

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Winston-Salem City Hall

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 101 South Main Street

N/A not for publication

city or town Winston-Salem

vicinity

state North Carolina

code NC

county Forsyth

code 067

zip code 27102

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Jessie Crow SHPO  
Signature of Certifying Official/Title

8/17/01  
Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the  
National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

removed from the National  
Register.

other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/City Hall

GOVERNMENT/City Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

foundation STONE/Limestone

walls BRICK

STONE/Limestone

roof OTHER/Built-up/membrane

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

1926 - 1951

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Northup and O'Brien, Architects

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .92

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid 1: Zone 117, Easting 56181114, Northing 39945410

UTM grid 3: Zone, Easting, Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sarah A. Woodard, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization David E. Gall, AIA, Architect date March 12, 2001

street & number 938 West Fifth Street telephone 336-773-1213

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name City of Winston-Salem

street & number 101 S. Main Street, P.O. Box 2511 telephone 336-727-2224

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27102

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

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

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**7. Narrative Description**

Winston-Salem City Hall is located at 101 S. Main Street and occupies the southern half of the block bounded by South Main Street, First Street, Church Street, and Second Street. The building's front elevation faces west. The building is on the southern edge of the original Winston city limits, closer to the center of the merged city of Winston-Salem than was the old Winston City Hall it replaced. Today, the northern half of the block, occupied by commercial buildings when City Hall was constructed, is a parking lot. Immediately to the west of City Hall is the 1995 Wachovia Bank skyscraper. To the south is the 1999 City Hall South building. East of the building is a parking deck.

In front of the building, to the west, is a grassy lawn divided into two sections by the main entrance. The front elevation of the building is approached from the street by a wide, two flight stairway which leads up from Main Street to the lawn which is crossed by a sidewalk. This sidewalk leads to another wide, but short, flight of stairs. The main entrance is at the top of this second set of steps. This walkway is flanked by large magnolia trees. The top flight of stairs is flanked by mature shrubs. Mature maple trees are located at the southwest corner of the lot and on the north half of the front lawn.

The exterior of City Hall has been altered very little over the past seventy-five years, although replacement windows have been installed throughout the building. The interior retains many historic features despite the fact that nearly all of the office spaces have been altered with the addition of suspended ceilings and new wall materials.

Designed by a leading local architecture firm of the period, Northrup and O'Brien, City Hall was completed in 1926. Executed in the Renaissance Revival style, the exterior is brick with a first floor of rusticated stone. The building has three stories and a basement. The footprint of the building is a wide, shallow U-shape with a small, one-story, rusticated stone addition attached to the south side of the north leg of the U.

The front facade is divided into seventeen bays, with a slightly projecting central pavilion which is defined by two-story limestone pilasters. These pilasters begin at the top of the first floor rusticated limestone and rise to the frieze, dividing the central section into eleven bays. The pilasters are capped with stylized classical capitals with acanthus leaf and anthemion and acroterion motifs.

The front facade, first floor level, is executed in rusticated limestone with windows in the central pavilion located in blind arches. These windows are modern replacements with twelve-over-three sash configurations. The original configuration was six-over-six. The main entrance is located on this level and is surmounted by a semi-circular metal fanlight. This entrance is also flanked by lanterns and windows with metal grilles. Below the first floor is a raised basement of rusticated stone with a watertable between the first floor and basement.

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On the second floor of the front facade, windows are highlighted with metal balconies and limestone hoods supported by scrolled stone consoles. Over the three central windows above the main entrance, these consoles support pediments. Also above these second floor windows are semi-circular, brick, blind arches with limestone keystones. Second floor windows have fifteen-over-three sash, though the originals were nine-over-nine. The second floor is brick.

The front facade of the third floor, like the second, is executed in brick. Windows have limestone surrounds, brick flat arches, and are smaller than those found on the second floor. These windows are also modern replacements with twelve-over-three sash. The original sash were six-over-six.

The front facade is capped with a limestone cornice and balustrade with shaped balusters. This conceals the building's flat roof. At the center of the balustrade on the front facade is a parapet decorated with a blank shield draped with swags carved in the limestone.

The other facades repeat the composition of the front with a rusticated limestone first floor, brick upper floors, and a limestone cornice and balustrade. Window trim remains the same on the other elevations as well, with the second floor windows being articulated by stone consoles, hoods, and pediments, although no stone or brick blind arches are utilized. The north and south elevations are nine bays wide. The west elevation has three bays on each projecting wing and four bays across the asymmetrical recessed section. The recess is four bays deep. On the south elevation, the basement level is fully exposed.

The rear, or eastern facade, of the City Hall has been altered with a one-story addition executed in rusticated limestone to match the original first floor to which it is attached. Also in the northwest corner of the interior of the "U," behind the addition, is a square, brick chimney.

On the southern facade, the full height of the basement is exposed due to the natural topography. Here, the basement level is executed in flush limestone block, above which is a watertable that skirts the entire building between the basement and first floor. The basement level has smaller windows and a centrally located entrance with a limestone cornice.

When entering through the front doors on the first floor, one first comes to a small vestibule with heavy crown molding incorporating egg and dart, dentil, and leaf-design moldings. Beyond the vestibule with its fanlighted double doors, is the main lobby with a marble floor and a grand staircase featuring marble treads and metal filigree balustrade. This stair is the most prominent element on every floor of the building. Secondary stairs with metal balustrades are located at both ends of the building.

Other lobby details include brass-framed bulletin boards, a brass mail box, brass door hardware, and what may be the original thermostat with a brass cover that matches that of the other fixtures and trim. This part of the building has marble walls and baseboards as well as an

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elaborate plaster ceiling medallion. Fanlights are located over the entrances to the smaller hallways which run the length of the main level.

Although the third floor has been completely altered, with the exception of the stair, the first and second floors and basement hallways have undergone few changes. Original wooden doors with brass hardware, frosted glass panels, and transoms remain. Most of the interior lighting fixtures, though consistent with the historic character of the building, are replacements installed during a renovation in the 1980s.

Other interior spaces, such as offices, including the Mayor's, and various chamber and meeting rooms, have been altered over the years with the addition of dropped ceilings, partition walls, and new wall materials installed over the original. Most public rooms, such as the Aldermen's Chambers (originally the "Municipal Courtroom") have not been subdivided, but many of the large offices, and the original "Aldermanic Chambers" have been partitioned to create more offices. As part of the renovation currently underway, it is expected that original paneling and plaster will be exposed or restored in some rooms, including the Aldermanic Chambers.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Summary

Winston-Salem's 1926 City Hall is the city's only example of Renaissance Revival civic architecture. It was constructed in the middle of a decade which saw the design and completion of a large number of structures, including those that are still Winston-Salem's most prominent residential, commercial, and public buildings. In addition, City Hall was designed by the prolific local architecture firm of Northup and O'Brien. This firm was responsible for many of Forsyth County's outstanding buildings in the 1920s and 1930s, such as Bowman Grey's estate, Graylyn, R.E. Lasater Mill, and Merry Acres, home of R.J. Reynolds, Jr., but unlike these homes, City Hall is a government building, and of Northup and O'Brien's two municipal buildings in Winston-Salem, City Hall is the only one that retains its integrity. With the exception of a small addition on the back of the building, City Hall's exterior has undergone almost no alteration, while the interior has experienced some modifications. In addition to its architecture, City Hall is important because it was the seat of Winston-Salem's government for seventy-four years before it was completely vacated for renovations in 2000. Today the building remains an integral part of Winston-Salem's downtown streetscape and meets National Register Criterion A for its role in the history of Winston-Salem's government. It also meets National Register Criterion C as the only example of Renaissance Revival government architecture in the city, and as an important design by the local architectural firm, Northup and O'Brien. Its period of significance begins in 1926, the year of its completion, and continues to 1951. Although the building served as city hall after 1951, it has been determined that the building does not possess exceptional significance, and therefore the fifty-year cut-off date for Criterion A is the end of the period of significance.

### Historical Context

In 1892, Winston's first Town Hall was constructed at the corner of Fourth and Main Streets, but the building was torn down in 1927 to make way for the R.J. Reynolds Headquarters Building, a fact that illustrated the influence of industry over local government. The new City Hall building was completed in 1926.

The history of the City Hall site reaches back to the earliest days of Winston's establishment. Judge D. H. Starbuck purchased the property during one of the first two auctions of lots in Winston around 1849. A year or two later, he constructed a two-story, brick, Georgian plan, Greek Revival house on the southern end of the block.<sup>1</sup> The home was said to have been

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<sup>1</sup>Sanborn Insurance Map, 1895, and 1922 aerial photograph from the Photograph Collection, North Carolina Room, Forsyth County Public Library, Main Branch.

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situated in a beautiful grove of trees, and in 1925, it was reported to the Aldermen that “one of the large, old, oak trees” on the property was in “a bad condition,” but could be treated for \$125, which was authorized.<sup>2</sup> A 1922 aerial view of the area confirms that the lot was wooded.

When the city acquired the home in 1920, it was being used as a boarding house. The City Health Department utilized the building for the next four or five years, until the site was cleared for the construction of City Hall.<sup>3</sup>

At the regular Board of Aldermen meeting on June 13, 1924, the Aldermen directed the mayor to appoint a Special Committee to investigate the construction of a new City Hall. In November, plans for the new building had been partially completed by the locally prominent architecture firm of Northup and O’Brien. The next month, Earle Sumner Draper of Charlotte was hired as the landscape architect.

In February, 1925, \$550,000 worth of bonds were issued for the “purpose of constructing a City Hall and Municipal Building for said city, and acquiring original furnishings, equipment and apparatus therefor [sic]...said building to be of fireproof construction.”<sup>4</sup> Throughout 1925, contracts were awarded for various aspects of construction, from heating and ventilation to elevators and time clocks. On November 19, 1926, the Aldermen’s minutes recorded the following:

The first regular meeting of the board of Alderman was held in the Council Chambers of the New City Hall Building on Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1926, at 7:30 o’clock P.M. with Mayor Thomas Barker presiding and the following members present: W.G. Jerome, N.V. Stockton, L.F. Owen, Chas. L. Creech, R.N. Hauser, W.T. Penny, J.W. Alspaugh, and W. C. Houchins.<sup>5</sup>

At that same meeting, it was requested that the Ordinance Committee “have an ordinance prepared protecting the New City Hall property and to prohibit expectorating on the floors.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Minutes of the Winston-Salem Aldermen, Book 19, page 471, 1 May 1925.

<sup>3</sup>Winston-Salem City Directories, 1918-1925.

<sup>4</sup>Minutes of the Winston-Salem Aldermen, Book 16, page 338, 6 February 1925.

<sup>5</sup>Minutes of the Winston-Salem Aldermen, Book 18, page 240, 19 November 1926.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

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The city-wide commercial, civic, and residential building boom, of which City Hall was a product, was made possible by the prosperity of Winston-Salem's industries. In 1913, R.J. Reynolds introduced Camel cigarettes and began importing enough Turkish tobacco and French cigarette paper that Winston-Salem was made a port of entry by the U.S. Customs Service.<sup>7</sup> Even though the city is over two hundred miles from the coast, it was, by 1916, the eighth largest port of entry in the country.<sup>8</sup> By 1930, Winston-Salem was producing more tobacco products than any other city in the world. The city also led the country in the production of men's knit underwear and the South in the production of knit fabrics, woolen goods, and wagons.<sup>9</sup> In a 1985 letter to local architect, Luther Lashmit, Wyatt Hibbs recalled his 1924 arrival in the city: "I was astonished at the wealth and prosperity of Winston-Salem. When I got off the train I had to dodge between Rolls-Royces to get to my taxi."<sup>10</sup>

City Hall was moved from the prominent corner of Fourth and Main Street to First and Main Street, at least in part, to accommodate the construction of the skyscraping headquarters for the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. This move was, as Clement Eaton, the son of Oscar Eaton, Winston-Salem's first mayor, said, "a symbol of the victory of the great tobacco company whom my father fought in vain against [in] its take-over of city government."<sup>11</sup> During the early 1920s, Reynolds paid one fourth of the city's property taxes while contributing \$1 of every \$2.50 in state income taxes.<sup>12</sup> In addition, "between 1913 and 1940, more than half of the 59 men who served on the Winston-Salem Board of Aldermen came from the city's tobacco or textile factories or its banks."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Frank V. Tursi, *Winston-Salem, A History* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1994), 169.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 170.

<sup>10</sup>Letter of Wyatt Hibbs, Norfolk, VA to Luther Lashmit, Southern Pines, NC, 20 August 1985.

<sup>11</sup>Clement Eaton, quoted in Tursi, 195.

<sup>12</sup>Tursi, 197.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

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When the old City Hall was vacated, the property was offered for sale on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1927. It was stipulated that the buyer must begin removal of the building within thirty days of purchase and have the removal complete within 120 days of purchase. On February 8, all bids for the property, which consisted of thirteen lots and the building, were rejected as being too low. Bids for the lots ranged from \$15,500 to \$52,600; the highest bid for the building was \$805. Three days later, the Alderman accepted a \$1505 bid for the building made by Frank J. Tesh, President of the Winston-Salem Advertising Club, and Secretary-Treasurer for Rominger Furniture Company, which was located across the street from the old Town Hall. It remains unclear how or exactly when the building or site became the property of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, but the location of the 1926 City Hall stands as a physical representative of the power exerted by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

**Criterion A: Political and Governmental Context**

When the Moravians settled the Wachovia tract and created the town of Salem in the mid-1700s, they set up a theocracy to govern citizens. The town grew and prospered under this government for nearly seventy years becoming a powerful leader in county and regional politics, but as early as the 1820s, some could point to cracks in Salem's system. By the 1840s, problems were obvious and in 1856, the theocracy officially ceased, and a secular system was installed.

In Salem's early years, the state's large western counties were being divided so that by 1790, Salem was in the southern part of Stokes County. In 1849, a new county was carved out of the southern half of Stokes, leaving Salem at the center of the newly created Forsyth County. The community, still under church control at that point, did not want the secular county government located in their town, but a few town leaders did advocate a near-by location for the new seat. After some argument within the congregation, the Moravians decided to deed land immediately north of Salem to the county, thus, establishing Winston, governed by a mayor and aldermen.

For sixty-four years the two towns existed side-by-side with separate governments. In 1879, consolidation of the towns was considered in a referendum. Salemites voted in favor of the action 138 to 18; Winston voters defeated the action 329 to 128.<sup>14</sup> Over the next twenty years, Salem's prosperity, political power, and population declined as Winston became an industrial boom-town. In 1870, Winston's population was 443 and Salem's was 905. Ten years

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<sup>14</sup>Historic Monograph Committee, eds., *Winston-Salem in History* (Winston-Salem; Historic Winston, 1976), vol. 6, *Government*, by Larry Edward Tise, 35.

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later, Winston was home to 2,854 while Salem's citizens numbered 1,340. This shift continued so that by 1910, there were 17,167 people in Winston and only 5,533 in Salem.<sup>15</sup>

In 1913, the towns finally merged and set up a mayor-aldermen form of government for the new, hyphenated city. This was the same year in which R.J. Reynolds began manufacture of Camel cigarettes, setting the scene for Winston-Salem to become the most prosperous industrial city in the state.

Throughout the 1920s, Forsyth County led the state in total assessed valuation of property, with almost \$200 million worth in 1927. The county retained this distinction into the late 1940s.<sup>16</sup> This prosperity was brought about by industry, and in order to maintain this status, the city created an "extralegal power structure bent on maintaining a friendly environment for building an industrial empire."<sup>17</sup> Aldermen and mayors were elected by and for the tobacco, banking, and textile barons. "The candidates anointed by the establishment always won; elections made the choices legal."<sup>18</sup> The mayor and aldermen essentially served as the head of "the biggest and best operated 'company town' in the South."<sup>19</sup>

It was in 1926, at the height of this industrial oligarchy, that City Hall was pushed down the hill to make way for the "real" city hall, the headquarters of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. For most of the first half of the twentieth century, Winston-Salem was run by industry. Between 1913 and 1960, eight men with tobacco manufacturing ties were elected to a total of 46 years as aldermen and only two Republicans won Aldermen seats. None were elected mayor. Despite the fact that these trends continued through the 1950s, by the late 1940s, while Winston was celebrating its centennial, it was also looking to the future.<sup>20</sup>

The City-County Planning Board was established in 1948, and the utilities division was formed in 1949. In 1948, the city manager form of government was adopted, but "power-

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<sup>15</sup>Historic Monograph Committee, 36.

<sup>16</sup>Adelaide Fries, Stuart Thurman Wright, and J. Edwin Hendricks, *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March*, revised ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 245-246.

<sup>17</sup>Historic Monograph Committee, 48.

<sup>18</sup>Tursi, 227.

<sup>19</sup>Historic Monograph Committee, 48.

<sup>20</sup>Historic Monograph Committee, 47.

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conscientious aldermen refused to leave administration entirely in the hands of the city manager," retaining the right to appoint department heads, special commissions, and commission members. Expanded government services meant more government spending. Thus, operating appropriations doubled between 1935 and 1945, doubling again between 1945 and 1955.<sup>21</sup>

It was also in this period of change that Marshall Kurfees was elected mayor in 1949. Writes Frank Tursi,

Kurfees' election was a turning point in city affairs, the first hint that the oligarchy of businessmen and bankers that had ruled the city for seventy years was weakening . . . Kurfees proved that someone could actually win an election in Winston-Salem without having friends in the companies' boardroom.<sup>22</sup>

Kurfees was in office twelve years. Under his leadership, African Americans began to make their way into local government. After World War II, rats were a common sight on downtown streets. Roads were plagued with potholes and other city services did not have the capacity to meet post-war needs. Kurfees oversaw the much-needed updating of the city's infrastructure and pushed for the construction of the East-West Expressway (now Business Interstate-40) and the city's parkway system.<sup>23</sup>

Today, the city's government continues to function in many of the patterns set in the late forties. Those elected to public office have become more representative of the total population and local government is no longer dominated by industry. Since 1926, these changes and expansions in city government have taken place in City Hall at 101 North Main Street, but during the summer of 2000, the building was completely vacated for renovations. Although many governmental functions will return to City Hall once work is completed, this is the first time in its history that the building has not been home to the city's officials and most of its departments.

### Criterion C: Architectural Context

During the first half of the twentieth century, some of Winston-Salem's most distinguished buildings were designed and constructed. One of the most prolific and prominent local firms was Northup and O'Brien. Winston-Salem native Leet O'Brien and Michigan native

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<sup>21</sup>Historic Monograph Committee, 44-45.

<sup>22</sup>Tursi, 228.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. 227-231.

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Willard C. Northup were both working in Winston-Salem when they began practicing together in 1913. In 1925, they named the firm Northup and O'Brien. Luther Lashmit, also from Winston-Salem, joined the firm in 1927. Other architects joined the firm and operated under the same name until 1950, despite Northup's death in 1942. From 1950 to 1953, the firm was known as the Office of Northup and O'Brien. In 1953, the name was changed to Lashmit, James, Brown, and Pollock, starting a series of name changes that continued well into the 1980s.

Northup and O'Brien was the leading firm in Winston-Salem during the 1920s and '30s, designing public, commercial, and residential buildings usually in the Colonial Revival, Beaux Arts, or Classical Revival styles. A list of their work is a who's who of Winston-Salem business and society. The firm designed Graylyn, the Norman Revival home of Bowman Gray, Merry Acres (destroyed), the International Style home of R.J. Reynolds, Jr., Norman Stockton's Georgian Revival home in Reynolda Park, and homes for various members of the Hanes, Gray, and Whitaker families. In addition, the firm was also building stores and warehouses and adding to and altering commercial buildings for these families.

Before the firm's 1950 name-change, it also designed numerous school auditoriums, gyms, and classroom buildings in Winston-Salem and the surrounding areas. Many of the buildings at the Methodist Home for Children on Reynolda Road are the work of Northup and O'Brien. Appalachian State University, Winston-Salem State University, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina-Greensboro are home to several examples of the firm's work.

The initial sketches of Winston-Salem City Hall were done by a young architect who was in Winston-Salem only three months. Employed by Northup and O'Brien for that short time, Wyatt Hibbs based his initial sketches of the new City Hall on Cass Gilbert's Municipal Building in Waterbury, Connecticut. Leet O'Brien gave him a picture of the Gilbert building as a guide, and although the renderings and working plans were developed after Hibbs ended his short tenure in the office, the influence of the Gilbert building is obvious.<sup>24</sup>

With an expanding upper class interested in hiring the best local and out-of-town architects, Winston-Salem found itself in the midst of a building boom at the time of City Hall's completion. Besides Northup and O'Brien, other local architects achieved success in this period, including William Roy Wallace, Hall Crews, C. Gilbert Humphries, and Harold Macklin. Out-of-town architects also worked in the prospering city. These firms included New York architects Cram and Ferguson; Mayer, Murray, and Phillip; and Shreve and Lamb. Popular for residential work were Charles Barton Keen and the New York firm of Peabody, Wilson, and Brown.

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<sup>24</sup>Letter of Wyatt Hibbs, Norfolk, VA to Luther Lashmit, Southern Pines, NC, 20 August 1985.

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Thomas W. Sears designed the gardens of twenty-four private residences and various public grounds in Winston-Salem between 1920 and 1950.<sup>25</sup> Local architectural historian Gwynne Taylor suspects that “it is quite possible that Winston-Salem contains more significant early twentieth century buildings by architects of national reputation than any other city in North Carolina.”<sup>26</sup>

These buildings utilized nationally popular styles, most of which were revival styles. The Renaissance Revival, in particular, was sparked in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as American architects and their patrons began to turn away from the asymmetrical, rustic, casual, and eclectic late nineteenth century styles. At the time, the United States was fast becoming the industrial capital of the world, and the country’s “robber barons were flattered with analogies to the merchant princes of the Renaissance.”<sup>27</sup> The industrial aristocracy now wanted formal designs for their homes and their cities’ municipal architecture. One avenue for this expression was the Renaissance Revival.

The premier example of this style was McKim, Mead, and White’s Boston Public Library (1887-98). The library is a horizontal, granite rectangle with a rusticated base and tile roof, reflecting “reserved classicism that derives from Alberti’s Tempio Malatestiano and a nearer Parisian prototype, the Bibliotheque Ste.-Genevieve by Labrouste.”<sup>28</sup> Interior materials include marble paneling, tiled floors, and coffered wood ceilings. This ‘people’s palace’ heralded the main impetus in American architecture from the nineties through the thirties.<sup>29</sup>

By the 1920s, Winston-Salem had its own robber barons with their own desires to break away from Victorian-era styles and create elegant homes and municipal buildings, but Renaissance Revival was not usually the chosen style. The homes of Winston-Salem’s

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<sup>25</sup>Gwynne Stephens Taylor, *From Frontier to Factory: An Architectural History of Forsyth County* (Winston-Salem, NC: City-County Planning Board of Forsyth County and Winston-Salem, 1981), 58-59.

<sup>26</sup>Taylor, 59.

<sup>27</sup>Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 669.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 670.

<sup>29</sup>William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), vol 4, *Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, 377.

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wealthiest usually employed Colonial Revival motifs. Standard commercial styles, with some classical references, and Art Deco were the preferred styles for retail and office buildings. Constructed in the 1920s and exemplifying this trend were the Carolina Hotel (1928), the Stockton Building (1929), the Nissen Building (1926-7), and the R.J. Reynolds Building (1929). Schools, auditoriums, and occasionally churches, utilized classicism with temple fronts or dominant porticos. Examples include the Calvin H. Wiley Middle School (formerly Grammar School) (1925), the gymnasium at Reynolds High School (1925), First Baptist Church (1924) and the Society of Friends Church (1927). Winston-Salem's largest churches, such as Augsburg Lutheran, St. Leo's Catholic, St. Paul's Episcopal, and Centenary Methodist, were constructed in this time period, as well and conveyed revivalist formalism by conforming to western European medieval traditions constructed in stone.

Prior to the twenties, Winston-Salem's municipal buildings were executed in late nineteenth century styles. In the 1890s, a town hall for Winston was constructed with decidedly Italianate references, including a square clock tower. Also constructed around the same time was the county's second courthouse, executed in the monumental, but rustic, Romanesque style. Both these buildings with their late nineteenth century references were torn down in the early 1920s to make way for their more elegant and formal classical replacements.

Though Renaissance Revival was not generally utilized in Winston-Salem, the city does have a few fine commercial examples. The Bolich-Nash and the Morris Plan Industrial Bank Buildings, both on Fourth Street, are both excellent Renaissance Revival facades from the mid-1920s, but they have undergone the typical interior and exterior alterations experienced by commercial buildings, such as significant ground-floor facade updates and interior renovations. In addition, these are commercial buildings designed to accommodate more than one tenant and display the goods or services that one may purchase inside. The Carnegie Library on Cherry Street is another local Renaissance Revival example, but it is considerably smaller - only one-story in height and three bays in width - and it was constructed twenty years before City Hall.

Most closely related to City Hall in terms of scale, design, architect, and use is the Forsyth County Courthouse. The courthouse was also designed by Northup and O'Brien and is located in downtown Winston-Salem. Though similar to City Hall in siting and size, the courthouse was more Classical Revival in design but has been nearly surrounded by 1958 additions. Also similar to City Hall is the 1920s YMCA building. It is a four-story brick building with arched entrances, fluted pilasters, and keystone arch windows.

All other 1920s classical revival style public buildings in the city, both commercial or civic, are either considerably larger than City Hall, or located outside downtown. Thus, City Hall is the only Renaissance Revival civic structure in Winston-Salem, as well as the city's most intact, historic civic building, and the least altered example of the work of Northup and O'Brien in downtown Winston-Salem.

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City Hall contributes significantly to Winston-Salem's architectural history as a handsome Renaissance Revival structure designed by the locally prominent and prolific firm of Northrup and O'Brien during the substantial pre-Depression building boom which fostered the construction of much of Winston-Salem's finest architecture. Today, it makes an important contribution to the city's streetscape both visually and historically as a representative of downtown Winston-Salem's wealthy "golden age."

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**10. Geographic Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated property is defined as Tax Lot 110 of Tax Block 6084 on Forsyth County Official Zoning Map 630854. The boundary is illustrated by the heavy black line on the accompanying zoning map, drawn to a scale of 1" = 200'.

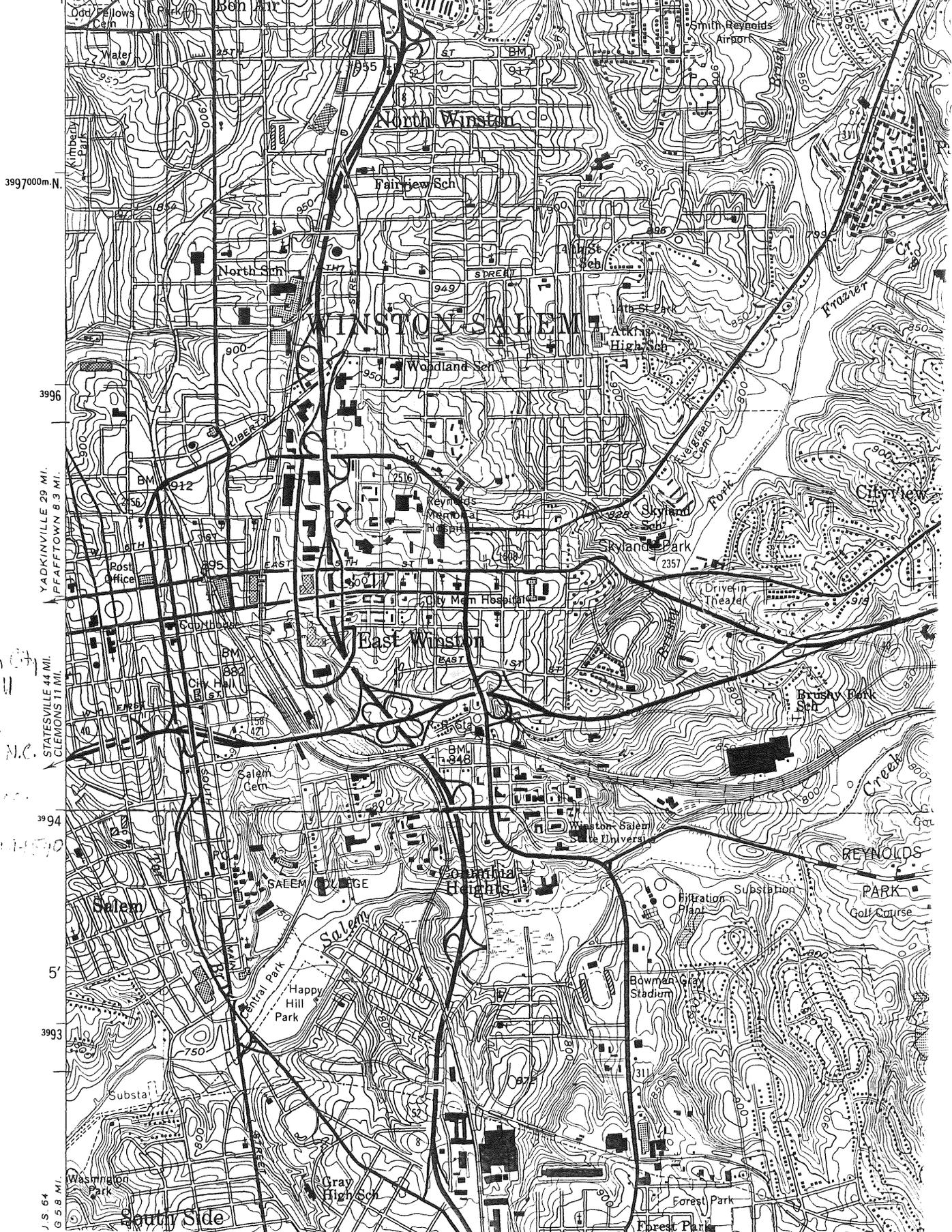
**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property is the lot which made up the original grounds of the City Hall at the time of the building's construction in 1926.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

4956 1/1 NE  
(RURAL HALL)

80°15' 568000m E MT. AIRY 36 MI. RURAL HALL 7.7 MI. 569 570 571 12'30" DE WA



Winston-Salem City Hall  
Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co., N.C.  
UTM reference  
17/568000/3994500

YADKINVILLE 29 MI. PFAFFTOWN 8.3 MI. STATESVILLE 44 MI. CLEMONS 11 MI. J.S. 64 MI. G. 5.8 MI.



MAIN ST

FOURTH ST  
SR 3257

LIBERTY ST  
SR 2456

THIRD ST

SECOND ST  
SR 3925

FIRST ST  
SR 3924

CHURCH ST  
SR 2515

CHESTNUT ST

BELEW

LIBERTY  
SR 2456

CARSWELL DR

57 CB

43 CB

42

50

499

CI-S

6114  
CB

6084

110

53 109

52

6180

58

PB

59

60

61  
CB

3B

406A

406B

404 405

115G

1.34CA

112D

203

205

206

204  
0.67AC

200  
116

110B 111B

108B 107B

109B

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