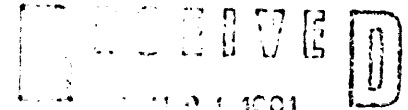


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 WEBSTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
other names/site number WE-64

2. Location

street & number Courthouse Square not for publication
city, town Dixon vicinity
state Kentucky code KY county Webster code 233 zip code 42409

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> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u>2</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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.

David L. Morgan 6-18-91
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan Date
State Historic Preservation Officer, Kentucky Heritage Council
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation 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.
 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:)

Patrick Andrews 8/8/91

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)

Moderne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof Tar

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheets

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 NA

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1938 - 1941

Significant Dates

1940

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Casner, Lawrence, Architect
Works Project Administration, Builder

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

See Continuation Sheets

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (38 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

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 approximately one acre

UTM References

A

1	6
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4	3	8	9	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	1	5	2	2	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Dixon, Ky., Quad.

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joseph E. Brent, Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Kentucky Heritage Council date March 26, 1991
street & number 677 Comanche Trail telephone 502/564-7005
city or town Frankfort state Kentucky zip code 40601

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Webster County Courthouse

Section number 7

Webster County, Kentucky Page # 1

The Webster County Courthouse is a poured concrete building 56 feet wide and 100 feet long, with a ground floor and three full stories. It is located at the crest of a ridge approximately 450 feet above sea level at the intersection of Main and Leeper Streets (US 41A and SR 132 respectively) in Dixon, Kentucky. The courthouse occupies approximately one acre of land in the center of Dixon. The courthouse fronts on Main Street directly across from the major portion of the business district in Dixon. Adjacent to the south side of the courthouse across a short unnamed street is the post office. The rear of the building, east side, is bound by some residential housing and an open lot, all of which are directly across Buckman Street. The north side of the courthouse is bounded by Leeper Street. The courthouse sits on a green space which is approximately one acre within the boundary described above and is some 700 meters NW of Farmers Creek. There are two non-contributing objects on the courthouse grounds, one is a modern war memorial north of the entrance and the other is a bell mounted on a concrete slab to the south.

Prior to the construction of the present courthouse an earlier, a smaller structure (45 feet wide by 76 feet long) occupied the same area of land. The older building was built sometime after the creation of the county in 1860. That building was razed as part of the Works Progress Administration project that built the current courthouse. The present structure currently stands as the visual focal point of the community.

The courthouse is built in the Moderne style with stylized classical features. Both the front and rear have four-column facades. These are stylized square fluted columns with rounded dentils along the porticos. A band of dentils also runs along the cornice all the way around the building. Lighted pedestals are located on base extension on both facades of the courthouse. On the front facade the pedestals are octagonal with glass blocks on all eight faces running from the base to the capital. The extensions at the front of the courthouse come off the two end columns. In the rear, the extensions come off the inside columns, the pedestals are smaller, four sided, turned so that the sharp edges faces the entryway. The glass blocks are utilized the same way here as in the front, only on just four sides. Another interesting detail of the courthouse are the two reliefs that are located at the ends of the extensions on the front facade. These are mounted at ground level and centered with the pedestals. The reliefs are of people depicting the two major occupations in the county, mining and farming; mining is on the north side and farming is on the south side of the facade.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Webster County Courthouse

Section number 7

Webster County, Kentucky Page # 2

Between the first and second floor windows on the front facade are concrete panels with "heroic eagles" on either side of the door with the inscription "justice" underneath the bird. Also on the front facade, above the columns centered above the doorway, is an octagonal clock and the inscription "Court House" on either side of the clock and "Webster County" beneath it. Along the north and south sides of the building in the center of the vertical rows of double windows are masks of Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson and F.D. Roosevelt, running in that order, from the rear of the building to the front on the north side and in just the opposite order on the south side.

The inside of the building is set up with a hall running from the front entrance to the rear with offices opening in from the hall on both the ground and first floors. The floor and halfway up the wall of these two floors are covered with two-tone green marble tiles (approximately 2' square). Located at the front, west end of the hall, on the ground and first floor is a vault that opens onto the hall on the ground floor and into an office on the first. The symmetry of the building is continued on the inside with twin steel spiral stair cases in the vaults that are on either side of the hall (north and south) adjacent to the front entrance that go from the ground to the first floor, with identical steel vault doors in the hallway. The second floor houses the court and the third floor is the old county jail and storage.

Integrity Statement

For the most part the courthouse has been altered very little since it was completed in 1940. The wooden doors at the front and rear entrances have been replaced with glass and steel doors, along with the door to the main courtroom. However, the original casement windows remain intact, although eight windows, four on either side of the building, have been filled in; it is not known if those windows were ever open or not. Many of the original interior details remain, including office signs and the marble floors and wall panels as well as many of the office doors.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Webster County Courthouse

Section number 8

Webster County, Kentucky Page # 1

The Webster County Courthouse is significant under National Register Criterion A in the context of New Deal Era Construction in Western Kentucky, 1933-1943 an historic context undertaken by the State Historic Preservation Office. New Deal era construction was undertaken by several agencies of the federal government in conjunction with state and local governments. The agencies that did the most construction in Kentucky include: the Civil Works Administration, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Public Works Administration, the National Youth Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the best known the Works Progress Administration, which became the Work Projects Administration in 1939. The Webster County Courthouse is an outstanding example of the property type of government building in the New Deal context. This property type includes those structures that house county, city or other local government activities, that house the machinery necessary for government activities (e.g., highway maintenance buildings), within which are provided necessary services, (e.g. public utilities).

Projects undertaken by any of the New Deal agencies had to be public projects and "All work undertaken should be useful -- not just for a day or a year, but useful in the sense that it affords permanent improvements in living conditions or that it creates new wealth for the nation."¹

Because the courthouse in Dixon houses the county government offices and formerly housed the jail and jailer, there is no other building in the county as closely associated with local government. Locally, it is the only structure of its appearance in the county, and so has come to embody the look of New Deal era construction to county residents. The building's architectural value may go beyond county line, as well. It is one of three poured concrete Moderne courthouses in Kentucky, two of which were designed by Lawrence Casner, who also designed the main vault at Ft. Knox. Although no study of the architectural significance within New Deal era architecture in Webster County or Kentucky has been undertaken, it seems reasonable to view the building is a good example of Moderne architecture in Kentucky. Future development plans should formally consider whether the building possesses statewide architectural significance.

The New Deal agencies built literally thousands of structures in Kentucky

¹ United States Department of Labor, (Washington, 1935), "Manual Outlining the Responsibility of the United States Employment Service in Registration and Referral of Workers on Works Projects Authorized Under the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, 1935."

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Webster County Courthouse

Section number 8

Webster County, Kentucky Page # 2

ranging from outhouses to bridges spanning the Ohio River. They built or improved nearly 20% of the courthouses in the state. The buildings were made of brick, native stone or, in three cases, poured concrete. Between 1933 and 1941 of the more than 20 courthouses built or improved between 1933 and 1941, only two projects were undertaken without the funding of a Federal agency (Cumberland and Harlin Counties). The courthouses vary in style as they varied in material. Those three poured concrete structures are also the only Moderne courthouses built in the state. The Webster County Courthouse is an excellent example of this style which is reflected in the other two courthouse constructed in a like manner. One of these courthouses is in Princeton, Caldwell County, and was also designed by Lawrence Casner. This building is very much like the one in Dixon and, though it is similar in design, some of the building's details are unique and help tie it to the community, e.g. concrete panel featuring tobacco leaves. The Ohio County courthouse at Hartford, similar to the other two in construction material and stylistic influence, contains a variation in its entrance treatment. The facade details of the Casner courthouses in Princeton and Dixon are square, while those in Hartford are rounded or streamlined. As a class, these three buildings are all locally significant examples of their styling because of their monumental proportions and the unusualness of their styling.²

Agencies of the New Deal were active in Webster County. The Civilian Conservation Corps had camps in Dixon and Sebree. The WPA also built a school, a gym and a warehouse in Dixon. The WPA also built education buildings in Slaughters, Sebree, Wheatcroft, Poole, and Providence. The school and the gym in Dixon are brick buildings with little reference to high style design. The Public Works Administration provided part of the funds for the school in Sebree, as well as funding a waterworks there. Of the remaining New Deal buildings in the county only the school at Slaughters is constructed in a style similar to the courthouse. However, the school is built of stuccoed concrete blocks with brick details and building is very modest in size and detail compared to the courthouse. None of the other remaining building in Webster County, save the above mentioned school are built in a similar style as the courthouse and none are built of poured concrete, thus the courthouse is a valuable sign of an unusual construction type in the local architectural environment.

² John W. Carpenter, Kentucky Courthouses, (London, Ky., 1988), pp. 56-57, 94-95 and 196-197.

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(8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section No. 8 Page 3

Webster County Courthouse
Webster County, Kentucky

County offices in Dixon had run out of room in the old courthouse when building projects of the New Deal, particularly the WPA, offered the county a chance to obtain a new structure. In June of 1938, the Fiscal Court voted unanimously to secure a new courthouse. Following the vote by the Fiscal Court a reporter for the Providence Enterprise wrote: "There has been criticism of the present antiquated courthouse and the citizens of the county will likely applaud the efforts to get a new structure at this time." In July 1938 the Webster County Grand Jury also went on record in favor of pursuing the new courthouse. The Grand Jury noted that the old structure was "in a bad state of repair" and the cost of remodeling and repair would be a continuous burden on the tax payers of Webster County.

Taking this into account, plus the fact that the county could get a new courthouse for \$35,000, the Grand Jury recommended that the Fiscal Court "take advantage of the opportunity to secure the county a new building sufficient in size to furnish offices and facilities for all of the officers and officials of the county." The Fiscal Court made arrangements with Bankers Bonds of Louisville for the sale of bonds to finance the county's \$40,000 share of the project; the WPA would supply the other \$126,000 dollars that would be needed to complete the building.³

With approval of the Federal grant, work was initiated quickly. Site clearing was begun in September of 1938 and completed by November. By December of that year construction had begun on the Moderne structure. Construction continued until early 1940.⁴

One will see very few new public buildings, save the 1986 county jail that have been built in Dixon since the 1930s. The old school, also built by the WPA, now houses a library and senior citizens center, also serves as a reminder of the effect that the New Deal had on Dixon. Given the slow pace of urban expansion, it is highly unlikely that Webster County would have obtained a new courthouse without the influx of the Federal funds. It is safe to say that these work relief agencies had a meaningful effect on the built landscape in Dixon, an effect which strengthens the association between architecture and Federal relief programs of the depression era.

³Providence Enterprise, June 1, 9; July 14; and August 11, 1938.

⁴Dixon Journal, Oct. 26, 1938, "President Approves Courthouse Project; Begin Work at Once." December 2, 1938, "Construction Begun on New Courthouse."

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(8-86)

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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Webster County Courthouse

Section number 9

Webster County, Kentucky Page # 1

Blumenson, John J.-G. Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to
Styles and Terms. Nashville: AASLH, 1982.

Brent, Joseph E. New Deal Era Construction in Western Kentucky, 1933-1943
(Draft). Frankfort, Ky.: Kentucky Heritage Council, 1991.

Carpenter, John W. Kentucky Courthouses. London, Ky: John W. Carpenter, 1988.

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(8-86)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Webster County Courthouse

Section number 10

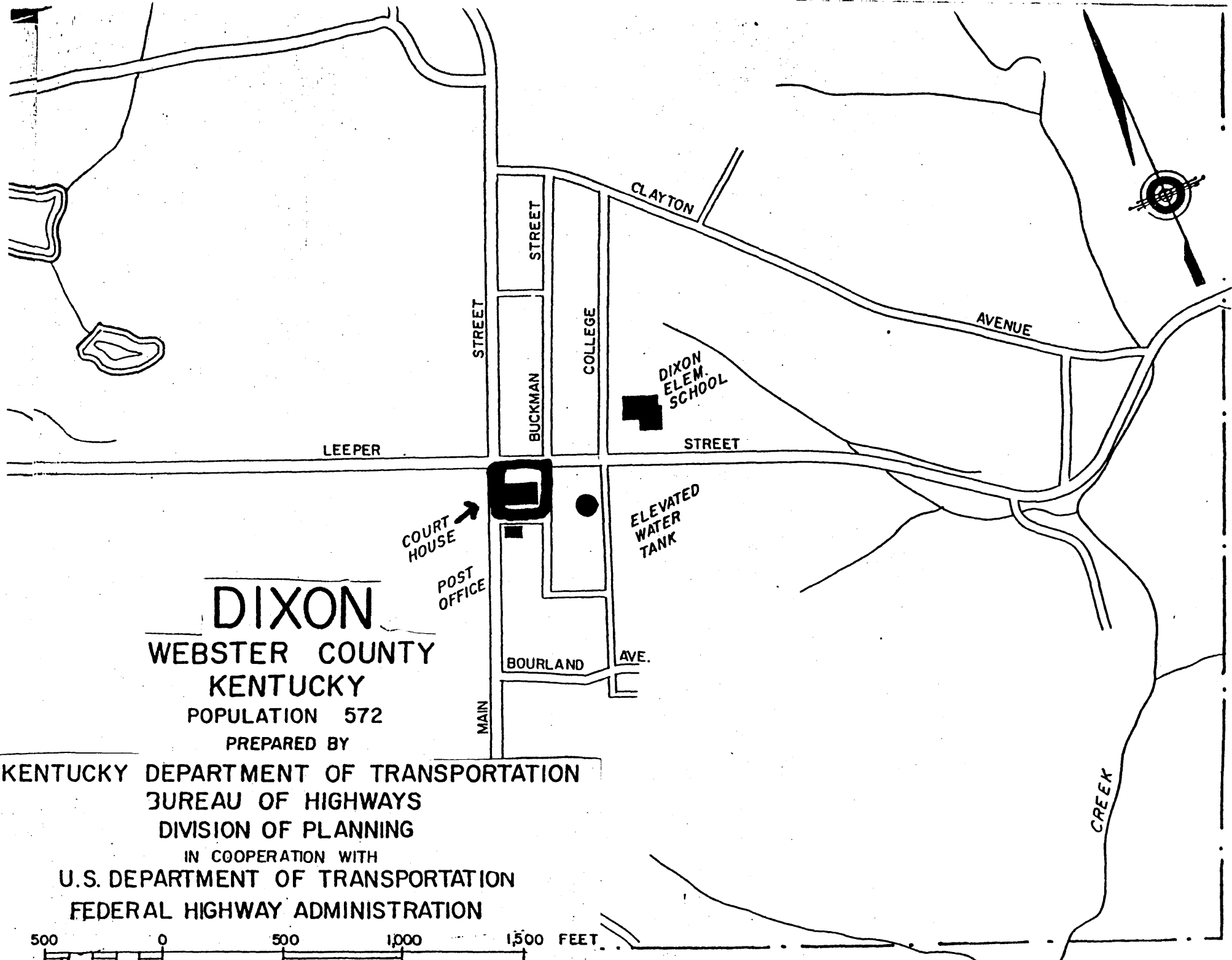
Webster County, Kentucky Page # 1

Verbal Boundary Description

See attached map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the courthouse, the two non-contributing objects (the modern war memorial and the bell on the concrete slab), and the green space that the courthouse sets upon. The area where the current courthouse stands is where the previous courthouse stood and it maintains the historic integrity as the site of county government.



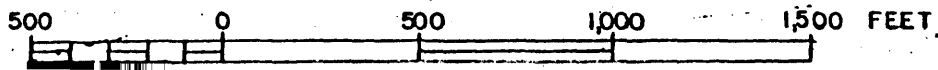
DIXON
WEBSTER COUNTY
KENTUCKY

POPULATION 572

PREPARED BY

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION OF PLANNING

IN COOPERATION WITH
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Webster County Courthouse
Webster County, Kentucky

Section number Photos Page 1

For All Photos:

Historic Name:	Webster County Courthouse
Location:	Courthouse Square, Dixon, Webster County, Ky.
Photographer:	Joseph Brent
Negative Location:	Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Ky.
Date Taken:	March, 1991

Photo No.

1	Front facade and north side of Webster County Courthouse
2	Front facade and south side of Webster County Courthouse
3	Rear facade and south side of Webster County Courthouse