

# Oregon Historic Site Form

Markham School  
10531 Capitol Hwy  
Portland, Multnomah County

## LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 10531 SW Capitol Hwy  apprx. addr

Portland  vcnty Multnomah County

Optional Information  
 assoc addresses:  
 (former addresses, intersections, etc.)  
 location descr:  
 (remote sites)

historic name: Markham School

current/  
 other names: Edwin Markham Elementary School

block nbr: \_\_\_\_\_ lot nbr: \_\_\_\_\_ tax lot nbr: \_\_\_\_\_  
 township: \_\_\_\_\_ range: \_\_\_\_\_ section: \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4: \_\_\_\_\_  
 zip: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 1

elig. evaluation: eligible/significant

primary constr date: 1951 (c.)  secondary date: 1990 (c.)   
 (optional--use for major addns)

primary orig use: School

secondary orig use: \_\_\_\_\_

primary style: Neo-Colonial

secondary style: \_\_\_\_\_

primary siding: Standard Brick

secondary siding: \_\_\_\_\_

plan type: School (General)

total # eligible resources: 1 total # ineligible resources: 0

NR status: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NR date listed: \_\_\_\_\_ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)

orig use comments: \_\_\_\_\_

prim style comments: Stripped colonial: Modern interpretation

sec style comments: \_\_\_\_\_

siding comments: \_\_\_\_\_

architect: Richard Sundeleaf

builder: \_\_\_\_\_

comments/notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name: PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009 Survey & Inventory Project

farmstead/cluster name: \_\_\_\_\_ external site #: 170  
 (ID# used in city/agency database)

## SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: \_\_\_\_\_

ILS survey date: 6/23/2009

RLS survey date: 6/23/2009

Gen File date: \_\_\_\_\_

**106 Project(s)**



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## ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

### Description Summary

Situated in a residential neighborhood of Southwest Portland, Markham Elementary School is located at 10531 SW Capitol Highway. Built in 1951, the Colonial Revival style school building (170A) is situated on a mostly grass-covered ten acre campus which includes a grass-covered commons in front of the main entrance. The modified H-shaped building has a wood frame clad with red brick which sits on a poured concrete foundation. The single story building is covered by gable roofs. The school building houses classrooms, an auditorium, a gymnasium, a media center/library, a cafeteria, and an administrative office.

### Architectural Description

Situated in a residential neighborhood of Southwest Portland, Markham Elementary School is located at 10531 SW Capitol Highway. Built in 1951, the Colonial Revival style school building is situated on a mostly grass-covered ten acre campus, which includes a grass-covered commons opposite the main entrance. Playfields are located at the rear and to the west of the school. An asphalt-covered half-circular driveway is located in front of the northeast wing (Cafeteria). Parking areas are situated at the southeast corner of the property off Capitol Way, and another at the rear of the school.

The school is oriented on a north-south axis with its principal entry facing SW Capitol Highway. The modified H-shaped building sits on a poured concrete foundation. The interconnecting low and medium pitched gable roofs are covered with composition shingles. Two passageways covered by flat roofs connect the two front (east) wings with the two rear (west) wings. Brick veneer is the primary siding, with concrete cladding on sections of the rear elevations. Fenestration consists of fixed single pane and metal and wood frame symmetrically placed pivot windows. Double-leaf metal doors are located at all the building's entrances.

The entry to the school is beneath a projecting gable roof portico supported by wood columns. The wood frame pediment is supported by eight wooden poles. Parallel projecting bays on the north and side of the building create an interior commons. These bays are also distinguished by projecting porticoes supported by brick columns.

The interior layout of the school consists of a modified H-shaped finger plan with four projecting classroom wings. The main north-south hallway bisects the two east-west wings/hallways. The shape of the hallway ceilings is either flat, arched, or semi-elliptical. The walls are lined with a variety of materials including concrete, brick, and sheetrock. Tubular fluorescent lights are suspended from the acoustic tile ceilings. The floors are covered with linoleum. Wood display cases line the hallways.

The auditorium retains many of its original architectural features. A half-circular wood veneer ticket booth is located in the wood paneled entry lobby. Interior finishes in the auditorium include wood seats, wainscot, and stage.

The double height gymnasium is located in the west wing of the building. Illumination is provided by fluorescent light fixtures and wood frame fixed pane windows. Seating consists of folding wooden bleachers. The original wood flooring is intact. Adjacent to the main gymnasium is a smaller auxiliary gym. The concrete floor and unfinished concrete and brick walls provide a durable play surface. The roof/ceiling is supported by wooden horizontal cross beams.

The classrooms are primarily square in plan. The classroom ceilings are either flat, shed-type, or saltbox shaped. The floors are covered with linoleum tile. The rooms feature wood doors, book cases, cabinets, and closets. Other built-in fixtures include sinks and counters. Tubular fluorescent light fixtures are suspended from acoustic tile clad ceilings.

### Alterations/Integrity

Markham Elementary School has evolved since its original construction in 1951. The original building was H-shaped. In 1965 two additional classrooms were added to the southwest. The most significant alteration occurred in 1979 when the auxiliary gymnasium and several classrooms were added to the northwest wing. At this time the media center was also remodeled (Markham Facility Plan).

With only minimal alterations, the school retains a high degree of integrity. The 1965 and 1979 additions made little alteration to the exterior cladding, roof lines, or fenestration. The projecting bays, porticoes, and cupolas in the Colonial Revival style have been retained. The hallways, classrooms, and gymnasium feature their original finishes, built-in cabinets, and configurations. The auditorium and lobby retain their wood paneling, seating, and ticket nook.

## HISTORY

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

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## Statement of Significance

In response to the residential growth in the southwest neighborhoods of the city, Portland Public Schools acquired the parcel on SW Capitol Highway for \$15,000 in 1945. Named in honor of Oregon Poet Laureate Edwin Markham, the school was built in 1951 for \$694,150 (Snyder 1979: 239, Portland Chronology Binder). The school was constructed during a period of modernization and new construction initiated by Portland Public Schools (PPS) after World War II. 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, the 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 partition 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).

Markham Elementary School was designed by Sundeleaf Architects of Portland. A native of Portland, Richard Sundeleaf practiced architecture in Oregon for nearly 60 years. Sundeleaf attended Sellwood Grade School and Washington High School. He obtained his degree in Architecture from the University of Oregon in 1923. Sundeleaf first worked as a draftsman in the office of A.E. Doyle, one of the most prominent architectural firms in the city. He then worked for the firm of Sutton & Whitney before establishing his own practice in 1928. Major commissions included buildings in Australia, Finland, and Portland for the Jantzen Knitting Mills. His connections with the Jantzen firm resulted in commissions for Mailwell Envelope (1931), Oregon Portland Cement (1929), and Woodbury & Co. (1939). One of the few architects in Portland with regular commissions during the Great Depression, Sundeleaf also served as the district leader for the Oregon Historic American Buildings Survey team. He is also known for the design of the Francis-Hopkins motors shows room (1949) and the Portland Medical Center Building (1955) (Ritz 2002 276-377).

For the design of Markham School, which was originally developed as a Middle School, Sundeleaf employed a variation on the finger plan utilized by many schools in the Portland area and throughout the United States. The architect successfully combined the planning principles and interior features of mid-twentieth century with characteristic attributes of the Colonial Revival style. The symmetrical bays and projecting porticos associated with that style facilitated the development of the centralized public spaces in the north and south wings. This design also created the interior courtyard that provided a central area for students awaiting pickup.

Markham Elementary School retains excellent integrity with its floor plan, cladding, fenestration, and many interior finishes intact. The auditorium and ticket booth are particularly distinctive for a school of this period. Although designed by Richard Sundeleaf, the architect is better known for his industrial buildings. However, the school successfully adapts characteristic features of the Colonial Revival style, including projecting porticos, cupolas, and a symmetrical plan to the educational principles of the mid-twentieth century. The school is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A and C.

## 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

## Bibliography: Bibliography

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.

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. PPS Archives, Portland, Oregon.

\_\_\_\_\_. Markham Elementary School. Facility Profile.

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\_\_\_\_\_. Markham Elementary School. Facility Profile.

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

Snyder, Eugene E. Portland Names and Neighborhoods. Their Historic Origins. Portland: Binford & Mort Publishing; 1st edition 1979.



East elevation front entry



South elevation courtyard (looking northwest)



East elevation (cafeteria) front entry



Southwest wing south elevation



East elevation auditorium entry

**Markham School  
Exterior Photos  
ENTRIX, 2009**



Gymnasium facing northeast



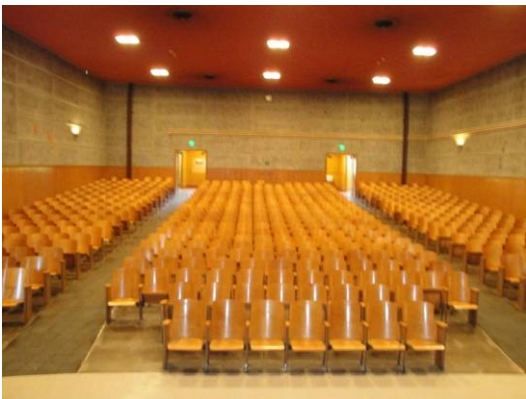
Classroom built-ins



Classroom built-ins



North wing corridor facing west

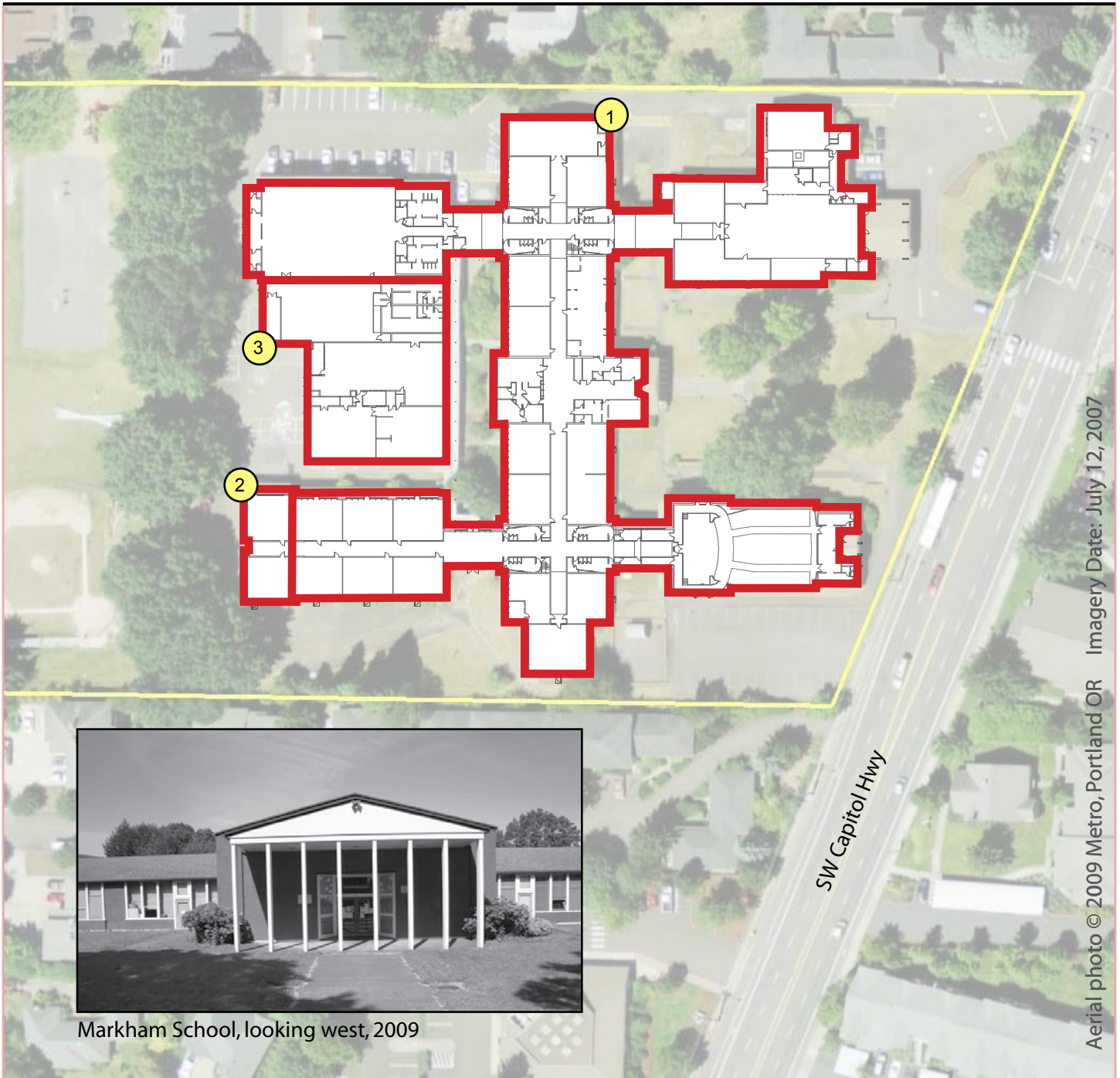


Auditorium facing east

# Markham School

10531 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland OR, 97219

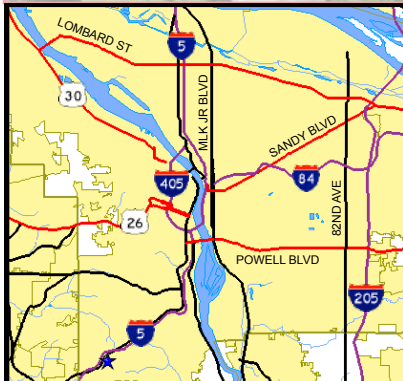
[View Site in Google Maps](#)






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



Markham School, looking west, 2009



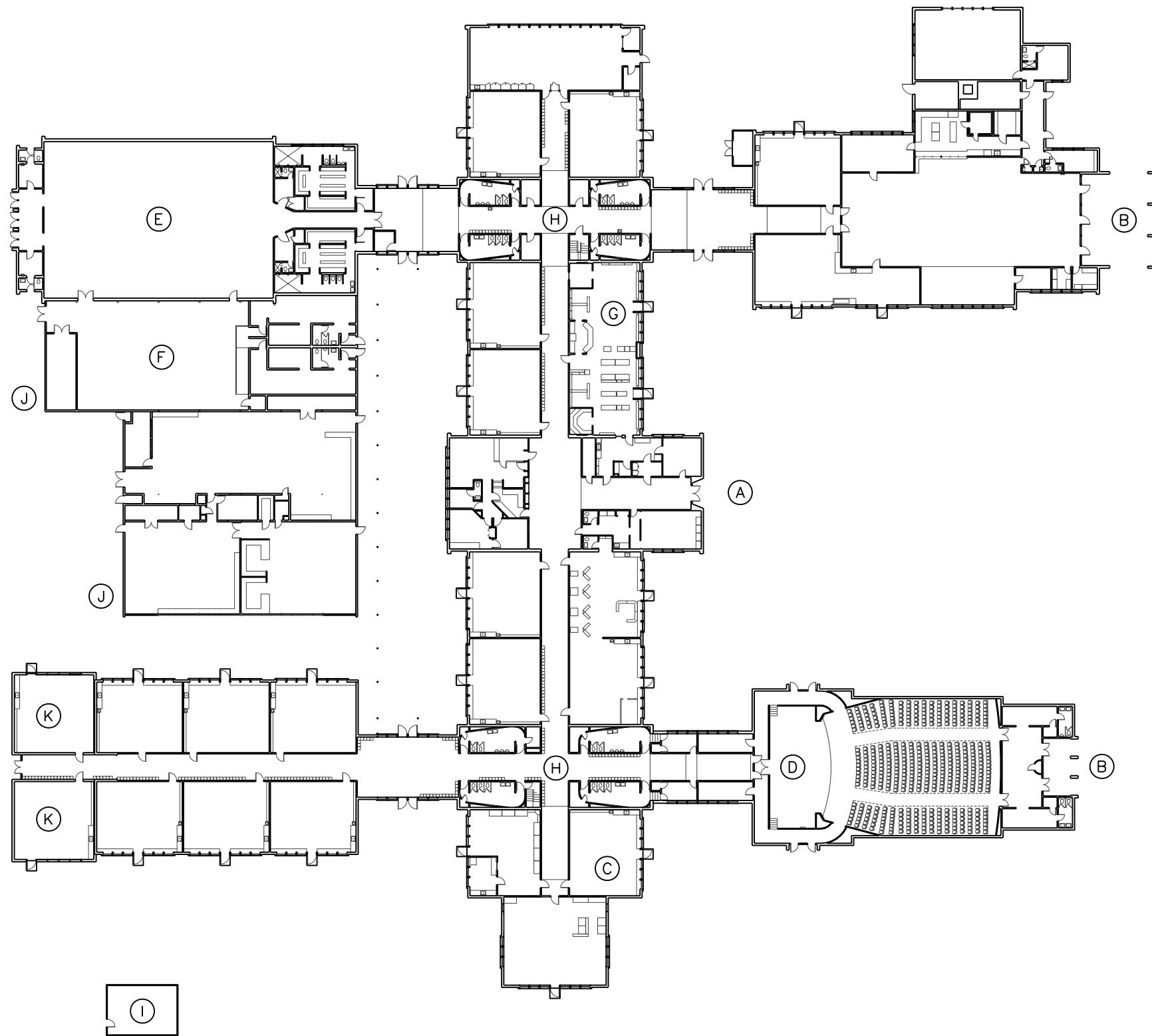
## Historical Significance and Building Integrity

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



## Building Periods

1. Original Building (170A), 1951
2. Addition (170A), 1965
3. Addition (170A), 1979

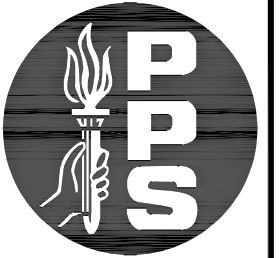


**KEYNOTES:**

- (A) THE ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL IS BENEATH A PROJECTING GABLE ROOF PORTICO SUPPORTED BY WOOD COLUMNS.
- (B) PARALLEL PROJECTING BAYS ON THE NORTH AND SIDE OF THE BUILDING CREATE AN INTERIOR COMMONS. THE WEST SIDE OF EACH WING IS CAPPED BY GABLE ROOF PORTICOES THAT MATCH THE MAIN ENTRY PROJECT.
- (C) THE CLASSROOMS RETAIN THEIR ORIGINAL CONFIGURATIONS, HEIGHT, LINOLEUM TILE FLOORS AND WOOD WALLS, FRAMING AND MOLDING. STANDARD FEATURES INCLUDE WOODEN BOOK CASES, CABINETS AND CLOSETS, SINKS AND COUNTERS.
- (D) THE FRONT ENTRY LOBBY OF THE AUDITORIUM FEATURES VERTICAL WOOD PANELING, A HALF-CIRCULAR, WOOD VENEER TICKET BOOTH, AND ITS ORIGINAL TILE FLOOR. INTERIOR FINISHES IN THE AUDITORIUM INCLUDE WOOD CHAIRS, WALL AND CEILING LIGHTENING, WOOD STAGE, AND ACOUSTIC PANELS ON THE SIDE WALLS.
- (E) THE GYMNASIUM HAS A HIGH BAY, COMPOSITION-BASED CEILING WITH FLUORESCENT LIGHTS. THE SPACE IS LINED WITH FOLDING, WOODEN BLEACHERS. THE ORIGINAL WOOD FLOORING IS INTACT.
- (F) FINISHES IN THE AUXILIARY GYM INCLUDE UNFINISHED CONCRETE AND BRICK WALLS AND A CONCRETE FLOOR. THE ROOF/CEILING IS SUPPORTED BY WOODEN HORIZONTAL CROSS BEAMS.
- (G) THE MEDIA CENTER/LIBRARY IS A SPACIOUS, CARPETED, OPEN ROOM DIVIDED INTO SEVERAL WORK AND STUDY AREA TABLES AND CHAIRS.
- (H) THE SCHOOL IS ORGANIZED AROUND AN EXTENDED H-SHAPED DOUBLE LOADED CORRIDOR. THE CORRIDORS RETAIN THEIR ORIGINAL CONFIGURATION AND FEATURES, CONSISTING OF CONCRETE, BRICK OR SHEETROCK WALLS, WOODEN DISPLAY CASES, METAL FRAMING AND MOLDING AND WOODEN CLASSROOM DOORS.
- (I) GREEN HOUSE
- (J) 1979 ADDITION
- (K) CLASSROOM ADDITION IN 1965

**GENERAL NOTES:**

- (1) FENESTRATION CONSISTS OF FIXED SINGLE PANE AND METAL AND WOOD FRAME, SYMMETRICALLY PLACED, HINGED WINDOWS.
- (2) BRICK VENEER IS THE PRIMARY SIDING, WITH CONCRETE CLADDING ON SECTIONS OF THE REAR ELEVATIONS.



MARKHAM ELEMENTARY - 170

10531 SW CAPITOL HWY 97219

PPS HISTORIC ASSESSMENT



DRAWING: ANNOTATED PLAN

DATE: Sept. 4, 2009

1 MARKHAM ELEMENTARY - 1ST FLOOR  
SCALE: 1" = 50'-0"

