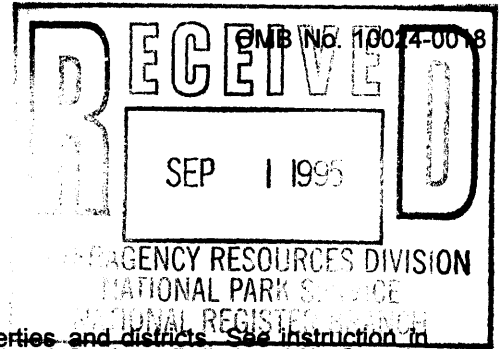


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Alamosa County Courthouse  
other names/site number 5AL263

### 2. Location

street & number 702 Fourth Street [N/A] not for publication  
city or town Alamosa [N/A] vicinity  
state Colorado code CO county Alamosa code 003 zip code 81101

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ]. )

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer August 28, 1995  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society  
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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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  
See continuation sheet [ ].

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date 9/29/95  
Edson H. Beall

\_\_\_\_\_  
Entered in the National Register.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Alamosa County Courthouse  
**Name of Property**

Alamosa County, CO  
**County/State**

**5. Classification**

**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**

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
3	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing.**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY  
REVIVALS: Mission/Spanish Colonial  
Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof CERAMIC TILE  
other  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Alamosa County Courthouse  
Name of Property

Alamosa County, CO  
County/State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

### Bibliography

(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
- # \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  
ARCHITECTURE

### Periods of Significance

1936 - 1938

### Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Works Progress Administration

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other:

Name of repository:

Adams State College Library  
Denver Public Library

Alamosa County Courthouse  
**Name of Property**

Alamosa County, CO  
**County/State**

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13      423320      4147030  
    Zone      Easting      Northing

3.      Zone      Easting      Northing

2.      Zone      Easting      Northing

4.      Zone      Easting      Northing

[ ] 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.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Robert Zimmerman/ Board of Alamosa County Commissioners  
Carol Mondragon/ Administrative Assistant

organization Alamosa County date August, 1994

street & number 402 Edison Avenue, PO Box 178 telephone 719-589-3841

city or town Alamosa state CO zip code 81181

**Additional Documentation**

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Alamosa County

street & number 402 Edison Avenue, PO Box 178 telephone 719-589-3841

city or town Alamosa state CO zip code 81101

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

**DESCRIPTION**

The Alamosa County Courthouse occupies a half-block location in Alamosa bordered by Fourth Street on the north, San Juan Avenue on the east, and Edison Avenue on the west. The Courthouse is a U-shaped two-story complex consisting of three separate units joined by covered walkways and a smaller attached jail building located off the southwest corner of the south and west wings. The three wings enclose a central courtyard opening off of Fourth Street.

The total three building Courthouse complex contains approximately 19,500 square feet. The foundation of all buildings is concrete, the walls are brick, and the roofs are clay tile. An arcade walkway surrounds the inner courtyard and joins the main south wing with the flanking east and west wings. The majority of the windows are the original wood sash, six-over-six with concrete sills and straight arches of brick soldier courses. Most bays contain single windows while a few contain pairs.

The north elevation of the south wing is symmetrical, set off by a central gabled parapet on the arcade. The roof is accentuated by a centered curvilinear gable with decorative Palladian motif brick work. The tripartite recesses are carried by a large wood sill, covered with a single row of clay tiles and supported by a pair of carved wood brackets. The east elevation contains a slightly off-center porch with a three steep stair which leads to a paneled wood entry door. The entry porch is covered with a front gable, tile roof supported by brick walls with arched openings. The porch gable repeats the curvilinear pattern of the upper gable end. Brick rowlocks form a circular frame containing a clay, Indian head in profile. The upper gable end repeats the decorative Palladian motif brick work with wood sill and brackets found on the north elevation. The south elevation is divided into a series of bays by brick pilasters. Three of the original second-story window openings are infilled with brick. The nine bays on the west portion of the south elevation contain modern casement windows and stucco infill within the original window openings. A steel fire escape accesses a second-story door in the western-most bay.

The jail is connected to the south wing via an enclosed second-story passageway. The connection allowed the direct transfer of prisoners from the jail to the courtrooms. The rectangular plan jail repeats the curvilinear gable ends of the other buildings with the decorative Palladian motif brick work. The windows are original six-over-six sashes. A small doorway provides access on the south elevation. A large, square, brick chimney pierces the roof on the west elevation.

The west elevation of the east wing is a mirror image of the east elevation of the west wing. A brick arcade with tile roof extends the full length of the elevations. The first-story fenestration includes a series of single and paired sash windows with occasional wood paneled entry doors. The second-story symmetrical fenestration consists of two pairs of six-over-six sash windows flanked by single six-over-

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

sixes. These are flanked by a Palladian motif element which includes a central, round arched, nine light window with flanking segmental arched recesses. The arched elements are divided by a pair of turned wood posts in a spiral pattern. The end bays are composed of single six-over-six windows. The north gable ends of the east and west wings are identical. The first-story contains a tripartite window grouping of six-over-six sashes. These are protected by a cantilevered tile roof with wood knee braces. The second-story contains a centered group of four windows. A large segmental arch of double rowlocks is flanked by smaller round arches. The center arch contains a pair of nine light, round arched windows. The smaller round arches contain six light windows. The upper curvilinear gables repeat the decorative Palladian motif brick work used throughout the complex. The south elevation of the east wing repeats most of the fenestration of the north elevation except for the first floor where a single six-over-six window is sheltered by a cantilevered tile roof with wood knee braces. The south elevation of the west wing contains only the upper gable decoration.

The east elevation of the east wing contains a series of evenly spaced six-over-six windows on the first and second stories. The first-story windows are sheltered by individual cantilevered tile roofs with wood knee braces. A central entry porch matches the design used on the east gable end of the south wing.

The west elevation of the west wing contains a series of single and paired six-over-six windows and a single wood paneled and glaze entry door without a covered porch.

The interior contains much of its original woodwork including the planked ceilings with their scorched patterning made with blow torches. The ceilings are supported by railroad rails, boxed with wood to simulate solid beams.<sup>1</sup> The railroad played a significant role in the founding and growth of Alamosa. The ready availability of rails and the difficulty of easily obtaining other steel beams during the Depression may have resulted in their use in the courthouse construction. Other original interior features include doors and door surrounds, windows, and window trim. A major restoration/rehabilitation of the courthouse began in 1978 and was completed in 1981. The work took place in phases beginning with the east wing, proceeding to the west, and concluding with the south.

In 1990, the former jail building was remodeled. The first floor was converted into three separate offices while the second became a law library, a small office, and a bathroom. Most of the original interior materials were removed during this renovation.

In 1991, the Board of County Commissioners had the second-story of the south wing remodeled into a conference center seating approximately 100 people. The former attic space was incorporated into the conference center. The old first floor law office was remodeled into an additional courtroom.

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<sup>1</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, December 8, 1937.

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

A new county office building was built directly west of the Alamosa County Courthouse to house part of the county governmental offices. The historic courthouse currently contains the offices of the Alamosa County Administrator/Controller, Alamosa County Land Use, and Alamosa County Nursing, and the Twelfth Judicial District Court and Probation Office. The Su Casa battered women's shelter, the Building and Grounds Supervisor's office and the law library are located in the former Alamosa County Jail building.

The Alamosa County Courthouse remains in good condition although repairs are needed on the brick walls and the clay roof. The building retains a large degree of its historic integrity, particularly on its exterior elevations.

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Alamosa County Courthouse meets criterion A under the area of politics and government for its association with the 1930s Depression Era Works Progress Administration, and criterion C for its architectural significance as a good example of the Mission style.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Alamosa County which is the youngest county in the state of Colorado was formed by an Act approved in the Ninth<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Senate Bill #545 by Senator W. H. Adams. Alamosa County was created from parts of Conejos and Costilla Counties. The act was approved on March 18, 1913 at 4:50 PM. At that time the County Commissioners who were in office were Chairman A. L. Moss, County Commissioner W. R. Pyke and County Commissioner H. Emperius.

The City of Alamosa was incorporated in 1878 and is the largest city in the San Luis Valley. Since Alamosa was incorporated, it has always been known as the hub of the San Luis Valley. Alamosa had grown to be the railroad center of the San Luis Valley within a period of ten years. Agriculture was dominated by potatoes. Also flour mills had been built in Alamosa to process the wheat that was grown extensively across the San Luis Valley. The land was great for raising sheep which brought in carloads of lambs for fattening. The Alamosa area was transformed into a large agricultural center.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>P. R. "Bob" Griswold, Rio Grande Along the Rio Grande  
(Talbot House Publication Services).



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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

On August 4, 1913, the County Commissioners voted to rent space from District Judge C. C. Holbrook for a period of three years in the amount of \$1,600 per year. The site was one block east of the present courthouse complex.

Then on August 28, 1913 Mr. Holbrook attended a County Commissioners meeting and stated that as far as he was concerned, the agreement was not binding and if the Commissioners wanted to rent space elsewhere, they were free to do so. The County Commissioners then decided to investigate the idea of a courthouse. Unfortunately due to financial constraints the idea of a courthouse was tabled.

At a meeting held on January 6, 1914, District Judge C. C. Holbrook submitted three proposals to the County Commissioners for space rental one of which would include "two rooms on Lots 6 and 7, Block 39 on Fourth Street. Changes and improvements would be at the expense of Mr. Holbrook, however, the expense would be taken out of the rent for \$1,700 per year. The contract was executed as Charles C. Holbrook as lessor and the Board of Alamosa County Commissioners as lessee.

At a County Commissioners meeting held on November 14, 1935, the County Commissioners authorized the Chairman to sign a WPA project proposal number six. The project was to consist of a one story U shaped Civic Center Building of Spanish Style. The building was to be constructed with concrete foundations, first floor reinforced concrete slab and beam with finish oak floor, stuccoed brick walls-frame coiling and a flat roof for a total cost of \$35,445. Alamosa County's contribution to be \$10,328.08.<sup>3</sup>

County Commissioners approved the bids for electrical, heating and plumbing on December 7, 1936. In order to provide adequate facilities for the county offices, the County Commissioners decided to add another story to the courthouse. The second story was to be added to the east and west wings to bring the courthouse to one level.

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<sup>3</sup>Board of Alamosa County Commissioners Meeting Minutes, Volume 1A.

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

The bids for heating, plumbing and electrical were then rejected.<sup>4</sup>

On Saturday, May 22, 1937 an impressive ceremony took place to lay the cornerstone at the Alamosa County Courthouse. During the ceremony, Masonic dignitaries, city and county officials and executives of the WPA were present. In the cornerstone were placed lists of WPA and county officials and county employees and a copy of the Daily Courier and other miscellaneous items.<sup>5</sup>

The County Assessor was the first county official to be able to move into the new east wing of the county courthouse. The move took place on July 22, 1937. On March 15, 1938, the County Treasurer and the County Clerk and Recorder moved into the east wing of the new courthouse complex.

Christmas of 1937 appeared to be very joyous at the Courthouse. A number of WPA employees placed a large christmas tree on the center pedestal of the fountain. The tree was painted aluminum and decorated with blue lights. Smaller trees were grouped around the large tree and red lights were placed. Several groups who were interested in singing Christmas carols were invited to use the central patio.

There were many projects done by the WPA that took place in Alamosa. Projects consisted of curb, gutter and oiling projects on the city streets. The WPA had 15 zone offices located in the State of Colorado, one of which was located in Alamosa.

During 1937, many large projects took place but the largest construction in Alamosa was the construction of the Alamosa County Courthouse. During the time that the courthouse was being built, the brick kiln located in north of Alamosa had been unused for 15 years and had been reconditioned by the WPA to produce the 750,000 bricks, 450,000 bricks were for the construction of the courthouse. Clay and sand excavated at the site of the brick plant was mixed for the bricks, which after pressing were placed in the open four or five days for curing. The bricks were then placed in

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<sup>4</sup> Alamosa Daily Courier, January 13, 1937.

<sup>5</sup> Alamosa Daily Courier, May 24, 1937.

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

a kiln where they were burned for 16 to 18 days. The brick kiln had the capacity of 228,000 bricks at burning.<sup>6</sup> Mr. George Hettler who was the foreman while making the bricks for the courthouse died in early January, 1937. In order to build the Alamosa County Courthouse, the WPA allocated \$39,712 and Alamosa County contributed \$31,149<sup>7</sup> which included the addition.

The last unit to be built was the Alamosa County Jail located on the Southwest corner of the courthouse. The unit consisted of a jail on the second floor and an apartment for the jailor on the first floor. The women's jail was located in the west end of the south unit.<sup>8</sup>

On July 8, 1938 a large number of employees from the WPA lifted the jail unit to the second floor of the new jail. The jail unit was part of the older jail located on the alley between Fourth and Main Street. In order to remove the jail unit, the south wall of the old jail had to be removed.<sup>9</sup>

There is one more mission-style building in Alamosa. The building is the Sacred Heart Church located across the street from the Alamosa County Courthouse. The church was built in 1927 for \$100,000. The church is also a brick building with stucco finish.

The Alamosa county courthouse continues to be the showplace in Alamosa. The County of Alamosa is very proud of their courthouse while still being the center for the carriage of justice.

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<sup>6</sup>The WPA Worker, September, 1936.

<sup>7</sup>Rocky Mt. News, December 8, 1937.

<sup>8</sup>Alamosa Daily Courier, May 25, 1938.

<sup>9</sup>Alamosa Daily Courier, July 8, 1938.

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

P. R. "Bob" Griswold, Rio Grande Along the Rio Grande  
(Talbot House Publications Services).

Board of Alamosa County Commissioners Meeting Minutes, Volume 1A.

Alamosa Daily Courier, January 13, 1937.

Alamosa Daily Courier, May 24, 1937.

Rocky Mt. News, December 8, 1937.

Alamosa Daily Courier, May 25, 1938.

Alamosa Daily Courier, July 8, 1938.

The WPA Worker, September, 1936.

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION OF ALAMOSA COUNTY  
COURTHOUSE**

Block 38, Lots 9-16 in Alamosa County Colorado

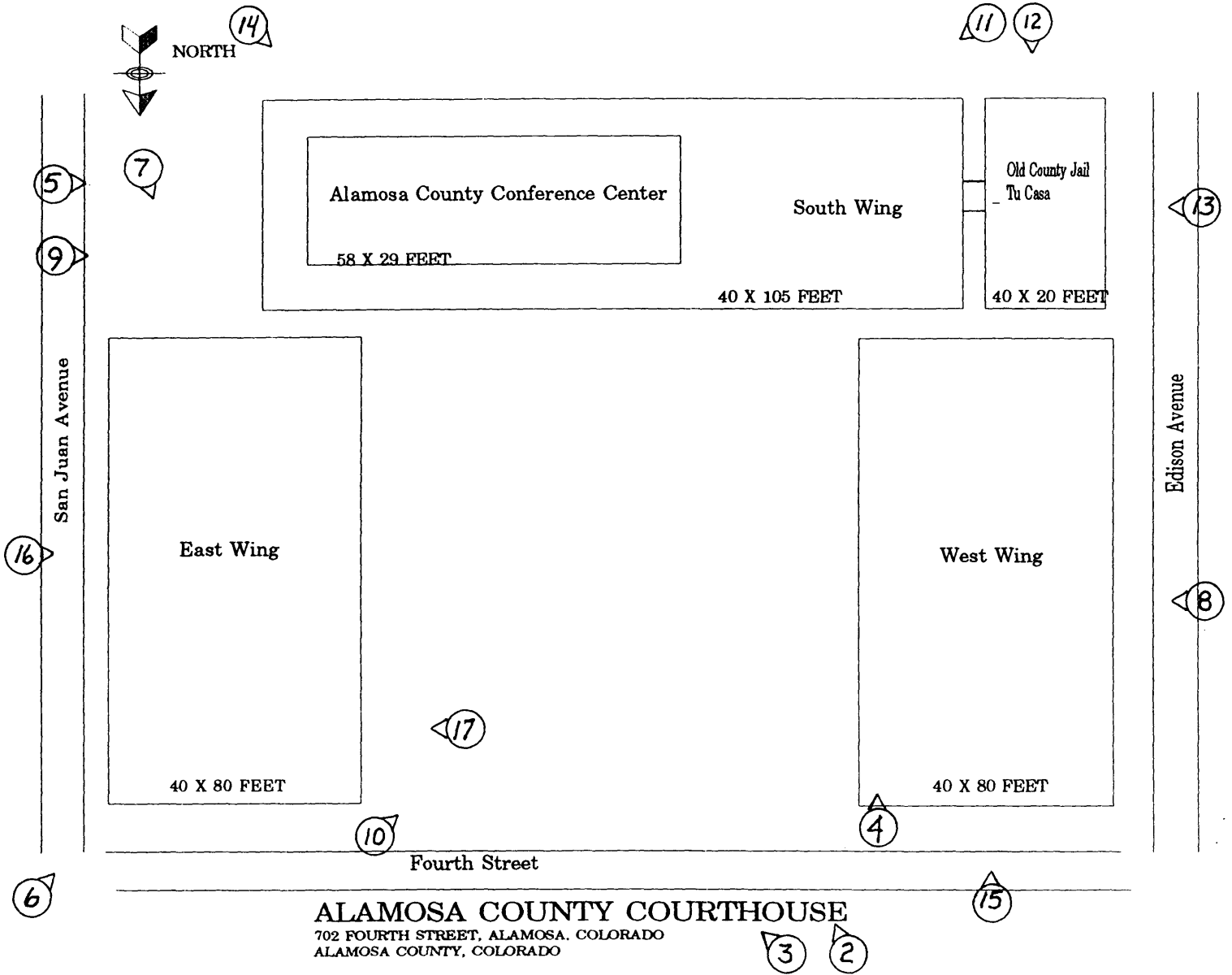
**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries of the Alamosa County Courthouse include only the property historically associated with the Alamosa County Courthouse.

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 Photograph location, view, and number.

 1

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Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

All photographs of the Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>View</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	North elevation of south wing, view to south. Photographer unknown. Location of negatives- unknown.	ca. 1938

The information below applies to photographs 2 through 24:

Photographer - Robert Zimmerman

Location of negatives - Office of the Board of Alamosa County Commissioners, Alamosa County Office Building

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>View</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	North elevation of the south wing, view to the south.	June, 1994
3	West elevation of the east wing, view to the southeast.	June, 1994
4	Interior of arcade along east wall of west wing, view to the south.	June, 1994
5	East elevation of the south wing, view to the west.	July, 1994
6	East elevation of the east wing, view to the southwest.	July, 1994
7	Second-story window detail, south elevation of east wing, view to the north.	June, 1994
8	West elevation of the west wing, view to the east.	July, 1994
9	East elevation of the east wing, view to the west.	July, 1994
10	East elevation of the west wing, view to the southwest.	June, 1994

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**Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado**

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>View</u>	<u>Date</u>
11	South elevation of the south wing, view to the northeast.	July, 1994
12	South elevation of the jail section, view to the north.	July, 1994
13	West elevation of the jail section, view to the east.	July, 1994
14	South elevation of the south wing, view to the northeast.	July, 1994
15	Gable end detail, north elevation of the west wing.	June, 1994
16	Entry porch detail, east elevation of the east wing.	June, 1994
17	Window detail, west elevation of the east wing.	June, 1994
18	WPA builders plaque.	June, 1994
19	Courthouse cornerstone.	June, 1994
20	Interior passageway.	June, 1994
21	Ceiling detail showing hand scorched and decorated wood planks.	June, 1994
22	Representative door found throughout the courthouse.	June, 1994
23	Second-story round arch window detail.	June, 1994
24	Courtroom interior, second-story, north elevation.	June, 1994



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Alamosa County Courthouse  
Alamosa County, Colorado

USGS QUAD MAP

Alamosa East, Colo.

