

# Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME			
<b>address:</b>	6 N Tillamook St Portland, Multnomah County	<b>historic name:</b>	Williams Avenue YWCA
<b>assoc addresses:</b>		<b>current/other names:</b>	Billy Webb Elks Lodge, Colored YMCA, Young Women's Christian Association; Williams Avenue Center
<b>location descr:</b>		<b>block/lot/tax lot:</b>	
		<b>twshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:</b>	1N 1E 27
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
<b>resource type:</b>	Building	<b>height (stories):</b>	1.5
<b>elig evaluation:</b>	eligible/significant	<b>total elig resources:</b>	1
<b>prim constr date:</b>	1927	<b>NR Status:</b>	Individually Listed
	<b>second date:</b> 2008	<b>date indiv listed:</b>	07/01/2020
<b>primary orig use:</b>	Meeting Hall	<b>orig use comments:</b>	Recreation & Culture: Sports Facility; Recreation & Culture: Auditorium
<b>second orig use:</b>		<b>prim style comments:</b>	
<b>primary style:</b>	Colonial Revival	<b>sec style comments:</b>	
<b>secondary style:</b>	Late 19th/20th Period Revivals: Other	<b>siding comments:</b>	
<b>primary siding:</b>	Shingle	<b>architect:</b>	James DeYoung and Knud Roald
<b>secondary siding:</b>	Wood:Other/Undefined	<b>builder:</b>	
<b>plan type:</b>			
<b>comments/notes:</b>			
9-11-2021: Fire damage to the building. RTO			
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS			
<b>Survey/Grouping Included In:</b>	<b>Type of Grouping</b>	<b>Date Listed</b>	<b>Date Compiled</b>
African American Resources in Portland, Oregon from 1851 to 1973	MPS	07/01/2020	2020
Women's History Sites	Thematic Grouping		2012
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY			
<b>NR date listed:</b> 07/01/2020	106 Project(s)		<b>Special Assess Project(s):</b> None
<b>ILS survey date:</b> 03/01/2018	<b>SHPO Case</b> 17-1520	<b>Date</b> 01/18/2019	<b>Federal Tax Project(s):</b> None
<b>RLS survey date:</b> 05/12/2016	<b>Agency Effect Eval</b> no adverse effect		
<b>Gen file date:</b> 01/18/2019			
ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION			
<i>(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)</i>			
<p>The Williams Avenue YWCA, currently the Billy Webb Elks Lodge #1050, is a one-and-a-half-story, 3,468-square-foot building located at the southwest corner of N Tillamook Street and N Williams Avenue in Portland's Eliot neighborhood. Its immediate setting is characterized by small-scale commercial buildings and dwellings constructed between the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. The subject building was constructed in 1926 in the Colonial Revival Style. It is generally rectangular in plan and features a side-gabled roof with three gabled wall dormers along the primary (north) façade. Above its concrete foundation, the exterior of the building is clad in wood shingles, with simple wood belt courses marking the first and second floor levels on all four elevations. Non-original concrete stairs and a concrete ramp lead to the main entry, which consists of paired doors beyond an arched opening surmounted by a parapet. With a few exceptions, the building's fenestration consists of double-hung, wood-sash windows. Apart from the entry stairs and ramp, exterior modifications are limited to select window replacement, addition of shingle cladding at the attic, replacement of all doors, and partial truncation of the chimney. The interior of the building, which includes a lobby, lounge and bar area, kitchen, dining hall and auditorium, and various offices and meeting spaces, has been more substantially altered; while the basic configuration of the first floor remains intact, the interior retains few original finishes. Despite modifications to the interior and exterior of the building, however, the resource retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association, and it retains integrity of materials, design, and workmanship with regard to its minimally-altered exterior. The building's exterior character-defining features include its one-and-a-half-story height, general massing plan, side-gabled roof with gabled wall dormers on the primary façade, wood shingle cladding, external brick chimney, multi-light wood windows, and recessed primary entrance with Colonial Revival detailing. Character-defining features in the building's interior include the wood floors in the lounge and auditorium, the auditorium stage, and the basic configuration of the first floor.</p>			
HISTORY			
<i>(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)</i>			
<p>The 1926 Williams Avenue Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) building, currently Billy Webb Elks Lodge #1050, is nominated under the African American Resources in Portland, Oregon, 1851-1973 Multiple Property Document (MPD). The Williams Avenue YWCA building meets all of the general and property specific registration requirements established by the MPD, and it is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage/Black, Social History/Civil Rights, Social History/Women's History, and Entertainment/Recreation for its significance as a community gathering space and as host to a variety of African American social, political, educational, and civil rights groups in the period 1926 to 1973. The period of significance is 1926 to 1973, beginning with the building's date of construction and ending with the conclusion of the Emanuel Hospital Urban Renewal Project, which permanently impacted the African American community in inner Northeast Portland and altered the setting of the property. At a time when many community groups and public spaces excluded people of color, the building at 6 N Tillamook St. offered a dedicated place for African American organizations to gather for socialization, recreation, and activism. The early history of the property has a special association with African American women's history, as the site was developed by the African American branch of the YWCA; the organization's affiliation with the property stretches back to 1921, before the current building was constructed, and continued for more than thirty-five years. The Portland branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) located its offices in the basement of the building from 1956 through 1964, and the Oregon Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, Urban League of Portland, and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) also held gatherings in its meeting rooms, auditorium, and lounge space. After more than nine decades of continuous association with Portland's African American community, the building remains owned and occupied by a historically African American organization (the Billy Webb Elks of the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the World, or IBPOEW) as of late 2019.</p>			
RESEARCH INFORMATION			
Title Records	Census Records	✓ Property Tax Records	✓ Local Histories
Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	✓ SHPO Files	✓ Interviews
Obituaries	✓ Newspapers	✓ State Archives	✓ Historic Photographs
City Directories	Building Permits	State Library	

<b>Local Library:</b>		<b>University Library:</b>	
<b>Historical Society:</b>	Oregon Historical Society	<b>Other Repository:</b>	
<b>Bibliography:</b>			
<p>"2 Candidates Asked to Speak." The Oregonian (Portland, OR), Oct. 20, 1956. Abbott, Carl. "Vanport." The Oregon Encyclopedia. Last modified Mar. 17, 2018. <a href="https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/vanport/#.WrA-dujwaUk">https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/vanport/#.WrA-dujwaUk</a>. "Attendance at Luncheons Show Large Increase." The Oregon Daily Journal (Portland, OR), Aug. 1, 1920. "Attorney Post Given Lucky." The Oregonian (Portland, OR), Jan. 30, 1954. "Billy Webb Elks Lodge." Williams District. Accessed Oct. 4, 2019. <a href="http://williamsdistrict.com/directory/listing/billy-webb-elks-lodge">williamsdistrict.com/directory/listing/billy-webb-elks-lodge</a>. "The Black Elks, a Home Away from Home." African American Registry. Accessed Sept. 22, 2019. <a href="https://aaregistry.org/story/the-black-elks-a-home-away-from-home/">https://aaregistry.org/story/the-black-elks-a-home-away-from-home/</a>. Brandimarte, Cynthia. 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