

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Willacy County Courthouse
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 547 W. Hidalgo Ave.
City or town: Raymondville State: Texas County: Willacy
Not for publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

State Historic Preservation Officer
Signature of certifying official / Title **Date**
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official **Date**

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
-	-	sites
-	-	structures
-	-	objects
2	1	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Government: Courthouse

Current Functions: Government: Courthouse; Education: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Classical Revival

Principal Exterior Materials: Brick

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7 through 10)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Government, Architecture

Period of Significance: 1922-1966

Significant Dates: 1922

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Phelps, Henry T, architect; Walker Construction Company, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 11 through 18)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 19)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 2.8 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 26.482382° Longitude: -97.787595°

Verbal Boundary Description: City block bounded by W. Main Avenue, N. 4th Street, W. Hidalgo Avenue and N. 3rd Street, Block 31 of the Original Townsite of Raymondville.

Boundary Justification: The nomination includes all property historically associated with the building.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Laurie Limbacher, with assistance from NR Coordinator Gregory Smith

Organization: Limbacher & Godfrey Architects

Street & number: 2124 E 6th St #102

City or Town: Austin State: TX Zip Code: 78702

Email: llimbacher@limbacher-godfrey.com

Telephone: (512) 450-1518

Date: March 30, 2016

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 20-23)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 24-40)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 41-55)

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photograph Log

Willacy County Courthouse
Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas
Photographed by Alfred Godfrey
December 2015

Photo 1
South Elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 2
South Elevation, entry detail
Camera facing north

Photo 3
East Elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 4
East Elevation, entry detail
Camera facing west

Photo 5
North Elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 6
West Elevation
Camera facing east

Photo 7
District Courtroom
Camera facing north

Photo 8
District courtroom
Camera facing southeast

Photo 9
First floor corridor
Camera facing east

Photo 10
Commissioners Court vault
Camera facing north

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 11

Third floor corridor
Camera facing east

Photo 12

Jail cell, third floor
Camera facing west

Photo 13

1950 Willacy County Library (contributing), north elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 14

1950 Willacy County Library (contributing), east elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 15

Northeast corner of the square; library at right
Camera facing southwest

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Description¹

The Willacy County Courthouse is a prominent civic landmark in Raymondville, Texas. The three-story modified cross-axial plan brick building is set on raised basement and occupies the center of full city block. Completed in 1923, the courthouse was built to provide improved citizen access to the seat of government of the newly-formed county, which was carved out of the great ranch lands of South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley in 1921. Henry T. Phelps, a prominent San Antonio architect whose reputation was widely established in Texas, designed the new courthouse in the Classical Revival style, with a deep red wired-brick façade and cream cast stone ornament. Despite some modifications to the interior plan, the courthouse possesses a high degree of integrity.

Setting

The Willacy County Courthouse sits on a full city block located on the west side of downtown Raymondville. Hidalgo Avenue, the road on the south side of the courthouse square, followed the old property line between the King Ranch, to the north, and Ed Raymond's ranch, to the south, and was one of the main roads in the town of Raymondville. Main Avenue, the road on the north side of the courthouse square, was a secondary town street, despite its name. The courthouse was placed in the center of the block, in an urban design pattern known as the Shelbyville Square, in a slightly modified configuration. The square was not surrounded by commercial or civic structures, because it was located in an area where residential and commercial site uses met. In the early years, civic and commercial structures were built on Hidalgo Avenue, and residential structures occupied the other streets facing the courthouse square. Over the years, the residential structures have gradually been replaced, and the courthouse square is now largely surrounded by civic and commercial buildings on all sides.

Shortly after the building was occupied, the grounds were further developed with plantings, memorials, walkways and paving. In 1924, a memorial tree was planted on the southeast corner of the grounds by the Raymondville Women's Club in honor of Alejandro Garcia Trevino, a Raymondville soldier who died in WWI. In 1926, a row of palm trees was planted along a concrete walkway at the perimeter of the square, and a corner approach was added from the southeast corner to the building. Angled parking was provided on the streets surrounding the courthouse square. In later years, more trees and shrubs were added to the square. The original rooftop flagpole was replaced by two ground-mounted flagpoles. A 1936 Texas centennial marker, originally installed at the Raymondville golf course, was installed on the square near the Trevino memorial in 1968. A triptych war memorial was installed on the south entry walkway, dedicated to the memory of Willacy County victims of the wars of the 20th century. These resources are small in scale and are included with the courthouse landscape as one contributing site.

The Reber Memorial Library (a contributing building) was built on the northeast corner of the square in 1950. A delegation of citizen advocates promoted the county-wide public library, to be privately funded, with the plans and specifications approved by the court. The court agreed to the future operation and maintenance of the county library, including the hiring of staff and purchasing of books and papers.

As the county grew, an Annex building (also a non-contributing building) was added in the northwest corner of the square in 1970. David P. Ashcroft was hired as the architect for the annex, built by Andis & Brunson. Originally designed to house the Tax, County Nurse and Civil Defense offices, the design was modified during construction to provide space for the County Judge.

In 1975, work was begun on a new Law Enforcement Facility, located across Main Avenue on the north side of the courthouse block. The jail was moved from the third floor of the courthouse to the new facility. The Sheriff's office

¹ This section is adapted from the Willacy County Courthouse Master Plan, prepared in 2010 by Broaddus Planning/Limbacher & Godfrey Architects. On file at the Texas Historical Commission.

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staff moved from offices in the first and second floor of the courthouse to the new facility, as well. (More recently, a newer jail was constructed on the outskirts of town, and the 1975 Law Enforcement Facility is now used as an annex to the courthouse functions.)

General Characteristics

Phelps designed the new courthouse in the Classical Revival style, which he used on most of his courthouses in the high point of his long career. The courthouse has a traditional, cross-axial plan, with entrances provided on the four sides of the rectangular building. The exterior of the building was understated, although it retained the basic composition of a classical façade with base, middle and cap elements. Consistent with the trend of the time in courthouse design, the jail was incorporated into the courthouse building for enhanced security and functional considerations. The primary exterior materials of the courthouse were brick, trimmed with cast stone ornament, all sheathing a structural concrete frame and slab system. The cast stone ornament was used to good effect, simple and heavy at the base, understated at the door and window trim and more detailed at the cornice and main entrances. The most elaborate ornament was reserved for the north and south entries, with engaged columns and a curved pediment over the main entry.

South Elevation

The south elevation is the primary façade of the building, on the long axis of the building plan. The simple Classical Revival form is a symmetrical, three-story, three-bay composition. The center bay projects from the two flanking bays, and has four engaged, cast stone columns, with smooth shafts and simple Ionic capitals trimmed with stars, accentuating the brick masonry piers. The entry door is in the center of the projecting bay, in a deeply recessed vestibule accessed by a half-flight of concrete stairs. A cast stone, bas-relief trim panel caps the vestibule opening. Directly above the entry doors, the historic District Clerk's vault was on the second floor, and the window sash was a multi-lite steel unit, instead of the wood sash used as the typical window unit. (The steel sash was later replaced with a pair of wood windows, which are in place today in the unrestored building.) The remaining openings are fitted with paired sets of double-hung wood sash windows at the upper floors, and single-lite sash at the basement. There is a cast stone belt course below the windowsills at the first and second floors. The paired sets of second and third floor windows are trimmed with a recessed, rectangular panel between the two levels, which accentuates the height of the building. A cast stone cornice band, trimmed with chunky corbels and a dentil band, topped by a brick parapet with a cast stone coping, caps the entire composition. There is a small, arched pediment, set at the center of the parapet, with a ribbon ornament giving the design date of the building.

North Elevation

The north elevation is a similar three-story, three-bay composition to the south elevation, with simpler trim treatments. The north entry is in the center of the projecting bay, flush with the exterior wall and at grade level. The interior monumental stair occurs at the center bay of the north elevation, and the windows are set to the stair landings, half a level below the other windows. On the east end, the historic county clerk's vault was on the first floor, and the window sash in the east bay were multi-lite steel units, instead of the wood sash used as the typical window unit. (The steel sash was later replaced with double hung wood windows, which are in place today in the unrestored building.) As at the south elevation, paired sets of double-hung wood windows are used in most of the openings, and the cast stone belt courses, cornice band and parapet coping continue. There is no pediment trim at this elevation.

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East and West Elevations

The east and west elevations are secondary facades, on the short axis of the building plan. As in the other elevations, there is a symmetrical, three-story, three-bay composition. The center bay projects from the two flanking bays, with exposed the brick masonry piers. The entry door is in the center of the projecting bay, trimmed with a very handsome, arched, cast stone panel. The door is accessed by a half-flight of cast concrete stairs. On the east elevation, the historic county clerk's vault was on the first floor, and the window sash on the north side were multi-lite steel units, instead of the wood sash used as the typical window unit. (The steel sash were later replaced with double hung wood windows, which are in place today in the unrestored building.) As at the north and south elevations, paired sets of double-hung wood windows are used in most of the openings, with single windows used at the two flanking bays. The cast stone belt courses, cornice band and parapet coping continue at these elevations, with a slight gable form showing in the parapet above the projecting center bay.

Interior Plan and Features

Phelps' design for the new courthouse had a traditional, cross-axial plan. Entrances were provided on the four sides of the building at the ends of the crossed corridors, landing at the first floor of the building. The basement floor, half a level below grade, was accessed by a pair of interior stairs and contained county clerk's records storage, as well as agricultural display and general storage spaces. The first floor, half a level above grade, was accessed by monumental exterior stairs and contained the county courtroom, and offices of the county judge, county clerk, sheriff, tax collector, tax assessor and treasurer, as well as a ladies' restroom. The second floor was accessed by an interior stair and contained the district courtroom, jury, grand jury, consultation and witness rooms and offices of the district clerk, bailiff, district and county attorney and judge, as well as an unassigned office. The jail was on the third floor, accessed by interior stairs, and contained a cell room, as well as sleeping quarters for the juries.

The interior finishes were simple and understated, using durable materials common to the time and building type. Most of the floors were scored concrete, with a color seal. The walls and ceilings were plaster, with wood base, chair rail and picture moulding trims and a painted wainscot below the chair rail. Interior doors were simple, two-panel stile and rail doors, with stained finish. Decorative suspended light fixtures remain in a few locations in the building, and other styles show in historic photographs in office spaces. Small storage vaults, with steel inner and outer doors with decorative paint treatments, were built in the County Judge, Tax Collector and Treasurer offices. Larger, room-sized vaults were built for the county clerk and District Clerk record storage rooms. Several wood-burning fireplaces, built of wire-cut brick, were installed in some first floor offices.

The second floor is accessed by a monumental staircase in the north corridor. The stair is simply detailed, with cast-in-place concrete treads and risers, and a utilitarian painted steel handrails. The District Courtroom, at the east end of the second floor, is the most prominent space in the building. It was designed as a two-story volume with a three-foot curved cove where the walls met the ceiling. The judge's bench faces south, and the jury box faces west. A small, private stairway led to a jury deliberation room and dorm on the third floor. The jail cells were located on the west end of the third floor, accessed by a spiral stair from the sheriff's office below.

Summary of Alterations and Integrity

Modifications have been made to the courthouse for a range of reasons -- to address growth and change in county government, to provide more a more comfortable environment for users, and to respond to contemporary regulatory requirements. Court minutes describe remodeling of the District Courtroom and the jail in the 1940s, to meet current functional demands on those spaces. A large air-handler was installed above the judge's chambers to provide conditioned air to the District Courtroom in 1965, and dropped ceilings were installed in the rooms as part of the work. The county library was added to the square in 1950, and an annex building in 1970. Dropped ceilings, furred walls and

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floor coverings were installed in various locations in the building through the years, but the original finish materials and volumes remain in place behind these surfaces. The exterior doors were replaced with aluminum storefront doors and sidelites in 1972. The jail was moved to a new building in 1975, and the third floor is now used primarily for storage and a law library. Handicapped accessibility upgrades, including an entry ramp at the west elevation and an interior elevator, were added in 1990. Beginning in 1971, window openings in various locations were infilled with solid panels. The panels were removed and new, operable wood windows installed at the first, second and third floors in 1998.

Even with these alterations, the Willacy County Courthouse is largely intact in overall form. There have been no additions made to the building, and the original, symmetrical composition of the plan and elevations remains unchanged. Original doors and windows have been replaced, but the original masonry openings remain and physical examples and photographic documentation of the historic doors and windows are available to aid in their restoration. Interior finishes have been covered over with new finishes, wall furring and suspended ceilings in most locations, but the original finishes remain in place behind them. Finally, the Willacy County Courthouse has served the county as the seat of government since it was originally occupied in 1923, and retains its integrity of location and association.

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Statement of Significance

The Willacy County Courthouse is the most prominent building in Raymondville, Texas, and has served as the center of county government since its completion in 1923. The county itself was created in 1921, at the demand of residents who wanted a more central location for the county seat, and the new courthouse was the physical symbol of the new, more accessible government. The architect, Henry T. Phelps, was a prominent designer of public buildings, and designed numerous Texas county courthouses over the span his three-decade career. The Willacy County Courthouse is one of his strongest designs in the Classical Revival style. The courthouse is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Government, at the local level of significance, to reflect the long history as the seat of Willacy County government. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, also at the local level of significance, as an excellent local example of a Classical Revival civic building.

Willacy County Historic Overview²

Willacy County is in the upper Rio Grande Valley of Texas, bounded by Kenedy County to the north, the Gulf of Mexico to the east, Cameron County to the south and Hidalgo County to the west. Nomadic Coahuiltecan and Karankawa Indians inhabited the area for thousands of years before the arrival of Spanish explorers in the sixteenth century. During the Spanish occupation of Texas, the area that is now Willacy County was part of a 600,000-acre land grant, the San Juan de Carricitos, given by Spain to Jose Narciso Cavazos in 1792. Although the region was known as El Desierto del Muerto ("Desert of Death"), the Spanish settlers brought domesticated livestock and established a ranching tradition in South Texas that continues to this day.³

During the nineteenth century, a tradition for large ranch enterprises took hold in the area. Richard King and Mifflin Kenedy made fortunes in riverboat traffic and began two of the largest ranches in Texas, both of which shaped the history of Willacy County. The vast King Ranch was begun by Richard King in 1852 on a 15,000 acre tract on the Santa Gertrudis Creek, about 60 miles north of Willacy County. Over the years, King and several business partners expanded the land holdings, and operated the ranch in several large divisions.⁴ Mifflin Kenedy, a river boat and ranching business partner of King's, began his own ranching operations in 1868, and purchased the La Parra land grant, on the north boundary of Willacy County, in 1882.⁵

At the turn of the twentieth century, the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway was chartered, part of a rail network built to connect Chicago, St. Louis and the Midwest to Louisiana, Texas and Mexico, enhancing trade and access for all points along the line. At the time, Brownsville was not readily accessible to inland locations to the north, and the entire 150-mile stretch from Brownsville to Corpus Christi was virtually open ranch land, without towns or cities to speak of. As the rail line was planned, a string of well-placed towns sprang up along the route, all hoping to prosper and grow with the coming of the rail traffic.⁶

One such new railroad town was Raymondville, started by Edward Bureson Raymond. Raymond came to South Texas in 1870 as a young man and worked herding cattle until he was hired by Richard King to open the El Sauz Division of the King Ranch, located in eastern Willacy County, in 1874. He managed King and Kenedy ranch business for almost 40 years, and acquired a ranch of his own in Willacy County, the Las Majadas Ranch. He served as postmaster of the El Sauz post office and was a school trustee and county commissioner of Cameron County, in addition to his ranching interests. In 1903, he deeded a portion of his ranch for the rail right-of-way and a station site, located one hundred

² This section is adapted from the *Willacy County Courthouse Master Plan*, prepared in 2010 by Broaddus Planning/Limbacher & Godfrey Architects. On file at the Texas Historical Commission.

³ Willacy County, *The Handbook of Texas*, 974.

⁴ King Ranch, *The Handbook of Texas*, 1111.

⁵ Kenedy, Mifflin, *The Handbook of Texas*, 1064.

⁶ Stambaugh, *The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas*, 171.

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miles south of the newly platted town of Kingsville. He created the Raymond Town & Improvement Company to market land plots in the new town, which was named Raymondville, in his honor.

In the summer of 1903, work began on the first section of the railroad from what would later become Robstown to Brownsville, and was completed in eleven months' time. The last two miles of track were laid on June 7, 1904, and over 5,000 people gathered in Brownsville to celebrate the event.⁷ The railroad was also celebrated in Raymondville, and the town prospered by the establishment of the Raymondville State Bank in 1907 and the construction of a telephone exchange and a cotton gin.⁸ The railroad brought growth and prosperity to the region, which led to the formation of a new county in the ranch country, called Willacy County. As the region continued to grow and prosper, the needs of the ranch country and the developing town sites diverged. The county government was reorganized and yet another new county was created, also called Willacy County.

Previous County and Courthouse

Willacy County was first formed in 1911 from portions of what were then Cameron and Hidalgo counties, covering most of the area that later became present-day Kenedy County. Although the Kenedy family was directly involved in the promotion of the new county, when state legislature authorized creation of the county, it was named in honor of Senator John G. Willacy (1859-1943), a state senator from Corpus Christi. The bulk of the land area of the county was part of the vast King and Kenedy ranch holdings. Sarita, a railroad stop town established in 1904 by John Gregory Kenedy, was designated the county seat. Sarita was a ranching center for the La Parra Ranch and the Kenedy Pasture Company, and town lots were platted and marketed to newcomers by the Kenedy Town and Improvement Company.⁹ For the first few years, the business of Willacy County was conducted in the wooden Pfau General Store and an adjacent house on La Parra Avenue in Sarita. In 1916, San Antonio architect Henry T. Phelps was engaged to design a new courthouse in Sarita. The three-story, masonry, Classical Revival building was accepted by the county in 1918, and has been in continuous use since that time, except for brief periods when the building has undergone rehabilitation work.¹⁰ This building later became the Kenedy County Courthouse in 1921.

Current County and 1923 Willacy County Courthouse

Despite the elegant new courthouse building, Sarita remained a remote, inaccessible location to many residents of Willacy County. There was no paved road across the vast ranch lands in the northern two-thirds of the county, and the railroad offered the only access to the county seat for most residents. In fact, most of the residents of the southern portion of Willacy County had closer connections with Cameron and Hidalgo counties, to the south. On January 24, 1921, during a mass meeting of the citizens of Raymondville, a resolution for creating a new county out of portions of Cameron and Hidalgo counties was adopted.¹¹

The 37th Legislature authorized the creation of present-day Willacy County on March 4, 1921.¹² It was one of the last counties formed in the state, the 253rd county out of 254. In the course of working out the details, it was discovered that the area of the county as first proposed was just shy of the 700 square miles required under the state statutes for establishing counties. In order to make up the deficit, John Gregory Kenedy offered a 1.42-mile-wide strip of land running from the Gulf of Mexico to the west side of the county from his ranch lands at the south end of the original Willacy County. In exchange, he asked that the name of the original Willacy County be changed to Kenedy County,

⁷ Stambaugh, *The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas*, 172.

⁸ Harding and Lee, *Rails to the Rio*, 54.

⁹ Sarita, Texas, *The Handbook of Texas*, 897.

¹⁰ TWC Architects, *Kenedy County Courthouse of 1918*, II-8.

¹¹ Favor Division of County at Raymondville, *Magic Valley News* [Lyford, Texas] 27 Jan 1921.

¹² Dossett, *District Courts of Willacy County*, 5.

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and that the new county to the south take the name of Willacy County. Raymondville became the county seat.¹³

The first meeting of the new Willacy County Commissioners Court was held on April 21, 1921.¹⁴ The first county judge was Samuel Lamar Gill, and four county commissioners were designated: W. A. Harding, Joe Turner, Fred Raymond, and R. W. Huff. They met in the office of Judge S. L. Gill, in the Raymondville State Bank Building, which was designated as the temporary Willacy County Courthouse.¹⁵ The commissioners set to work immediately, arranging for the use of a jail cage, borrowed from the King Ranch, and purchasing office furniture, books and supplies for use by the court.¹⁶ In August, they made preparations for a countywide election to consider the issuance of \$75,000 in bonds for the purpose of erecting a permanent courthouse and jail. The election was held on October 8, 1921, and the issue passed, with 137 votes in favor of the issuance of bonds and 15 votes against.¹⁷

Architect Henry T. Phelps

The following week, the commissioners entered into an agreement with Henry T. Phelps, prominent San Antonio architect and designer of the first Willacy County Courthouse in Sarita, for the design of the new courthouse and jail.¹⁸ Phelps was born in Victoria County in 1871, educated at the University of Texas, graduating in 1890, and apprenticed in several San Antonio architectural offices before establishing his own practice in 1902. In the early years of his career, he sometimes practiced with a partner, but by 1910 he formed an independent practice, which continued until the 1940s.¹⁹ By 1912, his reputation was widely established for both residential and public buildings. He designed seventeen courthouses in Texas over a twenty-seven-year period, in a range of architectural styles. Before beginning the Willacy County Courthouse, Phelps had completed many significant public buildings, such as the MKT Depot in Dennison (1909) and a handful of county courthouses, including those in Frio County (1904), Jim Hogg County and Atascosa County (1912), Mills County (1913), Blanco County (1916) and Kenedy County (1918). Following this commission, he would also produce courthouse designs for Schleicher County (1924), Uvalde County (1927), San Patricio County (1928), Kimble County (1929) and LaSalle County (1931).

As was typical for courthouse work, Phelps agreed to work for a 5% fee, based on a maximum \$65,000.00 construction cost, the first installment of 3.5% to be paid upon the completion of the bidding phase and the remainder to be paid over the course of the construction phase. Phelps presented preliminary plans to the commissioners on October 12, 1921, for a "courthouse and jail of size 49 x 94 x 34, three story and a basement, estimated to cost \$54,000.00 completed with jail, cells, etc." which were approved during the meeting.²⁰ Phelps was authorized to proceed with the work, and returned on October 24, 1921 for a follow up presentation, during which the plans and specifications were accepted with changes noted, though the minutes do not state what the changes entailed.²¹

Site Selection

The commissioners considered the question of an appropriate site for the new courthouse and jail during their meeting of October 21, 1921, when they considered the attributes and costs of several potential sites, including several owned by Judge Gill and Commissioner Harding. The two gentlemen recused themselves and left the room while the remaining Commissioners deliberated. The entire Court voted on the selection of Block 31 in the Townsite of

¹³ Harding and Lee, *Willacy County History*, 16.

¹⁴ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 21 Apr 1921, Vol. 1, p. 1.

¹⁵ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 10 Oct 1921, Vol. 1, p. 49.

¹⁶ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 17 Aug 1921, Vol. 1, p. 28.

¹⁷ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 22 Aug 1921, Vol. 1, p. 35, 10 Oct 1921, Vol. 1, p. 51.

¹⁸ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 12 Oct 1921, Vol. 1, p. 55.

¹⁹ Phelps, Henry Truman, *The Handbook of Texas*, 180.

²⁰ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 10 Oct 1921, Vol. 1, p. 56.

²¹ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 24 Oct 1921, Vol. 1, p. 69.

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Raymondville, at a sales price of \$2,500, as offered by F. G. Fawkes.²² The site was located on the north side of Hidalgo Avenue, between Third and Fourth Streets.

Hidalgo Avenue, the road on the south side of the courthouse square, followed the old property line between the King Ranch, to the north, and Ed Raymond's ranch, to the south, and was one of the main roads in the town of Raymondville.²³ Main Avenue, the road on the north side of the courthouse square, was a secondary town street, despite its name. In the original town plat, Block 31 was subdivided into 32 long lots, with an east-west alley at the center of the block. When Block 31 was dedicated for use as the new courthouse site, the alley was vacated and the separate lots were combined into one large block. The courthouse was placed in the center of the block, in an urban design pattern known as the Shelbyville Square, albeit with a slightly modified configuration.²⁴ In the early years, civic and commercial structures were built on Hidalgo Avenue, and residential structures occupied the other streets facing the courthouse square. Over the years, the residential structures have gradually been replaced, and the courthouse square is now largely surrounded by civic and commercial buildings on all sides.

Design and Construction of the Courthouse

Phelps' design for the new courthouse had a traditional, cross-axial plan. Entrances were placed on the four sides of the building at the ends of the crossed corridors. The basement floor, half a level below grade, was accessed by a pair of interior stairs and contained county clerk's records storage, as well as agricultural display and general storage spaces. The first floor, half a level above grade, was accessed by monumental exterior stairs and contained the county courtroom, and offices of the county judge, county clerk, sheriff, tax collector, tax assessor and treasurer, as well as a ladies' restroom. The second floor was accessed by an interior stair and contained the district courtroom, jury, grand jury, consultation and witness rooms and offices of the district clerk, bailiff, district and county attorney and judge, as well as an unassigned office. The jail was on the third floor, accessed by interior stairs, and contained a cell room, as well as sleeping quarters for the juries.²⁵

The exterior of the building was understated, although it retained the basic composition of a classical façade with base, middle and capital levels. Consistent with trends in courthouse design, the jail was incorporated into the courthouse building for enhanced security and functional considerations. The primary exterior materials of the courthouse were brick, trimmed with cast stone ornament, all sheathing a structural concrete frame and slab system. The cast stone ornament was used to good effect, simple and heavy at the base, understated at the door and window trim and more detailed at the cornice and main entrances. The most elaborate ornament was reserved for the north and south entries, with engaged columns and a curved pediment over the main entry.

The commissioners received bids on February 14, 1922 from nine general contractors, seven plumbing contractors, six electrical contractors, one jail contractor and three furniture suppliers. All of the construction bids were apparently higher than the amount budgeted, and the commissioners rejected all but the three lowest bids from the general contractors. The three general contractors and the jail contractor were asked to provide revised cost figures, based on eliminating the finish out of the basement, two of the jail cells, five toilets, painting of walls and substitution of brick partitions instead of stone partitions. The contractors presented revised cost figures and Walker Construction Company was selected, with a low bid of \$48,322, exclusive of the plumbing, electrical wiring and jail cell work. Southern Steel Co., the jail contractor, also provided revised pricing, and the jail work was accepted at a bid amount of \$6,971.²⁶

The following day, the commissioners met to execute the contracts with the respective contractors. The exterior face

²² Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 21 Oct 1921, Vol. 1, p. 57, Vol. 1, p. 108.

²³ Harding and Lee, *Willacy County History*, 68.

²⁴ Veselka, *The courthouse Square in Texas* 37.

²⁵ New County's Temple of Justice at Raymondville, *The Brownsville Sunday Herald*, 6 Nov 1921.

²⁶ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 9 Jan 1922, Vol. 1, p. 88, 14 Feb 1922, Vol. 1, p. 108.

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brick, an Acme matte face brick, with rough texture and full mottled shades, was selected by the commissioners. Prior to completing the contract with Walker Construction Co., the scope was increased to include a “basement apartment,” (probably a reference to the enclosed storage area for the county clerk’s office), and the cost was increased by \$5,000, for a total of \$53,322.00 for the general contractor. The commissioners also released \$2,208.25 (3.5% of the construction cost), to Henry Phelps for architectural services in connection with the design, plans, and specifications prepared to date.²⁷

The construction began shortly after the contracts were executed, and continued for the next year. In May 1922, the plumbing work was awarded to the firm of West & Gutzent, in the amount of \$2,100. In June, the electrical work was awarded to McAllen Electric Co. for \$800. Also in June, the stone work that had been eliminated at the time of initial award was added to the construction work, to be paid in warrants over the course of the next nine years. In October, the hardware contract was awarded to W. E. Huffaker for \$494. Also in October, bids for furniture for the courthouse and jail were reviewed, with Maverick-Clarke Co. the low bidder at \$5,434.90. There was, however, some controversy with this bid, as two of the commissioners “refused to OK the bid,” according to the minutes. In November, the painting work that had been eliminated at the time of initial award was added to the construction work, at an additional cost of \$1,200, with the architect waiving his fee for this increase. Also in November, bids for the installation of concrete walks were reviewed, and the bid from Walker Construction Co., to be paid in \$4,300 of warrants due ten to thirteen years in the future, was accepted.²⁸

In January 1922, the new Willacy County Criminal District Court met in Raymondville for the first time, with Judge Walter Timon, from Corpus Christi, on the bench. Although the location for the court sessions is not given in the newspaper account, it was likely the temporary courthouse in the Raymondville State Bank. After the Criminal District Court proceedings were completed, Judge Timon, Sheriff Turner, and County Attorney Sasse visited the Hidalgo County Courthouse, in Edinburg, attending court sessions there and transferring prisoners to the jail. While awaiting the completion of the Willacy County Jail, the county arranged a transfer program with the Hidalgo County Jail. According to Sheriff Turner, “it is less expensive to bring them over here by auto than to take them to Brownsville by train, and the prisoners in Edinburg have a habit of remaining where they are put.” In May 1922, the *Gravity Irrigation News* reported that “work on the new Willacy County \$75,000 courthouse was begun in Raymondville May 1st.” In April 1923, *Monty’s Monthly* magazine printed a brief description of “Raymondville’s push and progress,” including a snapshot of the new courthouse, described as “a modern and attractive building that would be a credit to many Texas counties much older and larger.” Also shown were photos of the packing of the earliest seasonal onion crop in the United States, and of a thriving poultry farm operation in Raymondville.²⁹

In February 1923, the commissioners met to review the status of the completion of the courthouse construction work. By this time, a new County Judge and several new Commissioners had been elected, and they took a more critical eye to some of the decisions of the previous Commissioners Court. They accepted the final invoices from Walker Construction Co., Henry Phelps, and the McAllen Electric Co., although they voted to rescind the order to install the concrete walks. They reviewed the Maverick-Clarke furniture contract and voted to rescind it, making only partial payment for invoices presented to date. They accepted the final invoice from West & Gutzent for the plumbing work, and approved the purchase of insurance for the new courthouse building, furniture and supplies. Finally, they ordered that the County offices be moved from the temporary location in the Raymondville State Bank to the new Courthouse, with the moves to be completed by March 1, 1923.³⁰

²⁷ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 15 Feb 1922, Vol. 1, p. 110.

²⁸ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 10 May 1922, Vol. 1, p. 137, 12 Jun 1922, Vol. 1, p. 139, 14 Jun 1922, Vol. 1, p. 141, 9 Oct 1922, Vol. 1, p. 176, 20 Nov 1922, Vol. 1, p. 189.

²⁹ Judge Walter F. Timon Opens the Initial Court, *Edinburg Valley Review* [Edinburg, Texas] 20 Jan 1922; *Gravity Irrigation News*, May 1922; *Monty’s Monthly*, Apr 1923.

³⁰ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 12 Feb 1923, Vol. 1, p. 213; 17 Feb 1923, Vol. 1, p. 217; 19 Feb 1923, Vol. 1,

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The minutes of the commissioners Court do not describe any festivities or other formal event to mark the opening of the new Courthouse, and no newspaper references (local nor statewide) regarding the opening of the courthouse have found. Perhaps the commissioners determined that a celebration was inappropriate, since they discovered that they were unable to pay a warrant of \$23.40 from the Court House and Jail Special Fund on March 12, 1923, the fund being completely depleted. The commissioners also became embroiled in a legal dispute with Maverick-Clarke over the furniture contract that began a few weeks before the move in to the new courthouse. The dispute was resolved three years later, when the County made additional payments to Maverick-Clarke for the furniture, vault doors and supplies provided to the county.³¹

Despite these distractions, the commissioners continued with the outfitting and operation of the new building. Two telephones were installed in May 1923, one in the Sheriff's office and one in the county clerk's office. To mark the various offices in the building, F. S. Campbell was hired to provide painted signs with silver lettering, the silver letters costing \$1 less than gold letters. In the fall, the commissioners ordered that estimates for window screening be sought and that the soil on each side of the courthouse be plowed and dirt dug up to the foundation of the building.³²

Site and Building Modifications

In general, the overall form of the courthouse is little changed from the original construction. In the early years, modifications were focused on completing portions of the project that had been eliminated from the original construction work due to cost constraints. In 1924, screening was installed on the building, likely on all the windows and exterior doors, at a cost of \$913. In 1928, a new doorway opening was cut between the County Attorney's office and the District Clerk's vault, allowing the attorney a more spacious office suite. According to newspaper accounts, the vault was not used for legal documents or record storage, and the attorney was short on space. The proximity to the District Courtroom allowed for a convenient waiting area for state's witnesses during trials, as well.³³

The grounds were also further developed in the early years. In 1924, a memorial tree was planted on the southeast corner of the grounds by the Raymondville Women's Club in honor of Alejandro Garcia Trevino, a Raymondville soldier who died in WWI. Despite the commemoration, the grounds apparently remained a bit informal in use and development. In early 1925, county officials were instructed to keep their cars off the courthouse lawn, and the Sheriff was instructed to enforce this direction. He was also directed to provide approaches (presumably walkways) from the four corners of the grounds to the courthouse building, in an effort to keep cars outside the row of palm trees that had been planted along the edge of the grounds. The following year, the commissioners again directed the Sheriff to make and maintain the corner approaches, a task that may never have been completed, since there is only one corner approach at the southeast corner, even today. In April 1926, the commissioners provided monies from the Permanent Improvement Fund for use by the Women's Club of Raymondville to beautify the courthouse lawn. The minutes do not state what these improvements were, but perhaps they included the evergreen shrubs that appear in photographs of the grounds from the 1930s.³⁴ Sidewalks were also installed in the spring of 1926. In April, the commissioners ordered the installation of a five-foot wide sidewalk at the outer edge of the courthouse block, eight-foot wide walks to each building entry, a four-foot wide walk around the building and street curbing around the block.

p. 217; 20 Feb 1923, Vol. 1, p. 218.

³¹ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 12 Feb 1923, Vol. 1, p. 215; 19 Feb 1923, Vol. 1, p. 217; 22 Feb 1923, Vol. 1, p. 220; 12 Mar 1923, Vol. 1, p. 221; 9 Apr 1923, Vol. 1, p. 224; 15 Mar. 1923, Vol. 1, p. 230; 10 Jul 1925, Vol. 1, p. 350; 14 Dec. 1925, Vol. 1, p. 392; 28 Apr 1926, Vol. 1, p. 408; 10 May 1926, Vol. 1, p. 410.

³² Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 4 May 1923, Vol. 1, p. 228; 14 May 1923, Vol. 1, p. 229; 10 Sep 1923, Vol. 1, p. 245; 24 Oct. 1923, Vol. 1, p. 250.

³³ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 10 Sep 1923, Vol. 1, p. 245; 14 Apr 1924, Vol. 1, p. 278; 8 Mar 1926, Vol. 1, p. 402; 2 Oct 1926, Vol. 1, p. 437; Vault in Courthouse is Utilized [full citation as to publication name not given in clipping file] undated; County Attorney Office Enlarged [full citation as to publication name not given in clipping file] 3 May 1928.

³⁴ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 11 Feb 1924, Vol. 1, p. 262; 12 Jan 1925, Vol. 1, P. 323; 8 Mar 1926, Vol. 1, p. 402; 12 Apr 1926, Vol. 1, p. 405.

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Perhaps reflecting the national economic conditions, only a few modifications were made to the courthouse in the 1930s. In 1930, a new cell, dubbed “Feme Sole” in a newspaper article of the time, was installed in the northwest corner of the jail, in an area originally designed as a jury sleeping room. A steel plate door was also added to the entry of the men’s jail cell area, since several prisoners had escaped by smashing through the original door. In 1939, the old wood and oil stoves were removed from the building and sold to the highest bidder. New radiant gas heaters and associated gas piping were installed to provide heating in the building. Architect Newell Waters was hired to complete plans and supervise the remodeling of the District Courtroom in January 1941.

In 1949, in cooperation with the City of Raymondville, the county paved its half of Third Street, Main Avenue and Fourth Street, running along the east, north and west sides of the courthouse block. In February 1949, a delegation of citizens met with the court to discuss establishing a county library. No action was taken at the time, since there was no budget established for such a project. The delegation of citizens returned in October 1949, and the court adopted a resolution declaring its favor for a county-wide public library to be erected on the northeast corner of the courthouse square. The building would be privately funded, with the plans and specifications approved by the court. The court agreed to the future operation and maintenance of the county library, including the hiring of staff and purchasing of books and papers.³⁵ On December 19, 1950, the court met with the Reber family, the donors of the new library building, and the library architect Jake Fossler, to finalize the location of the library on the courthouse grounds.

During the 1960s, the court continued to authorize maintenance and upgrade work to the building. Approximately 6,500 square feet of new vinyl asbestos flooring was installed in 1967; this is likely the flooring still in place in the corridors and some offices. Original fireplaces were removed from the Tax Collector-Assessor’s office on the first floor in 1967; the fireplaces likely matched the one remaining in the current Auditor’s office. Although the specific deterioration and repair methods are not outlined in the minutes, they note that the court approved repairs as needed to the windows of the courthouse.³⁶

In the late 1960s, the County proceeded with the design and construction of an Annex building in the northwest corner of the courthouse grounds. In November 1969, architect David P. Ashcroft presented plans to the commissioners and staff and the final plan was approved the following month. The annex was designed to house the Tax, County Nurse and Civil Defense offices. As construction was underway, the court determined that the County Judge should also move to the annex, and revisions to accommodate that move were approved in July 1970.³⁷ Building the annex and acquiring other space for County offices off-site allowed the remaining County departments still in the courthouse expansion room within the building. In 1971, the county clerk’s office expanded across the corridor to the south, taking in the space originally occupied by the County Judge and Commissioners Court in the southeast corner of the building.

In 1972, the court authorized the County Judge to proceed with remodeling the remainder of the interior spaces in the courthouse. Lay-in acoustical tile ceilings were installed throughout the first floor. The plaster walls were furred out with wood furring strips and skinned with contemporary wood paneling or sheet rock panels. All of the wood stile and rail exterior doors and most of the first floor interior corridor doors were removed and replaced with aluminum and glass storefront style doors, sidelights and fixed transoms. Window unit air conditioners were also installed in first

³⁵ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 14 Feb 1949, Vol. 5, p. 413; 14 Feb 1949, Vol. 5, p. 417; 22 Mar 1949, Vol. 5, p. 439; 10 Oct 1949, Vol. 5.

³⁶ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 8 May 1967, Vol. 10, p. 81; 12 Jun 1967, Vol. 10, p. 97; 14 Nov 1968, Vol. 10, p. 496.

³⁷ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 8 Sep 1969, Vol. 11, p. 119; 13 Oct 1969, Vol. 11, p. 186; 10 Nov 1969, Vol. 11, p. 191; 25 Nov 1969, Vol. 11, p. 215; 8 Dec 1969, Vol. 11, p. 220; 13 Jan 1970, Vol. 11, p. 254; 21 Jan 1970, Vol. 11, p. 258; 10 Feb 1970, Vol. 11, p. 273; 29 Jul 1970, Vol. 11, p. 363.

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

floor spaces, and the electrical system was remodeled.³⁸

In 1975, work was begun on a new Law Enforcement Facility, located across Main Avenue on the north side of the courthouse block. The jail was moved from the third floor of the courthouse to the new facility. The Sheriff's office staff moved from offices in the first and second floor of the courthouse to the new facility, as well.³⁹

The work of infilling the existing windows continued after those in the original county clerk's office were closed in 1971. By the early 1990s, almost all of the windows at all levels of the building had been infilled, and large, opaque, painted white panels were presented to the exterior in the window openings. In 1996, the County replaced the infill panels on the first, second and third floors with new, single hung wood windows. While this is an improvement over the solid infill panels, the original steel windows were not restored.⁴⁰

Conclusion

The Willacy County Courthouse was built during the Golden Age of courthouse construction in Texas. Stretching from the 1880s through the 1920s, this period coincided with a period of tremendous economic and cultural development in the state. The increase in wealth led to an increase in new public buildings, buildings which often served a symbolic function in addition to the pragmatic functions of business. Courthouses embody the stability and permanence of a democratic government, and the Classical Revival style in particular represents the ideals of democracy in a rapidly growing state.⁴¹ For serving Willacy County citizens as the seat of county government continuously since 1923, and as a significant local example of Classical Revival architecture designed by a master architect, the Willacy County Courthouse is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for Government and Criterion C for Architecture, at the local level of significance.

³⁸ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 4 Dec 1972, Vol. 12, p. 450; 20 Feb 1973, Vol. 12, p. 579; 12 Mar 1973, Vol. 12, p. 630; 24 Apr 1973, Vol. 12, p. 679; 29 May 1973, Vol. 12, p. 727; 11 Jun 1973, Vol. 12, p. 751; 4 Sep 1973, Vol. 13, p. 47; 18 Sep 1973, Vol. 13, p. 70; 8 Nov 1976, Vol. 14, p. 378; 10 Jan 1977, Vol. 14, p. 492; 14 Aug 1978, Vol. 15, p. 439.

³⁹ Willacy County Commissioners Court Minutes, 8 Jul 1975, Vol. 13, p. 830.

⁴⁰ Willacy county clerk's files.

⁴¹ Willard B. Robinson, *The People's Architecture: Texas Courthouses, Jails, and Municipal Buildings* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 195-260. See also Michael C. Andrews, *Historic Texas Courthouses* (Houston: Bright Sky Press, 2006).

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

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Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Location Map

Source: Google Earth, accessed March 30, 2016.

Latitude: 26.482382° Longitude: -97.787595°

Verbal Boundary Description: City block bounded by W. Main Avenue, N. 4th Street, W. Hidalgo Avenue and N. 3rd Street, Block 31 of the Original Townsite of Raymondville.

Boundary Justification: The nomination includes all property historically associated with the building.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Maps on the next two pages illustrate the changing boundaries of Willacy County, Texas.

Established in 1911, Willacy County covered much of the same area as present-day Kenedy County until 1921.

Source: <http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/pages/Texas.html>

Texas: Atlas of Historical County Boundaries



WILLACY

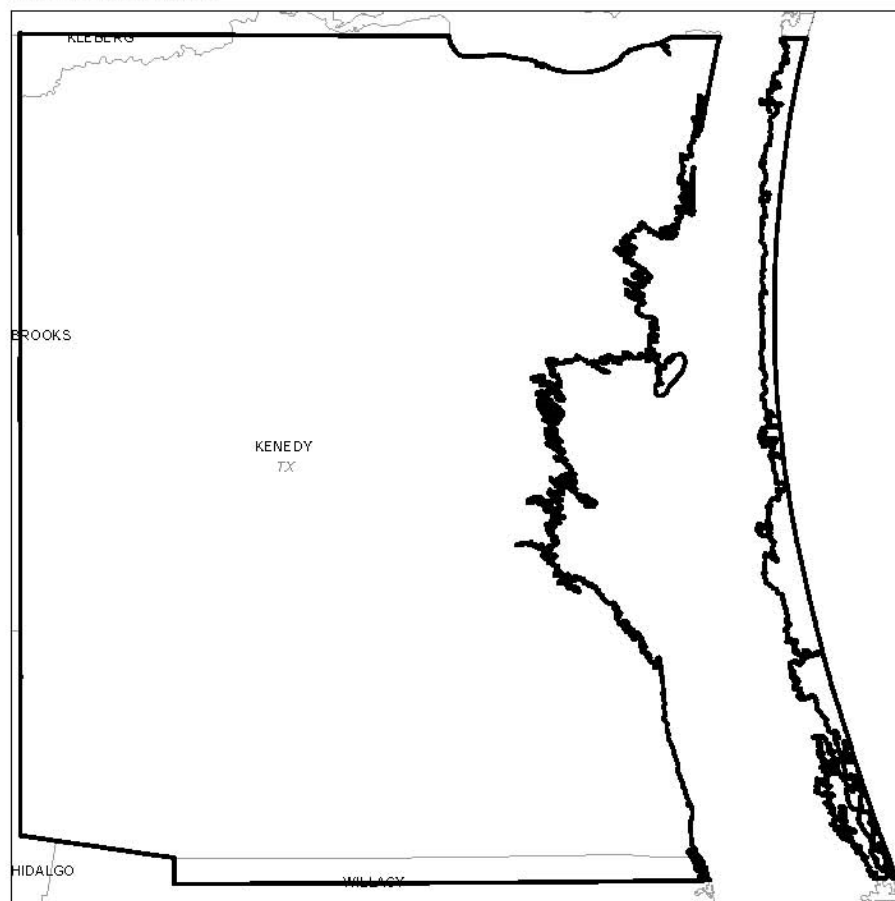
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3/11/1911 - 1/29/1917

Heavy line depicts historical boundary.
Base map shows present-day information.

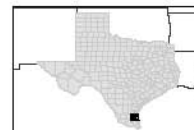
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WILLACY created from CAMERON and HIDALGO.

1,460 sq. mi.

(Texas Laws 1911, 32d leg., reg. sess., ch. 48/pp. 83-87)



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

In 1921, a new county taking the name of "Willacy County" was created from portions of Hidalgo and Cameron counties, while most of the area previously known as "Willacy County" became present-day Kenedy County.

Source: <http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/pages/Texas.html>

Texas: Atlas of Historical County Boundaries



WILLACY

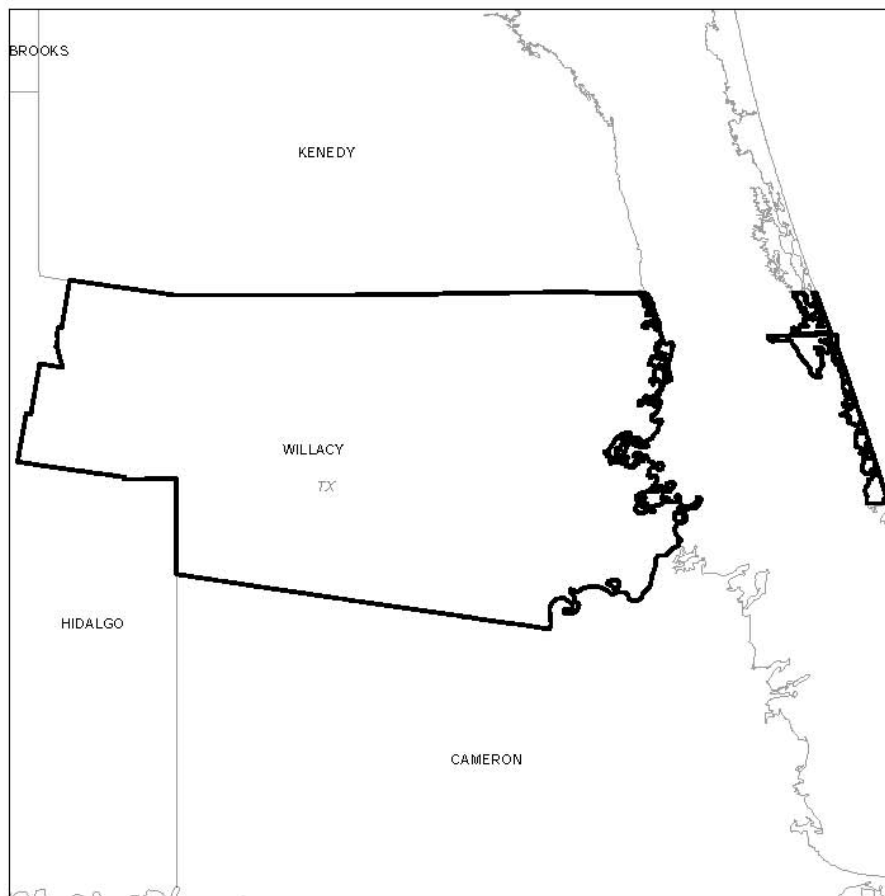
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4/2/1921 - 12/31/2000

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Base map shows present-day information.

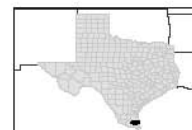
© The Newberry Library 2010



WILLACY re-created and re-organized. WILLACY gained from CAMERON and HIDALGO, lost to creation of KENEDY.

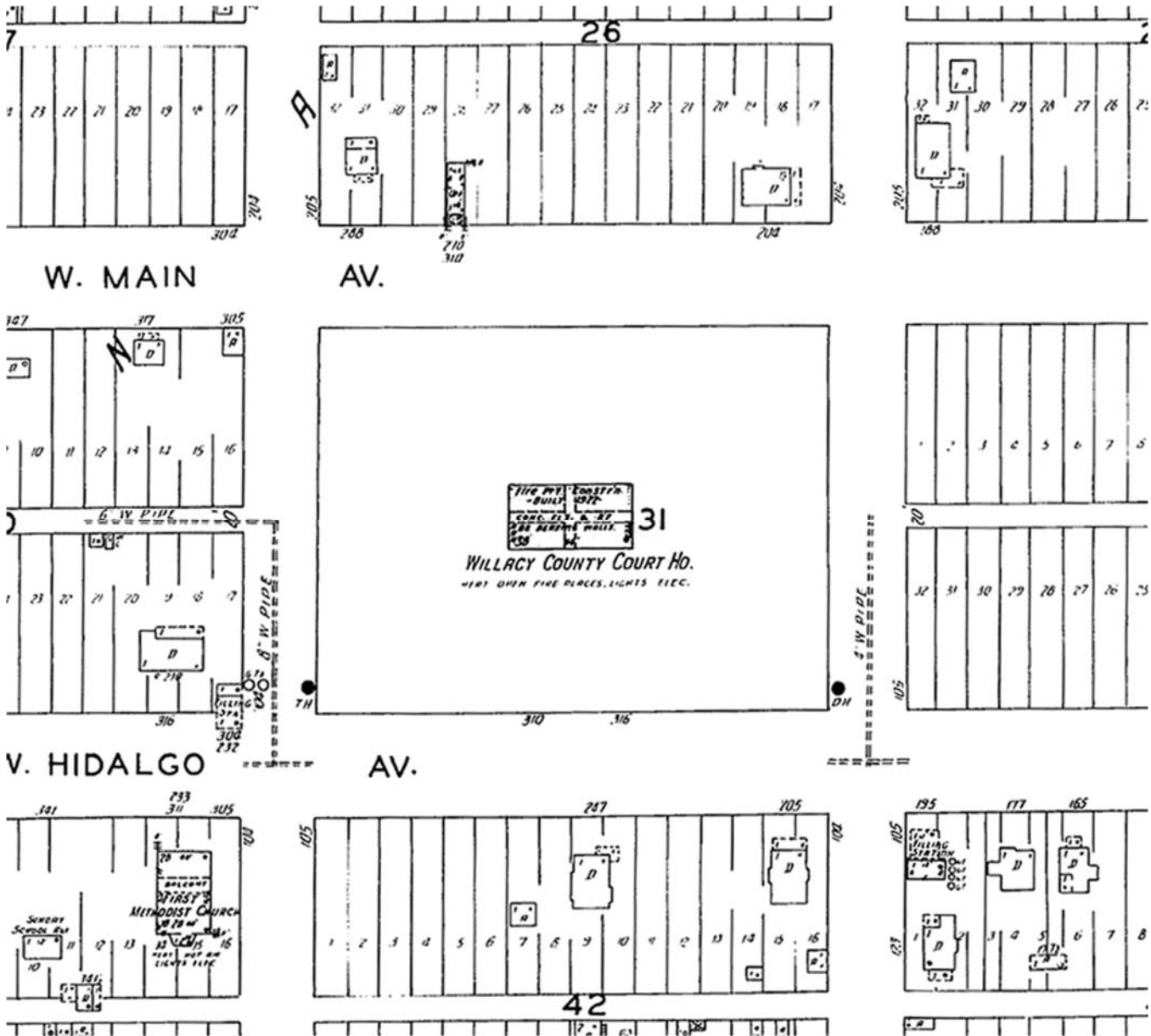
600 sq. mi.

(Texas Laws 1921, 37th leg., reg. sess., ch. 104/pp. 200-207)



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1930.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Aerial photo, c. 1945.

Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Willacy County Courthouse, c. 1936

Photo courtesy Reber Memorial Library, Harding Collection, Raymondville, Texas.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Willacy County Courthouse (historic postcard, no date).

Source: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/public/upload/images/photo-gallery/willacy-courthouse-antique-cars.jpg>



Willacy County Court House, Raymondville, Texas

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Willacy County Courthouse (historic postcard, 1936)

<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/blog/february-courthouse-month-willacy-county>



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Interior office, 1936

Photo courtesy Reber Memorial Library, Harding Collection, Raymondville, Texas.

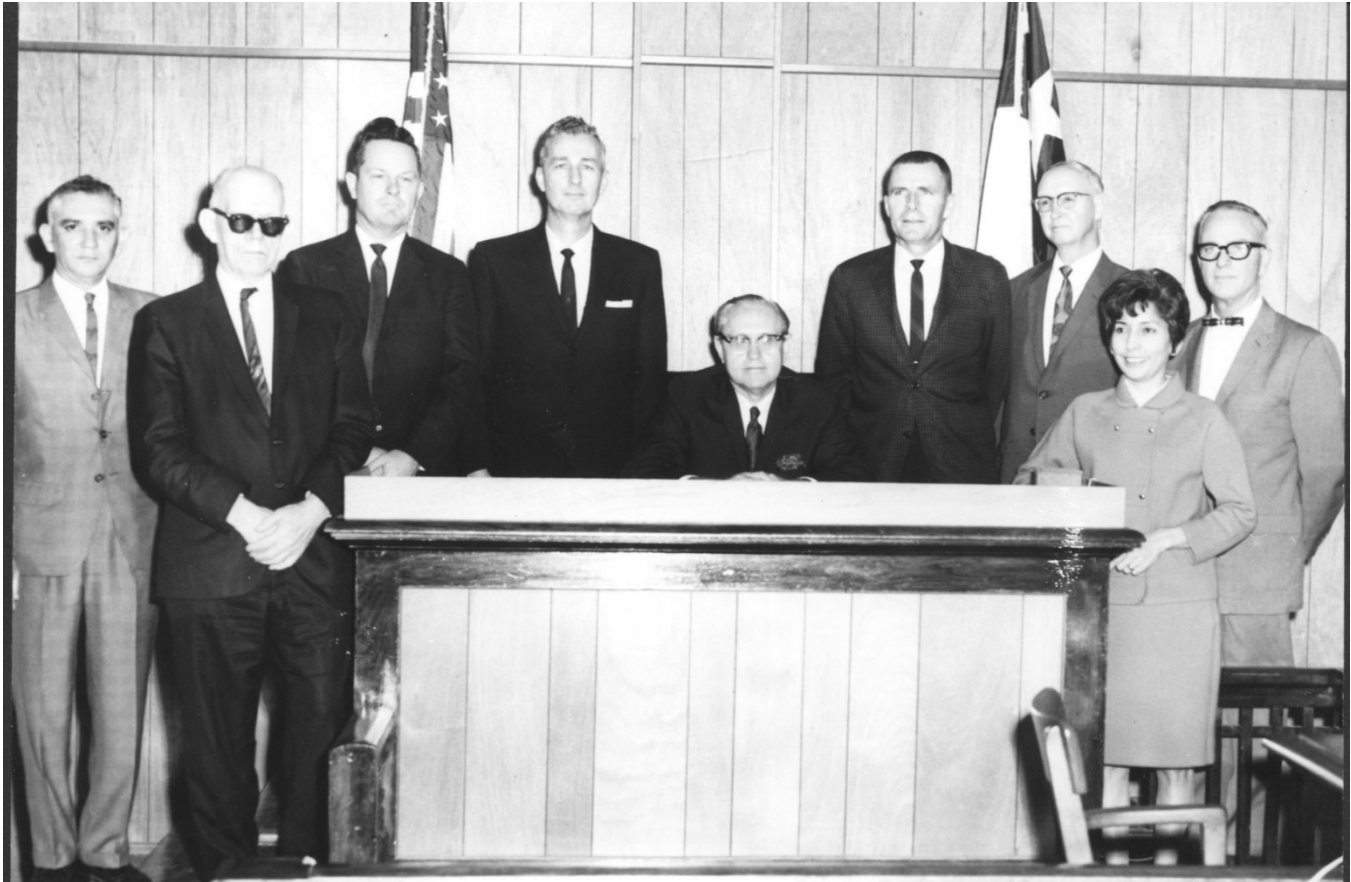


Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Interior District Courtroom, c. 1974

Willacy County District Attorney Edna Cisneros is the woman on the right.

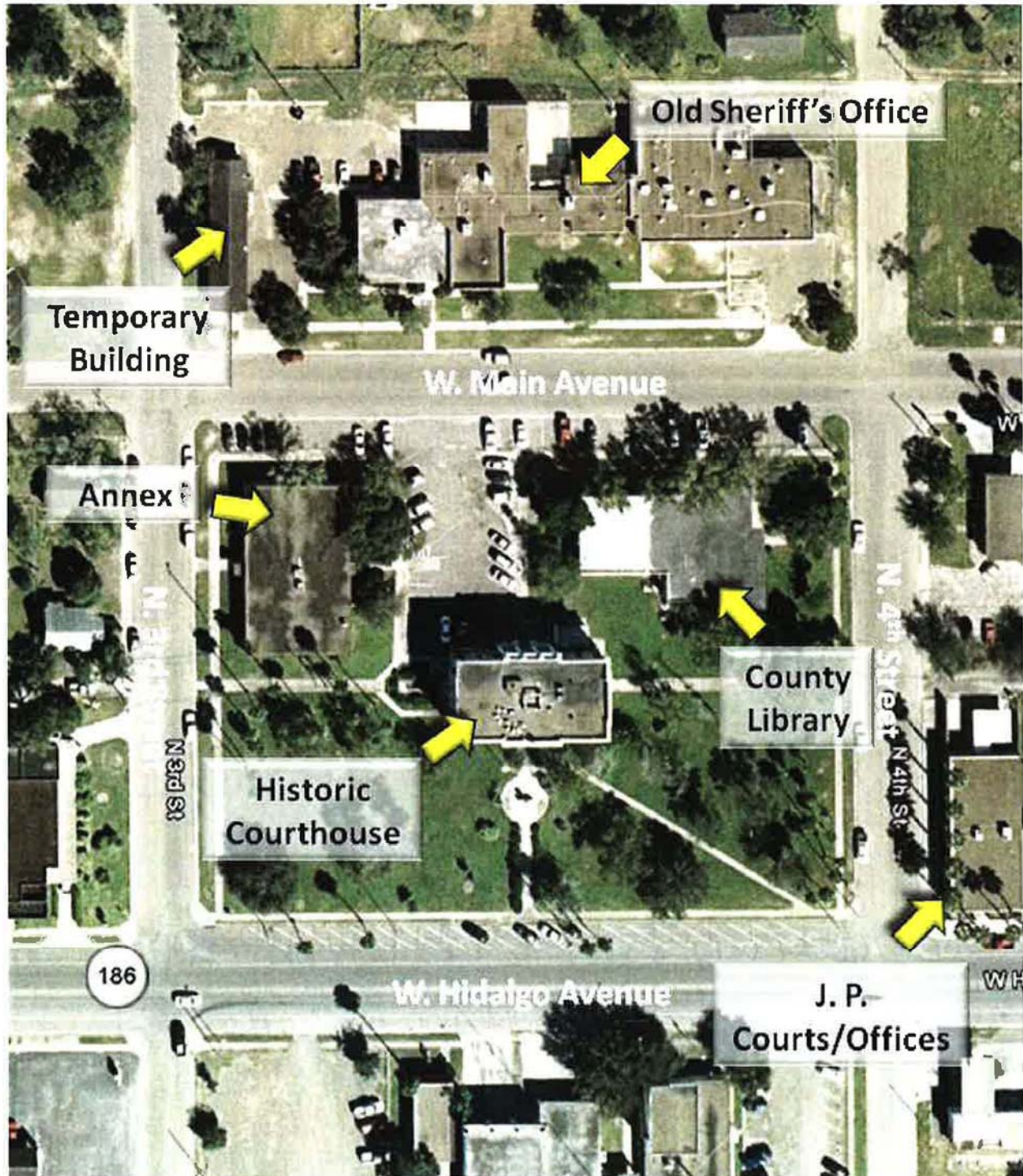
Photo courtesy Reber Memorial Library, Harding Collection, Raymondville, Texas.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Courthouse Square and Vicinity

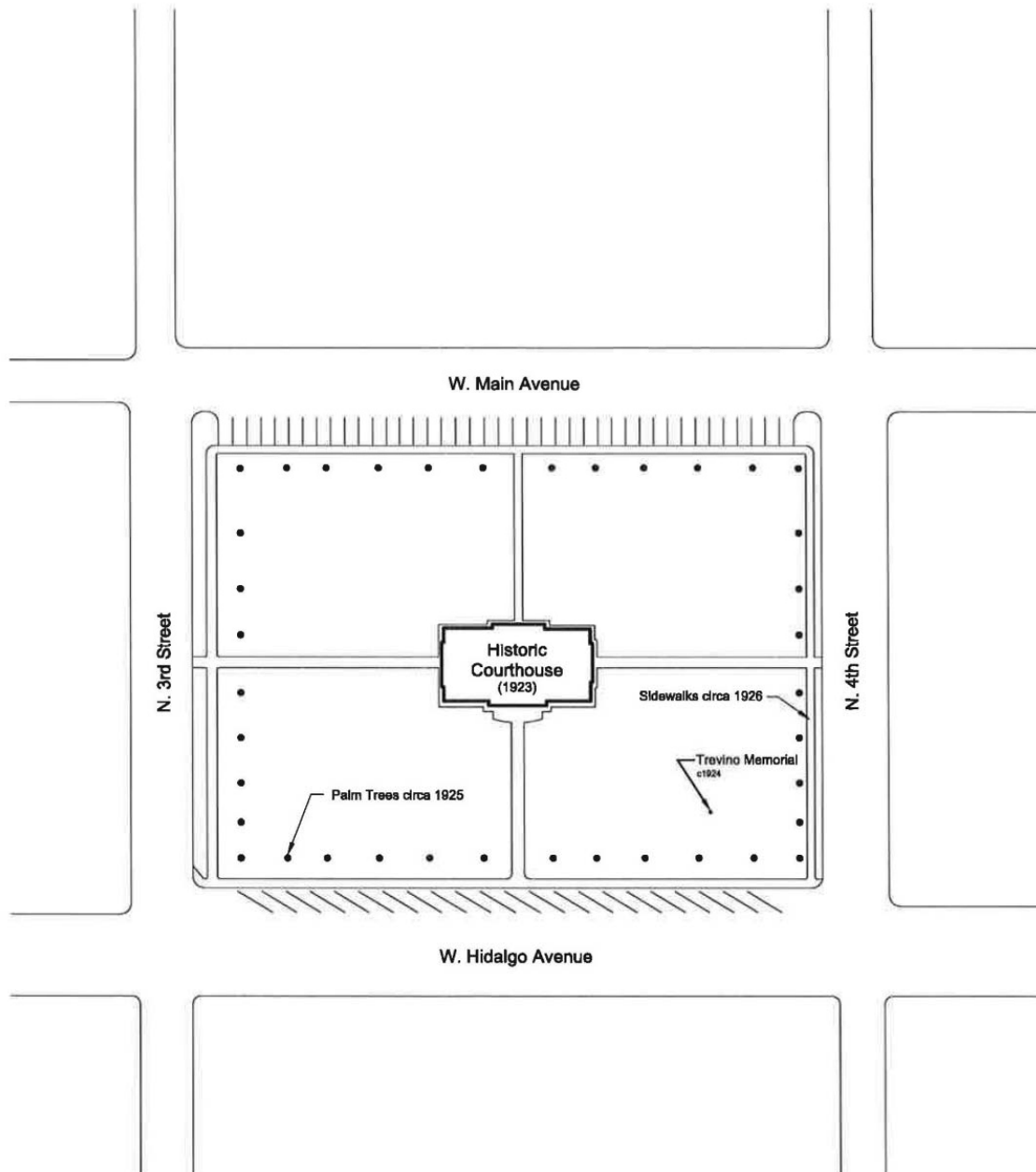
Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Historic Site Plan

Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



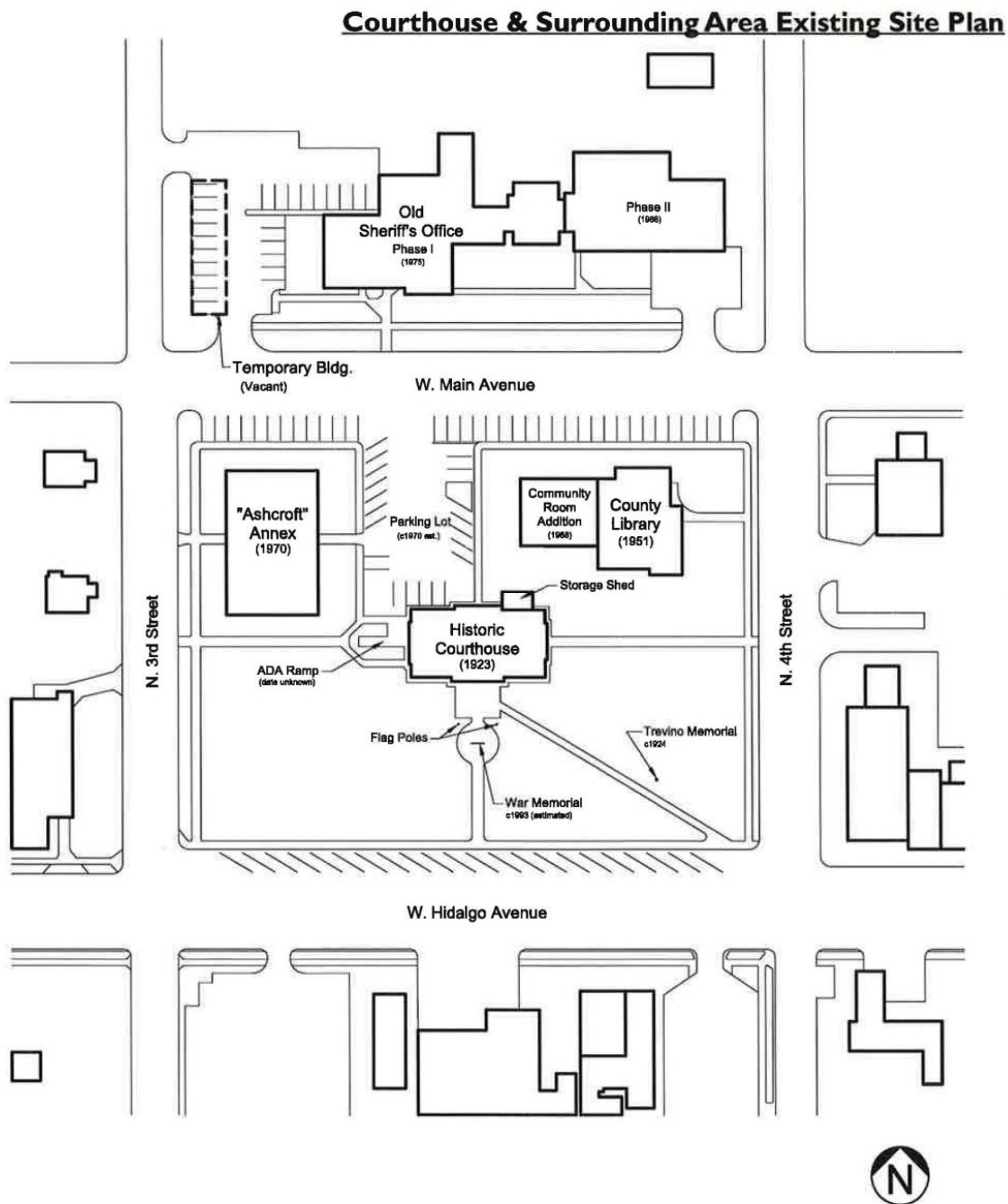
Historic Site Plan



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

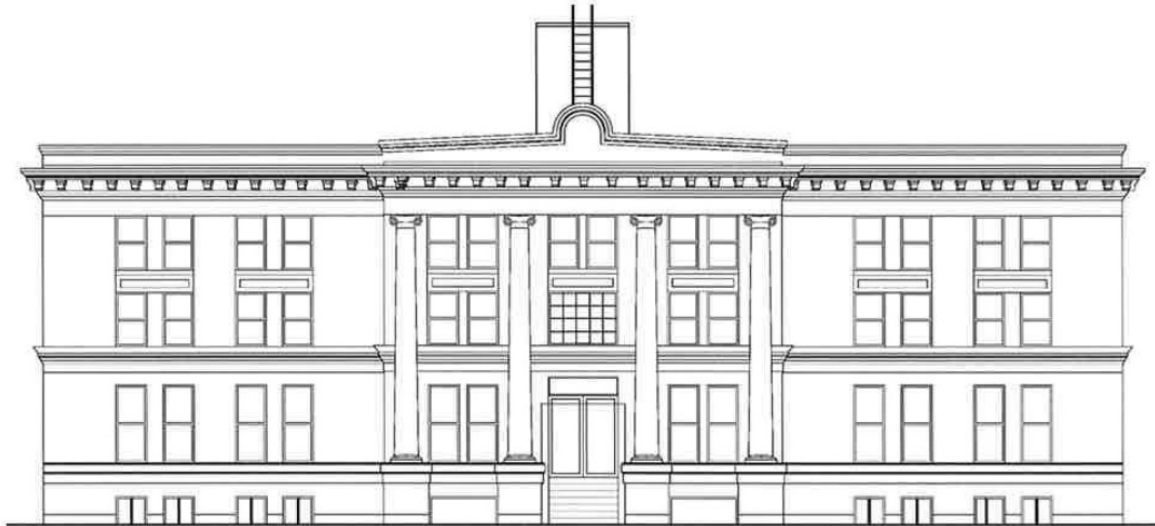
Current Site Plan

Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.

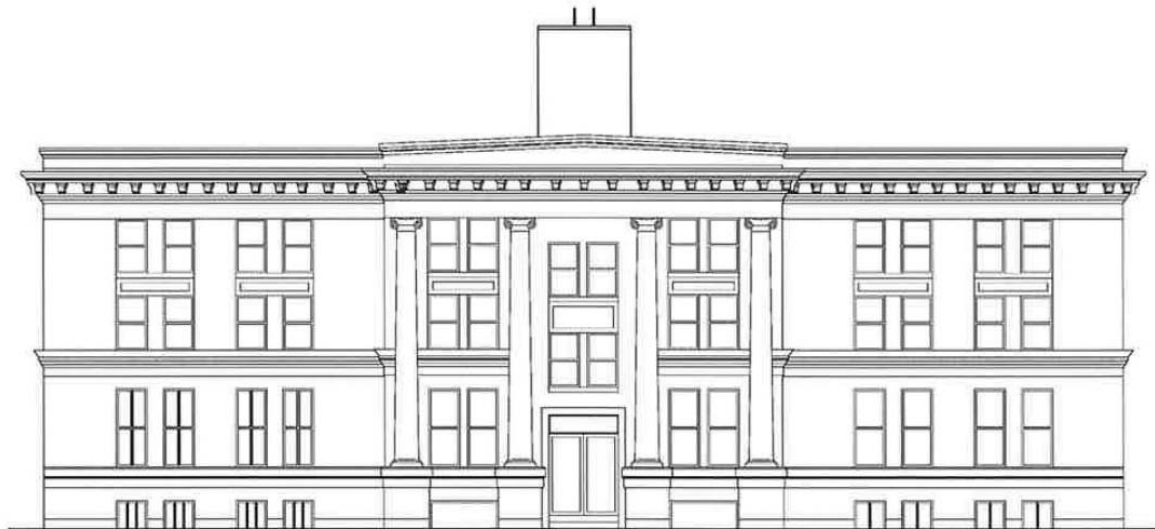


Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



Historic South Elevation



Historic North Elevation

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



Historic East Elevation

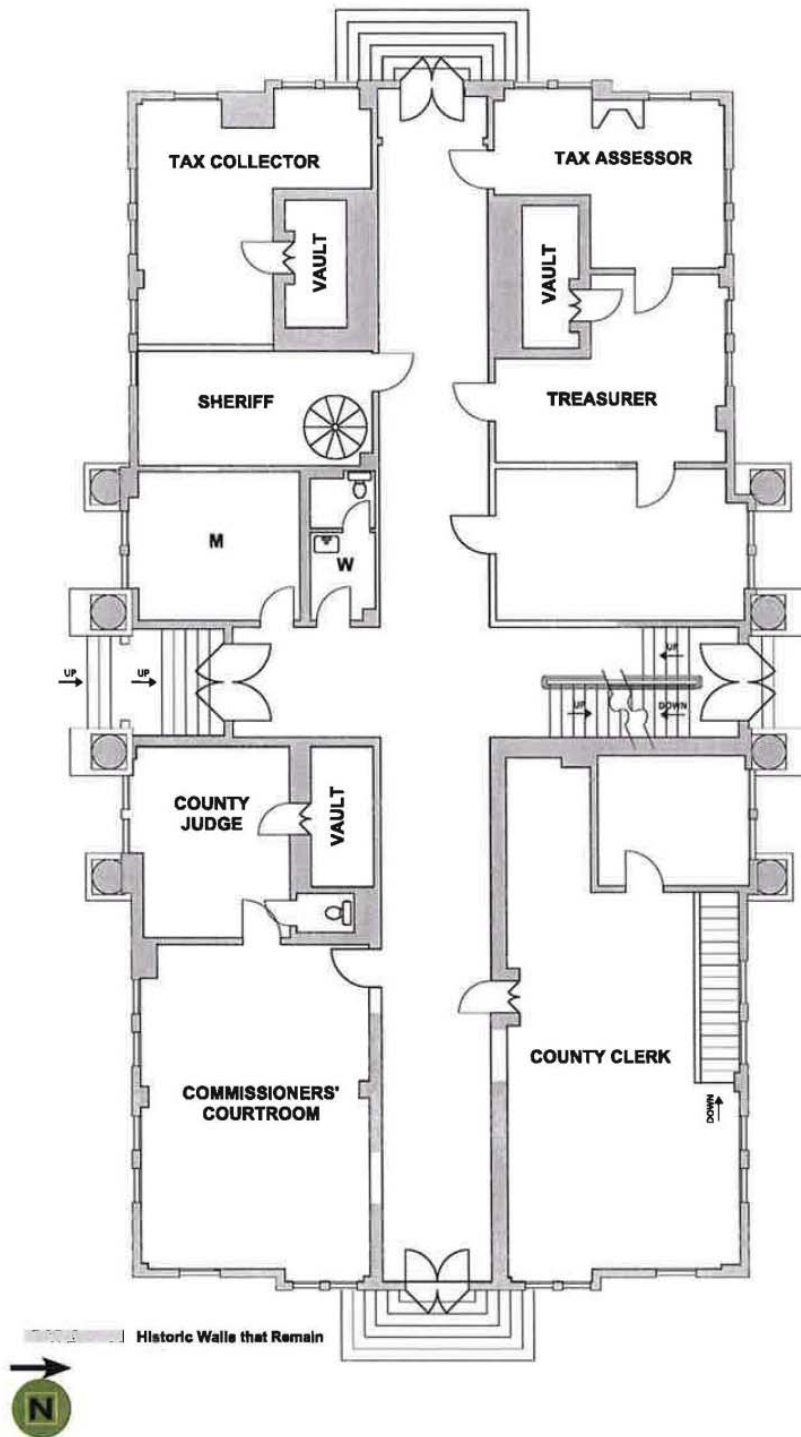


Historic West Elevation

Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Original First Floor Layout

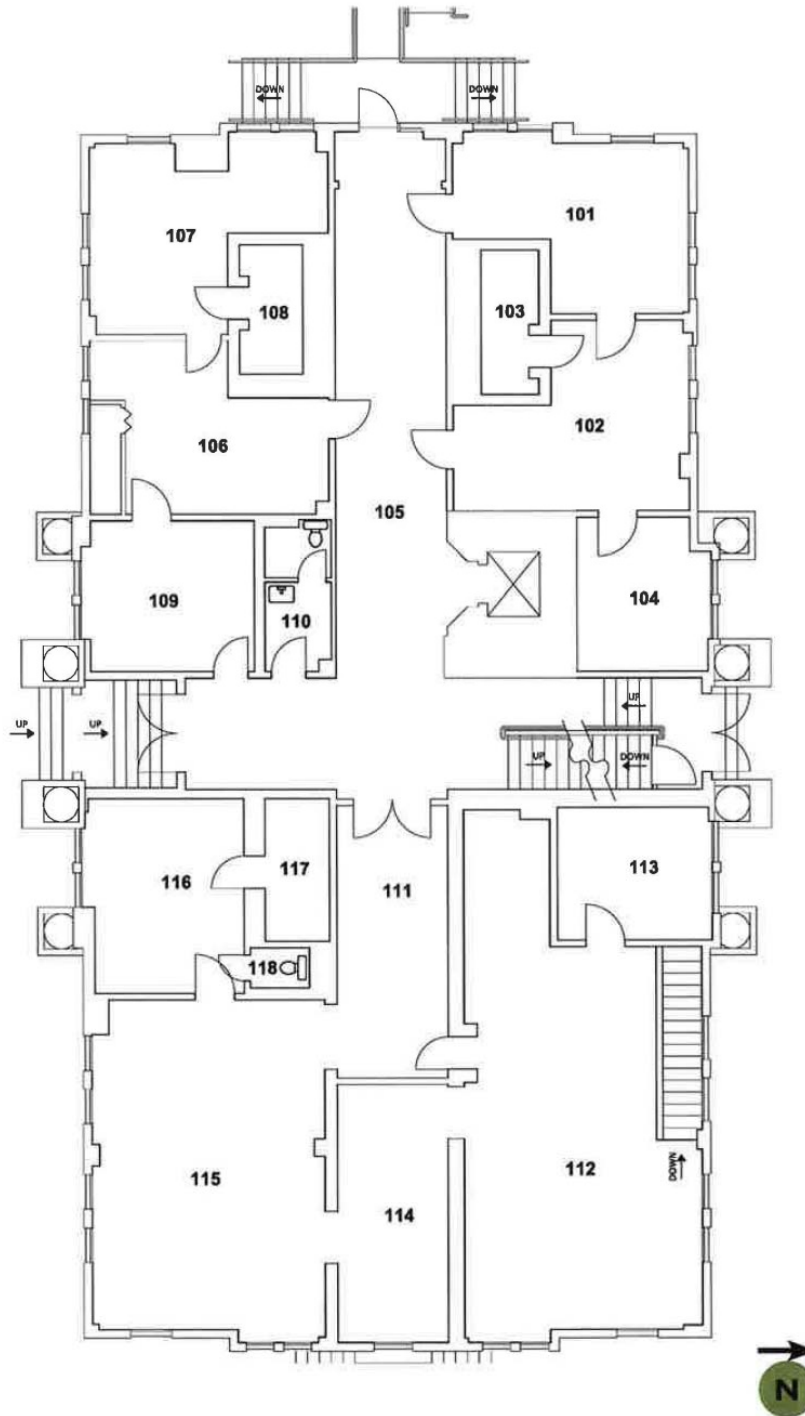
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Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Existing First Floor Layout

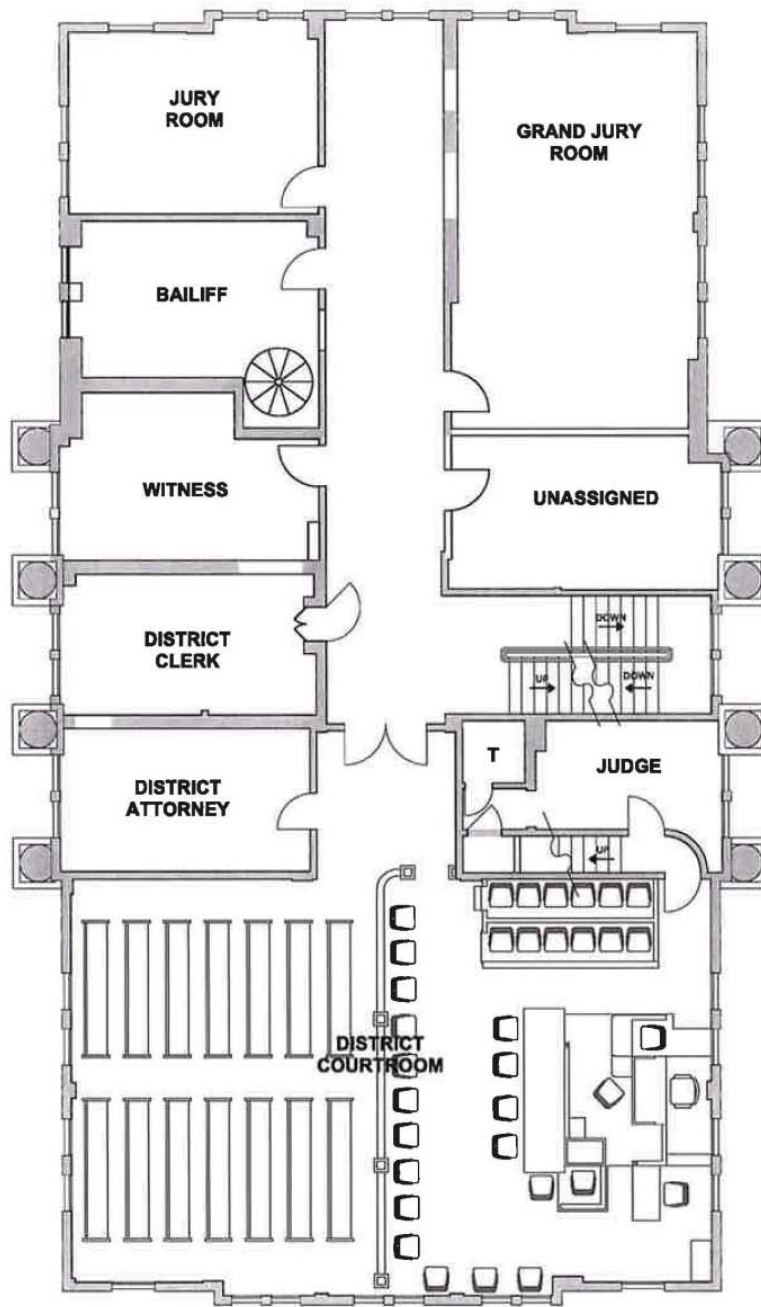
Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Original Second Floor Layout

Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



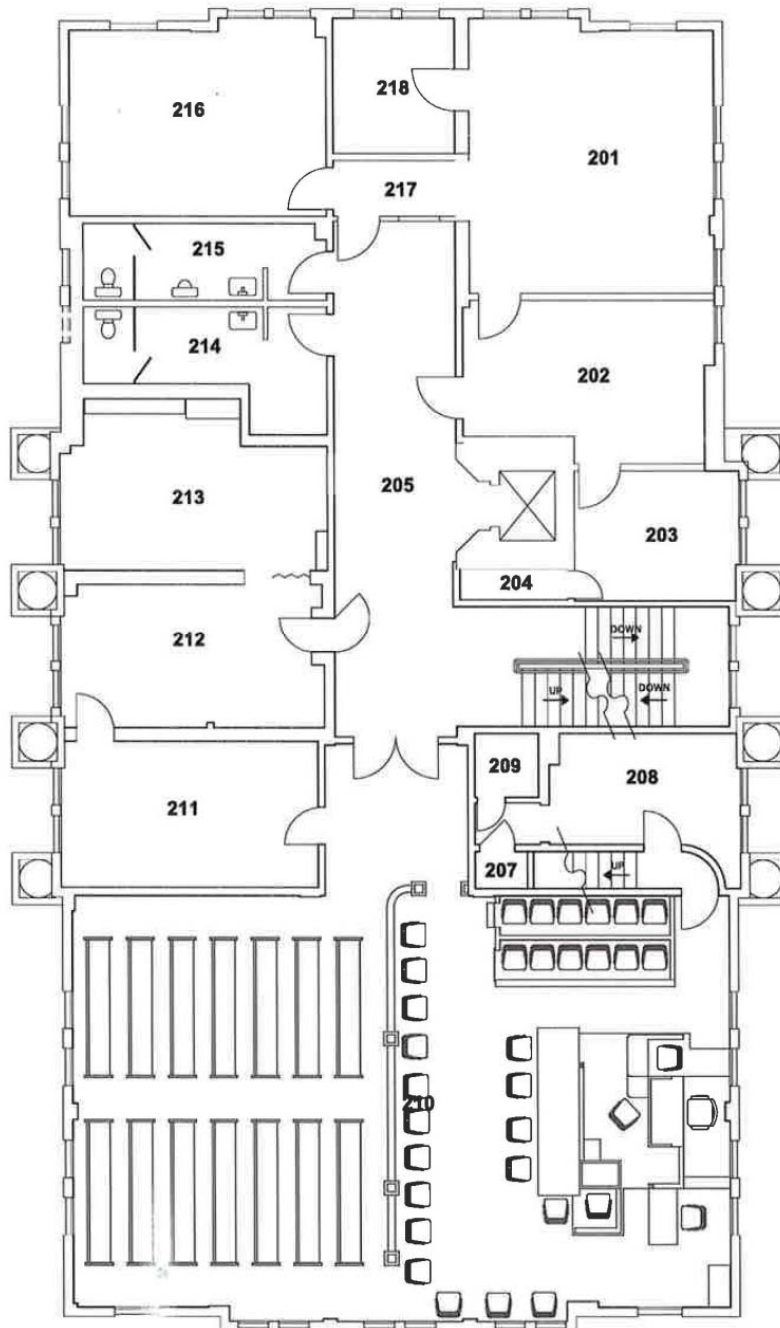
Historic Walls that Remain



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Existing Second Floor Layout

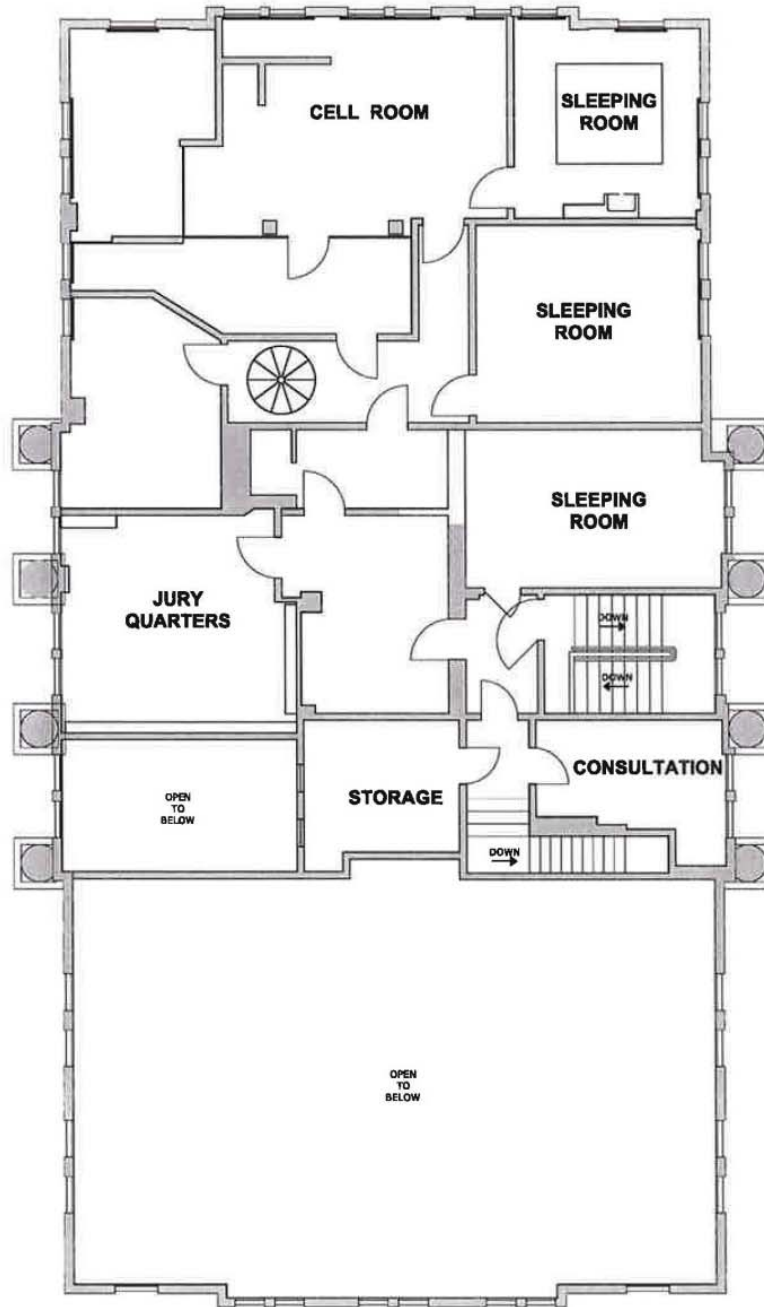
Reprinted from the Willacy County Master Plan, 2010.



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Original Third Floor Layout

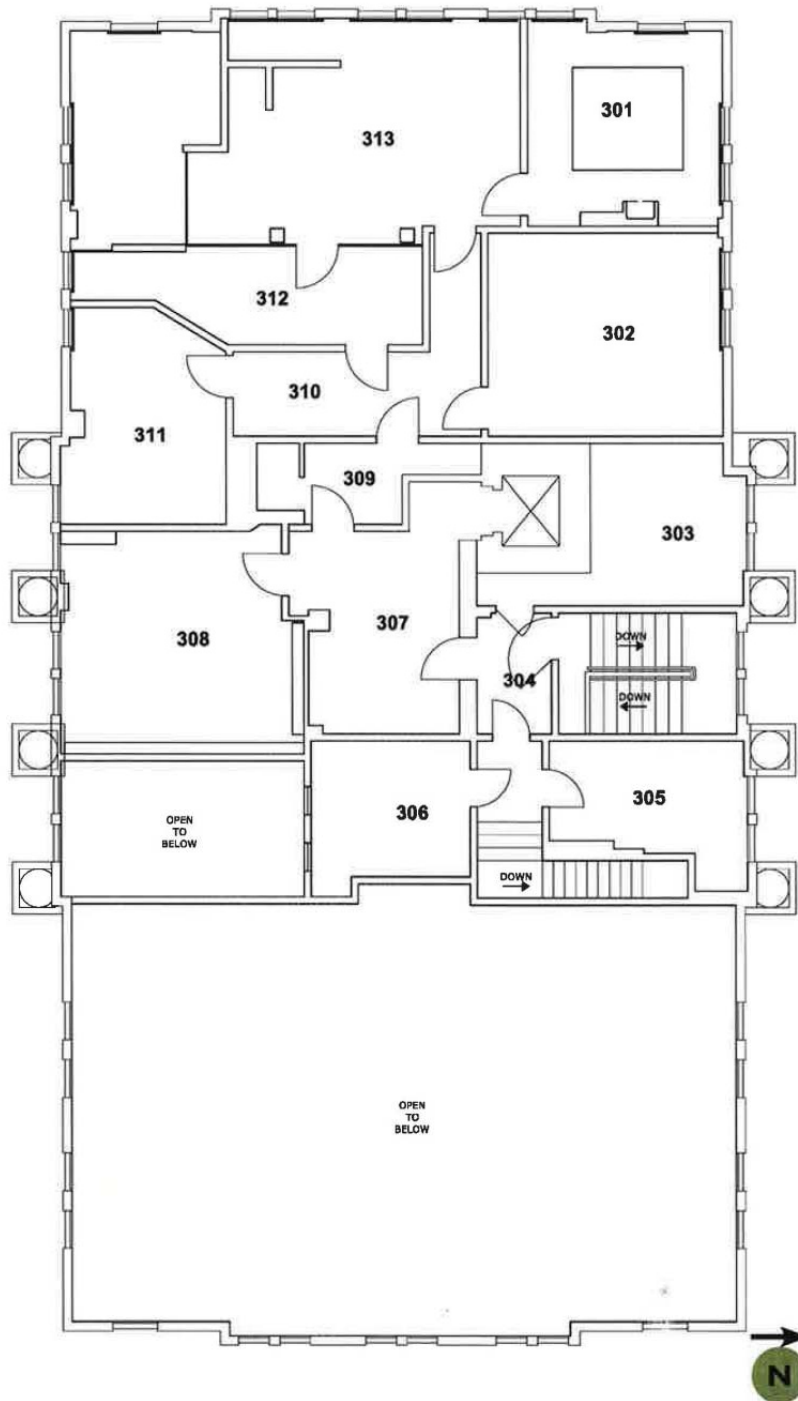
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Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Existing Third Floor Layout

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Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photographs

Photo 1: South Elevation



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 2: South Elevation, entry detail



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 3: East Elevation



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 4: East Elevation, entry detail



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 5: North Elevation



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 6: West Elevation



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 7: District Courtroom



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 8: District courtroom



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 9: First floor corridor



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 10: Commissioners Court vault



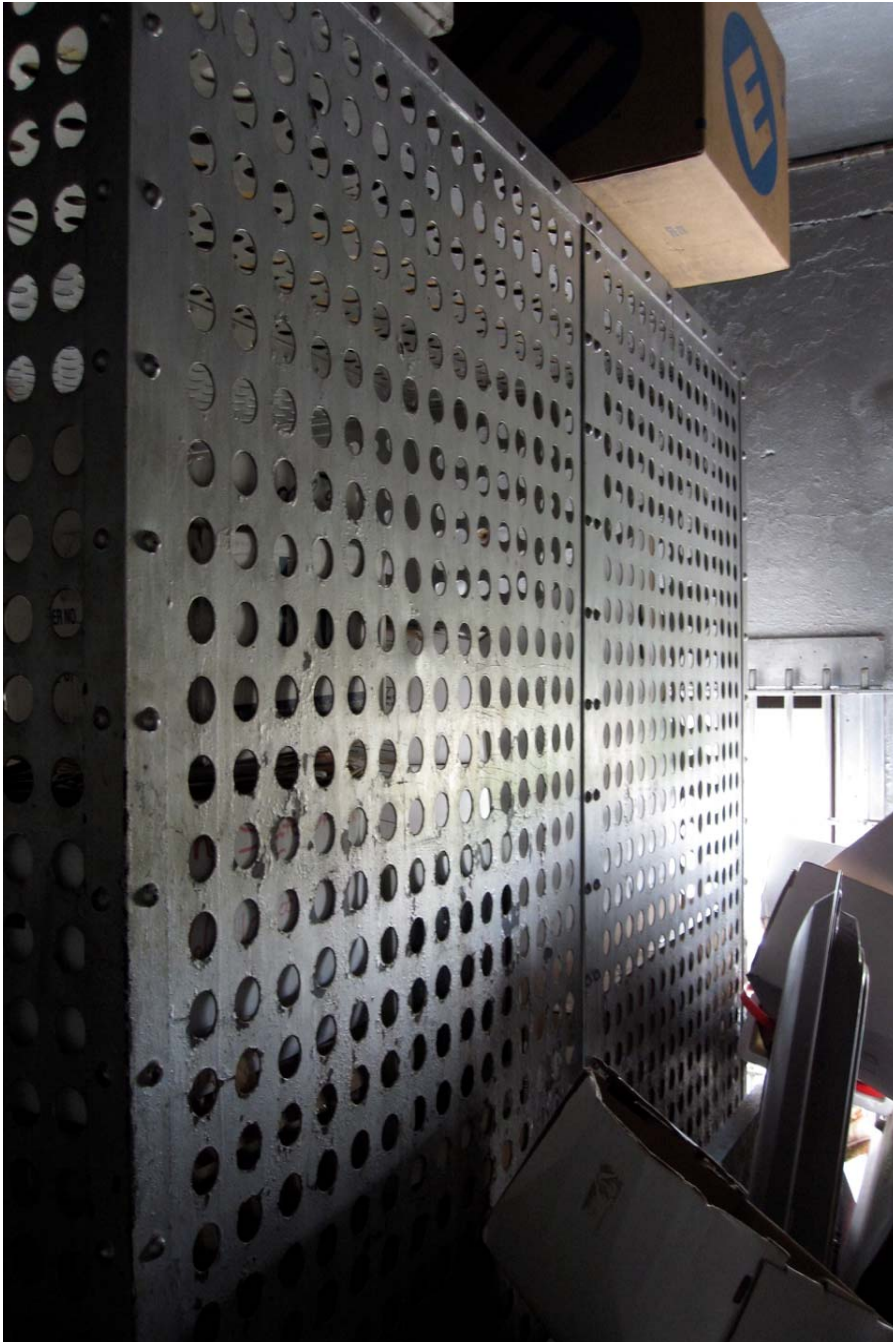
Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 11: Third floor corridor



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 12: Jail cell, third floor



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 13
1950 Willacy County Library (contributing), north elevation



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 14
1950 Willacy County Library (contributing), east elevation



Willacy County Courthouse, Raymondville, Willacy County, Texas

Photo 15
Northeast corner of the square; library at right



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