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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions):

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions):

Religion/Synagogue

Religion/Synagogue

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions):

Gothic Revival influence

Material (enter categories from instructions):

foundation: Pier-and-Beam/Brick

walls: Wood/Aluminum Siding

roof: Asphalt Shingles

other:

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

 See continuation sheet

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

 nationally  statewide  locallyApplicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Period of Significance:

Significant Dates:

Architecture

c. 1900

c. 1900

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Significant Person:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Unknown

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

 See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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7. Description

The Synagogue B'nai Abraham is a simple gable-front frame building covered in aluminum siding with an asphalt shingled roof. Lancet 4/4 windows, single ocular gable-end windows, and arched entryway with double doors are its noteworthy architectural features. The windows and entryway reflect a Gothic Revival influence.

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The Synagogue B'nai Abraham is a simple gable-front frame building facing west in an area of residential and office uses. It rests on a brick pier-and-beam foundation and is roofed with asphalt shingles. The building is covered in narrow, aluminum siding added in the 1980s matching the original clapboards. All windows are 4/4 double-hung wooden sashes with each upper sash pointed by simple angles, except for the two clear ocular windows in the gable ends. The property is on a sloping hillside with a parking lot to the north. There is very little formal vegetation around the building.

The 3-bay principal facade consists of single windows in the first and third bays and double wooden doors with blocked transom in the second (center) bay. An ocular window is between the apex of the arch and the gable roofline. A raised concrete uncovered porch with iron railing accesses the front doors from stairs leading to the south.

The north and south facades are identical with four evenly-spaced single windows; the east facade has two single windows.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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8. Significance

The Synagogue B'nai Abraham (c. 1900) is eligible under Criterion C as an excellent and one of the few extant examples of the Gothic Revival style in Brenham. It is believed to be the first Orthodox Hebrew Congregations in Texas. The property is in good condition, retains a high degree of integrity, and is associated with the local context "Community Development and Regional Expansion 1870-1941."

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The Synagogue is believed to be the first Orthodox Hebrew Congregation in Texas (organized in 1885). Although the Jewish community in Brenham has always been small, special efforts to keep the congregation active are part of its long history. In the 1960s and 1970s, students from the University of Texas in Austin were invited to attend so that the minimum number of male adults required to hold services would be present. The building is now used only for special occasions.

The Synagogue B'nai Abraham (c. 1900) is one of the only Gothic Revival properties in Brenham. The property exhibits restrained Gothic Revival influences with its lancet windows and arched entryway. Its simple features make an excellent example of the influence being used in a vernacular property that stresses its function over style.

The property is in good condition and retains a high degree of integrity.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

See bibliography of context statement

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, TX

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property: less than one

UTM References:

A 1/4/ / 750/580/ 334/0100  
Zone Easting Northing

C // / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

B // / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

D // / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description: Original Townsite, Block 73, Lot 3, City of Brenham, Texas

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes the nominated property and entire city lot that historically has been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dwayne Jones/Preservation Planner date: 1984; 1989  
organization: (with assistance from Sally Victor) telephone: 512/463-6094  
street & number: Texas Historical Commission state: zip code:  
city or town: 1511 Colorado, Austin TX 78701

2/14/90

United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet

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Brenham ~~KXXXXX~~ MPS Washington County, TEXAS

DATE LISTED

21. Southern Pacific Railroad Freight Depot  
Substantive Review

3/29/90

22. St. Mary's Catholic Church  
Substantive Review

3/29/90

23. Synagogue B'nai Abraham  
Substantive Review

3/29/90

24. US Post Office--Federal Building--Brenham

3/29/90

25. Washington County Courthouse  
Substantive Review

3/29/90

26. Wood-Hughes House  
Substantive Review

3/29/90

27. Schmidt House  
Substantive Review

12/10/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90000464

Date Listed:

Synagogue B'nai Abraham  
Property Name

Washington  
County

TX  
State

Brenham MPS  
Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for* Patrick Andrews  
Signature of the Keeper

3/29/90  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

**Statement of Significance:** The Synagogue B'nai Abraham is a religious property. Criteria Consideration A should be checked.

This information was confirmed with Dwayne Jones of the Texas SHPO.

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Synagogue B'nai Abraham  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Brenham MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Washington

DATE RECEIVED: 2/16/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/27/90  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/15/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/02/90  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000464

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 3/29/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Having one of the first Orthodox Hebrew Congregations in Texas, the Synagogue B'nai Abraham is significant as a minimally-styled historic revival building fashioned of wood.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept/c  
REVIEWER Antonietta A. Rice  
DISCIPLINE History  
DATE 3/27/90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR (Y)/N



CLASSIFICATION

\_\_\_ count      \_\_\_ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

\_\_\_ historic      \_\_\_ current

DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_ architectural classification  
\_\_\_ materials  
\_\_\_ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- \_\_\_ summary paragraph
- \_\_\_ completeness
- \_\_\_ clarity
- \_\_\_ applicable criteria
- \_\_\_ justification of areas checked
- \_\_\_ relating significance to the resource context
- \_\_\_ relationship of integrity to significance
- \_\_\_ justification of exception
- \_\_\_ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

\_\_\_ acreage      \_\_\_ verbal boundary description  
\_\_\_ UTM's      \_\_\_ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

\_\_\_ sketch maps      \_\_\_ USGS maps      \_\_\_ photographs      \_\_\_ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



SYNAGOGUE B'NAI ABRAHAM (#645)

BRENTHAM, TEXAS

DWAYNE JONES

OCTOBER 9, 1989

NEGATIVE ON FILE - TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

CAMERA FACING EAST



SYNAGOGUE B'NAI ABRAHAM (#645)

BRENNHAM, TEXAS

DWAYNE JONES

OCTOBER 9, 1989

NEGATIVE ON FILE - TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

CAMERA FACING NORTH

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500628