

Big Sky. Big Land. Big History.
Montana
Historical Society

Tom Micuda
City of Great Falls Planning and Community Development
#2 Park Drive South, Room 112
Great Falls, MT 59403

June 28, 2018

RE: Great Falls High School Historic District

Dear Tom,

Our office received a call about the plans for work on Great Falls High School property, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Great Falls High School Historic District). The district includes three contributing resources to the district: the high school itself, Memorial Stadium (the stadium, track, bleachers, field, the two connected buildings, and associated features), and the circulation pattern/spatial organization of the district.


We take this opportunity to convey our hope that the project proponents make additional efforts to retain the character-defining features and resources associated with the historic district. In particular, that they work to retain the integrity of both the buildings and the landscape, resources that work together in telling the important history of the school. Many times, when a project occurs in a National Register-listed district, the project's proponent often doesn't recognize that impacts to the district go beyond changes or modifications to the major standing building(s) but also affect other resources of the district, such as the landscape. The removal of trees, which has already occurred, in the northeast portion of the historic district for future parking was indeed unfortunate. The trees, which appear to have been quite mature, are a loss to the overall integrity of the district as they were undoubtedly, part of the designed landscape for the property.

We sincerely hope that the proposed addition to Great Falls High School is done in a manner that respects the historic elements of the existing building and grounds. We also hope that the contractors, regardless of if they are required to do so or not, consult with your office to get your feedback on the project.

Our office has also been informed that the school district has purchased the historic brick building at 2nd Avenue South and 20th St. South across from the northeast corner of the NR district. The building reportedly once served as a grocery store that catered to the students of the high school. A cursory look at the building indicates it retains strong integrity, easily conveying its historic use. We believe this building could be listed in the National Register either individually, based on its own history, or because of its association with the school, potentially through a boundary increase of the existing district. If the school district is interested in this possibility, please have them contact our office.

Thank you again for all you do toward historic preservation in Great Falls.

Sincerely,


John Boughton
National Register Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office
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CC: Philip Faccenda

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