

FINAL

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 Central Avenue School

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_ 095-015-49088

2. Location

street & number 2120 Central Avenue N/A  not for publication  
city or town Anderson N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Madison code 095 zip code 46016

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 36CFR 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.)

  
Signature of certifying official/Title

5/1/2007  
Date

Indiana Department of Natural 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:

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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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**

Indiana's Public Common & High Schools

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

VACANT

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque  
19th & 20th c. AMER.: Bungalow/Craftsma

foundation STONE: Limestone

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof ASPHALT

other CONCRETE

**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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1891-1956

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Parker, Charles F.
Watkins, Ernest R.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A-G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic 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):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, etc.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, etc.

Name of repository:

Central Avenue School  
Name of Property

Madison IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6	6	1	2	8	4	0	4	4	3	6	9	1	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

3 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

2 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4 

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 Carol Ann Schweikert  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 09-30-2006  
street & number 307 N. 10th Street telephone 317/ 776-1239  
city or town Noblesville state IN zip code 46060

## 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 Quality Housing Development Inc.  
street & number 1701 Pilgrim Blvd; PO Box 308 telephone 765/ 759-1121  
city or town Yorktown state IN zip code 47396

**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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**Description**

Central Avenue School, in the Fletcher addition to the city of Anderson, Indiana, is a combination of Romanesque Revival (1891) and Craftsman (1921) styles. The brick and stone building is 2 stories tall on a raised basement with two 3-story towers. The original 1891 school is on the west side of the complex while an attached 1921 addition is on the east. While the two buildings are both masonry construction, similar in shape and massing, the style, decorative elements and door and window openings differ significantly.

The building is sighted closer to Fletcher Avenue than Central because of the 1921 addition. Originally, it was centered between Fletcher and Central Avenues. On the Central Avenue side, the lot is raised several feet from street level. There are four steps up from the sidewalk to a concrete walkway leading to the asphalt lot. The asphalt runs up to the façade of the building except where window wells surround basement windows. A chain link fence runs along the lot on the west and north sides of the property. There are small grassy areas on both sides of the concrete walkway with four mature trees on one side. A fifth mature tree is located on the north side of the building next to the 1921 addition.

The far northwest corner of the property is a grass-covered playground surrounded by a chain link fence. The playground equipment has been removed. An alley runs along the south side of the school. The lot on the Fletcher Street side is level with the sidewalk.

On the north and south sides of the building, both the 1891 school and the 1921 addition are visible. On the west façade, only the 1891 is visible and only the 1921 addition on the east.

All basement and first floor window openings have been boarded up for security. The original sashes throughout the building were replaced sometime after 1976. The replacement sashes are shorter than both the 1891 and 1921 windows on the first and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The openings above the new sashes are infilled with a modern insulating material that is easily removed. The basement window openings have received a variety of alterations, discussed in each section.

**1891 Exterior**

The 1891 building is two stories with raised basement and constructed of brick and limestone. The bricks are laid in the running bond pattern in

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this brick bearing wall structure. The first floor windows have round arches, the second floor, segmented arches. The arches are comprised of one brick stretcher face and one brick header end in alternating courses. All 1891 window openings have rough-faced limestone sills. The roofline has decorative corbelling and a painted metal cornice on all four facades. The 1891 roof is hipped with three gables located on the north, south and east facades.

The west facade faces Central Avenue and is composed of three parts (Photo 1). The central 3-story tower projects out approximately eight feet from the front of the building. Its original sharply pitched pyramidal roof was replaced by a flat or very shallow pitched roof prior to 1954. The tower roofline has a metal cornice with corbelled brick accents on all four sides. The main entrance is centered in the tower underneath a large round brick arch. Originally, this arch was open and the main entrance to the school was recessed beneath the arch within the tower. The original arch was two brick faces tall. A set of steps starting at the front edge of the tower carried students up to the front doors at the first floor level.

By 1954, the arch had been partially infilled with newer brick and a stone foundation to mimic the original construction. However, the new stones are smaller than those in the original foundation. The new brick in the arch and approximately 13 rows of brick beneath the first floor window sills are painted red. This section of painted façade continues around all four facades of the building. All other exterior brick remains exposed.

The existing entrance to the 1891 building is located within the arch and has a set of double aluminum doors. A modern vinyl awning is attached to the façade over the doorway. Centered above the main entrance is a large round arched window opening with replacement sashes. Above the window opening is the nameplate in metal letters, "Central Ave. 1891 building". The nameplate is recessed into the façade within a decorative brick arch.

The two sections flanking the central tower are mirror images. Each section has two pairs of windows in the basement, first and second floors. Vents have been added in the façade underneath each 1st and 2nd floor window. Modern drain pipes run down this façade on each side of the tower from the roofline gutters to the stone basement.

The north side of the 1891 building is divided into three sections (Photo 2). The center section projects approximately 4 inches out from the façade

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and is capped by a gable at the attic level. The straight line of the gable is broken on each side by a triangular accent. A metal cap along the top of the gable protects the brick edge. The attic is lit by a Palladian window in the gable with a single stone sill across all three. The center one is a round arch opening that is boarded. The shorter side openings have flat arches. The right is infilled with louvers, the left with half glass and half louvers. Chimneys integrated into the brick walls are visible at the roofline on each side of the gable. The chimneys have decorative corbelling where they meet the roofline. The center projection has two window openings on the first and second floors. A basement window is centered under one window bay and a modern door under the other. The steps from the ground level down to the basement door are modern construction with brick walls and poured concrete. The steps are covered by a modern flat roof canopy. Drain pipes extend down this façade on either side of the center section.

Except for vents, the sections flanking the middle projection are mirror images. There are two window openings on each of the three floors. The basement has flat stone headers, the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, round brick arches and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, brick segmented arches. The façade has irregularly spaced vents for the modern mechanicals. Two basement windows have been boarded up and two were partially infilled with brick and smaller windows installed.

The south side of the 1891 building is identical to the north except for the vents and the basement door (Photo 6). The vents vary based on the mechanicals and the south side has no basement door. There are five single basement openings. The middle opening is infilled with concrete block. The remaining four are boarded up with plywood. Various conduits and electric meters serving the school building are mounted to this façade.

The original 1891 rear façade (east) matched the north and south façades in profile and the west façade in layout of the openings. However, the center projected slightly farther out than those on the north and south facades (Photo 3). Decorative details on the rear of the 1891 building including the roofline corbelling match the previous facades (Photos 2&3).

The rear projection of the 1891 building is obscured on all three levels by a narrow section of the 1921 addition (Photo 3). However, the pairs of windows on either side of the projection were left intact. The roofline gable and chimney tops remain partially visible. The basement windows on the rear façade were closed up with either brick or concrete block.

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**1921 Exterior**

The 1921 addition is simpler in style and decorative features and reflects the Craftsman style. The addition is masonry construction with a flat roof and raised parapet. The basement is poured concrete. The color of the 1921 cloister brick is slightly different from the original brick making it easy to see the where the two were joined, but the color difference is not visually detracting. The roofline parapet is crenellated with decorative stepped brickwork. A concrete cap runs along the top of the parapet. The 1921 addition has fewer window openings than the 1891 building, due in part to the improvements in interior lighting between 1891 and 1921 decreasing the need for natural light. Fewer, but wider window openings may also be due to the increased use of structural steel.

Three stringcourses run around the exterior of the addition at the height of the second floor windows, at a line between the basement and first floor and at the ground level (Photos 6&8). The stringcourses are composed of variations of brick faces with square concrete accents at the corners of the building, window openings and other 90 degree turns. The ground level stringcourse, flush with the façade, has one soldier brick row and one rowlock brick row. The basement stringcourse is comprised of two rows of soldier bricks divided by a concrete drip cap. The brick in the 2nd floor stringcourse matches the basement, but is laid in a stair-stepped arrangement, projecting slightly out from the façade. The 2nd floor window headers are incorporated into the second floor stringcourse as flat arches with small square concrete accents in the corners of the windows.

The first floor windows are unadorned by any decorative treatment, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor by the upper stringcourse. The large wall expanses not broken by window or door openings have large square or rectangular designs laid in the brick utilizing soldier rows of bricks with concrete accents in the corners (Photo 6). These designs are found on the rear, north and south facades and the north and south facades of the tower.

The joint between the two buildings was constructed as part of the 1921 addition and is narrower than the main body of the addition (Photo 3). On the north side, a 2nd floor doorway provides access to a metal fire escape. A ramp runs along the addition from the northeast corner, along the north side and around the corner to a first floor door for handicapped access. The ramp is a modern addition constructed of concrete and concrete block with a metal handrail.



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The Fletcher Avenue (east) façade of the 1921 addition has a central, 3-story projecting tower, similar to the Central Avenue façade in layout, but with distinctly different decorative details (Photo 5). The tower has a stepped roofline with concrete cap. The primary 1921 entrance into the school is centered in the tower (Photo 8). The original doors were replaced with double aluminum frame doors. A flat roof canopy is attached to the façade just above the door header. The original transom opening remains in place above the canopy. The doorway is accented along the sides and across the top with decorative brickwork that connects to the basement level stringcourse. Around the doorway, the stringcourse is stepped with varying configurations of soldier rows of bricks and a concrete cap. Like the windows, the corners of the doorway have square accents. The modern canopy is supported by two cast iron columns resting on half walls. The half walls are brick with concrete caps and accents and are original to the building. A pair of tall narrow windows is centered above the doorway on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The original sashes were replaced with shorter double hung windows and infilled above. A large rectangular concrete tablet inset in the façade above the windows is inscribed "Central Avenue School 1921".

The two sections flanking the central tower on the east facade are mirror images. The first floor has three bays composed of two pairs of windows flanking a single middle window. Each window has a simple concrete window sill. This five window layout is duplicated on 2nd floor. The first floor windows are completely unadorned while the headers on the second floor are part of the decorative brick stringcourse previously described. The basement floor has two pairs of windows centered under the pairs on the first and second floors. Vents are located in the façade under each of the 1st and 2nd floor windows except for the single middle windows. A doorway to the basement is located in the north side of the tower. The header for this doorway is incorporated into the brick stringcourse at the basement level. A concrete ramp runs from the northeast corner, along this façade to the basement door in the tower. It provides handicapped access to the basement. A metal handrail runs along both side of the ramp and is attached to the building on one side.

The north façade of the addition has two windows, one on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors, near the northwest corner. On the south side, the addition has three windows in the southwest corner of the main body, one on each floor (Photo 6).

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In 1949, a small addition was constructed along the south side of the narrow section of the 1921 addition (Photo 7). The foundation of this addition is concrete block and the brick is newer and slightly different in color. The four window openings are the smallest in the building. A basement door and steps were constructed into this addition with concrete block. A sloping canopy attached to the façade over the door and along one side is wood construction. The HVAC units are located next to the door. Although this addition is small and not visible from either primary façade, it obscures one bay of window openings on the rear of the 1891 building.

**INTERIOR**

The plan of Central Avenue School is primarily comprised of two main sections, the 1891 original building and the 1921 addition. Both are similar in layout with classrooms opening off a wide central hallway (Photos 14 & 17) accessed from stairways in towers on either end. The original 1891 classrooms measured approximately 25 feet by 35 feet. Classrooms in the 1921 addition measured approximately 25 feet by 30 feet. Each floor has a strongly symmetrical plan, however, 1891 classroom doorways in the center of the building are not symmetrically located across the main corridor.

The 1891 interior is more elaborate than the 1921 with fluted door and window trim and corner modillions (Photos 18 & 27). Beadboard and decorative trim accent the lower fourth of the hallway walls and many classroom walls (Photos 19 & 25). 1921 trim consists primarily of simple door trim, chair rails and baseboards (Photo 23). Many chalkboards, storage closets and built-in cabinets are intact (Photos 15,19,20,24 & 25).

The original high ceilings were lowered throughout the building with metal framing and acoustical tiles. The height of the dropped ceilings varied between the top of the door transom, the middle of the transom and the top of the doorway. The ceiling frames were routed around the original trim on the windows and doorways and across the door transoms and window openings, leaving the trim and openings intact. Those lowered ceilings have all been removed leaving mix of wall colors and finishes. No original ceiling fixtures were found.

The original window openings remain intact. However, the original window sashes have been replaced with shorter double-hung windows on the first and second floors. Modern materials have been used to infill the window openings above these sashes (Photos 18 & 20). The basement window sashes

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are replacement windows in the original size openings. The two arched windows within the 1891 stairhall retain their original sashes. Almost all of the original door openings remain intact with modern doors installed. Two original 1891 doors remain in their original locations (noted in the description of the specific area) and one door was relocated to an infill room in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor hallway. Two 1921 doors remain with a third relocated to an infill room.

Floor finishes throughout the building changed through the years. The last alterations installed carpeting or linoleum throughout much of the building. 1940s/50s tiled floors remained visible in isolated storage areas and under much of the carpet or linoleum. The modern finishes have all been removed, revealing the original hardwood floors in varying conditions. The layout and spacing of the original desks is evident in most classrooms by the darkened areas on the floor.

The main entrance on the west end opens into the stairwell at a landing between the first and second floors. This stairwell is located within the tower(Photo 11). It is a later alteration, possibly part of the 1921 or 1949 additions. The original entry was recessed underneath the brick arch on the exterior façade. The doors were at the top of a wide set of steps that ended at the first floor. The existing stairs circle around the stairwell from the basement up to the second floor. The stairs are supported by a modern concrete block foundation at the basement level. On the east end in the 1921 tower, the entrance opens into the stairwell between the basement and first floor

While the basic layout between the three floors is very similar, there are a few differences. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor 1891 classrooms have doorways between the classrooms on each side of the hallway. The moldings match the other window and door moldings, so they were likely original or an early alteration. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor 1891 classrooms do not have these secondary doorways. Each of the 1891 1<sup>st</sup> floor classrooms has a corner cabinet, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor classrooms do not.

Throughout the building, the chalkboards vary in size and style. The 1891 chalkboards have rounded wood trim and deep chalk trays. A later style has two sections, the lower section, 2/3 the height, is the chalkboard with the upper third a push-pin board. A few chalkboards are very simple without an attached chalk tray.

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The 1891 and 1921 buildings have some distinct differences, reflecting the changes to school architecture and expenditures by school boards. The 1891 building is more ornate with fluted door and window trim and decorative built-in cabinets. The 1921 building has minimal decorative trim, mostly simple baseboards and chair rail. The 1921 building incorporates large storage closets within the classroom space and most had built-in cabinets and small closets. The 1891 building had only single built-in cabinets. The 1891 doorways all had large, operable transoms to allow airflow between the spaces. None of the 1921 doors had transoms. The 1921 building has fewer, smaller windows.

**Basement Floor**

The basement can be accessed by a stairwell on the west end or by steps and a ramp on the east end. There are three secondary exterior entrances, one on the north façade into the 1891 building, one on the south through the 1949 addition and a handicapped accessible entrance in the 1921 tower. Where visible, the interior basement walls are primarily brick construction. Originally, the 1891 basement rooms were not used as classrooms, but when additional classroom space was needed, two rooms were converted to classrooms.

1891 The stairwell on the west end opens into a large central corridor. Brick bearing walls running east/west define this central corridor which mimics the central hallways on the upper floors. Unlike the upper floors, this corridor is divided into two rooms by a brick wall running north/south. This wall has one door near the north end which was originally an opening with no door. Near the south end is a small wood cabinet high on the wall and accessible from both sides. Cast iron support columns run through the middle of the corridor through both rooms. These columns were likely installed when the staircase was moved from the central hallway to the 1891 tower. The walls of this corridor are covered with child-friendly murals. The west end wall has a large bulletin board.

The east/west walls contain large round brick arches (Photo 9). These arches were later infilled with partitions or doorways to create distinct classrooms on each side. These infilled partitions and doorways have been removed. Child-friendly murals and chalkboards indicate the use of the northwest and southwest rooms as classrooms.

A single large arch in the south wall was partially infilled with a doorway to access the southwest classroom. The classroom remains largely intact.

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A segmented arched doorway in the east wall accesses a storage/mechanicals area. The edges of this doorway are rounded and there is no evidence of a previous door. The east wall between the classroom and storage area has a built-in bookcase, baseboard and chair rail molding. Chalkboards are located on the north, south and east walls.

The north wall of the west end corridor has two round brick arches. The northwest classroom remains open with bookshelves along the north wall. A doorway on the east wall accesses a secondary hallway. The exterior basement door on the north side opens into this hallway.

The middle corridor room has arches(Photo 9) like those in the west end room, but with two on the south side and one on the north. The northeast and southeast rooms were subdivided by modern concrete block walls creating restrooms in the northeast room and offices and storage rooms in the southeast room. The modern walls have been removed from both rooms leaving an open floorplan with no doors.

1921 At the bottom of the stairs in the 1921 addition is an interior ramp and an exterior door from an outside ramp providing handicapped access to the basement. A built-in bench/storage cabinet is found halfway down the ramp at the east end of the building, under the stairs. At the end of the ramp are double doors in a modern, half-glass wall. Through these doors is the central corridor in the 1921 basement. This corridor has carpeted floors, deep baseboard trim and mechanicals running overhead. The 1921 basement has two classrooms, relatively intact. Each room has an original storage space along the west side of the classroom accessed by doorways at either end. These doorways did not have doors originally and have smooth, curved edges. Both classrooms have their original wood doors with a large recessed panel below four panes of glass. The walls in both classrooms have smooth curves at the corners and ceilings.

The north classroom has chalkboards stretched across the north and south walls. The west wall has a small bulletin board. Both the classroom and storage room have deep baseboards. The narrow storage space has wall murals, mechanicals and built-in cabinets on one end (Photo 10).

The south classroom has chalkboards on the south and west walls and a bulletin board on the north. The storage did not have doors originally, but half-doors have been added to both doorways.

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In the narrow section joining the two buildings, the floor slopes down from the 1891 building to the 1921. Modern walls in this area form a room which encroaches on the corridor. The 1949 addition is accessed through this room. These rooms, including a small kitchen, have modern finishes.

**First Floor**

The first floor is laid out with a central corridor and classrooms on either side. Stairwells in towers on both ends provide access to this floor with a 3<sup>rd</sup> exterior entrance on the north side of the narrow 1921 section.

1891 The first floor landing in the 1891 stairwell has arched windows on each side of the central doors (Photo 26), deeply set into the wall. These were originally exterior windows within the archway before it was enclosed and they are the only original window sashes left. Both sashes are wood construction. The upper arched sash is immobile with a large single pane of glass. The lower sash is operable, also with a large single glass pane. The window hardware, including the lock, remains intact. On the tower side, the windows have iron bars spanning the full height of the opening.

Double modern doors in a glass wall open onto a central hallway, twenty-six feet wide. The original walls had beadboard paneling capped with wood trim along the lower fourth. Much of this paneling and trim remains intact along the hallway walls.

Modern interior partitions significantly encroached on the 1891 first floor hallway and required the removal of one door into the southeast classroom.

The original northwest classroom in the 1891 building (Photo 12) was subdivided by modern walls leaving the original doorways remain intact. A corner cabinet is intact in the southeast corner. The trim surrounding all the 1891 corner cabinets is fluted with corner medallions to match the window and door trim (Photo 25). None of the original doors to these cabinets remain. The original east and south walls have intact chalkboards with beadboard (Photo 12).

The northeast classroom (Photo 13) was divided into four spaces leaving the original walls and doorways intact. The west classroom door has an original set of hinges (Photo 28), on a modern door. A corner cabinet is located in the southwest corner.

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A third classroom in the southwest corner of the 1891 has an original corner cabinet, beadboard and trim along the north and east walls and several chalkboards. The doorways and trim remain, but with modern doors.

The southeast classroom has only one hallway door. The second door was enclosed leaving the trim on the classroom side, but removing it from the hallway side. Chalkboards with beadboard remain intact on the north and west walls with the corner cabinet in the northwest corner (Photo 25).

In 1921, the hallway was extended east into the new addition (Photo 14). The north wall of this area has an exterior entrance and the south wall has a door into the 1949 addition. The 1949 room has modern finishes, but is in very poor condition due to a roof leak.

1921 The 1921 central hallway is slightly narrower than the 1891 hallway and does not have the ornate door trim nor the beadboard trim (Photo 14). At the end of the 1921 hallway is a glass wall with a set of modern double doors opening into the stairwell in the 1921 tower (Photo 16). The stairwell is constructed in a double return layout. It is original to the 1921 construction with plaster walls and wide wood cap. Rounded wood handrails are attached to both sides of the stair. Steel and glass exterior doors are located at a landing between the 1st floor and basement.

The 1921 addition follows the 1891 plan with classrooms on each side of the central hallway. (Photo 15). The original doors, one for each classroom, have been replaced by modern doors with single glass panes in the top. The rooms have storage space along the west wall accessed by two doorways in the classroom (Photos 15 and 21). The classrooms have simple wood baseboards and chair rail moldings along the west walls (Photo 23). Each storage space has one window on the outside wall. Unlike the basement, the first floor classrooms have built-in cabinets centered between the storage room doorways (Photos 15 & 24). Both classrooms have five window openings across the east wall. Door trim is much simpler than in the 1891 classrooms and the windows are unadorned except for sills and aprons.

The built-ins in each room consist of a closet, two feet wide with a five-panel door (Photo 24). The cabinet has four shelves on the top. In the north room, these shelves are open with two sets drawers in the bottom half (Photo 15). In the south room, the top and bottom have shelves with replacement doors on top. The original hinge indentations are visible in both.

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**Second Floor**

On the south wall of the 1891 tower/stairwell, the original attic door and trim remain intact (Photo 27). The panels have simpler trim than the interior classroom doors. The wooden stair is very narrow, running west and then north to the attic. The 1891 attic is an unfinished open space.

The second floor interior also had numerous intrusions by modern infill walls and dropped ceilings, sometimes with two levels of dropped tiles.

1891 1891 hallway is largely intact with all 8 original doorways and most of the original door trim and beadboard paneling intact (Photo 17).

Alterations to the northwest corner classroom removed all the original beadboard paneling and chalkboards, but the window and door trim, as well as all 3 doorways were retained.

The northeast classroom was subdivided with a large open area and a series of smaller classrooms along the east wall. To access a storage area in the hallway, a wide opening was cut in the original classroom wall. Original beadboard with trim remains intact on the west wall of this room. The door and window trim and hall doorways are intact.

The southwest classroom (Photo 18) retains several chalkboards and sections of beadboard on the original north and east walls, as well as the door and window trim. This classroom has two intact doorways with trim and transom openings. The original doors were replaced.

The southeast classroom (Photo 19) was divided into five spaces with a narrow hallway. These walls were constructed over the long spans of chalkboards and beadboard paneling. Part of the wall between the southeast and southwest classrooms was removed and a column added for support. The doorway and trim between the classrooms remains intact.

In 1921, 1891 hallway was extended into the addition. The north wall of this area has an exterior door to a fire escape. On the south side of the hallway is a doorway to the 1949 addition. Modern restrooms were installed in this area and the 1921 brick exterior is visible.

1921 - The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the 1921 addition was originally laid out as two large rooms with flat arch openings into the hallway (Photos 20 & 22). The corners of the opening are curved, like the storage room doorways. In



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plan, these rooms with the hallway were shaped like a "T". At some point during the building's use as a school, the flat arch openings were infilled and these rooms utilized as additional classrooms.

A modern wall divided the south classroom (Photo 20) into two rooms. The original 1921 storage room (Photo 21) along the west side of this classroom was subdivided with a small bathroom at the north end. A ladder attached to the wall of the storage room accesses the unfinished attic. The original doorways into this storage room remain intact, but with modern framing for doors. The classroom door and window openings are intact. The door is modern. This classroom has a large, more modern chalkboard, on the infilled wall, probably installed when the hallway openings were enclosed.

The north classroom (Photo 22) in the 1921 addition was subdivided into several small rooms with a secondary hallway running north/south. To accommodate this layout, the original doorway was enclosed and a new doorway created several feet east. A built-in cabinet and closet (Photo 24), like those on the first floor, are intact along the west wall with a chalkboard on the north side. The original storage space was subdivided into two smaller storage rooms with the original doorways intact. The storage room doorways have rounded corners and no hinge or strike plate indentations. The storage rooms retain their simple wood baseboards and sections of chair rail molding.

Architecturally, Central Avenue School retains most of its original plan and many decorative elements and school amenities. With the modern intrusions removed, the plan of the building with its large classrooms and wide central hallways relate the historic use of the building. Almost all the original walls, doorways, and window openings remain intact as are many sections of the beadboard paneling and baseboard trim. Many education-related items also remain. Numerous chalkboards in both the 1891 and 1921 styles are found throughout the building. Built-in cabinets in both the 1891 and 1921 buildings and storage rooms in the 1921 building remain in several classrooms. With its two primary construction periods, the school is an excellent example of both late 1800s school construction and 1920s school architecture.

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Central Avenue School is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for Education and Criteria C, Architecture. The building reflects two distinct time periods in school construction, late 1800s and early 1900s and the architectural styles significant to each, Romanesque Revival and Craftsman. The building represents school floorplans and features for both time periods. The interior retains numerous architectural and educational elements from both styles including beadboard trim, fluted door and window trim, built-in cabinets and chalkboards. Although later occupants subdivided the large classrooms and encroached on the central hallway, almost all the original walls, door and window openings remain intact.

Central Avenue School was built on lots 15, 16, 17, 40, 41 and 42 in the Fletcher Place addition to Anderson, Indiana, a predominantly residential area. The Anderson Public School system started around 1857 with the construction of the first public school building. In 1868, the Second Ward School was built. When the schools in Anderson were re-graded in 1873, the school system consisted of two buildings with six classrooms serving 640 students 9 months a year. The 1873 re-grading also added a high school. From the 1870 through 1888, the Anderson Public School system grew very slowly with no new school buildings constructed. However, like many communities in central Indiana, the discovery of gas in the 1880s led to an influx of manufacturing facilities, resulting in a dramatic increase in population. Anderson's population tripled between 1870 and 1890 and doubled between 1890 and 1900. The many new families moving to Anderson for the new manufacturing jobs created a need for more public schools. In 1895, there were 3,088 students in Anderson's schools, more than 4 times the number in 1873.

Anderson's 3<sup>rd</sup> school, the Main Street School building was constructed in 1888 and used for the high school until the Lincoln School was constructed in 1890. The next ten years were a period of rapid growth in school facilities in Anderson. Central Avenue School and Park Place School were constructed in 1891. Additional school buildings were added in 1892, 1893, 1894, 1896, 1897 and the first high school building in 1898. In all, seven brick buildings, one frame school and one addition were built in Anderson in the 1890s, totaling more than \$200,000 in expenditures. By 1900, Anderson had ten school buildings, 9 brick and 1 frame, including a high school. They constructed 9 buildings in 8 years, after only three in the

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previous thirty-three years. Of the twelve schools in use in 1901, only Central Avenue remains.

For the Central Avenue School, six lots in the Fletcher Addition were purchased in May, 1891 for \$2,250. The school building was designed by Charles F. Parker, an architect in Anderson. None of the original bids opened on June 22, 1891 were acceptable. From a second round of bids opened June 30<sup>th</sup>, J.N. Thompson & Co. was awarded the contract for the superstructure for \$12,670. The original heating system was gas heat and the flooring for the original building included wood in the hallway. There were eight classrooms in the original building, plus a basement.

Furnishings for the new school included 440 single student desks, 62 single rear seats, ten teachers' desks, and 1,155 square feet of slate. The desks were to be made of oak. These were purchased from the Wabash School Furniture Company in Wabash, Indiana, the lowest bidder.

This school design was typical for other Anderson school buildings. Both the Columbia Public School built in 1893 and 7<sup>th</sup> Street Public School built in 1894 were square or rectangular in plan, masonry construction and two stories tall on a raised basement. 7<sup>th</sup> Street School had arched windows and Columbia had a front tower. Both have been demolished.

Between 1900 and 1940, the city doubled its population to more than 40,000. As population grew, so too did schools in the early 1900s. By 1913, the city of Anderson had 11 public school buildings, ten of which were brick. The school system employed 109 teachers. By 1915, the system included 12 buildings with over 6,000 students. A report to the school board in April, 1921 indicated that nine more classrooms were needed for the grade schools by 1930. Immediate discussions focused on additions to Park Place School and Central Avenue School, plus a new building for the Junior High School. Additions to both Central Avenue and Park Place were made in 1921. The Central Avenue addition was designed by Ernest R. Watkins, a well-known architect in Anderson. Watkins, whose first job was as a postal clerk for the Pennsylvania Railroad, studied engineering at Purdue University. In 1924, three years after he designed the Central Avenue addition, he designed the Anderson High School gymnasium (destroyed by fire).

Although the original discussions centered around a 2 or 4 room addition, school board minutes also include discussion on hardwood floors in the

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southeast basement corner room, indicating there were also two classrooms in the basement of the addition. Two additional lots on the north side of the school were added to the property and a playground was constructed in 1922. At a later, unknown time, two more lots on the corner of Central and 21<sup>st</sup> were added and the playground was re-located here.

Enrollment in the Anderson School system in the 1922-23 school year surpassed 4,000 students in grades 1-6. All the classrooms in the Central Avenue School, including the six new ones in the addition, were filled. Several other schools were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s including Shadeland School, Longfellow, 29<sup>th</sup> Street School and a high school gymnasium in 1924.

Central Avenue at its highest enrollment listed 16 classrooms, six on each of the first and second floors and four in the basement. The two 1921 rooms and the 1891 northwest and southwest basement rooms all have school-related amenities. It is likely that the northeast and southeast 1891 rooms were never used for classrooms.

In 1949, an office, nurse's room, teacher's lounge and stock rooms were added to Central Avenue along the south side of the hallway between the 1891 and 1921 buildings. In 1953, a new kindergarten was added in the basement rooms of the 1891 building. It is likely that during one of these alterations, the Central Avenue entrance was altered. The original entrance was recessed under the large brick arch in the tower. The entrance alteration partially enclosed the brick arch, installed exterior doors in the arch and constructed a staircase accessing all three floors of the building in the tower.

From 1926 to 1937, this building housed a Free Kindergarten, a new idea in public education. From the late 1940s through 1955, this building housed a junior high school in addition to the elementary school. The enrollment in 1940 was 290 and increased to 361 in 1962. In 1955, the junior high school including 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grades was moved to a new building, freeing up much needed space for the elementary here.

The first principal at Central Avenue was Hattie E. Bowman who worked with seven other teachers at this school teaching grades 1-6. In 1955, the staff included 17 teachers for K-6. Principals and teachers throughout the school's history were predominantly female. There was a high turnover of

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teachers and principals because so many were single and quit work after marrying. The longest serving principal was Mary E. Spice, who served from 1922-1947. Most early principals were promoted from the ranks of the Anderson school teachers. Between 1891 and 1913, principals served in two capacities, principal and teacher, assigned to a specific classroom.

As the school system continued to grow, newer, modern school buildings replaced the older, pre-1900 structures. In 1951, a report entitled "Public School Building Needs, Anderson, Indiana" was compiled on the fifteen buildings in the Anderson School System. Five of the fifteen buildings were less than twenty years old. Five were built prior to 1900, but only one was older than Central, Lincoln School in 1890. Overall, Central Avenue school received one of the lowest ratings in the study and the only one in which the building itself received an unsatisfactory rating. The 1951 report recommended this school building be abandoned at the earliest possible time, but the school building remained active.

In 1960, Central Avenue had 431 students in the sixteen classrooms. Central Avenue was one of the larger elementary buildings with Grades 1-6. In 1962, a report on the master plan for Anderson, Indiana showed this building being abandoned after the 1962-63 school year, but it remained active. In 1968, the building changed from an elementary school to a special education facility. It was used until 1974 when it was the oldest school building still in use in Anderson. In September, 1974, the special education program was moved to Park Manor School. In a letter dated September 3, 1974, the director of the special education program wrote the school board that the facilities at Park Manor were much improved from the Central Avenue building. Central Avenue, deemed unsuitable for modern education purposes, was abandoned.

In October, 1974, the school board voted to advertise the structure for sale. In 1975 and 1976, Central Avenue School was renovated for multi-purpose use including offices, day care and meeting space. Various non-profit, community-service groups utilized the building until 2002 when it was vacated. Since then, the building has suffered from break-ins and insufficient maintenance.

**ARCHITECTURE**

Central Avenue School is significant for its representation of school architecture in both the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Romanesque

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Revival style was used more often on public buildings and churches than houses, primarily because of the expense in the masonry construction. Romanesque Revival elements on the 1891 structure include masonry construction, round arches, square tower and rough-faced stone work. When constructed and for many years after, the building remained the architectural highlight of this residential neighborhood. The 1891 structure strongly reflects the typical school floor plan of the time period. The floor plan is largely symmetrical with wide hallways accessing classrooms on both sides. The door and window openings have fluted trim and corner modillions in the 1891 building. The 1891 building includes bead board trim along the lower fourth of the original interior walls. Based on the architecture, the school board seems to have focused on constructing a school that was functional and beautiful.

The Anderson City School Board constructed a number of schools in Anderson in the 1890s. Nearly all were 2-stories, masonry construction with stone foundations and brick superstructures. 3-story towers with pyramidal rooflines are also found on almost all, with the tower either integrated into the plan or, like Central Avenue, projecting out from the plan. The main entrance for all of the schools was the focal point with either a stone or brick arch and double doors. Only Central had the actual entrance recessed within the tower. The number of openings in the window groupings varied on the different schools, but were similar in height and degree of ornamentation. Most had round or segmented arch windows on at least one floor, often with stone sills. Central Avenue (1891), Hazelwood (1891), Columbia (1893), Seventh Street (1894) and Washington (1896) all had decorative brickwork along the roofline. Main Street School (1888) was the only one not built with a rectangular or square plan and Park Place School was the only 1-story masonry school.

The number of classrooms was consistent with the early masonry schools. Main Street, Central, Hazelwood, Columbia, Seventh Street and Washington all had eight rooms. The one frame building had only two. Only the two buildings utilized for high schools had more than eight rooms.

The ornate brickwork, interior trim and large windows on the original 1891 Central Avenue School sharply contrast with the 1921 Craftsman-style addition. The addition continues the central hallway plan with two classrooms on each floor, but with fewer window openings and very simple or non-existent trim.

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The architect for the 1921 addition incorporated the massing and layout of the 1891 building into the new addition. While the new addition reflects the style and amenities of the 1920s, the plan and massing are more reflective of the original building. The addition blends relatively well with the original while reflecting its architectural style.

The addition to Central Avenue occurred about seven years after the construction of Riley School (1914) and the same time as the addition to Park Place School. The rectangular plan, massing and simplicity are similar among the three projects, each with parapet rooflines, concrete stringcourses, window groupings, and simple or non-existent window and door trim. On each building, large expanses of exterior walls with no openings have decorative brickwork with concrete accents. The shape of the plans for both the Riley and Central Avenue additions complement the original structure at each school reflecting the architects' desire to blend with the existing building. However, stylistically, each addition reflected the current architectural style. These three building projects were part of a transition from grand 2-story schools with towers and extensive decorative details to the simple, elongated, one-story schools from the 1940s onward.

Built-in cabinets and/or storage closets exist throughout both sections of the building providing much-needed storage space for teaching supplies. Numerous chalkboards remain intact throughout the building with wood trim and chalk trays. Often these chalkboards cover the entire width of the wall, reflective of a time when most teacher demonstrations were on chalkboards and students often worked problems on the chalkboard. Chalkboard styles and trim differ between the 1891 and 1921 buildings showing the changes in styles in school features. The 1891 doorways had operable transoms which provided much needed airflow through the building. The transom openings remain intact although all but one of the operable transoms were removed with the 1970s renovations.

Architecturally, Central Avenue School demonstrates two distinctly different styles in school architecture and to some extent two different modes of thought in school construction. The 1891 building has little storage beyond small built-in cabinets. The large windows and door transoms were important for ventilation and student comfort. Large chalkboards incorporated wide chalk trays. Expenditures included decorative door and window trim with paneled doors, a reflection of the

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school board's willingness to fund construction beyond "necessities." By 1921, school architecture included large storage rooms and larger built-in cabinets. The chalkboards remained, but with simpler frames and small bulletin boards across the top. Improvements in ventilation systems and lighting were reflected in the elimination of many window openings and door transoms.

The Central Avenue School was a significant part of the Anderson Public School system for more than sixty years. Built when the city's population was growing at a rapid rate, the structure was constructed at a crucial time and met an important need in educating the student population. When built and thirty years later when added on to, the building was seen as an excellent education facility. The building grew and adapted to meet the needs of this area's elementary education including Free Kindergarten, a new idea that took hold in the 1920's and remains a significant part of our system today. The structure remained part of the Anderson School system serving the needs of many students for years after it was deemed unsuitable by two different studies. Central Avenue School is the oldest school building in existence in Anderson, the only pre-1900 building, and is well-representative of school architecture from the 1890s and 1920s.



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**Boundary Description**

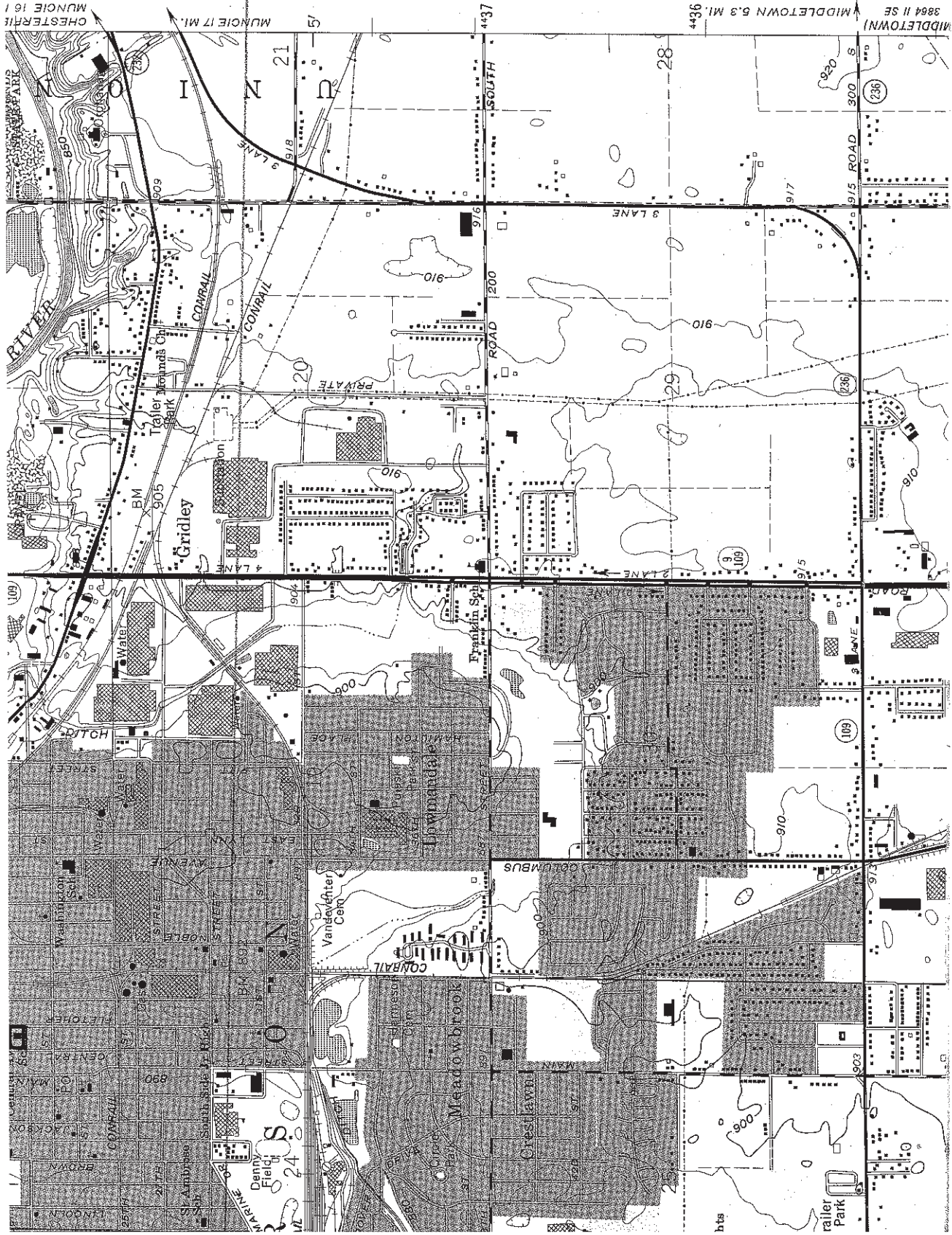
Fletcher Place Addition to the City of Anderson, Lots 15-18 and 39-42.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries are those purchased by the school board in 1891 and 1920. They incorporate the lots occupied by the school building and playground. While the equipment has been removed, the area remains grassy unlike the rest of the school property, suggestive of its original use.

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SCHOOL  
MADISON COUNTY,  
INDIANA

16 61284D 443691D



CHESTERFIELD  
MUNCIE 16 1

MUNCIE 17 MI.

4436

MIDDLETOWN 5.3 MI.  
3864 II SE

hbs  
railer  
Park