



**INTERSTATE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM  
SECTION 106 DOCUMENTATION FORM  
Individual Properties**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Agency/Project:</b> Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Oregon Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Transportation<br>Interstate Bridge Replacement Program<br>FHWA Federal-Aid No. S001(553), FTA No. XXXX(XXX), ODOT Key No. 21570, WSDOT Work Order No. 400519A |  |
| DAHP Project No. 2020-12-07501  | SHPO Case No. 21-0006  |
| Property Name: House of Providence/Providence Academy (WA 150)  | WISAARD Property ID: 18827                                     |
| Street Address: 400 East Evergreen Boulevard  | City, County, State: Vancouver, Clark County, WA               |
| Tax Parcel Number: 39220000   | Plat Block Lot: East Vancouver Blks 40, 41, #1 Blk 42, 48 & 49 |
| USGS Quad Name: Vancouver Quadrangle  | Township: 2N Range: 1E Section: 15                             |
| Coordinates: 45.62935, -122.66821   |  |
| This property is part of a <input type="checkbox"/> District  |  |

**Resource Use** (please use WISAARD lexicon for resources within Washington)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Current Use: Commerce/Trade – Professional  | Construction Date: 1873  |
| Historic Use: Education – School  | Alterations & Dates:<br>1891, Addition;<br>1943–1944, Addition of Gymnasium; Exterior galleries removed;<br>ca. 1956–1962, Kitchen addition;<br>ca. 1970, SW, NE, and NW parking lots;<br>2006–2009, Several outbuildings removed;<br>ca. 2015, Roof cladding changed, Rehabilitation of chapel and ballroom;<br>ca. 2023, Several outbuildings removed, parking lot expansion, removal of eastern portions of East Evergreen Boulevard property boundary hedge and curb |
| Architectural Classification / Resource Type:<br>Georgian, French Colonial / Building | Historic Context:<br>Education; Architecture; Religion   |

**Construction Characteristics** (please use WISAARD lexicon for resources within Washington)

|  |  |               |
|--|--|---------------|
| Foundation Type: Stone (Cut Basalt)  | Form Type: N/A   |               |
| Window Type & Material: Four-over-four, segmental arched, wood   | Exterior Surface Materials:<br>Primary: Brick<br>Secondary: Stone<br>Decorative: Stone   |               |
| Roof Type & Material: Front and side gable, Metal - Standing Seam  |  |               |
| Structural System Type: Masonry - Brick  | Plan Type: Irregular T-Shaped  |               |
| Number of Stories: Three   | Changes to Structures:   |               |
| Styles: Georgian/Federal, French Colonial  | Category:  | Change Level: |
|  | Plan   | Moderate      |
| Register Status: NRHP Listed   | Windows  | Slight        |
|  | Cladding   | Intact        |
| Condition: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | (Other)  |               |
|  | Integrity: <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |               |

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Figure 1. House of Providence, view from south (WillametteCRA 2021).

**Preliminary National Register Findings:**       **National Register listed**

**Potentially Eligible:**     Individually     As part of District

**Not Eligible:**     In current state     Irretrievable integrity loss     Lacks Distinction     Not 50 Years

**Property is located in a potential District**

**Oregon State Historic Preservation Office Comments (Washington DAHP comments found within WISAARD):**

**Concur**     **Do Not Concur**     Potentially Eligible Individually     Potentially Eligible as part of District     Not Eligible

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**



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**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

The House of Providence (Providence Academy) is an institutional property located at 400 East Evergreen Boulevard in the Esther Short neighborhood in Vancouver, Clark County, Washington. The property is bounded to the north by East 12th Street and a commercial property, to the east by Interstate 5 (I-5), to the south by East Evergreen Boulevard, and to the west by a mixed commercial/residential property. The property consists of a large primary building built in 1873–1874, a secondary building (referred to as the Kindergarten Building or gymnasium) built in 1943–1944, and the surrounding grounds that contains landscape elements, including a grass lawn, central walkway, and oval approach drives in front of the primary building. A short hedge, concrete curb, and mortared stone gate posts along East Evergreen Boulevard date to ca. 1920s, and associated parking areas to the southwest, northeast, and northwest of the primary building were constructed in the 1970s and 1990s. Properties in the immediate vicinity of the House of Providence are primarily commercial, with several multi-family residential properties to the west and north and the Vancouver Community Library adjacent south.

The primary building of the House of Providence property is three stories with a full basement and has an irregular T-shaped plan. Showing the influence of the Georgian/Federal and French Colonial architectural styles, the building has a low-pitched intersecting gable roof clad in standing seam metal, multiple regularly spaced gable dormers, and a domed bell tower surmounted by a lantern. Constructed in 1873–1874, the original building consisted of an east-west primary volume with a central wing extending north from the rear of primary volume. The western end of the primary volume was extended with an addition in 1891.<sup>1</sup> Prior to 1956, three-story projections were constructed on both the north side of the primary volume and at the end of the north wing, and a one-story kitchen addition was built between 1956 and 1962 in the northwest corner of the primary volume and the north wing.<sup>2</sup> The south (primary) and north elevations of the building’s primary volume are divided by front-gabled pavilions that alternate with recessed spaces. Open balustraded wooden galleries fill the recessed spaces between pavilions on each story. On the first story, the gallery is supported by brick piers, while the upper-story galleries are each supported by the regularly spaced series of lightly stylized wood columns that line the gallery below. The building’s 1891 west addition does not fully replicate this design pattern on the south elevation; instead, the central bay is only slightly recessed and lacks an exterior gallery. However, the west addition’s north elevation features a recessed gallery matching that of the original building’s south and north elevations. Similar galleries were originally constructed along the north wing’s east, north, and west elevations but were removed in the 1930s due to the prohibitive cost of maintenance.<sup>3</sup> Portions of the galleries on the south and north elevations were rehabilitated and the original roof cladding was replaced with the current standing seam metal roof in ca. 2016.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Florence, Lentz, “House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, NRHP Reference No. 78002738 (Olympia, WA: Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation), Section 7.

<sup>2</sup> “Aerial view of Vancouver, Washington, showing Providence Academy and St. Joseph Hospital, 1956.” Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections. Item No. 22.E5.009. Accessed June 26, 2023,

<https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/1365/rec/689>; “Damage resulting from the Columbus Day Storm of 1962, Providence Academy, Vancouver, Washington.” Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections. Item No. 22.E10.9. Accessed June 26, 2023

<https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/829/rec/313>.

<sup>3</sup> Lentz, “House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington,” Section 7.

<sup>4</sup> “Preservation & Renovation,” Historic Trust, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.thehistorictrust.org/providence-academy/renovations/>.



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5 The primary building is clad entirely in running bonded red brick. The pavilions of the south elevation are further articulated vertically and horizontally with brick pilasters and corbelled belt courses that frame each window within these massings. Each pilaster is capped with a wood capital where it meets the molded cornice running the length of the south elevation. The central pavilion is particularly ornate, employing corbelled brick window hoods with stone keystones and acanthus scrolls. A molded stone trefoil arched niche is located prominently in the center of the pavilion's pediment. Historic photos show that this niche once held a statue, but it was removed in the late 1960s.<sup>5</sup> The primary entrance is located in this original central pavilion. The entrance itself consists of a double-leafed wood frame door with large single glass panes, topped by a four-light segmental arched transom window. The entrance is covered by a flat-roofed brick and stone portico. The portico roof is supported by four thick brick columns, with segmental arched openings on either side that are transected by a stone bar to form a transom space. The front of the portico is adorned with a molded stone segmental arch with stylized columns and brackets. The portico is accessed by a poured concrete staircase that curves inward as it ascends. Rounded stone plinths flank the bottom of the staircase, and it is lined and divided by wrought iron railings. Matching railings enclose the side openings of the portico and line its flat roof.

15 The building's fenestration consists primarily of regularly spaced rows of tall wood four-over-four segmental arched windows, with shorter rectangular wood one-over-one sash windows repeated regularly on the rear (north) wing. Wider segmental arched windows consisting of a central four-over-four window flanked by slim two-over-two windows are located above the building's primary and secondary entrances.

20 Documentation of the original interior layout of the House of Providence's primary building was not available. However, floor plans of the building's interior spaces were produced in 1968 and included in the property's 1978 NRHP documentation. At that time, the first floor consisted of long central hallways down each wing that provided access to spaces that were originally a parlor, classrooms, and school offices.<sup>6</sup> 1978 NRHP documentation of the property indicated that these first-floor spaces had been converted to commercial office uses and a small restaurant, with minimal alterations to the interior partitions.<sup>7</sup> The auditorium that occupied the entirety of the 1891 addition's first floor consisted of five sets of paired columns supporting the ceiling down the middle of the room and the stage at its western end, consistent with ca. 1889 plans for the west addition.<sup>8</sup> An unsupported circular wood staircase was located at the intersection of the primary volume and north wing. It provided access to the upper floors.<sup>9</sup> The second floor contained unconverted classrooms and converted office space, as well as the intact original two-story chapel, located in the center of the north wing, just off the second floor landing.<sup>10</sup> The third floor contained unconverted dormitories that once housed the orphans of the House of Providence—the boy's quarters at the end of the north wing and the girls' at the west end of the primary volume, as well a ballroom and the balcony around the open upper level of the chapel.<sup>11</sup> An attic space above the third floor once housed the living quarters of the sisters that ran House of Providence, and the basement contained spaces that were formerly workshops and fuel storage rooms. Original interior features and materials such as paneled wooden doors,

<sup>5</sup> Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections. "Providence Academy in Vancouver, 1960s." Item No. 22.A2.28. Available: <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/421/rec/277>. Accessed June 26, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Supplemental materials.

<sup>7</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 7.

<sup>8</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Supplemental materials; Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections. No Date. "Plan, east end of first floor, Providence Academy, Vancouver, Washington, n.d." Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/1418/rec/825>.

<sup>9</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 7.

<sup>10</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Supplemental materials.

<sup>11</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 7, Supplemental materials.



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5 hardwood floors, wainscotting, enframements, and woodwork remained largely intact at that time, though painted over. However, the chapel's Gothic adornments remained fully intact, including the wooden altarpieces and statues in the chapel's apse and niches.<sup>12</sup> As the current recordation was limited to reconnaissance survey from the public right-of-way, all alterations to the interior after 1978 could not be documented. However, significant interior spaces such as the chapel and the ballroom were rehabilitated around 2016 for use as event spaces, with repairs and material replacements undertaken with in-kind materials.<sup>13</sup>

10 Original outbuildings on the House of Providence property (including a barn, stone root cellar, the original convent, and schoolhouse) were removed over time. Several of the early outbuildings located to the northeast of the House of Providence building have been recently demolished. The ca. 1873 wellhouse was demolished between 2006 and 2009, and the ca. 1873 laundry (IBR Map ID WA150b) and ca. 1910 boiler house and smokestack (IBR Map ID WA150c) were demolished in 2023 (Figure 19).<sup>14</sup>

15 The Kindergarten Building (IBR Map ID WA150d) to the east of the primary building is the only extant outbuilding associated with the House of Providence (Figure 19). It is a one-story, rectangular-plan building with a side-gable roof. It has a brick exterior, roof covered in red shingles, and central entrances on both its south and north elevations, each consisting of a double-leafed door beneath a cantilevered front-gabled hood that is accessed by a wood stair. The building's fenestration is varied, with examples of six-over-six and four-over-four single-hung windows, as well as a double casement window with a slim transom. The Kindergarten Building was designed by Sister Ignatia Marie (Laura Kathryn) Lindenkugel and constructed by general contractor Floyd R. Holcomb. As originally constructed, the building was vertically divided between the main floor classroom and the basement used as a workroom for male students. The building was converted into a gymnasium in 1963 through the removal of the division between the main floor and basement. This division was reinstalled between 1966 and 1974.<sup>15</sup>

25 The grounds of the House of Providence have changed considerably over time. The school grounds originally consisted of neatly laid lawns, garden plots, walks, and parterres among the outbuildings.<sup>16</sup> The Sacred Heart Garden, consisting of the concentric curvilinear entrance walks and a central garden element, was an original feature of the House of Providence grounds designed by Mother Joseph and completed ca. 1875.<sup>17</sup> Plants were donated by local nursery owner Gay Hayden, and labor provided by soldiers from the adjacent Vancouver Barracks.<sup>18</sup> In the earliest available photograph of the grounds, dating to the 1890s, the Sacred Heart Garden was

<sup>12</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 7.

<sup>13</sup> "Preservation & Renovation," The Historic Trust, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.thehistorictrust.org/providence-academy/renovations/>.

<sup>14</sup> "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 2006," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>; "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 2009," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>; Adam Alsobrook, et al., Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Historic Resources Baseline Survey Report (Portland, OR: WillametteCRA, 2023), 33.  
<sup>15</sup> "Providence Academy Kindergarten Building (Gymnasium, Kennedy Hall, Building 404)," The Historic Trust, November 15, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 8.

<sup>17</sup> "Providence Academy Tour", The Historic Trust. Accessed October 24, 2023, <https://www.thehistorictrust.org/providence-academy-2/>.

<sup>18</sup> "Section 106 Consultation Letter From Historic Trust to Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration for Interstate Bridge Replacement Program" Historic Trust, October 16, 2023.



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5 obscured by a pair of fences, with an outer wrought iron fence at the property boundary, a pair of wood gates framed by large cut stone columns at the property's southeast corner, and an inner wood plank fence around the House of Providence's primary building.<sup>19</sup> The original design of the Sacred Heart Garden was first photographed in 1901. At that time, the inner fence had been removed and the outer fence was replaced with a fence along the property line, which opened to the entrance walkway with a central gate flanked by sets of short columns.<sup>20</sup> The garden consisted of three concentric heart-shaped walkways around a central garden area with trees and shrubs. The street entrance had again been altered by 1910, with the outer fencing replaced with short hedges bounded by poured concrete curbs that ran along the East Evergreen Boulevard public right-of-way.<sup>21</sup> The opening to the entrance walkway was then framed by four mortared stone gate posts capped with square concrete forms. The inner concentric curvilinear walkways had been removed and a transecting central walkway with a circular flower bed in its center had been added from the street entrance to the building entrance.<sup>22</sup> The inner pair of mortared stone posts were removed in the 1920s.<sup>23</sup>

15 The earliest available historic aerial from 1951 shows that garden plots and parterres north of the primary building had been removed by that time, with spaces between outbuildings filled with lawns and groupings of trees transected by several walkways.<sup>24</sup> Two structures were located along the northern property boundary, a three-story classroom building and one-story play shed, and the entrance walkway appeared consistent with its ca. 1920s and current designs.<sup>25</sup> The open lawns of the grounds were replaced with expansive parking lots in the 1970s, with lawns remaining only in the property's northeast corner until they too were replaced between 1990 and 1994.<sup>26</sup> The Century House Restaurant was constructed on the House of Providence grounds in 1976, located on East Evergreen Boulevard just to the south of the primary building.<sup>27</sup> The restaurant building was demolished in 2018–2019 in order to accommodate an expansion of the adjacent parking area.<sup>28</sup> Between 2018

<sup>19</sup> "Providence Academy, Vancouver, Washington, ca. 1890s," Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections, Item No. 22.A2.091, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/1152/rec/190>.

<sup>20</sup> "Providence Academy, Vancouver, Washington, 1901," Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/1063/rec/872>.

<sup>21</sup> "Looking north at the main entrance of Providence Academy from Evergreen Boulevard, Vancouver, 1920s," Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections, Item 22.A2.2, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/420/rec/276>.

<sup>22</sup> "Photo postcard of Providence Academy in 1910." Available: <http://brickmojo.net/hiddenbricks/providencetour/>. Accessed October 31, 2023.

<sup>23</sup> "Looking north at the main entrance of Providence Academy from Evergreen Boulevard, Vancouver, 1920s," Item 22.A2.2, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/420/rec/276>.

<sup>24</sup> "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 1951," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

<sup>25</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Vancouver, Clark County, Washington. Sanborn Map Company, 1928, revised 1949. Map.

<sup>26</sup> "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 1970," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>; "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 1981," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>; "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 1990," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>; "Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 in 1994," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

<sup>27</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 7.

<sup>28</sup> Historic Aerial View of Vancouver, Washington 98660 2018-2019," Nationwide Environmental Title Research, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.



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and 2020, land along the western boundary lining C Street was partitioned from the property and redeveloped as two mixed-used retail and apartment buildings by Marathon Acquisition and Development, Inc. as part of the company's Aegis development. Furthermore, the parking lot in the parcel's southeastern corner was expanded ca. 2023.<sup>29</sup> Historic grounds features that remain include the grass lawn, central walkway with flower bed, oval approach drive in front of the primary building, the mortared stone gate posts (though the concrete pylons and lighting fixtures surmounting the stone gate posts were added after 1939), and the short hedge and concrete curb in the center of the historic grounds' southern boundary at East Evergreen Boulevard.<sup>30</sup> The intact portions of the hedge and curb span a distance of approximately 265 feet (generally aligning with the primary House of Providence building), whereas they historically were present at East Evergreen Boulevard over a distance of approximately 520 feet between C Street and the I-5 right-of-way. The western portions of the hedge and curb were removed to accommodate construction of the mixed-use buildings along C Street, and the eastern portions of these features were altered and ultimately removed to accommodate an expanded parking lot in the parcel's southeastern corner.

Boundary Description

15 The recommended National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) boundary of the House of Providence is defined as the boundaries of its current tax lot: Clark County Parcel No. 39220000.

**INTEGRITY**

20 The House of Providence retains integrity of location, as it remains in its original location. The property's integrity of setting has been diminished by substantial changes to its immediate vicinity, including the adjacent construction of I-5 and the development of modern commercial and residential properties. The property's integrity of design has been diminished somewhat by alterations to the primary building and substantial changes to its grounds. Alterations to the primary building include the removal of exterior galleries and several instances of window replacements on its north wing, the replacement of its original red-brown shingle roof with red standing seam metal, and changes to secondary interior spaces resulting from the building's conversion to commercial uses. However, the building's overall form, exterior cladding, the majority of its original fenestration, Georgian and French Colonial style elements and decorative features, and its most significant interior spaces (the chapel, ballroom, auditorium, entrance foyer, and hallways) remain intact. Furthermore, minor additions to the building are either located on secondary elevations and subordinate to the original structure in scale, or in the case of the 1891 west wing addition, compatible in scale and design with the original construction but differentiated by its lack of a gallery on the south elevation. While the material of its roof cladding has been changed, it is similar in color to the historic cladding materials and does not overly detract from the building's appearance. Likewise, more substantial alterations such as the removal of the north wing galleries and window replacements have been limited to secondary elevations and are screened by vegetation, reducing the visibility of these changes. The House of Providence's grounds have been substantially altered, including the removal of all but one of its outbuildings and the removal and replacement of much of its lawns, gardens, and circulation pathways with parking areas. The property does retain reduced portions of its historic landscape features along its primary boundary of East Evergreen Boulevard, including the central portion of the front lawn, walkway, and oval approach

<sup>29</sup> "Our Work: Aegis." Marathon Acquisition and Development, Inc., Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://marathonpad.com/work/aegis/>.

<sup>30</sup> "Providence Academy, Vancouver, Washington, ca. 1939," Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections, Item No. 22.J2.1, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://providencearchives.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15352coll3/id/871/rec/425>.



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drives in front of the primary building, the central portion of the short hedge and concrete curb along East Evergreen Boulevard, and the mortared stone gate posts. (The latter have been slightly altered through the addition of surmounting concrete pylons and lighting fixtures). These alterations have had a more limited impact on the property's integrity of materials. The primary building retains the majority of its historic materials, and replacements on the exterior and interior have been completed in-kind. Furthermore, the materials of historic landscape features such as the central walkway, oval drives, and mortared stone gate posts remain largely intact, though formerly open lawns and other landscaped areas have been replaced with hardscaped parking lots. The property largely retains integrity of workmanship, as the elements of the property that express craftsmanship remain intact. These elements include the primary building's elaborate exterior elements—its balustraded galleries, corbelled brick pilasters, bands, and window hoods and the stonework of the primary entrance pavilion and portico—and the decorative elements of its key interior spaces. Additionally, the property's remaining landscape features bolster the property's integrity of workmanship, such as the mortared stone gate posts. The property's integrity of feeling has been correspondingly diminished by changes to its setting and alteration of its grounds. The loss of all but one associated outbuilding and the alteration of its landscaping since the 1970s have left the primary building and Kindergarten Building standing among adjacent modern structures and parking lots. However, the property remains recognizable as a late 19th-century institutional property, emphasized by the sheer scale of its primary building with its Georgian and French Colonial design elements and brick and stone exterior materials, and important landscape elements along East Evergreen Boulevard that convey the sense of the institutional property's historic grounds. The property's integrity of association has been diminished by changes in ownership, the conversion of some of the primary building's interior spaces to commercial uses, and the removal of historic outbuildings and features on the House of Providence grounds. The property has not been owned and operated by the Sisters of Providence since 1969, after which the primary building's interior was partially converted to new commercial uses. Associated outbuildings, features, and open spaces of the grounds were gradually removed or replaced under subsequent owners. However, the primary building and the southwestern portion of the grounds largely retain their association with the property's historic design and use as an institutional building and campus. Importantly, the primary building retains key interior spaces associated with the Sisters of Providence's religious and educational activities, such as the chapel, which continue to convey the property's association. Furthermore, the current owner of the primary building has undertaken preservation and interpretation activities that enhance the property's historic associations with the Sisters of Providence.

Overall, the House of Providence retains integrity in a majority of aspects. It retains integrity of location and workmanship. While the property's integrity of design and materials has been diminished, many alterations to the primary building occurred during its period of significance, have been limited to secondary elevations, and have not substantially changed its overall form, design elements, materials, or appearance. Furthermore, features of its grounds along the primary property boundary of East Evergreen Boulevard remain intact to the extent that the historic landscape character of the property remains discernible. The property's integrity of setting, feeling, and association have been diminished through the alteration of the House of Providence site and changes in the use of the primary building, as well as the modernization of its immediate vicinity. However, the House of Providence retains a sufficient degree of overall integrity to convey its historical and architectural significance.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The House of Providence, located at the outer edge of the Esther Short neighborhood of Vancouver, Washington, was constructed in 1873–1874 by the Sisters of Providence (SOP). Led by Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the Sisters operated the House of Providence as a boarding school, orphanage, and headquarters of the SOP.





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The property is one of the earliest remaining examples of a religious social institution built in the Pacific Northwest by the SOP, one of the earliest of such organizations in the Washington Territory. Additionally, at the time of the building's construction, its scale and architectural design made it an exceptional and substantial undertaking in the small settlement of Vancouver, Washington.

5 Vancouver, Washington in the Nineteenth Century

10 The first permanent European American settlement of present-day Vancouver, Washington was the Hudson Bay Company's (HBC) Fort Vancouver. Established in 1825, the outpost was a central hub of all HBC operations on North America's west coast, serving diverse groups of people including Native American and European American traders, immigrants, trappers, and missionaries in the 1820s and 1830s. Though initially established on a bluff northeast of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site (NHRP No. 66000370), HBC relocated the fort facilities to the open lower plain along the Columbia River's north bank in 1829. Through the Oregon Treaty of 1846, the British ceded all claims on lands south of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel to the United States, including all lands now encompassed by Washington State.<sup>31</sup>

15 Amos and Esther Short arrived in the vicinity of Fort Vancouver in 1845, purchasing the property of Henry Williamson that the HBC had used and maintained up to that time. Though the Shorts resided on the north shore of the Columbia River since 1845, their claim was not officially granted until 1853, encompassing lands between present-day West Fourth Plain Boulevard and the Columbia River. By 1860, the southern portion of the Short claim had been partitioned off as part of the Vancouver townsite. In the latter decades of the 19th century, Vancouver became the primary shipping point for agricultural goods and timber in Clark County, connected to  
20 outer-lying segments by rudimentary trails and roads and several rail lines including the Vancouver, Klickitat & Yakima Railroad and Northern Pacific Railroad.<sup>32</sup>

Sisters of Providence

25 The SOP is a Catholic-affiliated religious organization founded in 1843 by Emilie Gamelin (née Tavernier) and Bishop Ignace Bourget of Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Though originally named the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor, Gamelin's congregation became known as the Sisters of Providence shortly thereafter.<sup>33</sup> In 1856, Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet of the Diocese of Nesqually [*sic*] invited the SOP to establish a convent and school at Fort Vancouver, resulting in a group of five sisters, led by Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, to travel from Montreal to Fort Vancouver.<sup>34</sup> The earliest SOP property in Vancouver was constructed in 1857, consisting of a small frame house that served as a convent and a temporary chapel.<sup>35</sup> The SOP was incorporated in Washington  
30 in 1859 as a religious charitable non-profit organization.<sup>36</sup> The SOP property in Vancouver expanded quickly, with the first building converted to a school and several small cabins constructed to house boarding students, orphans, and the elderly. Vancouver's first hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, was opened by the sisters in 1858, and housed

<sup>31</sup> Alsobrook, et al. *Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Historic Resources Baseline Survey Report*; 145–146, 160–161.

<sup>32</sup> Alsobrook, et al. *Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Historic Resources Baseline Survey Report*; 158, 161–166.

<sup>33</sup> "History." Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://sistersofprovidence.net/history/>.

<sup>34</sup> The Diocese of Nesqually [*sic*] operated under this spelling until the diocese's name was changed to Diocese of Seattle in 1907. This spelling is in contrast to the accepted contemporary spelling of Nisqually.

<sup>35</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 8.

<sup>36</sup> "History." Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://sistersofprovidence.net/history/>.



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in one of the early frame buildings. By 1863, the SOP property included seven wood-frame buildings, several of which were built with materials salvaged from Fort Vancouver after the fort was abandoned in 1860.<sup>37</sup>

Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

5 Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart was born Esther Pariseau in Quebec, Canada in 1823. Mother Joseph was the daughter of carriage-maker and from him, learned skills in construction, carpentry, and woodworking evident in the House of Province's construction.<sup>38</sup> She joined SOP in 1843.<sup>39</sup> Mother Joseph is credited with being the first person in the Pacific Northwest to organize institutional care for orphans, the elderly, and the mentally ill and the first to establish a permanent Catholic school and hospital.<sup>40</sup> During her forty-six years in Washington, Mother Joseph established thirty-three ministries. In addition to planning the design and construction of the House of Providence, Mother Joseph was involved in the financing and construction of Providence Hospital in Seattle, Washington, St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland, Oregon, and SOP buildings in Spokane and Walla Walla, Washington.<sup>41</sup> Mother Joseph was selected to become Washington State's second representative in the National Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. in 1980, and a statue of Mother Joseph was also dedicated in the Washington State Capitol in Olympia.<sup>42</sup>

15 The House of Providence Construction and Operation (1873–1966)

By the mid-1860s SOP's original property in Vancouver had become inadequate for the growing scope of the organization's operations. Mother Joseph began planning for the construction of a large building to house a convent, orphanage, and school, acquiring a separate property in Vancouver for the site. Funds for the building project were solicited from Vancouver residents and from mining and lumbering operations in the vicinity. Though an architect referred to as McKay is credited for the design of the chapel, Mother Joseph was credited with carving the five altars, some of the statues and pews, and much of the Gothic ornament. Brick for the construction of the House of Providence and its outbuildings was provided by Hidden Brick Company of Vancouver, operated by Lowell M. Hidden. In addition to the massive primary building, the House of Providence boasted bath and laundry facilities and the most advanced heating and ventilation systems available at the time. At the time of its completion, the building was hailed as the largest brick building in Washington Territory, and likely on the northern Pacific Coast.<sup>43</sup>

When it opened in 1874, the House of Providence housed both male and female orphans, as well as female day and boarding students. The House of Providence service population continued to expand, requiring the construction of a large addition to the west end of the original building's primary volume in 1891. In the early twentieth century, ancillary services were phased out or moved to other locations to focus the House of Providence's operation on education. The orphanage was phased out in 1916–1917, and the novitiate and SOP administrative operations were relocated to Seattle in 1924. While the school's attendance increased during World War II with an influx of shipyard and factory workers, the House of Providence's grade school and boarding

<sup>37</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 8.  
<sup>38</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 8.  
<sup>39</sup> No Title [Obituary for Mother Joseph of the Order of the Sisters of Charity of the House of Providence], *Seattle Daily Times*, January 20, 1902.  
<sup>40</sup> "Mother Joseph for state's second D.C. statue?" *Seattle Daily Times* (Seattle, WA), January 4, 1976.  
<sup>41</sup> No Title. [National Statuary Hall Unveiling for Mother Joseph], *Seattle Daily Times* (Seattle, WA), April 27, 1980.  
<sup>42</sup> No Title. [National Statuary Hall Unveiling for Mother Joseph], *Seattle Daily Times* (Seattle, WA), April 27, 1980; Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province 2023.  
<sup>43</sup> Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Section 8.



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school programs were discontinued in the 1950s as local public schools were constructed in Vancouver. The SOP school at House of Providence remained in operation until 1966.<sup>44</sup>

5 The Kindergarten Building, built 1943–1944, housed a kindergarten classroom from 1944–1948, supporting the activities of the SOP Kindergarten Department. Prior to the building’s construction, the Kindergarten Department, established 1940, had utilized a second floor space in the primary building for instruction purposes. Growing enrollment in the late 1940s resulted in the building’s use for elementary students after 1948. It also served as a meeting place for the Academy’s student union between 1948 and 1963, when it was converted to a gymnasium.

The House of Providence 1967–Present

10 The House of Providence was vacant until 1969, when it was purchased by Robert Hidden, a descendant of the brickmaker Lowell Hidden, with the intent to preserve and rehabilitate the property for modern uses. The property was rehabilitated over the course of the 1970s, with the rehabilitation and conversion of some interior spaces complete by 1978.<sup>45</sup> Hidden’s rehabilitation of the House of Providence was recognized at the time by the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation for his individual outstanding contribution to historic preservation.<sup>46</sup>

15 While information on the use of the House of Providence between 1978 and 2015 is limited, it is likely that Hidden continued to lease space in the building for commercial uses. Ancillary buildings such as the Kindergarten Building were also leased to tenants, including a Montessori school from 1978 to 2020. The Kindergarten Building is now leased to Downstage Center Productions, an arts education organization.<sup>47</sup> The House of Providence property was acquired by The Historic Trust in 2015 with the intent to continue preserving and rehabilitating the property as an event space and interpretive site.<sup>48</sup>

20 Architectural Style Influences

The House of Providence exhibits influences of the Georgian/Federal and French Colonial architectural styles. The Georgian style was popular in eastern North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The style is characterized by its large boxed form, occasionally with wings, a horizontal and vertical symmetry typified by primary elevations with a central entrance and flanking series of windows, embellished primary entrance surrounds and transoms, and decorative moldings, usually along the cornice.<sup>49</sup> The Federal style succeeded the Georgian style in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, incorporating its basic box form and strict symmetry, but more frequently supplementing the basic form with wings, refining elements such as windows by reducing the number of lights and applying decorative surrounds, and embellishing decorative detailing through the application of stone decorative elements to the elevation between window rows.<sup>50</sup> The House of Providence exhibits these elements through its pavilions-and-wings form, overall symmetry, four-over-four segmental-arched windows, and molded cornice, though it lacks other decorative details such as a dentil band or applied decorative

<sup>44</sup> Lentz, “House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington,” Section 8.

<sup>45</sup> Lentz, “House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington,” Section 7.

<sup>46</sup> “Preservation group to present 3 honors,” *Seattle Daily Times* (Seattle, WA), October 13, 1979.

<sup>47</sup> The Historic Trust, “Providence Academy Kindergarten Building (Gymnasium, Kennedy Hall, Building 404),” November 15, 2022.

<sup>48</sup> “Preservation & Renovation,” The Historic Trust, Accessed June 26, 2023, <https://www.thehistorictrust.org/providence-academy/renovations/>.

<sup>49</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017), 200–205.

<sup>50</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 216–222.



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elements. The French Colonial style was common in eastern North America in the eighteenth century, particularly in areas colonized by the French such as Canada and Louisiana. The style was characterized by small symmetrical forms, typically with side-gabled or hipped roofs, tall and narrow window pairs, and full-width incorporated porches.<sup>51</sup> The House of Providence’s long-incorporated exterior galleries and tall and narrow windows and doors, with tripartite examples over the entrances, are examples of French Colonial style influence.

National Register of Historic Places Eligibility

Previous Recommendation

The House of Providence was listed in the NRHP in 1978 (NRHP Reference No. 78002738).<sup>52</sup> The nomination form addressed the entire seven-acre site of the House of Providence, including the primary building and five outbuildings that remained at the time of listing: the boiler house, laundry, wellhouse, Kindergarten Building/gymnasium (at that time used as a school), and restaurant. The nomination form also briefly described extant landscape elements, specifically the vegetation and the oval-shaped drive that approaches the primary entrance. While the 1978 NRHP nomination did not specify the significance criteria under which the property was listed, the nomination form identified several areas of significance, including Architecture, Education, Exploration/Settlement, Religion, and Social/Humanitarian. These areas of significance generally correspond to Criteria A and C. At the time of its NRHP listing, the boundary of the property was defined as the historic extent of the grounds, corresponding to the city block bounded by 12th Street to the north, C Street to the west, East Evergreen Boulevard to the south, and Reserve Street and the I-5 right of way to the east. This boundary includes the current legal boundaries of Clark County Parcel No. 39220000 as well as the two parcels to its north (Clark County Parcel Nos. 39220001 and 986035621) and two parcels to its west (Clark County Parcel Nos. 986035622 and 39224000). Furthermore, the 1978 nomination did not provide a comprehensive inventory of features on the property nor did it clearly identify all contributing elements. However, a site map included in the nomination form noted that the property’s historic components were the primary building, boiler house, laundry, wellhouse, and the landscaping in front of the primary building’s entrance. “Intrusions” were noted as the restaurant building and 1940s-era Kindergarten Building (then occupied by a Montessori school). The nomination form did not specify a period of significance, although the identification of the Kindergarten Building as an intrusion suggests that the evaluator considered the property’s significant period to have ended before the 1940s.

Current Recommendation

This evaluation supports the previous listing and supplements it to recommend the House of Providence as eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A, B, and C, with a period of significance of 1873–1924. This evaluation also clarifies the property’s current boundary, as the legal boundary of the property has been reduced since 1978 and associated outbuildings and features of its grounds have been removed or replaced. Additionally, the current evaluation identifies the specific character-defining features that remain on the property.

<sup>51</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 179–186.

<sup>52</sup> Lentz, “House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington.”



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5 Based upon an evaluation of the House of Providence within its historic context, the resource is significant under Criterion A, at the state levels in the areas of education, religion, and social history. The House of Providence is strongly associated with the SOP's early activities and organizational growth in Washington State. The period of significance for this criterion is 1873 to 1924, which demarcates the year the Sisters of Providence constructed the House of Providence in Vancouver through the year the order relocated its headquarters to Seattle, after which the SOP's activities at the House of Providence were limited only to the operation of the SOP school. The resource was the first major construction project undertaken by the organization in Washington and operated for 93 years as an SOP institutional campus, serving as a school, orphanage, and headquarters of the organization. 10 The House of Providence was constructed in 1873–1874 as a consolidated site for the religious, social, educational, and administrative work of the SOP in Vancouver, Washington during that period, replacing an ad hoc complex developed by the organization over the previous sixteen years. The primary building housed an orphanage for over thirty years, was the organization's headquarters for forty years, and was an educational institution in Vancouver for 93 years. The property's construction allowed for the expansion of SOP activities in Vancouver and later in Washington and Oregon. The primary building most directly demonstrates the property's 15 association with the SOP, while extant historic features of the grounds demonstrate how the property evolved within the period of significance in concert with the expansion and evolution of SOP activities at the site.

20 Providence constructed the House of Providence in Vancouver through the year of Mother Joseph's death. The SOP's expansion into the Pacific Northwest was led by Mother Joseph, and over her forty-six years in Washington she greatly expanded the organization's presence and programming throughout the state. Under Mother Joseph, the SOP served as a model for the institutional care of vulnerable populations, particularly children. Furthermore, she directly led the development of the House of Providence, oversaw its programming during the early decades of its operations, and conducted the broader work of the SOP in Washington from the property.

25 The House of Providence is also significant under Criterion C, at the state level in the area of architecture and landscape architecture. The House of Providence is an example of an early institutional campus with significant qualities of construction, design, and landscaping. The primary building exhibits influences of the Georgian/Federal and French Colonial styles and the grounds were integral to the design of the campus and represent a cohesive design vision for the property with function and aesthetic elements. The period of significance for this criterion is 1873 through 1924, encompassing the dates of construction for the House of Providence's primary building (1873–1874) and its addition (1891), as well as the estimated construction dates of 30 the significant historic features of the property's grounds (ca. 1920s). The primary building was the earliest building of its scale in Washington State and includes Georgian/Federal- and French Colonial-style elements such as its pavilions-and-wings form, strict vertical and horizontal symmetry, tall segmental-arched windows and doors, and incorporated exterior galleries. While alterations have impacted its integrity of design, the building retains its 35 overall form, design elements, materials, and appearance to retain sufficient integrity to convey its architectural significance. Though many of the functional elements of the grounds have been removed, such as outbuildings and gardens, some formal landscape elements remain in front of the primary building and along East Evergreen Boulevard and retain sufficient integrity to convey their significance in landscape architecture.

40 In summary, the House of Providence possesses sufficient integrity to communicate its multiple areas of significance. As such, Parametrix recommends the resource as eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A, B, and C, with an overall period of significance of 1873 through 1924. As this document is in reference to the built environment components of the property, the resource is recommended not eligible under Criterion D.



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5 This period of significance spans the fifty-one years between the construction of the House of Providence campus and the relocation of the SOP headquarters from the property to Seattle. The span encompasses the nearly thirty years Mother Joseph led the organization's operations during this period, later significant alterations to the campus, including the addition to its primary building, as well as the estimated construction dates of the significant historic features of the property's grounds. This evaluation proposes an updated NRHP historic property boundary for the House of Providence that is the legal boundary of Clark County Parcel No. 39220000. This boundary is smaller than the historic property boundary originally identified in the 1978 NRHP nomination but encompasses all extant historic features that convey the institution's original campus-like qualities. The western and northern portions of the 1978 NRHP property boundary have been partitioned off as four individual parcels, and no longer contain any of the contributing elements included in the 1978 NRHP listing. Formerly contributing elements to the historic property have been demolished in the northern pair of parcels (Clark County Parcel Nos. 39220001 and 986035621) and the western parcels (Clark County Parcel Nos. 986035622 and 39224000) have been redeveloped as a pair of mixed-use retail/residential high-rises. The property's contributing elements and character-defining features within the recommended reduced property boundary are the original T-shaped House of Providence primary building and its west addition, including its brick cladding, intersecting gabled roof forms and dormers, alternating pavilions and wood galleries, pilasters, belt courses, fenestration pattern, wood windows and doors, projecting entrance, sculpture niche, and domed cupola. Character-defining landscape elements include the grass lawn that remains in front of the primary entrance, central walkway with circular flower bed, oval-shaped approach drives, mature trees, the stone gateposts (concrete pylons and lighting fixtures not contributing), and extant sections of the concrete curb and low hedge that define the center of the southern parcel boundary along East Evergreen Boulevard. Features within the historic property boundary that do not contribute to its significance include the Kindergarten Building and southwestern and southeastern surface parking lots, as these features were constructed outside of the period of significance.



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| Property Name: House of Providence/Providence Academy (WA 150)   | WISAARD Property ID: 18827                       |  |
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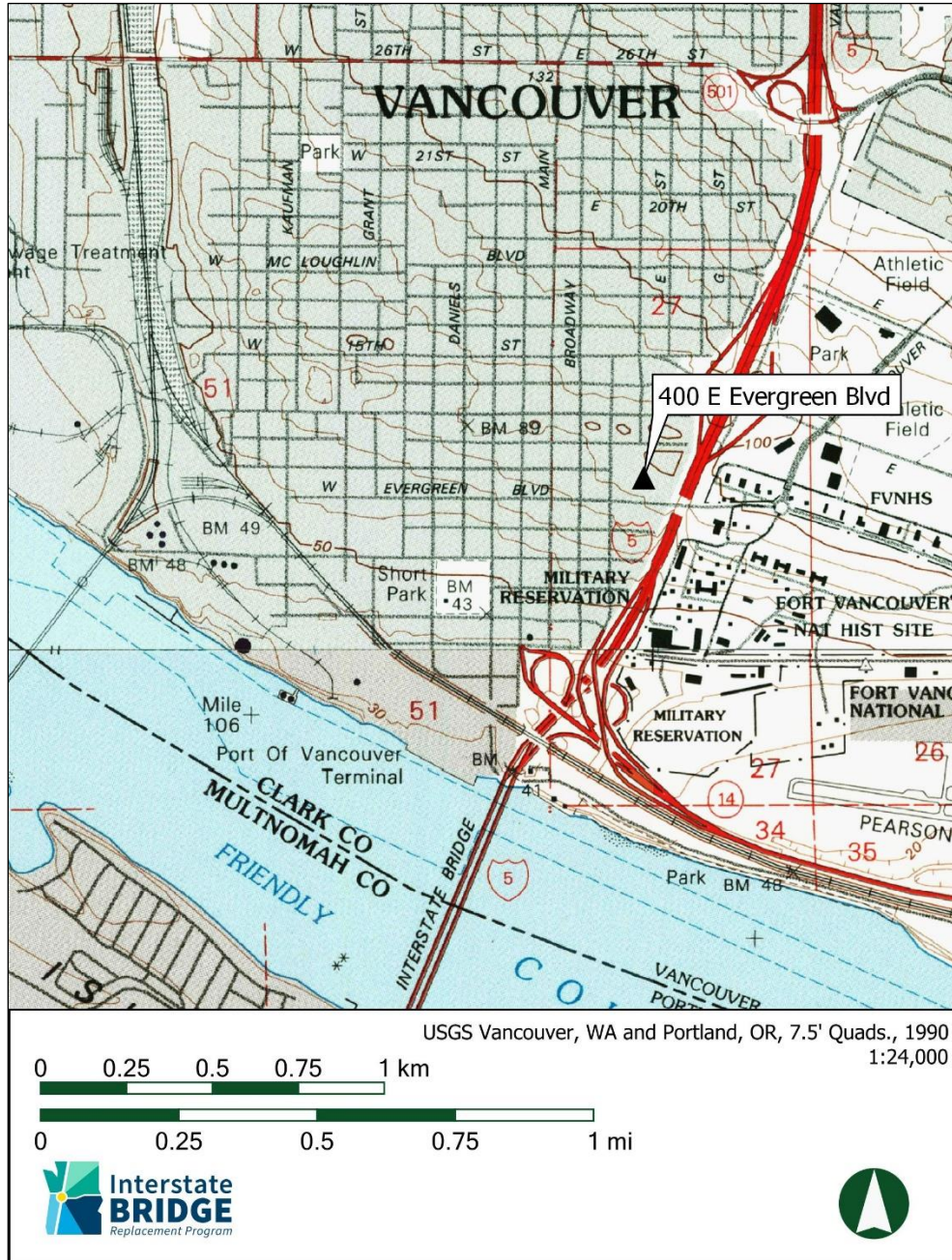


Figure 2. Location map of 400 East Evergreen Boulevard, Vancouver, Clark County, WA.

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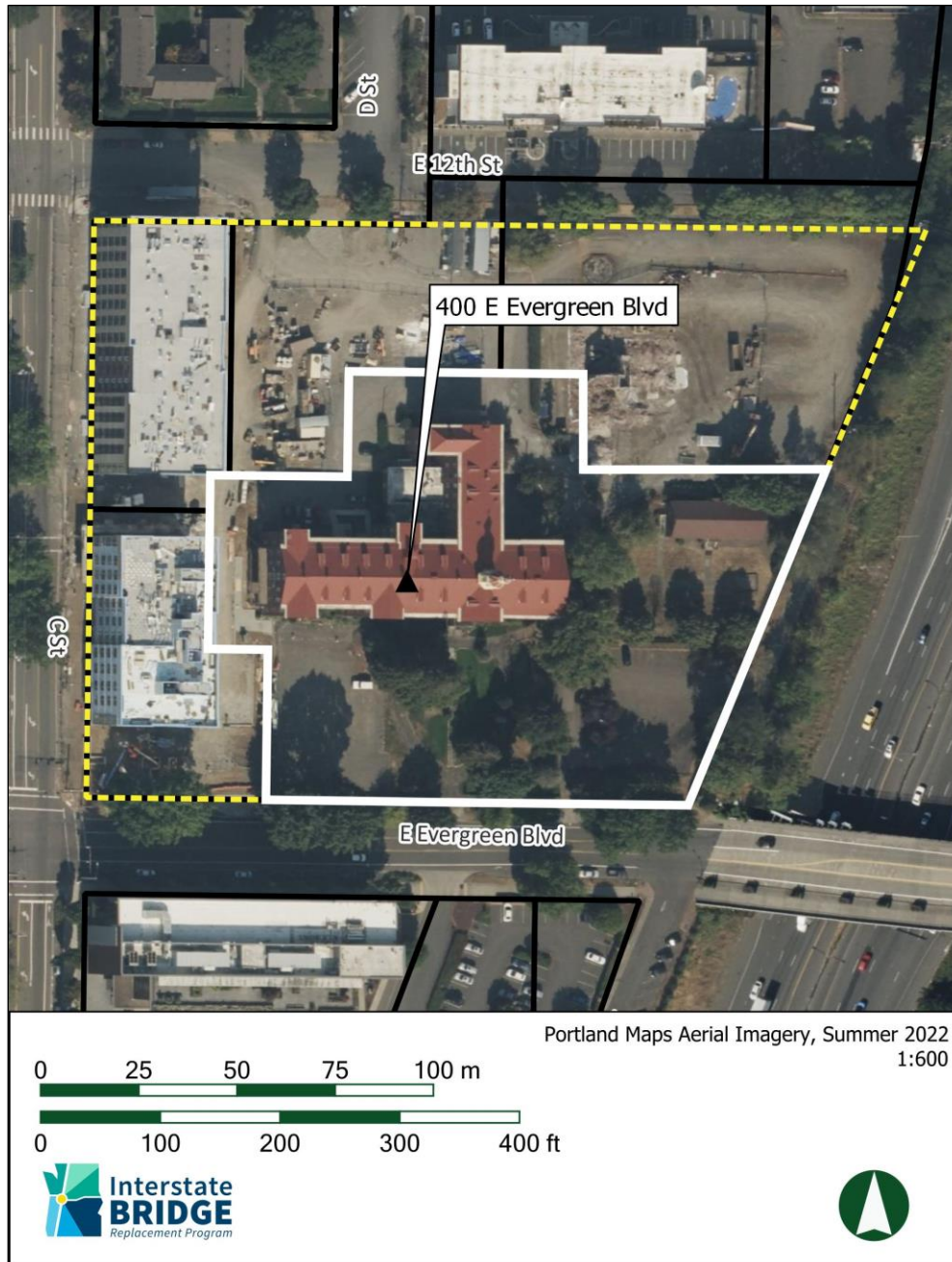


Figure 3. Aerial map of 400 East Evergreen Boulevard, Vancouver, Clark County, WA, showing 1978 House of Providence NRHP boundary in yellow, the recommended (revised) NRHP boundary in white, and adjacent tax lot boundaries in black.

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Figure 4. View of House of Providence 1891 addition from southwest (WillametteCRA 2023).

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Figure 5. View of House of Providence, north and west wings, from north (WillametteCRA 2023).

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Figure 6. View of House of Providence, north and east wings, from north (WillametteCRA 2023).

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Figure 7. View of House of Providence mortared stone gate posts and East Evergreen Boulevard curbing and hedges from east (ARG 2023).

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Figure 8. View of House of Providence Sacred Heart Garden entrance drives and landscaping from south (ARG 2023).

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Figure 9. View of House of Providence southeast boundary along East Evergreen Boundary from south, showing curbing and hedges no longer present (ARG 2023).



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Figure 10. View of House of Providence ca. post-1891 from southeast (Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections).

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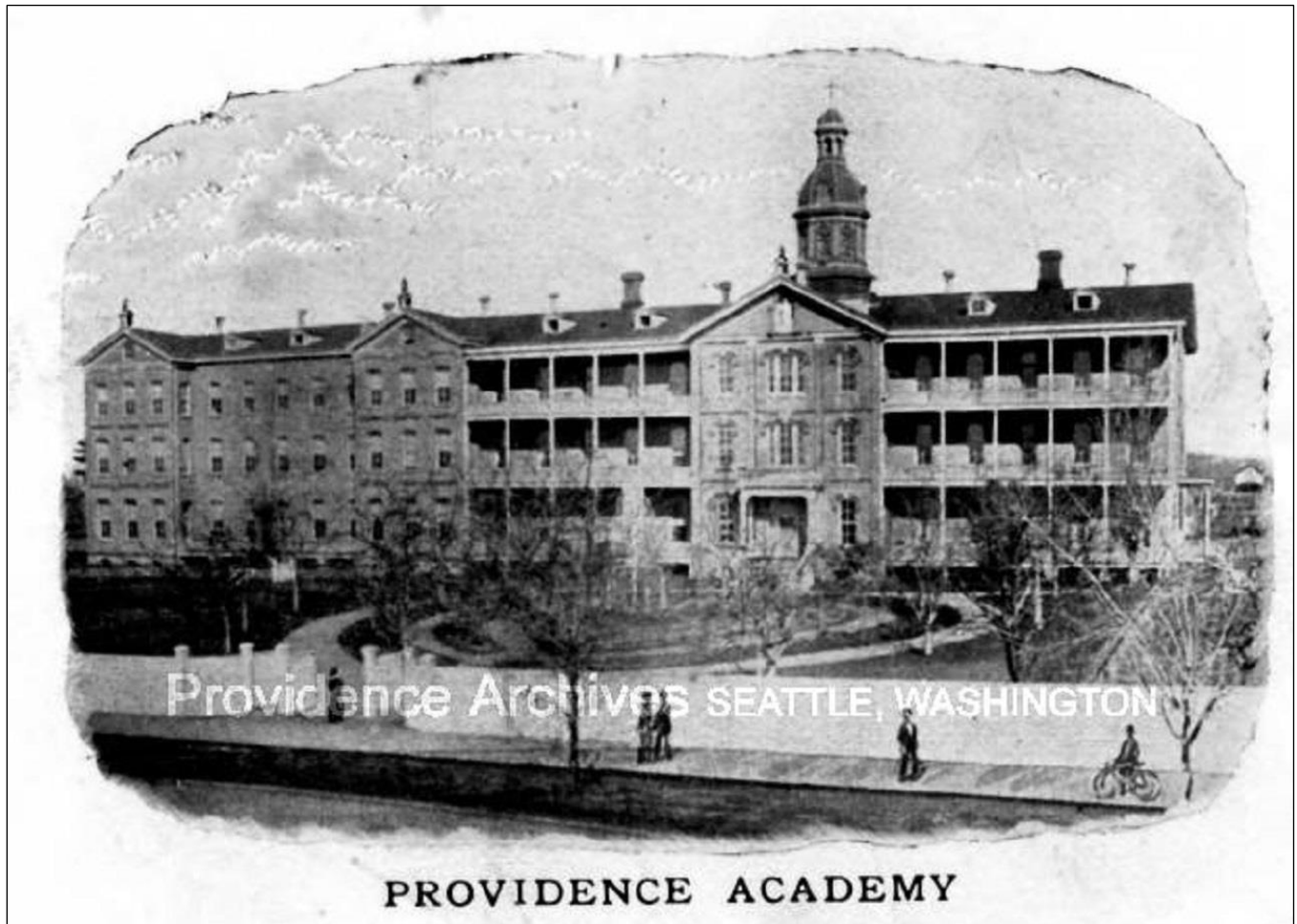


Figure 11. View of House of Providence in 1901 from south (Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections).

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Figure 12. View of House of Providence in 1910 from south (BrickMojo.net).

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Figure 13. View of House of Providence ca. 1920s from south (Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections).

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Figure 14. Aerial view of House of Providence in 1956 from southwest (Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections).

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Figure 15. View of House of Providence in 1966 from north (Providence Archives, Seattle, Digital Collections).

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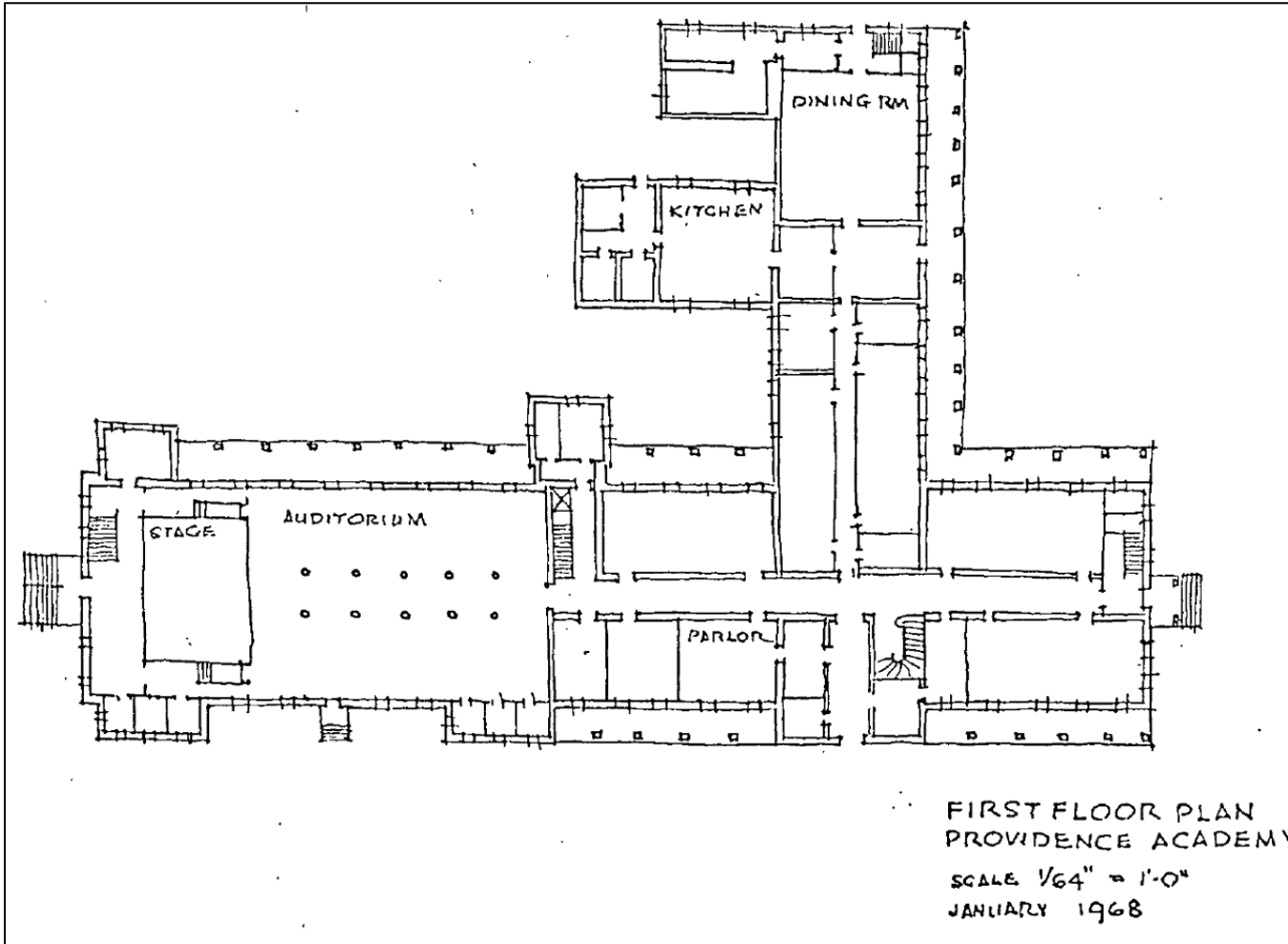


Figure 16. House of Providence first floor plan in 1968 (Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Supplemental materials).

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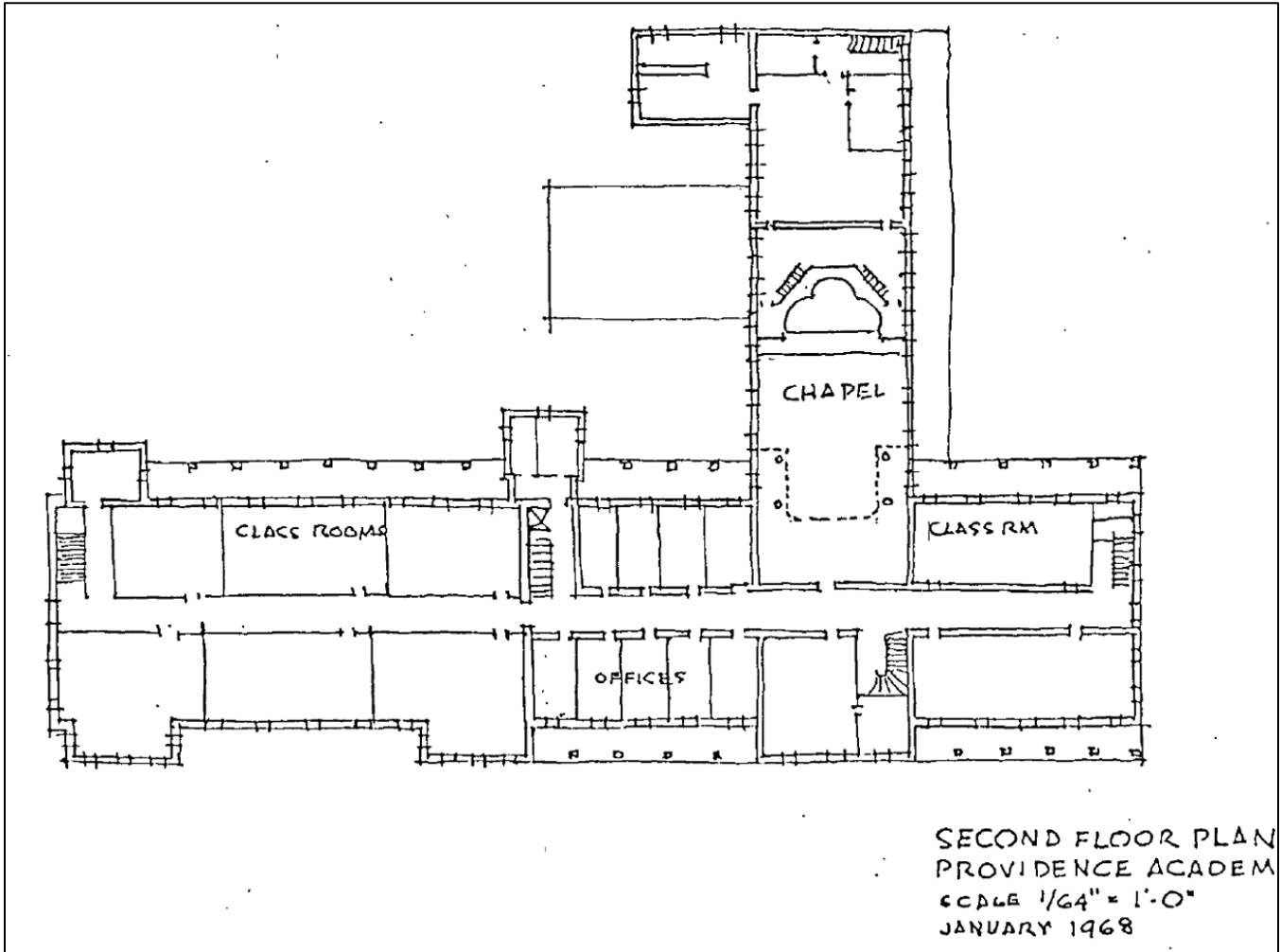


Figure 17. House of Providence second floor plan in 1968 (Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Supplemental materials).



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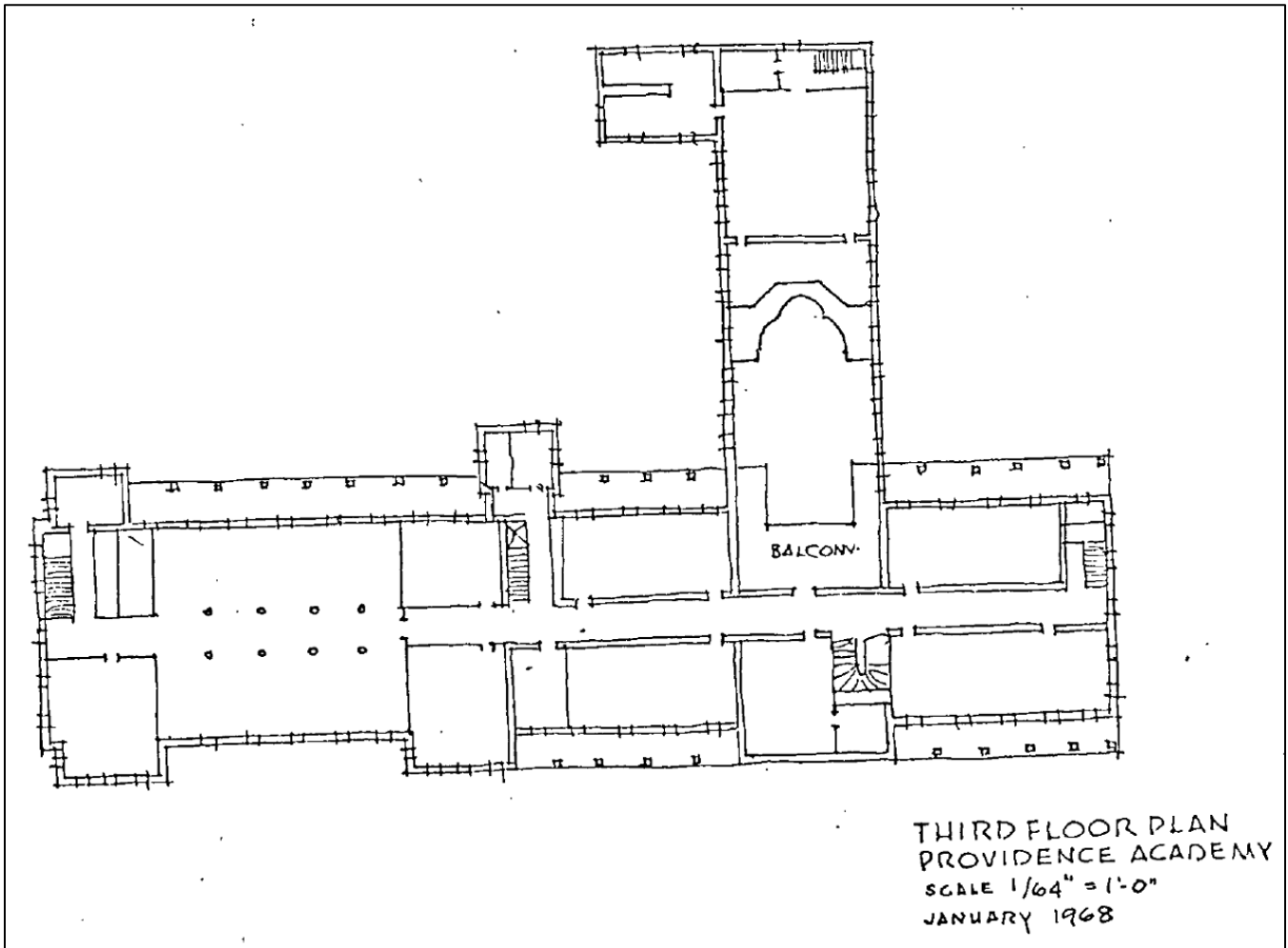


Figure 18. House of Providence third floor plan in 1968 (Lentz, "House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington," Supplemental materials).

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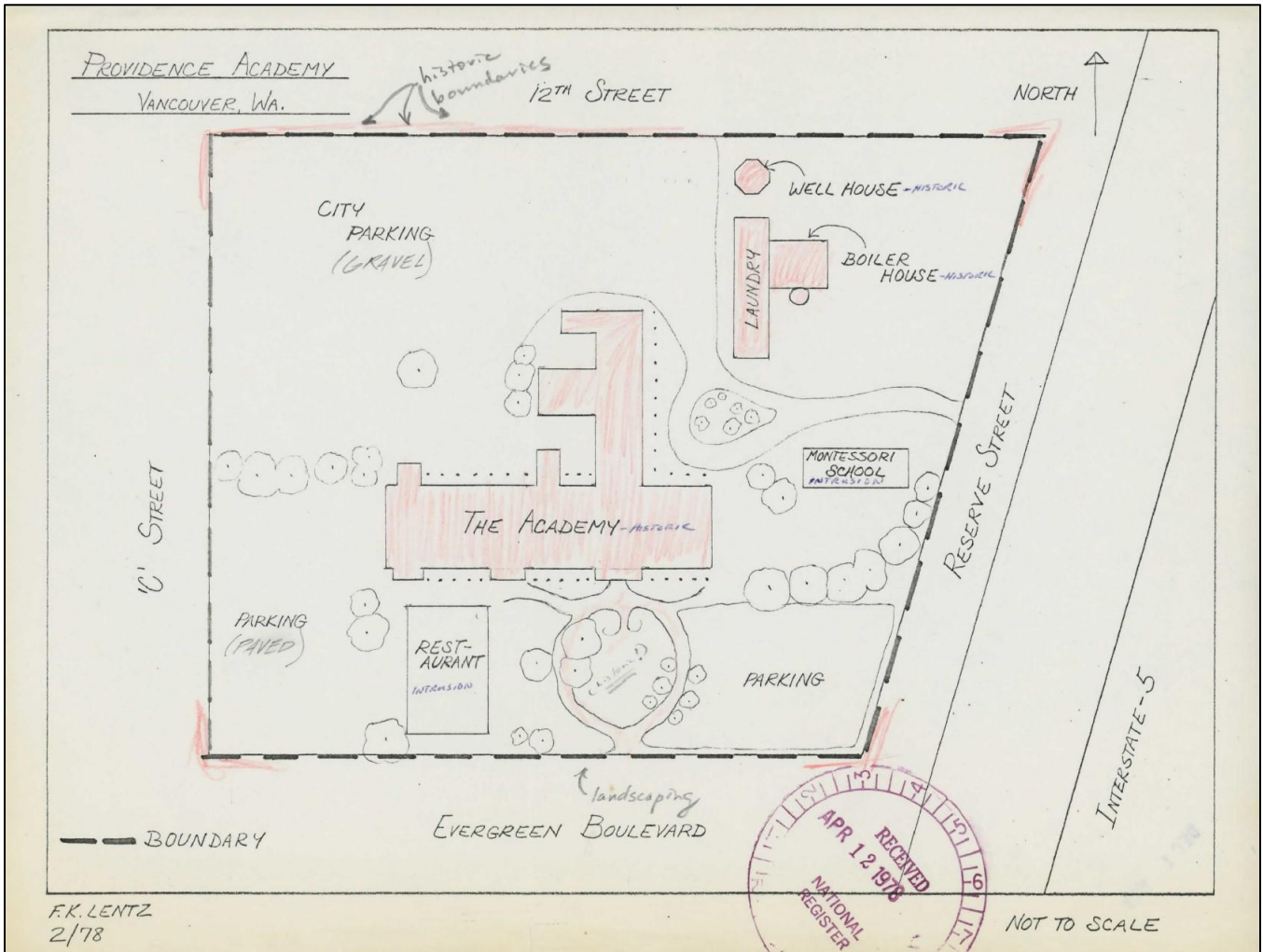


Figure 19. House of Providence site plan included in the National Register nomination form prepared in 1978; note that both the restaurant building (no longer extant) and Montessori school/Kindergarten Building are marked as “intrusions” (Lentz, “House of Providence, Vancouver, Washington,” Supplemental materials).