

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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Lowell Municipal Pool

Other names/site number: Lowell Pool; Lowell School Swimming Pool; ISHI# 01-21159

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 1601 N 28<sup>th</sup> Street

City or town: Boise State: Idaho County: Ada

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

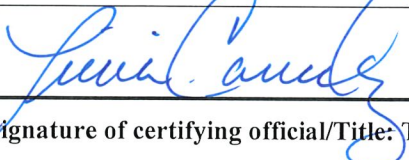
I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

	<u>8-2-22</u>
<hr/> <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> Tricia Canaday, Deputy SHPO <b>Date</b>	
<hr/> Idaho State Historic Preservation Office	
<hr/> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

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<p style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 0;"><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>Tricia Canaday, Deputy SHPO</u>    <b>Date</b> _____</p> <p style="margin-bottom: 0;"><u>Idaho State Historic Preservation Office</u></p> <p style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>
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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____	_____
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
_____	_____
<b>Title:</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

**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

**5. Classification**

**6.**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District

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Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE:

Sports Facility

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

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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

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## 8. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT:

Moderne

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK; CONCRETE

roof: CONCRETE

other: GLASS

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Lowell Municipal Pool (Lowell Pool) in Boise, Idaho is a one-story, ovoid-shaped above-ground swimming pool built in 1953. Located in the North End neighborhood of Boise, the Streamline Moderne style pool building occupies a small irregular-shaped lot adjacent to the Lowell Elementary School. This Wesley Birtz-patented pool sits on a concrete slab foundation and has concrete block and brick exterior walls finished with a cement plaster skim coat, glass block windows, and a board formed, concrete upper-level pool deck surrounded by a chain link fence. Facing east, the entrance projects from the ovoid and features inset, stylized block lettering for "Municipal Pool." The pool itself sits above ground; the locker rooms wrap around the sides of the inset pool at the ground level, with the roof serving as the upper-level pool deck. Its interior includes a vestibule and check-in lobby inside the main entrance, women's and men's locker rooms that wrap around the south and north sides of the pool, a storage room, and a mechanical room at the west end of the building.

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The pool has undergone few major alterations since its construction and retains good integrity. Notable changes include the application of a cement plaster skim coat to the exterior concrete block and brick walls, replacement of the original wood-frame windows with glass blocks, the chain link fencing added around the upper-level pool deck in place of the original wood fencing, and the storage room additions at the west end of the building, but these alterations do not detract from the pool's overall integrity. Through its setting, placement, form, materials, and character-defining features, the building clearly conveys its original function, historic associations, and period of construction.

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## Narrative Description

### *Location and Setting*

Boise (2020 pop. 235,648) is located on a broad, flat plain along the Boise River in southwest Idaho. The Rocky Mountain foothills rise northeast of Boise and the Owyhee Mountains are to the southwest. Boise's North End neighborhood is situated to the north and west of downtown at the base of the Boise Foothills. Located at 1601 North 28<sup>th</sup> Street at the intersection with Hazel Street, the Lowell Pool sits on a 0.842-acre property owned by the Boise Parks and Recreation Department. It sits at the western edge of the locally designated Expanded North End Historic District on a property that is contiguous to the expansive grounds of the Lowell Elementary School immediately to the south. This irregular-shaped property is roughly triangular and bounded by North 28<sup>th</sup> Street to the east, a paved school parking lot to the south, and single-family residential properties to the west and north. The two-and-a-half story brick and stone Renaissance Revival style school building situated to the south dominates the pool's immediate surroundings, while nearby streets are lined with a mixture of modest one-story residences, primarily from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and a handful of small-scale commercial buildings. State Street, located to the south and west of the adjoining school property, is a major commercial thoroughfare in the city.

The Lowell Pool faces east towards North 28<sup>th</sup> Street and occupies roughly the southern half of its irregular lot, while the northern section contains a lawn with a few large evergreen and deciduous trees and a U-shaped 20-space asphalt parking lot that serves the pool. To the south, the pool is surrounded by a narrow strip of lawn defined by a large irregular-shaped school parking lot that extends in front of its main entrance. A perpendicular concrete walk connects the north parking lot to the main entrance of the pool, while an asphalt driveway extends from the school lot to the storage room additions at the west end of the building.

### *Exterior*

The Lowell Pool is a one-story, ovoid-shaped, Streamline Moderne style "Bintz-type" above-ground swimming pool. Built on a concrete slab foundation, the pool building is about 77 feet wide (north to south) by 120 feet long (east to west) and almost entirely constructed of poured concrete. It was constructed so that the open-air pool is inset into the center of the building, with the surrounding upper-level concrete deck forming the roof of locker rooms on either side. A

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board formed, concrete system makes up the upper-level pool deck structure, spanning from the cement plaster-coated concrete block and brick exterior bearing walls to the foundation bearing wall that makes up the perimeter of the pool. The rectilinear entrance hall extends outward from the ovoid-shaped main pool building to the east and features inset, stylized block lettering for "Municipal Pool" and a curved parapet. Around the curving north and south sides of the pool building, the high windows are glass block. The upper level houses the pool deck enclosed by a chain-link fence, the concrete pool, and an observation area.

Facing east towards the intersection of North 28<sup>th</sup> and Hazel streets, the entrance hall sits at ground level and extends outward from the ovoid-shaped main pool building. Its Streamline Moderne style façade consists of a pair of fluted pylons of differing height that frame the offset recessed entry, a projecting concrete canopy, and a dramatically curved parapet. The name MUNICIPAL POOL is inset into the concrete; the Moderne block lettering for MUNICIPAL runs horizontally in the space above the projecting canopy over the doors and those for POOL run vertically to the right of the recessed entrance. To the right of the entrance, a dedication plaque commemorating the construction of the pool is set into the pylon. The inset letters and fluting are painted turquoise, while the remainder of the façade is painted light pink.

The north and south elevations of the ovoid-shaped main pool building consist of curved concrete block and brick walls coated in a cement plaster skim coat. The upper section of each wall has a ribbon course with ten inset rectangular glass block windows that provide light into the locker rooms. Each window is four glass blocks high and ten blocks wide, measuring approximately 2x5 feet in size. An additional glass block window in the south elevation of the projecting entrance hall provides light into the vestibule. On the west (rear) elevation, the rectilinear mechanical room extends outward slightly from the main ovoid-shaped pool building. A metal smokestack extends upward from the upper wall at the southwest corner of the building. On the west elevation, a pair of storage shed additions are attached to the northwest corner of the mechanical room. The smaller of them is concrete block with a composition shingle shed roof, while the larger has metal panel walls and a metal shed roof. Both the mechanical room and storage room additions are accessible only from the exterior.

### *Upper-Level Pool Deck and Swimming Pool*

The upper level of the building has a textured, exposed concrete deck that runs around the periphery of the ovoid-shaped open-air pool. A chain-link fence bolted to the concrete deck encloses the entire upper level. Three stairways lead from the pool deck to the interior; two stairways located at the west end of the pool deck provide swimmers separate access from women's and men's locker rooms. A third staircase is located above the main entrance at the east end of the pool, providing spectators access from the entry vestibule to an observation area in the southeast section of the pool deck. Another row of chain link fencing separates the observation area from the main pool deck. A single low diving board sits on the east end of the pool.

Measuring 60 feet wide by 90 feet long, the concrete pool's greatest depth is 12 feet at the east end; its shallowest depth, at the west end, is three feet. The depth markers are a series of concrete

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blocks rising from the deck with painted numbers. An imbedded scum gutter, designed to remove surface water contaminants, encircles the entire pool. The main intake of the pool's filtration system is located at the bottom of the deep end of the pool.

### *Interior*

The interior of the building wraps around the ovoid-shaped swimming pool below the upper-level pool deck and consists of an entrance vestibule, check-in lobby, women's and men's locker rooms, a storage room, and a mechanical room on the ground floor.<sup>1</sup> Throughout, the interior is utilitarian in character. The exterior walls are painted exposed concrete block and brick while those on the pool side are poured concrete. Floors and ceilings are concrete. Exposed lengths of electrical conduit and pool pipework of varying size run along the ceiling and walls in the lobby and locker room areas. The lighting is in the form of fluorescent fixtures mounted on the ceiling.

Inside the east-facing main entrance, a rectangular-plan vestibule contains a wall-mounted drinking fountain on the left and to the right, a stairway provides access to the observation area at the southeast section of the pool deck. The small adjoining check-in lobby wraps around the east end of the pool and contains a reception desk and concrete block partition walls that partially screen the locker rooms. To the left, the women's locker room wraps around the south side of the pool in a curved fashion. This long and narrow space holds several lockers and benches for changing along the interior wall. There are showers, toilets, and sinks at the west end, where stairs behind a replacement metal door climb to the southwest section of the pool deck. The men's locker room, located to the right of the check-in lobby, is a nearly identical long, narrow, and curved space with lockers, benches, showers, toilets, and sinks. At the west end of the men's locker room, a replacement metal door closes off stairs that climb to the northwest section of the pool deck. To the left of the stairs, a narrow door provides access to a small storage room. The mechanical room, which curves around the west end of the pool, contains the pool filtration system and is accessible only from the exterior.

### *Change Over Time and Integrity*

The Lowell Pool functioned as a municipal swimming pool from its opening in 1953 until its closure in 2019. During its operation, the property has undergone changes typical of extant Bintz pools to accommodate repairs and evolving functional and safety requirements. Unfortunately, limited information is available to determine when these changes occurred. City of Boise permit records document a renovation in 1993; earlier alterations are apparent from a comparison to photographs dating to the 1950s.

- Date Unknown: Replacement of the original wood fencing surrounding the upper-level pool deck with a chain link fence.
- Date Unknown: Removal of the two light towers located on the north and south ends of the upper-level pool deck.

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<sup>1</sup> The total interior space is approximately 2,536 square feet.

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- Date Unknown: Removal of the original high and low diving boards and their replacement with a single low diving board located at the east end of the pool.
- Date Unknown: Application of a cement plaster skim coat to the exterior concrete block and brick walls.
- Date Unknown: Removal or plastering of the decorative tilework framing the recessed entry and in the inset panel in the south pylon of the entrance façade.
- Date Unknown: Replacement of the original wooden double entrance doors which each had three small windowpanes with hollow metal doors.
- Date Unknown: Addition of the attached storage sheds at the west end of the building.
- 1993: Replacement of the wood frame windows in the locker room areas with frosted glass blocks in the original openings.
- 1993: Updates to the locker rooms, including updates to cabinets, changing rooms, lighting, and restrooms.

Although the above-noted changes have impacted the property's historic integrity in terms of materials and workmanship, it remains an excellent example of a rare building type that clearly conveys its original function, historic associations, and period of construction. The removal or concealment of some historic materials is noteworthy, but these changes are modest in terms of the overall design and do not impact the character-defining features. Currently, the pool is in fair condition due to deferred maintenance and is in need of upgrades for code compliance, but these issues do not detract from its integrity.<sup>2</sup> The property retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association, and good integrity of materials and workmanship.

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<sup>2</sup> These issues include leaking pipes, broken concrete, broken glass blocks, and exposed rebar. Full details are found in "Facilities Assessment: South and Lowell City Pools," Cushing Terrell and Aquatic Design Group, January 2021. Accessed on July 10, 2021 <https://www.cityofboise.org/media/12845/january-2021-facilities-assessment-south-and-lowell-pools.pdf>.

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## 9. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.
- 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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION  
ARCHITECTURE

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

**Period of Significance**

Criterion A: 1953-1972

Criterion C: 1953

**Significant Dates**

1953 (Construction)

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

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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

**Architect/Builder**

Wesley Bintz (Civil Engineer, Designer)

Jordan & Son (Builder)

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Lowell Municipal Pool is significant under National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria A and C, at the local level of significance. It is eligible under Criterion A in the area of significance of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION for its association with the development of public swimming pools in Boise. Lowell Municipal Pool is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of significance of ARCHITECTURE as an excellent example of the work of Wesley Bintz, the designer of innovative above-ground public swimming pools built across the United States.

The Period of Significance for Criterion A is 1953 to 1972, beginning with the pool's opening and ending roughly fifty years from the present, reflecting its continuous use as a public swimming pool until its closure in 2019. The Period of Significance for Criterion C is 1953, the date of the pool's completion.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Early Settlement of Boise and the Development of the North End*

Boise is situated along the Boise River, a tributary of the Snake River, in the high desert of southwest Idaho. It occupies the ancestral lands of the Shoshone-Bannock and Shoshone-Paiute tribes, which encompassed vast stretches of land in present-day Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Montana. Tribes to the north included the Nez Perce, the Coeur d'Alene, and others. The fertile Snake River Valley and its tributaries were important sources of life in this arid region, serving as important transportation corridors, not only for native tribes but also for European-American fur traders, missionaries, gold-seekers, and Oregon-bound settlers in the 19th century.<sup>3</sup>

The arrival of gold-seekers and miners in the early 1860s prompted the establishment of Idaho Territory in 1863 and the formation of Fort Boise, a military post along the Boise River. The new fort marked the beginning of Boise City, a small trading post settlement that was platted on July 7, 1863. It was named the county seat when Ada County was created in 1864. The lack of a developed transportation network attracted few to the large, rugged, and arid Idaho Territory, where only 14,999 residents lived in 1870. The first railroad to develop into Idaho Territory was the Utah Northern, a narrow-gauge line built from Ogden to Franklin in 1873-1874. With its continued development and the arrival of the Northern Pacific and Oregon Short Line railroads in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the population doubled. The Oregon Short Line (OSL) and Union Pacific (UP) railroads developed through the Snake River Valley in the 1880s, and a branch line connecting Boise with Nampa was completed in 1893. In 1890 when Idaho became a

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<sup>3</sup> Information on Boise's settlement and history is reproduced from Sarah J. Martin. "Corilla J. and Orlando Robbins House," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2020), Section 8, page 10.

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state, Boise was established as the capital city. The original town center, which is referred to as Old Boise, was a thriving commercial and civic district located around 5<sup>th</sup>, Capitol, Front, and Bannock streets.<sup>4</sup>

The North End, where Lowell Pool is situated, was Boise's first suburb. With incremental additions first platted in 1878, the neighborhood developed in earnest beginning in 1890 when speculators began widely purchasing land. The North End boomed over the following 25 years, resulting in a mixture of large and elaborate residences built for prominent citizens and modest middle- and working-class bungalows.<sup>5</sup> Harrison Boulevard, which was landscaped and paved in 1916, emerged as the North End's focal point with homes designed in various architectural styles including Queen Anne, Craftsman, Mission Revival, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 (NRHP #80001286) as the Harrison Boulevard Historic District, a larger area of the North End was later designated a local historic district in 1989. The Lowell Municipal Pool is located to the west of the NRHP listed historic district in the locally designated Expanded North End Historic District adjacent to the Lowell Elementary School (NRHP #82000220).

*Criterion A: Early Development of Public Swimming Pools in Boise*

Southwestern Idaho's arid climate means that water has always held an attraction during the hot and dry summer months in the region, and ponds and swimming holes along the Boise River provided the first publicly accessible swimming locales in what is now the City of Boise. The city's first purpose-built public swimming pool, the Natatorium, opened in May 1892 at the end of a trolley line running east from downtown along Warm Springs Avenue (Figure 6). Owned and operated by a private entity, the Boise Water Corporation, "The Nat" emerged as a destination recreational center in the region. Designed in a fanciful Moorish Revival style by the architect John C. Paulsen of Helena, Montana, the landmark building had carefully balanced six-story towers and wide side wings with picturesque keyhole arches.<sup>6</sup> Inside, the massive \$150,000 building featured a 125-foot-long pool with a two-story copper slide and artificial waterfall, along with a gymnasium, dining room, clubrooms, a saloon, and dance floors (Figure 7).<sup>7</sup> The pool itself had a depth varying from two to 16 feet and was heated with geothermal water.<sup>8</sup>

In 1934, a windstorm caused significant structural damage that led to the Natatorium being condemned and closed. The facility was subsequently rebuilt as an outdoor swimming pool and reopened in 1936 (Figure 8).<sup>9</sup> Following the reconstruction, the city rented the Natatorium from its private owners to allow youth swim lessons Monday through Thursday, which were offered

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Susanne Lichtenstein, "Harrison Boulevard Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1979), Section 8.

<sup>6</sup> Information on the Natatorium is from Jennifer Eastman Attebery, *Building Idaho: An Architectural History* (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1991), 59-60.

<sup>7</sup> "City May Take Over Old Nat and Construct Municipal Pool." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), August 3, 1934: 1. NewsBank.

<sup>8</sup> "Approach of 55<sup>th</sup> Swimming Season," *Idaho Daily Statesman*, (Boise, ID), May 25, 1947: 25.

<sup>9</sup> "Work Moves Ahead at Pool," *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), April 26, 1936.

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free of charge to Boise residents.<sup>10</sup> In 1952, after much deliberation, the city took ownership of the Natatorium.<sup>11</sup> When voters passed the bond later the same year to construct the Lowell and South pools, the city also allocated funds to refurbish the Natatorium.<sup>12</sup>

The city's second publicly accessible swimming pool was located in the basement of the downtown Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) building, which opened in 1920 (Figure 9). Designed by the regionally significant architectural firm Tourtellotte and Hummel, the indoor pool was part of a \$165,000 facility at 11<sup>th</sup> and Idaho streets that also included lodging and a ballroom.<sup>13</sup> The indoor pool allowed the YMCA to offer year-round lifeguarding and swimming lessons to the public.<sup>14</sup> The YMCA Pool remained open for the next several decades until 1968 when the new downtown YMCA building with a pool was completed at 10<sup>th</sup> and State Streets.<sup>15</sup>

### *Development of the Lowell and South Municipal Swimming Pools*

Boise's first purpose-built municipal swimming facilities, the Lowell Municipal Pool in the North End and the South Municipal Pool on the Depot Bench, opened in the summer of 1953. This event was the culmination of a nearly 20-year campaign by citizens and civic organizations for a city owned and operated public swimming pool. Boise's existing publicly accessible pools, the privately managed Natatorium and YMCA, could not serve its growing population and were inconveniently located for the increasing number of residents living outside downtown.

Boiseans' decades-long struggle to secure the city government's commitment to construct a municipal pool began in 1930. That year the city declined an offer of land from the local building and engineering company of Morrison-Knudsen for a pool, citing the lack of a clean water source and funding.<sup>16</sup> In February 1932, when the Boy Scouts obtained honorary control of city government for a half day, they passed an ordinance calling for a city pool.<sup>17</sup> Unsurprisingly, their efforts ultimately did not lead to much progress on the matter. Following the Natatorium's closure in 1934, Boise Mayor John J. McCue expressed a desire to take over the facility as a municipal pool on a 5-year lease. That plan, too, eventually failed in 1935.<sup>18</sup> In 1947, the Boise Junior Chamber of Commerce (known as the Jaycees) led a postcard campaign to hold a bond

<sup>10</sup> Boise City Department of Arts and History. "A Municipool History." Accessed December 3, 2020.

<https://www.cityofboise.org/media/14247/municipal-pool-history.pdf#:~:text=In%201947%2C%20the%20Boise%20Junior%20Chamber%20of%20Commerce.The%20Jayces%20estimated%20roughly%201000%20citizens%20signed%20postcards.>

<sup>11</sup> "Voters Okeh Swim Pool Bond Issue: Project Approved by Narrow Margin of 134 Ballots." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), July 16, 1952: 1. NewsBank.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Rich Binsacca. *Boise Double Take* (Boise, Idaho: Gate House Publishers, 2011), 94.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> R.L. Polk and Company, *Boise City Polk Directory* (Detroit, MI: R.L. Polk and Company, 1967), 895 and R.L. Polk and Company, *Boise City Polk Directory* (Detroit, MI: R.L. Polk and Company, 1968), 587.

<sup>16</sup> Boise City Parks and Recreation, "A Municipool History."

<sup>17</sup> "Scouts Manage City Half Day: Boy Councilmen 'Pass' New Ordinance Calling for Swimming Pool." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), February 21, 1932: 5. NewsBank.

<sup>18</sup> "Council Drops Pool Proposal: City Decides Against Taking Over Natatorium on Five-Year Lease Plan." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), August 6, 1935: 7. NewsBank.

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election to fund a municipal pool. The Jaycees obtained 1,000 signatures and saw the bond proposal make it to the ballot in 1949.<sup>19</sup> However, the bond attracted skepticism and lacked support from key groups including the *Idaho Daily Statesman*.<sup>20</sup> Ultimately, Boiseans voted down the proposal.<sup>21</sup> With little progress being made towards constructing a municipal pool, the City Recreation Department debated damming a segment of the Boise River for sanctioned public swimming in 1952.<sup>22</sup>

The Boise Exchange Club, undeterred by two decades of setbacks, launched a successful initiative to build municipal swimming pools for the community in April 1952. Following six months investigating options for swimming facilities in Boise, the organization shared its findings and proposed to the Boise Chamber of Commerce a \$200,000 bond issue to construct two new pools in Boise and modernize the existing Natatorium pool.<sup>23</sup> The Exchange Club recommended that the city construct two identical “Bintz-type” above-ground pools measuring 60 x 90 feet, one on the Depot Bench and one in the North End, for \$77,000 apiece. They also proposed allocating \$38,000 toward the updating of the Natatorium.<sup>24</sup>

For its part, the city appeared receptive to the plan. Boise’s need for municipal swimming pools had only increased since 1930. In 1952, the city’s public schools had over 11,000 children.<sup>25</sup> The Natatorium was seeing up to 1600 swimmers a day, sometimes with wait times as long as three hours to swim.<sup>26</sup> Notably, the Natatorium, now owned by the city, was making a profit for the first time in its history. Accordingly, the city recreation director believed that the two proposed new pools would pay for their own operating and maintenance costs through admission fees. There were concerns about the proposed pools not being of Olympic size to allow for swim meets. However, the city ultimately determined that the primary purpose of any new pools would be to accommodate as many swimmers as possible for recreation and not to hold swim meets.<sup>27</sup>

The location of the two proposed pools was the subject of much debate among city officials. School Board President Bowden stressed that he did not believe the school district “should get

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<sup>19</sup> “1000 Sign Petitions for New Jaycee Municipal Swim Pool.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), September 5, 1947: 2. NewsBank.

<sup>20</sup> “The City Council Plans for Vote on \$450,000 in Bonds Individual Voting on Several Issues Seems Advisable,” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), May 29, 1949: 4. NewsBank.

<sup>21</sup> “Bridge, Fire Station Bonds Clear Boise Voting Hurdles: Two of Three Proposed Municipal Improvement Plans Win Approval.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 29, 1949: 1. NewsBank.

<sup>22</sup> “Junior College Faces Forfeit of Swim Pool.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), February 2, 1952: 10. NewsBank.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid and “City Council To Eye Lease Of Natatorium.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), April 22, 1952: 6. NewsBank.

<sup>24</sup> “Exchange Club Proposes Bonds for Boise Swimming Facilities.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), April 18, 1952: 15. NewsBank.

<sup>25</sup> “Swimming Pool Backers Urge Voter Turnout: Committee Contends Pools are Necessary for Summer Program.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), July 13, 1952: 7. NewsBank.

<sup>26</sup> “Preliminary Plans for Boise Swim Pool Drive Mapped.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 19, 1952: 7. NewsBank.

<sup>27</sup> “City Council Studies July Election Date.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), May 27, 1952: 7. NewsBank.

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into the swimming pool business.”<sup>28</sup> The city originally considered Whitney Park and Elm Grove Park as sites for the new pools.<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, the city council and the school board jointly agreed that schools would be the best location for the pools given that the latter would operate only during the former’s summer break. They also felt that having the municipal pools on school property matched well with the summer recreation programs. In May 1952, the school board approved a motion for the proposed pools to be located at the Lowell Elementary School in the North End and South Junior High School on the Depot Bench. These locations would be included on the future ballot.<sup>30</sup>

The Boise Exchange Club proposal had more momentum and support than previous municipal pool initiatives, obtaining the crucial backing of the *Idaho Daily Statesman*, which had not supported the 1947 effort. Several community organizations worked together to create a steering committee and what was later known as the Boise Swimming Pool Committee.<sup>31</sup> By May 1952, at least 22 community groups had adopted resolutions favoring the swimming pool proposals. Together they were able to again get the city bond initiative on the ballot. On election day, 3,200 voters cast ballots in each of the City’s 15 precincts. By a narrow margin of 134 votes, the \$200,000 pool bond passed on July 15, 1952.<sup>32</sup>

In August 1952, the City of Boise met with and soon after contracted Wesley Bintz of Lansing, Michigan to design the new municipal pools at Lowell and South and to repair the Natatorium.<sup>33</sup> Bintz, a nationally known designer of above-ground municipal swimming pools, personally visited Boise on several occasions during the design and construction phases of the project.<sup>34</sup> After deliberating over three different bids on the project, Boise City hired the local construction firm J. O. Jordan and Son to construct the new pools.<sup>35</sup> The final cost of construction for the Lowell Pool was \$72, 631.<sup>36</sup>

The construction of the new pools began in early 1953, and both facilities were completed in time for the swimming season that year. Following some debate, each pool ultimately took its

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<sup>28</sup> “School Board to Aid City in Buying Pool.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), May 6, 1952: 6. NewsBank.

<sup>29</sup> “Council Starts Swimming Pools Bonding Move: Superintendent Tells School Board’s Choices for Sites.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), May 22, 1952: 2. NewsBank.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> In addition to the Boise Exchange Club, these included the Boise Junior Chamber of Commerce, Capital City Kiwanis, Kiwanis Club of Boise, Ad Club, Lions Club, Soroptimist, Optimist, Rotary Club, and the Parent Teachers Association, and Boy Scouts. “Service Clubs Unite to Push Pool Project: Committee Launched to Urge Proposed \$200,000 Bond Issue.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), May 8, 1952. NewsBank.

<sup>32</sup> “Voters Okey,” *Idaho Daily Statesman*.

<sup>33</sup> “City Council Starts Action on New Pools: Designer of Plunges Promises Swim Tanks In Use Next Summer.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), August 26, 1952: 14. NewsBank.

<sup>34</sup> “City Council Sells Bonds for New Pools: Contractors Puzzled by Plunge Details, Bid Opening Delayed.” *Idaho Daily Statesman*, January 6, 1953: 2. NewsBank and “Pool Designer Seeks Advice from Council.” *Idaho Daily Statesman*, (Boise, ID), September 16, 1952: 2. NewsBank.

<sup>35</sup> “Boise Company Wins Swim Pool Contract: J. O. Jordan & Son to Build Plunges, Repair Natatorium.” *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), January 27, 1953: 5. NewsBank.

<sup>36</sup> Idaho State Archives. Jordan-Wilcomb Construction Company Inventory, Building Permits, MS 535, page 5.

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name from the adjacent school.<sup>37</sup> Lowell Elementary School's namesake is James Russell Lowell, an American Romantic poet, critic, editor, and diplomat who used poetry to express his anti-slavery views.<sup>38</sup> The Lowell Pool was originally slated to open on June 5<sup>th</sup>, but the late delivery of part of the filtration system delayed its completion.<sup>39</sup> It officially opened on Saturday, June 20, 1953, followed ten days later by the South Municipal Pool on Tuesday, June 30, 1953.<sup>40</sup> The remodeled Natatorium officially reopened in mid-August.<sup>41</sup>

For the next 16 years, the Lowell Pool, South Pool, and the Natatorium remained the only municipal swimming facilities in Boise. It was not until 1969 that the Boise Parks and Recreation Department began opening additional neighborhood pools; Borah Pool opened in 1969, Fairmont Pool in 1974, and Ivywild Pool in 1998.<sup>42</sup> Today, the city owns and operates a total of six outdoor municipal pools located in neighborhoods across the city.

### *History of the Lowell Municipal Swimming Pool*

The Lowell Municipal Pool has functioned as a centerpiece of the North End community since 1953. It reached full capacity the afternoon of opening day, as a crowd of 250 Boiseans swam in the chilly 64-degree water.<sup>43</sup> The formal dedication by Boise Mayor R. E. Edlefsen took place amidst much fanfare two days later on June 22, 1953, and the *Idaho Daily Statesmen* estimated a crowd of 1,235 visited the pool that day (Figure 10).<sup>44</sup> City staff instituted temporary "swimming shifts" to accommodate all the swimmers.

During its first year of operation in 1953, the Lowell Pool's cost of admission was 10 cents for children under the age of twelve, 25 cents for students, and 35 cents for adults. Season tickets

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<sup>37</sup> Initially, Boise Mayor R. E. Edlefsen suggested to pool designer Wesley Bintz that the Boise pools be named Pools One, Two, and Three. "That way we can hold down the number of complaints from people who will be dissatisfied, no matter what we name the pools," Edlefsen said. "Pool Designer Seeks Advice from Council." *Idaho Daily Statesman*.

<sup>38</sup> Lowell Elementary School webpage. Accessed January 1, 2022.

<https://lowell.boiseschools.org/cms/one.aspx?portalid=510441&pageid=2134435>

<sup>39</sup> "Opening of Lowell Pool Waits on Filter System." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 16, 1953: 6. NewsBank.

<sup>40</sup> "City's Second Plunge Opens to Swimmers." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), July 1, 1953:6. NewsBank.

<sup>41</sup> The Natatorium renovations included shortening the deep end and removing the stone diving platform. "Work Progresses in Rehabilitation of Swimming Pool." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), July 15, 1953: 16 and "Work on New Pools Inspected by Designer's Representative." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), February 25, 1953: 16. NewsBank.

<sup>42</sup> "Lack of Well Leaves New Boise Pool Dry." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 11, 1974: 1. NewsBank, "Woman gave so kids could swim," *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), March 30, 2001: 1. NewsBank, "Take a Dip Saturday, Pools Open." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), May 31, 1974: 29. NewsBank, and "Swimming Pool Constructed in Boise Park." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), September 10, 1968: 2. NewsBank.

<sup>43</sup> "Hundreds of Youngsters Take Part in Opening of New Pool." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 23, 1953: 16. NewsBank.

<sup>44</sup> "Formal Ceremonial Slated For Swim Pool Dedication." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 12, 1953: 6. NewsBank.

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were \$5 per individual and \$8 per family.<sup>45</sup> The pool's events during its first season included the Red Cross "Learn to Swim" program from 9:00-noon each day. It also hosted adult swim lessons, Red Cross life-saving lessons, adult classes, competitive swimming, and swimming programs for disabled children.<sup>46</sup>

By the early 1990s, after nearly 40 years of heavy community usage each swimming season, the pool was in need of repairs and upgrades. The city retained Armstrong Architects of Boise to renovate both the Lowell and South pools in 1993. Work at Lowell Pool included concrete repair, plumbing work, the installation of the present glass block windows throughout the building in place of the wood frame originals, and upgrades to the locker rooms.

In recent years, the pool opened early for the graduating students at Lowell Elementary and other nearby elementary schools for an end-of-year swim party. The pool season typically ran from the last day of school in May to the first week of August. Swimmers at the Lowell Pool could purchase general admission (drop-in) passes or a summer pool pass. In 2019, from May through August, 5,053 visits were tracked at Lowell Municipal Pool. The group with the highest attendance at Lowell Municipal Pool was pool pass holders aged 17 and younger, the majority of whom lived within a one-mile radius of the pool.<sup>47</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of all Boise public swimming facilities following the 2019 season, and the Lowell Pool remains closed as of summer 2022.<sup>48</sup> During this period, the City of Boise assessed the condition of the pool and found it to be lacking ADA and code compliance.<sup>49</sup> Local citizens are currently working to see it rehabilitated and reopened.

### *Criterion C: Wesley Bintz and the Development of Above-Ground Municipal Swimming Pools*

The Lowell Municipal Swimming Pool is a "Bintz-type" above-ground swimming pool designed by Wesley Bintz (1891-1967), a civil and structural engineer based in Lansing, Michigan (Figure 16).<sup>50</sup> Born in Stanberry, Missouri, Bintz grew up in Hiawatha, Kansas, Zion City, Illinois, and Canada before his family settled in Charlotte, Michigan in 1908, where he attended high school. He later studied at the University of Michigan, obtaining a bachelor's degree in engineering in

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<sup>45</sup> "Youngsters Swarm at New Lowell School Swim Pool." *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise, ID), June 21, 1953: 12. NewsBank.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Boise Parks and Recreation. "Lowell Pool Information." Handout presented at the Lowell Pool Focus Group Meeting, December 9, 2021.

<sup>48</sup> The final event held at the Lowell Pool prior to its closure was the Lowell Parent Teacher Student Association's Back-to-School Swim Night in August 2019.

<sup>49</sup> "Facilities Assessment: South and Lowell City Pools," Cushing Terrell and Aquatic Design Group, January 2021. Accessed on July 10, 2021 <https://www.cityofboise.org/media/12845/january-2021-facilities-assessment-south-and-lowell-pools.pdf> and "City of Boise Outdoor Pools Will Not Open in 2020." City of Boise. May 1, 2020. Accessed December 3, 2020. <https://www.cityofboise.org/news/parks-andrecreation/2020/may/city-of-boise-outdoor-pools-will-not-open-in-2020/>.

<sup>50</sup> Background information on Wesley Bintz is from "Wesley Bintz, Consulting Engineer," *Lansing State Journal* (Lansing, Michigan), July 13, 1958: 10 and Tegan D'Arcangelis Baiocchi, e-mail to Laura Bainbridge, February 20, 2022.

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1916 and master's degree in the same field in 1918. Following graduation, he spent two-and-a-half years working in the city engineer's department in Flint, Michigan. In 1921, he relocated to Lansing, Michigan to work as a structural engineer for that city's engineering department. A year-and-a-half later he was appointed Lansing City Engineer.

Wesley Bintz developed the Bintz-type above-ground swimming pool during his years working for the cities of Flint and Lansing. Following involvement with the construction of two swimming pools in Flint, he designed Lansing's J.H. Moores Memorial Natatorium (commonly known as the Moores Park Pool; NRHP ##85000096) in 1922 while working as the Lansing City Engineer. The resulting entirely above-ground ovoid swimming pool was the prototype of what became known as a Bintz-type pool or more simply a "Bintz pool." This design was innovative in that it was an above-ground building, with the bottom of the pool resting on the ground and the pool deck on the roof. The bath house, containing changing rooms, showers, restrooms, and a mechanical room, was placed around the pool beneath the pool deck, which could be accessed via two sets of stairs. Most subsequent Bintz-type pools were ovoid, or egg-shaped like the prototype in Lansing, but rectangular variations were also popular.

During the 1920s, public swimming pools were growing in popularity in the United States, particularly in landlocked cities and towns in the Midwest. In 1923, Bintz left his position with the City of Lansing to design and build swimming pools full time and capitalize on the growing number of such projects across the country. He patented his "Bintz-type" swimming pool that same year (Figures 17-18). By 1958, Bintz and his firm had designed 135 swimming pools across the country, including several traditional sunken pools. Approximately 100 of these projects were Bintz-type pools, which were constructed in at least 94 communities in 24 states.

Bintz promoted his above-ground pool design as having several distinct advantages over traditional rectangular sunken swimming pools.<sup>51</sup> Foremost, they were reputedly more efficient and cost effective in terms of their construction and operation. In the late 1930s, he advertised Bintz-type pools as 25% to 40% cheaper than sunken pools for equal size and features.<sup>52</sup> By combining two structures – the pool and the bath house – into one, construction required a smaller footprint and fewer building materials. Because it was above ground, it also required less excavation, and the finished pool would allow attendants to service pipes and other systems from inside the bathhouse. Even the ovoid shape was designed with efficiency and cost-cutting in mind. Bintz preferred an ovoid pool over a rectangular pool for several reasons, including the fact that corners were not conducive to swimming and required more building material than a curved wall. The ovoid shape also allowed for a larger shallow end, where most swimmers would congregate, and a smaller diving end. Still, Bintz conceded that while ovoid pools worked best in parks and large open areas, rectangular pools were better within tighter lots in the city where they would be bounded by other buildings, sidewalks, or streets.

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<sup>51</sup> Information on the advantages of Bintz-type pools is from Debbie Sheals, "Fayette City Park Swimming Pool," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1999), Section 8, page 10.

<sup>52</sup> This is noted in an undated Bintz advertisement reproduced in "Charles F. Johnston Pool, Johnson City, New York," Historic American Engineering Record HAER No. NY-57 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, no date), Written and Descriptive Data, page 18.

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The Bintz-type pools built across the United States from the 1920s through the 1950s were remarkably standardized, with even late examples of the type exhibiting the shape, use of curtain walls and reinforced concrete construction, and location of support rooms established in the 1922 prototype in Lansing. Variables included size (ranging from 35' x 40' to as large as 130' x 240'), curtain wall material, design of the main entrance, and architectural style. In addition, some examples incorporated additional features such as fountains, wading pools, and water slides.

Bintz-type pools were designed in a variety of contemporaneously popular architectural styles, including Classical Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Art Deco (Figures 20-22). The Streamline Moderne style exhibited by the Lowell and South pools appears to have been popular in examples constructed after World War II. There were at least two other Bintz-type pools with identical Streamline Moderne façades completed later the same year as the Boise examples: the Memorial Pool in Bremerton, Washington and the Middleport Pool in Middleport, Ohio, both no longer extant (Figure 23). The extant World War II Memorial Pool (1951) in North Attleborough, Massachusetts is a simplified variant of the same basic design. Streamline Moderne, which reached its zenith of popularity in the 1930s and 1940s, emphasized horizontal lines, curving forms, and smooth stucco exteriors to give the impression of sleekness and modernity. The Bintz-type Streamline Moderne pools dating to the early 1950s are late examples of the style.

Most Bintz pools were constructed as public municipal pools and financed through bonds or financial gifts, though the pools were also popular as New Deal projects during the 1930s. Other Bintz pools were private facilities constructed for amusement parks, resorts, or hotels. Several of Bintz's pools are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In addition to the aforementioned Moores Park Pool in Lansing, Michigan, these include the Fayette City Park Swimming Pool of 1936 in Fayette, Missouri (NRHP #99000457); Randlett Park Swimming Pool of 1926 in Anadarko, Oklahoma (NRHP #03000878); and Margaret Manson Weir Memorial Pool of 1934 in Weirton, West Virginia (NRHP #93001230).

Wesley Bintz's firm continued to bid on municipal pool projects into the mid-to-late 1950s, according to newspapers, placing the two examples in Boise in the last phase of Bintz-type pool construction, which began following the Second World War. In 1953, the firm completed 10 swimming pool projects across the country, four of which were Bintz-type pools of similar size, shape, type, detail, and equipment.<sup>53</sup> These four virtually identical pools were the Memorial Pool in Bremerton, Washington, the Lowell Pool in Boise, the South Pool in Boise, and the Middleport Pool in Middleport, Ohio. Notably, only the two Boise pools are extant.

During the mid-1950s, the Bintz firm employed the Boise pools as the latest model to promote Bintz-type pools across the country. One of its advertisements of this period included a bird's eye view of one of the Boise pools and listed the building costs of both as representative of

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<sup>53</sup> This is noted in an undated Bintz advertisement reproduced in "Charles F. Johnston Pool, Johnson City, New York," Historic American Engineering Record HAER No. NY-57 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, no date), Written and Descriptive Data, page 16.

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recent projects (Figure 19).<sup>54</sup> In 1954, the same bird's eye photograph was published in the *Ithaca Journal* to illustrate what a proposed Bintz-type pool would look like in that community.<sup>55</sup>

The Lowell Municipal Swimming Pool is an intact example of Wesley Bintz's patented swimming pool design that retains the character-defining features of the type: it is an above-ground swimming pool, it incorporates the bath house (lockers, changing rooms, showers, etc.) into the swimming pool structure beneath the pool deck, and it is ovoid in shape. Other distinct features common on Bintz swimming pools are also present, including the prominent main entrance façade with its stenciled lettering, the scum gutter encircling the inside of the pool, and the bronze dedication plaque near the entrance. Bintz pool experts have identified the Lowell Pool as one of only sixteen Bintz-type pools still standing out of the approximately 100 constructed across the United States.<sup>56</sup> Boise's two examples of the type, the Lowell and South pools represent the last known surviving "sister" pools, or two or more Bintz pools constructed within the same city or town. Several communities constructed multiple Bintz-type swimming pools; Flint, Michigan and Indianapolis, Indiana each had two pools; while Beaumont, Texas, and Grand Rapids, Michigan, each had three. Today, Boise is the last city that retains multiple Bintz-type pools.

### *Summary*

Lowell Municipal Pool is significant under Criterion A in the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION, for its association with the development of public swimming pools in Boise. Following its 1953 completion, the pool served as an important community gathering place for children and adults in Boise's North End for nearly seven decades until its closure in 2019. It remains a testament to the city's rapid post World War II population growth that prompted the much-debated development of municipal swimming facilities. Lowell Municipal Pool is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of significance of ARCHITECTURE as an excellent example of Wesley Bintz's patented above-ground swimming pool design. It retains integrity across each of the seven aspects and is one of the few remaining examples of this rare building type.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> "Meeting on Proposed Swim Pool Planned." *Ithaca Journal* (Ithaca, NY), March 13, 1954: 3.

<sup>56</sup> Tegan D'Arcangelis Baiocchi, e-mail to Laura Bainbridge, February 20, 2022.

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Lowell Municipal Pool  
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Lowell Municipal Pool  
Name of Property

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**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
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**11. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.842

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 43.634779                      Longitude: -116.223891
2. Latitude:                                      Longitude:
3. Latitude:                                      Longitude:
4. Latitude:                                      Longitude:

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**Or**  
**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

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

The Lowell Municipal Pool is located in Section 33, T4N, R2E in Ada County, Idaho. The parcel number is R1624004760. The property description is as follows, according to the Ada County Assessor: East 200' of Block 42 South of Center Line Sand Creek Flume – Cruzen Addition to the City of Boise.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The above noted property includes the entire 0.842-acre property owned by the Boise Parks and Recreation Department on which the pool is located.

---

**12. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Laura J. Bainbridge  
organization: Friends of Boise Historic Pools  
street & number: 2626 W. Ellis Ave  
city or town: Boise state: Idaho zip code: 83702  
e-mail: ljbainbridge@gmail.com  
telephone: 208-860-9679  
date: 02/11/2022

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Figure Log

- Figure 1: Regional Location Map
- Figure 2: USGS Quadrangle Map
- Figure 3: Parcel Map
- Figure 4: Local Location Map
- Figure 5: First Floor Plan
- Figure 6: Natatorium, Boise Idaho, Exterior View
- Figure 7: Natatorium, Boise, Idaho, Interior View
- Figure 8: Natatorium, Boise, Idaho, Aerial View after 1936
- Figure 9: YMCA Swimming Pool, Boise, Idaho, Interior View, 1920s
- Figure 10: Formal Opening of the Lowell Pool, 22 June 22 1953
- Figure 11: Bird's Eye View of Boise Bintz-Type Pool
- Figure 12: South Pool, Boise, Idaho, Exterior View, c. 1953
- Figure 13: Lowell Pool, Boise, Idaho, View of east elevation looking west, c. 1985
- Figure 14: Lowell Pool, Boise, Idaho, View of pool deck and pool, c. 1950s
- Figure 15: Lowell Pool, Boise, Idaho, View of pool deck and pool, c. 1950s
- Figure 16: Pen Portrait of Wesley Bintz, 1958
- Figure 17: Bintz-Type Pool Patent, Elevation, 1926
- Figure 18: Bintz-Type Pool Patent, Floorplan, 1926
- Figure 19: Wesley Bintz Advertisement, c. 1954
- Figure 20: Athletic Park Swimming Pool, Anderson, Indiana, Exterior View
- Figure 21: Municipal Pool, Rutland, Vermont, Exterior View
- Figure 22: Montevideo Municipal Pool, Montevideo, Minnesota, Exterior View
- Figure 23: Middleport Pool, Middleport, Ohio, View of façade

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**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Lowell Municipal Pool

**City or Vicinity:** Boise

**County:** Ada

**State:** Idaho

**Photographer:** Various (see below)

**Date Photographed:** Various (see below)

Photo Number	Description	Photographer	Date
1 of 17	Bird's eye view looking southwest	Cushing Terrell	2020
2 of 17	Bird's eye view looking southeast	Cushing Terrell	2020
2 of 17	Bird's eye view looking northeast	Cushing Terrell	2020
4 of 17	View of primary (east) and side (north) elevations. Camera facing southwest	Idaho SHPO	May 22, 2020
5 of 17	View of primary (east) elevation. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	May 22, 2020
6 of 17	View of primary (east) and side (south) elevations. Camera facing northeast.	Idaho SHPO	May 22, 2020
7 of 17	View of dedication plaque on primary (east) elevation. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	May 22, 2020
8 of 17	View of side (south) elevation showing entrance hall connection. Camera facing north.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022

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9 of 17	View of side (south) elevation. Camera facing northwest.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
10 of 17	View of side (south) elevation with attached storage sheds. Camera facing north.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
11 of 17	View of rear (west) elevation showing attached storage sheds. Camera facing east.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
12 of 17	View of rear (west) and side (north) elevations. Camera facing southeast.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
13 of 17	View of pool deck and pool from upper level of entrance hall. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
14 of 17	View of check-in lobby and entrance vestibule with stairs to pool deck. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
15 of 17	Women's locker room. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
16 of 17	Women's locker room showing metal door leading to pool deck stairs. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022
17 of 17	Men's locker room. Camera facing west.	Idaho SHPO	April 28, 2022

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

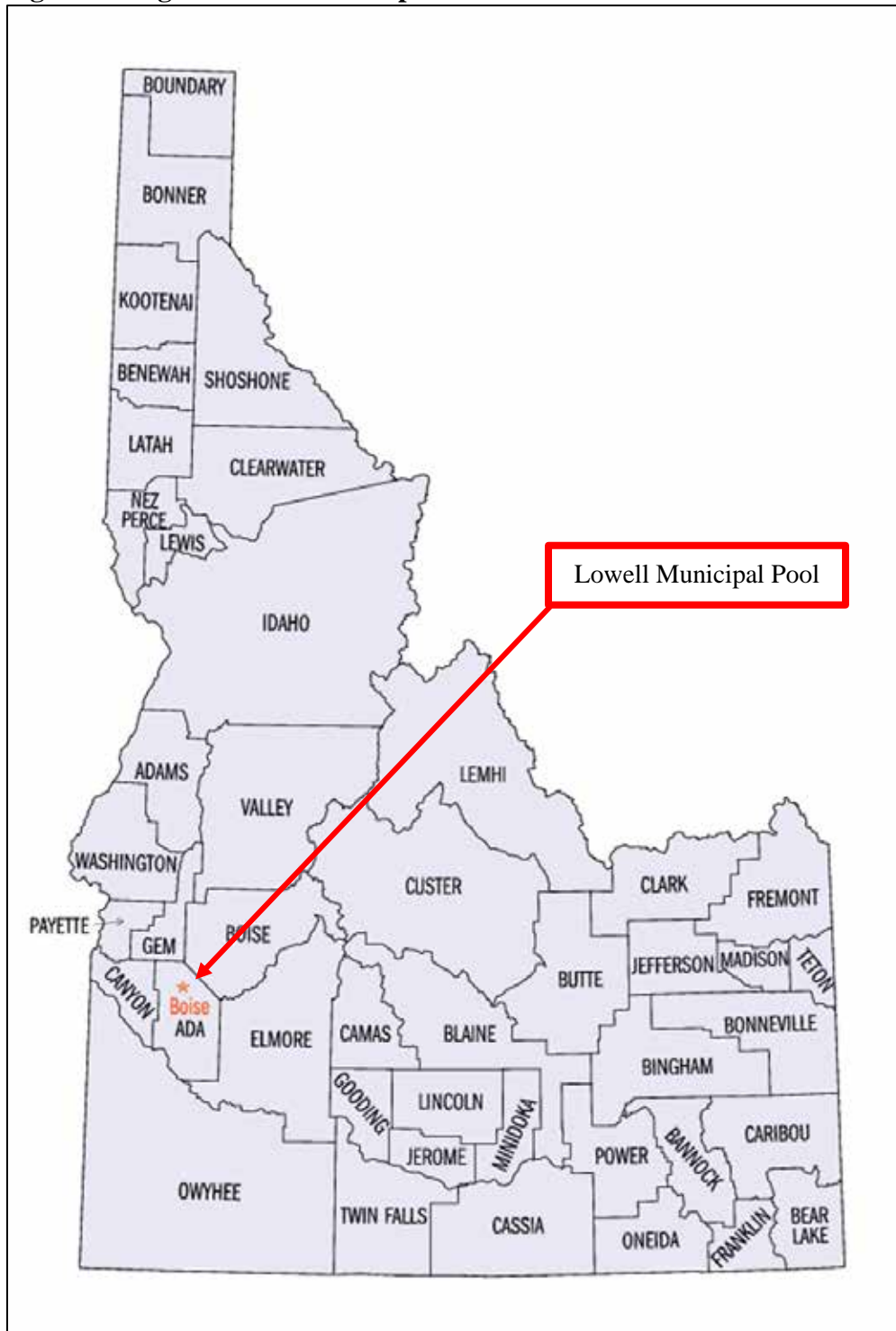
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**Figure 1: Regional Location Map**





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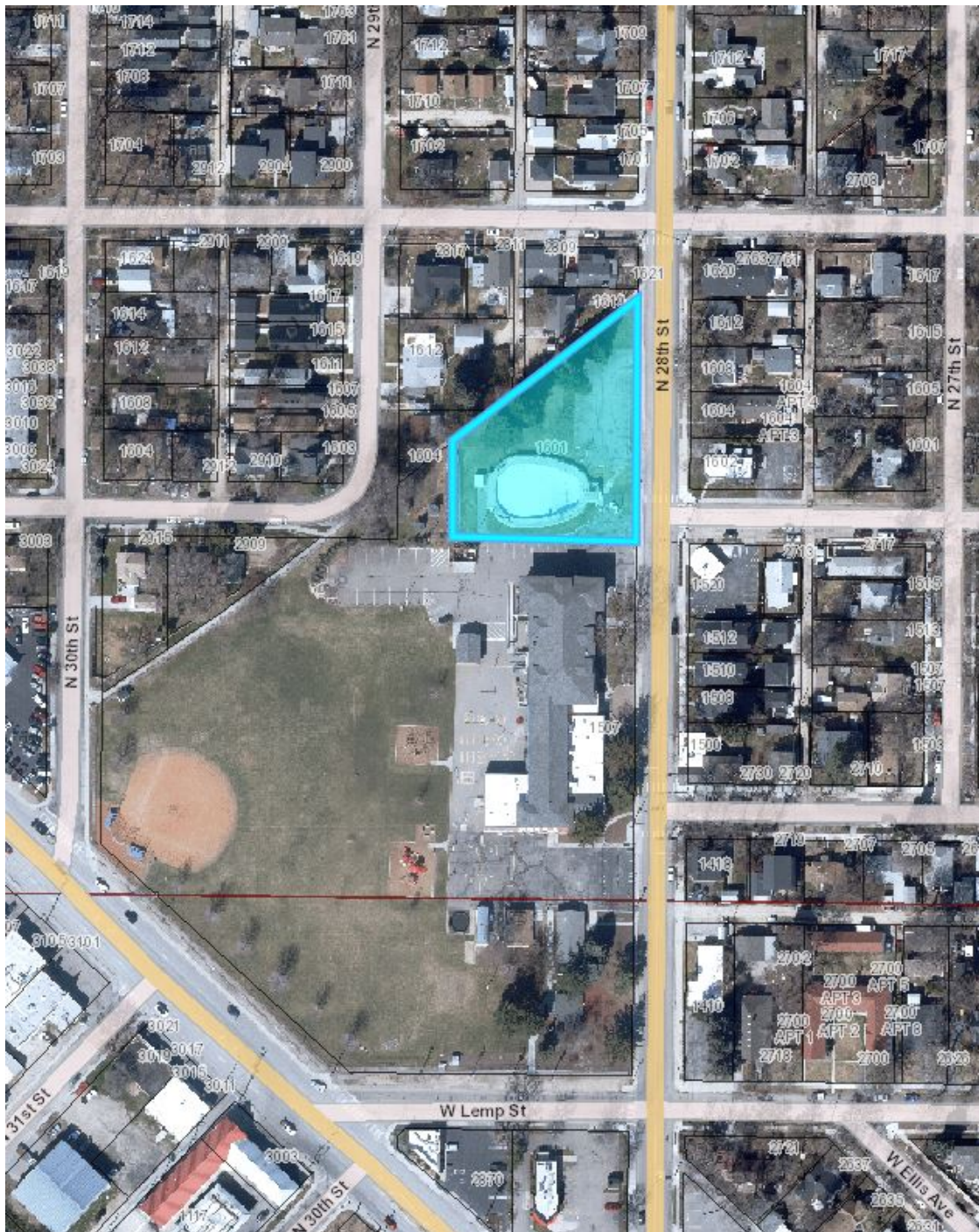
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Figure 3: Ada County Parcel Map (Boundary Map)

North Pool at 1601 N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street outlined in blue. Parcel no. R1624004760 (North at top)



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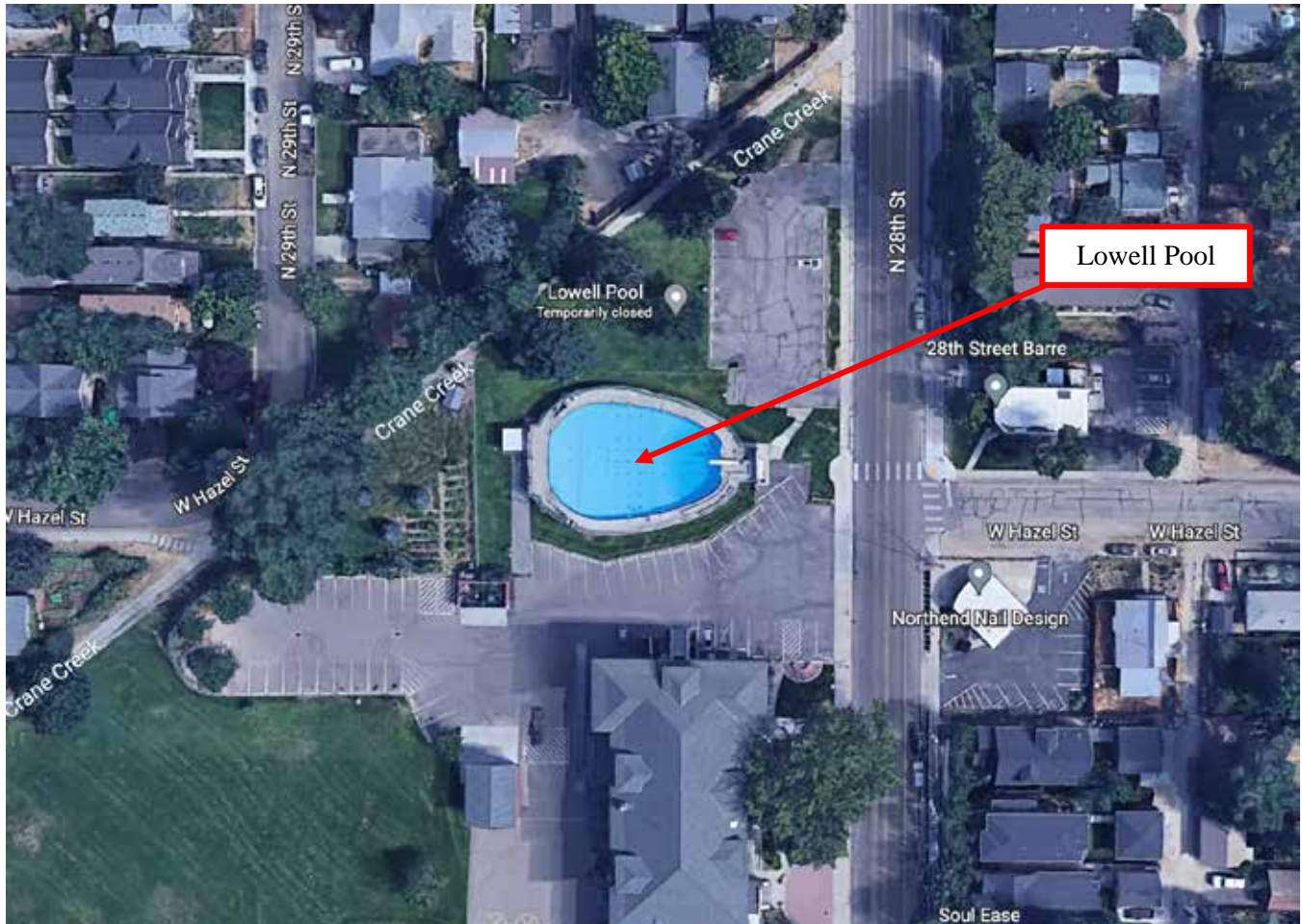
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Figure 4: Local Location Map, Google Earth

North Pool at 1601 N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street. Parcel no. R1624004760 (North at top)



Latitude: 43.634779 Longitude: -116.223891

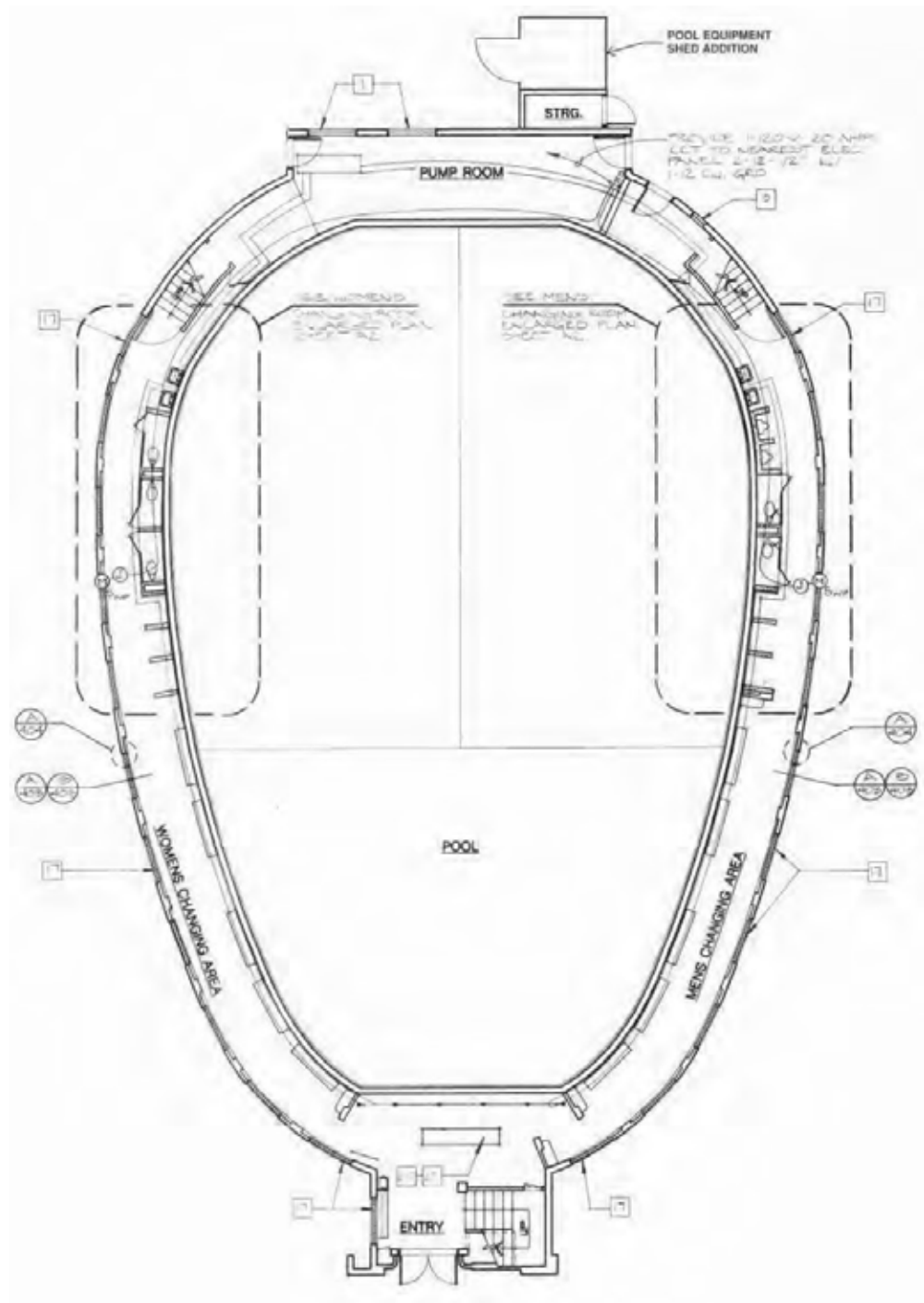
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Figure 5: First floor plan  
Source: City of Boise and Armstrong Architects



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**Figure 6: Natatorium, Boise, Idaho, Exterior view, Date Unknown**  
Source: Idaho State Archives.



**Figure 7: Natatorium, Boise, Idaho, Interior view, Date Unknown**  
Source: Idaho State Archives



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**Figure 8: Natatorium, Boise Idaho, Aerial view of open-air pool after 1936, Date Unknown**  
Source: Idaho State Archives



**Figure 9: YMCA Swimming Pool, Boise, Idaho, Interior view, 1920s**  
Source: Idaho State Archives



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Figure 10: Formal opening of the Lowell Pool on June 22, 1953

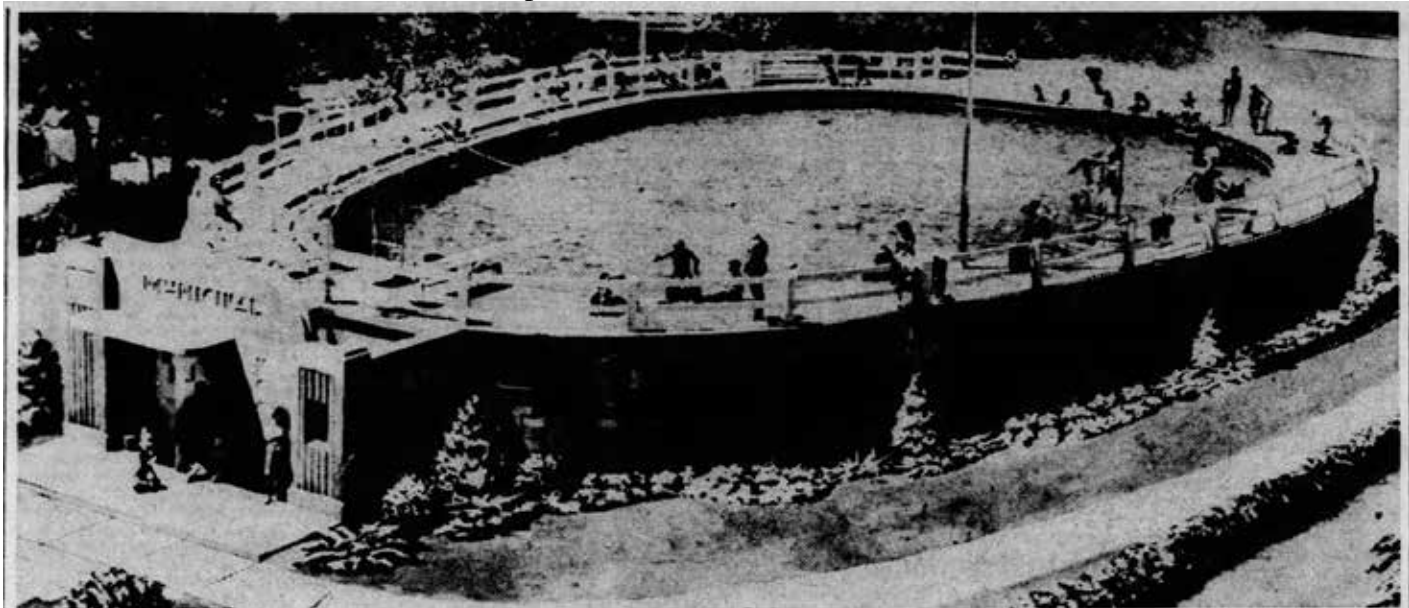
Source: *Idaho Daily Statesman*, 23 June 1953, p. 16.



LARGE NUMBERS of Boise youngsters thronged the city's new Lowell school swimming pool Monday as the mercury climbed to summertime intensity. There were so many swimmers, in fact, that city recreation department officials found it necessary to declare "swimming shifts."

Figure 11: Bird's Eye View of Boise Bintz-Type Pool, c. 1953

Source: *Ithaca Journal*, 13 March 1954, p. 3.



PICTURED ABOVE is a 60x90 foot ovoid swimming pool at Boise, Idaho, a duplicate of one that has been proposed for Stewart Park. An elevated, heated pool with an attached spray pool, it could be built for \$85,000, according to Wesley Bintz, a consulting engineer of

Lansing, Mich., who specializes in the design and construction of swimming pools. Bintz told Mayor Cook's special aldermanic committee last week that the cost would include locker rooms, filtration plant, showers, toilets and equipment.

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**Figure 12: South Pool, Boise, Idaho, Exterior view looking west, c. 1953**

Source: Idaho State Archives



**Figure 13: Lowell Pool, Boise, Idaho, View of primary (east) elevation looking west, c. 1985**

Original color scheme of the Lowell and South pools and non-extant tile framing recessed entry

Source: Stacy Kral



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**Figure 14: Lowell Pool, Boise, Idaho, View of pool deck and pool, c. 1950s**  
Source: Idaho State Archives



**Figure 15: Lowell Pool, Boise, Idaho, View of pool deck and pool, c. 1950s**  
Source: Idaho State Archives



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Figure 16: Pen Portrait of Wesley Bintz, 1958  
Source: *Lansing State Journal*, 13 July 1958, p. 10.



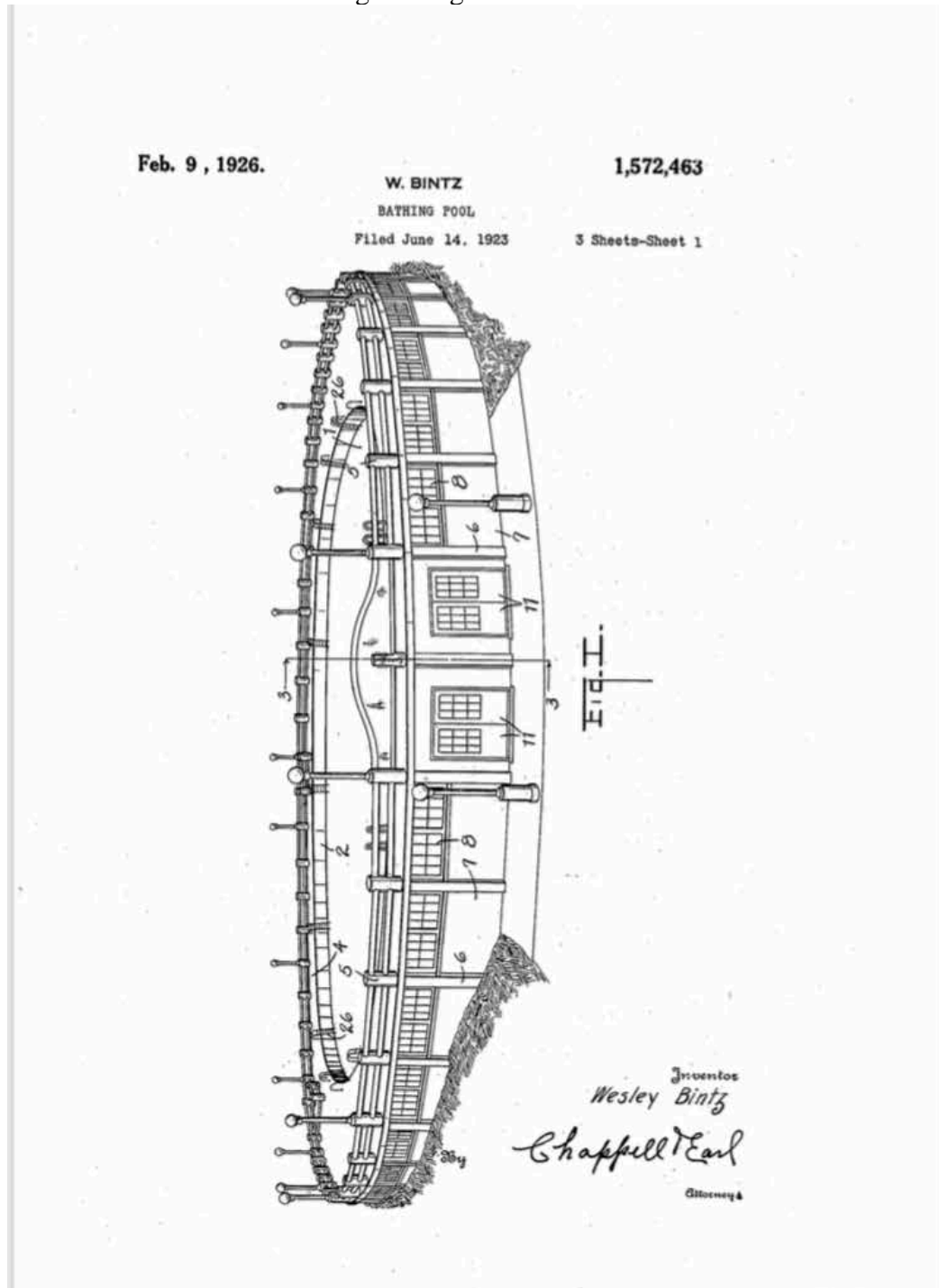
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Figure 17: Bintz-Type Pool Patent, Elevation, 1926  
Source: Historic American Engineering Record





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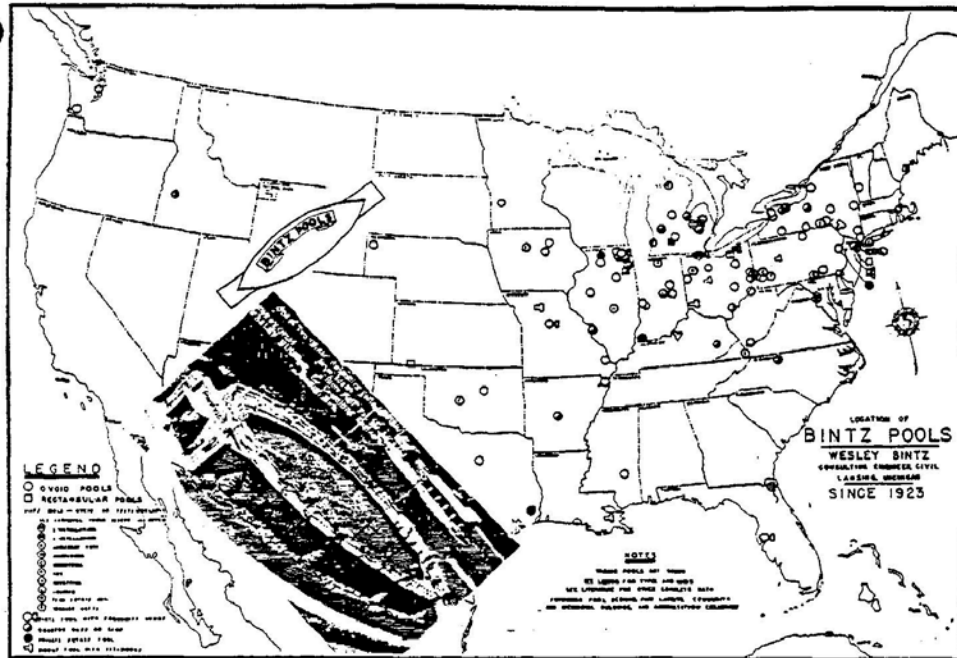
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Figure 19: Wesley Bintz Advertisement featuring the Boise Pools, c. 1954  
The advertisement includes an illustration of one of the Boise pools and lists the costs of both as representative of the current cost to construct a Bintz-type pool  
Source: Historic American Engineering Record

# THERE IS ALWAYS A LEADER



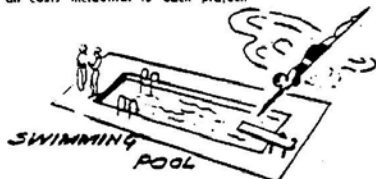
SINCE 1923 The map above locates the many Bintz designed swimming pools which have been built the past 1/2 century. This wealth of experience, probably unequalled, is available to those who contemplate the construction of a swimming pool for any use.

A SWIMMING POOL is not a hole in the ground, but more complicated in design, in certain ways, than a water treatment plant, or a sewage disposal plant. It is strictly an engineering project, and requires years of experience to properly design, specify, detail and co-ordinate pool, bathhouse, concourse floor and equipment.

IN 1953, of the ten Bintz designed pools completed that year, four were of similar size, shape, type, detail and equipment, but located in widely separate parts of the country.

ACTUAL COSTS of these four pools are tabulated at left with complete breakdown of items. Note how low bids parallel the Engineer's Estimate. Also bear in mind the total costs are for a complete operable pool and bathhouse to serve a population up to 10,000, and include all costs incidental to each project.

REVISION	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	ESTIMATED
GENERAL CONTRACT c.	\$30,448.00k	\$31,207.18	\$58,400.00c \$31,585.84
Painting	1,100.00	600.00c	1,800.00
Plumbing-General	12,181.00y	10,102.00	s.s 10,699.52
Public Toilets	7-y	1,324.00	s.s 927.92
Filter Installation	7-y	1,814.00	s.s 1,219.20
Water Heating-Showers &	(1,324.00)	(1,694.00)	none 1,274.62
Pool	(1,324.00)	(1,082.00)	none (1,204.1)
Electrical	1,909.00	1,876.00	s.s 1,340.93
Pool Equipment	454.00	778.00	453.50 566.50
Baskets and Backs	1,129.44	1,200.00	1,123.36 1,194.18
Purification System	7,150.00	11,304.00	6,117.00 10,101.90
Vacuum Cleaner	84.00	398.00	35.00 45.10
Brass Plates	s.s	125.00	s.s 101.97
Filing	(4,250.00)		
Sales Tax	(1,207.00)		
Total as per "a"	\$19,916.44	\$61,976.18	\$67,105.86 \$61,118.08
Plus 20% f	3,983.29	12,395.14	13,461.77 12,821.62
Total	\$23,899.73	\$74,371.32	\$80,567.63 \$73,939.70
Total including "c"	\$42,321.37	\$78,800.02	



NOTES: a. All General Contracts and/or sub-contracts are about alike. Cost of this project is \$75,000 complete, not including "c" or local conditions. (b) is prepared for Boise's two pools. c. Does not include items listed below, except as noted by s or f. d. See in original presentation. e. Pool and heating only. f. Engineering, Service Lines and Landscaping. x, y, z. Included in item marked by same letter.

LABOR AND MATERIAL COSTS: Cement \$4.10/bbl; Aggregate \$2.24/CuYd; Lumber \$107.00; Contractors \$0.28; Carpenters \$1.20/hr; Masons \$3.00/hr; Common Labor \$4.45/hr.

POOL DATA: Overall 77'x110' Ovoid; Pool 60'x90' Ovoid; pool area 1,110.50 sq ft; pool depth 3-11'; volume 179,508 gal.; automatic 100G, wadals 70.0%; Concourse floor wadals, 8'-19" area 2,591.7 SqFt. Bathroom area 2,183 SqFt. Big. Elev. 25'x95'. Capacity (110 shallow; 110 deep) bathers, at one time 357, daily 1,075. For communities of 8-10,000 population, includes outlying population.

WE DESIGN ANYTHING in swimming pools, Community and Memorial Buildings, Band Shells, Park and Recreation Layouts and Developments and Cabanas Indoor & Outdoor Swimming Pools. We have designed numerous Sunken Pools and Bath-houses. Our experience counts just the same. But we, as well as others, can't beat our own "BINTZ POOL" Design.

FREE-"MODERN SWIMMING POOLS."-Our 70-page pamphlet with complete and detailed information on "BINTZ POOLS" and "OVOID" and "VASOID Shape" Pools. Many pictures and actual photographs.

WESLEY BINTZ, P. E., Swimming Pool Designs & Consultation Exclusively  
301 S. Washington Ave. Lansing, Mich. . . . PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER

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**Figure 20: Athletic Park Swimming Pool, Anderson, Indiana, Built 1925**

Early Bintz-Type Pool of the 1920s closely following the patent design

Source: Idaho State Historic Preservation Office



**Figure 21: Municipal Pool, Rutland, Vermont, Built 1929-1930**

Example of a Bintz-Type Pool with a Gothic influence

Source: Idaho State Historic Preservation Office



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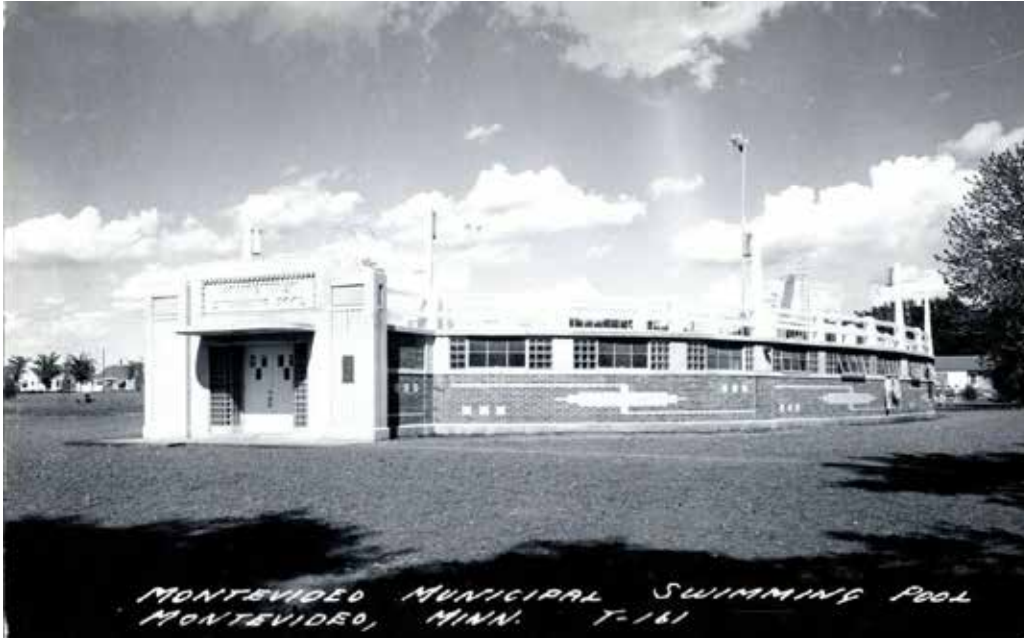
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**Figure 22: Montevideo Municipal Swimming Pool, Montevideo, Minnesota, Date Unknown**

Example of a Bintz-Type Pool with Art Deco façade, decorative sidewall brickwork, and a water slide  
Source: Idaho State Historic Preservation Office



**Figure 23: Middleport Pool, Middleport Ohio, Exterior view, Built 1953**

Example of Bintz-Type Pool with identical Streamline Moderne façade to the Boise examples  
Source: Idaho State Historic Preservation Office



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**Photo 1:** Bird's eye view looking southwest.



**Photo 2:** Bird's eye view looking southeast.



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**Photo 3:** Bird's eye view looking northeast.



**Photo 4:** View of primary (east) and side (north) elevations. Camera facing southwest.



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**Photo 5:** View of primary (east) elevation. Camera facing west.



**Photo 6:** View of primary (east) and side (south) elevations. Camera facing northeast.



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Photo 7: View of dedication plaque on primary (east) elevation. Camera facing west.



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**Photo 8:** View of side (south) elevation showing entrance hall connection. Camera facing north.



**Photo 9:** View of side (south) elevation. Camera facing northwest.



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**Photo 10:** View of side (south) elevation with attached storage sheds. Camera facing north.



**Photo 11:** View of rear (west) elevation showing attached storage sheds. Camera facing east.



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**Photo 12:** View of rear (west) and side (north) elevations. Camera facing southeast.



**Photo 13:** View of pool deck and pool from upper level of entrance hall. Camera facing west.



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**Photo 14:** View of check-in lobby and entrance vestibule with stairs to pool deck. Camera facing west.



**Photo 15:** Women's locker room. Camera facing west.



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**Photo 16:** Women’s locker room showing metal door leading to pool deck stairs. Camera facing west.



**Photo 17:** Men’s locker room. Camera facing west.



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