

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bogalusa City Hall is set in the midst of a modern, low-scale, municipal government complex, which connects with the City Hall through the west wing. The boundaries of the nominated area were chosen to include the City Hall and exclude the newer municipal buildings, which are set to the rear and sides. The City Hall has a small front lawn, and is approached by means of a semi-circular driveway.

The early twentieth century Classical style building is thirteen bays wide and one story high. The five-part facade has a central portico, hyphen wings, and a pair of end pavilions. The four-column Tuscan entrance portico lacks a pediment, as do the end pavilions. The central square lobby is surmounted by a heavily molded square dome, with a large central skylight under a circular lantern. The major offices are located at either end of the building, in the aforementioned end pavilions. Air circulation is achieved by means of axial corridors which radiate in three directions from the central lobby. They give strong vistas through the building, and provide access to municipal offices and the large rear court room.

The long leaf yellow pine building is raised approximately three feet above the ground on a ventilated brick foundation. All windows and doors are original.

The exterior composition presents a harmonious, elegant, and essentially Classical appearance, most of which is derived from the turn-of-the-century Renaissance Revival. This includes features like the heavy double bracketed frieze, the gently sloping roofs, the five part composition with the central dome, and the double clapboarding which gives the appearance of rusticated stone. The interior has long leaf yellow pine, board and batten wainscoting, and several pedimented doors, but is otherwise unornamented.

Ceilings have been lowered in the corridors and offices. But this is the only change in the building, other than the aforementioned hyphen connection with the modern municipal buildings to the rear and sides.

SPECIFIC DATES                      1917  
BUILDER/ARCHITECT              Architect: Rathbone Debuys

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bogalusa City Hall is of architectural significance as a handsome example of an early twentieth century town hall of the then predominant Classical mode. The elegant Renaissance Revival building, with its five-part composition, and axial, almost Palladian plan, represents a greater degree of high style sophistication than is achieved in any other building in Bogalusa, or most other town halls in southeastern Louisiana. The City Hall's significance in the area of politics/government rests upon its status as the seat of municipal government since 1917.

Bogalusa was incorporated as a city in 1914, and the City Council met first in the office building of the Great Southern Lumber Company, the corporation which had erected the town (See Amy Quick, The History of Bogalusa, the "Magic City" of Louisiana (reprinted from Louisiana Historical Quarterly, Jan. 1946), pp. 38, 43-44). The town's first mayor was William H. Sullivan, general manager of the Great Southern's operations in Bogalusa and "the father of Bogalusa." The first two major tasks undertaken by the new municipal government were the purchase from the lumber company of the water and sewer system and improvement of it, and the erection of the City Hall (See Quick, pp. 37, 44-45). The architect for the building was Rathbone Debuys of New Orleans and the contractor E. N. Moore (See original plans, located in City Hall in Bogalusa).

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Quick, Amy. The History of Bogalusa, the "Magic City" of Louisiana. Reprinted from Louisiana Historical Quarterly, Jan. 1946.

Plans for City Hall, located in Bogalusa City Hall.