

# Oregon Historic Site Form

Marshall High School  
3905 91st Ave  
Portland, Multnomah County

## LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: <u>3905 SE 91st Ave</u> <input type="checkbox"/> apprx. addr	historic name: <u>Marshall High School</u>
<u>Portland</u> <input type="checkbox"/> vcnty <u>Multnomah County</u>	current/ other names: <u>Southeast High School</u>
Optional Information assoc addresses: (former addresses, intersections, etc.)  location descr: (remote sites)	block nbr: _____ lot nbr: _____ tax lot nbr: <u>R33336</u> township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____ zip: _____

## PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: <u>Building</u> height (# stories): <u>3</u>	total # eligible resources: <u>0</u> total # ineligible resources: <u>1</u>
elig. evaluation: <u>not eligible/non-contributing</u>	NR status: _____ NR date listed: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)
primary constr date: <u>1960</u> (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> secondary date: _____ (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> (optional--use for major addns)	orig use comments: _____
primary orig use: <u>School</u>	prim style comments: _____
secondary orig use: _____	sec style comments: _____
primary style: <u>International</u>	siding comments: <u>Variegated tan brick</u>
secondary style: _____	architect: <u>Stanton, Boles, Maguire &amp; Church</u>
primary siding: <u>Standard Brick</u>	builder: _____
secondary siding: _____	
plan type: <u>Modern School</u>	
comments/notes:	

## GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name	<u>PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009</u>	<u>Survey &amp; Inventory Project</u>
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farmstead/cluster name: \_\_\_\_\_ external site #: 220  
(ID# used in city/agency database)

## SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: \_\_\_\_\_  
ILS survey date: 6/26/2009  
RLS survey date: 6/26/2009  
Gen File date: \_\_\_\_\_  
**106 Project(s)**



## ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

(Include expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings, and alterations)

### Description Summary

Marshall High School is located 3905 SE 91st Ave. in the Lents neighborhood of southeast Portland. The 23 acre campus includes only the main school building (1959, 220A). The three story building is largely devoid of architectural embellishments, but the internal functions of the school, such as the stairwells, hallways, library, auditorium, and gymnasium are clearly communicated by the building's fenestration patterns, overall massing, and varying building heights. The building mixes an external skin of variegated tan-colored brick with expansive banks of plate glass windows that form the building's curtain walls. Cantilevered overhangs shade the windows on each floor on the west and south sides, while no eaves are present on the north and east sides. The interior follows a square shaped corridor plan that provides access to all classrooms, the auditorium, cafeteria, and the gymnasium.

### Architectural Description

Marshall High School is situated in the Lents neighborhood of southeast Portland. The campus consists of a 23 acre square-shaped property that extends northward to gain access to SE 91st Avenue. Development in the surrounding area consists primarily of single family residences built between 1945 and 1970 as well as large scale retail with the presence of large "big box" stores situated to the west at Eastport Plaza ([www.portlandmaps.com](http://www.portlandmaps.com)).

The campus consists of the main school building erected over one period of construction in 1959. The school is approached via a U-shaped drive that affords easy student drop offs and access to surface parking lots as well as the playing fields. An oval track, football field, and grandstand as well as other playing fields are located to the south of the main building.

The main (east) entrance into the school consists of three double door entries that are recessed into the building as the second floor is supported by a single round concrete column. The west elevation exhibits only two floors while the remainder of the building features three stories due to a change in the topography that descends from west to east. While banks of plate glass windows extend to the north of the entry, a large round edged double height volume, the auditorium and music wing, extends to the west. The north elevation features three floors of plate glass windows interrupted at three points by three floors of small square windows that mark stairwells. The stairwells are similarly marked on the east and south elevations as well. A one story largely unfenestrated boiler building is situated to the west of the north elevation.

The west elevation exhibits a one story shop extension and a double-height, largely unfenestrated gymnasium that projects from this side of the building. The second and third floors of this elevation, however, feature a different fenestration on the second and third floors. Due to the lack of classrooms on the exterior face of the building, the single loaded corridor is illuminated by small square windows. Due to the lack of large windows, no cantilevered overhang is located on this end of the building. Two double-door entries provide access into the gymnasium on the west elevation. On the south elevation is a one story extension that serves as the kitchen for the adjoining cafeteria which is located within the main building. Each bank of windows is shaded by a cantilevered shade.

The interior corridors are arranged in a square-shaped plan with the more specialized spaces extending from the exterior. The corridors and classrooms generally feature 12" by 12" tiles and are illuminated by tubular fluorescent lighting. The locker-lined corridors also feature ceramic tile walls. The classrooms are generally square-shaped and have acoustic tile ceilings.

The high school also features an entirely enclosed, terraced courtyard that descends from east to west. The terrace is marked by vegetation. The lower terrace features a series of concrete beds to the north. A central walkway provides access from the east to west corridors as well as through the corridors directly to the exterior. The library intrudes into the courtyard and is supported by a series of cylindrical columns on the bottom floor.

### Alterations/Integrity

Marshall High School has not been significantly modified since it was constructed. Some ADA improvements were made in 1994 and 1995 and classroom models have occurred in several areas since the school was erected. These modifications are minor in scale and do not significantly detract from any of the character-defining features of the school. The school, therefore, retains its integrity of design, materials, location, association, feeling, workmanship, and setting.

## HISTORY

(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period [preferably to the present])

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## Significance Statement

In 1945, the citizens of Portland approved a ballot measure that provided \$5,000,000 over five years to construct, improve, and rehabilitate its public school buildings (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2). The ballot measure enabled PPS to respond to the explosive growth in school-age children that had occurred in the city as a result of the arrival of defense plant workers and their families, as well as the deferred maintenance arising from the lack of funds during the depression (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2-3). Beginning with this initial bond measure, PPS embarked on an effort to improve its school facilities through renovations, additions, and new construction of over fifty schools between 1945 and 1970.

For the new building program, PPS schools adopted the call of architects and school planners across the country for new types of schools. Nationally known architects including Richard Neutra, the Walter Gropius led Architects Collective, and the Perkins Will architectural firm promoted new school types that reflected both evolving educational practices and design philosophies (Ogata 2008: 567-568; Perkins and Cocking 1949: 238-246). Emphasizing the need for economy and rapid construction, the designers adopted new materials that were standardized and mass produced including steel, plywood, glass block, and aluminum. In many buildings, architects achieved flexibility through the building's structure by employing non-load-bearing partitions walls and zoned ventilation and heating systems. Folding walls and moveable cabinets provided additional flexibility intended to enable teachers to rearrange rooms based on lesson plan and activities (Ogata 2008: 568).

Although many of the architects for schools in Portland continued to design their schools to be extensible, designers turned away from the two-story schools with centralized massing and the period revivals that were popular in the 1920s. Instead many architects adopted the principles of the Modern movement and its regional variant, the Northwest Regional style, choosing to express functional areas through massing and materials to create innovative forms (McMath 1974: 628). Classrooms featured extensive built-ins that included sinks, slots for bulky rolls of paper, and coat storage. Many buildings incorporated interior courtyards which facilitated access to the outdoors and expanded the opportunities for passive ventilation and daylighting.

In the aftermath of World War II, residential development in southeast Portland boomed as new, more suburban neighborhoods sprung up on the periphery of Portland's city limits. Beginning in 1957 and until 1960, PPS began purchasing individual tax lots outside of the city limits near SE 91st Avenue for the purpose of constructing a new high school to better serve the residents of "outer" southeast Portland (PPS Chronology Binder). In all, PPS spent \$96,955.44 for the properties and after including the sales of houses that once occupied the lots. The cost of construction of the school, \$4.768 million, surpassed all previous high schools constructed by PPS (PPS Chronology Binder).

Designed by Stanton, Boles, Maguire and Church, the John Marshall High School was originally called Southeast High School until it was renamed for the U.S. Supreme Court justice who was credited with establishing the principle of judicial review (Oregon Journal 10-13-1960). A native of Iowa, Glenn Stanton graduated from the University of Oregon. He received his M.A. from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Stanton returned to Portland where he worked with Morris H. Whitehouse, eventually becoming a partner in the firm of Whitehouse, Stanton & Church. In 1935 Stanton opened his own firm. Stanton later entered into partnership with Hollis Johnston. In 1955, Stanton formed the partnership of Stanton, Boles, Maguire, and Church – a firm that would be responsible for designing Madison and Marshall High Schools in 1955 and 1960 respectively. Significant work designed by this firm included military projects, structures for the new Lewis & Clark College Campus, and the Stadium Branch of the U.S. Nation Bank. Stanton was also known for supervising the restoration of the McLoughlin House (1846) in Oregon City. This project was one of the early architectural preservation projects in the state (Ritz 2003: 368).

Marshall High School reflected prevailing ideas concerning high school design in the 1950s and 1960s. The school featured a square corridor plan with the various functions of the school decentralized around all parts of the square. The gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, were all designed to serve as appendages to the square corridor plan. The building, largely constructed with exterior curtain walls that consisted half of brick and half of glass, also featured cantilevered eaves on each of its three floors on only the south and west sides of the building to reduce the amount of glare caused by sunlight. Other interesting components of the school include an undersized auditorium to reduce the size of heated spaces, sliding partitions that could increase classroom sizes and permit work with team teaching techniques, as well as a large terraced courtyard located in the middle of the building (Oregonian 11-6-1960).

The high school building has not been extensively modified over time and retains most if not all of its character-defining features. Despite the retention of its historical integrity, Marshall High School does not appear to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Although associated with the suburban expansion of southeast Portland, the high school's overall design was not noted as being necessarily innovative for the time period. Other high schools constructed in Portland in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Wilson High School, garnered wide attention for their unique method of construction and architectural design (Oregon Journal 1-1-1956). Jackson High School (now Jackson Middle School) received attention for its unique building forms and planning that reflected the evolving educational and administrative philosophies of the time. When placed in context with these other high school buildings, Marshall High School does not appear to be as good an example of the high school property type in the post-war period.

## RESEARCH INFORMATION

(Check all of the basic sources consulted and cite specific important sources)

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title Records           | <input type="checkbox"/> Census Records                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Property Tax Records  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Histories      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biographical Sources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHPO Files | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obituaries              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers           | <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories        | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Permits                | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library         |  |

Local Library: Multnomah County Library

University Library: Portland State University Library

Historical Society: Oregon Historical Society

Other Repository: PPS Archives

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## Bibliography: Bibliography

McMath, George. "A Regional Style Comes to the City." In *Space, Style and Structure: Buildings in Northwest America*. Ed. Thomas Vaughan, 467-499. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974.

Ogata, Amy F. "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 67, no. 4, December 2008: 562-591.

Oregonian. "School Building Planned to Meet Student Needs." 9-6-1960.

Oregon Journal. "School of 'Firsts': Portland's Woodrow Wilson High School Built with New Structural Techniques." 1-1-1956.

Perkins, Lawrence B and Walter D. Cocking. *Schools*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1949.

Portland Public Schools. *Repairing, Rehabilitating and Modernizing the School Plant*. Portland: Portland Public Schools. Office of the Superintendent, 1945.

\_\_\_\_\_. *School Chronology Binder*.

Ritz, Richard. E. *Architects of Oregon. A Biographical Dictionary of Architects Deceased – 19th and 20th Centuries*. Portland: Lair Hill Publishing, 2003.



**ENTRIX**

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™



Main entrance, east elevation (220A).



Courtyard, looking northeast (220A).



East elevation near main entrance (220A)



View of south elevation (220A).



Interior courtyard, looking southeast (220A).

**Marshall High School  
Exterior Photos  
ENTRIX, 2009**



Typical corridor near main entrance.



Auditorium seating detail.



Shop classroom.



Library overlooking the courtyard.

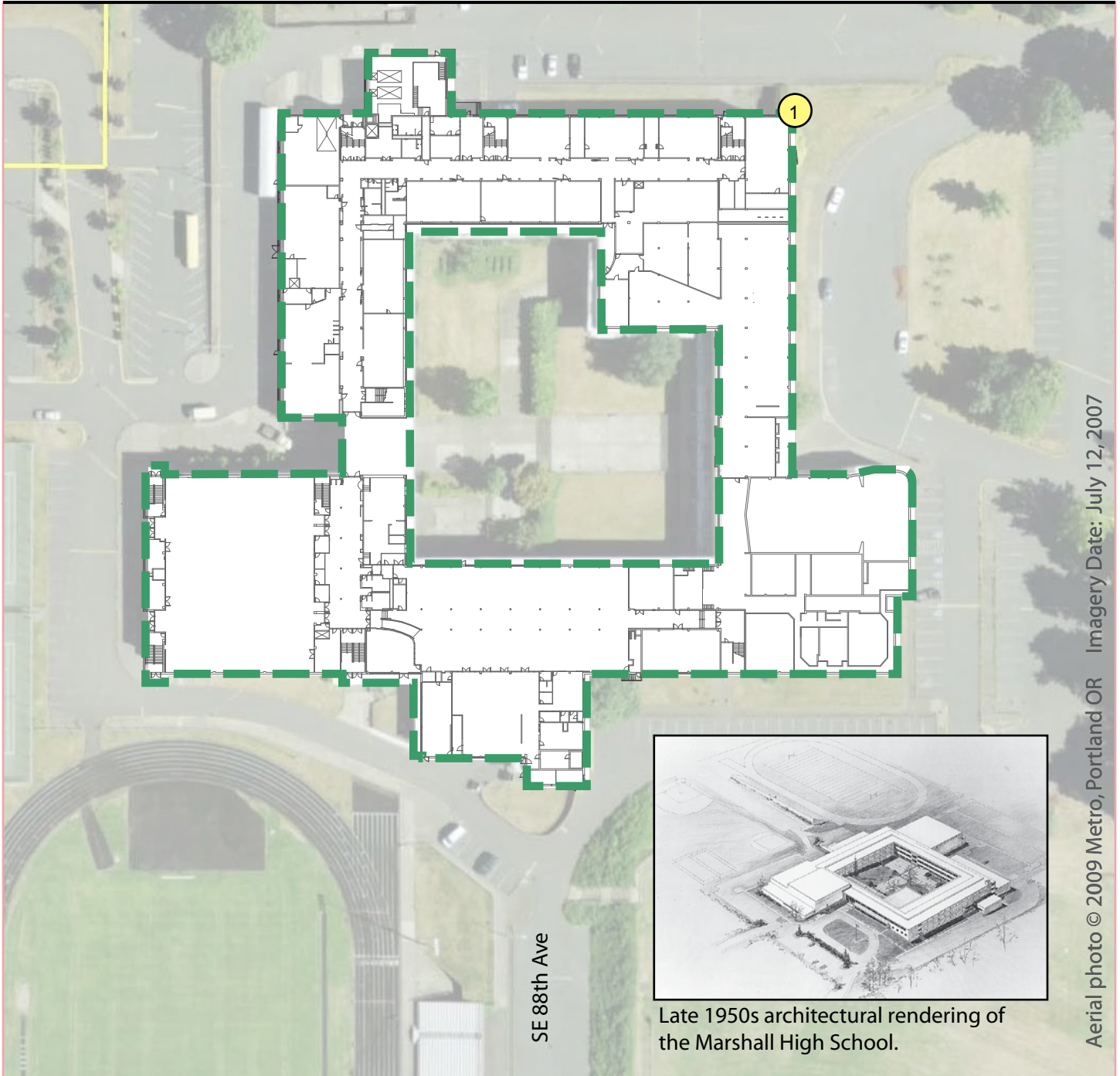


Cafeteria detail of structural columns.

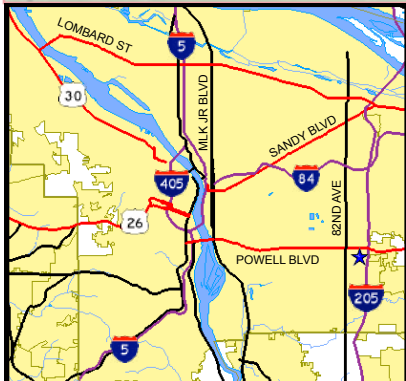
# Marshall High School

3905 SE 91st Ave, Portland OR, 97266




[View Site in Google Maps](#)



Aerial photo © 2009 Metro, Portland OR Imagery Date: July 12, 2007



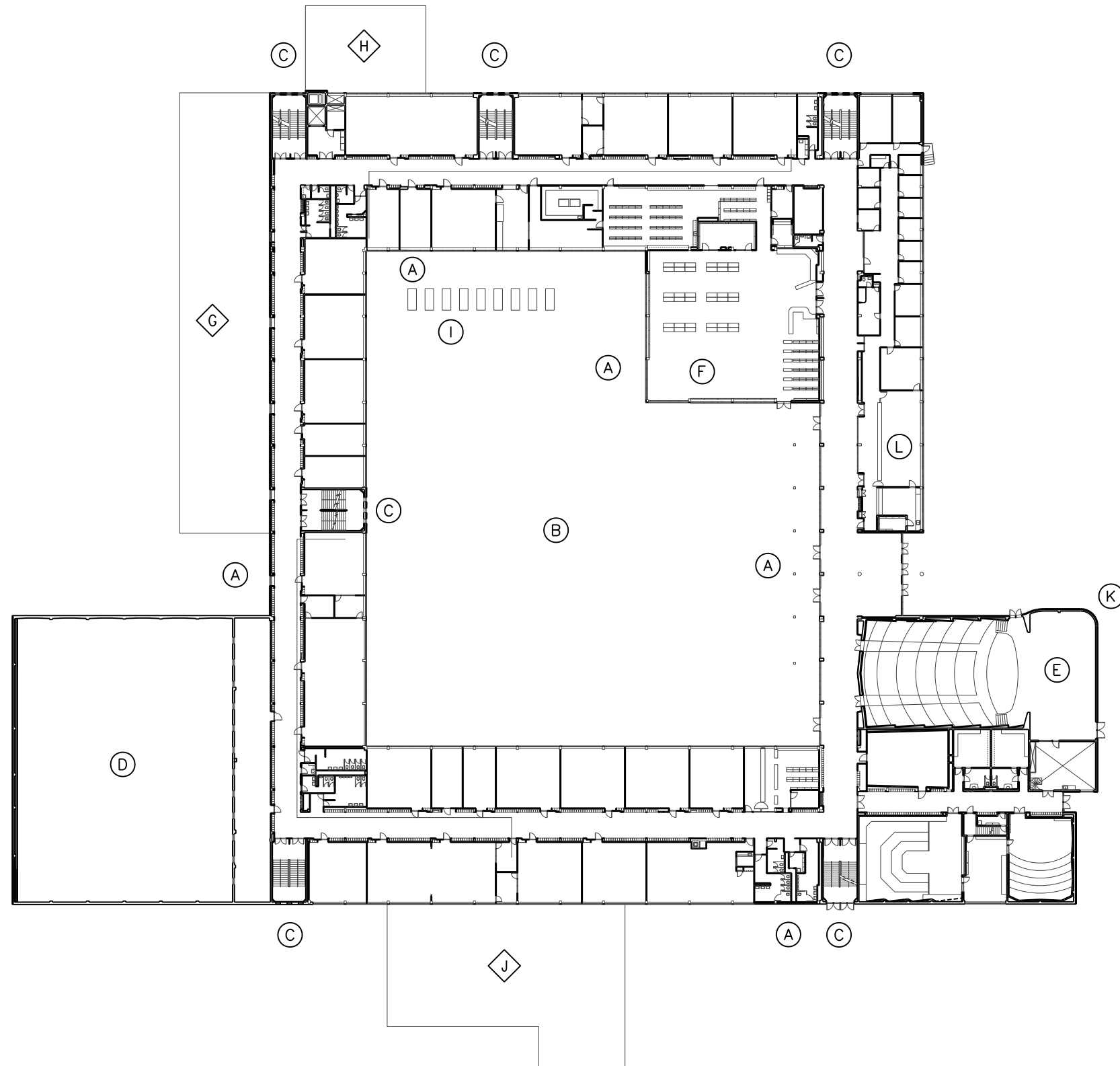
## Historical Significance and Building Integrity

-  Contrib: High Significance
-  Contrib: Moderate Signif.
-  Non-Contributing



## Building Periods

1. Original Building (220A), 1959



**KEYNOTES:**

- (A) CANTILEVERED OVERHANGS SHADE BANKS OF PLATE GLASS WINDOWS.
- (B) TERRACED CENTRAL EXTERIOR COURTYARD
- (C) ROWS OF 3 SQUARE WINDOWS MARK LOCATIONS OF INTERIOR STAIRWELLS
- (D) GYMNASIUM - STRUCTURAL STEEL TRUSSES SUPPORT FLAT ROOF
- (E) AUDITORIUM
- (F) LIBRARY SUPPORTED BY CIRCULAR COLUMNS ON GROUND FLOOR
- (G) 2ND FLOOR - WOOD AND METAL SHOP CLASSROOMS
- (H) 2ND FLOOR - BOILER ROOM
- (I) ROW OF CONCRETE PLANTER BOXES
- (J) 2ND FLOOR - KITCHEN FOR CAFETERIA
- (K) CURVED BUILDING CORNERS TO SUGGEST A SCULPTED FORM
- (L) SCHOOL OFFICE

**GENERAL NOTES:**

- ① WINDOWS CONSIST OF SINGLE PLANE PLATE GLASS WITH HOPPER STYLE WINDOW
- ② EXTERIOR SHEATHING CONSIST OF TAN COLORED STRETCHER BOND BRICK.
- ③ LONG EXTENDED BANKS OF WINDOWS ARE INDICATIVE OF CURTAIN WALL CONSTRUCTION. MOST STRUCTURAL LOADS ARE CARRIED INTERNALLY BY REINFORCED CONCRETE COLUMNS WHICH ALLOWS THE EXTERIOR TO RETAIN A GLASS SKIN.
- ④ ONE FLOOR LIES UNDER THE WEST, NORTH, AND EAST SIDES OF THE BUILDING. WHILE TWO FLOORS LIE ABOVE THE FIRST FLOOR.



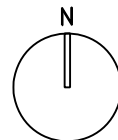
MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - 220

3905 SE 91ST AVE 97266

PPS HISTORIC ASSESSMENT



1 MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - 1ST FLOOR  
SCALE: 1" = 60'-0"



DRAWING: ANNOTATED PLAN

DATE: Sept. 4, 2009