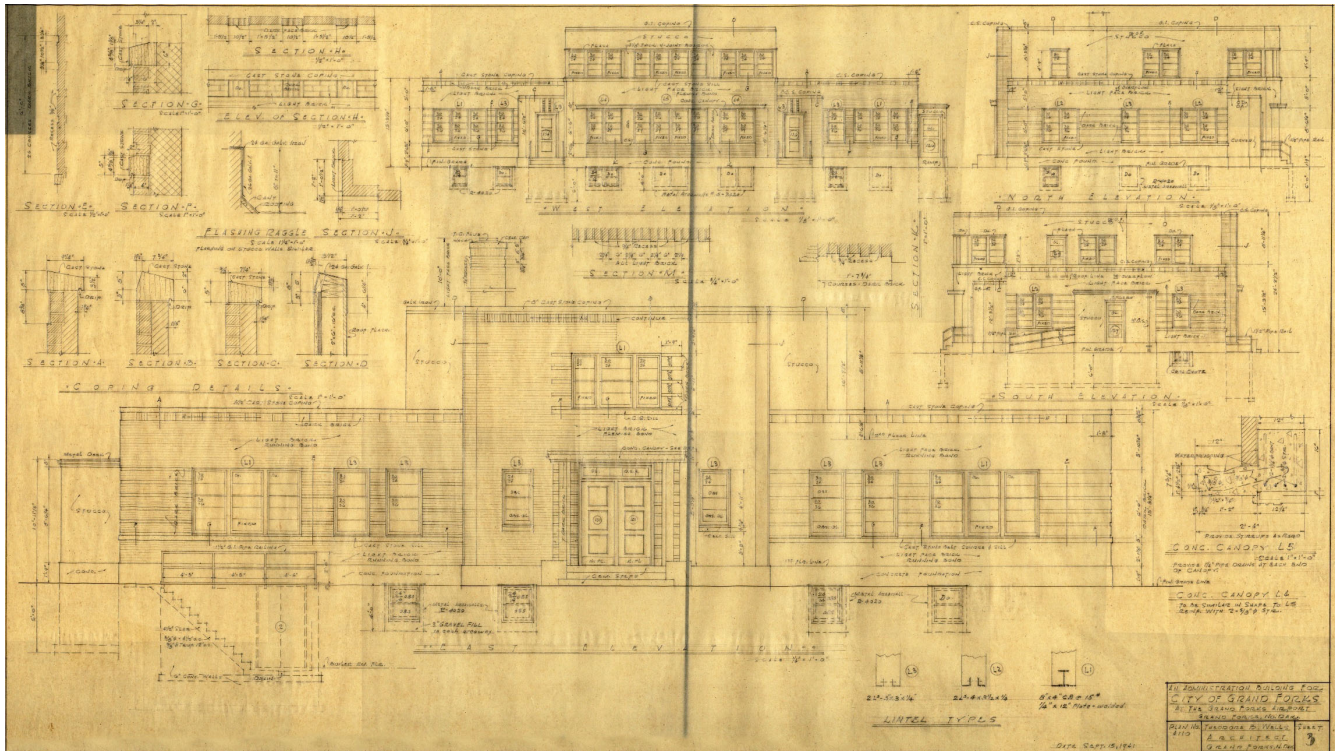


Fig. 28: Theodore B. Wells working elevation drawings of “an Administration Building for City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport,” September 1941. (Wells Denbrook Architectural Records)

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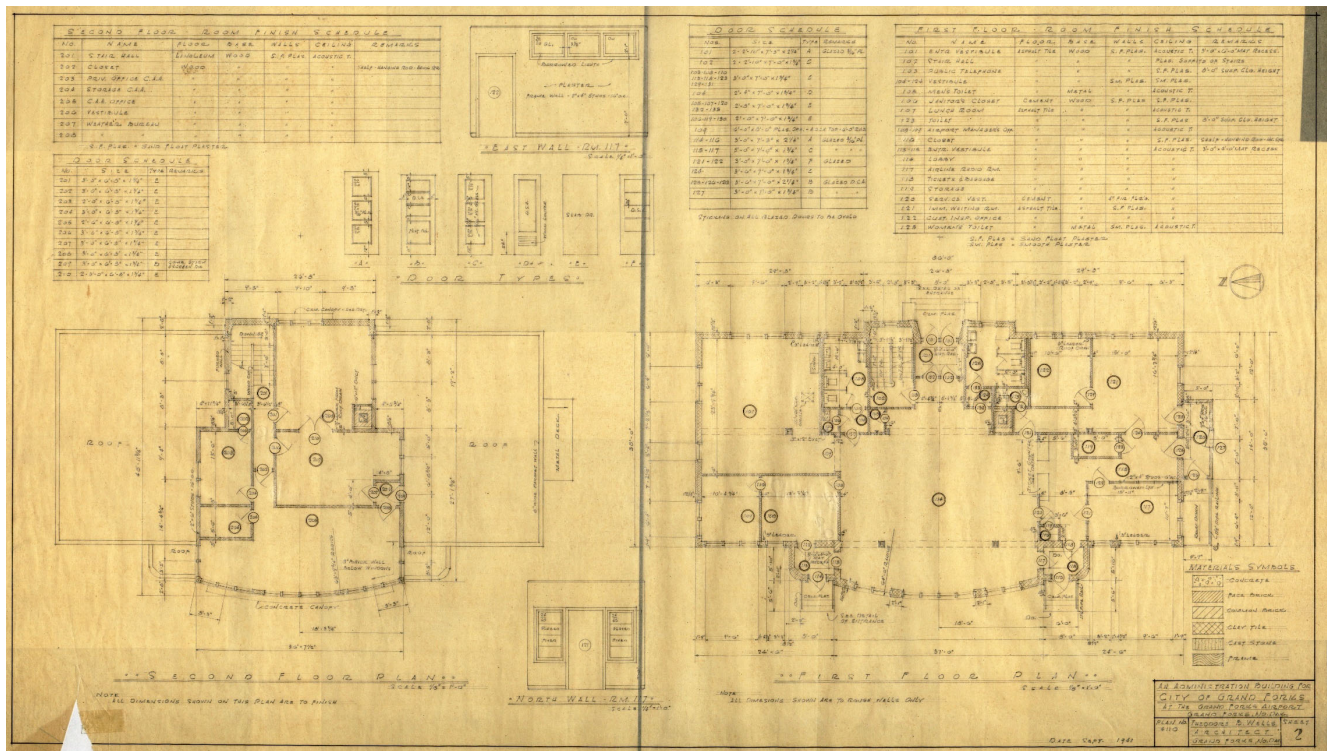


Fig. 29: Theodore B. Wells working floor plan drawings of “an Administration Building for City of Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Airport,” September 1941. (Wells Denbrook Architectural Records)

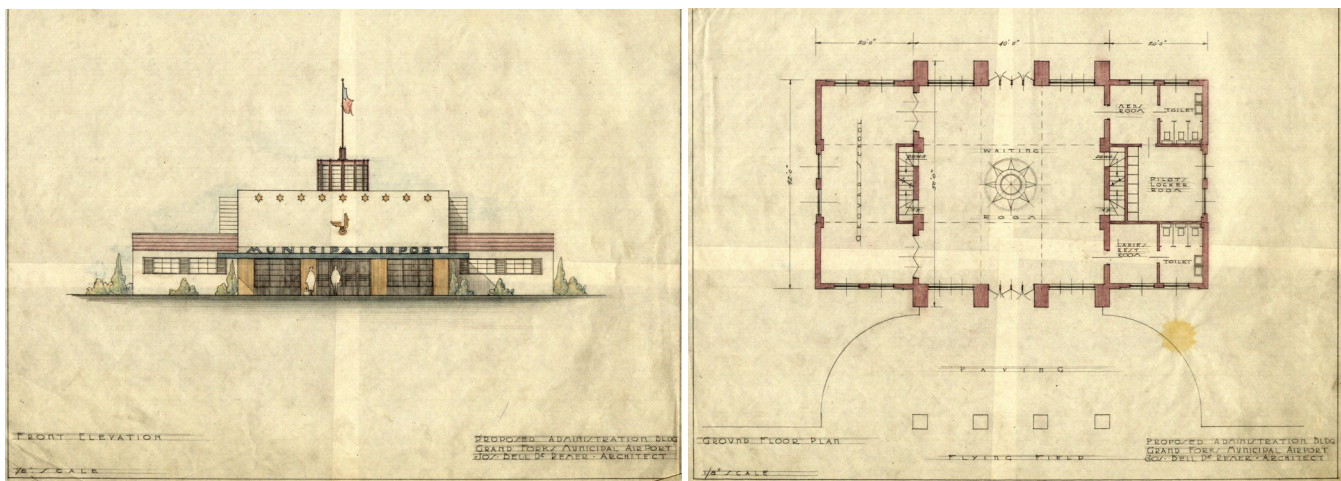


Fig. 30 & 31: Joseph Bell De Remer elevation rendering and Ground Floor Plan for “Proposed Administration Building: Grand Forks Municipal Airport,” no date. (Joseph Bell DeRemer Papers)

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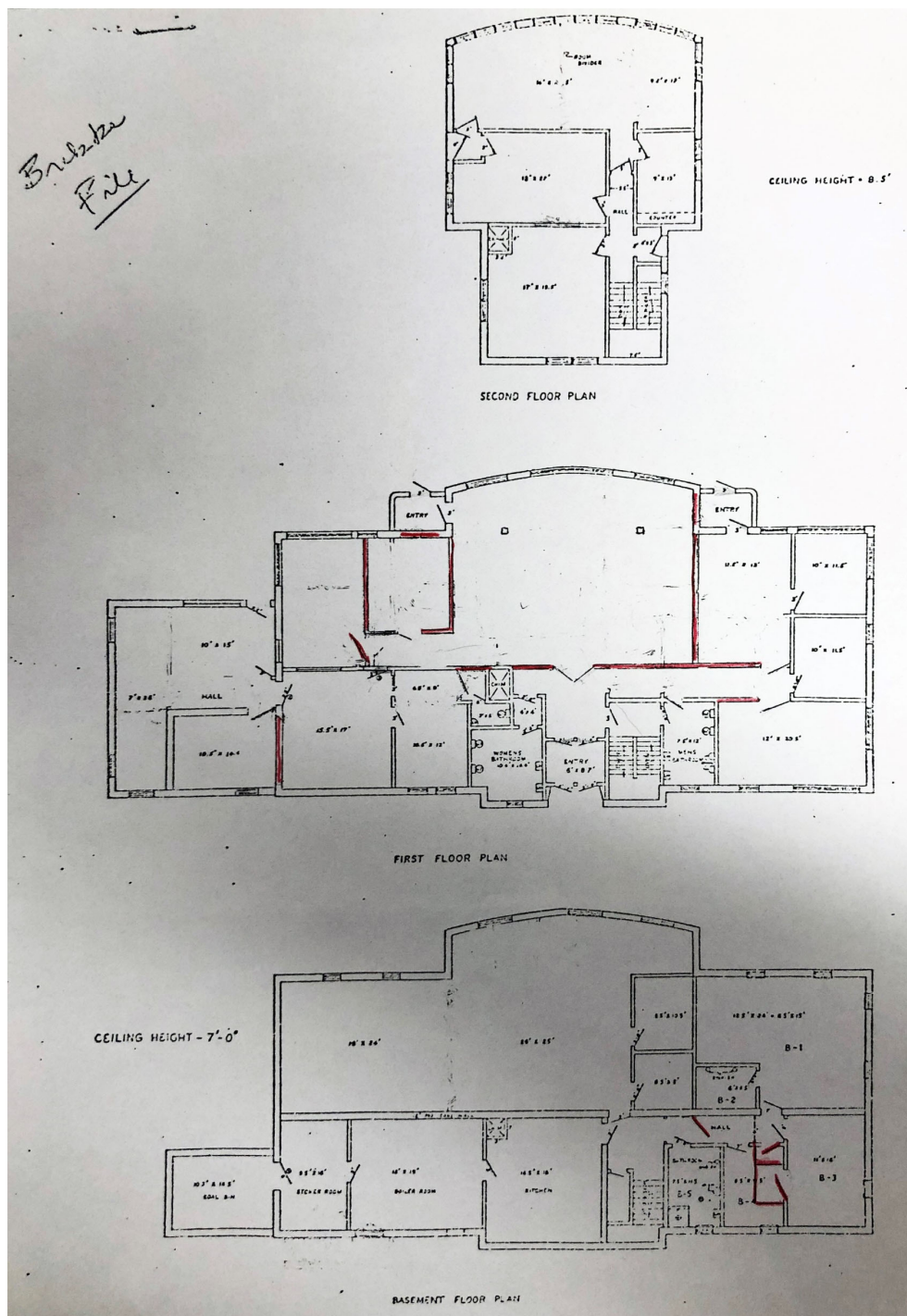


Fig. 32, 33, & 34: "Brekke File" floor plans, 1970-1980s (City of Grand Forks, Inspections)

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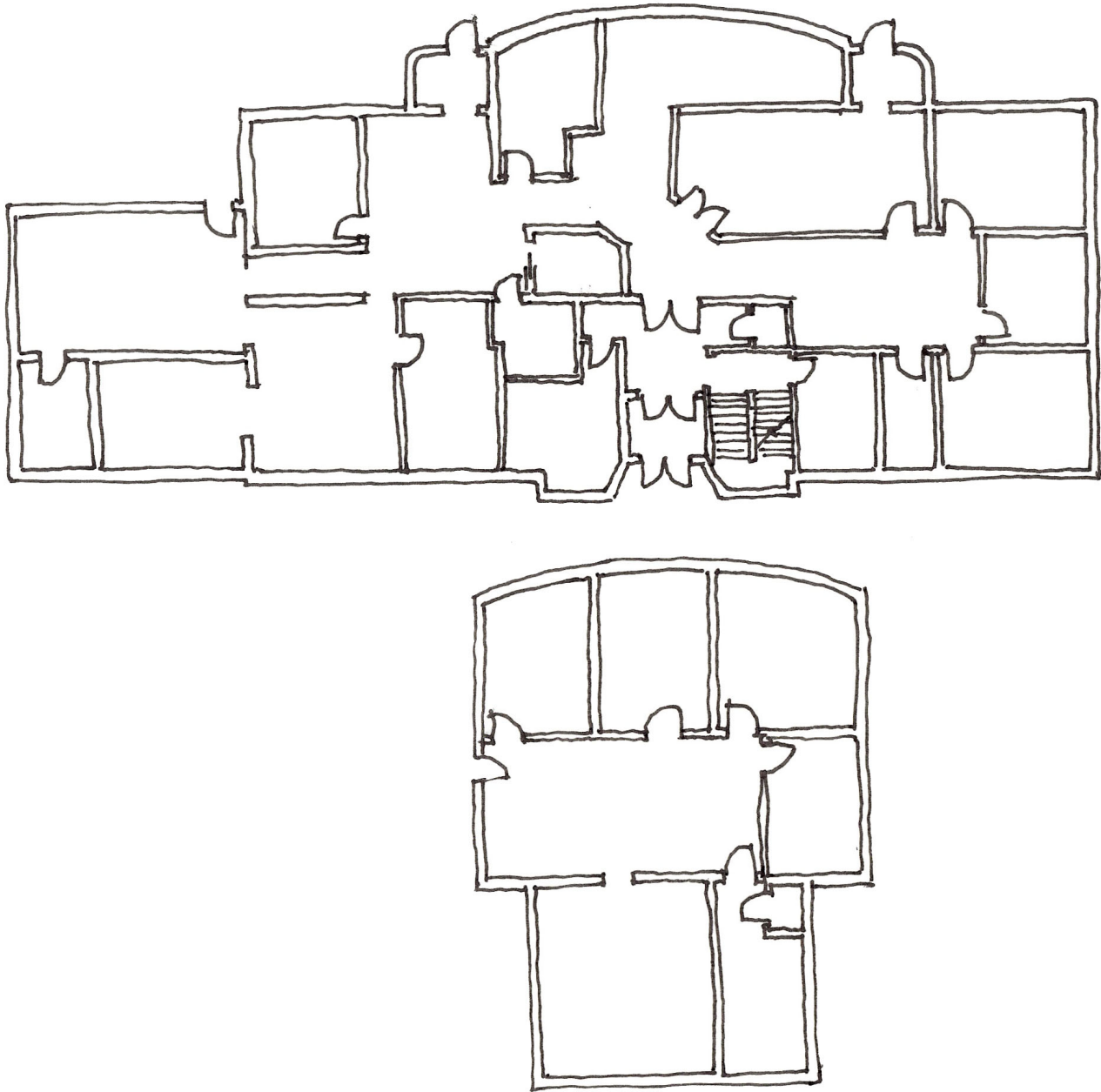


Fig. 35 & 36: Sketch plans of present-day floor plans at the main and upper levels of the Brekke Building (former Administration Building)



















