



City of Seattle  
Department of Community Development/Office of Urban Conservation

## Landmark Nomination Form

Name Old Georgetown City Hall Year Built 1909  
(Common, present or historic)

Street and Number 6202 - 13th Avenue South

Assessor's File No. \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Description Plat Name Queen Addition Block 6 Lot s 29-32

Present Owner City of Seattle Present Use Police Precinct

Address Municipal Building, 4th & James

Original Owner City of Georgetown Original Use City Hall

Architect V. W. Vorhees Builder \_\_\_\_\_

**Description:** Present and original (if known) physical appearance and characteristics

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The building is a two story structure made up of three areas. The main body of the structure is roughly divided in half by an east-west masonry bearing wall. This wall separates the former city hall from the old fire station. The city hall portion was the north half of the building; the south half was the fire station. In 1915, a garage was added to the east side of the building. This addition is one story high and constitutes the third major area or wing of the building.

The exterior of the building is primarily clinker brick. This brick is very hard and nonporous. The brick was on the outside of the brick kiln during the firing and exposed to the direct flames in the kiln. Consequently, the brick is warped, misshapen, varied in color but makes an interesting wall. The south and east walls of the fire station are constructed of red common brick. All corners are buff-colored brick quoins. An entablature of similar brick connects these quoins. Sills are painted concrete or brick. Windows are wood double hung. Interior is of wood frame construction except for an old vault and a few concrete partition. Finishes are generally three-coat plaster on wood lath and vinyl asbestos floor tile.

The interior of the building has little architectural detail, with the exception of some of the door and window moldings. Only a portion of the gallery and railings remain. There is no architectural decorative plasterwork on the ceiling as might be expected on a structure of this age. The plaster wainscoat in the fire station could be retained and used as a motif throughout the restored building, if desired.

Access to the roof is through the hose tower. The hose rack is still there, and the tower is not only in good condition, but an interesting addition to the building's architecture. The roof to the small hose drying tower is covered with sheet metal cornice and the soffit is rusted away, but can be easily repaired. There is a small skylight over the toilet and shower area in the fire station wing. A masonry wall separates the old city hall from the fire station.

A steeple, which stood as a landmark for the area, was blown off in the 1920's because it was improperly supported. By 1943 the rest of the tower was in danger of complete destruction due to vibration from low flying aircraft from nearby Boeing Field. The tower was finally dismantled. A recent check with the Federal Aviation Administration shows that the rebuilding of the tower would not violate existing height restrictions regulations in the zone surrounding the airport.



### Statement of significance

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In January, 1904 the Georgetown City government was established. The first city hall was located on Horton Street. This building housed the jail as well as city offices and the fire department. Municipal pride, a desire to demonstrate the permanence of Georgetown and a land swap with the Oregon and Washington Railroad led to the building of a permanent city hall. The land swap meant the relocation of city hall to the triangular block of Stanely Street and "A" street where it is currently situated. In 1909, the plans by V. W. Vorhees were accepted by the city council. The cost, \$10,000, was deemed too high and they rejected all bids and decided to use day labor. The new building was the focal point for all municipal services. The building contained a police court, jail, engineers', treasurer's and mayor's offices, the city council chambers and the fire department. It was the first building in Georgetown to have hot and cold running water. A clock tower, not included in the original plans, was constructed with funds raised by general subscription.

Georgetown annexed to Seattle in the Spring of 1910. Seattle Superintendent of Buildings, Francis W. Grant, reported that he inspected city hall and pronounced it "the only real building that had ever come into Seattle by annexation". It would be used for the police, health and fire department. A long-sought library was projected for the upstairs area, although it was not funded for several years after the annexation.

With the industrialization of the south end after World War II, the face of the Georgetown community began to change. The first community service to depart City Hall was the library, closing in 1948. Later the Fire Station moved to larger, more modern quarters on the periphery of Georgetown. The Police Department has been the only continuous occupant since Seattle took the building over in 1910.

This structure is probably the only city hall remaining from early communities that were absorbed by the expansion of Seattle. Some Georgetown residents remember the area when it was a separate corporate entity, and the services dispensed from that building. Old mainstays of the community and younger, more recent residents of Georgetown value the structure as a symbol of current community pride, and a visible reminder of the area's rich cultural past.



Photographs:

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Submitted by: Office of Urban Conservation - at the request of Environmental Works

Address 402 - 15th Avenue East, Seattle, Wash. 98112 Phone (206) 329-8300

Date 2-14-83

Reviewed

*[Signature]*  
 Historic Preservation Officer  
 Acting City Historic Preservation Officer

Date 2-14-83