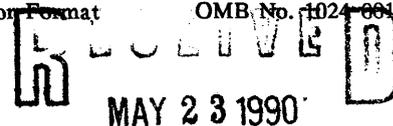


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Franklin County Courthouse
other names/site number FR03-037

2. Location

street & number 15th Ave bet N and O Sts N/A not for publication
city, town Franklin N/A vicinity
state Nebraska code NE county Franklin code 061 zip code 68939

3. Classification

| | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>1</u> | <u> </u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-state | <input type="checkbox"/> site | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | | <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
Nebraska State Historical Society
Date May 14, 1990

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 _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Beth Boland 7/5/90
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

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 brick

roof asphalt

other stone

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)

Architecture

Politics/government

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

1925-40

1925-26

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Berlinghof, George A.

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.

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Section number 7 Page 1

Built in 1925-26, the Franklin 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 the impression of a government building representing modernity, simplicity, strength, and prosperity. In addition, the courthouse has other County Citadel characteristics: flat roof and designed by an architect. The property is also a good and late example of the work of Nebraska architect George A. Berlinghof, representing the evolution of his designs. The courthouse shares certain design features with courthouses he designed for Howard and Greeley Counties in the 1910s.

The Franklin County Courthouse is rectangular and consists of two stories plus an attic space (storage plus the extended courtroom ceiling) set upon a prominent raised basement. Three broad stone steps provide access to the principal entrance, which is recessed on the east facade. Inside the east entrance are ramps leading to the basement and steps up to the first floor. The rear or west entrance opens directly onto the basement level.

Limestone is used for the foundation and also trim, especially at the east entrance and along the parapet. The stonework contrasts with golden tan brick and provides an important unifying element. It is used for the rather broad and smooth water table, window surrounds combining first and second story windows, distinctive door surround, moulded bases and capitals of shallow brick pilasters, the cornice, and parapet. Rusticated brick set upon a small stone foundation provides a sturdy base for the composition.

All four facades have slightly recessed sections of windows that are located between brick corner bays. Since the east facade is the primary entrance, it has more elaborate detail: brick pilasters, consoles, foliated panels, plaques with swags, and shields.

The east entry steps of the 96x68' courthouse lead to a very small corridor on the first floor which has offices leading off all sides. The district courtroom occupies most of the west end of the second floor.

The courthouse is a fine example of the County Citadel courthouse exhibiting Classical Revival stylistic elements. These include monumental proportions, parapet, large pilasters, attic story, symmetric arrangement, and such classical elements as consoles, swags, and shields.

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The interior retains a number of original elements, especially the spacious courtroom. Important elements are the original high ceilings, elaborate plasterwork including a cornice with acroteria, medallions, and egg-and-dart courses, paired squared pilasters with fanciful capitals, low grey marble wainscoting, broad plaster ceiling beams decorated with an acanthus pattern, and three large lights hanging from ornate plasterwork. Hallways have grey marble wainscoting, terazzo floors with border patterns, and golden oak woodwork.

Interior modifications include some dropped ceilings (which are appropriately set back from the windows), replacement lighting, new paneling in some rooms, some new counters, and a sliding chair on the staircase to provide access for the handicapped to upper floors.

Exterior alterations consist of three-part replacement windows with opaque panels, and a metal and glass front door. An historic photograph at the Nebraska State Historical Society reveals how little the building has changed. Original windows were paired, as now, and had rather large upper transoms to form a two-part arrangement.

The Franklin County Courthouse is centered on a full courthouse square just north of the commercial area of Franklin. Houses are all around the square. The town's principal street runs along the east end of the lot, and a former hotel is a half block south. The west or rear portion of the site is now an asphalt parking lot, and a small fenced prisoner exercise yard and small utility shed are located there. No prominent objects or buildings are on the site, and the exercise yard and shed were not counted for this nomination.

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The Franklin 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 a focal point for the administration of local government and institutions in the county. It is a fine example of public architecture and contains good examples of design features and facilities distinctive to its design and use as a courthouse. In addition, the property is an interesting late example of the work of an important Nebraska architect, George A. Berlinghof, representing the evolution of his designs.

As a good example of the County Citadel Property Type, 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, and prosperity, also features of the County Citadel.

The Period of Significance is 1925, when construction began, to 1940, when the "fifty year rule" takes effect. The Franklin 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.

Franklin County is located midway in the south tier of Nebraska counties, on the Kansas state line. Various groups made early, often temporary settlements in the area beginning in 1870, and the following year the county was organized. County residents spent considerable time and energy trying to establish good candidates for the county seat. Waterloo briefly held that designation, as did a community named Franklin City, but in 1874 Bloomington won a county seat election.

In 1878 railroad officials announced plans to build a line that would pass through Franklin County. A new Franklin was among the rail stops platted along the line. In 1880 a group of Congregationalists established Franklin Academy in the town, which is located in a slightly more central spot than Bloomington. The Academy was a success and by 1902 there were three buildings on the campus. (It closed in 1922.)

Franklin supporters rekindled the county seat controversy in the late 1910s and successfully challenged Bloomington. In 1920 voters approved

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the change, and Franklin became the county seat. Progress on constructing the present courthouse was slow but steady. By 1923, when the county continued to rent a building for courthouse use, county officials acquired the courthouse site for \$5,000. They also were accumulating a building fund, which had reached \$25,000 by January of 1923. The goal was to raise around \$100,000 by levying a countywide tax.

By early in 1925 sufficient monies had been collected, and the county advertised for architects. The plans of George A. Berlinghof, a well-known Lincoln architect, were selected and put out for bids. Vrana Brothers of Omaha were selected to be general contractor on April 21, 1925, and construction proceeded through the summer of 1925. On March 9, 1926 the county opened bids for the janitorship of the building, an indication that construction was essentially complete. On June 22, 1926, county commissioners passed a resolution stating that "certain defects in construction" should be corrected by July 15. The defects were unspecified in county records, but the matter was resolved by the end of 1926.

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

Acreage of property 1.1 acres

UTM References

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1 4 | 5 0 3 9 4 0 | 4 4 3 8 3 8 0 | B | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| | 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 December 31, 1989 |
| street & number | 3140 Easton Boulevard telephone (515) 266-4964 |
| city or town | Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50317 |

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- Long, Barbara Beving. "County Courthouses of Nebraska." Multiple Property Submission. 1989.
- Nebraska State Historical Society. Photo Collection. #M281-964.
- Tracings. Franklin County Courthouse. George A. Berlinghof. March 4, 1925.
- Franklin County. Commissioners Record. Books 7 and 8.
- Franklin County Historical Society, comp. Historical Highlights of Franklin County. Campbell: C&L Publishing Co., 1967.
- Works Progress Administration. Survey of County Courthouse Records. 1936. NeSHS Archives. Franklin County.
- "Franklin County." Who's Who in Nebraska. Lincoln: Nebraska Press Association, 1940.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, the Franklin County Courthouse, occupies all of block 7 of People's Addition of Franklin and is roughly 225x225' in size.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city block that has historically been associated with the property.