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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name **White Center Fieldhouse**

other names/site number Steve Cox Memorial Park; White Center Park; King County Park No. 4

2. Location

street & number 1321 SW 102nd St. ☐ not for publication

city or town Seattle ☐ vicinity

state Washington code WA county King code 033 zip code 98146

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___ **statewide** _X_ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria

_X_ **A** ___ **B** _X_ **C** ___ **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

WASHINGTON SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

White Center Fieldhouse
Name of Property

King County
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

	private
X	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

	building(s)
X	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
		district
		site
1		structure
1	1	object
4	2	**Total**

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Landscape: Park
Social: Clubhouse
Recreation and Culture: Sports Facility
Recreation and Culture: Outdoor Recreation

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Landscape: Park
Social: Clubhouse
Recreation and Culture: Sports Facility
Recreation and Culture: Outdoor Recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Rustic/ National Park

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Wood: Log
roof: Wood: Shingle
other: Landscape Walls and Gutter: Stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

White Center Park was built by WPA construction crews in 1940 on 12 acres donated by the Mountain View Community Club. The original 12-acre parcel remains intact. The park is located east of White Center's commercial district and is currently named Steve Cox Memorial Park, after a much-loved local law enforcement officer who was killed in the line of duty. The park contains several historic buildings and structures which were designed in the Rustic/National Park style including a half-log clad fieldhouse (1940) the park's primary historic building; a caretaker's residence (1940); garage (1940); and low rock walls sections of river-rock gutters (c. 1940). Non-contributing features on the site include a handball court (1964); and playground equipment (2011). All contributing buildings appear to maintain overall integrity of form, fenestration patterns, and materials.

Site

The park as a whole has undergone significant alterations over time with the construction of several new buildings and structures. The boundaries of the nominated area are considerably smaller than the original parcel due to the introduction of several non-historic elements. The fieldhouse is centrally located on the park's northern boundary. A non-historic handball court is located west of the fieldhouse. West of this are the caretaker's residence and the garage, both facing north. An asphalt driveway separates the garage from the tennis courts (originally a playground area) at the northwest edge of the park. A low stone wall runs along the southern edge of the garage, caretaker's residence and handball court. The area between the wall and buildings is planted to lawn and a number of trees. A parking lot is located south of these buildings and the fieldhouse. Two non-historic baseball diamonds are located in the southwest corner of the park. A non-historic baseball grandstand and several restroom buildings are located at the center of the park's southern-most area. The park's southern boundary is marked by a row of trees which may date to the time of the park's initial development.

Narrative Description

Contributing Resources

- *Fieldhouse, 1941 (Building)*

The side-gabled fieldhouse faces north and is centrally located on the park's northern edge. It has a concrete foundation with a raised basement. The main volume of the building has a 115' x 50' footprint with a small attached wing (30' x 20') - extending from the east elevation. The dormers boast louvered openings but originally contained three divided light windows. The side gable roof is clad with asphalt shingles and is high-lighted by two small gable dormers on the main/north façade. The gable ends of the main roof and dormers are supported by large log knee-braces. A stone chimney is located on the east (side) elevation of the main volume, and rises just below the roof line. The wood-frame building is clad in half-log novelty siding which runs horizontally on the main body and vertically in the gable ends.

A large shed-roofed porch is centrally located on the primary elevation and is supported by pairs of log posts which are joined by short spans of log railing. Each corner is supported by a group of three log posts. The posts divide the porch into four bays. The two central bays are accessed by a large wooden stair with metal railing. The two side bays are contained by oversized log railings. To the west of the porch is a series of concrete ramps switchbacks which allow handicap access to the basement since the building is not equipped with an elevator.

Windows on the main façade consist of massive six-part wood-sash divided light windows. Two of the six windows are truncated in height due to the shed roof porch. Two sets of modern solid double doors are highlighted by a 5 pane transom window.

The south (rear) elevation is pierced by eight, evenly spaced, massive six-part wood-sash divided light windows at the first floor level. A central basement window is covered with plywood. Stairs under a small shed roof at the corner of the east wing lead up to the first floor level and down to the basement. A non-historic gabled roof spans the fieldhouse's west elevation to a non-contributing adjacent handball court creating a breezeway.

The interior of the fieldhouse remains remarkably intact on the main floor. It contains one full-sized basketball court striped for a variety of alternative games. Its high ceiling is supported by large full-width boxed beams resting on large knee braces. Tongue & groove paneling cover the walls and ceiling stained a dark rich brown. The floor is maple and is original to the building. The west wall features a recessed stage which is framed with milled painted lumber. A central window in the east wall allows the office to supervise the gymnasium. The large divided light windows allow a great deal of light into the room. The basement accessed via the west and /or east side of the building is a maze of newer rooms covered in sheetrock with vinyl floors. Here, pool tables, ping pong tables, an art center and computer labs offer additional programing space.

- *Rock Stone Wall, c. 1941 (Object)*

A low field stone, granite rock wall runs adjacent to the west façade of the fieldhouse, then down the rear property line of the caretakers house past the handball court, then turns north at the corner of the lawn to the north behind the garage. Presumably it contained the back yard/side yard of the caretaker's residence. The wall is capped with a concrete slurry mixture formed in an inverted "V" shape.

- *Caretaker's Residence, 1941 (Building)*

A small, one-and-one-half story, side-gabled residence built for as a park caretaker residence. It is located west of the fieldhouse and handball court. It is clad in horizontal laid half-log novelty siding on the main body of the house, and vertical laid half log siding in the gable ends. The dwelling has an asphalt composition roof with exposed rafter tails and small A-frame style knee braces. It mostly retains a majority of its original one-over-one, wood-sash windows, although some of the first floor windows have been replaced with single pane fixed units. The primary façade contains a central plank-style wood door protected by small shed roof porch. The porch is supported by plain four by four inch posts and built on a wood platform. Per historic images the porch was originally supported by round logs. The rear elevation includes a central, square enclosed porch that is accessed from the east.

- *Garage, 1941 (Structure)*

A single car garage is located west of the residence. It faces north and is clad in horizontal laid half-log siding. It also has an asphalt composition roof with exposed rafter tails. A single, solid entry door is located on the east façade. The garage door is also solid. Windows are limited to a fixed pane rectangular sash divided into eight panes.

Non-contributing Resources

- *Handball Court, 1964 (Building)*

This building is located immediately west of the fieldhouse. It is a boxy, one-story building with a mansard roof with exposed rafters. The roof is clad in wood shingles. Exterior walls are sheathed in horizontal tongue & groove wood siding with vertical framing boards applied at even 4' intervals to break up the façade. There are no windows. The building has a concrete foundation and is entered on the east façade. It is attached to the fieldhouse by a small gable covered walkway.

- Steve Cox Memorial, 2011 *(Object)*

Located at the northeast corner of the lawn, in front of the fieldhouse, are five columnar slabs of basalt stone. Four of the five contain various etched poems and dedication messages to slain King County Deputy Steve Cox. A fifth column, the largest of the group, is set at an angle resting upon the southern-most rear column which has a graphic of a King County Sheriff badge.

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.)

- [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 values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1941

Significant Dates

1941

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

King County Road Engineer (Architect)

WPA Construction Crews (Builder)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph
(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Summary

The White Center Fieldhouse in southwest Seattle, Washington is historically significant under Criterion A for its association with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history. The fieldhouse and associated buildings are a direct product of a nationwide Depression-era economic recovery program that had a significant impact on the physical development of King County. Built in c.1941 the White Center facility was one of the earliest King County parks, and is closely associated with the formative years of the County's Parks and Recreation Division. In addition, the fieldhouse also meets Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of its type and period of construction. The fieldhouse, the primary building in the complex, is an excellent example of Depression-era public architecture, known variously as CCC-style or Park Service Rustic. The White Center fieldhouse is one of eight WPA-built fieldhouse activity centers which were constructed in communities throughout King County. Of these, five are still extant. Today the nominated property continues to function as an important recreational facility in the suburban community of White Center. The period of significance begins and ends with the finished construction date of the fieldhouse, 1941.

White Center

The community of White Center is an unincorporated area of King County located between the cities of Burien and Seattle. In the early 20th century White Center was a relatively uninhabited, heavily forested area that was gradually logged off, making way for farming and rural development. In the second decade of the 20th century, with the construction of better roads and a streetcar line, commercial and residential growth increased dramatically with the first identifiable business being constructed in 1908. The community formed around a small townsite developed by George W.H. White, whom won naming rights over a coin toss in 1918. During WWI, a large number of people moved to the area as the general population of Seattle increased. By the mid-1920s, the community had become more stabilized and a small downtown businesses district was established. White Center was close to the shipyards and other early industrial plants in the Duwamish River Basin. In addition, there were no restrictions on building, and there was an abundance of vacant land. A second boom period took place preceding and following WWII due to the vicinity of industries liked the Boeing Airplane Company and other major businesses that contributed to the war effort.

Formation of a King County Park System & White Center Park

Until the late 1930s, outdoor recreational programs in King County outside the city of Seattle were locally operated. In some rural communities, civic groups acquired land and established activity programs staffed largely by volunteers. However, few communities had the resources to construct recreational facilities and most had to rely on schools, churches, and community halls to house indoor group activities.

An official committee on parks, recreation, tourism, and fish and game was established in 1935 when the County Planning Commission became a legal body under state statute. While the first King County Planning Commission was established in 1927, it was not until 1935 this group functioned as an advisory body to the King County Board of County Commissioners, advising them on land use related to County-owned property. Joshua Vogel and Otway Paradee, both associated with the Commission, were staunch parks and recreation advocates who led the way to the eventual creation of a county parks program.

Further encouragement that the County engaged in park development came from the community of Des Moines. State Senator Mel Neal, an active member of the Des Moines Civic Betterment Committee, introduced legislation for the establishment of county parks systems statewide. The County Park Law, passed in the 1937 legislative session, enabled counties to acquire - by purchase, donation, gift or dedication - camping, view, recreation and park sites for public use and enjoyment.

In January, 1935, the King County Board of County Commissioners passed Resolution No. 6725, creating a Department of Public Works, Parks and Playgrounds under the supervision of the County Road Engineer. Two

separate park districts coinciding with the North and South Road districts were established, with a shared budget of $32,120. The Commissioners appointed Archie Phelps, a West Seattle butcher and city parks activist, as Superintendent for South District No. 2, and H. B. Hartzell as Superintendent for North District No. 1.[1] From the outset, the mission of the King County Parks Program was recreation-oriented:

> *In carrying out the provisions of this act, King County has devoted its resources to the improvement of recreational centers and community buildings to provide supervised play areas and facilities for children, as well as meeting rooms and assembly halls for community functions and activities. No special effort is being made in the development of scenic areas, because the national park service and the state park department have provided on a large scale for the preservation of such scenic spots.*[2]

Further encouragement that the County engage in park development came from the community of Des Moines. State Senator Mel Neal, an active member of the Des Moines Civic Betterment Committee, introduced legislation for the establishment of county parks systems statewide. The result was the Acquisition of Camp Sites and Parks by Counties Act (better known as the County Park Law), passed in the 1937 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Clarence Martin on March 1, 1937. The law enabled counties to acquire - by purchase, donation, gift or dedication - camping, view, recreation and park sites for public use and enjoyment.

Superintendent Phelps first task was to conduct a survey of King County to determine the need and location of parks. The County Commissioners then requested proposals from community clubs who wished to turn over their property to the county. In 1937 the county had only two acres for park use, but within two years had acquired 220 acres through various donations.

Among the first projects developed by the newly established county park system was to construct recreational centers in various rural locations and communities throughout the county. The County would furnish 30% of the cost of materials and the Federal Government would furnish Works Progress Administration (WPA) work crews for the construction and any additional funding. Using this method, between 1938 and 1941, eight major fieldhouses were built. The White Center Fieldhouse was among this group.

Reportedly in 1938, King County established White Center Park on land donated by the Mountain View Community Club (although this has not been verified). The Seattle Times reported in November of 1938 that the WPA had approved an allocation of $66,002 in funds for the new county park. WPA press releases a month later indicate that the County provided and additional $24,334 in matching funds.

Construction was underway on the White Center fieldhouse by the spring of 1939. By July of that year however, work was stalled on the project as some 60 men failed to report for work. Those workers were involved in a county-wide, three day strike organized by the Workers Alliance of Washington to protest new federal regulations to increase working hours. As construction continued at a slow pace on the facility, in October of 1940 there was increasing talk about turning the almost completed building over to another use. The National Youth Administration was interested in the building as a training center, but they ruled out the facility quickly due to an inadequate water supply. However, later articles indicate that the fieldhouse was in fact turned over to and outside entity, the Army. Surprisingly, little evidence of use of the facility between 1940 and 1943 has been found, hence an exact date of when construction was finished and the early use is unknown at this time.

A June 26, 1941 a Seattle Times article noted that the first annual fair and exhibit of the King County Association of Recreational Councils was to be held at the fieldhouse, which might lead one to believe the building was in public not Army use. The next time the field house is mentioned in the local newspapers is not until January 18, 1942. This article notes that the Civil Defense office was housed in the fieldhouse. The first real mention of the fieldhouse for public recreation use is not until August 5, 1943. The Seattle Times reported that the fieldhouse would formally be open to the public for recreational use the next day. A formal dedication

ceremony was to include games, music, tumbling, dance groups and other entertainment in cooperation with the White Center Commercial Club, Veterans organizations and other local groups. Mrs. Mae Slonian, recreational supervisor for the district was in charge of the program, along with field supervisors Benjamin Hicks and Norman Richsted. That same article notes that the building had previously been in use by the Amy. One author notes that the building was used as a barracks for a Barrage Balloon Battalion, but this has not been verified. Specific details about the opening celebration beyond the short article have not been found, and local newspapers continued to quietly cover various activities in the building over the preceding years. Articles reported events such as a costume contest (July 28, 1944); craft classes, tumbling groups, and swimming trips (June 16, 1944); and meetings of the Teamsters Joint Council Promotional League which featured Army and Navy motion pictures (August 27, 1944).

The completed facility included the main fieldhouse, a caretakers cottage and garage, and a ball field with a covered wooden grandstand. Quickly the facility became a hub of recreational and cultural activity in White Center. Newspaper accounts note that by 1946 over 600 boys between the ages of 8 and 18 were using the facility. John Stepich, whom had served as an athletic officer at Fort Lewis, became the Park Superintendent in 1946 and made many improvements to the site. He was instrumental in modernizing the ball field, which included re-grading the site, adding fencing, and purchasing flood lights. This gave White Center the only lighted playfield outside of the bigger Sick's Stadium in King County at the time. Stepich also helped raise funds for a playground to be added to the west side of the building (present day site of west tennis courts) in 1949. A surplus Grumman Wildcat airplane was secured from the Navy and added to the playground in August of 1958.

The fieldhouse also housed a branch of the King County Library system in the basement from the 1940s to the 1960s before it moved to a separate building east of the nominated structure in 1964. Through the efforts of the White Center Exchange Club, an indoor handball court was built in 1964 between the fieldhouse and caretakers cottage. The facility was the first such facility in the county-park system. Built for a cost of $20,000, the court was dedicated on September 2, 1964. The highlight of the dedication included a brief handball match between Governor Albert Rosellini and Dr. Roy Velling, president of the White Center Chamber of Commerce, against County Commissioners Ed Munro and John O'Brien.

By the mid 1960s the playground on the west side the property was showing signs of decay. On November 18, 1966 a new playground was built on the east side of the property. Named "Astroland", the park featured space age playground equipment such as the "Telstar Whirl" ride, "Star Swings" featured simulated rocks and a 33ft tall space ship with interior stairs and a wavy exit slide. The playground was dedicated by Astronaut and Seattle native, Richard F. Gordon Jr. Funding for the park was headed by Dr. Roy Velling, a White Center Dentist, whom raised over $12,000 in just over 4 months.

In 1977, the original wooden grandstand burned to the ground and was replaced by a modern concrete block and steel grandstand shortly thereafter. This stadium was renamed "Mel Olson Stadium in 1985.

Contribution of the Works Progress Administration

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) which helped build the fieldhouse was designed to coordinate the programs of various federal agencies providing work to the unemployed during the Great Depression. Created under the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935, the guiding principal was that gainful employment on public projects was preferable to the acceptance of doles in terms of worker self-respect, the conservation of skills, and solid economic recovery. Once underway, the WPA furnished most of the jobs and dominated the public works program on a nationwide scale.

The WPA required that projects must 1) have authorized local sponsors; 2) have general public usefulness; 3) not interfere with private employment; 4) be capable of completion by the available supply of WPA-eligible workers; 5) not demand excessive expenditure of material as compared with labor; 6) be capable of completion by the end of the fiscal year; and 7) be on public property.

Although it merged with the Public Works Administration (PWA) in 1940 to become the Federal Works Agency, the programs of the WPA were not liquidated until 1944. The peak year of activity was 1938. By 1941, the WPA had employed over 8,000,000 people - one fifth of all workers in the country. During its approximately nine-year lifespan, the WPA completed more than a quarter of a million projects encompassing nearly every field of economic and social activity. Seventy-eight percent of total WPA expenditures were spent on construction, engineering, and conservation projects, and the remaining 22 percent on community service programs.[3]

In King County, the WPA (along with the PWA and other federal recovery programs) left a lasting legacy of artistic, literary, historical and archival accomplishments, as well as a wide range of public works projects. Roads, bridges, docks, sidewalks, flood control projects, parks, schools, and a variety of public buildings and facilities were built throughout King County with WPA funding and labor. Park projects in the west Seattle area alone included concrete work on the Alki Beach Playgrounds, flood improvements and lighting of the field at Hiawatha Playground, sprinkler installation at the Youngstown Playfield, and the construction of an incinerator at the West Seattle Athletic Field. In White Center the WPA had funded a variety of projects including $68,000 of new water mains and fire hydrants, several miles of paved roads, a new grade school and $260,000 worth of sewer lines.

In the establishment and development of King County parks, local communities, the county, and the WPA formed effective public-private partnerships. These partnerships resulted in the acquisition and improvement of at least 15 park sites (as of December 31, 1939) and the construction of eight major recreational facilities - including fieldhouses - between 1937 and 1940. In addition to the White Center fieldhouse, four fieldhouses (today called activity centers) remain in use within parks; two are still in the King County system. The fieldhouses were built in Des Moines, Preston, Enumclaw, Kirkland, Bellevue, Burien, North Bend and White Center.

The fieldhouse in Kirkland is no longer standing and the fieldhouse in Burien, has been relocated and remodeled and sits on the campus of a private school. The fieldhouse in Bellevue has been turned over to the City of Bellevue and operates as a senior center. It has been extensively removed on the interior. Des Monies, Preston, Enumclaw, North Bend and White Center fieldhouses are all intact and still function for their original purpose.

The federal, county, community partnership worked in the following manner in King County:

1. Communities interested in establishing facilities for park and recreation purposes deeded to the County, through a local park committee, land suitable for park use.
2. The Board of County Commissioners established the park by resolution, assigning each an official County number. Project planning was carried out by the Public Works, Parks and Playground Department in conjunction with the local park committee, subject to WPA approval.
3. Financing of the project was negotiated with the WPA, generally at 25%-County, 75%-WPA. Labor was furnished through the WPA by eligible unemployed workers in the community.
4. When approved by the WPA, surveys and plans were prepared by architects and engineers in the office of the County Road Engineer. Construction was carried on jointly under Parks Commissioners, County Road Engineer staff and the WPA. Materials were provided by the County or by donation from community groups.
5. Maintenance and general supervision were to be provided by the Department, in consultation with the local park committee. [4]

To take advantage of the federal largess, communities throughout the county donated some 220 acres of land for park purposes between 1937 and the end of 1939. Headquarters for the South District were set up at White Center and for the North District at Kirkland. The Public Works, Parks and Playground Department entered the sawmill business in order to reduce the cost of materials in construction of the fieldhouses. A mill for the South District operated at Deep Lake near Cumberland, and for the North District at North Bend. WPA

crews operated the mills which produced lumber at approximately $5 per thousand feet. Additional materials were donated by the Northern Pacific Land Company. WPA assistance made possible the first capital improvement program of the King County Parks Department. Until the close of World War II however, recreation programs in the fieldhouses were largely managed by the local communities.

The Influence of Rustic Architecture

Many park-related structures (like the nominated resource) built during the depression years were constructed in the Rustic style, a term used to describe the stylized, romantic character of hand-built structures in American parklands, which evolved between 1916 and 1941 under the aegis of the National Park Service. The style grew in response to a new view of the American concept of wilderness and a desire to return to nature. With the conquering of a continent, wilderness was recognized increasingly as a resource to be preserved and respected. Rustic architecture was in great part a function of this philosophy, influenced as well by the popularity of the picturesque landscape and the Arts & Crafts school of architecture and decorative design.

National Park Service Historical Architect Merrill Ann Wilson describes the Rustic Style as ...

> *"... a natural outgrowth of a new romanticism about nature, about our country's western frontiers ... the conservation ethic slowly took hold in this atmosphere of romanticism. Part of this ethic fostered the development of a unique architectural style. Perhaps for the first time in the history of American architecture, a building became an accessory to nature ... Early pioneer and regional building techniques were revived because it was thought that a structure employing native materials blended best with the environment".5*

Organized in 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps (the CCC), another new deal program, played a major role in the rustic building program of many parks both on the national and state level. Through this mechanism and through the publishing of several Park Service textbooks for CCC construction crews (entitled Park Structures and Facilities) the theory and practice of rustic design and construction were made available to local park systems around the country.[6]

The White Center Fieldhouse has a distinct rustic feeling based on many design elements as expressed through the National Park Service guidelines. Decorative details include in the large knee braces at the eaves, exposed raft tails, the use horizontal half-log siding on the first floor wall contrasted by vertical half-log siding in the gable ends, and wood sash multi-pane windows. Further adding to the rustic character are the oversized grouped porch columns and railings.

Unlike many National and State park rustic structures which utilized full log construction, the White Center fieldhouse was constructed using balloon frame construction techniques, then clad with faux log siding. Easier to apply, log cabin siding looks exactly like a log but requires 75% less wood. Its shiplap design ensures a tight installation against weather and eliminates the need for chinking between logs. Most log siding is milled from 2 x 8 Pine or Cedar and has a smooth face texture with a finished thickness of 1 ½” and 6” of round pattern. The siding type was invented in the late 1920s at the E.C. Miller Cedar Lumber Company in Aberdeen and was in widespread use by the mid-1930s.

The rustic tradition of the Pacific Northwest was a major influence on the design and construction of all eight fieldhouses and related structures in the King County park system. Each fieldhouse is unique in its design and plan. Architecturally the fieldhouse at Enumclaw (now known as the Enumclaw Expo Center), is the closest in design to the White Center facility. A near duplicate, varying features include a smaller front entry porch and accessed from the front, rather than the side; one less dormer on the main façade and no dormers on the rear façade such as those found on the Enumclaw building.

Architectural plans, and specific sources for the designs of any of the fieldhouses have not yet been located. The style is not known to have been applied to so many major facilities at the local park level in any other county in the State of Washington.[7]

Conclusion

Today the White Center Fieldhouse is part of Steve Cox Memorial Park is owned and operated by the King County Park & Recreation Division. The fieldhouse retains its distinctive characteristics of the Depression era and is an excellent example of the Park Service Rustic style.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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- Fifth Annual Report of the County Road Engineer, 1939, King County, State of Washington, p. 184.
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- Personal Interviews with the following individuals from March – June, 1984:
  - Elliott Cowden, White Center
  - Alice Douglas, Bellevue
  - Melanie Draper, Des Moines
  - Mary Farrell, North Bend
  - David Hansen, Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
  - Bill Hutsinpilar, King County Parks and Recreation
  - Mrs. Joseph Jacobs, White Center
  - Bob and Charlotte Jabobs, King County Department of Planning
  - Dick Johnson, Bellevue
  - Georgia Kramer, North Bend
  - Bonnie Leible, White Center
  - Randell Nelson, Preston
  - Mel Olson, White Center
  - Margaret Peiper, North Bend
  - Treva Seales, Highland Senior Center, Bellevue
  - Steve Starlund, Washington State Department of Natural Resources
  - Lyle Stow, North Bend
  - Stephanie Toothman, National Park Service
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- "West Seattle Plans Detailed", Seattle Times: March 23, 1939.
- "1,300 Out in State, Says Workers Alliance", Seattle Times: July 10, 1939.
- "Clubs Seek Tips for New Center", Seattle Times: January 25, 1940.
- "$325,958 W.P.A. Jobs Approved", Seattle Times: May 26, 1940.
- "Rural Parks, Built by City Taxes, Lure Seattleites "Outside"", Seattle Times: June 9, 1940
- "N.Y.A. May Take Old-Age Home", Seattle Times: October 4, 1940.
- "Recreation Project Secure, Says Taylor", Seattle Times: October 7, 1940.
- "Recreation Unit Sets 2-Day Fair", Seattle Times: January 26, 1941.
- "South End Will Aid Local Defense", Seattle Times: January 18, 1942.
- "White Center Fieldhouse To Open Tomorrow", Seattle Times: August 5, 1943.
- "Fieldhouse Party at South Park", White Center News: November 12, 1943.
- "White Center Fieldhouse News: Summer Program", White Center News: June 16, 1944.
- "Fieldhouse News", White Center News: July 28, 1944.
- "Teamsters Will See War Films", Seattle Times: August 27, 1944.
- "$10,000 Sought for Boys Club", Seattle Times: September 16, 1946.

- "Handball-Courts Building Begins", Seattle Times: May 21, 1964.
- "Handball Building to be Dedicated", Seattle Times: September 1, 1964.
- "White Center Facilities", Seattle Times: August 12, 1966.
- "Seattle Area Sets Hero's Welcome for Gordon", Seattle Times: November 6, 1966.
- "King County Parks – Recreation for Everybody", Seattle Times: March 19, 1967.
- Eals, Clay, West Side Story: The History of West Seattle and White Center – Robinson Newspapers, 1987
- Young, Peg, White Center Remembers, The Print Shop, White Center, WA, 1976
- Parks and Recreation Guide, King County Parks & Recreation Department, c. 1952.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
_X_Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: King County Historic Preservation Program

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than One Acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References _____NAD 1927 or _____NAD 1983

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

Or Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
1	47°30'41.90"N	122°21'7.66"W	3		
2			4		

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated area is located in Township 23 North, Section 6, Range 4 East, W.M. on part of blocks 30, 31, 32 of State Addition No. 5 in King County, Washington. It is otherwise known as part of Tax Parcel 797320-2900.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundaries encompass the northern portion of the lot to include all the resources originally associated with the WPA constructed field house. Other resources on the parcel fall outside of the period of significance and hence are not included within the nominated boundaries.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Katelyn E. Wright (adapted from King County Landmark Registration Form) (Edited by DAHP Staff)

organization King County Historic Preservation Program date January 2015

street & number 701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 telephone 206-296-8689

city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98104

e-mail

Additional Documentation

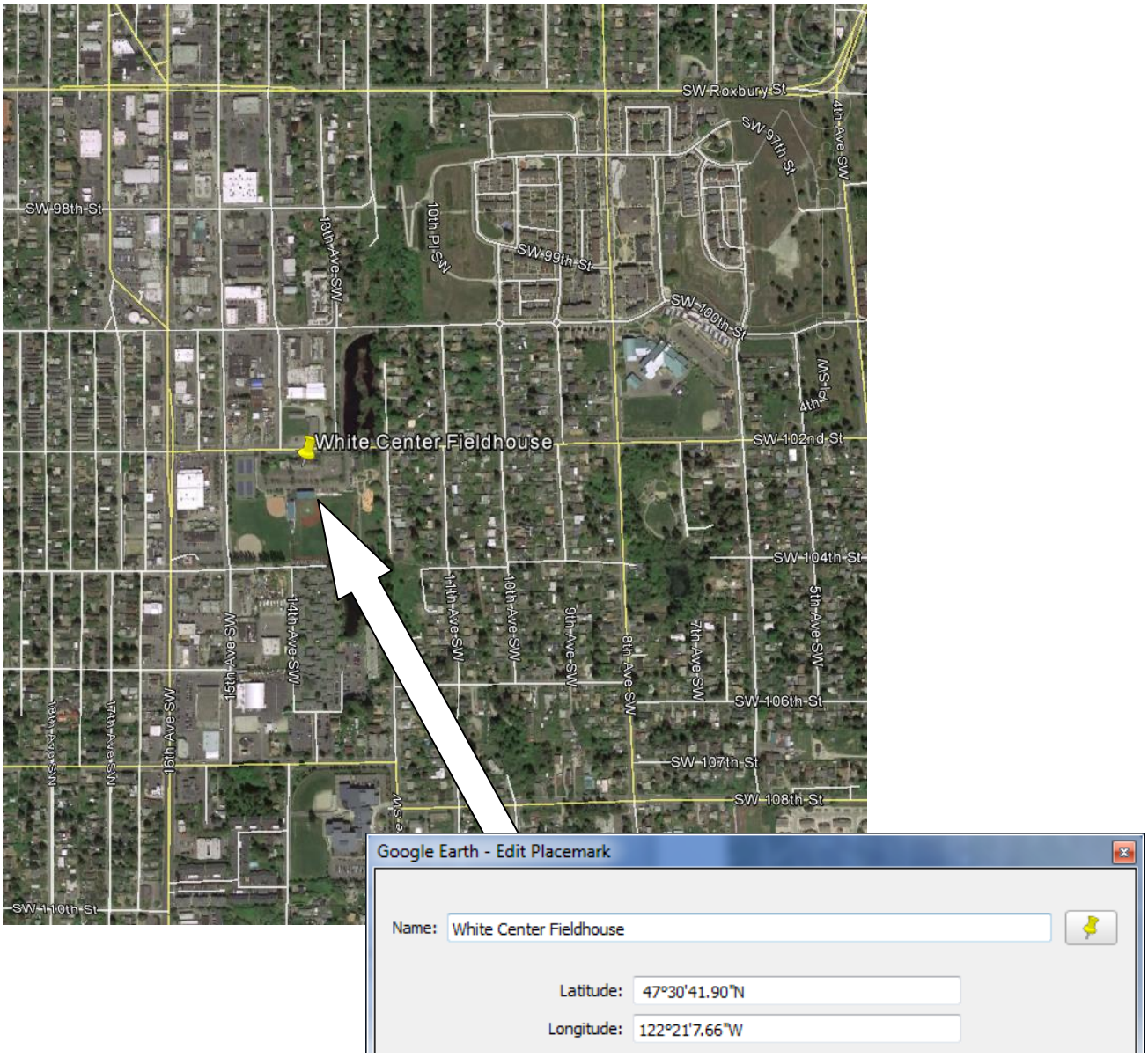
Submit the following items with the completed form:

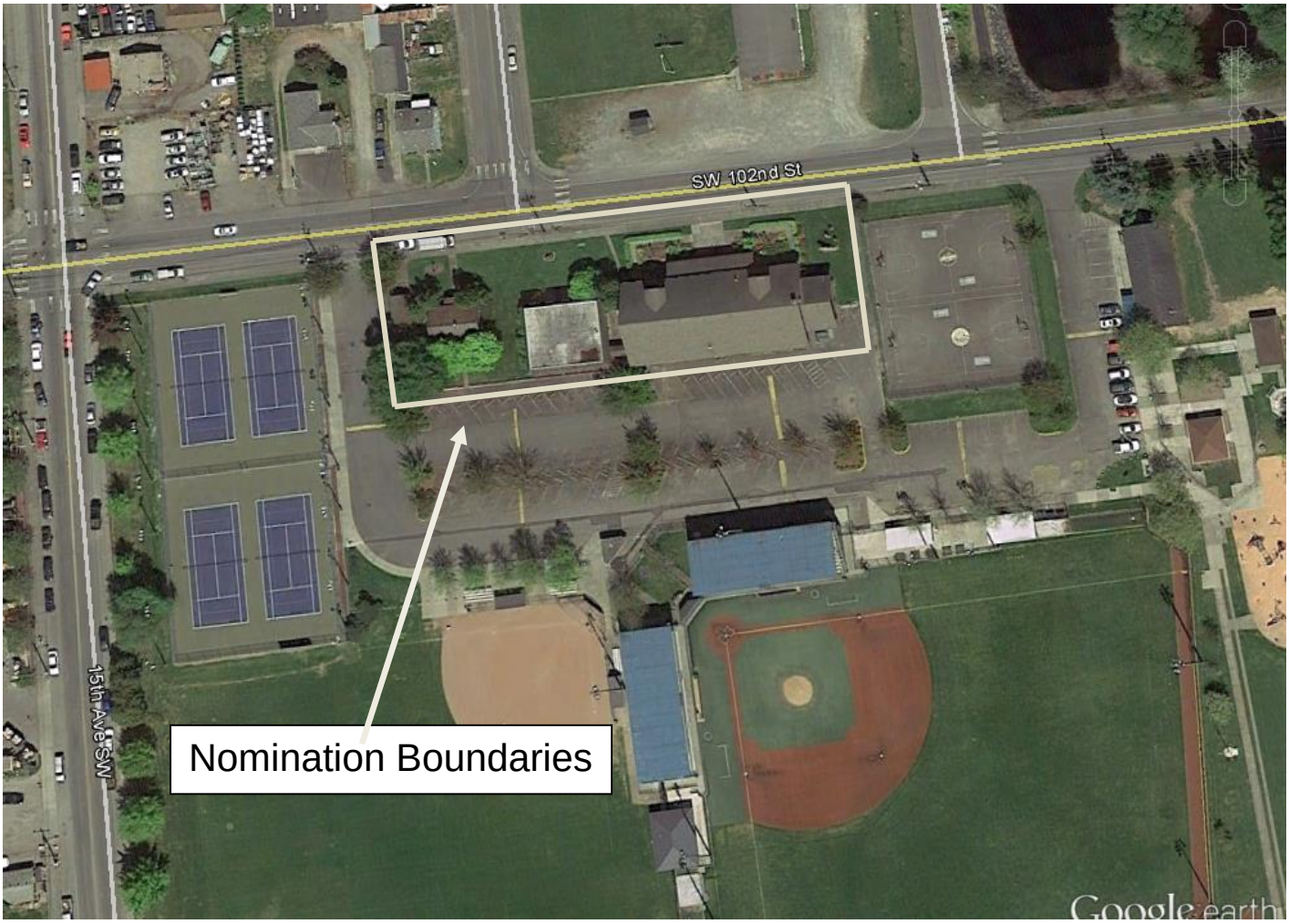
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

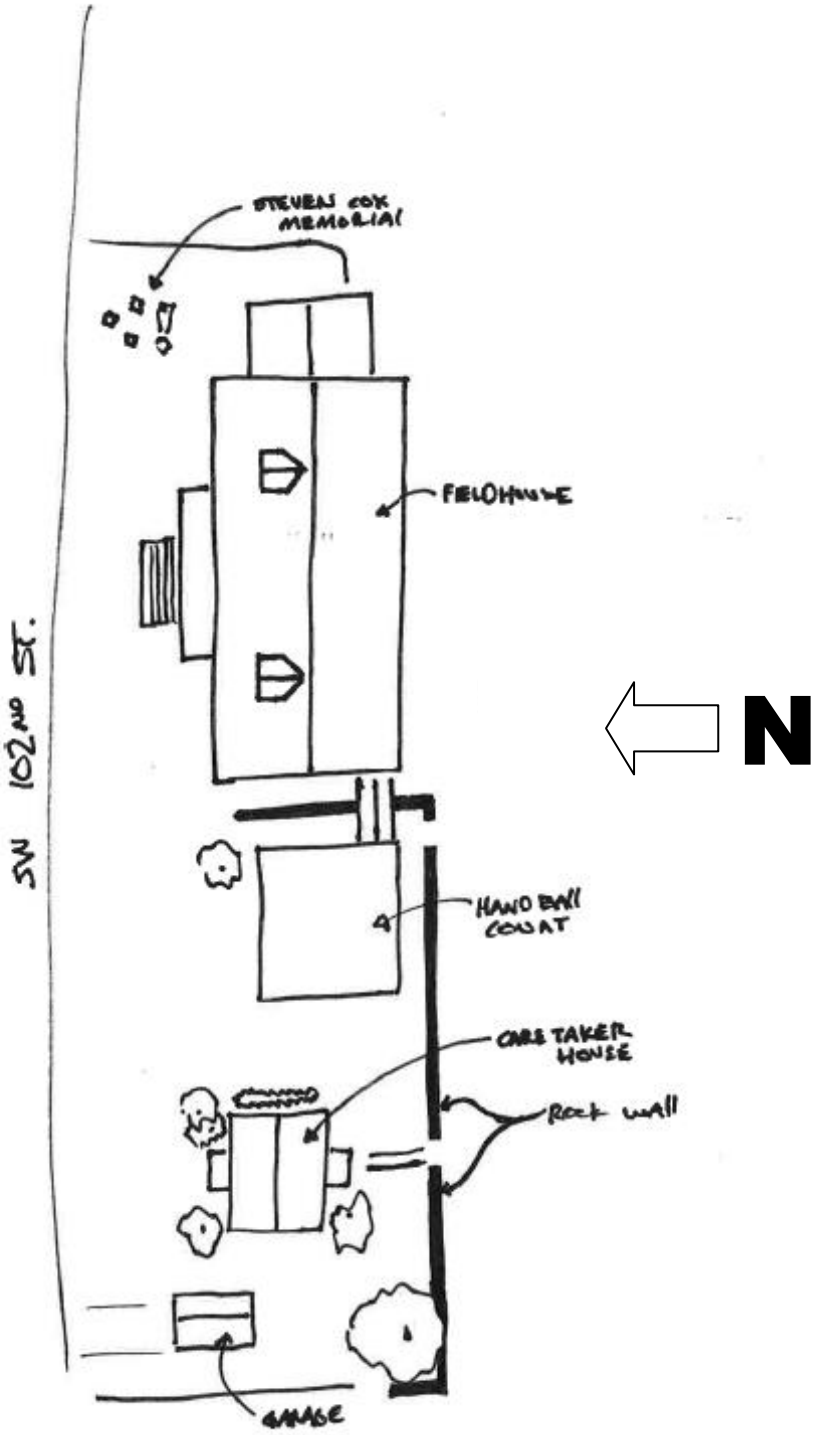
- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

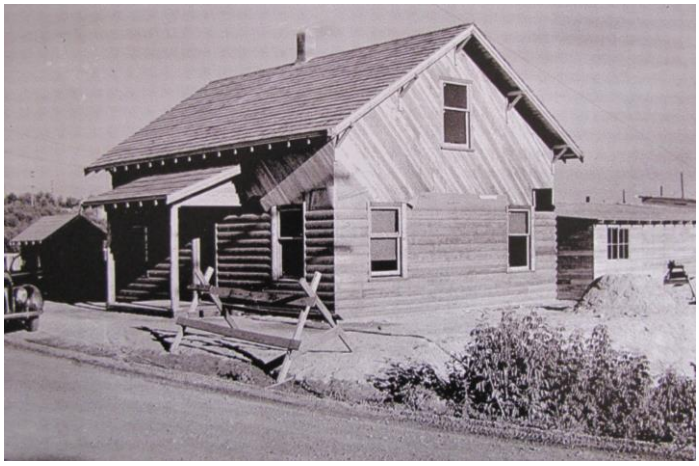




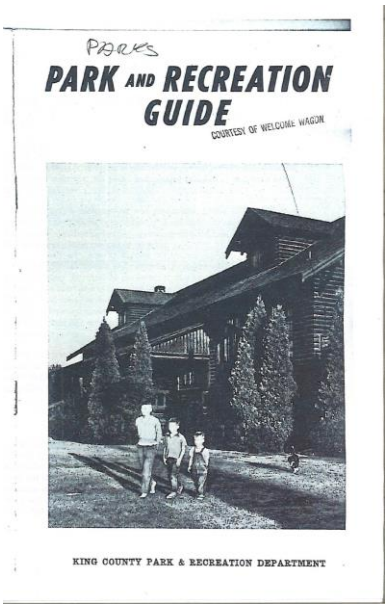
White Center Fieldhouse
Nomination Boundaries *Google Earth Base map*



White Center Fieldhouse
Site Plan *Not to Scale*



Construction Images of Fieldhouse and caretakers cottage – c. 1940



King County Parks and Recreation Guide– c. 1952 (Featuring White Center Fieldhouse on cover)

Right to Left: Garage, Caretakers Cottage and Fieldhouse – c. 1952

Rear of Fieldhouse from southwest corner – c. 1952

Main façade of Fieldhouse, north elevation – c. 1942

Playground dedication, Fieldhouse and Caretakers Cottage in foreground – May 22, 1949

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: White Center Fieldhouse
City or Vicinity: Seattle
County: King County **State:** WA

Photographer: Michael Houser
Date Photographed: November 14, 2014

1 of 15 - Main façade/ north elevation of fieldhouse, No. 0001

2 of 15 – Northeast corner of fieldhouse showing Steven Cox Memorial, No. 0002

3 of 15 – Northwest corner of fieldhouse showing basement handicap access, No. 0003

4 of 15 – detail of fieldhouse entry porch, No. 0004

5 of 15 – East facade of fieldhouse, No. 0005

6 of 15 – Rear / South facade of fieldhouse, Handball Court in foreground to left of building, No. 0006

7 of 15 – Entry Door detail, No. 0007

8 of 15 – West façade of fieldhouse, No. 0008

9 of 15 – Interior of fieldhouse looking west toward stage, No. 0009

10 of 15 – Basement of fieldhouse, No. 0010

11 of 15 – Handball court resting west of fieldhouse, No. 0011

12 of 15 – Rock wall at rear of caretaker house, No. 0012

13 of 15 – Main façade of caretaker house, No. 0013

14 of 15 – Caretaker garage, No. 0014

15 of 15 – Rear of caretaker garage & house taken from southwest corner, No. 0015

White Center Fieldhouse
Name of Property

King County
County and State

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

name King County; Parks and Recreation Division Co: Darlene Sellers

street & number 201 S. Jackson Street, Suite 700 telephone 206-296-8687

city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98104

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.