

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet

Item number 1-3,7

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Hidalgo County, Lordsburg
County Courthouses of New Mexico

1. Name: Hidalgo County Courthouse
(County Courthouses of New Mexico)
2. Location: 300 South Shakespeare Street
Lordsburg, New Mexico
3. Owner: Hidalgo County Commission
Hidalgo County Courthouse
300 South Shakespeare Street
Lordsburg, New Mexico 88045

7. Description: The 1926 Neo-Classical Revival Style Hidalgo County Courthouse is a two story, rectangular building with a 1978 dissimilar, non-contributing addition attached to the north. The addition does not adversely affect the integrity of the historic structure. Located on a Shelbyville style court square, this courthouse was designed by Thorman and Frazier and built by Jack Heather.

This two story courthouse with basement is flat roofed with a protruding metal cornice and pressed metal cresting embellishing the parapet line. The body of the 1926 building is red brick with concrete detailing in the form of horizontal bands and spandrels. Windows are metal sash set into the brick walls in vertical, two story bands. The entrance is located at the center of the westside. A short flight of stairs leads to the double, fully glazed, aluminum doorway (originally wood with 3/4 glazing). Surrounding the entrance are stylized pilasters decorated with floral medallion symbols. Above this is a classically detailed pediment with dentilated horizontal and raking cornice, plain tympanum, and simplified ancon. This area is darkly painted, but was originally unpainted concrete. A jail building stands to the east of this structure.

The interior has carpeted floors, plastered and wood paneled walls, and oak rails and banisters. The stairway is wooden with oak balustrade; the landing is viewed from two semi-circular balconies on the second floor. Doors throughout are wood and glass. Ceilings are over 11 feet high.

The second floor courtroom has a carpeted floor, acoustical tile ceiling and oak furniture.

The building has an elevator and handicap access through the dissimilar 1978 addition. The courthouse is in good condition with moderate remodeling in the form of some replaced interior doors, closed-up basement windows, and the 1978 addition.

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8. Significance: The Hidalgo County Courthouse in Lordsburg, New Mexico meets National Register Criterion C as a competent, if simple, Neo-Classical design and as one of the best-designed, historic public buildings in Lordsburg.

For the Hidalgo Courthouse, architects Thorman and Frazier chose the Neo-Classical Revival, the most popular style for public buildings the first quarter of this century. The building's symmetry, the expanses of unornamented wall, and the restrained Greek Classical detailing are all typical of the style. The grouping of windows into vertical panels was being popularized during the 1920s by the Art Deco style. The use in courthouse design of this feature, which was derived from skyscraper office buildings, often reflects the expansion of government services which require more office space than earlier courthouses. Although extremely modest by Eastern standards, the courthouse was a suitably imposing structure for this ranching county which had approximately 5,000 inhabitants when the courthouse was built and had grown to only 6,049 by the 1980 census.

Modest, one-story, adobe and wood frame houses surround the courthouse square. Two blocks north, is a small commercial district of one and two-story brick and stone buildings. A few have pressed metal, Classical moldings. Others have the adobe-colored stucco and projecting vigas (ornamental log beam ends) of the Pueblo style. These stand as a reminder of the days when US Highway 70 carried cross-country tourists by the business district before it was bypassed by Interstate 10. One of these Pueblo style buildings, the Hotel Hidalgo is comparable in the quality of its design to the courthouse.

9. Major Bibliographic References:

"Housing, Care and Accessibility of Public Records." WPA Inventory of the County archives, Hidalgo County, 1941. State Archives and Record Center, Santa Fe.

Pare, Richard, ed. Courthouse: A Photographic Document. New York: Horizon Press, 1978.

Robinson, Willard. The People's Architecture: Texas Courthouses, Jails and Municipal Halls. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983.

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Sanborn Map Company. "Lordsburg, N.M." Maps dated 1902, 1908, 1930.

Whisenhunt, Donald. New Mexico Courthouses. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1979.

10. Geographical Data: The nominated property consists of Block 21 of the Original Townsite, Lordsburg, N.M.

Quad Name: Lordsburg, N.M. Quad Scale: 1:24,000

UTM Reference: 12 715760 3581120

Acreage: approximately 1.5 acres.