

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

2208

NOV 28 1989

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dodge County Courthouse
other names/site number DD05-E6

2. Location

street & number 435 N Park Ave N/A not for publication
city, town Fremont N/A vicinity
state Nebraska code NE county Dodge code 053 zip code 68025

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: County Courthouses of Nebraska
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

James A. Hanson
Signature of certifying official

November 17, 1989
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See cont. sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.

Patrick Andrews

1/10/90

removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Jan Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Government/courthouse

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Government/courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone

roof other

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

[X] See continuation sheet, section 7, page 1.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/government

Architecture

Period of Significance

1917-39

Significant Dates

N/A

1917-18

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

A.H. Dyer Co.

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

[X] See continuation sheet, section 8, page 1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

[X] See continuation sheet, section 9, page 1.

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 # _____

- Primary location of additional data:
- State historic preservation office
 - Other state agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property 1.5 acres

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>14</u> <u>7</u> <u>10</u> <u>10</u> <u>10</u> <u>18</u> <u>10</u> <u>4</u> <u>15</u> <u>18</u> <u>19</u> <u>16</u> <u>19</u> <u>10</u>	B	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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	Zone Easting Northing		Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet, section 10, page 1.

Verbal Boundary Description

[X] See continuation sheet, section 10, page 1.

Boundary Justification

[X] See continuation sheet, section 10, page 1.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Barbara Beving Long, consultant		
organization	Four Mile Research Co.	date	November 8, 1989
street & number	3140 Easton Boulevard	telephone	(515) 266-4964
city or town	Des Moines	state	Iowa zip code 50317

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Built in 1917-18, the Dodge County Courthouse is a good, largely unaltered example of the Property Type, County Citadel. Identifying features include: rectangular shape, centered entrance, costly materials, distinctive ornamentation, Classical Revival stylistic influence, provision for fireproof storage, and impression of a government building representing modernity, simplicity, strength, and prosperity. In addition, the courthouse has other County Citadel characteristics: flat roof, appearance of a raised basement, and designed by an architect. It is the first of six entirely stone-faced County Citadels built between 1917 and 1930 across the state, a subgroup of the property type. The impressive size, mass, and materials of the courthouse work together to mitigate the effect of alterations.

The Dodge County Courthouse is a three story building that also has partial attic space tucked behind the parapet. Access from the four entrances is directly onto the first floor. All entries are centered on their respective facades, and the east pavilion is the primary entrance. The rear or west facade continues the materials of the other sides but lacks some of the ornamentation and was intended to be the back of the building. With the exception of a low granite base for the raised basement, the building is faced with Bedford limestone.

Centered pavilions project above the parapet line, giving a certain strength to the design. The parapet has a decorative moulding that is slightly pedimented at the center. Immense simple smooth round engaged columns extend for the first and second stories and further call attention to the pavilions. Rather simple entrances with flat moulding (and a slight pediment above), dentils, small rosettes, and simple squared pilasters are tucked beneath the engaged columns.

Elements of the Classical Revival style displayed here include the symmetrical arrangement, monumental proportions, smooth stone surface, unadorned parapets, unenriched entablature, and both rusticated and ashlar finish. A moulded cornice with modillions provides a unifying horizontal line. The deeply rusticated basement contrasts notably with the smooth stone above. Similarly, stone voussoirs that top first floor windows contrast with the simple window treatment above them.

Four bays of windows flank the main pavilion, which is five bays wide. The 66x132' building is unusually long and narrow, and only one bay of windows flanks the five-bay side pavilions (narrower than the five bays of the front). Window treatment within the pavilions is somewhat more detailed than elsewhere above the foundation and features sills with

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small consoles and plain stone panels between the second and third stories. The window and walls that are between the engaged columns are slightly recessed from the end bays of the pavilions.

Entry to the first floor is through a small vestibule on the east facade but directly onto a long corridor on the north and south facades. On the west a minor entry vestibule is tucked behind the staircase. County offices such as the treasurer's and clerk's offices and the supervisors' meeting room are located on the second story. Vault placement and size is variable. The 35x50' district courtroom occupies the southwest corner of the third floor at the end of the hallway.

Exterior alterations include: replacement windows that have a row of glass block on either side of them, small metal fire stairs on the north facade, concrete ramp to allow access by the handicapped on the south side, attic windows enclosed on east facade, and the Judicial Center addition. This large four-story addition is connected to the courthouse by a second story enclosed walkway and is thus offset from the building. It occupies over a half block at the west or back of the courthouse, is faced with red brick, and has stone trim with of classical inspiration.

Built in 1986, the Judicial Center contains the jail and courts for the county. In the courthouse the former district courtroom has been converted to a meeting room for the Board of Supervisors and has therefore been considerably changed with new ceilings, lighting, and wall coverings. Hallways have fluorescent lighting and also exposed conduits in them. The Ladies' Rest Room has been made smaller. Original features include grey marble wainscoting and stairs, ceramic tile flooring in tan, black, and white, and elaborate plaster mouldings in four patterns.

The courthouse is located off-center on a half-block site just east of the principal commercial street of Fremont. Commercial and related land use, including a low-scale parking garage, face the courthouse. No objects other than a simple flagpole (not counted for this nomination) occupy the site. Concrete walks lead directly to the three public entrances, and pleasingly curved walkways also lead to the main or east entrance.

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The Dodge County Courthouse is architecturally significant (Criterion C) and also historically significant (Criterion A) for its association with politics and local government. The property derives its historic significance as the focal point for the administration of local government and institutions in Dodge County. It is a good example of public architecture in the community and contains good examples of design features and facilities distinctive to its design and use as a courthouse.

As a fine example of the County Citadel, the courthouse contains design features and facilities distinctive to its design and use (such as fireproof vaults), has a rectangular shape, centered entrance, costly materials, distinctive ornamentation, and Classical Revival stylistic influence. Elements of the design combine effectively to convey the impression of a government building representing modernity, simplicity, strength, and prosperity, also features of the County Citadel. It is the first of six entirely stone-faced County Citadels built between 1917 and 1930 across the state, an important subgroup of the Property Type.

The Period of Significance is 1917, when construction began, to 1939, when the "fifty year rule" takes effect. The Dodge County Courthouse is being nominated as an example of the Property Type, County Courthouses of Nebraska (County Citadel) of the Context, County Government in Nebraska, 1854-1941, from the Multiple Property Submission, County Courthouses of Nebraska.

Dodge County is one county west of the Missouri River, and the Platte River forms its southern boundary. With these geographic advantages, the county was among the early settlement areas in the state. Settlers from Des Moines, Iowa staked a claim at Fremont, the present county seat, in August 1856, the year after the county was established.

Fontenelle was named temporary county seat, but Fremont won the county seat designation in 1860, apparently in an election. Fontenelle backers continued to lobby for the county seat until 1867. By 1867, Fremont had had rail service for three years, perhaps a factor in Fremont's ascendancy at the expense of Fontenelle in the county seat wars.

Also in 1867 the county built the first courthouse, a two-story brick building, on the present courthouse site. Unlike some other pre-Civil War communities in Nebraska, Fremonters did not allocate an entire block for courthouse use nor did they plat the town to have commercial buildings surrounding the courthouse site. The courthouse was located

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on one end of the half-block site just off of and facing away from the main commercial street.

The Union Pacific Railroad connected Fremont with outside markets and provided an important economic boost beginning in 1864. Other lines also entered the city, and by 1880 population stood at over 3,000 people, up from 1,199 the previous decade. Fremont enjoyed an important rail-fueled period of economic growth between 1870 and 1890, and population topped 6,700 in 1890.

The 1867 courthouse suffered the double blow of wind storm damage in 1884 and a severe fire on December 31, 1887. Dodge County communities seized upon the need for a new courthouse to question whether a new county seat might be useful too. According to a 1905 booklet, eleven towns competed for the county seat designation in the early 1880s. Fremont is located in the southeast corner of the county, and rival communities likely used this lack of centrality as an issue in the contest.

Despite these onslaughts, Fremont retained the county seat. County residents approved a \$50,000 bond issue in 1888 for a new courthouse, and the City of Fremont gave an additional \$10,000. The second courthouse, a large brick and stone County Capitol, was dedicated October 4, 1890. Like its predecessor, however, it was a victim of fire, on December 5, 1915. The building was almost a complete loss.

The third and present Dodge County Courthouse was built on the same site as the others. Voters approved a \$100,000 bond issue on June 20, 1916, and the county had an additional \$40,000 from insurance on the old building.

The county board selected a local architectural firm, A.H. Dyer Company, to design the building. (No other information is known about the architect.) They also visited courthouses in Nebraska and Iowa to see the latest in courthouse design. On January 24, 1917, Olson & Johnson of Missoula, Montana, was chosen to be general contractor.

Construction plans took place during the uncertainties of World War I, and there were likely some delays in obtaining construction materials. On April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson declared war against Germany, and the nation went on a wartime footing. Formal dedication ceremonies were held October 19, 1918, just before the Armistice ending the war.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show the increase in size over the decades of the courthouse buildings that served the county. Also increased was the cost of construction, and the present courthouse cost \$223,239,

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including all furnishings. It replaced a \$50,553 building. Among the special features was the Ladies' Rest Room at the north end of the main entry vestibule, which featured "wicker furniture and leather cushions of the best quality, and Moquette carpet." The facility was "the result of the persistent efforts of the Fremont Commercial club," according to the dedication program.

The courthouse was a thoroughly modern facility. Ceilings were tinted "in distemper colors," while the ornamental plaster was colored "in Tiffany blends" (all done by George C. Campen of Fremont). Two Otis automatic elevators provided service for the public and for prisoners and freight. Of course, such an up-to-date building was wired for electricity, and fixtures were "of the latest artistic type."

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Long, Barbara Beving. "County Courthouses of Nebraska." Multiple Property Submission. 1989.

Nebraska State Historical Society. Photo Collection. #M281-955, M281-954.

Works Progress Administration. Survey of County Courthouse Records. 1936. NeSHS Archives. Dodge County.

Tracings. Dodge County Courthouse. A.H. Dyer Co. Filed with county February 13, 1917.

"Formal Dedication Ceremonies of the New County Court House and Jail at Fremont, Nebraska." October 19, 1918. (Quoted.)

Fremont, Nebraska. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. 1892, 1920.

Fremont Illustrated. Fremont: W.P. Fritz, 1905.

Pictorial Story of Fremont, Nebraska on the Lincoln Highway. Fremont: Martin & Co., 1921.

Fremont Centennial Association. "The 'Prairie Venture.' Fremont, Nebraska Centennial History, 1856-1956."

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, Dodge County Courthouse, occupies Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and the west half of lots 3 and 4 of Block 155 of the Original Plat of Fremont and is roughly 260x260' in size.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the half-block that has historically been associated with the property as well as the lots that the Judicial Center addition to the courthouse now occupies.