

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Ottawa County Courthouse

other names/site number _____

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2. Location

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street & number 102 East Central not for publication N/A

city or town Miami vicinity N/A

state Oklahoma code OK county Ottawa code 115

zip code 74354

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Bob Schubeur 1-20-04
Signature of certifying official Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

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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
- removed from the National Register

 other (explain): _____

Elson H. Beall 3/3/04

Jan
Signature of Keeper Date
of Action

=====
5. Classification
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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u> objects
<u>5</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) County Courthouses of Oklahoma (Thematic)

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6. Function or Use
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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>courthouse</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>government office</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>correctional facility</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>courthouse</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>government office</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls BRICK
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1952-1954

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8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
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Significant Dates _____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder Koberling, Joseph, architect
W.D. Barger Construction Company, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property 2 acres MOL

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>332820</u>	<u>4082340</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

N/A See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian, for Miami Main Street

organization ARCH Consulting date November 2003

street & number 364 County Road 1230 telephone 405/459-6200

city or town Pocasset state OK zip code 73079
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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ottawa County Commissioners

street & number 102 E. Central, Ste. 202 telephone 918/542-9408

city or town Miami state OK zip code 74354

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SUMMARY

The Ottawa County Courthouse is a four-story, concrete and white brick, Modern style building with a basement. Although the original, red brick, 1916 building with a half-circular projection on the south side remains standing inside the existing building, the current exterior of concrete on the first floor topped by three floors of white brick dates to 1952-1954. Joseph Koberling of the Tulsa architectural firm Koberling, Brandborg and Roads, AIA, designed the new edifice and the local W. D. Barger Construction Company undertook the construction work. The roof of the building is flat with the original configured fourth floor noticeably setback. The building's windows are metal, four- and five-pane, hopper and the doors are predominately, nonhistoric, double, glazed slab with fixed transoms. From a distance, the building does not appear to be highly decorative with the pilasters separating the vertically aligned windows being the most obvious feature. Most of the pilasters have concrete bases and capitals with the shaft being white brick. In certain areas of the building, the pilasters do not have the concrete bases while some do not have either the concrete base or capital. Other decorative details include stylized, projected, concrete, main entrances with flat concrete roofs; twenty-two, small, bas-relief, concrete panels systemically placed above all first floor windows on the north, west and south elevations; three small, bas-relief, concrete panels on the south elevation between the second and third floors; vertical brick projections separating all of the second and third floor windows composed of double sets of four soldier bricks with a fifth set of soldier bricks above separated by the regular course of brick; a continuous concrete water table on the lower portion of the first floor and a continuous concrete dripstone course between the first floor and second floor; a continuous soldier brick band which encircles the building immediately above the third floor and serves as the third floor window headers; and, a concrete coping around the three different levels of the building.

Overall, the courthouse retains an excellent degree of integrity, including location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. The most notable alteration to the exterior of the building has been the construction of a metal fire escape on the east elevation, technically the rear of the building. Added in the mid-1980s to provide a means of emergency egress for prisoners held in the fourth floor jail, the fire escape is enclosed with metal panels and are not in scale with the rest of the building. However, due to its rear location and see-through construction, the fire escape has a minimal impact on the integrity of the building. Other changes to the building consist of new metal, glazed, slab doors with matching transoms at the

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entrances, removal of the historic concrete planters flanking the west side entry and the erection of a large metal antennae on the roof.

Typical of courthouses in Oklahoma, the Ottawa County Courthouse encompasses one entire city block. One building and five objects have been placed on the courthouse grounds. These include the free-standing, one-story, white brick jail constructed about fifteen feet south of the courthouse's south elevation in 1996; the erection at an unknown but fairly recent time of a centrally located, modern sign which currently notes the town's status as a nationally certified Main Street community and is placed just off the north side of the sidewalk which encircles the outside edge of the courthouse block; the construction of three flag poles and a black marble Veterans Memorial on the northeast corner of the courthouse block in 1988; the replica Statue of Liberty statue with its stone triangular planter on the northwest corner of the block which was put in place by the Boy Scouts of America in 1950; the two Spanish War cannons located to the immediate southeast of the statue which were placed on the courthouse grounds in 1948; and, the erection of a flagpole directly in front of the building which dates to 1940. Due to insufficient age, the new jail is included in the resource count as a noncontributing building. The War Memorial and Main Street sign are considered noncontributing objects as they also were not present during the period of significance. The remaining objects, including the Liberty Statue and planter, the cannons and flagpole, are included as contributing since they were all present during the period of significance. Overall, only the new jail has a discernible impact on the courthouse's integrity of setting. However, due to its freestanding location, compatible building material and smaller scale, the jail does not have a significant detrimental impact on the ability of the Ottawa County Courthouse to convey its significance.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Ottawa County Courthouse is an unusually shaped building. The fourth floor is nearly obscured on three sides by its setback. Merely clad with white brick and new windows in the 1950s exterior work, the fourth floor retains its smaller proportions dating to the original 1916 courthouse. Projecting significantly away from the fourth floor, the third and second floors are nearly identical on the north, east and west elevations. The south elevation at this level contains the distinctive half-circle projection which highlighted the original building. To blend this elevation with the others, the half-circle was covered with white brick and square towers were constructed to flank the circular projection. Despite this, the south elevation does not really

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emulate the large, flat, rectangular design which characterizes the other elevations.

The ground floor of the building is constructed of reinforced concrete, the only floor to be so, with a concrete dripstone course encircling the building and dividing the white brick from the similarly-colored lower reinforced concrete. Further differentiating the first floor from the others are the one-story, square, corner sections. These sections balance the design of the upper floors by completing the geometric massing of the building. Although original to the 1950s design, the corner sections are distinctive from the rest of the ground floor with a tall concrete entablature which extends above the continuous concrete dripstone dividing the first and second floors.

All three of the stepped levels of the building are topped with flat, built-up roofs and edged with concrete copings. A large metal antennae projects from the center of the uppermost roof. On the junction of the south and east walls, there is a chimney-like projection from the third floor. Centrally located on the north side of the third floor roof is a white brick box which likely houses mechanical equipment. The foundation of the building is concrete. The building also has a partial basement. The original 1916 courthouse had a small basement on the southeast side. The 1950s expansion added additional space on the same side but under the new construction.

Due to the extreme setback of the fourth floor, this level of the building is hardly visible from street level and, thus, only barely appears in photographs of the building. Like the other levels of the building, the fourth floor roof has a concrete coping. The windows in this area of the building are metal, one-over-one, hung with metal bars on the inside. Due to its obscurity and the lack of blueprints for that level of the building, the fenestration pattern is not clear. The cell areas on the west side of the building do not have any windows, although the women's cell area on the east side has three windows. Also on the east side of the fourth floor, there is a nonhistoric entry located towards the north which connects to the mid-1980s fire escape. The office area on the north side of the fourth floor has more windows, approximately six. The south side of the fourth floor has no windows with the interior of the half-circular area being part of the historic, oval-shaped, third floor courtroom.

Unlike the majority of buildings which front onto one street, the Ottawa County Courthouse was designed to front onto three sides, north onto East Central Avenue, west onto Southeast A Street and south onto Southeast 1st Avenue. Although not equal in size, the north and west elevations have matching,

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dominant, central, double entries and face onto the main business district of the town. Also fronting onto commercial buildings, the south elevation contains an identical central entry, as well as the separate, less substantial Sheriff's entry. The east elevation, the only one to face residential buildings, was clearly designed to function as the back of the building. Featuring no entry porches, the east elevation also does not have the decorative concrete panels which ornament the first floor of the other elevations.

Despite the similarities between the north and west elevations, the north wall is clearly the facade. This is reinforced by the current landscaping which includes historic planters flanking the entry and other shrubs ornamenting only the north elevation. Like the other walls, the north elevation is composed of three sections consisting of the flanking one-story projections and the central three-story main area. The flanking one-story sections on the north elevation are nearly identical with a wide concrete entablature which extends above the dripstone course encircling the building. The wall below the entablature is smooth and contains only two single windows and, on the east projection only, a single entry. Like the rest of first floor, the windows are metal, four-pane, hopper and the concrete sills are incorporated into the continuous water table separating the foundation and the upper wall. Unlike the other windows, the windows in the one-story sections have slightly projected, flat, concrete surrounds. The entry located on the north wall of the east section consists of a single, metal, glazed, slab door with a light directly above. The entry does not have a sheltering roof.

Above the one-story sections, the wall recedes significantly. On both the second and third floors of this corner area are two single, metal, five-pane, hopper windows. Like the main central portion of the north elevation, the windows are horizontally separated by a brick, slightly projected pilaster but the pilasters do not have concrete caps or bases. Instead the pilasters are flush at the top and are capped by the continuous soldier brick band that encircles the building and serves as the third floor window headers. The second and third floor windows are separated by two vertical brick projections composed of double sets of four soldier bricks with the fifth set of bricks above separated by the regular course of brick. Only in these sections of the building are there small square vents above the third floor windows. Each vent is decoratively outlined with soldier bricks.

The symmetrical central section of the north elevation consists of nine openings on the first floor and ten openings on the second and third floors.

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The nine openings on the first floor consist of four windows flanking a double central entry. The windows match the four-pane, metal, hopper windows found elsewhere on the first floor. Above each window is a rectangular, concrete, bas-relief panel which matches the dimensions of the window below. Each panel contains a different scene related to the various public functions of the county government. The central, projected entry contains a nonhistoric, double, metal, glazed slab door with a large metal transom. Flanking both sides of the entry are historic concrete planters which flare out past the adjacent window. The side walls of the entry consist of three pilasters, each projected slightly further than the one behind and topped by a flared concrete capital. On each side wall is a centrally placed, historic, black metal and glass, stylized light fixture. Rising above the dripstone course which extends the length of the wall, the entry porch extends to just below the second floor window sill with a flush, double, concrete band marking the top and connecting the two outermost pilasters. Set immediately above the door opening is a projected, flat, concrete roof which features rounded corners and two incised horizontal bands. In the resulting rectangular area between the projected roof and top of the entry porch is a rectangular concrete panel with the inscription "Ottawa County Courthouse."

The upper two floors of the central section consist of symmetrically placed windows separated by projected pilasters. The pilasters are composed of white brick shafts and concrete bases and capitals. The bases of the pilasters emerge from the concrete dripstone course separating the first and second floors and extend to the level of the window sill. The capitals start at the same height as the brick header of the third floor windows and extend only partially up the remainder of the wall. The identical windows in this area are five-pane, metal, hopper with concrete sills. The second floor windows have a flat soldier brick headers, matching all of the other second floor windows. Between each second and third floor windows are two vertical brick projections composed of double sets of four soldier bricks with a fifth set of bricks above separated by the regular course of brick. The third floor is topped with a concrete coping.

Although not as long, the west elevation was originally designed nearly identical to the north elevation. The one-story sections flanking the main section are identical to the west section of the north elevation with only two single, four-pane, metal, hopper windows. A minor difference between the two one-story sections is that the north one-story section of the west elevation has an historic drain sprout, located towards the south side. Above the one-

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story sections, the recessed walls match the fenestration pattern and decorative detail of the corresponding area of the north elevation. Unlike the north elevation, the central portion of the west elevation contains only eight openings on the second and third floor and seven on the first floor. The west elevation's first floor is treated the same as the north elevation, including bas-relief panels above each window illustrating the various functions of the building and a prominent central entry. The west entry differs from the north entry only in the removal of the historic planters and the inscription above the flat entry roof which reads "Liberty/Equality/Fraternity." The second and third floors of the main section of the west elevation also match the north elevation in fenestration pattern and decorative detail.

The south elevation of the Ottawa County Courthouse is the most notably different wall. As constructed in 1916, the courthouse featured a prominent half-circular projection on this elevation which contained the oval-shaped, third floor, district courtroom. In the 1950s, this half-circular wall was incorporated into the overall rectilinear design by the construction of two square towers above the first floor on either side. The rounded central area, which extends into the fourth floor in this area, was not really obscured, merely covered with white brick. This central circular part of the south elevation contains several different features from other sections of the building, including a wide entablature above the third floor windows. The entablature features a concrete architrave, a plain but wide brick frieze and a narrow concrete cornice. The third floor windows are an atypical, seven-pane, metal, hopper and both the second and third floor windows are double. The pilasters separating the windows have concrete capitals but, unlike the majority of pilasters, do not have concrete bases. Additionally, between the vertical projections ornamenting the wall between the second and third floor, there are small, raised, concrete panels consisting of eagles flanking the scales of justice. The square towers adjoining the circular projection have two each of the typical, five-pane, metal, hopper windows separated by pilasters on each floor. The pilasters on the square towers do not have concrete bases or capitals. Similar to the rest of the building, the towers have the vertical brick projections separating the third and second floor windows and the continuous brick band immediately above the third floor windows.

The first floor of the south elevation adheres to the rectilinear pattern of the rest of the building. The one-story sections on either side match in detail that of the north one-story section on the west elevation, including the

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drain sprouts located towards the inside of the wall. Like the north elevation, the central portion of the south elevation consists of four openings flanking a central prominent entry. The entry matches the north entry, including the historic concrete planters and light fixtures. Also matching the north elevation, each opening has a concrete bas-relief panel above it. The panels on this side of the building depict law and order scenes, including the "Justice for All" above the main door, the scales of justice and administering the oath of office on the west side and Sheriff's officers with horses on the east side. Differentiating the south elevation's first floor is the single entry located symmetrically towards the east side. Historically providing direct access to the Sheriff's Office, the entry has a simple flat roof that matches the detail of the other entry roofs but is smaller and placed notably lower. Flanking the Sheriff's nonhistoric, metal, glazed slab door are plain, historic, metal, light fixtures. The panel above the door, in position with the other panels above the windows, reads simply "Sheriff" with a large raised star.

The east elevation of the Ottawa County Courthouse was clearly designed as the back of the building. While the fenestration pattern and decorative details are identical to that of the other elevations, the east elevation contains only a single unadorned entry in the south one-story section which is now covered and contains a nonhistoric air conditioning unit. Above this, on the roof of the one-story section, several other nonhistoric heating and cooling units have been added. Directly under the two windows of the one-story section is a small, square, basement opening which is protected on the three exposed sides by a pipe railing. Immediately north of the one-story section is the exterior basement stairs which has a pipe railing along the two outermost sides. Immediately above the stairs is one blind window on the first floor. Also differentiating the east elevation is the large metal fire escape which extends from the setback fourth floor to the ground. Added in the mid-1980s to allow emergency egress for prisoners only, the fire escape does not open onto any other levels and is completely enclosed with metal panels to prevent escape. The fire escape is clearly out-of-scale with the rest of the building but due to its location, different materials and see-through design, it does not compromise the building's integrity. North of the fire escape, located on the far north wall of the one-story section and adjacent to a modern Reserved Parking sign, is the historic, concrete, Masonic cornerstone, laid on 21 May 1954.

Because of the courthouse's historic association with the entire block on which it is situated, the boundaries for the building include the whole block.

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However, the historic courthouse block contains several resources besides the courthouse building. This includes a freestanding, one-story, Contemporary style, white brick, flat-roofed County Jail erected about fifteen feet south of the courthouse's south elevation. The jail has a row of four, metal, one-over-one, hung windows and a recessed, double, metal, glazed, paneled doors with sidelights on the east elevation; a single, metal, slab door with sidelights and shed covering on the south elevation; a metal overhead door on the west elevation; and, two single, metal, slab doors with sidelights and shed coverings on the north elevation, the eastern one of which has two flanking, metal, one-over-one, hung windows. The jail extends nearly the full width of the block and is located in what was historically a parking lot. Off the southeast corner of the jail is a large, square, brick and concrete sign inscribed with the function of the building. Due to its recent construction date, the jail is a noncontributing resource. However, as the jail is not attached to the courthouse, is constructed of a matching material, adheres to the rectilinear design of the courthouse and is only one-story in height, it does not greatly impact the integrity of the courthouse.

Other resources on the courthouse grounds include a contributing, replica-sized Statue of Liberty with brick planter, located on the northwest corner of the block. Placed by the local Boy Scouts of America in 1950, the statue was in place when the Courthouse underwent its transformation in 1952-1954. Southeast of the statue and planter are two Spanish War cannons. The cannons were brought to the courthouse grounds in 1948 and, thus, are also contributing resources. Centrally located in front of the courthouse, mid-way up the sidewalk, is a contributing metal flagpole, erected in 1940. North of the flagpole, near the sidewalk that encircles the perimeter of the block, is a modern noncontributing sign which currently reads "Miami/Nationally Certified/Main Street Community." Opposite the Statue of Liberty, on the northeast corner of the block, is the marble Veteran's Memorial, dedicated in 1988 to Ottawa County's veterans. In addition to the three-part marble slab, there are three flagpoles that are part of the memorial; due to their obvious connection and recent construction date, the poles and marble slab are considered one noncontributing object. There are also four wood benches situated in two landscaped groups on the north side of the block in front of the courthouse. The benches are not included within the resource count as they are of an indiscriminate age and they are not necessarily permanent fixtures. Overall, the contributing and noncontributing objects on the courthouse block are of such smaller scale so as not to significantly impact the ability of the building to convey its significance.

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ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

The only addition of note to the Ottawa County Courthouse was the mid-1980s construction of the metal fire escape on the east elevation. Although out-of-proportion to the building, the fire escape does not the affect the ability of the courthouse to impart its historic appearance or character. Alterations to the building, including the addition of a roof antennae, replacing of the doors with modern, metal, glazed, slab doors and removal of the concrete planters on the west entry only, have not greatly impacted the courthouse's integrity. Other minor alterations to the original courthouse block have been described above. Only the new jail has any meaningful impact on the courthouse's integrity, Due to its smaller scale, matching building material and independence from the historic building, the jail does not significantly impact the courthouse's integrity. Overall, the Ottawa County Courthouse retains its integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association to a remarkable degree.

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SUMMARY

The Ottawa County Courthouse is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with local government and politics. The courthouse is the identifying building associated with all facets of county government in Ottawa County. The Ottawa County Courthouse is also eligible under Criterion C for its architectural significance. An excellent example of a Modern style county courthouse in Oklahoma; the local landmark building is also notable for its total inclusion of the 1916 courthouse into the current building.

The building's brief period of significance, 1952-1954, reflects the construction of the existing facade. Because of the lack of visible elements, the original courthouse, constructed in 1916-1917 and fully incorporated into the interior of the existing building, is not included within the period of significance. Despite the construction work which expanded the building, the offices at the courthouse continued to function as close to normal as possible throughout the period of significance. Although still in use as the county courthouse, the end date of significance conforms to the completion of construction of the existing exterior and the National Register's current fifty-year mark.

This nomination for the Ottawa County Courthouse relates to the thematic "County Courthouses of Oklahoma" nomination, completed in 1984. The thematic nomination included only those county courthouses built prior to 1935. Construction on the existing exterior of the Ottawa County Courthouse began in 1952 and was completed in 1954. Despite the different periods of significance, the thematic nomination provides an applicable context for the Ottawa County Courthouse under both Criteria A and C.

The Ottawa County Courthouse is currently a threatened resource. Due to several fire and safety violations, the State Fire Marshall is requiring the county commissioners to bring the building up to code, including an emergency lighting system, hard-wired smoke detection system and periodic checks on the building's west side subsidence problem by a qualified engineer. Citing excessive cost to rehabilitate the courthouse and a general lack of available space to adequately meet current needs, the commissioners have recently sought to demolish the existing building and build an entirely new courthouse on the same block. However, Ottawa County voters did not approve the new construction project during the 18 November 2003 election. Although the vote relieves the immediate critical danger for the building, the courthouse remains threatened

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as the county commissioners are still pursuing options that would include demolition of the existing building. The issue remains extremely sensitive at this time and those who are working to preserve the courthouse deserve commendation.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Located in the far northeastern corner of Oklahoma, Ottawa County was organized as a governmental/political unit as part of Oklahoma's statehood in 1907. Covering 477 miles, Ottawa County is the only Oklahoma County to be adjacent to both the Kansas and Missouri state lines. The county was named for the Ottawa tribe, one of the many Native American groups relocated to this area by the federal government during the nineteenth century. Originally part of the Cherokee Nation, the far northeast corner of Indian Territory was given to the Quapaws, Senecas and a small band of Shawnees in the early 1830s. After the Civil War, surplus lands of the Quapaw, Seneca and Shawnees were given to several small tribes relocating from Kansas, including the Wyandots, Peorias, Miamis and Ottawas. These tribes then formed the Quapaw Agency. The lands of the tribes forming the Quapaw Agency were allotted between 1889 and 1892.¹

Previous to the end of allotment of the Quapaw Agency lands and approved by the Secretary of the Interior as required by federal law for land in Indian Territory, 588 acres of the Ottawa Indian Reservation was purchased by the Miami Townsite Company in 1891. The area was quickly surveyed and platted into lots, resulting in the town of Miami (pronounced My-am-uh). Like much of the rest of Oklahoma, Miami relied on the surrounding agricultural community for much of its economic well-being. However, Miami also benefitted greatly from the unique lead and zinc mining activities available in Ottawa County.

Although the presence of lead within the area was known from the earliest historical times, . . . , large scale mining interest in the area did not appear until the late 1870s. John Patrick McNaughton came to the Peoria reservation in search of mineral wealth in about 1877. Although finding abundant evidence of underground riches and entering into a leasing agreement with the Peoria tribe, McNaughton was restricted by the Secretary of the Interior to strictly prospecting for lead, not being allowed to mine or sell the mineral. Beginning in 1889, the federal government undertook allotment of the tribally-held lands

¹Arrell Morgan Gibson, Oklahoma: A History of Five Centuries, 2nd Ed (Norman, Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 149 and 195.

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of the Quapaw Agency. McNaughton immediately leased several thousand acres from Peoria allottees for mining purposes. However, lands within the former Quapaw Agency remained restricted by the federal government and the validity of McNaughtons leases were questioned. In a personal appeal to Congress, McNaughton was allowed to continue under the Treaty of February 23, 1867 which granted United States citizenship to the Peorias. In 1896, Congress passed a leasing bill which allowed five-year leases for land in what is now Ottawa County with another bill the following year which allowed ten-year leases.² Thus, the land of northeast Indian Territory could now be widely leased by lead and zinc mining interests.

Initially, much of the lead mining occurred around Peoria, near the Indian Territory/Missouri border. In 1897, however, an ...accidental discovery... shifted the mining activities to near Miami, Indian Territory. Twenty-two years after the first commercial lead mine was opened in Indian Territory, the last big strike in the Tri-State District was uncovered. Returning to Joplin following a disappointing drilling near Commerce, Oklahoma, a rig owned by the Picher Lead Company of Joplin get stuck near Tar Creek, north of Miami, in August 1914. Sinking a wildcat hole, the driller hit a rich deposit. The Picher Lead Company then leased 2,700 acres in the new field and, overnight, a new mining camp named after the company blossomed less than ten miles north of Miami.³

After 1915, ninety percent of the ore produced in the district came from the Picher Field. In 1918, seventeen million dollars worth of lead and zinc were mined and sold with the majority coming out of mines in a three mile radius of Picher. The price of ore dropped following the end of World War I but production continued relatively unabated. By 1925, mines in Ottawa County produced 103,359 tons of lead and 549,211 tons of zinc. In contrast, mines in southeast Kansas and southwest Missouri produced a combined total of 33,049 tons of lead and 256,839 tons of zinc for the same year. Overall, the district itself was the worlds largest producer of lead and zinc concentrates for over a century, from about 1850 to 1950, producing in excess of one billion dollars worth of product. Production within the district peaked in 1926 with 423,800 tons of zinc and 912,117 tons of lead being mined. In addition to arms and

²Velma Nieberding, The History of Ottawa County, (Marceline, Missouri: Walsworth Publishing Company), 59-64.

³Gibson, Oklahoma, 163-164. See also Arrell Morgan Gibson, Wilderness Bonanza: The Tri-State District of Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma, (Norman, Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 40.

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munitions, lead and zinc concentrates were used in toys, coins, roofing, surgical equipment, linoleum, interior paints, ceramics and pharmaceutical products, among a host of other items.⁴

Although lead and zinc are no longer mined in Ottawa County, the population changes of the county in the first seventy years of the twentieth century are largely reflective of the mining activities. County population stood at 12,827 at statehood with a modest increase of 2,886 by 1910 to reach 15,713. Within ten years and following the opening of the Picher Field, the number of residents in Ottawa County rose to 41,108, a gain of over 25,000 peoples. Declining slightly following the peak of production in the field, by 1930 Ottawa Countys population stood at 38,542. Over the trying decade of the 1930s, Ottawa County lost only 2,693 residents, bringing county population to 35,849 by 1940. Although lead and zinc production briefly picked up during World War II, the federal governments termination of their program for premium payments for production of strategic materials in 1947 continued the decline in economic conditions in Ottawa County. By 1950, county population had fallen to 32,218. Mining conditions continued to deteriorate in the 1950s as the rich ores were exhausted and the remaining low-grade minerals were more expensive to mine. Although lead and zinc mining continued in Ottawa County through the late 1960s, the county population reached a low of 28,301 in 1960. Following the cessation of mining in the county in the late 1960s, other industrial plants emerged which boosted the countys population in 1970 to 29,800 and allowed it to continue to moderately grow over the ensuing decades.⁵

Designated the county seat of Ottawa County in 1907, the city of Miami had ...set aside a valuable court house square, worth probably \$30,000... by 1915. The proposed block was previously reserved as a city park. Like many new counties in Oklahoma, Ottawa County utilized a rented courthouse and jail in the early years which cost the taxpayers about \$3,800 per year. Beginning in early July 1915, interested persons began circulating a petition asking the county commissioners to call a special election to vote bonds for the construction of a courthouse costing at least \$75,000. By the end of the month, nearly 800 residents endorsed the petition and the county commissioners

⁴Gibson, Wilderness Bonanza, 40, 170-171 and 266. See also Nieberding, History of Ottawa County, 32-33, 87.

⁵Oklahoma Almanac: Almanac Features Online Oklahoma County Pages, County Government in Oklahoma, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/almanac/counties.htm>, accessed 3 December 2003.

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requested the city of Miami place the deed for Block 96 of their city into escrow at the First National Bank of Fairland.⁶

Although an election was still in the future, Theodore Maenner, ...a skilled architect (and) member of the firm of Maenner and Senne of St. Louis..., was in Miami by 9 August 1915 investigating the possible needs of the county in the way of a building for courthouse purposes. Within two weeks, Maenner submitted drawings of an imposing courthouse that were to be used as ...simply a suggestion calculated to convey the economic advantages and the public convenience of a suitable court house. Shortly after this, E. P. Madorie of the Kansas City, Missouri, architectural firm Madorie & Birdsall also completed plans for a building. In addition to the drawing of the building, Madorie also completed a full set of blue prints which showed ...a model arranged jail structure for the top floor, offices and court rooms, vaults, special rooms for farmers and others to hold meetings in, rest rooms for the farmers wives..., in addition to a ...basement, well planned, with storage rooms, boiler room and space for other purposes. Both plans called for a Classically-styled, light-colored, four-story building.⁷

The county-wide special election was held on 28 September 1915. At a rate of almost five to one, the courthouse bonds were approved with 2,354 voting for and only 532 residents voting against the measure. The following month and as promised previous to the election, the county commissioners called a mass public meeting ...to discuss in a friendly way and make suggestions regarding plans and specifications for the new court house... on Saturday, 22 October 1915. In sum, the meeting resulted in Hearty expressions of confidence in the ability and integrity of the Board, as well as of the county surveyor..., and it was the sense of the meeting that the matter be left fully under their supervision....⁸

By early December 1915, Attorney General Freeling approved the sale of the bonds for construction of the courthouse to the firm of Hoehler, Cummings & Prudens. Additionally, the county commissioners selected the Oklahoma City architectural firm of Hare & Company as ...the architects whose plans suit best for the proposed court house and jail.... The plans for the new

⁶The Miami (Oklahoma) Record-Herald, 2 July 1915, 9 July 1915, 30 July 1915 and 10 September 1915.

⁷Ibid., 13 August 1915, 27 August 1915, 3 September 1915 and 10 September 1915.

⁸Ibid., 1 October 1915, 22 October 1915 and 29 October 1915.

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courthouse were approved on 18 January 1916 and the contractor contract was awarded to the Union Construction Company of Muskogee, Oklahoma, by the end of February 1916. At the same time, the plumbing and heating work was awarded to the O.K. Plumbing Company of Miami at a separate cost of \$5878.79. Although the newspaper noted the winning bid price of the building, without the jail, was \$61,000, they also stated the total price of the courthouse would exceed the \$75,000 bonds. The cost of the jail was estimated to be \$4,500, plus the cost of architectural fees of \$3,500, bringing the total to \$74,878.79. However, the newspaper notes a bid by J.J. Rooney, head of the Union Construction Company, at \$62,967. Using this figure, plus the other costs, would bring total cost above the approved \$75,000 to \$76,845.79.⁹

Construction on the courthouse was underway by mid-April 1916 with the Masons, amidst great ceremony, laying the cornerstone on the last day of May 1916. Work rapidly progressed so that by mid-September 1916, it was anticipated that the exterior work would be complete by the first of October and interior work finished a month later. Delayed by problems with the heating and plumbing subcontractors, held up material shipments and freezing temperatures, work on the courthouse continued through November and December 1916 into January 1917.¹⁰

In early February 1917, the courthouse was almost ready for occupancy. However, the new county commissioners were ...having some trouble to figure out where they (we)re going to get the money to finish payment and get possession of the building from the contractor. Apparently, the commissioners did not have enough money to pay the final costs of the building. Finish work continued on the building through February 1917. With no fanfare, most of the county offices moved into the new courthouse on 15 March 1917. One week later, the county commissioners were still threshing out money matters. The general contractor was still owed \$13,000 to \$14,000, of which the commissioners allowed \$10,000. It was anticipated the county treasurer would not pay it, however, as the amount exceeded the 80 percent payable prior to acceptance of the building. At issue was the question of ...did or did not the commissioners accept the building when they ordered the officials to move in and thereby took possession. Additionally, the plumber was still not paid in full on his contract price of \$2,327 and the Pauley Jail Building Company was still owed \$7,700. The county did not have any more available building

⁹Ibid., 3 December 1915, 21 January 1916 and 3 March 1916.

¹⁰Ibid., 14 April 1916, 26 May 1916, 2 June 1916, 15 September 1916, 6 October 1916, 13 October 1916, 27 October 1916, 17 November 1916, 22 December 1916, 29 December 1916 and 12 January 1917.

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funds to pay these contractors. Nonetheless, the county sheriff moved his offices and prisoners into the new courthouse by mid-April 1917. With the sheriffs ...abandonment of the city hall the county shuts off the last item of rental expenses.¹¹

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

By the late 1940s, the 1916 courthouse was not meeting the needs of the community. In addition to a lack of office and vault space, the four-story building lacked adequate restroom facilities, particularly for female rural and out-of-county visitors, and an elevator. After several years of advocacy for a new building, the matter was brought to a vote of the people. On 26 June 1951, Ottawa County voters considered a two-year, 5-mill levy to raise \$200,000. It was anticipated that an additional nearly \$90,000, given to the countys court fund by a special act of the state legislature, would be transferred to the building fund, bringing the total amount of available funds to \$290,000. The voters handily approved the measure with 1,776 voting in favor and 607 opposed.¹²

As a cost saving device, the existing 1916 courthouse would be fully incorporated into the new building. The majority of rooms in the old building, all of fire-proof construction, were to be converted into vaults and record storage. New areas would be added on all sides and a new exterior of white brick and concrete would replace the red brick and stone of the early building. Joseph Koberling of the Tulsa architectural firm Koberling, Brandborg and Roads, AIA, designed the courthouse expansion with the preliminary plans complete previous to the passage of the mill levy. Born in Budapest, Hungary, Koberling trained at the Armour Institute in Chicago, Illinois, receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Architecture in 1925. He opened his office in Tulsa in the same year, entering into several subsequent partnerships with other local architects. Koberling was a licensed architect in Oklahoma from 1928 until his death in 1991 at about 91 years of age.¹³

¹¹Ibid., 9 February 1917, 23 February 1917, 23 March 1917, 30 March 1917 and 13 April 1917.

¹²Miami (Oklahoma) Daily News, 24 May 1951, 24 June 1951 and 27 June 1951.

¹³Ibid., 24 May 1951 and 24 June 1951. See also Joseph R. Koberling, Jr., AIA (1900-1991): The Architects, Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, <http://www.tulsaarchitecture.com/Architects/Koberling.htm> accessed

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In late October 1951, county officials met with the State Examiners Office to discuss financial matters. On the same day, they met with Joseph Koberling in efforts to reach a contractual agreement. Apparently doing so, Koberling immediately set to work with a survey of the existing building to determine the course of action. Although initial expectations anticipated a quicker start, the county did not advertise for bids on the construction work until 1 May 1952. All bids were to be opened on 2 June 1952 with a contract to be awarded immediately. According to County Attorney Jim Reed, The winning contractor will be allowed not more than one year for completion of the job. Overall, it was expected the project would not even take that long.¹⁴

As planned, the bids were opened on 2 June 1952. However, A dilemma confronted Ottawa county officers...following examination of contractors bids for the courthouse expansion project. All of the bids exceeded the available funds with the lowest bid coming in at \$436,971, well above the \$290,000 building fund. The low bid, submitted by the Hannaford Construction Company of Tulsa, Oklahoma, helpfully included ...20 economy alternates which would reduce its estimate to \$340,097, however, this remained more than \$50,000 above the budgeted amount. Work schedules proposed by the eleven bidders ranged from just under a year at 250 working days to over two years at 550 working days.¹⁵

Within days, county officials were wielding the economy knife on the project. As soon as the bids were opened, studies were being made with the emphasis on reducing the interior work. Primarily, the reductions focused on the ...probable elimination or revision of certain decorative and office arrangement features. The original scope was also reduced by the exclusion of Other lesser specifications... which included some decorative exterior work. On 2 July 1952, the project was again put out for bid. This time, however, the project included predominately the expansion of the building with the majority of the interior renovation of the existing building being eliminated.¹⁶ One important element in the interior work remained in the plans, the renovation of the district courtroom.

13 November 2003.

¹⁴Ibid., 25 October 1951, 28 October 1951 and 1 May 1952.

¹⁵Ibid., 3 June 1952.

¹⁶Ibid., 5 June 1952, 10 June 1952, 2 July 1952 and 5 August 1952.

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The new bids were opened on 4 August 1952 with the low bid of \$303,666 being submitted by a local builder, W.D. Barger. However, With all alternate specifications added and subtracted Bargers apparent winning bid will amount to \$296,666. This did not include the five percent architect fee which was an additional nearly \$15,000, bringing total project costs to \$311,666. Barger also submitted a favorable work schedule with an estimate of 300 working days.¹⁷

It was also at this point in time that an explanation for the higher costs was offered by District Judge William M. Thomas. Thomas stated that overall the project ...may cost 25 percent more than it would in the spring of 1951 when (it) was first considered seriously as building costs had increased that much. Thomas also revealed that additional money would likely be available for the project as, due to higher property valuations, the 5-mill levy would raise more than the initial \$200,000, possibly \$225,000. The state had also promised an additional \$16,960 in federal money as the project would allow the states health and welfare offices to be advantageously located in the courthouse. Thus, there would be sufficient money available for the project as all together, this increased the building fund to \$331,960. To help the project along, the Ottawa County Excise board approved a mill transfer on 7 August 1952 that provided an additional \$19,112.72 for the courthouse project.¹⁸

Construction work on the courthouse expansion begin in September 1952. By the end of March 1953, the work was progressing nicely with the new exterior walls of the first floor being laid and the second floor walls taking shape above this. In mid-September 1952, a dedication was held for the ...handsomely remodeled district courtroom... on the third floor of the building. However, work came to a temporary halt in mid-November 1952 as ...brick masons throughout Northeastern Oklahoma remained idle while seeking higher wages. Although resolution of the strike was not noted in the local paper, by February 1954 work was well underway on the painting and redecorating of the interior.¹⁹

As the building was nearing completion, a jarring note was published in the local newspaper on conditions of the fourth floor jail. Receiving only an exterior re-finishing in the expansion project, the jail was inspected by

¹⁷Ibid., 5 August 1952.

¹⁸Ibid., 5 August 1952 and 8 August 1952.

¹⁹Ibid., 30 March 1953, 20 September 1953, 19 November 1953 and 7 February 1954.

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Hubert H. Raney with the U.S. Bureau of Prisons in early February 1954. In addition to several hygienic issues, the inspector noted severe plumbing problems and failure of many of the cell locking devices. Additionally, Raney expressed regret that the new elevator did not extend to the fourth floor and added the suggestion that The architects should try to get a drunk up the narrow stairs to jail sometime. Overall, Raney asserted The county gave much thought toward improving the courthouse and the building gives a stranger the thought that it is new throughout. Too bad they didnt give the jail as much thought at the same time.²⁰

Twenty-one months after construction work started, the new Ottawa County Courthouse was ready to be dedicated. With much fanfare, the cornerstone of the new building was ceremoniously laid on 21 May 1954 by S. Neal Johnson of Guthrie, the ...most worshipful grand master of Oklahoma Masons.... Two days later, the building was formerly dedicated with ...hundreds of visitors... attending. State Supreme Court Justice Ben Arnold was the featured speaker and he assured local residents that ...this nation will not be taken over by Communists as long as Americans adhere to the principles of Democracy. Numerous other dignitaries attended the dedication, including U.S. Senator Robert S. Kerr, Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court Harry L.S. Halley and William S. Hamilton, former president of the Oklahoma Bar Association.²¹

The expansion of the Ottawa County Courthouse allowed the county government to function with a new efficiency. The improved facilities centralized the seat of county government and also allowed for an expansion of county records and services. Additionally, the new building enhanced the community identity. The county courthouse, typically the identifying building of the county, was critical to the county and local towns self image.

In Oklahoma, the historic significance of county courthouses in local government was established in the thematic County Courthouses of Oklahoma nomination, listed in 1984. Although the Ottawa County Courthouse was constructed after 1935, the ending date for consideration of properties under the thematic nomination, the historic significance remains fully applicable. To quote the nomination,

Each countys courthouse serves as the seat and focus of local administration. The courthouse is the physical building that houses the established form for governing diverse groups of people throughout

²⁰Ibid., 11 February 1954.

²¹Ibid., 7 April 1954, 20 May 1954 and 24 May 1954.

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the state. The style of the building may vary from county to county, but the essence of its function does not. The courthouse provides the place in which the local judiciary system metes out justice to the citizens of the county. Other governmental offices, such as those of the sheriff, the county clerk, the tax assessor, and the treasurer, are also located in the courthouse. In some counties, the courthouse contains the offices of such other integral community services as motor vehicle licensing, veterans affairs, the local election board, and the county extension agency. The courthouse is invaluable as a political center and as a repository of a countys records.²²

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Ottawa County Courthouse is architecturally significance as an excellent example of a Modern style county courthouse in Miami, Oklahoma. Designed and constructed in the early 1950s, the courthouse is notable for its atypical plan which fully incorporated the previous courthouse into the existing building. Construction work on the existing building was complete in 1954 and the building has maintained its appearance for the ensuing fifty years. While sharing some traits and decorative features with other Oklahoma courthouses, the Ottawa County Courthouse remains easily distinguished.

In 1985, the Oklahoma Historical Society published Dr. Charles Gradys book County Courthouses of Oklahoma. Nearly twenty years later, this book remains the accepted standard source of information on the seventy-seven county courthouses in Oklahoma. As with any study of this scope, there are some errors in the book. Notably, the 1950s expansion of the Ottawa County Courthouse was designed by Joseph Koberling of the architectural firm Koberling, Brandborg and Roads. Grady attributed the design to the firm of Bransborg (sic) and Roads. Additionally, work on the first Ottawa County Courthouse was completed in 1917, not 1915 as stated in the book, and the architectural firm employed on the project was Hare and Company, not Hair and Tonini. Nonetheless, the book is the best source of information available and is used to place the Ottawa County Courthouse within its proper architectural context.²³

²²Suzanne Haynes, County Courthouses of Oklahoma Thematic National Register Nomination, (On-file in the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory, Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: 1984), Section 8, page 0.

²³Dr. Charles Grady, County Courthouses of Oklahoma, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1985), 82.

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Between 1942 and 1955, the only Oklahoma county that undertook extensive work on their courthouse was Ottawa County. With construction work beginning in September 1952, the expansion and complete re-facing of the building was complete by May 1954. Typical of Oklahoma courthouses, the form of the building adheres to the Classical tripartite pattern with the first floor acting as the base and the upper floors the shaft. The barely visible fourth floor acts as the crowning capital. Despite this adherence to historical antecedents, the Ottawa County Courthouse is Modern in style and expresses a definite, modern, rectilinear form. The verticality of the building is emphasized by the symmetrical placement of the large multi-paned windows and the two-story pilasters separating the windows. The highly stylized one-story entry porches with their flat, concrete, rounded roofs further emphasize the Modern feel of the building. The use of concrete and white brick is in keeping with the Modern appearance and replaced the previous contrasting red brick and white stone.

Decorative elements on the Ottawa County Courthouse include concrete bas-relief panels above the majority of the first floor openings. These panels are reminiscent of the decorative elements on several 1930s Oklahoma courthouses, including Pottawatomie, Pushmataha and Grady counties. All three of these courthouses are Art Deco style buildings and are richly ornamented. This ornamentation includes numerous bas-relief panels, frequently related to one of the primary functions of the building, justice. Overall, the Ottawa County is much more decoratively restrained, possibly related to the project budget constraints, but also in keeping with the early 1950s construction date.

Although the Ottawa County Courthouse shares some similarities with other county courthouses in Oklahoma, the building is unique. The primary purpose of the 1950s construction work was to expand the courthouse to provide additional badly-needed space. Although an economical move, the inclusion of the 1916 courthouse in the existing building created a distinctive building that would be impossible to duplicate. The early courthouses curved south wall created a design issue that was ably handled by Joseph Koberling; however, it also necessitated an atypical design that would reasonably not be copied elsewhere. The fourth floor jail, which was not expanded in the 1950s project, also presented a design challenge which resulted in the three-story wings on all sides of the original building balanced by the one-story corner sections.

Ottawa County is not unique in their re-use of their first courthouse. By 1984, six other Oklahoma counties had re-used their existing courthouse, none in exactly the same manner. Interestingly, all six counties are located in eastern Oklahoma. Seminole County built a new courthouse in 1927 which was first expanded with a side wing in 1938. Thirty-seven years later, a much more substantial second wing was added to the other side of the building. In 1961,

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Sequoyah County ...began a major remodeling... of their 1913 courthouse that included a new, two-story, brick exterior that covered the third floor windows and enclosed the original full-height Classical porch with a proscenium porch. It does not appear the Sequoyah County Courthouse was expanded as part of the project. Choctaw County re-clad the granite upper floors of their four-story, 1912 building with brick in about 1964. They also modified the windows and full-height entry porch at the same time. Although substantially altering their building, they also did not apparently expand the building. The same year work was on-going in Choctaw County, Pushmataha County altered their 1934 courthouse. Unfortunately, Gradys book does not detail what work was involved in the alteration; however, the work was significant as it cost \$96,000, almost \$36,000 more than the original building. In 1968, Latimer County undertook an expansion project similar to that of Ottawa County. In addition to adding two wings to their two-story building, they also painted the historic, dark-colored, rusticated sandstone and modified the windows and entry. Rogers County added rooms on three sides of their 1937, brick building and substantially altered the interior, all in 1981.²⁴

While typically destroying the integrity of the original courthouses, the new building may be as architecturally important as the previous building. Continuing to function as the seat of county government, the new building is immediately accorded landmark status. Additionally, because of the well-known importance of the functions of the building, all courthouses are designed as monumental public buildings and, therefore, embody the distinctive characteristics of the type and period. For National Register purposes, consideration must be paid to the age of the alterations and if the overall building reflects the correct period of significance. The Ottawa County Courthouse was essentially re-made in 1952-1954, within the current fifty-year mark of the National Register, and the building ably conveys its historic appearance from that time.

Within Miami, the Ottawa County Courthouse is without parallel. The light-colored courthouse is majestically sat on a city block that is notably devoid of the commercial and residential construction occupying the surrounding blocks. The beautifully landscaped and maintained courthouse grounds also lend importance to the building while providing an ideal spot to pass the time. The size and scale of the building further sets it apart from neighboring buildings. Additionally, the majority of buildings in downtown Miami are of red brick, including the Miami Post Office. Located one block directly north of the courthouse, the post office occupies a prominent corner location one

²⁴Ibid., 36, 63, 82, 88, 90, 91 and 92.

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block east of Main Street. Like the rest of the downtown buildings, however, the post office is one of several buildings occupying the block.

Overall, the Ottawa County Courthouse is a peerless public building within Miami and the surrounding county. While easily recognized as the seat of county government, the courthouse is also distinctive in comparison to the other seventy-seven courthouses in Oklahoma. Conclusively, the Ottawa County Courthouse is an excellent example of a Modern style courthouse in Miami, Oklahoma. Although the period of significance for the building only extends for a relatively short two-year period, the courthouse is also historically significant for its role in local government during this time. Even with construction work going on, the courthouse continued to function with the typical county business being taken care of. During the period of significance, the Ottawa County Courthouse along with the other Oklahoma county courthouses remained vital centers of political and social service and furthermore serve(d) as visual landmarks and symbols of the cohesive force of local, democratic government within the state of Oklahoma.²⁵

²⁵Haynes, County Courthouses of Oklahoma, Section 8, 2.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 33

Ottawa County Courthouse
name of property
Ottawa County Oklahoma
county and State

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Lots 1-32, Block 96, Original Plat, Miami, Oklahoma.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes all the property historically associated with the Ottawa County Courthouse.