

FALCON VILLAGE, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
1 Reservoir Road
Falcon Heights Vicinity
Starr County
Texas

HABS TX-3557-A

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Intermountain Region
12795 West Alameda Parkway
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0267

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FALCON VILLAGE, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

HABS No. TX-3557-A

Location: 1 Reservoir Road
Falcon Heights vicinity
Starr County
Texas

Falcon Village Administration Building is located off Farm-to-Market Road 2098 Spur, 0.6 miles southwest of its intersection with Ranch Road 2098 (MAP 1).

The center of the building is located at latitude: 26.56, longitude: -99.14. Coordinates were obtained January 24, 2012 using ArcMap and NAIP aerial photography from USDA, which has 6-meter horizontal accuracy. Location information is not restricted.

Present Owner
And Occupant: United States Section, International Boundary and Water
Commission (USIBWC)
4171 North Mesa, Suite C100
El Paso, Texas 79902-1441

Present Use: Administration Building for Falcon Dam and Village

Significance: The Falcon Village Administration Building (Administration Building) is a contributing resource in the National Register-eligible Falcon Dam and Falcon Village Historic District, significant on the national level as a mid-twentieth-century public works project that was part of a larger program to provide water conservation, flood control, power generation, and recreation to the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas and Mexico. The project was also significant as a cooperative venture between the United States and Mexico to address water rights to the mutual benefit of the two nations. The Administration Building served as the project field office during the construction of the dam and power plants from 1951 to 1953 and as operations office for the facility after its completion. It is an integral part of Falcon Village, a post-World

War II planned community designed for government workers at a large, federal, public works facility.

Historian: Jeffrey L. Holland (Historian) and Geoffrey B. Henry (Architectural Historian), TRC Environmental, Inc. April 2012.

Project Information: HABS documentation of the Falcon Village Administration Building was undertaken at the request of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) as partial mitigation for the loss of the building, which will be replaced with a new administration building for the USIBWC area operations office. Daniel Borunda, Natural Resources Specialist for USIBWC, and Kim Barker of the THC developed an MOU to address the impacts to the building. Jeffrey Holland and Vince Macek of TRC conducted the fieldwork on behalf of the USIBWC from January 9–12, 2012. The historical report was prepared by Mr. Holland and Geoffrey Henry of TRC. The photographs were taken and the graphics prepared by Mr. Macek. Elia Perez of TRC's El Paso office served as project manager for TRC.

Part I: Historical Information

A. Physical History:

- 1. Dates of construction:** December 1950–May 1951
- 2. Architect:** U.S. Section, International Boundary & Water Commission (USIBWC), El Paso, Texas. Rodger B. Collons oversaw construction for the USIBWC at Falcon Village as the field engineer for the project.¹
- 3. Owners, occupants, and uses:** The building has been owned and occupied by the USIBWC since its construction. It served as the administrative project office for the U.S. section during the construction of the dam and powerhouse. After the project was completed, it was converted to its planned use as the U.S. section's office for operation and maintenance of the dam, power plant, and appurtenant buildings. The building currently houses the offices of the area operations manager, dam operations manager, and other USIBWC employees.
- 4. Builder, contractor, suppliers:** Noser Construction Company, McAllen, Texas was awarded a contract for \$57,984 to construct the office building and garage, which were completed at a cost of \$59,009.65 (Contract IBM-4371). The cost of the office itself was \$32,314.86. Suppliers and subcontractors included: Valley Brick & Tile Company, Madero, Texas (brick); Alamo Iron Works, San Antonio, Texas (steel); Chrysler Corporation, Airtemp Division, Dayton Ohio (air conditioning); J. W. Martin Electric Company (electrical systems); Edwin F. Guth Company, St. Louis, Missouri (fluorescent light fixtures); Herring-Hall-Marvin Safe Company, Hamilton, Ohio (vault door); and Crane Plumbing (bathroom fixtures).²
- 5. Original plans and construction:** Plans and elevations dated March 1950 and revised August 8, 1950 were prepared at the USIBWC headquarters in

¹ *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam and Power Plants*, [1958?], p. V-1, U.S. Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC), Falcon Dam Power Plant Record Room ("Telephone Room").

² Correspondence, Office and Garage Building, Contract IBM-4371, 1950–1951, folder 14.11.1, USIBWC, Falcon Village Administration Building File Room, Falcon Village, Texas.

El Paso, Texas.³ The plans and specifications were made available to bidders, and a construction contract was signed with Noser Construction October 20, 1950 for \$57,984. Work was begun in December 1950 and completed in May 1951.⁴ The plans called for a one-story, concrete masonry building with brick veneer and overall dimensions of 44' wide x 51' deep. The Administration Building contained a lobby, six offices, a brick vault room, and restroom facilities for men and women. It was constructed as specified with only a few minor changes. In April 1951, the USIBWC directed Noser to substitute one coat of clear exterior brick waterproofing compound for the three coats of white waterproof paint called for in the specifications. A few other modifications were made to the original plans because of supply issues or price concerns.⁵

The design for the front (south) façade of the building featured five bays with an entrance door centered between four 4'-0" x 5'-5" windows with concrete sills and lintels. A full-length porch with concrete floor was sheltered by a shed roof with a centered cross-gable over the entrance door. The porch roof was supported by six, 8" x 8" Douglas fir posts topped with simple capitals. The rafter plates were 10" x 8" Douglas fir beams that turned out at the gabled entrance and had scalloped ends. The gabled entrance roof extended 15 inches beyond the porch roof. Galvanized iron gutters were attached to the fascia boards on the beveled rafters.

The three other facades were designed with little ornamentation. The windows were all of the same size with the exception of the two half-height windows in the restrooms in the north ell. The long east wall had two sets of paired windows between two single windows, while the west wall had three irregularly spaced single windows in the front section. There were two single windows on the rear (north) façade. The 3' overhanging eaves had exposed rafter ends. The low-pitched roof (at a ratio of 4:12) was covered with 1" sheeting and 5-ply built-up roofing material.

³ *Specifications, Schedule and Drawings, Garage and Office Buildings, Falcon Village, Starr County, Texas, Rio Grande International Dams Project, 1950, Falcon Village Administration Building Vault, Falcon Village, Texas.*

⁴ *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam, p. V-12.*

⁵ Correspondence.

The interior vault room was constructed with brick interior walls, a 6” reinforced concrete slab ceiling, and a Herring-Hall-Marvin No. 64 steel vault door (see Field Records) for fire protection. The interior of the vault room measured 10’ x 12’, with a 34 1/16”-wide. Other interior walls of the Administration Building were of metal lath covered with three layers of gypsum and lime plaster, finished with a coat of cement plaster. Floors in all rooms except the restrooms were covered with 9-inch-square asphalt tile. Ceramic tile was used in the restrooms. The Administration Building had 10’ ceilings fitted with acoustical tile attached to nailing strips on the ceiling joists.⁶

Drawings and specifications for the plumbing and electrical systems and fixtures were submitted by the contractor for approval. The plumbing included the laying of all lines for the air conditioning, water coolers, water heater, vent pipes, drains, janitor’s closet, and bathrooms. Lighting fixtures for the offices, halls, and vaults were 40-watt fluorescent lights, while the outside doorway lights, janitor’s closet, and bathrooms had 100-watt incandescent lights. In December 1950, John C. Tambernine, the office engineer, approved plans for 48 ½” Guth Hinged G-S-T fluorescent fixtures. Literature for a Chrysler Airtemp, 8-ton air conditioning unit Model M104 and a Marley Aquatower No. 72 cooling tower were submitted in January 1951 (see Field Records). This system was installed in the janitorial closet. Also in January 1951, Noser wrote to the IBWC that their subcontractor, J. W. Martin Electric Company proposed to use LaSalle recessed wall heaters and Electromode unit heaters.⁷

Only a few historic views of the Administration Building were located. The earliest view is captured from a film made in October 1953 at the dedication ceremony for the International Falcon Dam (PHOTO 1).⁸ Prior to the ceremony, President Dwight D. Eisenhower greeted local Girl Scouts in front of the building (PHOTO 2) and was then ushered inside. A newspaper photograph of this event ran in the local paper, as well. That photograph is copyright protected, but a copy of the article taken from the newspaper on microfilm is included in the Field Records.

⁶ Specifications, p.58, 63.

⁷ Correspondence.

⁸ Texas Department of Public Safety, “Eisenhower Visits Texas – DPS at the Falcon Dam Dedication, 1953.” Texas Archive of the Moving Image, Austin, Texas.

A photograph of unknown date in the possession of Mr. Alberto Hinojosa, current Dam Operations Manager, shows the front of the building (PHOTO 3).⁹ It appears that the front porch was being painted at the time. The details of the plans from 1950 seem to all be intact in this photograph and constructed to specifications. A photograph from 1957 that accompanies the project completion report shows the landscaping around the building (PHOTO 4).¹⁰ Finally, a photograph showing utility work near the garage building in 1962 shows the east side of the administration building in the background (PHOTO 5).¹¹ In all of these photos, the original design of the porch and roof appear to be intact.

A picture of several employees receiving 10-year service awards in January 1962 appears to have been taken in Administration Building lobby and is the only historic view of the building interior that was located (PHOTO 6).¹² It indicates that the wood paneling was added after that date and that the 9-inch-square asphalt tile floor was replaced after that date with a similar, but not identical, 12-inch square tile.

- 6. Alterations and additions:** The original roof was a 5-ply, built-up roof. It was repaired in 1962 by South Texas Roof and Metal Works of Laredo. The contract specified that the crushed stone on the roof be removed, then re-papered with 15-pound felt, mopped with 50 pounds or more of hot asphalt per 100 square feet, spread with marble chips 5/32" to 3/8", and embedded at a rate of 100 pounds or more per 100 square feet.¹³ The roof was later replaced by shingles, perhaps more than once.

No structural additions have been made to the building. A patio in the rear ell covered by a metal shed roof was added at an unknown date. The porch supports and some porch details were replaced sometime after 1962 based on the photo of that date that shows original porch supports in place (PHOTO 5).

⁹ Photograph in the office of Mr. Alberto Hinojosa, Falcon Village Administration Building, Falcon Village, Texas.

¹⁰ *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam*, p. V-9.

¹¹ Photographs on file, 1962, USIBWC, Falcon Village Administration Building Vault, Falcon Village, Texas.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Invitation, F-6532, Roof Repairs, Office Building, Garage and Vehicle Storage Building, 1962, folder 14.324, USIBWC, Falcon Village Administration Building File Room, Falcon Village, Texas.

Some interior details are also replacements, including the fluorescent light fixtures and linoleum tile flooring. Plywood paneling was added in the lobby and receptionist's office some time after January 1962. The air conditioning unit in the janitorial closet was replaced at an unknown date by an exterior unit located on the north side of the building. The two commodes in the men's room were replaced with one at an unknown date. The building entrance and bathrooms were made handicapped accessible sometime after 1990. Some restroom fixtures, the restroom signs, and some of the doors appear to be original.

B. Historic Context:

The Falcon Village Administration Building was constructed as part of the support facilities for the International Falcon Dam project on the Rio Grande River between Texas and Mexico. The dam was made possible by the Water Treaty of 1944, by which the United States and Mexico agreed to equitably distribute the water rights to the Rio Grande and cooperate in the management of its mutual water resources. The dam and matching power plants, one in Mexico and one in the U.S., were to be constructed under the oversight of the International Boundary and Water Commission, which maintained sections in both nations. The commission was established in 1889 as the International Boundary Commission to settle border disputes and water rights issues. Through a series of agreements, the IBWC made improvements to the Rio Grande that included channel rectification, dam construction, and levees.¹⁴

International Falcon Dam was the first storage dam project on the U.S./Mexican border and was intended to control water resources for the Lower Rio Grande Valley, which was developing as a major agricultural region. The benefits of the multi-purpose project included water conservation, flood control, control of silt deposition, power generation, and recreation. The dam was a joint construction project, with the powerhouses and ancillary features constructed by the respective countries in which they were located. The site of the dam was established by joint studies that found the Falcón-Salineño area most suitable. The location was approved in 1947. The dam was designed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 1948 and specifications were completed by 1950, when initial construction began. The 5-mile long, rolled-

¹⁴ Julie McGilvray et al., *Historic Resources Survey for the International Falcon Dam and Reservoir Project, United States International Boundary and Water Commission*. Dallas: MWH Americas, Inc., 2011, 10–11.

earth dam was one of the longest in the world at the time of construction and created a 26-mile-long, 87,000-acre reservoir.¹⁵

The dam was constructed by a consortium of seven firms known as Falcon Dam Constructors, which included Mexican and U.S. sections, each employing its own workers and maintaining separate operational facilities. The main project office for the U.S. section was located at old Fort McIntosh in Laredo. Falcon Village, located northeast of the dam on the U.S. side, was the field headquarters for the U.S. section of the project, as well as serving as a temporary construction camp and residential community for workers and staff. A preliminary plan for Falcon Village made in October 1948 showed a similar layout to the one that was eventually built, including the bent-wing grid with two main longitudinal roads and a service area near the entrance to the village. However, the original plan called for masonry dwellings and featured more amenities such as a store, a filling station, and a swimming pool.¹⁶

In January 1950, at a meeting at the USIBWC headquarters in El Paso, project engineers discussed the permanent features planned for Falcon Village and a modified plan was developed. The bids received for the masonry dwellings exceeded Congressional budget caps for residential buildings and were rejected. Instead, it was recommended that 30 surplus buildings from old Fort McIntosh and Laredo Air Force Base in Laredo be moved to the site and refitted as semi-permanent dwellings. The original plans for the village also called for a permanent office building that could accommodate the staff necessary for the construction of the dam, but at the January 1950 meeting, it was determined to build a smaller permanent office suitable for administration and maintenance of the dam after the project was completed. Additional office space needed during construction was to be provided by bringing the old post engineer's building from Fort McIntosh to the site, which could be sold after completion of the dam and powerhouse. The store and filling station were

¹⁵ McGilvray, et al., *Historic Resources Survey*, 11–13; *International Falcon Dam Souvenir Program* (McAllen Chamber of Commerce, McAllen, Texas, 1953), 33; *Falcon Dam and Power Plant* [brochure], (El Paso, Texas: USIBWC, 1990).

¹⁶ *Preliminary Studies and Estimates of Cost of Construction for Falcon Village*, October 14, 1948, folder L-7.2.7, USIBWC, Falcon Village Administration Building File Room, Falcon Village, Texas.

eliminated from the plan under the assumption that private enterprise would provide these services.¹⁷

Meanwhile, temporary facilities were being constructed at Falcon Village to support the early stages of construction. In 1949, a temporary field office was established, and by July 1950, the construction camp included two dormitories, a mess hall, eight dwelling units, an office building, and a utility system, all of a temporary nature and erected by USIBWC workers.¹⁸

The foundations for the buildings arriving from Laredo were prepared in September 1950, and the buildings were moved to the site between November 1950 and January 1951. Government workers completed the conversion of the buildings to residential use, with the exception of plastering and tiling, which was done under contract. The residences were completed in April 1951 and were used until the 1960s when they were replaced by permanent dwellings.¹⁹

The current Administration Building and the nearby garage were the first permanent structures built for the village. They were constructed under the same contract, which was awarded to Noser Construction in October 1950. Work began in November 1950 and was completed in May 1951. The office building was used for administration of the construction work on the dam and powerhouse.²⁰

International Falcon Dam was completed in 1953 and was dedicated on October 19 of that year in a grand ceremony attended by the presidents of the United States and Mexico. U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's motorcade arrived at the dam site in the morning after driving from the Texas governor's residence in Sharyland, near Mission. At the USIBWC Administration Building in Falcon Village, the President was greeted by a Girl Scout troop from Hebbronville. A photograph of the President and the Girl Scout troop in front of the Administration Building was published on the front page of the *McAllen Valley Evening Monitor*. The President's Chrysler convertible then crossed into Mexico along the dam road, which was lined with 7,000 U.S. and Mexican troops standing nearly shoulder-to-shoulder for 12 miles, from the

¹⁷ R. B. Ward to L. M. Lawson, "Report on Meeting of January 11, 1950," 8 March 1951, Folder 11.2, Construction Details Preliminary to Preparation of Contract Plans and Specifications – Falcon Village, USIBWC, Falcon Village Administration Building File Room, Falcon Village, Texas.

¹⁸ *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam*, p. V-5-V-7; R. B. Ward to L. M. Lawson, 8 March 1951.

¹⁹ *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam*, p. V-5-V-7.

²⁰ *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam*, p. V-11-V-12.

Administration Building to the City Hall in Nuevo Guerrero, where he met Mexican President Ruiz Cortines. After festivities in the town, the two presidents returned to the USIBWC headquarters on the American side for a luncheon on the grounds of Falcon Village attended by 500 guests. This was followed by the dedication ceremony on the dam at the monument constructed at the official border between the two countries.²¹

Installation of the equipment in the powerhouses in the U.S. and Mexico was completed in April 1954, with the first commercial power generated October 11, 1954. After completion of the project, Falcon Village served as the operations center for the U.S. Section of the IBWC and a residential community for its employees. The Administration Building housed the project office for operation and maintenance of the dam, power plant, and appurtenant buildings. A report on the completed project made circa 1958 reported the construction cost of the village through June 1957 at just over \$1 million.²²

In 1959, plans were developed to replace the semi-permanent housing in the village with permanent dwellings. The architectural firm of Monroe Light & Higgins designed the two-, three-, and four-bedroom house plans, as well as the community building, the guest house (now called the hydro office), and the bachelor's quarters (now called the guest house). The guest house and bachelor's quarters were located in the same block as the Administration Building, while the dwellings, with the exception of one house, were located on four blocks extending in a bent-wing pattern beyond the office buildings. The community building was located in the middle of the four blocks in a triangular lot formed by the bend in the street grid. All of these buildings were of concrete masonry unit (CMU) construction, covered with stucco, except the community building which had exterior walls of brick. At least 28 houses were completed in this initial phase of construction. Another seven were built beginning in 1970 outside of the original four blocks. Amenities for residents of Falcon Village included a playground, ball fields, tennis courts, and a dock on Falcon Reservoir.²³

Overall, the Falcon Village complex is an excellent example of a mid-twentieth-century, utilitarian, planned community for government workers at a

²¹ "Mighty Falcon Dam Dedicated by Two Presidents." *The Westlaco News (Hidalgo County, TX)*, 22 October, 1953.

²² *Falcon Dam and Power Plant*.

²³ McGilvray, et al., *Historic Resources Survey*, 13–15, 30–39.

remote facility. It is typical of such communities found at military bases, national parks and recreation areas, and government installations. The village provides a central area for both work and leisure, making it more convenient for the employees of Falcon Dam than commuting long distances to the site. The layout of the site, its landscape features, and the architectural character of the buildings in Falcon Village are all designed with function in mind, but are congruent with the environment and culture of south Texas.

The basic design, appearance and floor plan of the Falcon Village Administration Building was re-used by the USIBWC at its other facilities in Texas. The 1961 building specifications and plans for the Amistad Dam Administration Building, located near Del Rio in Val Verde County, are nearly identical to those used at Falcon Dam. At Amistad, brick rowlock sills and lintels were substituted for the concrete sills at Falcon, but this is the only significant difference.

Although a modest structure, the Administration Building is the focal point of the Falcon Village, being the reception area for visitors as well as the command center for operations at the facility. The welcoming front porch, large door and window openings, and the warm brick veneer, elevate the structure from institutional blandness, and the original architectural details of the porch reflected the heritage of the Texas borderlands.

Part II. Architectural Information

A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural character:** The Administration Building is typical of post-World War II construction and shows evidence of the then-popular residential Ranch style, particularly in its use of a shallow-pitched hipped roof, one-story height and L plan and the full-width front porch.
2. **Condition of fabric:** The Administration Building has been well maintained over its history, with repairs made as needed to the exterior and interior fabric. The brick veneer exterior is in good condition, and the concrete window sills and lintels are still intact. The metal windows and the doors are all operational and in fair-to-good condition. The original wood porch posts have been replaced with metal posts. The building's interior has retained its original floor plan, although wall finishes, lighting, and ceilings have been replaced or covered over by later materials.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall Dimensions:** The Administration Building is a one-story, five-bay structure built on an L plan, with the façade on the south elevation and a rear wing or ell extending to the north. The front of the building is 44' wide and the west wall is 30' long. The rear ell is 26' wide and 21' deep. The east wall is 51' long.
2. **Foundations:** The Administration Building stands on a reinforced-concrete slab foundation and has no basement. The foundation is parged for approximately 10-12 inches above ground on the west side of the building.
3. **Walls:** The 13-foot-tall exterior walls are faced with a brick veneer, laid in American bond with a row of header bricks used on every sixth course.
4. **Structural System, Framing:** The Administration Building features CMU construction, with steel door frames.
5. **Stairways:** There are no exterior stairways in the Administration Building.
6. **Chimneys:** There are no chimneys in the Administration Building.
7. **Openings:** The Administration Building has retained its original number of door and window openings, with none having been added or removed.
 - a. **Doorways and doors:** The primary entrance is on the center of the south facade, with a single-leaf, wood-and-glass door that replaced the original single glass panel door at an unknown date. A screen door was also removed at an unknown date based on the original plans and a historic photograph of unknown date (PHOTO 3). Above the entrance is a concrete lintel to which is affixed a metal sign lettered with OFFICE. Above the lintel is a round metal sign with the USIBWC logo. A metal exterior light with glass panes is to the west of this door. A secondary entrance is on the west side of the north ell with a concrete sill and lintel. It has a single-leaf wood door with metal handle.

- b. Windows:** Fenestration consists of four-light awning windows with metal frames and operating hardware. Each window has a concrete sill and lintel. There are two windows flanking either side of the south entrance; three windows on the west wall; smaller two-light awning windows flank the secondary entrance on the north ell; there is one window on the north end, and four windows (single and paired) on the east wall.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, Covering:** The gable-on-hip roof is clad with gray asphalt shingles. The triangular, louvered wood vents in the attic story of each gable end have been replaced by plywood with drilled vent holes.
- b. Cornice, Eaves:** The Administration Building has wide, overhanging eaves and exposed wood rafter ends on the east and west elevations. A galvanized iron gutter runs along the front porch roof. A section of aluminum gutter was added on the north eave to protect the A/C unit. The cross-gable porch roof is finished with a wood box cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor Plans:** The Administration Building floor plan consists of two sets of two offices flanking either side of the central lobby. To the rear (north) of the lobby and to the west of the hall is a fireproof vault room. The rear ell contains an additional office, a break room with sink and refrigerator, separate men's and women's restrooms, and a janitor's closet.
 - a. Main Floor:** See above.
 - b. Upper floors:** None.
 - c. Attic:** The attic crawlspace was not accessible.
 - d. Gallery, Porch:** The roof overhangs approximately five feet on the front to shelter a one-story, five-bay porch supported on six non-historic round metal posts. There is a shallow-pitched, centrally placed front gable on the porch roof, which extends eight inches beyond the porch roof eaves. The two central posts have wedge-shaped wood capitals. There is a narrow-width board ceiling. The concrete porch floor is a rust color and scored in blocks. The porch approach has been

altered by the addition of a concrete handicap access ramp leading to the entrance.

The roof of the north ell overhangs on the west to shelter a one-story, one-bay porch over the secondary entrance. The porch has a concrete floor.

2. **Stairways:** There are no interior stairways.
3. **Flooring:** The floors are covered with linoleum tiles and have wood baseboards, except for the two restrooms which have ceramic tile floors and a strip of tile running above the floor.
4. **Wall and Ceiling Finish:** The interior walls were all originally plastered, but have been clad with plywood paneling in the entrance lobby and receptionist's office.
5. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and doors:** The door frames have molded wood jambs. The office doors are wood with metal hinges and door knobs. There is a wood louvered door with brass knob to the janitor's closet. The restroom doors are topped by wood signs lettered with MEN or WOMEN. The vault room has a metal-clad door with metal latch handle.
 - b. **Windows:** There are two translucent glass windows along the north hall that light the two offices from the hall. The wall between the lobby and the receptionist's office has a large opening, originally with a sliding glass pane.
6. **Decorative Features:** The Administration Building was designed as a utilitarian structure with an emphasis on simplicity of design and finishes and there are no decorative features on the interior.
7. **Hardware:** Most door knobs are replacements of the originals except for the brass knob on the janitor's closet door. Metal door hinges are original.
8. **Mechanical Equipment:**

- a. **Heating and Cooling:** The Administration Building features central heating and cooling. Heating and cooling units, as well as a hot water heater are located in the janitor's closet.
- b. **Plumbing:** The Administration Building has original indoor plumbing. Men's and women's restrooms are located in the north ell.
- c. **Electric:** The Administration Building retains its original electrical wiring and outlets.

D. Site:

The Falcon Village Administration Building is set at the entrance to Falcon Village, a planned community for the operatives of the International Falcon Dam and Reservoir. The building faces roughly south toward the dam. The paved entrance road to the village (Falcon Main Street) is located off FM 2098, the rural farm road that leads to International Falcon Dam. The entrance road splits in front of the Administration Building, with Main Street on the east and Reservoir Road on the west forming the two main roads into the village. A small parking area and a flagpole are located in the triangle formed by the split in the road and the Administration Building. A garage, warehouse, and other support facilities are located to the right of (to the east) and behind the building (to the north). The building is located in a cleared, generally level park-like setting of maintained grass lawn dotted with isolated hardwoods and palm trees. Views of Falcon Reservoir can be seen to the west.

1. **Historic Landscape Design:** The initial landscape design for Falcon Village was prepared in 1951 by a firm in Laredo, Texas. Although some of the mature trees planted as part of that plan were lost to drought in recent years, the overall design was not significantly different than the current appearance. The grounds were to be covered by lawns with native trees planted throughout, including fan and date palms, Rio Grande ash, mesquite, and ebony. Many of these trees still are found dotting the village. Historic aerial photographs and a few contemporary photographs suggest that the landscape around the Administration Building is not significantly changed from its historic appearance. The area has been kept clear, with widely-spaced trees and a maintained lawn. During construction of the dam, a number of temporary buildings were located around the Administration Building, including a mess hall, a dormitory,

and a warehouse to the east, and an office building and laboratory to the north. These buildings were removed sometime after 1954. Two palm trees were located on the grass between the front of the building and the parking area from at least 1953 to sometime after 1962. They are no longer standing.

2. **Outbuildings:** A small utility shed is located behind the Administration Building. It was constructed in the late 1980s and contains an emergency generator for the building.²⁴ It is not considered a contributing structure to the historic district.

Part III. Sources of Information:

- A. **Architectural Drawings:** Original plans for the Falcon Village Administration Building were located in the vault room of the building and will likely be transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration Region Branch in Fort Worth, Texas before demolition. They were photographed as part of the documentation and are reproduced in Figures 1–4. Larger copies of these plans are included in the Field Records.
- B. **Early Views:** Video footage of President Eisenhower’s 1953 visit to International Falcon Dam for the dedication ceremony is the earliest image found of the Administration Building. Still photo captures from that video are shown in Photos 1 and 2 of this report. Several photographs dating to the late 1950s and early 1960s show portions of the building. These views were located in the vault, file room, and offices of the building. They are discussed in the physical history section of the historical report and are reproduced below in Photos 3–6.
- C. **Bibliography:**

1. **Primary and Unpublished Sources:**

Museum of South Texas History, Edinburg, Texas. Falcon Dam and Reservoir newspaper clippings and vertical files.

²⁴ Mr. Raul Garcia, USIBWC, personal communication 11 April, 2012.

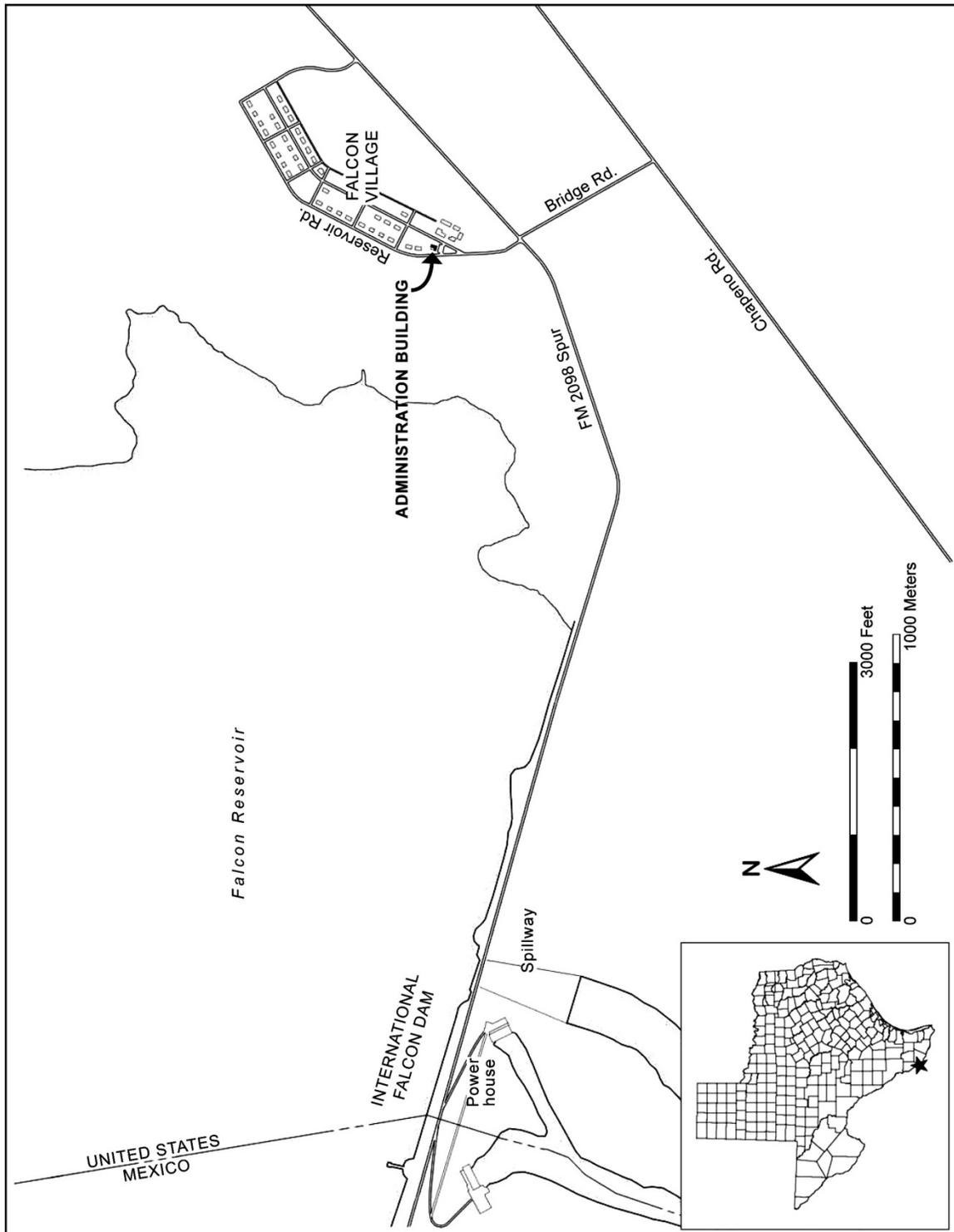
U.S. Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC),
Falcon Dam File Room and Falcon Village Administrative Building
Vault and File Room, Falcon Heights, Texas. Correspondence,
Studies, Specifications, Plans, Reports, Photos.

2. Secondary Sources:

McGilvray, Julie, James W. Steely, Anna Mod, and Kevin A. Miller. *Historic Resources Survey for the International Falcon Dam and Reservoir Project, United States International Boundary and Water Commission*. MWH Americas, Inc., Dallas, Texas in association with SWCA Environmental Consultants, Austin, Texas. Submitted to United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission, El Paso, Texas, 2011.

D. Sources Not Investigated: There are no significant sources of information that have not been investigated.

E. Supplemental Material: A location map, copies of the original plans, and copies of historic photographs of the building are attached to this report. Larger copies of the plans, digital color photographs taken in the field, newspaper clippings related to International Falcon Dam, and literature on the original air conditioning, lighting, and vault door are submitted as Field Records.



Map 1. Location of Falcon Village Administration Building in relation to Falcon Village, International Falcon Dam, and existing roads.



Photo 1. Composite view of Administration Building during the dedication ceremony for Falcon Dam (still image from film, courtesy of Texas Archive of the Moving Image).



Photo 2. President Eisenhower greeting Girl Scouts in front of the Administration Building (still image from film, courtesy of Texas Archive of the Moving Image).



Photo 3. Photo of unknown date of the entrance to the Administration Building (photo in possession of Mr. Alberto Hinojosa, Falcon Dam Operations Manager).



Photo 4. View of the south and east sides of the Administration Building, 12 September 1957
(photo from *Report on Construction of Falcon Dam*, 1958[?]).



Photo 5. View of utility construction with Administration Building in background, 6 June 1962
(photo from Administration Building Vault).



Photo 6. USIBWC employees receiving their 10-year service pins in the lobby of the Administration Building, 15 January 1962 (photo from Administration Building Vault).

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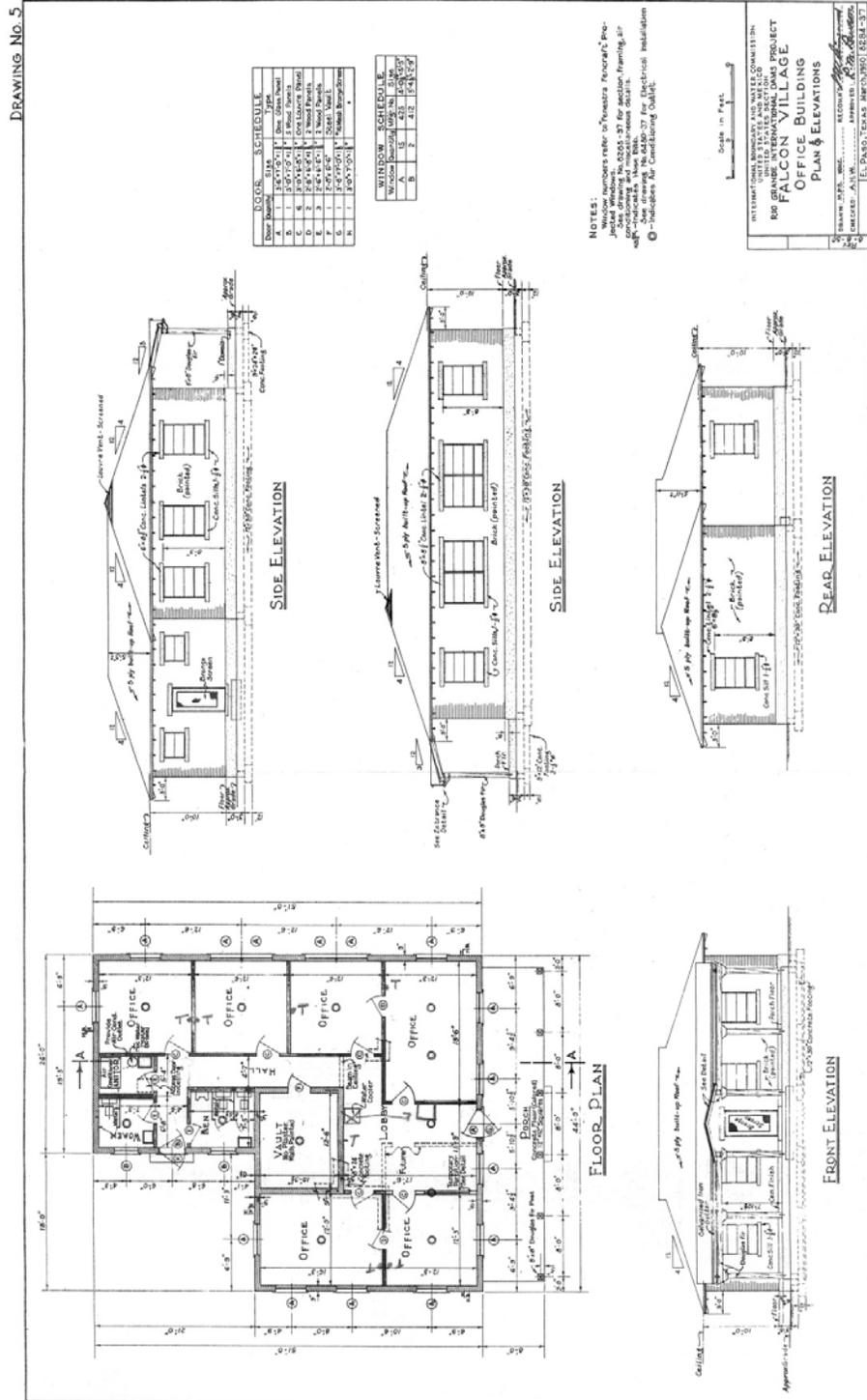


Figure 1. Original plan and elevations for Falcon Village Administration Building.

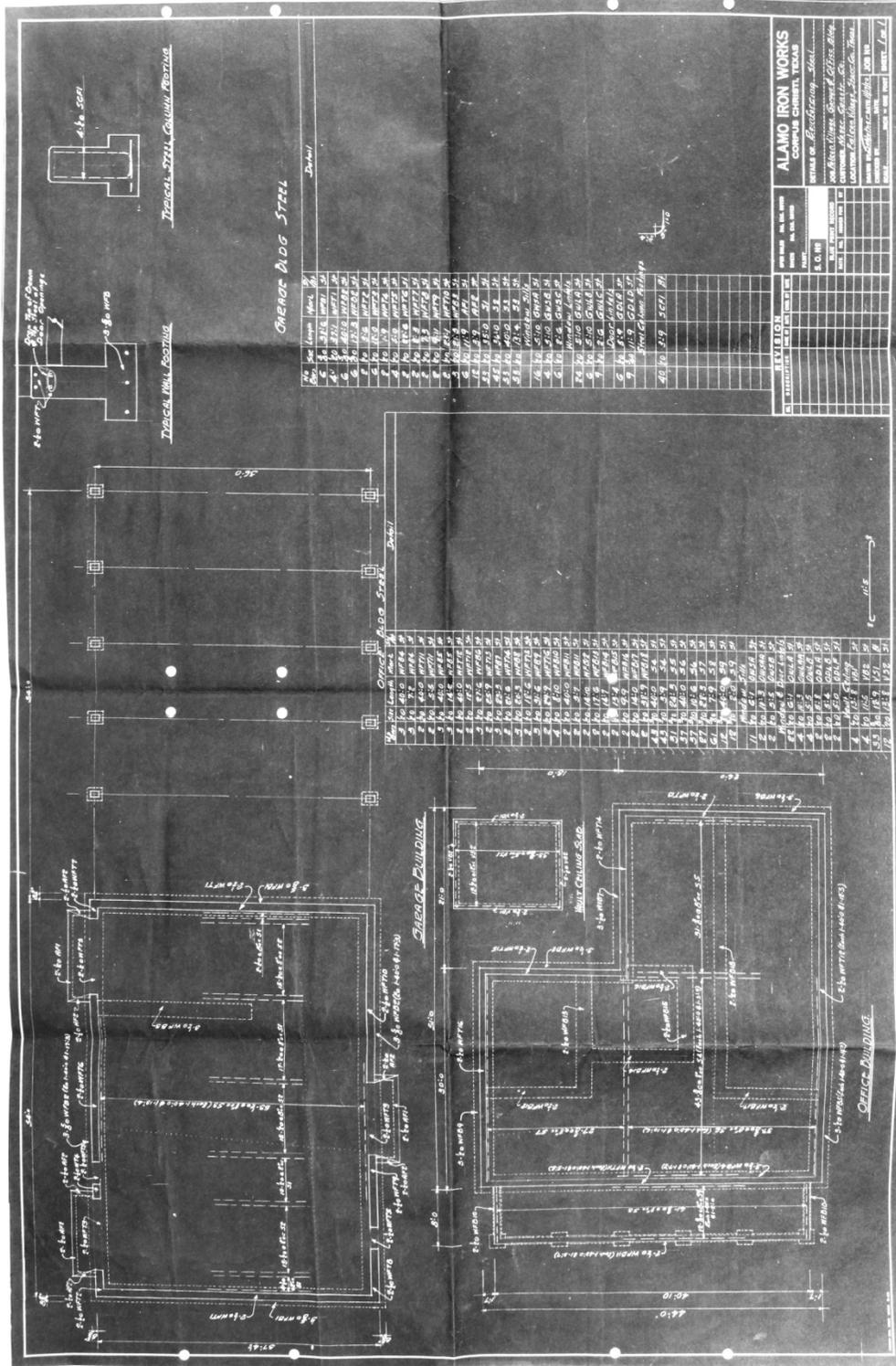


Figure 4. Original details of structural steel for Falcon Village Administration Building.