

(Oct. 1990)

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**



339

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

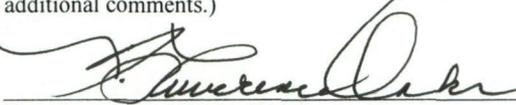
HISTORIC NAME: Chambers County Courthouse
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 404 Washington Street
CITY OR TOWN: Anahuac
STATE: Texas **CODE:** TX **COUNTY:** Chambers **CODE:** 071
NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A
VICINITY: N/A
ZIP CODE: 77514

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 of certifying official _____ Date _____

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
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.)

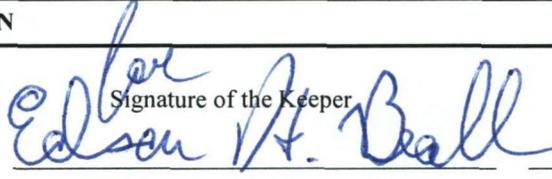
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. 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): _____

 Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action 4-25-08

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Public-Local

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: Building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	1	0 BUILDINGS
	0	0 SITES
	0	0 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	1	0 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: GOVERNMENT: county courthouse

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: GOVERNMENT: county courthouse

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION CONCRETE
WALLS CONCRETE; STONE / limestone
ROOF ASPHALT
OTHER

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-7).

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

Narrative Description¹

The Chambers County Courthouse commands a square city block in Anahuac, a town situated on the northeast bank of Trinity Bay on the Texas Gulf Coast. Designed in 1935 by Austin architect Corneil G. Curtis and constructed in 1936-37 by El Paso builder Robert E. McKee, the three-story, cast-in-place concrete structure is sheathed in Texas fossil limestone with Texas crème limestone spandrels. "Modernistic" in its spare, stylized design details, the stepped massing of the courthouse is ornamented by monumental fluted pilasters and relief rondels that depict symbols of the environment and economy of Chambers County. The building serves as the fifth courthouse for this county and the second one constructed in Anahuac, the county seat since 1907. Although the steel windows were replaced in 1966, the courthouse exterior and interior retain a high degree of architectural integrity.

The Anahuac courthouse square is on the western edge of the town grid and measures 361 feet, east to west, and 303 feet, north to south. The square is bounded by North Court Street on the north, Washington Street on the east, Stowell Street on the south, and Bolivar Street on the west. Axial sidewalks lead to the four cardinal entrances of the courthouse. A low berm surrounds the courthouse and functions as a small acropolis, providing a sense of elevation which suggests that the building is rising above its surroundings. The courthouse square has an open and spacious character befitting its coastal location, and it is covered with wide expanses of St. Augustine grass lawn. Large-diameter oak and pecan trees stand just inside the perimeter sidewalks and a single palm tree stands on the berm at the building's northeast corner. The east and west entrance sidewalks feature two long planting beds, with their original concrete borders intact; historically filled with low-growing plantings, the beds currently are filled with crape myrtle trees and a yaupon hedge that obstructs the building's axial views. Six short flag poles mark the edges of the walks at the east entry bed. Two picnic benches share the site, along with commemorative plaques and a concrete pad at the northeast corner where a German 105mm howitzer once stood.

Positioned on the site with its long axis running north to south, the building's principal entries face to the east and west. This orientation is not particularly suitable for this latitude and climate because it gives a western exposure—with heat and strong light—to a long, major façade. It also does not take the best advantage of the southeasterly breezes for cross ventilation. The courthouse was air-conditioned when built, making it an early example of a modern building planned for mechanized climate control rather than for natural ventilation. There were no physical site conditions to dictate this orientation, other than perhaps the orientation to the waters of Trinity Bay.

The Chambers County Courthouse fully exhibits the basic characteristics of the Moderne or "Modern Classic" style with a continuing simplification of ornament and subtle complexities of massing. The massing of the courthouse presents the appearance of differently sized blocks simply standing against one another. The masses do not overlap or interlock and their heights are only slightly different. Two lateral blocks, three stories tall, project forward and frame the central block, which is slightly taller, making an overall I-shape in plan. Two-story blocks stand at either end of the lateral blocks on the north-south axis. The courthouse has a cast-in-place concrete structure of columns and beams resting on spread footings. The building's floor decks are 5 1/2-inch thick, one-way concrete slabs, and its exterior walls of red clay tile are sheathed in Texas fossil limestone with smooth and fluted Texas crème limestone spandrels.

¹ This section is adapted from the Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, prepared by Bailey Architects, Inc., Houston, Texas, 2006.

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Although they are rather subtle, there are numerous ornamental features on the courthouse exterior. The east and west façades of the central mass are composed as recessed temple fronts, each with six fluted pilasters without bases or capitals. The face edges of the flutes are flush with the tall stone entablature above them, and fluting is also used to form the stepped-back jambs of the door portals at all four entrances. Large windows and doors that read as dark voids fill the gaps between the fluted pilasters, allowing them to appear as free-standing columns. Windows are arranged in vertical, three-story stacks, and recessed spandrels of stone are placed at each floor to reinforce the building's verticality.

The five spandrel panels at each of the east and west entries are flat, and they feature relief rondels depicting symbols of the environment and economy of Chambers County: marshes, water fowl, shipping, oil, and fishing. These two façades are accentuated by a modest projecting cap with stone coping, and four stylized eagles with upswept wings, like Greek acroteria, punctuate the corners. These sculptural elements are smaller than they appear on the architect's original drawings, and, oddly, they crouch like gargoyles rather than soar as eagles. On the north and south façades, which do not have fluted pilasters between the stacks of windows, the spandrel panels are fluted and feature octagonal relief sculptural panels of stylized floral motifs.

Monumental flights of stairs, flanked by stone head walls, rise to meet the terraces that span the length of the east and west façades of the central block. Stairs also extend out from the two-story blocks on the north and south ends of the courthouse. The most prominent elements of exterior ornament on the courthouse are the tall aluminum lanterns that stand like sentinels, flanking the stairs on all four façades. These eight large lanterns possess projecting vertical fins, making them appear as if they are rockets ready to launch into the skies. The heavily stylized, abstracted forms interspersed between the fins may be read as flames, water spouts, oil gushers, or palmetto leaves.

The courthouse interior features a rich palette of materials decorating the public spaces and the courtroom. The second and third floor lobbies have encaustic tile floors with a geometric, Victorian-era floral pattern of bright colors that contrasts sharply with the subtle, Moderne style of the building. Wainscots of polished Marmor pink marble line the hallways. Pilasters and fluted square columns in the main second floor lobby are of the same Marmor pink marble with a gilded pattern of incised triangles forming stylized caps. The lobby ceiling has shallow plaster coffers with square steps, and its original five bronze light fixtures remain in place.

The steel railing of the monumental interior staircase is a delicate, web-like pattern in the Zig-Zag Moderne style and features a wood cap. The metal railing extends through all three floors of the courthouse and along the third floor balcony at the courtroom entrances. The staircase has honed gray marble treads and risers.

All of the courthouse's interior doors, transoms, sidelights, and woodwork are oak, and the finish has been slightly bleached. The original darker, walnut-like stain is visible behind the dropped ceiling tiles that were installed decades later. All of the furnishings of the commissioners' courtroom, including the judge's bench, tables, chairs, rails, pews, and tall wainscot are also of oak. In the third-floor district courtroom, all of the furnishings are of walnut. A convex fluting motif is used like a cap on the top edge of all the furnishings and tall wainscot inside the courtrooms. Pilasters in the district courtroom are capped with square wooden panels carved in a design of fern buds reminiscent of Ionic columns. In the commissioners' court, the wainscot is topped with a sinuous wave and the pilasters end in billowing clouds.

Six original bronze and glass light fixtures remain in the lobby and east entry. The five lobby fixtures, in two sizes, are round with projecting fins, similar to the monumental aluminum lanterns of the building's exterior. In the east entry vestibule, a rectangular bronze fixture with floating glass panels is suspended on three ornate rods. Similar fixtures in the

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Chambers County Courthouse
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west stair landing and the district courtroom were removed in 1966 but have been found, stored in wood crates beneath the east terrace.

The first recorded cleaning of the courthouse exterior was a sandblasting treatment in 1948; the stone has been cleaned several times since then, causing some damage to the stone surface and loss of sculptural detail. The steel windows were replaced in 1966 with aluminum single-hung windows that do not follow the original mullion patterns. The original steel casement windows were divided into a small light at the top and bottom with a longer middle light; large glazed transoms over all four entrances were screened by aluminum grilles with a pattern of circles fitted inside a grid of squares.

Despite these modifications, the building's exterior retains a high degree of integrity of craftsmanship. The courthouse's most important architectural features, including its massing and its ornamentation, remain unchanged. Like the exterior, the interior of the courthouse also retains a high degree of integrity, reinforcing the building's continuous significance to the community. Furthermore, the Chambers County Courthouse retains its integrity of location and association, having served the county and its communities without interruption since its completion in 1937.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- 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 VALUE, 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: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Government, Architecture

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1935-1958

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1937

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Corneil G. Curtis, Architect; Robert E. McKee, General Contractor

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-8 through 8-16).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheet 9-17).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- 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 (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Chambers County Courthouse has served as the center of county government for seventy years. The building signifies the strength and unity of Chambers County, which was nearly dissolved in the aftermath of a devastating hurricane in 1915. After the first courthouse was consumed by fire in April 1935, Chambers County received a grant from the federal Public Works Administration to construct a new judicial building. Architect Corneil G. Curtis of Austin, Texas, who had designed two other courthouses in Liberty and Rusk counties, provided Chambers County with a design for a new courthouse that followed contemporary trends, blending traditional elements with the "modernistic" forms and ornamentation. For its decades of service as the center of Chambers County government, the courthouse is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Government at the state level of significance. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the state level of significance as an excellent example of Texas's early modern courthouses.

Development of Chambers County and Anahuac, Texas²

Chambers County, divided by the Trinity River and named for Thomas Jefferson Chambers, is a rural county less than twenty miles east of Houston in the Coastal Prairie region of Southeast Texas. The city of Anahuac, the county seat of Chambers County, is on the northeast bank of Trinity Bay on the Texas Gulf Coast. The county comprises 616 square miles of level terrain that slopes toward Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, its southern and southwestern boundaries. Its abundant coastal marshland has never supported a large population, but its watery lowlands are well-suited to the production of rice, the county's principal crop. Other farms produce corn, feed grains, citrus fruits, vegetables, and some cotton, in addition to significant numbers of beef cattle, hogs, sheep, and poultry. Natural resources include salt domes, industrial sand, and pine and hardwood timber; oil, gas, and sulfur are present in commercial quantities.

Karankawa, Coapite, and Copane Indians lived in the area when the first European expeditions traveled the lower Trinity River. The land that eventually became Chambers County formed part of the Atascosito (or lower Trinity River) District, a subdivision of Nacogdoches in Spanish Texas. By the late 17th century the French intruded on Spanish interests by trading with the Indians as far as the Sabine River. French trading expeditions to the area along Galveston Bay and the lower Trinity in 1754 provoked Spanish efforts to protect the region with a system of missions guarded by adjoining presidios. In 1756 Spanish missionaries established Nuestra Señora de la Luz Mission near the site of present Wallisville, and, to gain strategic control of the lower Trinity River, soldiers constructed San Agustín de Ahumada Presidio on its east bank near what is now the Chambers-Liberty county line. Missionaries worked among Orcoquiza Indians who inhabited the region. The threat of French control ended with the signing of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, awarding Louisiana to the Spanish, yet the area remained insecure. Indigenous populations remained steadfast in defense of their homelands and cultures, resulting in the relocation of the Spanish missions in 1766 and abandonment of the Spanish settlements by 1772. In 1805 Spanish troops landed at what is now Smith's Point to reinforce the Atascosito community, but by 1812 few Spanish settlers had moved into the region; subsequently filibusters used it as a staging ground to mount attacks against Spanish Mexico.

² This section was adapted from Diana J. Kleiner, "Chambers County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed on 20 November 2007 at: <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/CC/hcc9.html>; Kevin Ladd, "Anahuac, Texas," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed on 20 November 2007 at: <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/AA/hja8.html>; and Margaret Swett Henson, "Chambers, Thomas Jefferson," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed on 20 November at: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/fch8.html>.

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The earliest inhabitants of the Anahuac area were Atakapan Indians. In 1721 French explorer Jean Baptiste de La Harpe visited a village of some 200 Atakapans located between the future site of Anahuac and Round Point. The site eventually was called Perry's Point, a name attributed to the noted filibuster Colonel Henry Perry, who established a camp there in 1816. By the early 1800s, Alabama and Coushatta Indians had arrived in the area from Alabama, assimilated the local Bidais and Orcoquizas, taken over their livestock trade with settlers along the Atascosito Road, and planted crops. A colony of French exiles from Napoleon's Grand Army under Charles François Antoine L'Allemand—planning to free Napoleon and put his brother Joseph on the Mexican throne—attempted to establish themselves near the site of present Anahuac in 1818, but were driven out by the Spanish. Jean Laffite, the infamous French pirate, left the area permanently around 1820.

After the Mexican war of independence from Spain in 1821, American settlement in the area began at the invitation of the Mexican government. Some of the pirate Laffite's men remained in his absence, and *empresarios* Haden Edwards, Joseph Vehlein, David G. Burnet, and Lorenzo de Zavala received grants in the area; the major portion of what is now Chambers County was part of Vehlein's grant. Struggles between American settlers and Mexican authorities increased as officials sought to prevent further immigration from the United States and maintain control. Colonel John Davis Bradburn, the newly appointed Mexican commander, arrived at Perry's Point in October 1830 with three officers and forty soldiers to begin construction of a fort. In January 1831 General Manuel de Mier y Terán, commanding officer of the Mexican states of Coahuila y Texas, officially named the fort Anahuac after the ancient capital of the Aztecs. Colonel Bradburn hired a surveyor to lay out the town according to an 1823 Mexican law mandating a grid of streets running north to south, each street fifty-four feet wide, and he named the streets after the eighteen states of the Mexican Republic. Bradburn's difficulties with the American settlers culminated in the Turtle Bayou Resolutions and the eventual withdrawal of the Mexican garrison.

In 1829 Virginia-born, Kentucky-trained lawyer, surveyor, and would-be politician Thomas Jefferson Chambers (1802-1865) obtained extensive properties on the eastern shore of Trinity Bay in partial compensation for his work as surveyor general and chief justice of the Supreme Court of Coahuila y Texas. Chambers then purchased a five-league tract the following year, including the site that would be present-day Anahuac, from Vincent Padilla, a fellow surveyor and close friend whose relative was the land commissioner. This property stretched from Turtle Bay south to Double Bayou, and Chambers briefly called the town Chambersia in his own honor. Local settlers, some of whom had been on their claims since 1824, were upset by Chambers's land grab, but they could not know that he was only just beginning to acquire property in the area.

Although he had hoped that the town would become "one of the most important emporiums of the Gulf of Mexico," Chambers was not able to attract investment in Chambersia, and in 1842 the sheriff sold the tract for back taxes to John O'Brian and restored the name Anahuac. Chambers attempted to win the property back through the local courts, but when he lost his case, he took matters into his own hands and killed O'Brian. The Liberty County court did not indict Chambers for the murder, however, and he reclaimed possession of the land. O'Brian's widow challenged this claim through the state Supreme Court and won in 1855, yet Chambers remained in residence on the property.

Chambers, whose property was valued at more than a half-million dollars by 1860, was the county's wealthiest, and perhaps most notorious, resident. Beginning in 1838, Chambers became involved in a long-running civil dispute with Charles Willcox over ownership of the Anahuac townsite. In 1862 the Texas high court decided in favor of Willcox yet, as in the O'Brian case, Chambers remained in residence on the property. Chambers also held a claim on the land upon which the state capitol now stands in Austin, but this title claim was not fully resolved until 1925. By that time, however,

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Chambers was long dead, having been killed in his Anahuac home by a shotgun blast fired through an open window. Although no one was ever arrested for this shooting, many locals believed that the assassin was Albert V. Willcox.

Thomas Jefferson Chambers's nephew, William Morton Chambers, was installed as the first county judge of Chambers County, which was formed in 1858 from Liberty and Jefferson counties, and organized the same year with Wallisville as its county seat. The opening of a meat-packing plant in Wallisville in the 1870s reflected the continuing importance of ranching in the Chambers County economy, though many cattlemen drove their herds north to Kansas City or shipped them after railroad service reached the area. Because railroad routes reached no farther than the county's eastern and western borders by the 1890s, with the exception of a single branch line that provided freight service to the interior, Chambers County remained isolated and dependent on steamer traffic and other water transportation to Galveston. No major towns developed in the county until 1896, when settlers from the Midwest, who also developed the port at Bolivar, helped to complete the Gulf and Interstate Railway from Beaumont to Bolivar Peninsula.

The Anahuac Townsite Company, under the direction of William Duncan Willcox, George R. Fahring, and Francis M. Hamilton, began real estate development of the town in the early 1900s. Shortly thereafter, local business leaders began to campaign for Anahuac to be named the new county seat, and it was made so in an April 1907 election. Legal efforts to reverse the election failed, and the First Court of Civil Appeals ordered county records transferred from Wallisville to Anahuac in 1908. Efforts to dissolve the county itself were made in 1915, 1923, and 1925 as conflicts developed over stock laws, prohibition, and the county seat question. These were complicated by offers of lower taxes from Harris and Liberty counties, whose officials hoped to cash in on Chambers County oilfields. Nevertheless, Anahuac has remained as the seat of Chambers County since the 1907 election.

Previous Chambers County Courthouses³

The first three county courthouses were built in the original county seat of Wallisville, to the northwest of Anahuac. Daniel B. Wallis donated land for a courthouse square, and a wood frame courthouse was constructed there in 1858. Fire consumed the courthouse and all of its records on 2 December 1875. A similar fire destroyed the Liberty County courthouse one year earlier, prompting many to suspect that area land speculators had started both fires in an attempt to destroy all documentation and confuse titles of land ownership in the two counties.

While waiting for a second courthouse to be built, Chambers County commissioners rented the upper floor of the Joseph LaFour Hotel and another room in a building owned by James Wilson for the use of the district court and clerk. In 1879 the county also rented the Wallisville schoolhouse before the completion of a new, two-story, wood frame courthouse in 1880. This second county courthouse was constructed at a cost of six hundred dollars.

The third Chambers County courthouse to be built in Wallisville was completed in January 1887. Houston contractor August Baumbach built the two-story courthouse using brick covered with stucco, but his design was rather simple in contrast to the more ornate, towering courthouses constructed throughout Texas during this period, many in the Second Empire style. Baumbach designed the building as a cubic mass of three bays, capped with a hipped roof. The center bay of each façade stepped forward slightly, making all of the façades appear to be equal, although only two sides of the building functioned as entrances. These center bays were crowned with gables that advanced from the hipped roof. The courthouse's corners were articulated with large quoins and the elevations were ordered horizontally by three pair of

³ This section is adapted from the Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, prepared by Bailey Architects, Houston, 2006.

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string courses: one slightly below the arch of the first floor windows; one at the second floor line; and one slightly above the midpoint of the second story windows. All windows and doors had segmental arches except for the paired second floor windows in the center of each façade, which were arched. A shallow frieze with panels of diagonal soldier brick wrapped the top of the building like a ribbon. There was no expression of any classical details, such as capitals and bases, curved moldings, or dentils. The soffit of the short overhang was likewise plain, without brackets or modillions. The floor plan of the courthouses had a center hall on the ground floor running the length of the building with three offices on each side and a staircase at the north end. The courtroom occupied most of the second floor, with two rooms flanking the stairwell.

In November 1894 Chambers County moved to construct a new jail on the east side of the courthouse square, approving the sale of bonds for that purpose. A contract with Diebold Safe and Lock Company, signed in April 1895, began the building process for a two-story brick jail, which, when completed, featured a distinctive tower. Each façade of the tower had tall, arched windows, and a peaked roof rose sharply from masonry gables on all four sides, nearly overshadowing the neighboring courthouse. Although this third county courthouse and jail were demolished in 1948, their foundations remain in a grassy field along the Trinity River.

Wallisville declined after the economic panic of 1907, but Anahuac developed into a boomtown, and its boosters filed a suit to make it the seat of Chambers County. On 11 April 1907, citizens voted to relocate the county government to Anahuac, and though the election results were contested in the state court, Anahuac was confirmed as the victor. On 18 April 1907, the county advertised for plans and specifications for a new courthouse and, in the meantime, rented the Woodman Hall over Willcox & Swinney's Store as a temporary courthouse.

F. W. Steinman, a contractor, submitted the winning bid for the new county courthouse in October 1908. Steinman's plans and specifications estimated the construction costs at \$32,000. A bond election to raise funds for the new courthouse was held in June 1911, and the bonds were issued the following month. The deed for the site was executed on 17 August 1911, and construction was completed on 21 August 1912. The bonds also paid for the construction of a jail, designed by Southern Structural Steel Company of San Antonio and estimated to cost \$8,500. The courthouse featured indoor plumbing, telephones, and electric lights; a separate, outdoor toilet was provided for "colored people."

Steinman's design was a truly monumental, classically-inspired structure in the Renaissance Revival style, and it featured an enormous, eclectic tower. Rising only one block away from the bluff overlooking the Trinity River and bay, the brick and stone courthouse dominated the modest wood framed structures of the surrounding town and likely was visible from far offshore. Few courthouses in Texas, in any era, were designed as boldly. Photographs suggest that the façade *parti* was a simplification of Bernini's Palazzo Chigi-Odescalchi, built in Rome during the seventeenth century. All of the façades of the three-story courthouse were organized in the classic tripartite palazzo hierarchy of a one-story base, a middle section of two stories unified by colossal pilasters, and a tall entablature with a projecting cornice as its cap. A tall, solid balustrade, punctuated with urns, functioned as an attic story. Ground-floor openings were squared at the top and extended to the broad string course that formed a plinth for the colossal orders. Unlike its Renaissance models, the first floor walls were not rusticated, but smooth. The arched second-floor openings were accented by pediments on consoles that appeared to float on the wall plane. On the third floor, the openings were held tight under the cornice and were squared at the top.

A projecting temple front provided a dramatic emphasis to the principal façade. Its smooth columns stood on a base story porch and rose two stories to support an entablature and pediment with a single oculus in its tympanum. Tripled columns marked each corner of the temple front, which had two interior columns. The lateral façades, in contrast, contained deeply

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recessed central entries, suggesting that the courthouse floor plan was likely the typical central-and-cross-axis corridor scheme.

The courthouse tower, designed in an eclectic, French Second Empire style, provided a jarring contrast with the ersatz palazzo building below it. A tall, square platform with its own cornice and balustrade rose behind the projecting pediment to support the tower. The tower was two stories tall and featured a pair of arched windows on the first level of each side. The second level openings appeared as a serliana—an arched central window flanked by two smaller arched windows—with a small balcony projecting below its center. The arched top of the central window incorporated a round clock face. The tall, hipped roof changed from a square at its base to an octagon at its top. Low dormers rested directly above the pediments above the serliana on each side. The tower was topped with cresting, an oddly residual Victorian feature on an otherwise classically-inspired structure.

The first Chambers County Courthouse in Anahuac was destroyed by fire on 28 April 1935, after less than 23 years of service. The county judge and other citizens entered the smoking building and were able to save the county records, the judge having resorted to throwing documents out of the second story windows. The sheriff's investigation determined an electrical short to be the cause of the conflagration. Following the fire, the first floor of the small brick jail on the southeast corner of the courthouse square served as a temporary courtroom, and a small wood frame structure was built adjacent to it to provide additional space.

Building the Second Chambers County Courthouse⁴

The very day after the fire that destroyed the elaborate, Renaissance Revival-style courthouse, the Commissioners' Court moved to investigate means to finance a new judicial building. Although the disaster may have unified some in the community, it also exacerbated deep-rooted tensions among others. An election was held on 29 June 1935 to determine, once again, the location of the county seat of Chambers. While some believed it should remain at Anahuac, others thought it should be relocated to a "more desirous and convenient location." Certainly the lack of a county courthouse bolstered the arguments of those against the town of Anahuac. This was not the first time that the county's strength had been tested in the aftermath of disaster; in the wake of a devastating hurricane in 1915, county residents seriously considered dissolving Chambers County and splitting it between neighboring Harris, Jefferson, and Liberty counties. These discussions came to a head during the Great Depression, when a 1931 petition drive finally rejected the dissolution movement. The results of the election on 29 June 1935 showed a similar display of strength, as the returns heavily favored maintaining the county seat at Anahuac. The Commissioners' Court proceeded with its plans to build a second courthouse.

By August 1935, an application was filed for federal aid in the form of a Public Works Administration (P.W.A.) grant, which was received on 9 December 1935 in the amount of \$90,000. As early as 8 July 1935, the Commissioners' Court motioned to hire Austin-based architect Corneil G. Curtis to design the new Chambers County courthouse, and on 22 November 1935 the court resolved to hire him and paid a \$500 fee for "preliminary skeleton plans and specifications." Curtis worked quickly on these plans, which may have been possible since the architect had already built two similar courthouses in Liberty and Rusk counties. A foundation plan bears a completion date of 26 November 1935, only four days after Curtis officially received this commission. Bids were received for this foundation work by 14 December 1935.

⁴ This section is adapted from the Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, prepared by Bailey Architects, Houston, 2006.

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

A construction superintendent, F. L. Corey, was hired on 18 February 1936. Construction bids were received on 13 April 1936 along with bids for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work. J. W. Zempter Contracting Company of Galveston (\$184,985), Robert E. McKee of El Paso (\$180,900), Pheiner & Ceban of San Antonio (\$187,000), and Thomas Bate & Son of Dallas (\$197,048) each submitted bids to the county. Although the "bids received were in excess of the amount contemplated, the county resolved to issue necessary warrants to complete and equip the project." After architect Curtis reviewed and approved the submissions, the low bid of Robert E. McKee was accepted and a construction contract approved on 11 May 1936.

With the recommendations of the architect and superintendent, the county issued a Certificate of Acceptance for the completed courthouse building on 14 June 1937. The finished structure cost \$276,000, paid in part with the \$90,000 P.W.A. grant along with \$43,000 cash and bonds for \$145,000. Dedication ceremonies were held on 26 June 1937 and included a parade featuring the 25-piece South Park School Band of Beaumont and the American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps; dedication exercises; a lunchtime barbecue followed by "special entertainment" and three ball games; and an evening dance at the American Legion Hall, Turtle Bayou.

At the time of completion, four structures remained on the southeast side of the courthouse square. The 1892 brick jail structure stood at the corner and remained in place until 1943. Three other buildings were demolished later in 1937: the wood frame structure constructed after the 1935 fire, which served as a temporary courthouse; another wood frame building to the west of the jail; and a brick toilet, possibly the "colored toilet" built with the 1912 courthouse. Today there are no other buildings on the courthouse square in Anahuac.

Corneil G. Curtis, Architect, and Robert E. McKee, Contractor⁵

Corneil G. Curtis (1890-1963) was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, and began his architectural training before 1910 with the Dallas firm of Lang and Witchell. Curtis apprenticed with the esteemed firm and may have assisted in the design of the Sanger Brothers Building and the Sears and Roebuck Wholesale Store, both in Dallas. Lang and Witchell were one of the earliest practitioners of the Prairie and Chicago schools of architecture in the state of Texas. Curtis worked for the firm during the same period in which a former employee of Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles E. Barglebaugh found employment in their offices.

In 1912 Curtis relocated to Paris, Texas, to oversee a project for Lang and Witchell. While there he met and married Mary L. Means, the daughter of local grocer Oscar L. Means. Curtis chose to remain in Paris and established his own practice as Curtis, Broad, and Lightfoot, which later became Curtis and Lightfoot. In 1916 Barglebaugh designed the Prairie School-influenced First National Bank in Paris, and Curtis assisted in the completion of that building. Later in 1916 the city of Paris suffered a fire that destroyed much of its residential area and most of its commercial core. Curtis, working with various partners, designed many of the buildings that replaced the older, Victorian-era structures, including the American National Bank, the Perkins Dry Goods Store, and several schools and residences. He also assisted in the design of the Lamar County courthouse with Sanguinet and Staats (1920). Perhaps the most important building Curtis and Lightfoot completed for the beleaguered town was the Paris City Hall and Fire Station (1920). Curtis also completed a more

⁵ This section is adapted from the Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, prepared by Bailey Architects, Houston, 2006, including interviews with Corneil G. Curtis, Jr., conducted in Austin, Texas, by Sue Winton Moss, in September 1999. On McKee, see Irene and Duffy Stanley, "McKee, Robert Eugene, Sr.," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed on 21 November 2007 at: <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/MM/fmncv.html>; also see his obituary in the *Houston Post*, 22 October 1964; and Herman Liebreich, "Mr. Robert E. McKee, Sr.," *Password* 12 (Winter 1967).

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

personal project there in 1923: a new cobblestone, Craftsman-style bungalow for his wife's parents in what is now known as the Church Street Historic District.

After this building boom subsided and architectural commissions in Paris slowed, Curtis relocated his family and his practice to Houston in 1926. He collaborated with Dallas-based architect Arthur Thomas on several projects in Houston, and they received commissions for several large civic structures, including the Rusk County courthouse in Henderson (1928), the Liberty County courthouse in Liberty (1931), and the city halls of two oil boomtowns, Alvin and Goose Creek, Texas.

The late 1920s and early 1930s were a prolific period in Curtis's career. He designed a number of buildings, including residences, schools, and commercial buildings, although not all of these plans were realized. His designs for schools may have had the same general form but were decorated in different styles, such as the Mission Revival or Moderne. Curtis often employed the popular Tudor Revival, Mediterranean, or Colonial Revival styles for his residential projects, and the Mediterranean or Moderne styles for commercial structures. His plan for the Metzger's Dairy processing plant in Houston featured monumental milk bottles at its corners, perhaps the most whimsical proposal of his career. Strongly influenced by his apprenticeship with Lang and Witchell as well as his collaborations with Barglebaugh, Curtis was part of the vanguard of architects who brought the Prairie School to Texas. By the time he relocated to Houston after the Paris boom, Curtis's work showed the influence of his long friendship with the architect Dudley Green, who had attended the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris, France. Green was considered to be the "Art Deco" expert at Lang and Witchell and designed the Dallas Power and Light Building (1920) and the Lone Star Gas Building (1931) for the firm. The courthouses in Rusk and Liberty counties, and the later Chambers County courthouse all show Curtis's adept handling of the Moderne or Modern Classic style.

In 1934 Curtis moved to Austin, where he remained for thirty years until his death. He continued his practice and received many commissions, some of which were financed by the Public Works Administration, including the Chambers County courthouse and three schools in the Brownwood area. A school he designed in Anahuac, built with P.W.A. funds, was purported to be the largest school under one roof in the entire state. Along with his wife, Curtis was very active in the lobbying effort to require registration and certification for architects in Texas, and the legislative effort—led by Dallas architect Lester Flynt—was based out of the Curtises' Austin home. In 1937 the state legislature established the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners, and Curtis received license number 14.

A veteran of a cavalry unit during World War I, Curtis tried to enlist in the army during World War II, despite his age. Instead the architect worked with a private contractor building military installations in the Caribbean. After the war, Curtis resumed his practice, collaborating with A. B. Benson and then with Alvin Newbury. In the early 1950s, Curtis became the chief architect at the Texas Highway Department, designing and building resident engineer offices and maintenance complexes throughout the agency's twenty-five districts. Many of the agency's district offices show a strong International Style influence. After he reached the age of 65 in 1955, Curtis became more selective regarding his commissions, preferring to accept projects in Amarillo, Brownwood, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Paris. He retired from the Texas Highway Department in 1962 and died the following year at age 72.

Robert Eugene (Gene) McKee, Sr., was born in the Lake View neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois, in 1889. His family moved when he was very young to St. Louis, Missouri, where he attended the Manual Training School of Washington University. McKee left St. Louis as a young man to live on his uncle's ranch at Elk, New Mexico, and after a short stay there he relocated in 1910 to El Paso, Texas, and began his career in the engineering and construction fields. After working as a draftsman and engineer for the El Paso Milling Company and the engineering department of the city of El

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

Paso, McKee began his own construction company in 1913 and quickly became one of the most prominent general contractors in the United States.

By 1935 McKee had built the naval docks and the Marine Hospital at the naval base in San Diego, California. In Hawaii his company built various military facilities, including the power plant at the U. S. Naval Air Station at Pearl Harbor and, at the adjacent Hickam Field, the Air Corps Double Hangars and a 3,200-man barracks. He was also constructing officers' quarters, warehouses, air corps machine shops, and an engine-test facility at Hickam Field, and all were substantially complete, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941.

During World War II McKee built the largest military center in Texas—Camp Bowie, near Brownwood—in a record time of ten months, and his company also constructed large military installations in the Panama Canal Zone and in the Territory of Hawaii. He was chosen to be the general contractor of the facilities for the Los Alamos Atomic Energy Project in New Mexico, and in October 1945 Major General Leslie R. Groves, officer in charge of the atomic project, awarded McKee the Army-Navy "E" for high achievement. In the 1950s McKee constructed the Cadet Quarters Complex, the Air Force Chapel, and several other large facilities at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado. In 1959 McKee served as the general contractor for the new Los Angeles International Airport.

McKee's company built a large percentage of El Paso's major structures, including offices, hospitals, banks, schools, churches, military installations, and facilities at the University of Texas at El Paso. Two of his pet projects were the Austin High School stadium, named for him, and the Southwestern Children's Home. His firm became one of the largest individually owned contracting companies in the United States when he incorporated his construction operations in 1950, and at one time McKee had 42,000 workers on his payroll. While building a variety of major projects in thirty-five of the fifty states, McKee operated from branch offices in Dallas, Santa Fe, Los Angeles, Honolulu, and the Panama Canal Zone, but kept his headquarters and home in El Paso.

McKee was very active in the El Paso community, and he was appointed city alderman in El Paso in 1928. He also maintained his personal ties to New Mexico and became a major collector of art made in and around the art colonies of Santa Fe and Taos; in 1947 McKee was appointed colonel and aide-de-camp to the governor of New Mexico. McKee served on the El Paso Museum of Art's board of directors and donated his Southwestern and Native American art collections, establishing the museum's McKee Collection of Paintings. In 1952 he formed the Robert E. and Evelyn McKee Foundation, a nonprofit, charitable corporation within the United States. The City of El Paso honored him as a "conquistador" in 1960, and he was inducted into the El Paso County Historical Society's Hall of Honor, posthumously, in 1967. He died in 1964 in El Paso, still active as chairman of the board of Robert E. McKee, General Contractor, Incorporated.

Architectural Significance of the Chambers County Courthouse

The second Chambers County Courthouse in Anahuac is a significant example of the modern classical style frequently utilized throughout Texas for civic buildings during the 1930s and 1940s. Although the style is most commonly referred to as "Art Deco," a term derived from Paris's 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, the building's appearance is more accurately understood as a combination of fairly traditional design concepts with elements of the new "modernistic" formal vocabulary associated with Art Deco and Moderne architecture. In the United States the most common response to this new "modernistic" approach to design was the replacement of historicist decorative features with a rigidly geometric, stylized form of ornamentation. This method was applied to buildings' defining formal components, like columns and cornices, as well as in limited areas of applied decoration, often in the form

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

of low-relief sculptural carvings and flattened moldings. While structures designed in this style achieved a novel and modern appearance, what was inside the building envelope remained relatively unchanged.

In *Architecture in Texas, 1895-1945*, architectural historian Jay Henry refers to this unification of the traditional and modern as the "Modern Classic" style, while Willard B. Robinson calls it the "Stripped Classic" style in *The People's Architecture: Texas Courthouses, Jails, and Municipal Buildings*.⁶ The courthouse's traditional I-shaped, or bar-bell, courthouse plan, with the central courtroom flanked by supporting spaces, is obscured by the modern appearance of its rigidly geometric, stepped masses and its rather spare, yet very stylized ornamentation. The style is representative of the progressivism that defined the era, in which erecting a courthouse with a new, "modernistic" design became a public assertion of the county's commitment to growth and improvement.

Counties that built courthouses in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s were replacing buildings that had been constructed in the Victorian era. The Modern Classic style was the perfect solution for a county who wanted to seem progressive and forward-thinking without completely abandoning the familiarity, solidity and monumentalism of classical idioms. As Robinson suggests, these attributes made the Modern or Stripped Classic style an especially popular choice for public architecture in the 1930s. The Chambers County Courthouse is an excellent example of the style's swift and widespread adoption during this period, even in more isolated rural counties.

The Chambers County Courthouse has served the local community for over seventy years. Beyond its formal role as the center of county government, the courthouse and its square represent the heart of public life in Chambers County. The building's design exemplifies the widespread influence of Art Deco and Moderne architecture on Texas county courthouses, but also the tendency to retain some entrenched traditional features. The Chambers County Courthouse is therefore nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Government and Criterion C in the area of Architecture, both at the state level of significance.

⁶ Willard B. Robinson, *The People's Architecture: Texas Courthouses, Jails, and Municipal Buildings* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 262-269; and Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas, 1895-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993).

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Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

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Stanley, Irene, and Duffy Stanley. "McKee, Robert Eugene, Sr.," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed on 21 November 2007 at: <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/MM/fmcnv.html>.

Obituary for Robert E. McKee, Sr. *Houston Post*, 22 October 1964.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	15	337121	3294198

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The Chambers County Courthouse is centrally located on the courthouse square, which includes one full block in Anahuac, Texas, bounded on the north by North Court Street, on the east by Washington Avenue, on the south by Stowell Street, and on the west by Bolivar Avenue.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION The nomination includes all property historically associated with the building.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: Rachel Leibowitz, Historian, Texas Historical Commission, based upon the Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan by Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, of Bailey Architects, Inc.; with assistance from Bob Wheat, Chair, Chambers County Historical Commission

ORGANIZATION: Chambers County Historical Commission

DATE: 12 December 2007

STREET & NUMBER: H C Route 1, Box 217

TELEPHONE: (409) 267-6599

CITY OR TOWN: Anahuac

STATE: Texas

ZIP CODE: 77514

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see continuation sheet Map-18)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet Photo-25 through Photo-36)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS (see continuation sheets Plan-19 through Plan-24)

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Chambers County, Texas (Honorable Jimmy Sylvia, County Judge)

STREET & NUMBER: P. O. Box 939

TELEPHONE: (409) 267-8295

CITY OR TOWN: Anahuac

STATE: Texas

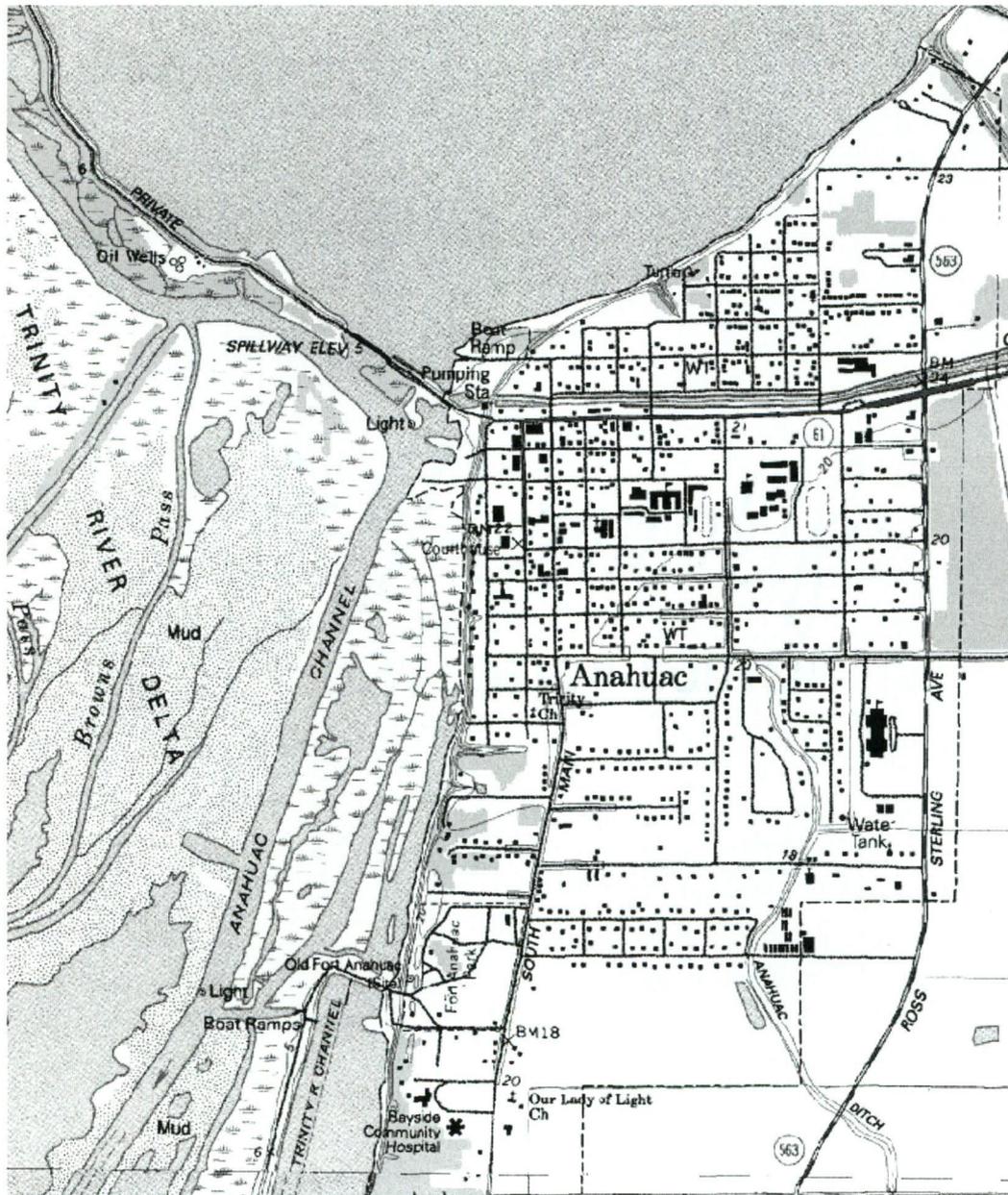
ZIP CODE: 77514

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



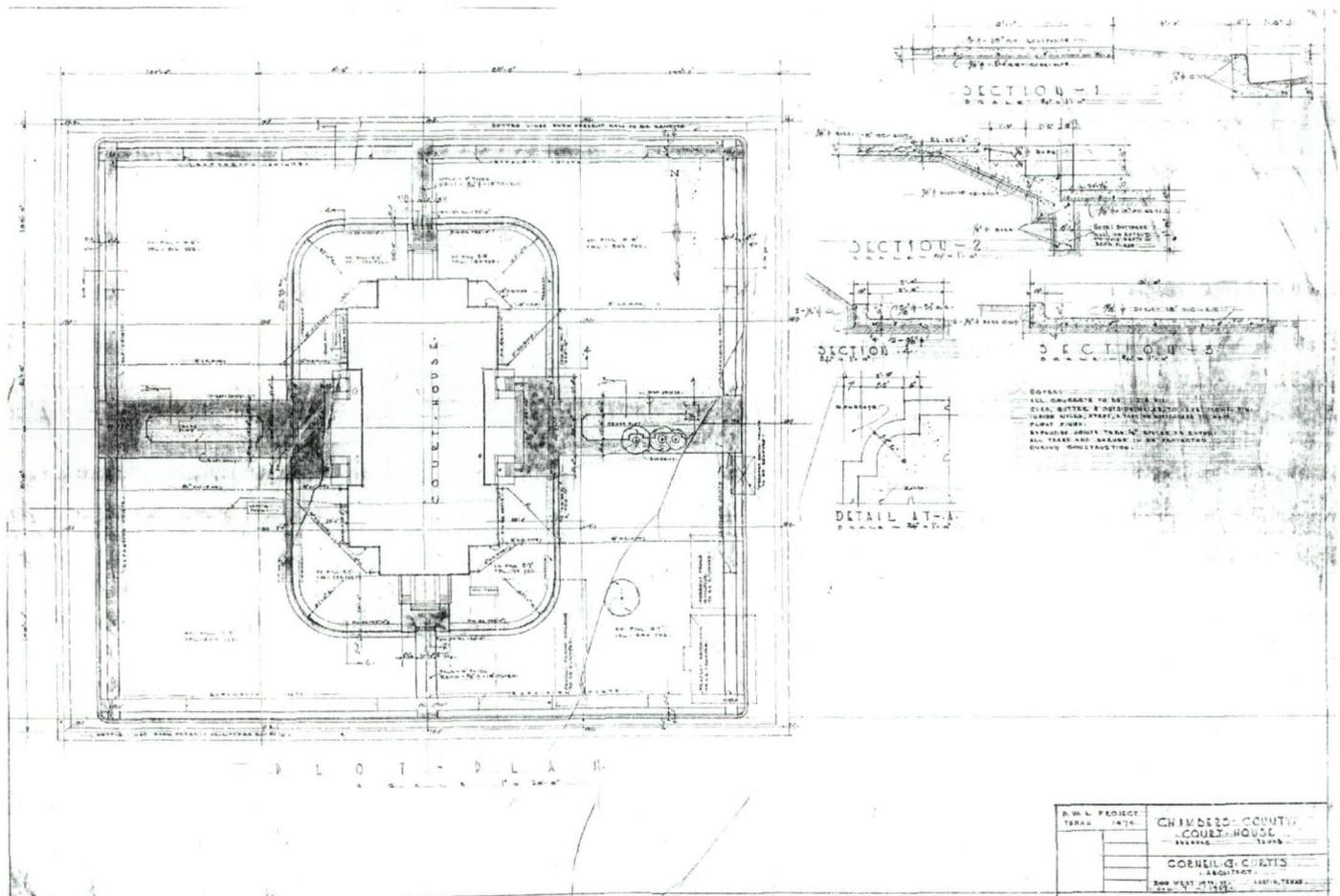
Map 1. Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Plan 1. Site Plan, Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, 1936

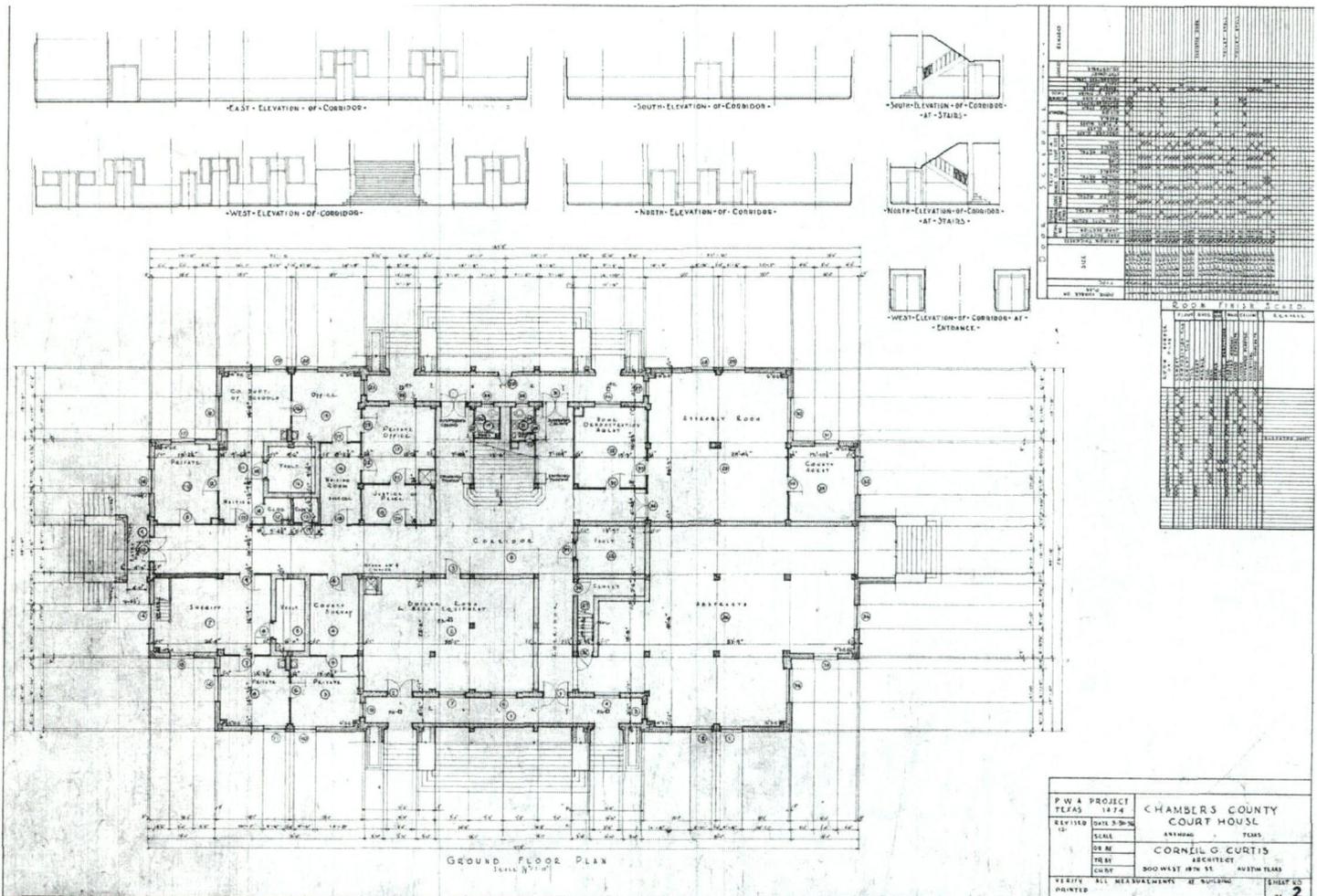
(Corneil G. Curtis Drawing Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Plan 2. Ground Floor Plan, Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, 1936

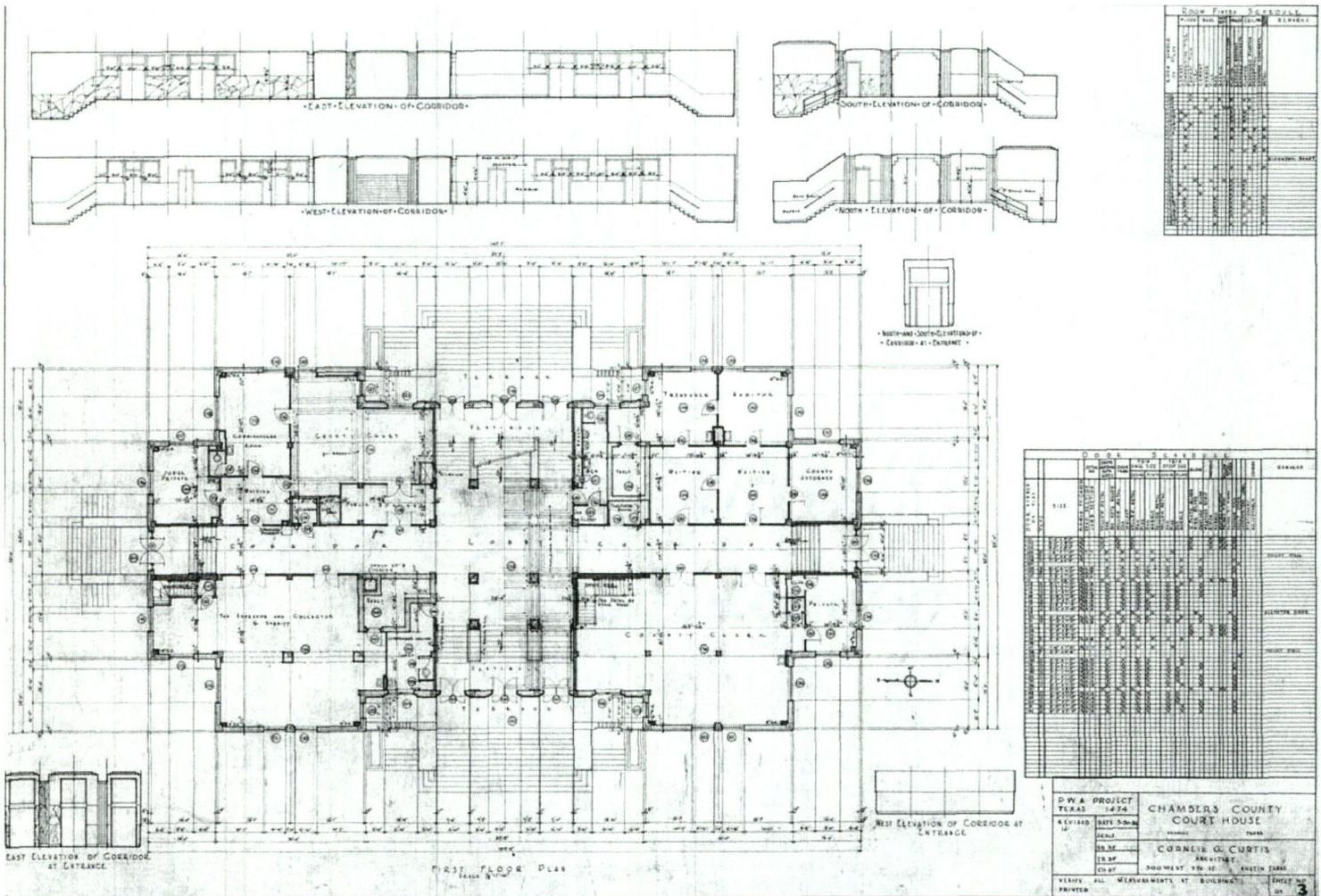
(Corneil G. Curtis Drawing Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin)

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Section PLAN Page 21

Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Plan 3. First Floor Plan, Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, 1936

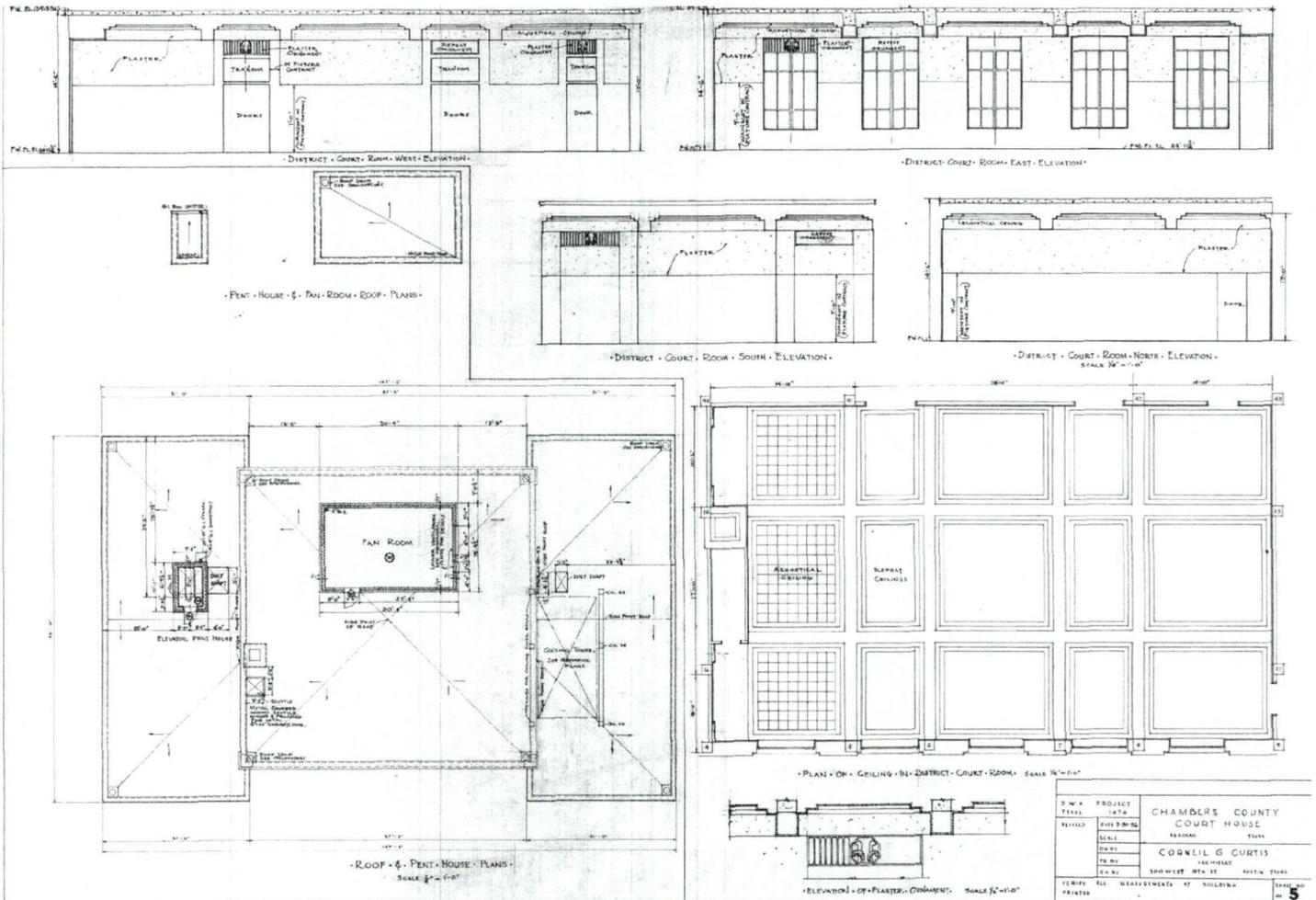
(Corneil G. Curtis Drawing Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Plan 5. Roof Plan, Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, 1936

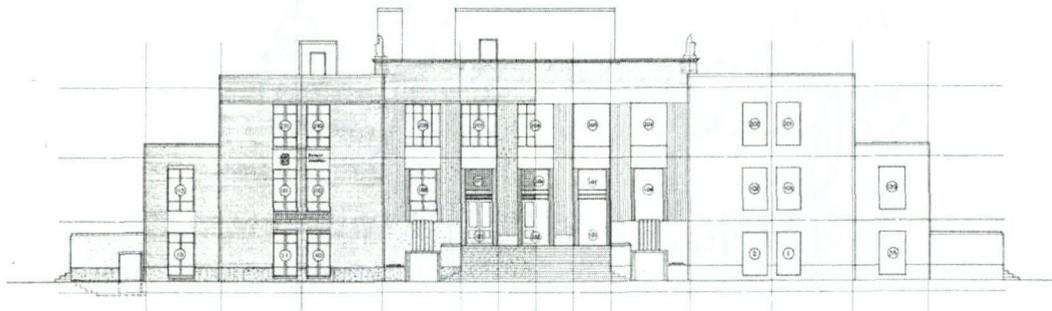
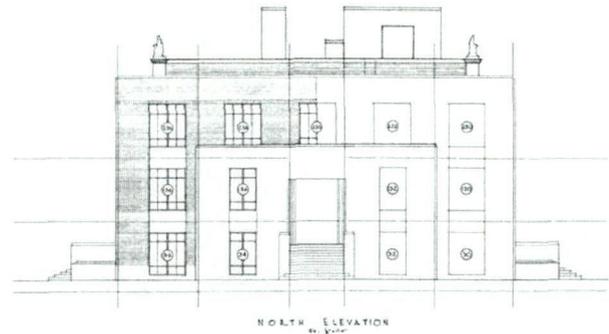
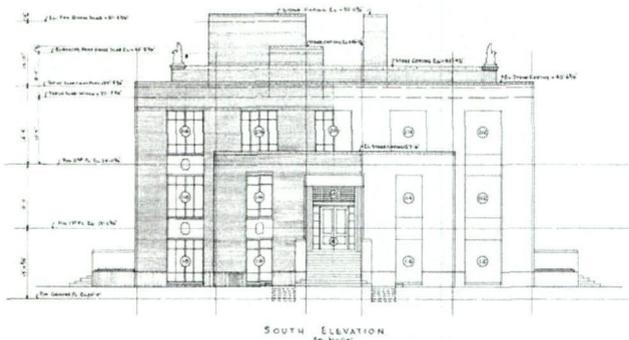
(Corneil G. Curtis Drawing Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin)

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Continuation Sheet

Section PLAN Page 24

Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



P.W. & PROJECT	CHAMBERS COUNTY
TEXAS	COURT HOUSE
REVISION	DATE DRAWN
SCALE	DATE
DESIGNER	CORNELIUS G. CURTIS
DATE	PROJECT
NO.	ADDRESS
NO.	CITY
VERIFY ALL MEASUREMENTS OF BUILDING	
PRINTED	BY 16

Plan 6. North, South, and East Elevations, Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, 1936

(Corneil G. Curtis Drawing Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin)

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Section PHOTO Page 25

Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

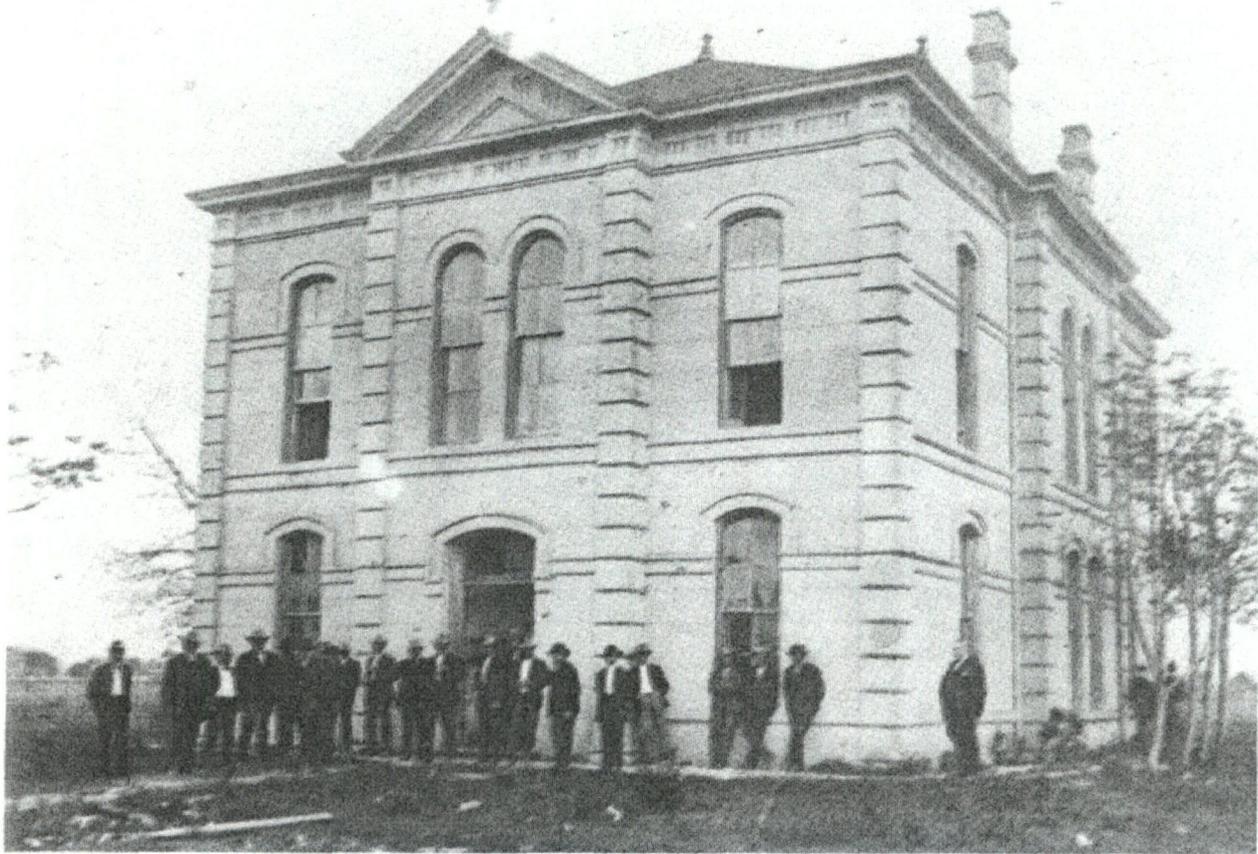


Photo 1. The third Chambers County Courthouse, Wallisville, Texas, c. 1887

(collection of Wallisville Heritage Park)

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Section PHOTO Page 26

Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

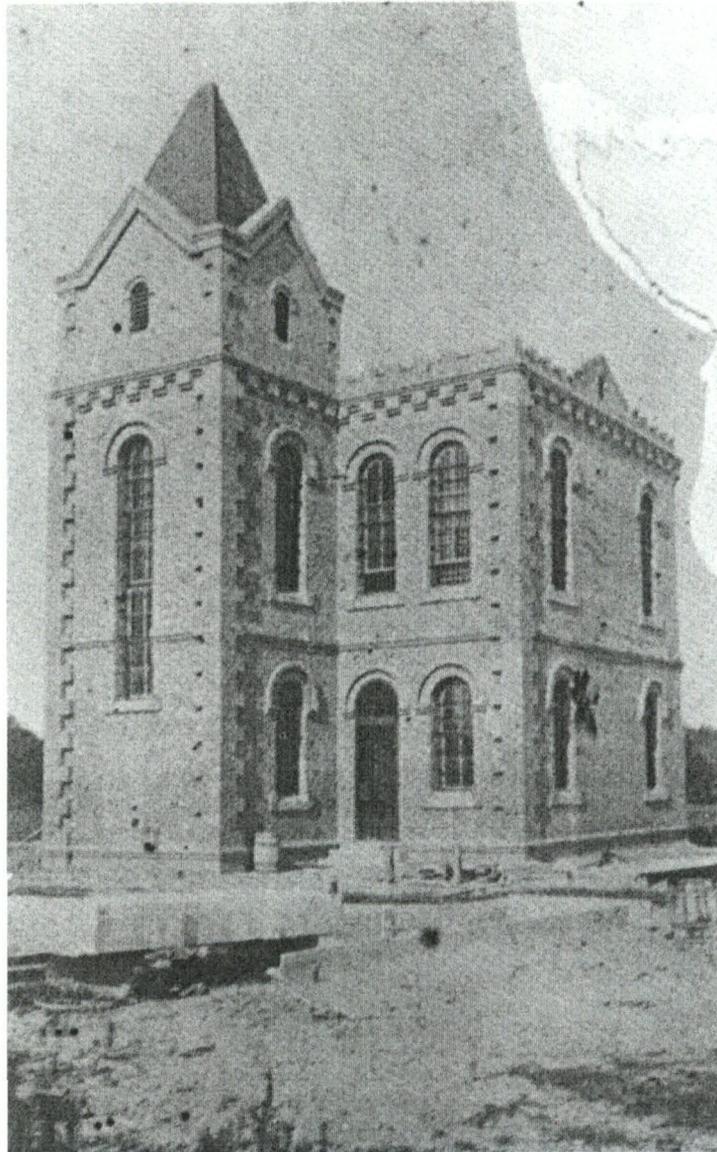


Photo 2. Chambers County Jail, Wallisville, Texas, c. 1895

(collection of Wallisville Heritage Park)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 3. The first Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, c. 1912

(collection of Wallisville Heritage Park)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo. 4. The second Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, southwest view, c. 1938

(collection of the Texas Department of Transportation)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

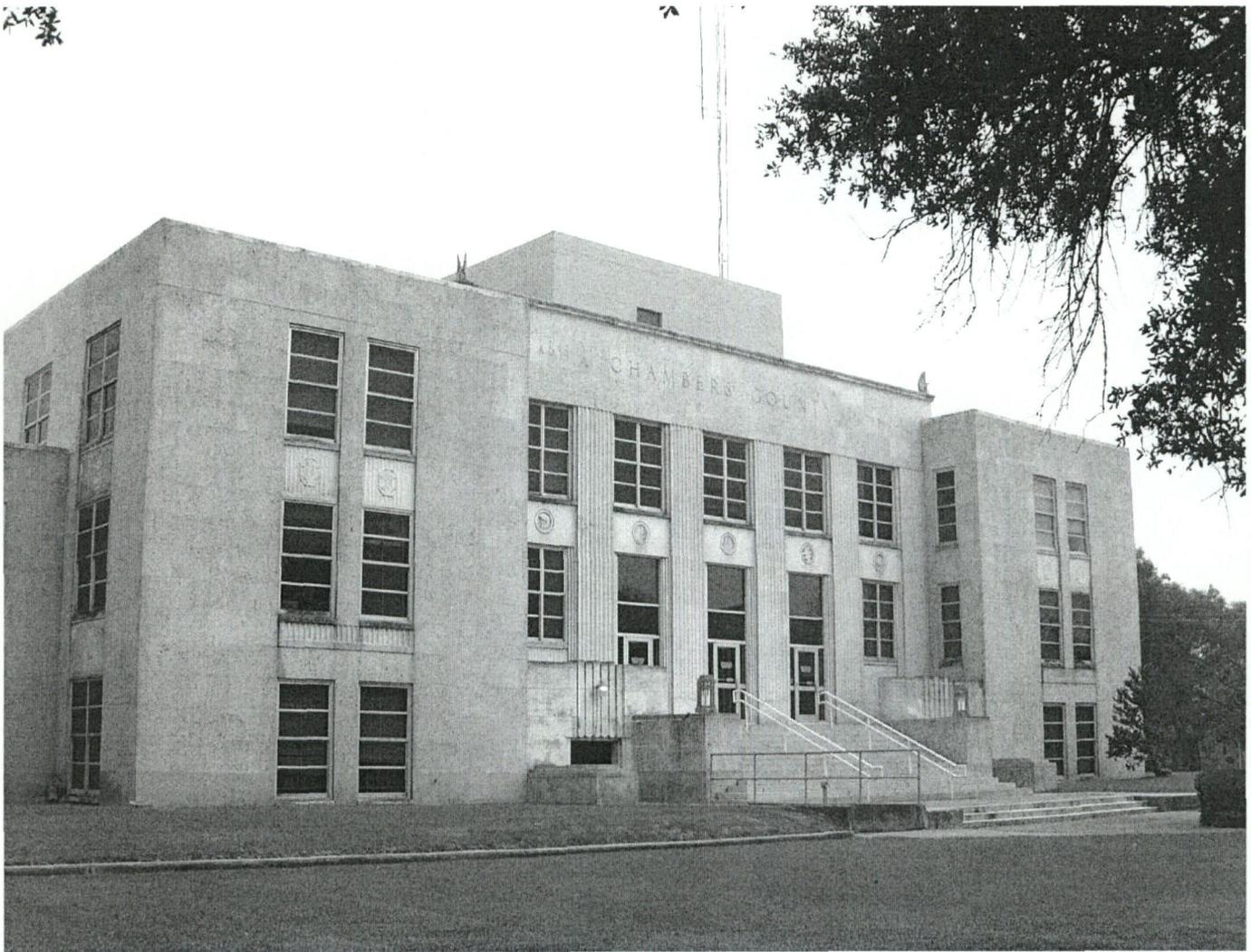


Photo 5. Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Texas, northwest view, 2006

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 6. Typical corridor with Marmor pink marble and encaustic tile floor (left)

Detail, main stair rail in the Zig-Zag Moderne style (right)

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 7. Typical lantern at entry steps (west)

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 8. First floor lobby, looking west to staircase.

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 9. Commissioners Courtroom, first floor.

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 10. District Courtroom, second floor.

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas



Photo 11. Detail, stone eagle sculpture at roof parapet

(Chambers County Courthouse Historic Preservation Master Plan, Bailey Architects, Inc.)

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Section PHOTO Page 36

Chambers County Courthouse
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

PHOTOGRAPH CONTINUATION SHEET

Chambers County Courthouse
Chambers County, Anahuac, TX
Photographed by Gerald Moorhead, FAIA
2002

Negatives on file with Gerald Moorhead, Bailey Architects, Houston, TX

Photo 1 of 5
Southeast view
Camera facing northwest

Photo 2 of 5
Central bay, west façade
Camera facing east

Photo 3 of 5
South façade and steps
Camera facing north

Photo 4 of 5
Typical aluminum lantern at entry steps (west entry)
Camera facing north

Photo 5 of 5
Lobby, first floor, looking west
Camera facing west

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Chambers County Courthouse

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Chambers

DATE RECEIVED: 3/12/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/31/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/15/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/25/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000339

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 4.25.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



1
CHAMBERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ANAHUAC TX
VIEW FROM SE TO NW
GERALD MOORHEAD 2002



2
CHAMBERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ANAHUAC TX
CENTRAL BAY, WEST FACADE
GERALD MOORHEAD 2002



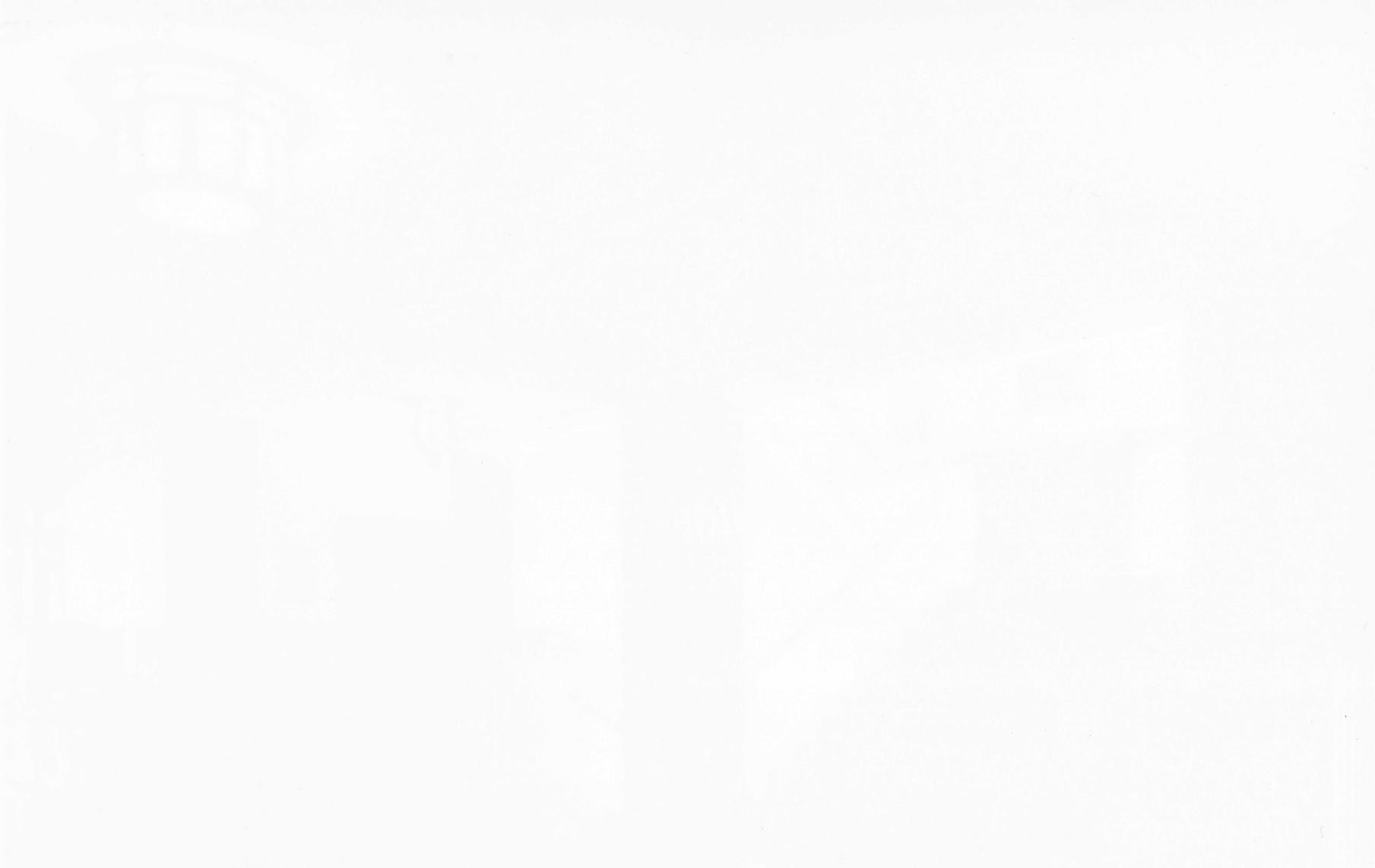
3

CHAMBERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ANAHUAC TX
SOUTH FACADE & STEPS
GERALD MOORHEAD. 2002



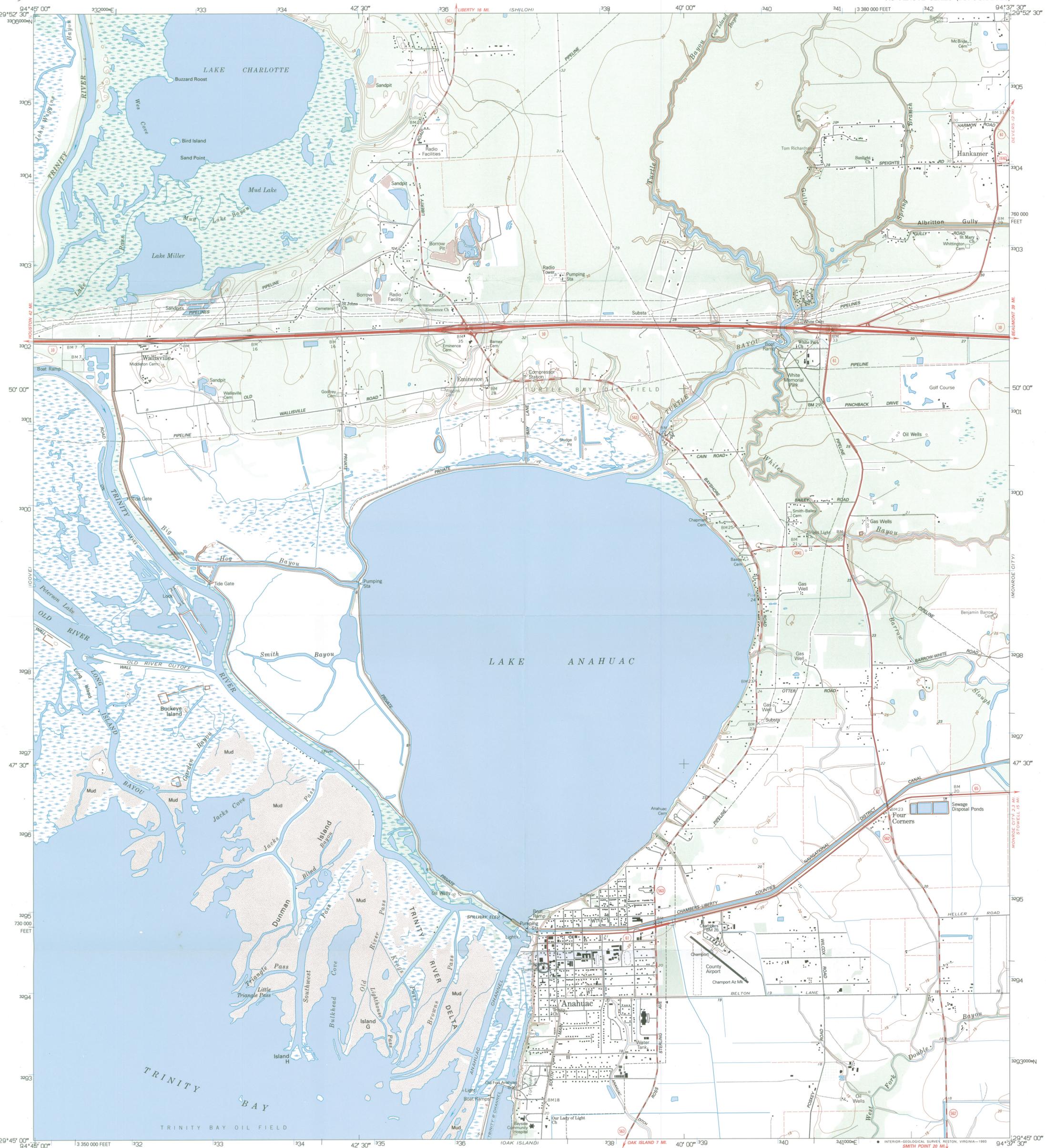
4
CHAMBERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ANAHUAC TX
TYP. ALUM. LANTERN AT ENTRY STEPS (WEST)
GERALD MOORHEAD 2002



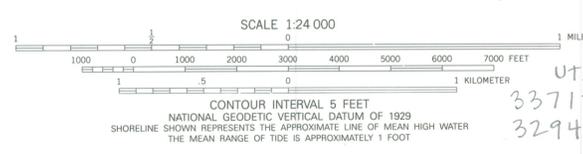
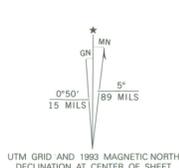


5

CHAMBERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ANAHUAC TX
LOBBY, FIRST FLOOR, LOOKING WEST
GERALD MOORHEAD 2002



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Compiled from aerial photographs taken 1987 and other sources
Field checked 1989. Map edited 1993
1927 North American Datum (NAD 27). Projection and
blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15
10000-foot ticks: Texas Coordinate System, south central zone
North American Datum 1983 of (NAD 83) is shown by dashed
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83
for 7.5 minute intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road

Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

2994-342
ANAHUAC, TEX.
29094-G6-TF-024
1993
DMA 7043 1 SW-SERIES V882

UTM ZONE 15
337121 E
3294198 N
CHAMBERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
ANAHUAC, CHAMBERS COUNTY, TEXAS



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

Rick Perry • Governor
John L. Nau, III • Chairman
F. Lawrence Oaks • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

TO: Linda McClelland
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Rachel Leibowitz, Historian
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas

DATE: 11 March 2008



- The following materials are submitted regarding Chambers County Courthouse, Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National Register of Historic Places form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resubmitted nomination
	Multiple Property nomination form
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Photographs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	USGS map
	Correspondence
	Other: CD with digital photograph files

COMMENTS: Enclosed in the revised nomination, addressing all concerns in your evaluation/return sheet.

SHPO requests substantive review

The enclosed owner objections (do) (do not) constitute a majority of property owners

Other: