(Oct. 1990)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1515

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Fort Worth High School
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: Central High School; School No. 19; Fort Worth Junior High School; Jennings Avenue Junior High School; School No. 40; Parker, Ernest, Junior High School; School No. 50; Parker, Ernest, Middle School; School No. 150; Homes of Parker Commons

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 1015 S. Jennings Avenue
NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Worth
VICINITY: N/A
STATE: Texas **CODE:** TX **COUNTY:** Tarrant **CODE:** 439 **ZIP CODE:** 76104

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 (_ nationally) (_ statewide) (x locally). (__ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official — Date: 10/18/02

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
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 commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is: — Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

✓ entered in the National Register — for Edson H. Beall — 12/12/02
___ 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: Private

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: Building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
	1	0	BUILDINGS
	0	0	SITES
	0	0	STRUCTURES
	0	0	OBJECTS
	1	0	TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: EDUCATION/school = secondary school

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling = apartment building

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Classical Revival

MATERIALS:

FOUNDATION	Concrete
WALLS	Concrete, Brick, Granite
ROOF	Concrete, Synthetics
OTHER	N/A

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-8).

Summary Description

The Fort Worth High School building (later known as Fort Worth Junior High School, Jennings Avenue Junior High School and Ernest Parker Junior High/Middle School) is located at 1015 S. Jennings Avenue on the Near South Side of Fort Worth, Texas. Constructed in 1909-1911, the monumental 3-story Classical Revival style building sits on a raised concrete basement and features such hallmarks of the style as engaged Tuscan columns supporting a large pediment, pilasters, rounded and triangular pediments over entrances, and a denticulated metal cornice. The exterior is clad in a yellow brick with granite insets and pink-tinted cast stone. Bands of 1/1 double hung wood windows with fixed transoms are placed in repetitive patterns on each floor. The site on which the school was built was a narrow block so that the front (west) and rear (east) facades were near mirror images of each other as each faced a street. The north and south elevations are also essentially identical. The building is less than a half block north of Rosedale Street, a busy east/west thoroughfare serving the city's medical district. It was originally located in a primarily residential neighborhood with the notable exception of the 3-story Classical Revival style Southwestern Bell Telephone Exchange Building (1909) south of the school at the corner of Jennings and Rosedale. The area became increasingly commercial in the second half of the 20th century with the demolition of historic houses in the area and the construction of strip shopping centers and fast food restaurants along Rosedale Street, some of which are now vacant. The Fort Worth High School building was recently converted to residential use. Although the interior has been significantly altered, the exterior retains a high degree of its architectural integrity.

Description

The Fort Worth High School building is a 3-story brick, granite and concrete landmark on Fort Worth's Near South Side. It is located at 1015 S. Jennings Avenue, slightly north of Rosedale Street, a busy east/west thoroughfare serving the city's medical district. Constructed in 1909-11 in the Classical Revival style, the monumental building features such decorative details as engaged Tuscan columns supporting a large pediment, pilasters, triangular and rounded pediments over entrances, and a denticulated metal cornice. The cast columns and other cast trim has a light pink tint. Bands of 1/1 double hung wood windows with transom lights above punctuate each floor in repetitive patterns. The school was sited on a long narrow block with both the east and west facades facing streets, resulting in a design with near mirror images on those elevations. The north and south elevations are also nearly identical to each other. Historically, the building was located in a primarily residential neighborhood with the exception of the classically-inspired Southwestern Bell Telephone Exchange Building (1909) located to the south. After 1951, the houses located on the block immediately east of the building (between May Street and Jennings Avenue) were removed. A track and football field were constructed on the site and May Street was vacated. During the last half of the 20th century, the blocks surrounding the school complex to the east, south, and west became increasing commercial as houses were torn down and commercial establishments built in their place, including a strip shopping center and several fast food restaurants. The area experienced some decline in the past few decades as buildings were allowed to deteriorate and others were torn down, leaving vacant lots. The Texas Department of Transportation is widening Rosedale Street which has resulted in the relocation of some businesses, particularly on the south side of the street. However, some historic buildings to the north are being rehabilitated. With the rehabilitation of the Fort Worth High School building and the nearby Alexander Hogg School building, an influx of new residences is occurring. The rehabilitation of the Fort Worth High School building to apartments resulted in significant alterations to the interior of the building, although its historic fabric had been removed in the 1980s. However, the building retains a significant amount of its exterior integrity and is readily identifiable as an early 20th-century educational facility.

The primary facade faces west and is divided into five bays with the outer and center bays projecting slightly forward (Photos 1 and 2). The building sits on a raised concrete basement. The center bay is the focal point of the facade as it contains the entrance portico. The portico contains four engaged cast columns that are 2-stories high. These columns support a large triangular pediment with a decorative wreath in the center. Decorative brickwork frames the pediment. The portico is accessed by a flight of stairs lined with wing walls. Between the engaged columns are three entrances surmounted by rounded pediments supported by decorative scrolled brackets. These openings contain paired wood doors, each with a large single light with transoms above. The doors have been fixed shut. Above the entrances are large windows with a similar configuration as the doors. Above the large pediment is a

denticulated metal cornice that wraps around the entire building. Near the center bay's parapet is a long rectangular cast name block inscribed with "1910/FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL" (see photo #6 for similar view of east elevation's name block). There are 1/1 double hung wood windows on the sides of this bay at each floor. Two cornerstones are located on this bay at the corners above the basement level. The left or north cornerstone reads: "Erected 1910/Waller & Field/Architects/Innis-Graham Sons Co./Builder." The right or south cornerstone reads: "Trustees/Walter C. Strong, Pres/J. W. Strain Vice Pres/J . W. Stitt Secty/E. T. Tyra/Geo. B. Gay/J. K. Wilson/Geo C. Clarke/J. W. Cantwell/Supt. Schools."

The bays flanking the center bay each have a band of six 1/1 double hung wood windows with fixed transoms (although the basement windows do not have the transoms). A cast beltcourse separates the basement from the first floor and the second story windows from the third story windows. The latter beltcourse lines up with the entablature of the center bay.

The outer two bays lack windows except for two 1/1 double hung wood windows at the basement level. The bays are adorned with two 2-story high cast pilasters that support a cast cornice. Between the pilasters are two granite rectangles, the lower ones being larger than the upper. The former are each inscribed with a single word. The one on the north bay is inscribed with the word "KNOWLEDGE" and the one on the south bay is inscribed with the word "VIRTUE."

The rear or east elevation is nearly identical to the west elevation (photos 4 and 6). Due to a slight change of grade, the center portico is accessed by a longer flight of stairs than is the front portico. Beneath the stairways is a ground level entrance to the basement. This entrance is accessed through a segmental arched opening on the north and south sides of the staircase. The lower granite panels on the outer bays are inscribed with different words as well. The left or south bay is inscribed with the word "GOVERNMENT" and the right or north bay is inscribed with the word "INDUSTRY."

Nearly mirror images of each other are the north and south elevations (photos 3 and 5). Each is divided into five main bays. The outer bays have a band of four 1/1 double hung wood windows on each floor. All but the basement windows are surmounted by a fixed transom. The second and fourth bays are projecting stairwell towers. These bays each have entrances accessed by a flight of concrete stairs. The entrances are placed midway between the basement and first floor levels and have paired 6-light paneled wood doors surmounted by single light transoms. Above the entrances at mid-floor level are sets of triplet windows with the transoms. The outer windows are narrower than the center windows. A basement window opening to the left of the west entrance on the north elevation and one to the left of the east entrance on the south elevation have been converted to ground level entrances.

The roof of the building is hidden by a brick parapet trimmed with cast coping. The roof itself is of concrete, slightly sloped for drainage, and covered with a modified bitumen. A skylight is located near the east side of the center of the roof. Two light wells extending from the ground to the roof are located in the center of the building.

Alterations

In 1977, the Fort Worth Independent School District closed the school building, then known as Ernest Parker Middle School. In December 1984, the school district sold the Parker building, as well as the adjacent 1935 gymnasium to the south, the nearby Alexander Hogg School, and the rest of the campus containing a track and a football field to a developer. The developer planned to convert the Parker building to office space. The interior partitions, windows and door were removed. Work ceased on the project and the building was left exposed to the elements until purchased by the current owner in 1999. Prior to this, in 1990-91, an outpatient clinic for the Department of Veterans Affairs was constructed east of the building on the site formerly occupied by the track and football field.

Rehabilitation work on the exterior called for cleaning by low-pressure water wash. Lead based paint was removed from the building base. Damaged masonry elements and the metal cornice were repaired as needed. New wood windows were installed, matching the historic configurations. The window openings on the north and south sides of the center porticos were enlarged and new

window openings were inserted at the basement level to more closely reflect the size of other window openings without the transoms (compare historic openings in Photo 1 to those in Photo 2). New doors were installed. The doors on the east and west elevations were fixed in place. Entrance were inserted in two basement window openings, one on the north elevation and one on the south elevation. Stairs were repaired to meet current code requirements.

As mentioned previously, most of the interior was gutted in the 1980s, leaving little historic fabric. Before the rehabilitation began, hazardous materials were abated. Old plumbing, electrical pipes, conduits, and similar items were removed. Damaged terrazzo flooring was removed. Stairs were protected and preserved for future use as was ceramic tile at the former entries on the east and west sides. Damaged plaster was removed from the walls. Many structural elements that had been damaged by exposure to the elements were repaired. An elevator shaft was constructed on the east end of the north light well. Apartments were constructed following the same configuration of the old corridors. New interior walls were finished with a rough texture. The rehabilitation work was completed in 2001. The building contains 86 mixed income apartments varying in size from 531 square feet for a one bedroom efficiency apartment to 1066 square feet for a two bedroom, two bath apartment. The building, along with the rehabilitated Alexander Hogg School building and a new apartment building constructed on the site of the gymnasium are known as the Homes of Parker Commons.

The site surrounding the building has been altered to accommodate its new use as apartments. Paved parking surrounds the building on the north, east, and south sides. A concrete block trash enclosure was built southeast of the building (excluded from the boundaries of property for this nomination). Low shrubbery has been used to block off the stairs on the west and east elevations. Security fencing surrounds the adjacent parking lots.

Comparison of the integrity of the Fort Worth High School building to other school buildings in Tarrant County listed on the National Register of Historic Places

The former Fort Worth High School building retains a significant amount of its historic and architectural integrity on its exterior, overcoming the loss of historic integrity on the interior. It retains its integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship. The building has lost its historic association as it is no longer used as a school. The setting has been altered with the creation of the parking lots and landscaping. However, with the existence of the Veterans Affairs clinic to the east and the historic telephone exchange building to the south, one still senses the urban feel of the original setting. This, along with the exterior's architectural integrity, conveys the feeling of an early 20th-century school building.

Currently, there are five school buildings individually listed on the National Register in Tarrant County. These include the Bedford School in Bedford, Texas (NR 1997), and the Stephen F. Austin School (NR 1983), the North Fort Worth High School (NR 1995), the James E. Guinn School (NR 1998), and the Riverside Public School (NR 1999) in Fort Worth.

The Bedford School was erected in 1914-1915. The architectural style of the 2-story brick building is best described as vernacular in that it lacks any defining detail or ornamentation with the exception of a large rounded arched opening. The school was added to in 1951, 1952, and 1954. The interior was also modified. The building was nearly gutted by fire in 1991. The fire destroyed the roof and portions of the second floor collapsed. In spite of the damage and loss of historic material, the building was still listed on the National Register at the local level of significance for its association with the development and early educational history of Bedford. The building has since been rehabilitated as a community center.

The James E. Guinn School was constructed in several phases in 1917, 1927, and 1936. The 1917 section had been demolished before the nomination was written. The campus currently consists of two historic buildings, one of which was added on to in the 1950s. The campus also contains a gymnasium that was constructed in the 1950s. Although the 2-story brick buildings were in poor condition with a collapsed roof and the windows boarded over at the time the property was listed on the National Register, they retained most of their historic integrity. Since being listed, one building has been rehabilitated as a business assistance center.

Rehabilitation has started on another building.

The North Fort Worth High School is a 3-story H-shaped building influenced by the Prairie School of architecture. It was constructed in 1918-1919 with major interior alterations made in 1937-1939 and again in 1955-1957. Although the exterior was basically intact at the time of listing on the National Register, the nomination noted that the interior had been changed significantly during the two renovations so that it was difficult to discern how much historic fabric had been retained. This building is the only one of the five that still functions as a public school.

Stephen F. Austin School was constructed in three phases in 1892, 1909, and 1958. The original portion was designed in the Romanesque Revival style and each addition mimicked this style. The 2-story, brick and stone U-shaped building was basically intact at the time it was listed, both on the interior and the exterior. The building now serves as the headquarters for the Williamson-Dickie Manufacturing Company.

The Riverside Public School was constructed in 1911 as a 1-story, 2-room school for African American youth. The design was influenced by the Prairie School. The building was listed despite the loss of it historic windows (replaced with metal, multiple light units), the reconfiguration of the front entrances, and the loss of the front parapet. Prior to listing on the National Register, the building was converted to residential use and the interior altered with the creation of additional rooms, although the configuration of the original two rooms was still discernable. The building is now used as a youth center associated with the Corinth Baptist Church.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

_X_ **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.
_X_ **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 VALUE, 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: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Education, Architecture

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1911-1952

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1911

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Waller and Field, architects; Innis-Graham Construction Company, builder
Gideon Toal, architects (1999-2001 rehabilitation)
M. Myers Development, Inc., general contractor (1999-2001 rehabilitation)

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-9 through 8-15).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheet 9-16).
PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A
_ 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:
x State historic preservation office *(Texas Historical Commission)*
_ Other state agency
_ Federal agency
_ Local government
_ University
x Other -- Specify Repository: Fort Worth Public Library, Fort Worth, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Fort Worth High School building, later known as Fort Worth Junior High, Jennings Avenue Junior High School and Ernest Parker Junior High/Middle School, is a landmark building in the Near South Side of Fort Worth, Texas. The 3-story brick, marble, and concrete building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criteria A and C. It is significant under Criterion A for its association with the education of high school and then junior high school children on Fort Worth's South Side. It served as a high school from 1911-1918, and then as a junior high/middle school from 1918 until its closing in 1977. For a majority of those years, it was segregated by race, serving white students only. The building is also eligible under Criterion C as an excellent example of the Classical Revival style as applied to an early 20th-century school building. It was designed by the local architectural firm of Waller and Field and constructed by the Innis-Graham construction firm in 1909-1911. The completion of the Fort Worth High School was "a fitting climax" to the public school district's attempt to modernize the school system in the early years of the 20th century. Its monumental presence recalls an era when local school districts constructed educational buildings that symbolized the importance of education to the community. The period of significance begins in 1911, the year the building opened for classes, to 1952.

Historical Background

The Fort Worth public school system was organized in 1882 and in 1890, the city's first high school was constructed. As was the case in cities throughout much of the country, the schools were segregated by race. This high school, located south of the central business district at Hemphill and Daggett, was for the city's white students. It was destroyed by fire in December 1909. However, a replacement school was already under construction at the time of the fire.[1]

When the first high school was built in 1890, Fort Worth's population was 23,076. By 1900, the population was about 27,000. With the arrival of the meat-packing industry in 1902, the city grew quickly and by 1910 it had a population of nearly 75,000. This dramatic increase called for the erection of new schools in the growing neighborhoods. With the help of a $450,000 bond issue, the city initiated a school building program in 1909 that provided the opportunity to construct modern schools. According to the school system's Annual Report for 1910, the modernization program incorporated three objectives:

1. The concentration of the upper grades at suitable centers where a better classification and departmental instruction is introduced, and where equipment for manual training, domestic science, agriculture, music, and art is provided.

2. The building of large elementary schools instead of small ones, so that a better gradation of pupils may be secured.

3. The raising of the standard of requirements for teachers in our schools along with the raising of salaries.[2]

Schools constructed during this period included E. M. Daggett, nearby Alexander Hogg, and an addition to Austin School. All of these opened in 1909. Other schools and their opening dates included Sam Rosen, April 1910; the Colored High School, May 1910; Walter Huffman, Peter Smith, A. J. Chambers, and R. Vickery, all of which opened in September 1910. All were of masonry construction. The new (white) high school, located on South Jennings Avenue, opened for classes in September 1911 and was

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[1] *Fort Worth Record*, December 2, 1909, as transcribed in the Federal Writers' Project, Chronological Data, compiled between 1936 and 1941, 7551, [microfilm], Fort Worth Public Library, Fort Worth, Texas.

[2] *Fort Worth Public Schools, Annual Report, September 1910,* 21-22./..

considered "a fitting climax to the other new school houses."[3]

The Fort Worth High School was designed by Waller and Field [Marion L. Waller and E. Stanley Field] and built by Innis-Graham Construction Company. Waller, sometimes by himself and sometimes in partnership with Field (and sometimes another associate named Shaw), designed several schools for the Fort Worth school system. These schools generally were influenced by the Classical Revival or Beaux Arts styles although the design for the Sam Rosen School (no longer extant) was influenced by the work of Louis Sullivan and the Chicago School. Waller also designed the Alexander Hogg School, A. J. Chambers School, and the R. Vickery School. Other designs by Waller included the campus and several buildings at Texas Christian University, of which Jarvis Hall (1911) is still extant, as well as the remodeling of Ann Waggoner Hall at Texas Wesleyan University (1905), the Johnson-Elliott House at 3 Chase Court (1910, NR 1984), and the Parker-Weaver House at 2014 Hemphill (1908). The construction firm of Innis-Graham also built the Alexander Hogg and A. J. Chambers schools, the Graham House at 410 W. Leuda (1910), and Fire Station No. 10 at 2804 Lipscomb Street (1910).[4]

When the Fort Worth High School opened for classes on September 14, 1911, work had not been completed on the building. The superintendent of the schools decided to hold classes in the unfinished school instead of having students continue to meet in scattered locations in other school buildings as they had been forced to do since fire destroyed the old high school. According to the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, classes were held on the first three levels of the building even though they still were in need of some plastering and painting. The upper floor, containing the auditorium and domestic science and fine arts rooms, was finished later in the fall. When completed, the school had approximately 70 rooms.[5]

Enrollment during the first session was larger than expected. Although the overall attendance throughout the system was about the same, nearly 200 additional students enrolled at the high school bringing the opening day registration to nearly 1,000. It was thought the majority of these additional students were ones who had dropped out of school earlier or others who had intended to go to college but were attracted to the new school because of its modern classrooms and equipment. All eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade white students living south of the Trinity River were to attended this school. Because the student population was drawn from across the city, additional streetcars were provided on the lines that served the school before and after school hours.[6]

The new high school was a source of pride for the community and school administrators boasted about its amenities. In his annual report of 1913, Principal R. L. Paschal wrote:

> . . . in utility and convenience of arrangement it has perhaps no superior in this country. There are well equipped laboratories for physics, chemistry, and the biological sciences; the rooms for mechanical drawing, shop and forge work, sewing and cooking, are modern in their appointments; the best apparatus obtainable has been placed in them. The heating plant serves its purpose satisfactorily. Sanitary drinking fountains and other sanitary appliances have

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[3] Ibid., 21.

[4] *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Fort Worth Upper North, Northeast, East, Far South, and Far West* (Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas, 1989), 9, 10, 40-41, 124, 125, 185, 189, 244-245; *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Phase III, Fort Worth's Southside* (Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas, 1986), 34, 37, 47, 72, 93, 132, 137; Carol Rourk, *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Fort Worth Central Business District* (Fort Worth, Texas: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas, 1991), 49.

[5] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* [evening edition], September 1, September 14, 1911. The building was sometimes referred to as being four stories as the basement or ground floor was also used for classrooms.

[6] *Ibid.*, September 1, September 24, 1911.

prevented the spread of any contagious disease.

The Fort Worth High School was one of the first in the United States to equip and maintain a lunch department. Our facilities for performing this service are now first class in every respect. Several hundred students are served every day in the dining room.

An attempt has been made to provide here at home a school that would meet the various needs of our citizens in the education of their children. In the past few years agriculture, botany, physical geography, zoology, forge work, and a commercial course have been added to the curriculum. Some of these subjects had been previously offered, and discontinued on account of lack of laboratory facilities. We have been in no hurry to add new courses before we were ready for them. The emphasis has all along been placed upon doing well the work already undertaken.

Athletic exercises that should reach every pupil in the school are very desirable. We have made a beginning toward this end by introducing folk dancing and other exercises for the girls under the leader of a competent director.

It seems that our efforts are appreciated by our citizens. Of the 7868 white pupils south of the river in school last year, 1235 of them were enrolled in the High School. This is 15.72% of the pupils, nearly three per cent. higher than the average for the country as a whole. There has been an increase of three per cent. in the number of our high school pupils, for the country as a whole, the increase was about one per cent. in the past three years.[7]

Paschal's report went on to say that the number of graduates was increasing with nearly 100 students graduating annually and that a large proportion were going on to college. In addition, students were receiving recognition for their academic excellence. In 1912, students from Fort Worth High School placed first in debate and second in declamation in state competition. In 1913, students took first place in the state for declamation.[8]

When North Fort Worth was annexed into the city limits in 1909, Fort Worth had two high schools for white students. The Jennings Avenue school was sometimes referred to as Central High School or School No. 19. Fort Worth's continued growth throughout the 1910s caused the city to construct another high school for the South Side. This school, located closer to the central business district, opened in 1918. The school on Jennings Avenue was converted to a junior high school and was known as Fort Worth Junior High, the city's first junior high school. It served the needs of the seventh and eighth graders south of the Trinity River. However, from 1919 to 1925, seventh graders were transferred back to nearby Alexander Hogg School due to overcrowding at the junior high school.[9] As Fort Worth continued to grow, additional schools, including junior high schools, were constructed during building campaigns in the 1920s and 1930s.

The Fort Worth Junior High School, despite its large size and numerous classrooms, received some criticism in a study published in1931. The study was conducted by George D. Strayer of the Teachers College of Columbia University. His report concluded that new schools were urgently needed. The junior high school was cited for its small classrooms, many of which were less

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[7] *Fort Worth Public Schools Annual Report, September 1913*, 30-31.

[8] *Ibid.*, 31.

[9] M. H. Moore, "A School Building Program, Fort Worth, Texas" (M.A. thesis, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, June, 1930), 55.

than 500 square feet. According to the report, "This necessitates smaller classes than are usually found in the junior high school organization, and is undoubtedly a factor causing the highest cost per pupil in average daily attendance of any high school in the system." Some additional space was gained in the classrooms by removing the desks from the rooms and using tablet armchairs. The school plant also was cited for its lack of space for play and physical activities. It was recommended that the houses located north of the school be removed and that the telephone building located south of the school be acquired and demolished and a gymnasium constructed there. The report concluded that too much had been invested in the site to do anything less than to continue to use the school. With an absolute roll of 1,412 and an average daily attendance of 1,249, it was recommended that the student population be reduced by 150-200 pupils.[10]

It had been hoped that during the school building program begun in 1925 that a gymnasium for the junior high school would be constructed but those plans did not come to fruition.[11] The lack of physical education space was remedied with the construction of a gymnasium in 1935. This was accomplished with the help of the Public Works Administration (PWA), one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs designed to stimulate the country's economy in the face of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Through the PWA, a $4,000,000+ school building program was initiated in Fort Worth in 1934 that included the construction of a gym for the junior high, then known as Jennings Avenue Junior High School (School No. 40). In July 1934, the Board of Education approved the purchase of property north of the school for the location of the gym. Actual construction began in April 1935. The building was designed by Clyde H. Woodruff and constructed by Cain and Cain. The I-shaped building was built of reinforced concrete with brick veneer and measured 87' x 157'. The gym area was flanked by two-story blocks containing dressing rooms, showers, office, and storage areas. The exterior of the building was ornamented with cast friezes and panels depicting basketballs, footballs, baseballs and other sporting equipment. The gymnasium was constructed at a cost of $59,676 and was the eighth project to be placed under construction in the PWA program.[12]

The school campus also benefited from another New Deal program. Under the Work Projects Administration (also known as the Works Progress Administration or simply as WPA), Fort Worth schools were beautified as the result of a landscaping program that was accomplished in at least two phases. In December 1935, $25,645 was allocated for landscaping Jennings Avenue Junior High. In 1938, an additional $533.10 was approved for the school. Although the exact nature of the improvements is not known, it is possible that stairs south of the gymnasium and the tennis courts located between the gymnasium and the school building were constructed at this time. Neither of these features are extant.[13]

At the time of the construction of the gymnasium, Jennings Avenue Junior High School was the largest junior high in the city. It had 44 classrooms, 7 large administrative offices, 2 large study halls, and still retained the auditorium. It had an enrollment of

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[10] George D. Strayer, *Report of the Survey of the Schools of Fort Worth, Texas* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1931), 122-23; Moore, "A School Building Program," 126.

[11] Moore, "A School Building Program, Fort Worth, Texas," 128.

[12] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 26, 1934, as transcribed in the Federal Writers' Project, Chronological Data, 9524; *Fort Worth Star Telegram* [evening edition], April 3, 1935; Building Permit #14703. A transcription of the permit is located in the file for the Jennings Avenue/Ernest Parker Gymnasium located at Historic Fort Worth, Inc., Fort Worth, Texas. The transcriber recorded the date of the permit as March 29, 1930. Newspaper research reveals that the actual date should be 1935.

[13] Article from the *Fort Worth Star- Telegram*, December 11, 1935, found in the "Schools--Fort Worth--History" clippings file, Fort Worth Public Library; article from the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* [morning edition], August 18, 1938, found in the "WPA" clippings file, Fort Worth Public Library.

1,536 students.[14] Around 1946, the name of the school was changed to Ernest Parker Junior High (School No. 50) in honor of a former principal. This is the name it retained through the end of the period of significance.[15]

The campus containing the school and gymnasium buildings was located on a long narrow block that was bordered by Terrell Avenue on the north, Jennings Avenue on the west, Rosedale Street on the south and May Street on the east. Several houses were located east of the school between May and St. Louis Avenue. Sometime after 1951, the houses were removed, May Street was vacated, and a track and football field were constructed in this area.[16]

Following World War II, the neighborhoods around Ernest Parker Junior High began to decline with the encroachment of commercial establishments and the flight of residents to the suburbs. Thought was given to the closing of the school but a decision was made to rehabilitate the building in 1960. The Fort Worth Independent School District eventually adopted the middle school system and Ernest Parker became a middle school. Continual decline in the surrounding neighborhoods and decreasing enrollment finally forced the closing of the school in May 1977.[17]

In December 1984, the Fort Worth Independent School District sold the Ernest Parker Middle School and Gymnasium and the neighboring Alexander Hogg School to a developer. The developer's plans called for the conversion of the schools to office use and the construction of two 20-story towers on the property containing condominiums and apartments. The interior of the former high school building was gutted and all windows and partitions were removed, although the auditorium's proscenium was retained. However, the project fell through and work ceased on the site. In 1990-91, an outpatient clinic for the Department of Veterans Affairs was constructed on the grounds where the track and football field were located.

In 1999, the current owner began rehabilitating the former Fort Worth High School into apartments now known as the Homes of Parker Commons. The apartments were completed in 2001. The building contains 86 apartments varying in size from 531 square feet for a one bedroom efficiency apartment to 1066 square feet for a two bedroom, two bath apartment. The nearby Ernest Parker Gymnasium was demolished for the construction of an additional apartment building and the adjacent Alexander Hogg School was also converted to apartments. Although the setting of the building has been altered with landscaping and parking lots, the former Fort Worth High School building is still an imposing fixture in this South Side neighborhood. It still evokes the value that Fort Worth placed in its school building program in the early decades of the 20th century as it now serves the residential needs of the area in the 21st century.

Architectural Significance of the Fort Worth High School

The Fort Worth High School building is eligible for the National Register at the local level under Criterion C as an excellent example of the Classical Revival style as applied to an educational institution. The building bears such hallmarks of the style as the classical (Tuscan) columns supporting a large pediment and a denticulated cornice. The design of monumental high school buildings

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[14] Federal Writers' Project, "Guide to Fort Worth," (unpublished manuscript), compiled between 1936 and 1941, 21268, [microfilm], Fort Worth Public Library, Fort Worth, Texas.

[15] Fort Worth City Directory, 1945, 1946.

[16] Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, January 1945 corrected to 1951, Volume 1, page 47. [Microfilm]. Fort Worth Public Library; Carol S. Childress, *Adaptive Uses: A Feasibility Report Prepared for the Parker Ad Hoc Committee, May 1980*, 19.

[17] Article from the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* [evening edition], January 28, 1960, found in the "Schools--Fort Worth--History" clippings file, Fort Worth Public Library; Childress, *Adaptive Uses*, 6.

in urban areas was common prior to World War II. Such buildings reflected the importance communities placed on education and high school buildings became neighborhood landmarks.[18] The inscription of the words "Knowledge," "Virtue," "Industry," and "Government" on granite panels at the corners of the building reinforce the value of secondary education to the community.

School buildings constructed for white students in Fort Worth during the first two decades of the 20th century typically reflected Classical or Beaux Arts influence. Generally two stories, these buildings were symmetrical masonry blocks of fireproof construction. Schools from the 1880s and 1890s were influenced by Romanesque or Gothic Revival styles. They were typically 2- to 3-stories and of masonry construction but as evidenced by the destruction of the high school building in 1910, were susceptible to fire. Fort Worth's only extant 19th century school building is the former Stephen F. Austin School (NR 1983), although it received additions in 1909 and 1958 that were sensitive to the original Romanesque Revival style.

When constructed, the Fort Worth High School building took up nearly the full width of the block, resulting in two elevations facing north/south streets. That is why the east and west elevations are essentially identical. The east elevation formerly faced May Street and the west faces Jennings Avenue. With its proximity to the streets and the former telephone company building to the south, the old high school building was also illustrative of a common characteristic of early 20th-century school buildings in Texas. According to a 1941 study, six out of seven schools in Texas had inadequate sites and recommended that elementary schools have at least five acres, junior high schools have ten acres, and high schools have twenty acres. This report also called for the construction of less "monumental" types of schools and more adaptable and economical schools. Recommendations such as these fueled the construction of post-World War II schools in the suburbs, which tended to be located on larger sites, had fewer stories, and were less ornate than their early 20th-century counterparts.[19] The Fort Worth High School building still retains a very urban and monumental presence despite the alterations to the site and its rehabilitation as an apartment building.

The building was designed by Marion L. Waller (d. 1943) and E. Stanley Field. Little is known of Field. Waller lived in Fort Worth from 1901 until 1930. His designs included a variety of building types such as the 2-story Googins Building at 1539 North Main Street (c. 1911), the Johnson-Elliott House at 3 Chase Court (with Field, 1910, NR 1984), and the Frank and Mellie Love House in Georgetown, Texas (1916, NR 1986). But his obituary stated that he "was known as the 'father of Texas schools' because he had supervised construction of more than 300 such structures." Extant public school buildings designed by Waller in Fort Worth include the Alexander Hogg School, A. J. Chambers School, and the R. Vickery School. The Fort Worth High School and Alexander Hogg School buildings were unusual among the early 20th-century schools in that they received no additions. The A. J. Chambers School was incorporated into the I. M. Terrell High School in 1936-37 and the R. Vickery School also received an addition in 1936-37. Waller's other school commissions in Fort Worth included the campus and several buildings at Texas Christian University, of which Jarvis Hall (1911) is still extant, as well as the remodeling of Ann Waggoner Hall at Texas Wesleyan University (1905). Besides the numerous school buildings he designed in Fort Worth, he also designed buildings at North Texas State Teachers College in Denton and in the Rio Grande Valley where he lived from 1930 to 1940. His obituary also stated that he had a $1,000,000 contract with the Mexican government but had to flee the country during the 1924 revolution.[20]

The listing of the former Fort Worth High School building on the National Register of Historic Places will help recognize its significance in the modernization of the city's school system in the early part of the 20th century. It continued to serve the educational

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[18] Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas, 1895-1945,* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 94-97.

[19] William Wayne Caudill, *Space for Teaching: An Approach to the Design of Elementary Schools for Texas,* Bulletin of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, Fourth Series, No. 9 (College Station, Texas, August 1, 1941), 3, 9.

[20] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 12, 1943.

needs of South Side (white) youth throughout the first half of the century. It is therefore eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion A. It is also eligible under Criterion C at the local level for its Classical Revival design as applied to a public school in Fort Worth as well as its representation of the practice of building monumental schools in the years prior to World War II. Its period of significance is from 1911, when it opened, to 1952. It still retains a significant amount of its exterior architectural integrity. Its recent rehabilitation saved the building from further deterioration and perhaps even demolition. It is now contributing to the revitalization of the city's Near South Side.

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Vaughn, Chris. "Back to Life." *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 24, 2001.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: approximately 1.15 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	656520	3623020
2.	##	######	#######
3.	##	######	#######
4.	##	######	#######

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheet 10-17)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION (see continuation sheet 10-17)

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: Susan Allen Kline, Historic Preservation Consultant

ORGANIZATION: **DATE:** June 2002

STREET & NUMBER: 2421 Shirley Avenue **TELEPHONE:** (817) 921-0127

CITY OR TOWN: Fort Worth **STATE:** Texas **ZIP CODE:** 76109

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see continuation sheet MAP-18)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet PHOTO-19)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Marvin B. Myers, President, Parker Commons, Ltd.

STREET & NUMBER: 3100 McKinnon Street, Suite 800 **TELEPHONE:** (214) 969-7328

CITY OR TOWN: Dallas **STATE:** Texas **ZIP CODE:** 75201-7003

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point on the east curbline of South Jennings Avenue parallel with a line 40 feet south of the southwest corner of the building; thence north along the east curbline of South Jennings Avenue approximately 238 feet to a point parallel with a line 40 north of the northwest corner of the building; thence east along that line approximately 210 feet to a point parallel with a line 40 east of the northeast corner of the building; thence south along that line 238 feet to a point 40 feet south of the southeast corner of the building; thence west along that line approximately 210 feet to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries were drawn to exclude portions of the parking lots on the north, east, and south sides of the buildings as well as a concrete block trash enclosure southeast of the building, all of which are not historic to the building. The nomination includes all property historically associated with the building.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1951
(Fort Worth High School Indicated by Arrow)

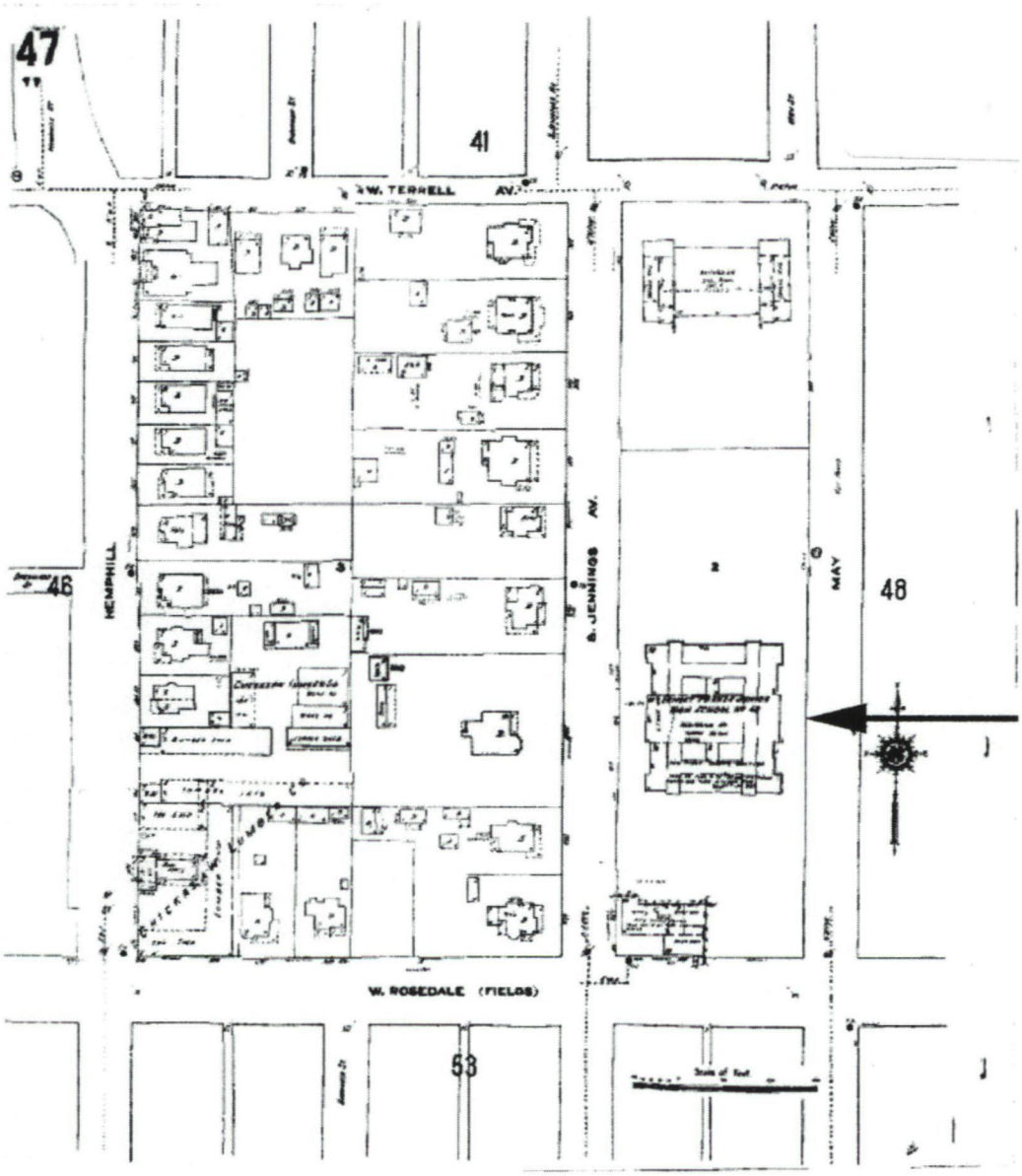

Photo Log

Fort Worth High School
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Supplemental Photo

Photographer: Unknown
Date: Unknown, possibly 1911
Negative: Fort Worth Public Library, Genealogy and Local History Division
View: Southwest Oblique, Camera Facing Northeast
Photo 1 of 6

File Photos

Photographer: Susan Kline
Date: June 2002
Negative: Texas Historical Commission

View: Northwest Oblique, Camera Facing Southeast
Photo 2 of 6

View: Northeast Oblique, Camera Facing Southwest
Photo 3 of 6

View: Southeast Oblique, Camera Facing Northwest
Photo 4 of 6

View: Southeast Oblique, Camera Facing Northwest
Photo 5 of 6

View: Detail of East Elevation, Camera Facing West
Photo 6 of 6

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Fort Worth High School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Tarrant

DATE RECEIVED: 10/29/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/22/02
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/08/02 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/13/02
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02001515

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

✓ ACCEPT ___ RETURN ___ REJECT 12/12/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA_____

REVIEWER_____ DISCIPLINE_____

TELEPHONE_____ DATE_____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL
1015 SOUTH JENNINGS AVENUE
FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 6


FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL

1015 SOUTH JENNINGS AVENUE

FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 6


STOP

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL
1015 SOUTH JENNINGS AVENUE
FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 6


FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL

1015 SOUTH JENNINGS AVENUE

FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 6

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL
1015 SOUTH JENNINGS AVENUE
FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 6


FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL
1910

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL

1015 SOUTH JENNINGS AVENUE

FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 6

FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL
1015 SOUTH JENNING'S AVENUE
FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 14/656520/3623020

USGS
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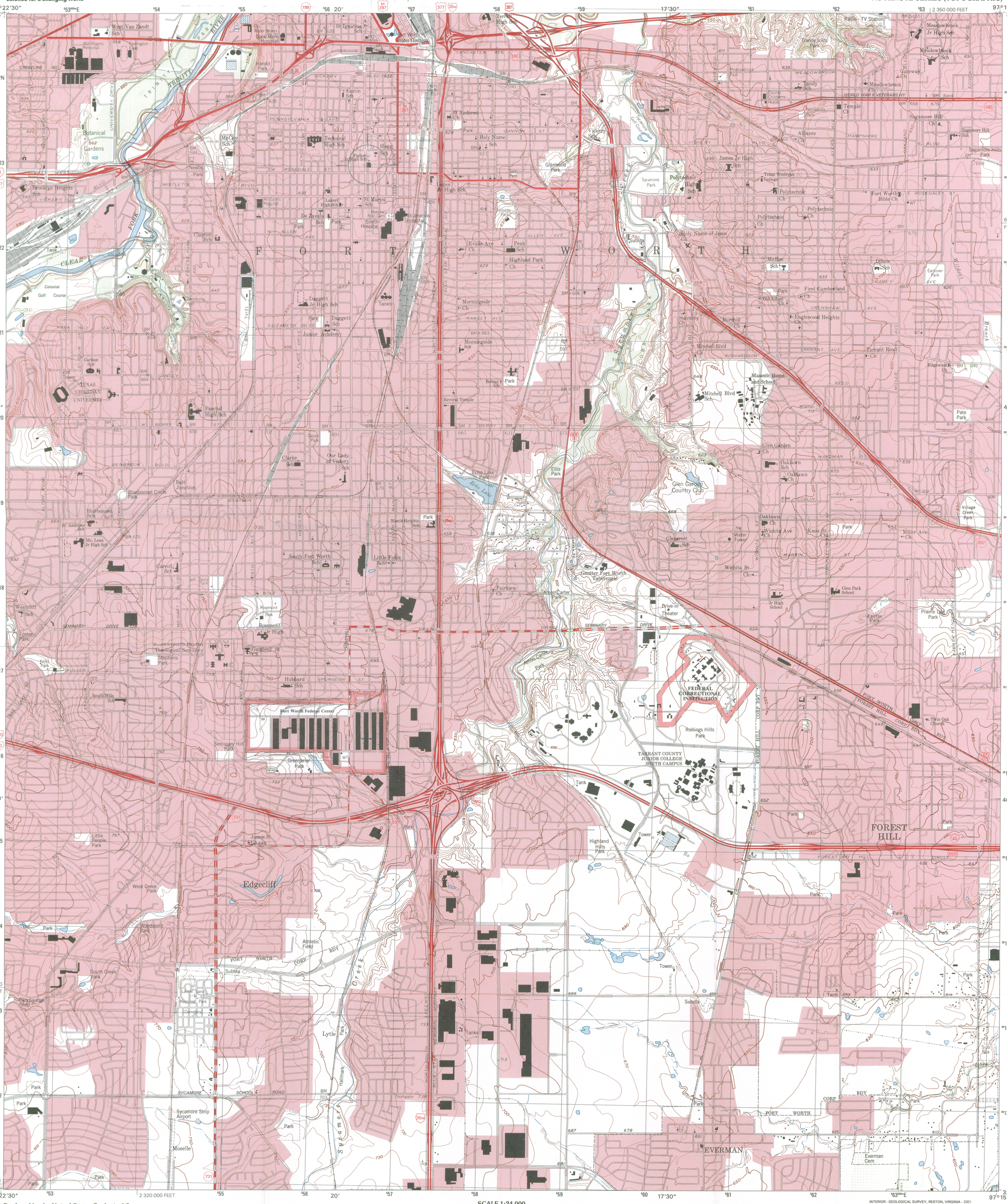
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

FORT WORTH QUADRANGLE
TEXAS-TARRANT CO.
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Topography compiled 1952. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1995 and other sources. Survey control current as of 1955. Boundaries current as of 2000

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 14
10 000-foot ticks: Texas Coordinate system of 1983 (north central zone)

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Houses of worship, schools, and other labeled buildings verified 1955

MN
GN
0°55′ 16 MILS
5½° 98 MILS
UTM GRID AND 2001 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

20% TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER

SCALE 1:24 000

KILOMETERS
METERS
MILES
FEET

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

TEXAS
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3
4		5
6	7	8

1 Lake Worth
2 Haltom City
3 Hurst
4 Benbrook
5 Kennedale
6 Primrose
7 Burleson
8 Mansfield

ADJOINING 7.5′ QUADRANGLE NAMES

3297-424

INTERIOR - GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 2001

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway hard surface ..... Light-duty road, hard or improved surface .....
Secondary highway hard surface ..... Unimproved road .....

Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

FORT WORTH, TX

1995

NIMA 6549 III NE-SERIES V882

ISBN 0-607-93643-8