

New Mexico Historic Preservation Division  
Contract Number 35-12-41985.22



# Historic Taos County Courthouse Condition Assessment & Preservation Plan

September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013

*Prepared by*

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## Executive Summary

This Condition Assessment and Preservation Plan is funded by a grant from the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. Additional funding and support has generously been provided by the Town of Taos and Taos County.

The Town of Taos initiated this project through a publicly advertised Request for Proposal in December of 2013, which resulted in eleven submissions. Henry Architects was selected to perform the work in collaboration with structural consultant Hands Engineering and historical consultant Archinia. Draft reports were submitted to the State Historic Preservation Division in June and September 2013. This report has been revised to address review comments received.

The purpose of this project is to assist the Taos County Government and the Town of Taos in their preservation and rehabilitation of the largely vacant and unused Historic Taos County Courthouse. The scope of work undertaken by Henry Architects in preparing this report included numerous visits to the site, where the building and its contents were measured and photographed, existing floor plans and exterior building elevations were prepared, extensive research of the history of the building and its construction materials was conducted, the building was inspected and existing conditions documented and recommendations for stabilization, preservation and rehabilitation, and estimates of probable construction costs were developed. Additionally, programming meetings were held with numerous stake-holders in the project to determine the beneficial uses of the building and its interior spaces. All of these efforts were performed in an open and collaborative public process.

Sources for research and documentation of the building's construction chronology and historic appearance included the following:

- Taos artist Regina Cooks' woodblock print of the south façade of the building titled "Moving Into the New Courthouse"
- The original 1932 construction drawings located in the University of New Mexico's Center for Southwest Research Architectural Drawing Archives
- Project notes contained in the historic archives of the Public Works Administration (State Archives in Santa Fe)
- Aerial photographs commissioned by the New Mexico Department of Transportation in 1952 & 1957.

The un-stabilized adobe building clad in cementitious plaster is an excellent example of a Spanish Pueblo Revival style public building. Despite a roughly forty year period where little to no maintenance occurred, the building remains in fair condition. The Historic Taos County Courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 and the State Register of Cultural Properties in 1986.

For future planning, this report includes a detailed description of each space, including its original use, current condition and detailed recommendations for preservation and rehabilitation. The most severely deteriorated features of the building are the roof membrane and exterior windows. Replacement of the roof and rehabilitation of the historic windows are essential to preserving the building's overall integrity. The EPDM roof membrane should be entirely replaced, and the exterior plaster system should be restored. Water infiltration into the two story structural adobe walls, if left in their existing condition, will lead to the further deterioration of the building. The restoration of the exterior stucco should be undertaken only after the non-historic side additions are carefully demolished and the original first floor exterior wall openings on the east and west facades are restored.

Finally, the non-historic side infill additions should be removed, either entirely or partially, and the open space reused.

A preliminary building code analysis and an evaluation of building wide accessibility issues is included in this report. Specific building code and accessibility requirements will need to be addressed once a final detailed plan for the buildings reuse is completed. The report does recommend that an elevator for the mobility impaired be installed for access to the upper floor, as well as new publicly accessible restrooms installed on both floors in compliance with Chapter 29 of the IBC. This report also includes a hazardous material survey that was performed on a small portion of the first floor jail complex in 2010 and extrapolates the implications of the findings for the proposed complete building rehabilitation.

Also included for future planning are opinions of probable construction costs for the anticipated preservation and rehabilitation work identified. This work is prioritized into phases so that future funding can be sought for each distinct phase or for the entire project.

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Taos, NM

September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013

# Part I – Introduction

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## Purpose

This is the first comprehensive study of the history and existing conditions of the Courthouse structure.

The purpose of this report is the following:

1. Identify the threats to the long term structural integrity of the building and recommend cost-effective solutions to mediate or eliminate them.
2. Identify and recommend appropriate types of new uses for the building's future use.
3. Determine the locally preferred uses of the interior spaces through an open and collaborative public process.
4. Document and recommend preservation treatments for the significant character defining historic features.
5. As Taos County continues to grow and expand away from its historic downtown plaza and its residents slowly adjust to occupying the newly constructed Taos Government Complex (located close by on Paseo del Pueblo Sur) this study will serve as a guide for the appropriate preservation of the historic structure that exists on the plaza.
6. The report documents and clarifies the history of the building, its site, and the significant Works Progress Administration artwork that is contained within the Courtroom.
7. The preservation plan, part of this report, provides estimates for prioritized work to rehabilitate the building for its continued use and enjoyment by the community.

## Goals

Future goals that have been identified by the stake-holders and consultant team are as follows:

- Secure the building from immediate threats due to water infiltration into the building's exterior.
- Remedy all structural deficiencies; building settling, beam and column movement, and cracking identified by the structural consultant.
- Provide access to persons with impairments to all public portions of the building. Currently, the building does not contain an elevator or an accessible ramp to the second floor, and in particular, the location of the historically significant Courtroom and murals.
- Provide code compliant restroom facilities that are open to the public, including the numerous out of town visitors to the adjacent public plaza. Currently, the building has no public restrooms and only a single water closet. No other public restrooms are available in the vicinity of the building or the plaza. The closest public facility is the portable restroom structure that the Town of Taos constructed in the nearby Teresina Lane, the alley, north of the building.
- Keep the building in the public realm and encourage long term occupancy by appropriate tenants which may include but are not limited to:
  - Nonprofit organizations
  - Arts organizations and/or museum groups
  - Local artisans and/or manufacturers

## State and National Register Listing

Taos County Courthouse, 1986		SR #1272
Taos Downtown Historic District, 1982	SR #860	NR #82003340
Multiple Property Listing, 1982		SR #1722

## Context

Constructed on the north side of an historic plaza, the 1933 Taos County Courthouse is the most recent of at least three civic structures built in this location on the Taos Plaza over the past 160 years. The building, constructed in 1933, is historically significant for being a Public Works Administration funded project with Works Progress Administration art in its major second floor community space, and for its Spanish Pueblo Revival design by New Mexican Architect Louis Hesselden.

Taos Plaza has changed over time, with several major periods of its development. These include the following:

- Pre-Puebloan and Puebloan Periods
- Early Spanish Period
- Territorial Period
- Spanish Pueblo Revival Period
- Modern Period

## Pre-Puebloan and Puebloan Period, 1100 - 1796

Taos was settled by Native Americans in the early 1100's, who built pit-house shelters for their seasonal hunting and gathering trips to the area. The first Pueblos settled in the area in approximately 1320, and Taos Pueblo, as it exists today, was established in the 1400's. Spanish settlers, who had lived in individual ranchos since the earliest settlers in 1615 until the establishment of the town in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, combined forces to create a community. Taos Pueblo was a regional trade center and community civic functions occurred in the main plaza of the Pueblo until the Hispanic community of Don Fernando de Taos was established in 1796.

## Early Spanish Period, 1615 - 1852

When Don Fernando de Taos was established in 1796, work began in earnest to bring together sixty three original families or one hundred and forty seven individuals, into six early placitas. One of those placitas, Don Fernando, became Taos Plaza. However, the early Taos Plaza appeared different than what visitors see today. The earlier plaza was a rectangular shaped residential block, similar to a very large hacienda. The plaza had a protected gated entrance so it could be closed off to attack from cattle or horse rustlers, or Indian attack. The traditional Spanish vernacular plaza was fortified with thick buttressed walls. Buildings were linear one story buildings with portals, small mica windows, heavy wooden doors, small communicating doors between residences, flat roofs, and parapets to provide shielding for armed guards who patrolled the rooftops. Early settlers built an acequia that fed the plaza from a board flume from Kit Carson Park.

This plaza, and the structures that enclosed it, slowly evolved into a solid walled perimeter with a number of gates that could be closed for security. Over time, the original linear structures were extended into more irregular shaped buildings, particularly on the north and south sides of the plaza. The Historic Taos County

Courthouse is located over the northern foundation of this original plaza.

Taos remained the northernmost outpost of the Spanish frontier for many years and was not accessible by road until the late nineteenth century. Up until this time, Taos was accessed by foot, then pack trails which were eventually widened to accommodate carts. Due to the difficulty in travel, Taos remained somewhat isolated, and the architecture was characterized by simple, low, one story square and rectangular earthen structures built from locally available materials.



Figure 1. Taos Plaza in approximately 1880 looking west, note Territorial Style pitched roof on courthouse at right, the first courthouse located on the site of the Courthouse which is the subject of this report

## First Courthouse, Territorial Period, 1830 - 1880

The first courthouse, built between 1830 and 1844, dated from this early Spanish period. The earliest known map of Taos, produced in 1847, notes the “calboza”, which in Galician, a dialect of Spanish from Northwest Spain common in the Americas, meaning “jail”, rather than “courthouse”, located a few feet west of where the courthouse is located today. Historical records suggest the two functions were seamless at the time. The map does not seem to be scaled, and has never been able to be verified. The original design of this courthouse is unknown. The earliest known photograph indicating the design of this courthouse was taken in 1902, and is included as Figure 2. on the following page. At that time, the building had a flat roof with a small projecting parapet over the central door. The roof was pitched before 1918, and a dormer added above the central entrance, presumably to make the building appear more in keeping with the fashionable American architectural styles of this period.

In the first few decades of the 1800’s, Taos became known for beaver trapping, and the first non-natives and non-Hispanics began to arrive in search of work in this area. These earliest settlers were mostly French-Canadians, but it would not be long until word spread to the East about the unique frontier character of New Mexico, and healing available for ailments like tuberculosis.

By 1847, the first wood mills were opening in New Mexico, and more and more Americans and Europeans were arriving. They brought new ideas about architectural style that influenced architecture in the state, and in Taos.

The Territorial Period introduced the second phase of the plaza architecture. This phase consisted of two periods. The first period was around the time of the Civil War. The earthen walls were whitewashed and portals were eliminated from the facades of

buildings surrounding the plaza. The second period was characterized by the vast majority of the adobe buildings being demolished or covered with clapboard and board and batten siding typical of other towns in the American West. The plaza was surrounded by buildings with wooden storefronts, large storefront windows, pitched roofs, wood trim, and retractable awnings. Historic photographs of Taos in this period are unrecognizable to contemporary Taosenos, because of the abundant signage, the lack of portals, and the wooden boardwalks surrounding the plaza. The original rectangular shape of the open grassy plaza framed by perimeter dirt roads remained, although the outside perimeter of the plaza was expanding to accommodate growth.

Taos County was designated as a county by the Territorial Legislature in 1852. The next year, the 1830 Courthouse was described by Blanche Grant in her book When Old Trails Were New as “a low rude building less comfortable than the cow stables in some states...” indicating that 20 years later, the 1830 courthouse already needed work.

## Second Courthouse, Territorial Period, 1880 - 1932

The second Taos County Courthouse was erected in 1880 on the north side of the Plaza on the site where the Historic Taos County Courthouse, constructed in 1933, exists today. This Courthouse building was a one-room deep one story high adobe Territorial structure with earthen plaster and wood trim. The structure had a flat roof with parapets. A gable roof, and later, a gable roof with a cross-gable, were constructed over the flat roof. This Courthouse building never appears to have had a portal.

In 1898, Earnest “Blumey” Blumenschein and Bert Phillips started the Taos Art Colony when they were traveling through Northern New Mexico on an art expedition and accidentally had a broken wheel. Blumenschein brought his broken wheel to Taos Plaza to be

repaired by a blacksmith. While Blumenschein stayed for several months, Phillips decided to make Taos his permanent home. This led to another of Taos’ evolutions. Artists and thinkers from around the world were invited, by the earliest members of the Taos Society of Artists, to explore the area and paint its vast landscapes and the indigenous people of Taos Pueblo. With the influx of new visitors came a need for hotels and restaurants, which started to change the architecture of the business district again. By 1900, there were more businesses than residences around the Taos Plaza.

The first octagonal gazebo was constructed on the plaza in 1908.

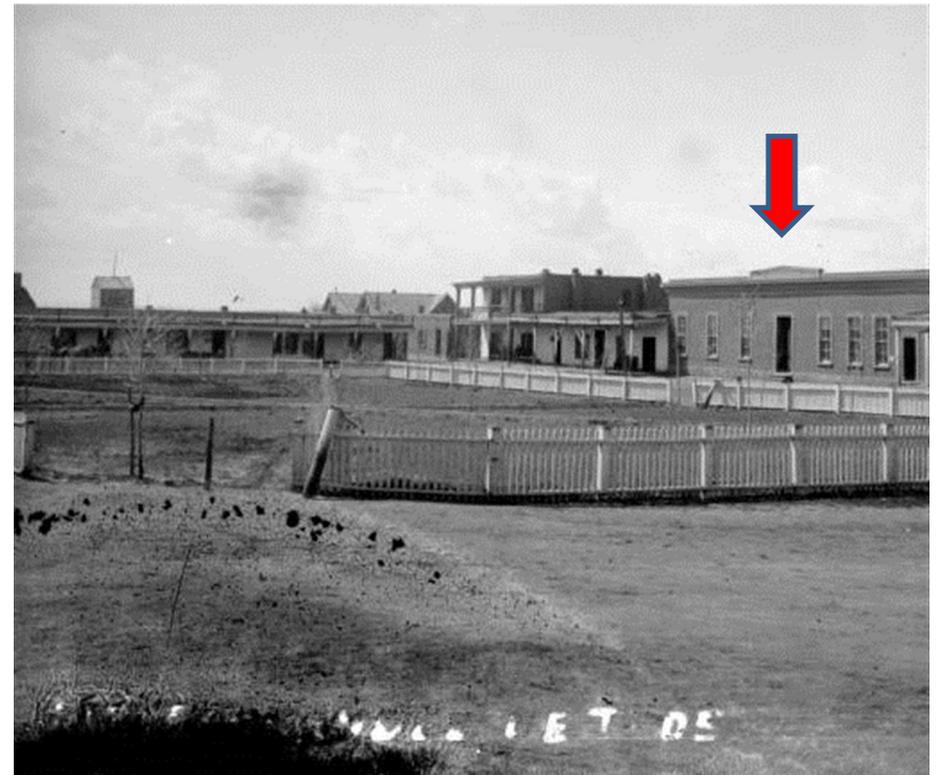


Figure 2. Taos Plaza in 1902 looking west. The Courthouse is to the right. Note that the pitched roof has been removed and a parapet has been added with vertical pediment to emphasize the entry.



Figure 3. Taos Plaza in 1918 looking west. Note that the second Territorial period courthouse, on the right beyond the Greek Revival structure with the horse and buggy in front, has a pitched roof again, this time with a gable over the entry.

### **Third Courthouse, Spanish-Pueblo Revival Period, 1933 - 1968**

The most recent period of the plaza’s development occurred after a series of fires in the early 1900’s. In 1912-1918, the east side of the plaza burned, destroying the old McCarthy House and leaving only a fence. The Columbian Hotel, on the south side, the present location of the La Fonda Hotel, burned in 1928. The west side of the plaza burned in 1931. The north side of the plaza, including the courthouse, burned in 1932. On the southwest corner of the plaza the Don Fernando Hotel, a converted hotel in what was once the Gusdorf store, burned in 1933. The appearance of Taos Plaza today, originated during the this time, when new buildings were being constructed in the Pueblo Revival architectural style, popularized in the architecture of Santa Fe and Albuquerque.

During the 1920’s and 1930’s, second story additions began to be constructed on the one story structures. A two story façade was added to the Gusdorf Store on the southwest corner of the plaza during this period. In 1937, a second and third story were added to the La Fonda Hotel on the south side of the plaza. The buildings began to be built with clerestories for improved interior lighting. It was during this period that the Historic Taos County Courthouse was built to replace the 1932 burnt courthouse on the north.

Another change to the plaza during this period was that the acequia on the plaza was replaced with barrels that were filled from a well located in the center of the plaza. In 1929, the street around the plaza was widened to accommodate cars. Also, a stone wall was constructed around the perimeter of the plaza’s central grass covered “courtyard”, approximately in the same location as the existing perimeter walls stairs, and concrete ramps of today.

The Columbian Hotel, now the La Fonda, added the first new portal on the plaza in more than 30 years. The characteristic boardwalks installed in 1847 were abandoned and replaced with concrete sidewalks, probably due to fire danger and maintenance issues. In 1933, the 1908 octagonal gazebo on the plaza was replaced with a Spanish-Pueblo Revival style gazebo with a stucco parapet and wood vigas, lintels, posts and corbels, matching the surrounding Pueblo Revival buildings.

The Fiestas de Taos were conceived by plaza merchants in the 1930’s. The fiestas were held in mid-summer to attract shoppers to downtown, who would normally be at the Pueblo for San Geronimo Day, an Indio-Hispanic predecessor. The portal of the Historic Taos County Courthouse was historically used as a viewing platform for fiesta royalty to enjoy a bird’s eye view of the three days of festivities.



Figure 4. Taos Plaza Sanborn Map 1908, north is to the left.



Figure 5. Sanborn Map of downtown Taos 1929, north is to the left, the plaza is located off of the map to the right

In the location of the existing Historic Taos County Courthouse, the 1908 and 1929 Sanborn maps, prepared before the 1932 fire, depict a structure roughly one third as deep as the present structure. A smaller structure, possibly the jail, is located behind it to the north between what was North Plaza Drive on the south and Juan Largo Lane, now an alley, on the north. The building filled the block from east to west.

The National Register Nomination for the Historic Taos County Courthouse notes that the structure “was about to become obsolete from lack of space and light when it coincidentally burned to the ground in 1932.”



Figure 6. 1930 Courthouse, from National Register Nomination

The fire, reported at 2:00 AM on May 9, 1932, left the entire north side of the plaza in ruins, including the single story Territorial courthouse. After the 1932 fire, the town was incorporated so that a town fire department and municipal water service could be established, and funding obtained to support them. The town was suffering the ravages of the depression, and the third massive fire in a generation made it clear that something more had to be done, as “*bucket brigades*” would no longer be sufficient to fight fires.

Interestingly, the 1908 Sanborn map notes that previous to the establishment of the Fire Department, the means of alerting citizens to the fire in Taos... was ringing the church bells.



Figure 7. Photo of burned courthouse featured in Santa Fe Reporter 1938

After the fire was extinguished, reports noted that "nothing was left of [the courthouse] except a few blackened walls, the iron work of the jail, and the wooden signs on the front wall which bravely announced, 'County Clerk' in letters on which not even the paint had blistered." Fortunately, the vault also withstood the heat of the fire, or quick responders came in and saved what county records were salvaged. Prisoners were removed from the courthouse quickly upon the reporting of the fire, and placed in a hotel room for safekeeping.

According to period reports, the fire was started by faulty wiring in a pool hall owned by Frank Baxter and was fueled by high winds. Businesses damaged included the Taos County Courthouse and Jail; the Pool Hall; the Plaza Cafe and Hotel; the Burch Grocery Store; the Saavedra Drug Store; the Bond McCarthy Store; Quality Bakery; the Montaner Drug Store; an icehouse; and the post office.

Another report of the fire notes that, "Virtually every able bodied citizen in the town responded to the call for help and all were working incessantly today to stamp out the flames." A sudden shift in the wind enabled them to bring the fire under control and it was believed that the buildings on the adjoining side of the plaza would be safe unless the wind should again change. Buckets, garden hoses and anything that would carry water or could be used to get water (to the burning buildings) was pressed into service. An appeal to Santa Fe to send the Santa Fe fire department was refused by Santa Fe officials, who said they could not send the city's only fire truck to Taos because it would leave the capitol city unprotected.

Among the losses in the 1932 fire was an entire accounting of the county's newspapers back through the early nineteenth century. The Courthouse was the single most important building in the rural community of Taos, hosting all of its government functions. These functions were vital to the community, especially at the time, as Taos County was addressing the Depression and its associated impacts.

Early plans to relocate the courthouse to the National Guard Armory were abandoned, and the existing Historic Taos County Courthouse was rebuilt on the earlier Courthouse location. The site, 0.188 of an acre of land, was assigned to Taos County in perpetuity, in a deed signed by Franklin Roosevelt on March 25, 1935. That assignment was followed on May 21, 1935 by a deed donating the 0.515 acres comprising the existing Taos Plaza to the County. The sites are platted as Exception 279, PC284 PI, County of Taos in a 1930 Plat completed by the Public Survey Office in Santa Fe.

The Historic Taos County Courthouse, designed by Albuquerque Architect Louis Hesselden, was built with partial funding from the Public Works Administration combined with a loan from a local bank. Construction was started in 1932 by contractor L. H. Bovos.

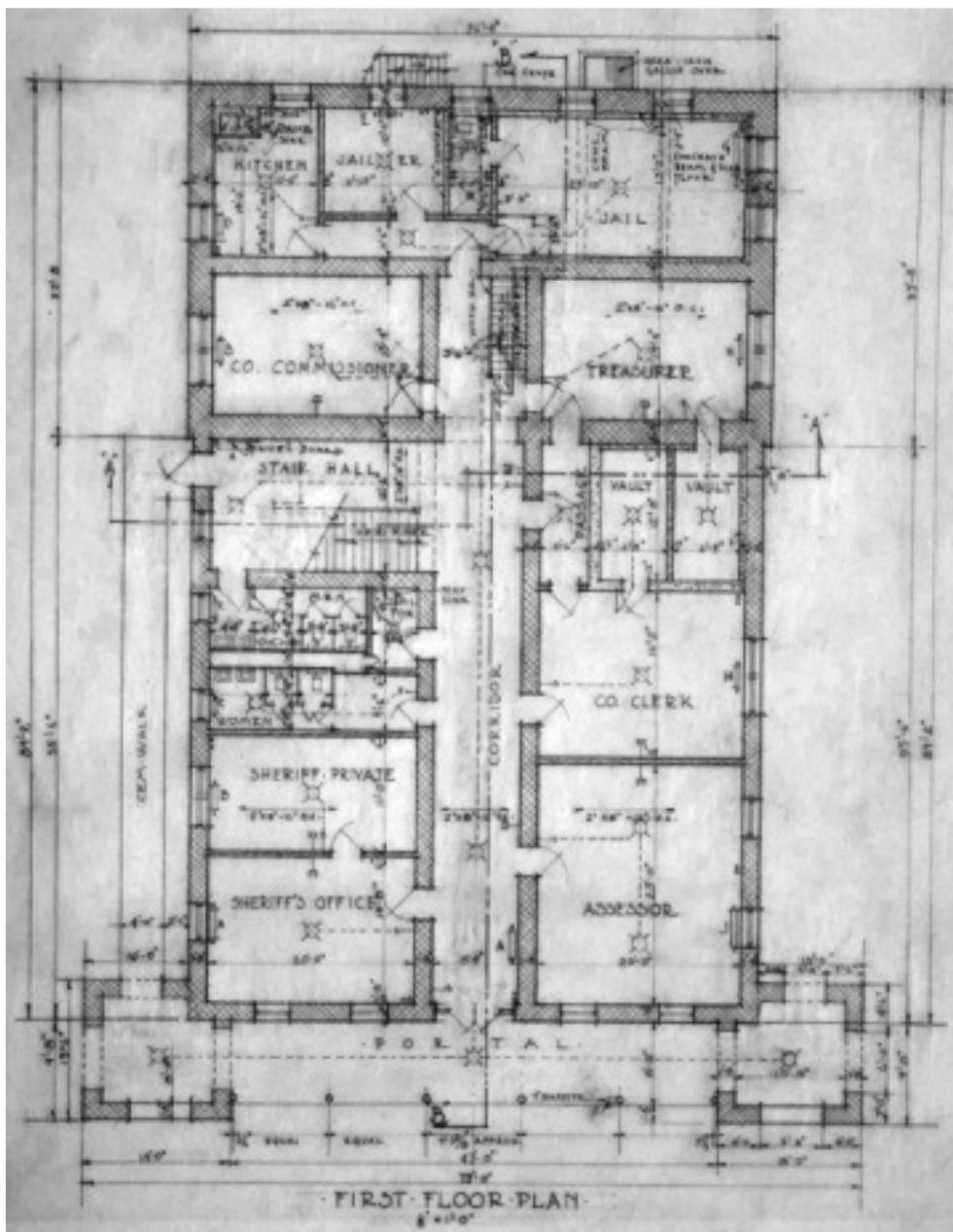


Figure 8. 1932 Construction Drawing - First Floor Plan, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research

The Historic Taos County Courthouse was completed and inhabited by January 1934. The facility included offices for County staff, including the Sherriff, County Clerk and Assessor, Commissioner, Treasurer, two vaults, and jail on the first-floor, and the Agriculture Agent, Superintendent of Schools, District Judge, Justice of the Peace, District Attorney, and the Court and Jury Rooms on the second floor. The move into the courthouse was facilitated by “trucks, vans, lorries, and wagons” according to a report by the 23 year veteran Taos News Arts editor Regina Tatum Cooke, who completed the woodblock print of the Courthouse move-in for the front page of the paper on the day the facility opened.

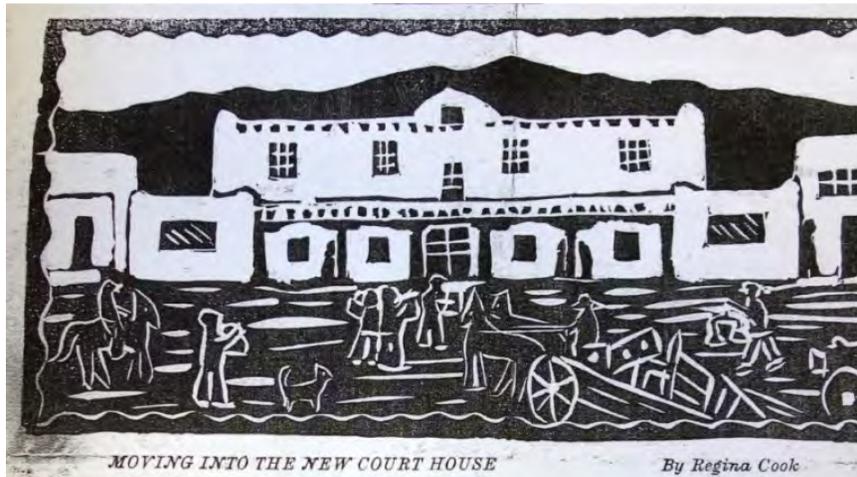


Figure 9. 1934 woodblock print of Historic Taos County Courthouse by Regina Cook



Figure 10. Taos Plaza in 1934-1937 looking west. Note that the Historic Taos County Courthouse is on the on the right. The western alley infill has been completed and a new portal has been constructed by this date



Figure 11. Taos Plaza ca. 1945 looking northwest. Note the massive stucco elements at east and west ends of the Courthouse portal



Figure 12. South Facade during Fiestas of the late 1940's. Note the modified portal showing the portal similar to how it exists today.



Figure 14. Taos County Courthouse during Fiestas ca. early 1960's

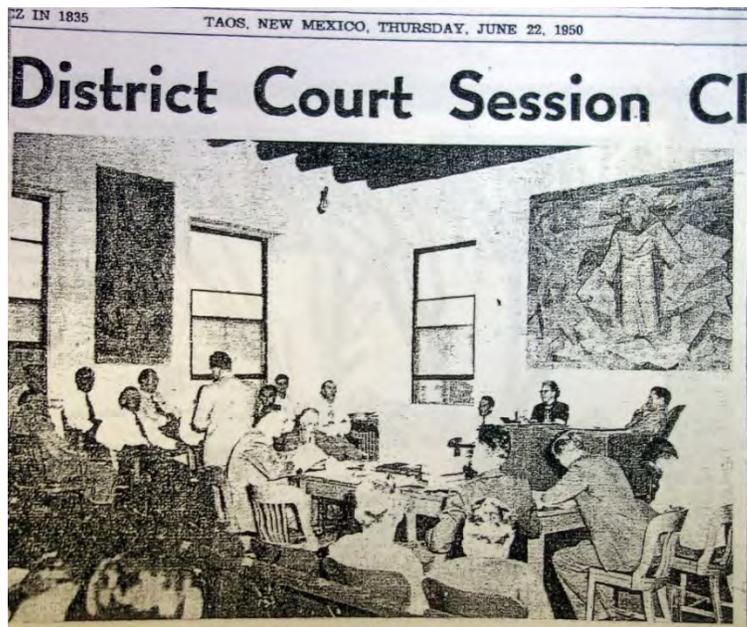


Figure 13. Interior photograph of Courtroom in session, 1950, Taos News

### Third Courthouse - Modern Period; 1968-present

Since the 1930's changes to the plaza, the buildings have remained unchanged, except on the east side of the plaza where a vacant lot, because of the earlier fire, was eventually replaced with a gas station. In the 1990's, a series of poorly detailed Spanish-Pueblo Revival-influenced structures were constructed on the eastern edge of the plaza. These buildings are the location of the present day "The Gorge" restaurant and several other tourism oriented shops.

The Historic Taos County Courthouse was abandoned for use as a courthouse in 1970 in favor of a new facility constructed on a site located at the south end of town. Since then, the building has had many uses, and tenants; sometimes serving as an "incubator" for young local talents, and often being under-utilized to the point of near vacancy.

## Character Defining Features

The character defining features of the Historic Taos County Courthouse are as follows:

- Location on Taos Plaza, serving as a courthouse square, reflects the enduring Spanish influence of town planning.
- The two story flat roofed stuccoed adobe building with curvilinear parapet, exposed vigas, and punched windows are characteristic of the structure's Spanish Pueblo Revival Style.
- Original fenestration included six over six divided lite double hung wood sash windows on the main south façade. Rear and side fenestration included simpler double hung wood windows without divided lites.
- A Pueblo Revival Style portal extends across the entire front, south façade, and is detailed with exposed round vigas and wood decking, 10x10 wood support beams, 12" diameter round posts, and carved wood corbels. The portal originally terminated on the east and west ends with massive stucco rooms that lead to open alleyways on the east and west sides of the building.
- The plan was an original central hallway plan with the primary entrance centered on the front, south, façade. The central corridor plan still remains on the second floor. Infill partitions have been constructed on the first floor, which change the plan. However, the original walls defining the first floor corridor remain intact.
- The interior has 2" wide oak flooring with a clear sealer, painted lime plaster walls (painted) over wood lath or adobe. Simple plaster ceilings that match the walls are

typical for all rooms with the exception of the second floor courtroom which has a ceiling with wood vigas and decking.

- Interior wood stairs have geometrically carved wood balustrades and railings.



Figure 15. Courtroom vigas and wood floors



Figure 16. South façade



Figure 17. Second floor railing of interior wood stairs

## Statement of Significance

- Excerpt from the National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, 1986 SR #1272

*“The 1932 Taos County Courthouse is architecturally significant as a good example of the Spanish Pueblo Revival architecture designed by architect Louis Hesselden, and historically significant for its association with the Public Works Administration era of arts funding.*

*Taos County was created by the Territorial Legislature in 1852, but Taos is also important for its earlier association with Spanish settlement. Named for the nearby Pueblo, it was first settled by the Spanish in 1617, and remained the northernmost outpost of the Spanish frontier for many years. The first courthouse dated from this early Spanish period. The second Taos County Courthouse was erected in 1880 on the north side of the plaza. This building was about to become obsolete from lack of space and light when it coincidentally burned to the ground in 1932. Fortunately, the vault withstood the heat of the fire, and all of the county records were salvaged.*

*With a loan from a local bank, the county built this courthouse late in 1932. This Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style building was erected on the same location as the 1880 Courthouse, and was designed by Albuquerque architect Louis Hesselden. By 1934, the county had obtained funding from the Public Works Administration for the painting of the Courtroom murals. These murals are period interpretations of justice by four prominent New Mexico artists, Emil Bisttram, Ward Lockwood, Bert Phillips, and Victor Higgins.”*

## Historic Integrity Analysis

	High	Med	Low	Remarks
<b>Location</b>	X			The Taos County Courthouse has functions have been located in structures existing on this location from 1880 to 1970.
<b>Design</b>	X			The original courthouse design remains, with the exception of the massive stucco “rooms” on either side of the front portal which were modified sometime between 1945 and 1951 to replicate the other portal posts, beams and vigas. See Figure 11 for a photograph showing the pre-1945 design. A new decorative door was added to the second floor front façade and the first floor windows of the primary façade are replaced with fixed glass units in oversized wood frames. Structural system, massing, arrangement of spaces, pattern of fenestration, textures and colors of surface materials, and type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing remain. The mission style bell tower and upturned ends of the second floor parapet, along with the central hallway plan, the exposed viga tails of the façade and the portal remain.
<b>Setting</b>		X		The plaza setting remains. The original structure was a free standing building. However, infill additions on each side have altered the original relationship to adjacent buildings.
<b>Materials</b>	X			Original building materials, including wood details and cementitious stucco, are intact. Wood windows have been replaced on the first floor of the façade with fixed glass units in oversized wood frames, but these are obscured by the portal.
<b>Workmanship</b>		X		Workmanship of the parapets, canales, roof, and portal roof could all be improved.
<b>Feeling</b>	X			The Courthouse retains the feeling of the original structure as designed.
<b>Association</b>		X		The building’s use as a courthouse remains unchanged until 1970. The building is currently used for commercial and office use.
<b>Overall Integrity</b>	X			

## Architect Louis Hesselden

Louis Gilbert Hesselden was the son of Wallace and Annie Hesselden. His father, Wallace, was the president of the Territorial Fair and President of the Albuquerque Land and Irrigation Company in the late 1800's. Wallace, an immigrant from Yorkshire, England, was also a successful stonemason who built the Bernalillo County Courthouse and County Jail. Louis' brother, J.W. (Joseph Wallace), had two children, Adrian and Donald, who built sections of Albuquerque's suburbia under the moniker of Hesselden Construction. The Hesselden boys became known as a major construction family in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Louis Hesselden was born in Wendell, Oklahoma, on February 5, 1895 while his mother, Annie, was home visiting her family. He graduated from Albuquerque High School in 1913. After returning from service as a 1st Lieutenant in the US Army, where he served from 1917-1919, Hesselden returned to New Mexico to manage Superior Lumber and Mill Company for six years. At the same time, he took classes in the engineering program at the University of New Mexico from 1920-1922. He left to attend the University of Pennsylvania for his Bachelors of Architecture from 1924 to 1927. In 1929, he worked for the American Classicist, Paul Phillip Cret, with whom he had studied at the University of Pennsylvania. He completed his Masters there in 1930 and went on to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, where he studied landscape painting until 1931. Louis worked in Philadelphia before returning to New Mexico in 1932 to wait out the Depression.

Hesselden became one of Albuquerque's most prolific architects. He designed the Nob Hill Business Center, the first automobile shopping center in the world. He also designed the Excelsior Laundry Building, College of St. Joseph Campus of the University of Albuquerque, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, First Methodist Church,

the Albuquerque Country Club, and the Mountain State Telephone Company Headquarters. He designed several structures of the New Mexico State Fair, countless residences, and eventually, the Bernalillo County Courthouse and Hall of Justice that replaced the one built by his father.

Hesselden began working for the Albuquerque Board of Education to research national trends in school construction and design, and to supervise the repair and recondition all of the existing city schools, in the 1930's. Hesselden was the sole architect for the school system until the 1950's, which the APS acknowledges by treating structures built and rehabilitated during that time as being constructed in "The Hesselden Years." During this time, he designed seven elementary schools, two junior highs, and several additions, including Highland High School, Valley High School, the Coronado School, built in 1936 to 1937 as a Public Works Administration project, Jefferson Middle School, and the Riverview School. In 1937, he was contracted by Albuquerque Public Schools to help them utilize New Deal funding and Works in Progress Administration manpower to add three buildings to the Albuquerque High School complex. Hesselden completed the Classroom Building (1937), the large Gymnasium Building (1938), and the Library Building (1940). More than half of Hesselden's projects for Albuquerque Public Schools were funded by the Works in Progress Administration.

Louis Hesselden worked from an office on Third Street. His design style was noted to have several common characteristics; the use of cementitious stucco, brick and cast stone as decorative detailing evoking Spanish Colonial Revival and Territorial Revival Styles, and details influenced by Mediterranean and California Mission Revival styles. This explains the interesting mission detailing of the Historic Taos County Courthouse.

## Murals and the Artists, 1935 - 1939

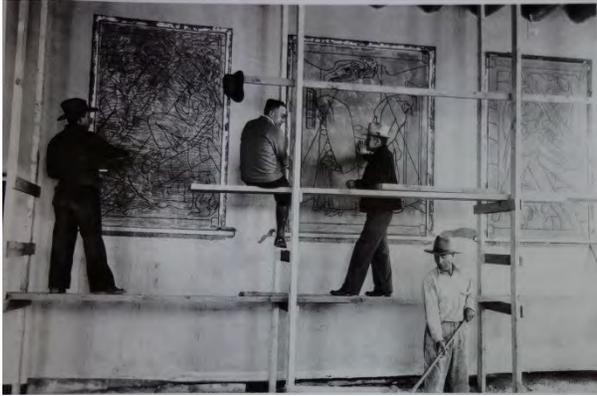


Figure 18. Interior photograph of murals being prepared, Taos News 1938

When the new courthouse was completed in January, 1934, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) commissioned four of Taos's premier artists to paint ten murals in the facility as part of the New Deal. The WPA was formed to alleviate some of the crunching poverty resulting from the Depression. Fifteen million people were out of work in the United States. Many of those were artists.

The Taos artists, despite their fame, were not immune to the effects of the economy. It was said that Victor Higgins visited the Heptagon Gallery every single day, in hopes of having sold some work and procuring a check for the commission. Frances O'Connor stated, "...the art they could produce was the first of the stricken nations' expendable luxuries," when discussing the importance of the WPA projects that stimulated the potential for artists to sell their work. However, the invention of the mural decoration program by Franklyn Delano Roosevelt's administration was more significant. It was also personal and revolutionary. George Biddle, an artist from a prominent Philadelphia family, attended Groton and then Harvard with President Roosevelt. In a letter dated two months after the inauguration, Biddle approached Franklin Delano

Roosevelt (FDR) and emphasized that the young generation of artists, inspired by muralist revolutionaries in Mexico like Diego Rivera, were hungry, not just for food but for change. Biddle argued that these young American artists could, if given the opportunity, use mural art as a way of developing an intentional, expressive, even idealistic national expression. FDR decided to give them a chance. The program, consistently led by the Treasury Department, lasted ten years, putting all types of artists back to work to create a new vision for the recovering country. Program Director Edward Bruce, however, rejected the "Mexican invasion" and insisted that all WPA projects be socially responsible. The result, in most cases, was a clean modernist version of Americana. The New Deal put twelve million Americans to work at a cost of two billion dollars. The program was so successful that French diplomat Raoul Dufy came to Washington to study the program to determine if it was a potential prototype for the French.

New Deal projects employed more than half of the four hundred thousand people living in New Mexico. Of those people, one hundred and sixty seven were artists, who completed sixty five murals, more than six hundred and fifty pieces of portable art, and ten sculptures for New Mexico's civic and community spaces.

Four of Taos's premier artists were engaged in the Taos WPA effort; Emil Bisttram, Ward Lockwood, Bert Phillips, and Victor Higgins. They became known as the "Taos Fresco Quartet."

The original intent of the Taos County Courthouse WPA project was to have thirteen panels of murals; eleven narrow vertical ones, a round medallion over the entrance, and Higgins' large central Ten Commandments piece. The ten completed murals were originally intended to recount events in Taos history. However, at some point, either the artists or their directors changed the subject of the murals to a much more serious and dramatic theme – the use and misuse of law, described artistically in vivid scenes and titled in both English and Spanish. Commentators and contemporaries at the time the murals were painted, noted that none of the works

tended to be authentic to the “place” or “people” of Taos, explaining that “the compositions are allegorical because the historical events of Taos are yet subjects of bitter controversy.”

The murals were completed in March 1934, after three months of work. The murals are constructed of tempera pigment mixed with distilled water and applied to a fresh coat of wet lime plaster, applied on several more coats of plaster.

The project was locally managed by Public Works Arts Project, Regional Coordinator, and famous Santa Fe artist Gustave Baumann, and supported by assistants including Amarante Maes, who along with Baumann, appear in the most well-known photo of the work in progress. Taosena, Ila McAfee, whose scrapbook provided part of the more interesting articles for this report, also reported that she had been allowed “to help with the mixing of the sand, but not to paint.” Renowned female Taos artist, Gene Kloss, wanted to be involved in the project. However, he was not invited to participate, which was a loss for the courthouse, since the wildly successful painter was inducted into the National Academy of Design.

The project was plagued by scheduling delays, plaster preparation issues, consistency problems requiring additional sand, washed at the river at Placita, to be brought in from Rinconada, and painting issues, including a six-fingered woman painted by Emil Bisttram. There were even dangerous mishaps like Bert Phillips falling off the scaffolding one day.

Reports at the time expressed concern about how the murals were going to be financially maintained and whether they might detach from the walls, once it was discovered that the structure of the building on the north side of the structure was failing.

In 1994, an eleventh mural was completed in 1994, by renowned New Mexican fresco artist, Frederico Vigil, following a conservation project on the ten original murals.

For additional detailed information on the artists and images of the murals contained within the building see Appendix “H”.

## Hopper and Easy Rider, 1969 to Present

The courthouse was abandoned as a courthouse and office use in 1970, and was later reopened as the Taos Art Center. It began to house plaza merchants, as well as being one of the sets for the movie *Easy Rider*, with Taos's legendary visitor and part-time resident, Dennis Hopper, who was jailed in the building.

The scene of *Easy Rider* filmed at the Historic Taos County Courthouse Jail features Jack Nicholson leaving the "drunk tank," taking a swig of his Jack Daniels bottle and invoking D.H. Lawrence.

Hopper became a fixture in Taos after *Easy Rider*, purchasing the Mabel Dodge Luhan House, which he called "the Mud Palace," on a tip from another New Mexican actor Dean Stockwell. He used Taos as a base for more than a year during editing of his eagerly awaited sequel, "The Last Movie," which was never released due to being too "avant garde" for Universal's taste. John Wayne, Bob Dylan, and even George McGovern visited Hopper at the "Palace." After the shelving of his film, Hopper spent the next ten years becoming a Taos icon.

Hopper was arrested and jailed in the Courthouse at least once. On July 2, 1975, he was charged with reckless driving, causing and fleeing the scene of an accident, and evading arrest. His jail time cost 20 minutes and a two hundred and fifty dollar fine.

However, Hopper was an influential man who exposed Taos to a larger audience of new fans. Eventually, he was given the key to the town by Mayor Darren Cordova in 2009, prior to his death and burial in the vicinity of Taos a year later.

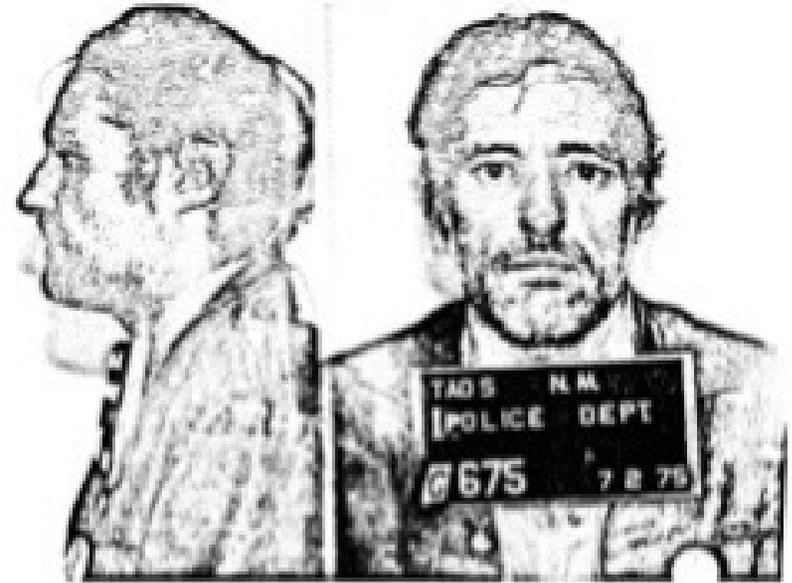


Figure 19. Dennis Hopper as photographed during his stay in the Taos County Courthouse Jail, July 2, 1975

## Current Planning and Policies for Adaptive Reuse of the Taos County Courthouse, 2010 - Present

The Taos Arts and Culture District was formed in 2007 under the umbrella of the state wide New Mexico Arts and Cultural Districts Act. This local non-profit organization, which reports to the state organization, emphasizes the revitalization of the Taos Plaza, with particular emphasis on the under-utilized Courthouse. A series of articles titled “Reviving El Corazón” by J.R. Logan, published between August and October of 2011, inspired a major plaza enhancement project called “Town Curb Appeal,” sponsored by New Mexico Main Street and the Friends of New Mexico Main Street. The two-day event, held in October 2012, attracted volunteers for beautification and enhancement projects at the plaza and the Courthouse. Future proposed projects, included within this plan, include the rehabilitation of the Courthouse, the addition of permanent lighting for staging at the plaza, enhanced security and night-time illumination of the historic Courthouse, purchase of film and video projection equipment, and Courthouse stucco and viga repair.

Recent proposals for the use of the historic Courthouse include arts incubator, performance space, winter visitors’ information center, office space, and housing.

In 2010, the Town of Taos received a one hundred and twenty five thousand dollar federal grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to upgrade the mechanical systems of the building. The funds were used to design and install a modern gas fired hot water radiant heating system to replace the aging and failing steam boiler and radiator system.

On June 2, of 2013, the Taos County Board of County Commissioners passed County of Taos Resolution #2012-41 “A RESOLUTION APPROVING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE OLD COUNTY COURTHOUSE”. The resolution states that “the County desires to use the Old County Courthouse to promote

tourism, public awareness of, the preservation and restoration of, and the economic revitalization of the Old County Courthouse, Taos Plaza and the historic downtown as the economic, cultural and “historic hub of the downtown” the resolution also states that space should be allocated based on the following priorities, in order of importance:

- Activities, groups or individuals that directly involve the planning, preservation, restoration, promotion or increased activities for or access to the Old Courthouse, the Taos Plaza, and the historic downtown, in that order or priority.
- Programs or individuals that result in increased funding for the planning, preservation, restoration, promotion and operation of the Old Courthouse, the Taos Plaza, and the historic downtown.
- Activities, groups or individuals that directly create gross receipts tax types of jobs, tourism or new economic opportunities for the County, the Courthouse, the Plaza, the historic downtown, through grants, loans, technical assistance , business counseling or the attraction, direct creation or management of new entrepreneurial opportunities, business relocation or business expansion.
- Activities, groups or opportunities that result in matching or kind opportunities to leverage other federal, state, private or philanthropic funding for the Old Courthouse, the Plaza, Historic downtown or county.
- Activities, groups or individuals, that provide greater exposure to the public of the mural room, Courthouse and historic district.
- Activities, programs, and groups, that may increase the provision of services to the community; not currently available to underserved populations, through the provision of short-term office or display space.

## Report Methods and Limitations

This report was initiated as a result of an initial request from Taos County to replace the failing steam boiler, located in the original basement. This minor mechanical upgrade to the building, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, led to the realization that the structure needed a much more in depth study. Taking into account the entire history of the site, structure and art work. A comprehensive field survey of the existing structure was completed during the summer of 2013. Portions of this report were partially developed utilizing the original 1932 Louis G. Hesselden construction drawings that were located in the Center for Southwest Research's archive at Zimmerman Library of the University of New Mexico. The 5 sheets of lead pencil on vellum drawings were found very fragile, but intact. Digital photographs of these sheets are located in Appendix "B".

The physical investigation was conducted using non-invasive testing methods relying on exposed construction assemblies within the interior of the structure as well as exposed areas of the exterior walls of the north-east alley and roof areas. No scientific sampling of paint or plaster materials was conducted. No measured drawings were produced as part of the work of this report. Historic drawings were used in combination with field measurement for the drawings incorporated into this report.

## Research Sources

The following archives were used for this report:

- Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Library System
- Fray Angelico Chavez History Library
- El Palacio Magazine
- The Library of Congress
- Museum of Fine Arts Library & Archives
- Museum of Indian Arts and Culture
- Laboratory of Anthropology Library;
- National Hispanic Cultural Center Library
- New Mexico Museum of Art;
- New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office Archives
- New Mexico State Records Center and Archives
- New Mexico State University Library
- Office of the State Engineer Library
- Palace of the Governors Photo Archives
- Santa Fe Public Library
- Southwest Research Center Archives at UNM-Taos
- Smithsonian Institution Digital Collections
- Taos Public Library
- Taos Arts and Culture District Plan;
- University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research
- Records of the Taos County Facilities Department

## Building Construction Chronology, 1930 - 2013

As explained in earlier sections of this report, the Taos County Courthouse is located on the north side of the Taos plaza. Teresina Lane borders the rear, north, side of the building. Parking was originally angled forty five degrees in front or south of the portal, similar to today. The original road surface was compacted dirt.

The 1932 Floor Plan depicts a seventy five foot wide portal along the south or plaza facing façade. This portal remains today with additional portal elements added that connect the original portal to the portals of adjacent buildings. This seventy five foot portal correlates to the width of the southern property line shown on the property plat dated 1938 (figure 20 below). It is probable that when the ownership of the Courthouse passed to the County in 1932, the seventy five foot wide south portal of the building and the open alleys on the east and north existed. Physical evidence remains today clearly indicating the original building configurations. The 1932 floor plan also documents the existence of the east and west alleys.

Oral history, historic photographs and existing physical evidence indicate that the west alley was infilled in the late 1930's with a small infill addition adjacent to the front, south, portal. Numerous portal modifications, commenced at the same time. Massive stucco open "rooms" at the east and west end of the front portal were removed. Other infill additions within the east and west alleys were constructed through the 1940's and 1950's.

No images or records of the surface or landscaping of the original alleys have been found. Bare earth with little or no landscaping was common for commercial properties of the time because of limited availability of funding and water. The original 1932 construction documents did not include a site plan because of the small 0.18 acre site and the urban setting with contiguous structures.

Note: a shallow water well that existed in the center of the site prior to the current building's construction remains directly under the central first floor corridor. Access is through a hatch in the floor.

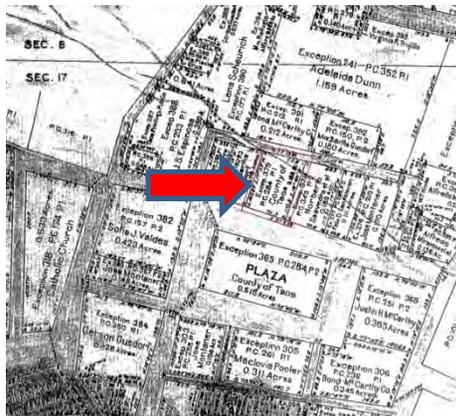


Figure 20. Property Plat, 1938 (north is up)

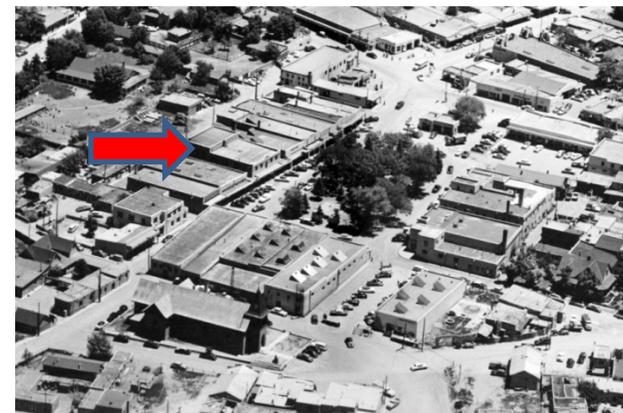


Figure 21. Aerial Photo of Plaza, 1949 (north is to the left)

## Existing Site Plan – With Additions and Modifications

1. Infill addition in West Alley & stucco portal elements removed, 1937
2. Second infill addition in West Alley, late 1930's
3. Infill addition at East Alley & stucco portal elements removed, early 1940's
4. Second infill addition in East Alley, late 1940's
5. Jail cell addition in West Alley, early 1950's, concrete block construction
6. Concrete block retaining wall built, early 1950's
7. Jail cell partition infilled for new mechanical room
8. Original restrooms removed, date unknown
9. Interior remodel, added partitions & doors, 1992
10. Wood exterior stair built, 1986

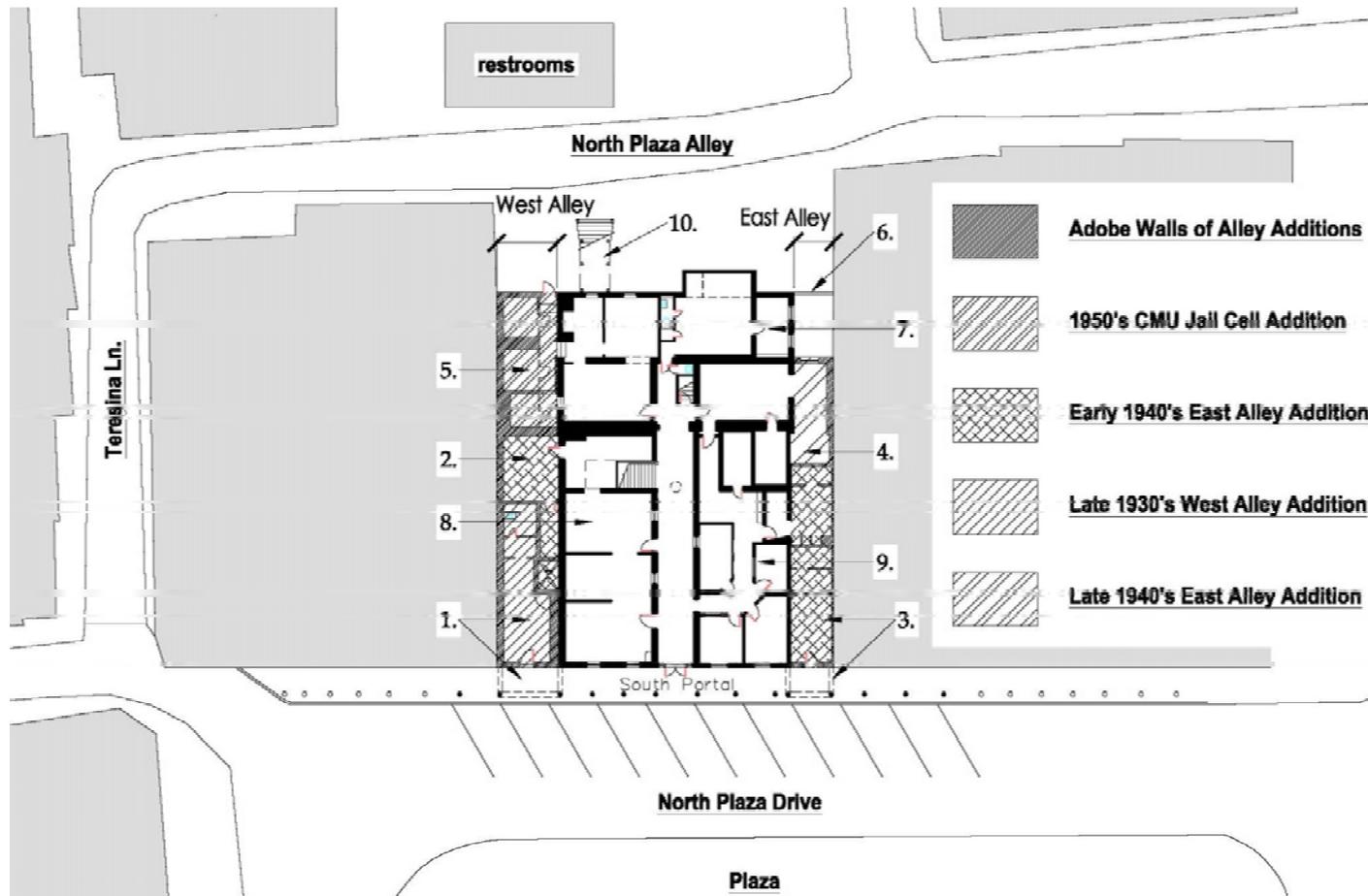


Figure 22. Existing Site Plan, with additions indicated by hatch patterns

## Construction Chronology –Significant Changes to the Structure

As stated earlier, the form and outline of the Historic Taos County Courthouse remains unchanged except for the following:

- Original vacant alleyways on the east and west sides of the building were filled with additions. Most of the windows original to these east and west elevations were removed in to make room for new doorways accessing the additions. When side doorways were not constructed, the original east and west windows were left in place and covered over with wood frame and gypsum plaster partitions.
- The east and west ends of the front portal have been opened to replicate the post and beam design of the center section.
- The eastern half of the first floor central corridor plan was filled in with poorly constructed walls to form smaller retail spaces.
- The first floor main entrance doors and side lite panels were removed and replaced with full glass units and inexpensive residential style door hardware sometime in the early 1990's.
- The original first floor windows on the south façade were removed and replaced with fixed glazing picture windows fabricated out of rough sawn lumber.
- The original first floor public restrooms located midway along the western half of the structure have been completely removed and turned into retail space.

- A suspended acoustic ceiling tile system, consisting of 2'x4' tiles and recessed fluorescent lighting fixtures was installed below the original plaster ceilings.
- Carpet has been installed over some portions of the original wood flooring.
- An aluminum storefront door and a covered wood stairway were added to the north façade to provide egress from the second floor courtroom down to the north alley.
- The steam boiler system was abandoned in the basement, and cast iron radiators were removed and replaced with modern fan-coil cabinet style units and a hydronic boiler installed in a partitioned off portion of the old jail holding cell. These mechanical upgrades were performed in 2010.

The original configuration of the spaces followed a design consistent with a well-functioning courthouse and its associated programmatic spaces. The courtroom is located on the second floor allowing for a custom designed staircase to ascend to the court, symbolizing a “rise to justice”. Locating the courtroom above the first floor jail also gave a more prominent position to the courtroom.

Convenience controlled the first floor location of the administrative functions; since these service areas had to be easily accessible to the public. Similar to other courthouses at the time, the building has a linear floor plan with a double loaded central corridor on both floors.

Unchanged from the original design, the courtroom is distinguished from all other rooms in the building by a much higher ceiling; sixteen foot instead of the ten foot ceilings found throughout the remainder of the structure. The courtroom also is the only room in the building with exposed wood vigas and wood decking. The custom painted murals reflect the overall theme of “Justice”



Figure 23. Postcard from 1951

Records indicate that the county was still paying for the burned courthouse in 1938, six years after the fire. At that same time, it was discovered that the new courthouse was “sinking” on the north side due to a double dose of bad design - use of adobe foundations to three feet below grade and a lack of drainage around the building. The building was declared unsafe by then Sherriff Malaquias Martinez. It was noted in news clippings at the time that the concrete block wall at the front door, upon which the dedication plaque of the building was attached, was likely to be the only structurally sound part of the building. The stabilization of the courthouse was passed off to WPA architects. Although reports lament that the implementation was delayed several times.

The New Mexico Department of Transportation aerials depict the original walls of the building, although no details are clear. Refer to Appendices “C” and “D” for large scale copies of these images.



Figure 24. South Facade from 1982 National Register nomination. Note the missing viga tails, the stucco fascia, and the change in massing of the portal

After the building was vacated by Taos County Government in 1970, minimal funds and maintenance were provided by the county. Reports of roof leaks, damaged adobe, ruined plaster, cracking and chipping of the ceilings and walls, and damage from break-ins became more and more common, until the facility was stabilized and the roof repaired in the 1990’s. Since 1970, the structure has been used for a myriad of purposes including but not limited to the following: lawyer’s offices, art galleries, retail shops, and theatre and dance companies that used the historic courtroom space. The building remains mostly vacant, with a single tenant on the second floor and a total of five tenants on the first floor, all clustered along the south façade.

## Summary of Building & Site Chronology

### Historic Period

- 1796 The location of the main Taos Plaza is established on the current plaza site, along with five other smaller residential plazas, with the recognition of Don Fernando de Taos as a formal Mexican community. An acequia feeds the plaza
- 1830 First jail & crude “courthouse” was built on the current site
- 1880 Second courthouse was built on the current site. It was a one room, one story, Territorial Style adobe and wood structure with a detached jail cell building behind at the far north end of the site. This courthouse does not have a portal and connects to both neighboring structures. A well is located between the two structures
- 1898 Ernest Blumenschein founded the Taos Art Colony
- 1900 The Taos plaza transitioned from a residential to a commercial area
- 1908 The first octagonal gazebo was built on the plaza
- 1912-1931 Multiple fires destroyed the majority of the structures on the plaza
- 1920’s The acequia on the plaza was abandoned. A well was dug in the center of the plaza. The streets around the plaza were widened to accommodate cars and stone wall replaces the former picket fences around the plaza
- 1930’s Fiestas de Taos started to assist Taos Plaza merchants with marketing. The Courthouse portal was the seat of the fiesta royalty, and the stage was located directly in front of the Courthouse
- 1932 Fire destroyed the wood frame courthouse building that stood on the site since 1880

### Modern Era 1968-2007

- 1932 Plans were completed for the new Courthouse and construction began
- 1934 Building was completed and Taos County Government moved in

- 1937 West portion of south portal “stucco room” was replaced with a mission style parapet, exposed portal columns, and small infill addition in the “west alley”
- 1940-1950 The middle portion of west alley was infilled, east alley was infilled. The entire portal was simplified and the parapets were flattened
- 1950’s The jail concrete block addition was added to the north end of the west alley area
- 1968 Plans were developed for a new modern courthouse and jail complex located on Paseo del Pueblo Sur located approximately one mile south of the plaza on the main commercial strip through Taos
- 1970 The Taos County Government moved into the new Courthouse leaving the Historic Taos County Courthouse for use as rental offices and retail
- 1990’s Interior partitions added at western portion of first floor, dividing spaces into small one room shops, main entry door and first floor plaza windows replaced with fixed glass units
- 1994 Courtroom murals conserved, by Frederico Vigil, and an additional mural added, roof replaced, first floor south façade entry doors replaced with flush rail and style residential doors and inexpensive hardware
- 2010 Extensive mechanical upgrades were completed throughout the building, including replacing the steam boiler with a new hot water boiler. The cast iron radiators located throughout the building were replaced with hot water based fan coil units at this time.

## Original Building Plan – First Floor

The primary building entrance was and remains centrally located on the south façade leading to a central first floor corridor. Refer to the 1932 floor plan in Figure 25 below. The 1932 construction drawings show the central first floor corridor flanked by the assessor's office on the east and the sheriff's department and private sheriff's office on the west. Men's & women's restrooms were located midway along the corridor on the west, with a small custodial closet containing a mop sink located at the north-east corner of the restroom core. It is unknown when the restrooms were removed. Handwritten notes on the wall, dated 1940, indicate that the present custodian's closet may not have been built as shown on the original drawings. The county clerk's office was located directly across the corridor from the restrooms.

Two fire-proof vaults with cast-in-place concrete walls and heavy metal doors separate the county clerk from the treasurer's office to the north, with a small passageway connecting these two interrelated offices. Directly across the corridor to the west was the stair hall leading to the second floor. Exterior egress from the stair hall was through a door into the west alley. North of the stair was the county commissioner's office.

Stairs leading to the unfinished basement are located at the north-east corner of the corridor. A large open jail holding cell was located at the north-east corner of the first floor. A more secure jail cell was constructed out of cast-in-place concrete that protrudes out beyond the north facade into the north alley. This secure jail cell is not shown on the 1932 drawings and may have been built when the structural remediation work was executed on the. The security hardware and lockdown mechanism for the northern jail cell was constructed out of heavy steel plate and ½" diameter steel bars with fully welded connections. The door for the secure cell was designed to be quickly and easily locked by operating a lever from the main jail room. An office for the jailer and an associated kitchen are located on the north-west corner of the structure.

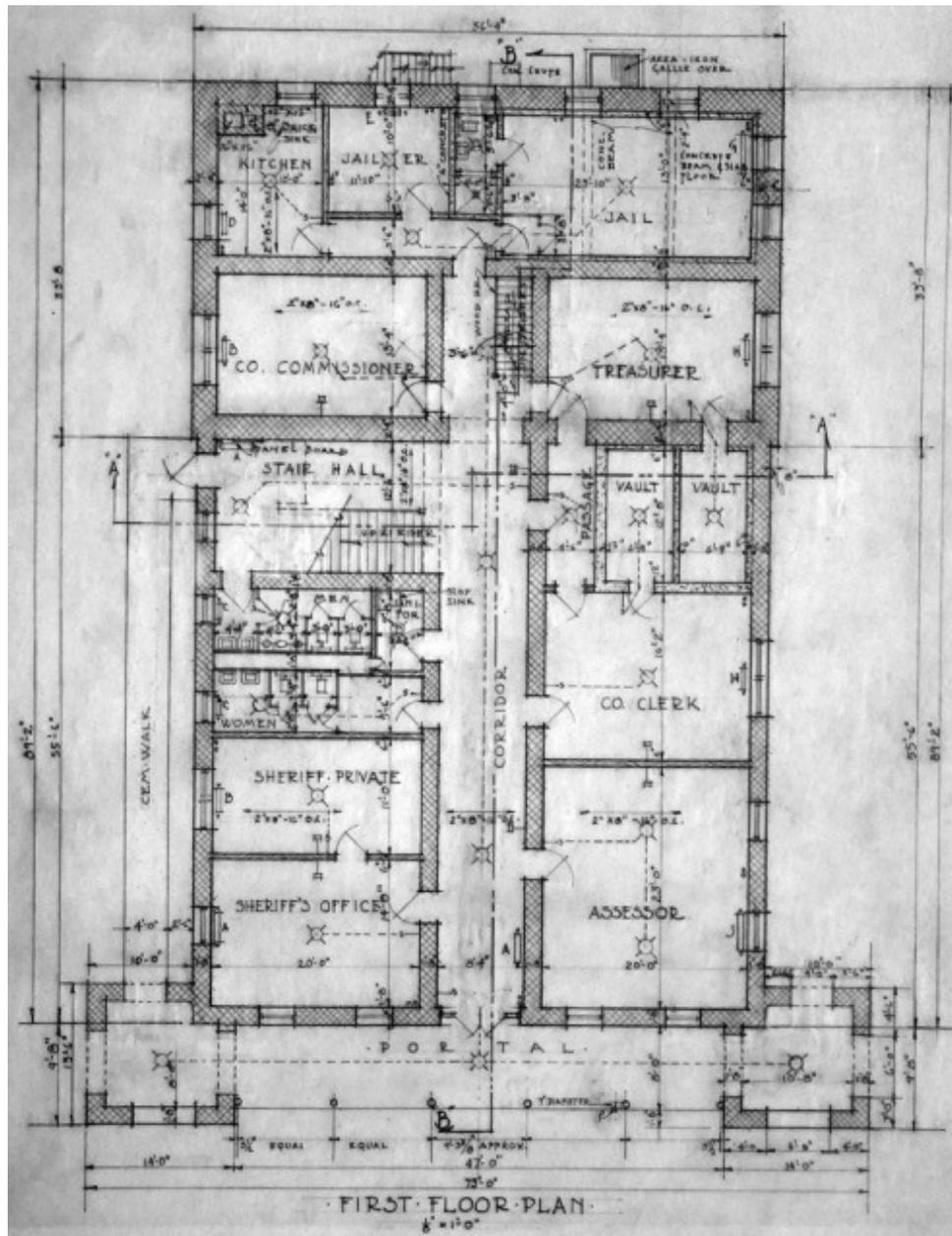


Figure 25. 1st Floor Plan, 1932 Construction Drawing (north is up)

## Original Building Plan – Second Floor

The original second floor plan was designed with a generous stair and central hallway. A large west window at the stair landing provides ample day-lighting. The second floor rooms are accessed from the stairs through a double loaded north-south corridor and are situated above the first floor corridor of the same width. The Courtroom is entered from the south through a set of double doors. Historic photographs indicate that the Courtroom was furnished with free-standing tables and chairs. No built in case-work ever existed or was designed. The room is embellished with ten frescoes depicting the theme of “Justice” (refer to the Appendix for images of the works and biographies of the artists). The judge occupied the east end of the room and sat directly below “Moses The Law Giver”. Large double hung windows flood this room with natural light. Vigas and exposed wood ceiling decking exist only in this room.

All other rooms have less ornate finishes. An egress door exists on the north wall. The Jury Room is on the south with the District Judges Chambers, which is accessed by a narrow private corridor that bypasses the Jury Room. Simple rectangular offices for the Justice of the Peace and the District Attorney occupy the southeast corner. A large office for the Superintendent of Schools with two large windows occupies the southwest corner. The Agriculture Agent’s Office is located north of the Superintendent’s Office and directly south of the stairwell. The roof access, often used by spectator’s to view events on the plaza, is at the south end of the Corridor.

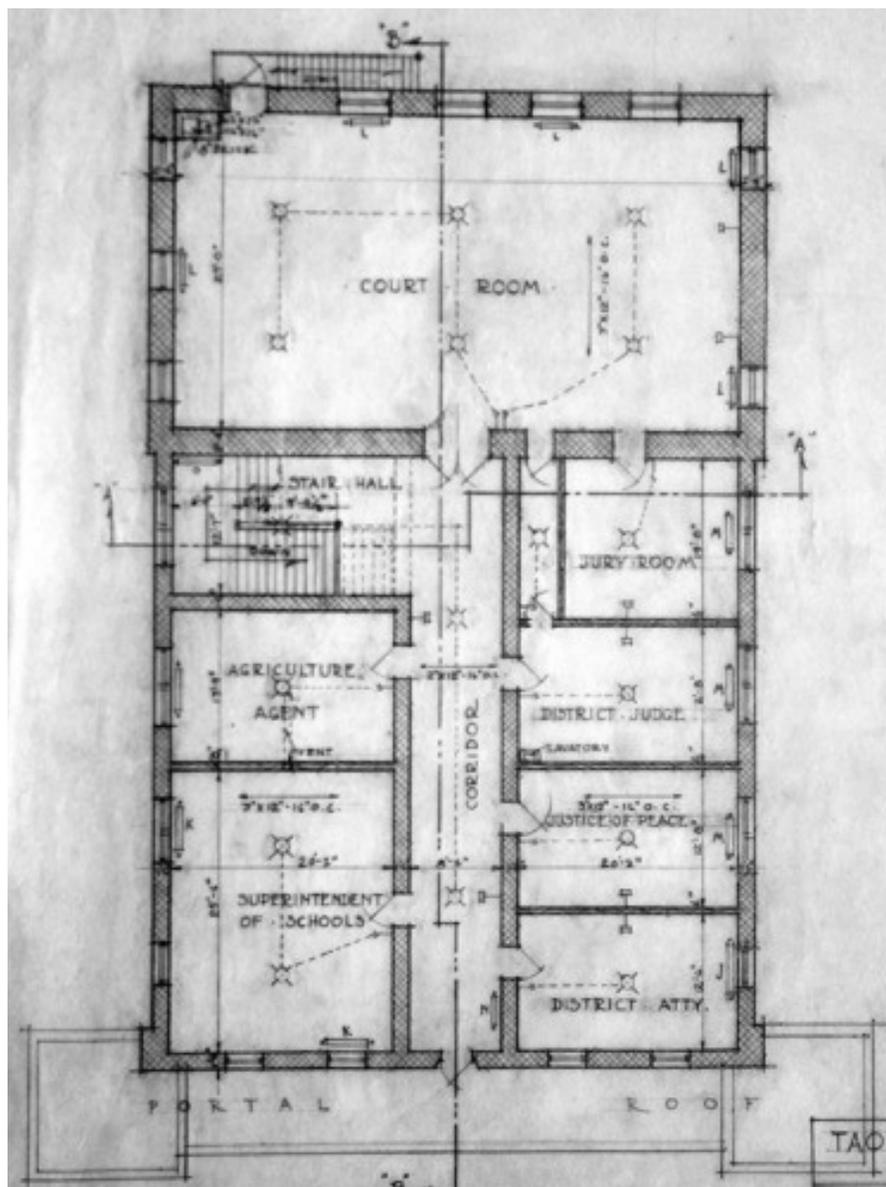
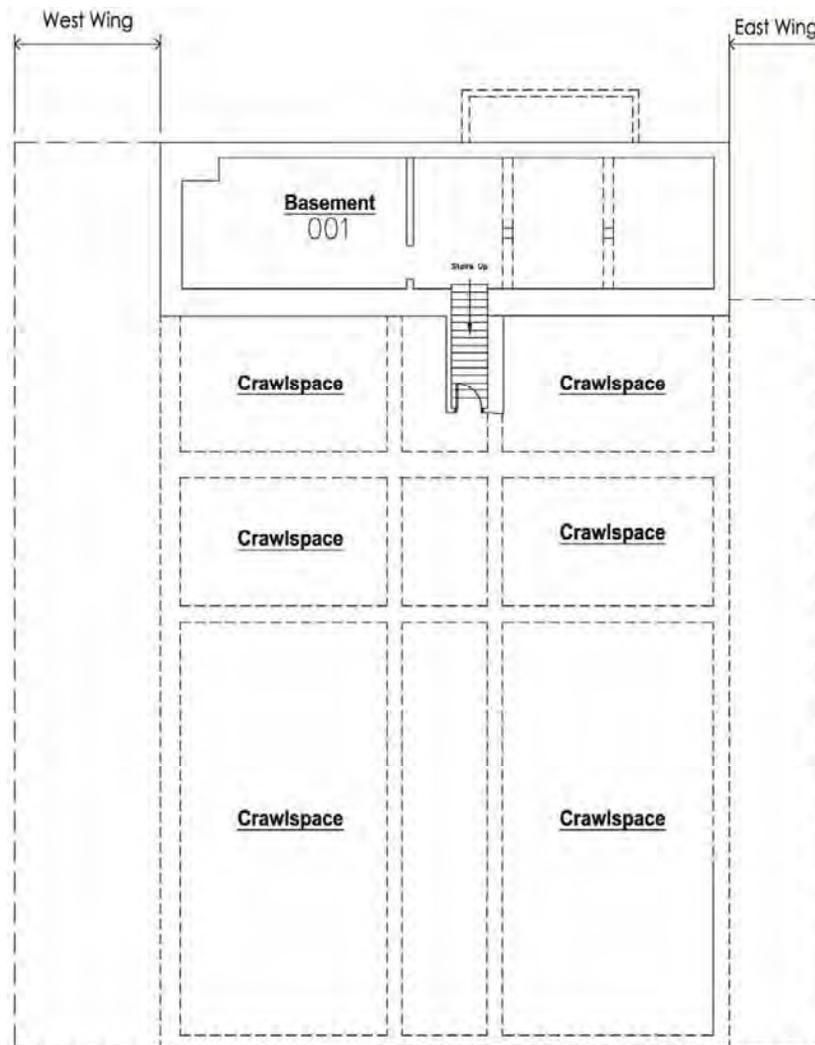


Figure 26. 2nd Floor Plan, 1932 Construction Drawing (north is up)

For a comprehensive list of rooms, their defining features, and finishes please refer to the Room Finish Schedule in Appendix "F"

## Existing Building Plan – Basement



**Gross Existing Building Area  
(Basement):**

Main Building 970 gsf  
(excludes crawl space)



Figure 27. Existing Building Plan, Basement

# Existing Building Plan – First Floor

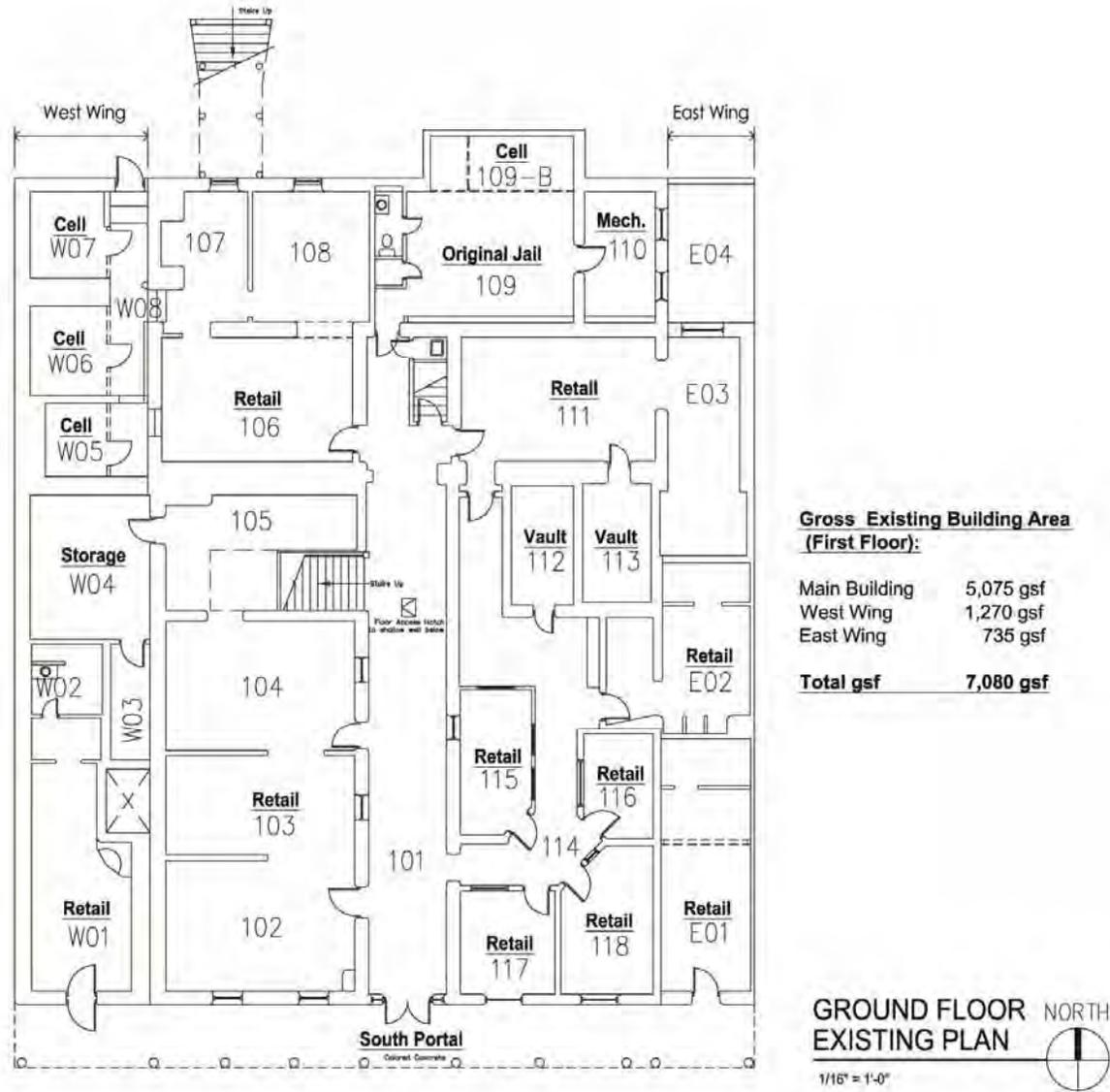


Figure 28. Existing Building Plan, First Floor

# Existing Building Plan – Second Floor

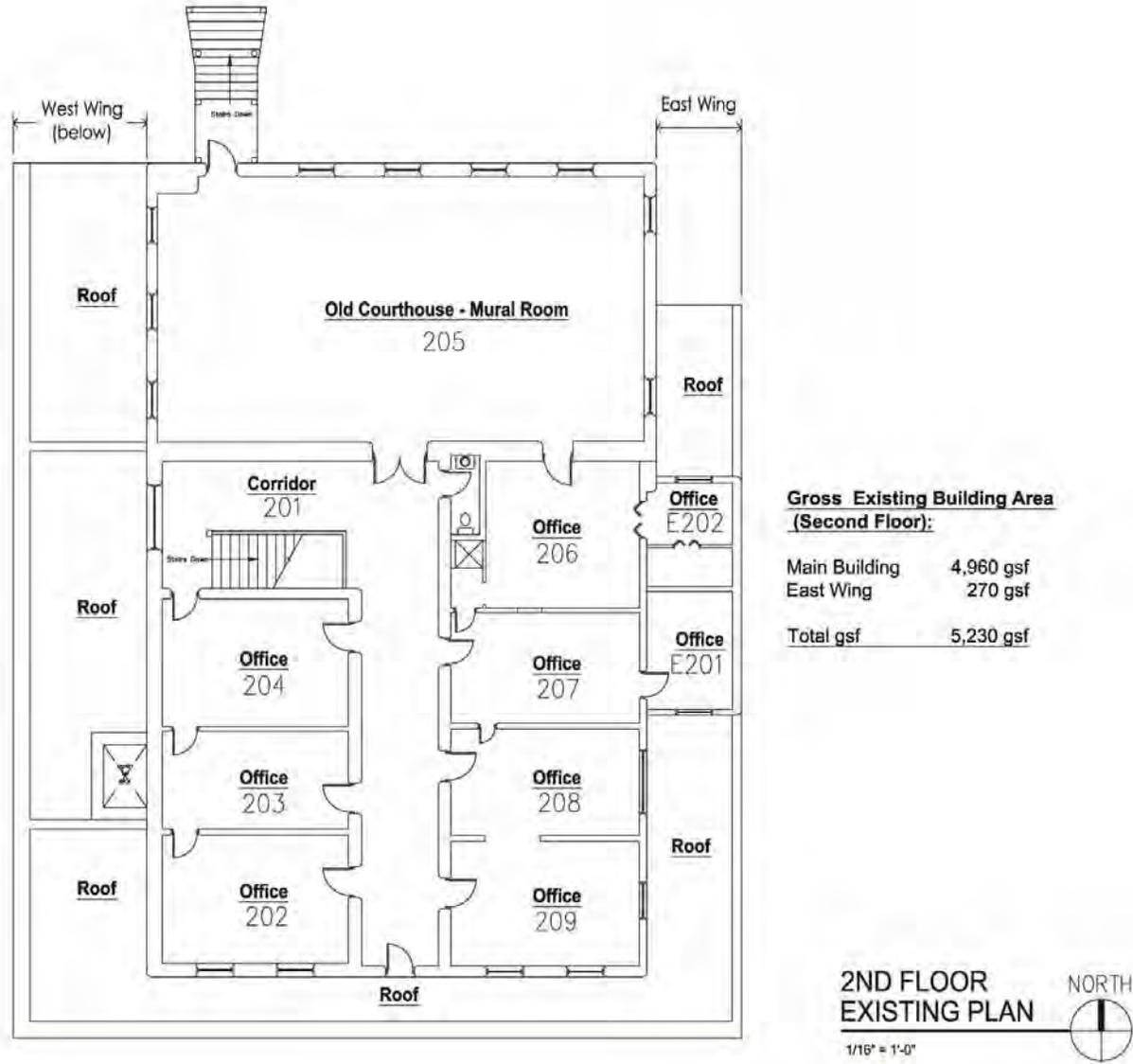


Figure 29. Existing Building Plan, Second Floor

## Photographs – Existing Conditions

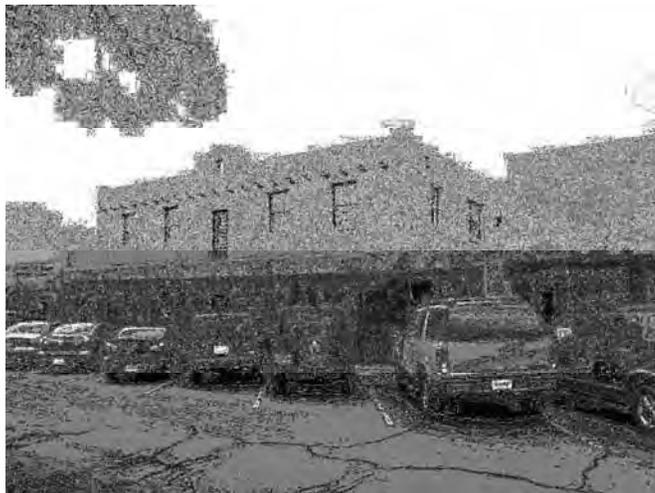


Figure 30. South Elevation, June 2013



Figure 31. North Elevation, June 2013

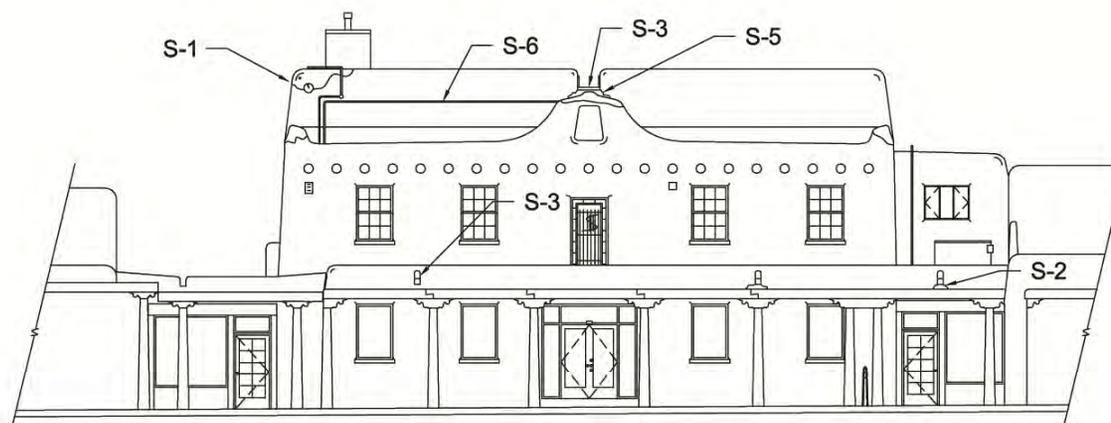


Figure 32 South-West Elevation (East Wing – Detail), June 2013



Figure 33. North-West Elevation (West Wing), June 2013

## Existing Conditions Documentation – Front Façade, South Elevation

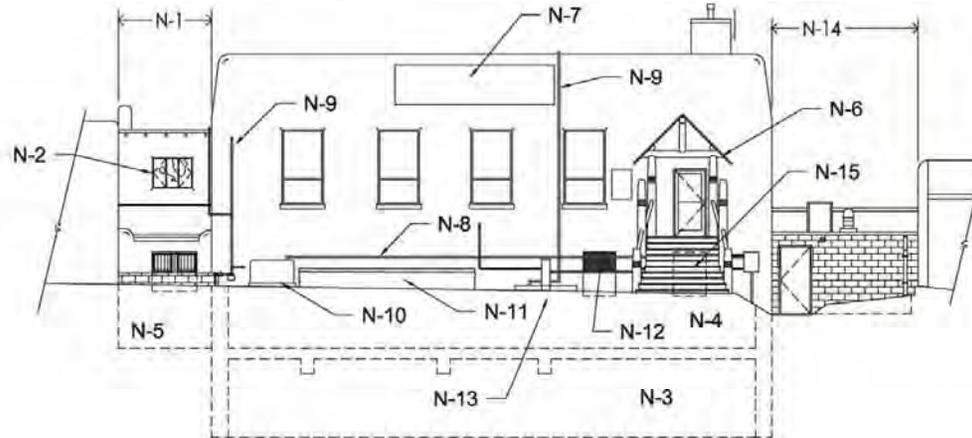


### SOUTH ELEVATION

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>S-1 Damaged cementitious stucco. Cracked, spalling finish coat and undercoat. Exhibits signs of water damage and water infiltration. Surface of stucco has accumulated deep layers of dirt, grime, bird droppings, and moss/algae growth in shaded areas. Multiple locations.</p> <p>S-2 Severely cracked, spalling cementitious stucco system directly below drainage canale. Water damage is evident. Stucco mesh/building paper is visible</p> <p>S-3 Galvanized metal drainage canale. Metal is damaged, warped, bent, cracked.</p> <p>S-4 Exposed 10" wood viga end. Shows signs of water infiltration. Wood is cracked, and exhibits signs of "dry-rot".</p> <p>S-5 Exposed (painted) polyiso rigid spray insulation showing signs of decay from exposure to UV sunlight. Insulation is damaged, soft to touch, and unstable. Perimeter has shrunk away from surrounding cementitious stucco allowing water to migrate into adobe wall.</p> | <p>S-6 Exposed galvanized metal electrical conduit - surface mounted. Joints are loose, conduit has separated from wall in multiple locations. Multiple locations on all facades. Some circuits appear to be non-functional and/or abandoned.</p> |
|--|---|

Figure 34. Existing Conditions Evaluation - South Elevation

## Existing Conditions Documentation – Rear Façade, North Elevation

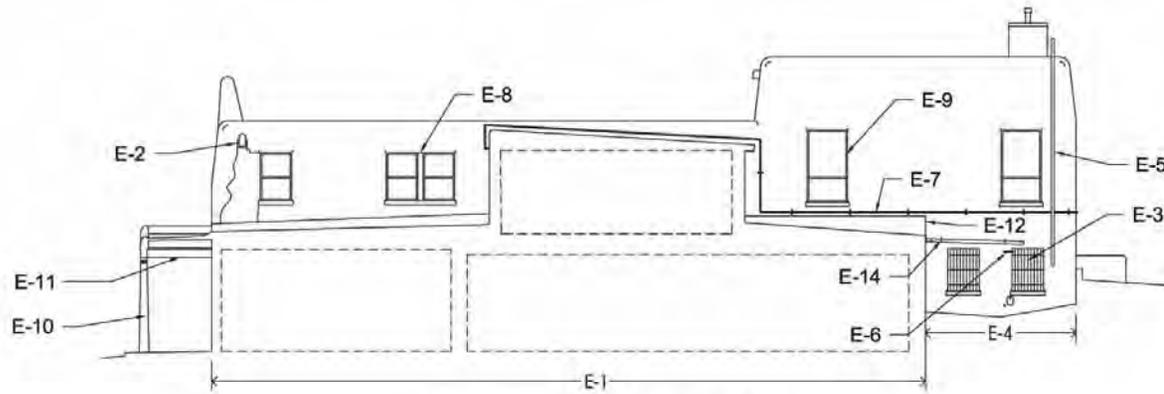


### NORTH ELEVATION

- N-1 East Alley addition. Likely constructed in 19XX.
- N-2 Steel sash casement windows ca. 1960's. Single pane glass, painted metal frame, glass is broken or missing in multiple locations.
- N-3 Basement with unfinished earth floors, cast-in-place board formed concrete walls/ceiling/beams. Original boiler abandoned ca. 2010 and replaced with new hydronic boiler in first floor mechanical room.
- N-4 Portion of first floor approximately 48" below adjacent grade at north side of building.
- N-5 Exterior access yard approximately 48" below adjacent grade at north side of building. Open to sky, numerous Siberian Elms and unplanned/invasive plants.
- N-6 Wood framed exterior egress stair added ca. +/-1985.
- N-7 Plywood sign mounted to stucco
- N-8 Surface mounted electrical conduit
- N-9 Surface mounted natural gas line.
- N-10 High voltage electrical transformer at grade.
- N-11 Cast-in-place concrete enclosure for original jail cell below. Concrete is spalling due to continuous exposure to freeze/thaw cycles for the past 80 years. Large aggregate is exposed and fragile.
- N-12 Original 3/8" diameter steel security grille. Original window has been replaced with modern decorative stained glass and the remaining window opening has been infilled with masonry below.
- N-13 Remnants of original concrete coal chute - abandoned. 10" diameter steel flue - abandoned. Opening is ringed with rail-road tie. Adobe is below grade and exposed. Abandoned coal chute is collecting water & debris and is open to animals and weather.
- N-14 Modern jail cells constructed in the west alley ca 1950's. CMU Construction. Interior jail cells are intact. Hollow metal exterior door.
- N-15 Original window opening infilled with cmu and abandoned.

Figure 35. Existing Conditions Evaluation – North Elevation

## Existing Conditions Documentation – Side Façade, East Elevation

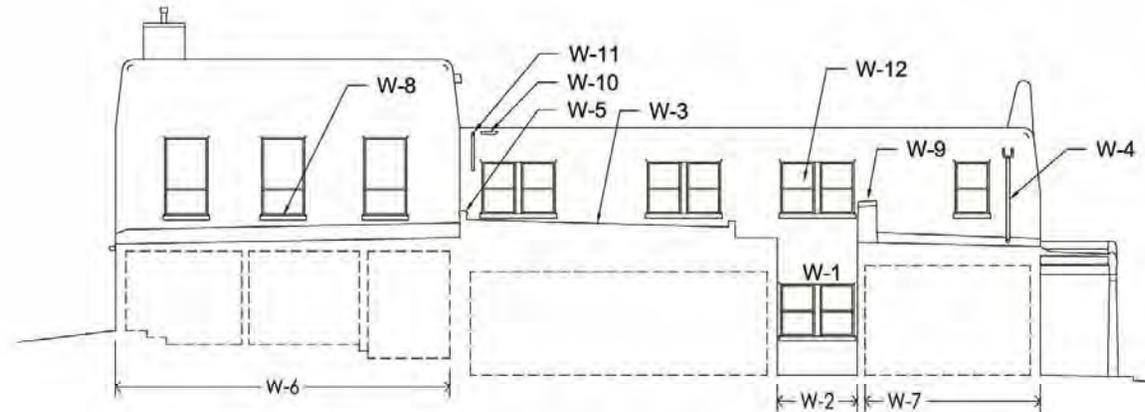


### EAST ELEVATION

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|--|--|
| <p>E-1 East Alley addition ca. 1940's?</p> <p>E-2 2x wood canale lined with galvanized metal. Area directly below canale is water damaged and shows signs of water infiltration into adobe wall assembly. Stucco has bulged out and shows signs of previous repair work.</p> <p>E-3 Original wood "jail cell" windows are damaged beyond repair and missing many components. Rough opening is boarded up with plywood. Original security bars consisting of 1/2 diameter steel bars welded to 1/4"x2" flat bars are intact. Stucco at opening is severely damaged and adobe bricks are exposed to weather at both windows.</p> <p>E-4 Sunken exterior utility courtyard, open to sky, and contained by a low cmu wall separating the courtyard from the north alley. Finish grade of the courtyard sits approximately 12" above finish floor of the First Floor, and appears to not drain to any point outside of the courtyard...potentially allowing storm-water to accumulate. Area is overgrown with weeds, debris, and numerous Siberian Elm tree sapplings. Area is unsafe, unlit, and collects trash.</p> <p>E-5 Exposed galvanized metal mechanical flue from abandoned water or space heater.</p> | <p>E-6 Exposed 1" flexible electrical conduit mounted to face of building.</p> <p>E-7 Exposed 1-1/2" natural gas line surface mounted to face of stucco.</p> <p>E-8 Original wood sash single pane windows with original hardware intact. All units suffer from lack of maintenance and have been screwed shut for security reasons. Sill and jamb trim are weathered &amp; cracked.</p> <p>E-9 Courthouse/Mural Room windows appear to be the original frames with the exterior wood stops replaced with in kind material. Glazing is single pain. All units in this room are in fair condition. Clear finish on exterior exhibits decay from UV and weather exposure.</p> <p>E-10 10" diameter wood columns throughout the south portal. Columns sit directly on concrete paving below and exhibit some cracking and warping due to weather exposure and moisture migrating up from the concrete paving. Dark Brown paint.</p> <p>E-11 8" diameter vigas at 30" o.c.. Brown paint. Majority of vigas are in fair condition. Several vigas shows signs of being spliced or repaired at mid-span in the past, no signs of sagging or failure.</p> <p>E-12 Exposed EPDM roofing membrane with galvanized metal termination strip.</p> <p>E-14 Galvanized metal gutter surface mounted to face of stucco and dischargin directly to grade below.</p> |
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Figure 36. Existing Conditions Evaluation – East Elevation

## Existing Conditions Documentation – Side Façade, West Elevation



### WEST ELEVATION

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| <p>W-1 Wood sash window, boarded up and plastered over on inside of wall.</p> <p>W-2 Exterior light well. Originally part of West Alley.</p> <p>W-3 60mil EPDM roofing membrane with exposed galvanized closure strips. Membrane is approximately 20 years old, shows signs of significant wear, and is close to the end of its useful life.</p> <p>W-4 4" pvc downspout connected to 2x8 wood canale lined w/ galvanized metal &amp; flashed with EPDM roof membrane. Downspout discharges directly on to EPDM roof membrane below.</p> <p>W-5 Ceramic wall coping/tile with brown glaze, layed directly over EPDM roof membrane. Tiles are loose, some are cracked.</p> <p>W-6 West Alley infilled with new jail cells ca. 19XX?</p> <p>W-7 Retail Shop ("Smoke Signals") added to West Alley ca, 194x?</p> <p>W-8 Cast in place concrete window sill. Extremely deteriorated. Typical of multiple sills. Existing concrete is cracked, spalling, &amp; has exposed rough aggregate. Exhibits signs of many years of freeze-thaw damage.</p> | <p>W-9 Cementitous chimney flue for kiva fireplace below. Non-functioning/abandoned.</p> <p>W-10 Rough sawn wood blocking embed in adobe wall/stucco. Remnant of strucural support for roof access ladder previously removed? Wood member has shrunk/twisted and is seperated from the stucco allowing moisture into wall cavity.</p> <p>W-11 Overhead phone service entrance from pole in north alley.</p> <p>W-12 Original wood sash single pane windows with original hardware intact. All units suffer from lack of maintenance and have been screwed shut for security reasons. Sill and jamb trim are weathered &amp; cracked.</p> |
|--|--|

Figure 37. Existing Conditions Evaluation – West Elevation

## Part II – Condition Assessment & Repair Recommendations

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Modifications and additions to the historic portions of the building should be minimized. Per the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation:

- *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and environment.* (Standard #9)
- *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.* (Standard #10)

### Building Description

The two-story flat roofed Spanish-Pueblo Revival style Taos County Courthouse building is constructed of unstabilized adobe brick walls on a reinforced cast-in-place concrete foundation. A partial basement, primarily for mechanical equipment, exists under the northern third of the structure. A crawl space with dirt floors exists below the southern two thirds of the structure. The exterior stucco system is a multiple coat cementitious mixture applied directly over the un-stabilized adobe bricks, with chopped straw and the rough texture of the adobes acting as the lath. The finish stucco coat contains an integral color, that is roughly the tone of natural adobe mud. The central corridor plan is rectangular. The plaza facade is a one-part façade, composed of a single story commercial façade running the full width of the plaza facade of the building.

The structure is flush to the property line along the south sidewalk, with a front, or south portal extending the length of the facade over the public walkway. The building shares side walls with infill structures on the east and west.

The building is roofed with a low slope roofing system consisting of polyisocyanurate spray foam insulation applied with a 1/8" per foot slope, and a 30mil black EPDM membrane. The roof membrane is adhered directly to the spray foam. The roof slopes are channeled to a series of metal canals by way of built up roof crickets. The roof crickets are constructed out of spray foam insulation. The glue adhering the roof membrane to the underlying spray foam has failed, allowing the membrane to separate and move. Large areas of loose, rippled, or creased roofing membrane exist. The roof of the south portal, used as a balcony, can be accessed through a door from the second floor corridor.

Windows are of the "punched" opening type with the wood frames deeply recessed within the thickness of the adobe walls. These windows are a mixture of one over one double hung for the side facades, and six over six double hung for the south façade. The majority of the interior doors are raised panel wood, with some having a Dutch door configuration with ornate carvings. The exterior door on the first floor level of the north façade is an un-insulated hollow metal door set within a hollow metal frame. The south façade has simple flush panel wood doors with full lites. All of these exterior doors are non-historic.

The interior walls and partitions are typically sanded plaster over wood lath. The majority of these interior plaster partitions have been painted multiple times. Interior flooring is the original 2" wood planks, with the exception of exposed concrete and/or vinyl tiles at the rear portion of the first floor. Distinguishing features also include wood vigas and decking in the original second floor courtroom.

## Foundation and Stem Walls

The building is built on a continuous reinforced cast-in-place concrete grade beam that supports all structural walls. This grade beam is 12" wide and of variable depth. The exposed surface of the concrete is board formed with rough indentations left from the formwork.

There is no evidence of cracking settling or shifting of the concrete bond beams or the associated stem walls that extend down to the basement. The exposed foundation walls of the basement level have some areas where the large, two to three inch aggregate, of the concrete mix is exposed. This was typical of the time and poses no structural threat.

The entire basement area and all of the visible stem walls, are coated with a deep layer of black soot remaining from when the building had a functioning coal fired boiler. The coal shoot and abandoned mechanical piping, located on the north wall of the basement, are vulnerable to weather infiltration (freezing air and water/snow) and should be sealed up and concealed.



Figure 38. Concrete Column/Beam in Basement

The majority of the basement is unexcavated, with a crawl space to the south, and two large rooms located to the north. The basement rooms originally contained the boiler, coal storage, and miscellaneous storage areas. Currently the basement is only used for storage.

The floor between the basement rooms and the remainder of the structure is a concrete beam and slab, while the remainder of the first floor is framed with 2x8's, and the second floor with 3x12's. Structural wood framing throughout is in surprisingly good condition. The general condition of the structural concrete foundations and stem walls is good. One area of concern is the threat of water infiltration due to the grade at the north alley being raised over the years. A water

proof membrane and appropriate drainage system should be installed or the adjacent grade should be modified to provide for positive drainage in this area of the building.



Figure 39. Abandoned coal chute and mechanical piping on north wall of basement

### Foundation & Stem Wall Recommendations

1. Clean the exposed concrete foundation & stem-walls of all built up grime and coal soot residue in the interior of the basement.
2. Remove all loose debris, unstable patches, infill material, and abandoned ducts or piping from the coal chute, and abandoned flue and replace with solid cast-in-place concrete.
3. Remove the built up earth that has accumulated in the north alley against the building. Re-grade the north alley to provide positive drainage away from the

building and provide a waterproof membrane at the face of all vertical concrete that is below grade.

4. Cast a 4" thick reinforced concrete house-keeping pad and install a floor drain with sump pump in the Basement Floor.

### Interior and Exterior Walls and Finishes

The massive exterior walls of the structure feature cementitious stucco that is finished in a warm toned integrally colored sanded finish consistent with many of the neighboring structures around the plaza. The adobe brown color of this stucco is synonymous with present-day Taos and northern New Mexico structures. The stucco system is thick due to multiple applications over time. The original cement scratch coat appears to be applied directly over the structural adobe bricks with no evidence of the use of metal lath, with the exception of areas that have been repaired over the past thirty years.

Historic photographs do not indicate that mud plaster was ever applied to the exterior, and this is consistent with Architect Hesselden's use of newer types of materials. Corners and transitions are well rounded and void of hard edges. Sand used in the final stucco coat is coarse. Many of the stucco areas are cracked and show evidence of water penetration into the finish system. This is especially apparent in the vicinity of the roof canals.

The north façade, especially at the upper parapet, exhibits severe build up of dirt and grime and even areas of mild mold growth on surfaces that are not exposed to direct sun. Portions of the exterior walls that are protected by the portal are in much better condition than adjacent exposed areas. Some delamination of the exterior stucco has occurred on the second floor east elevation. The north

façade of the east alley infill addition is in very poor condition with no evidence of a final finished color coat. Fortunately, the numerous stucco repairs that have occurred over the years have all been applied with a cement based plaster system. Acrylic stucco systems should never be used on an adobe building of this type because of the potential to trap moisture inside the walls.

The second floor portion of the primary, south, facade features exposed viga tails covered with light gauge galvanized metal that has been painted brown. The majority of this metal flashing is in poor condition. It is bent, torn and disfigured through exposure to the severe weather cycles characteristic of northern New Mexico. The original exposed viga tails at the main south portal have been removed and plastered flush with the portal parapet.

The rear, north, façade has a unique basement protrusion that is cast out of concrete, and located at grade and just east of the center of the facade. To the east of this concrete protrusion are two small window openings with historic iron security screens over the window openings. This is possibly evidence of original jail cells of 1830 structure. The cast concrete is spalling and the jail cell windows have been infilled solid. A modern interpretation of a historic covered stair rear entry also exists here. This back wall also features a cast in-place concrete chimney flue, on the west, that appears as a stucco element rising all the way from the basement to the roof. It previously served as the boiler exhaust.



Figure 40. Interior plaster damage at the base of the second floor office located at the south east corner of the building

Interior finishes are typically sanded lime plaster over wood lath on the non-load bearing wood partitions, or applied directly to adobe substrate of the original north and south walls. Many of these partitions have been covered with a rough brown coat of cementitious plaster and painted with high gloss paint.

Overall the structure is in fair condition, with some damage to the exterior integrally-colored cement stucco causing spalling of the interior plaster, especially at the junction of the existing walls and the alley infill structures. The finish and color are consistent with neighboring structures. There is some damage to the stucco where, for instance, signs have been removed.



Figure 41. Exposed adobe & open coal chute @ base of north facade



Figure 42. Metal lined wood canale at upper roof showing EPDM roof detailing and water damaged stucco

#### Interior & Exterior Wall Finish Recommendations

1. Remove all loose stucco and damaged stucco as necessary and provide continuous sealant around all windows, doors, and other exterior openings to prevent the entry of water.
2. Remove and replace all of the sheet metal canales. New canales shall extend beyond the face of the structure a minimum of 24" or be provided with downspouts or splash blocks.
3. Replace the exposed viga tails at the south portal by installing new wood viga tails that carefully match the diameter and spacing of the existing vigas.
4. Apply a new cementitious color coat to the entire building.

## Rear Stair

The covered, turned wooden stairway on the back, north facade of the building, was installed in the 1990's by local woodworker Eric Lambert. It runs perpendicular to the structure, as opposed to the original stair which ran parallel, according to the 1932 construction documents. The current stair, which is not consistent in appearance with the historic character of the building, is in good condition and does not presently need to be replaced.



Figure 43. Exterior covered stair at north façade

### Rear Stair Recommendations

1. The stair is in fair condition with only minor code improvements needed. A 1-1/2" diameter metal handrail should be added for safety.

## Signage

Signage is wooden, located on either side of front entrance doors. The building is marked with historic district plaque on plaza facade. North side signage is in poor condition and should be removed.

### Signage Recommendations

2. Remove all abandoned or non-relevant signage prior to application of new stucco to the exterior of the building and new plaster to the interior.
3. Institute a building wide signage design guideline that unifies all interior and exterior signage into a cohesive design using carved wood or cast metal signage.

## Main Entry Portal

The flat roofed portal has round wooden columns, sometimes doubled, elongated French curve and ball style corbels, an exposed beam supporting stained exposed vigas and a stained wood plank ceiling.

The roof is drained from poorly fitted metal "canales" formed of recycled gutters and downspouts in a flat parapet. The south portal is distinguished by a cast-in-place concrete obelisk-shaped hitching post on the east, very likely used to tie up horses or animals for the members of the community who still use them. An exposed viga east of the front entry doors shows signs of being spliced some time ago, but is structurally sound and the repair was performed very well. Portions of the portal in front of the alley infills have been replaced in the past year. These remain unpainted or stained.

### Entry Portal Recommendations

1. Canales should be replaced with wooden, clad, or metal canales appropriate to the period of significance.
2. Damage from poorly installed roofing and improperly detailed connections between neighboring structures should be addressed.
3. Wood at alley infill portals should be stained to match the remaining portal.
4. Painted wood that was originally painted should remain painted. Remove all loose paint and repaint as necessary.
5. Damaged or deteriorated wood members should be repaired with epoxy and replaced only when necessary.



Figure 44. Typical Canale and Wood Corbel of the Entry Portal



Figure 45. Contemporary concrete hitching post at the Entry Portal

## Roof and Parapets

The parapet on the second story is of Mission Revival style, with curved upturned ends and a mission “bell” centered on the facade. All of the existing parapets, including those located on the upper roof and entry portal appear to be constructed using the same adobe bricks as the walls.

The roof framing for the building consists of 2x6 rough sawn lumber members that have been nailed together with a top and bottom chord to form an open web wood truss. The 1932 construction drawings indicate that the roof structure of the second floor Courtroom was exposed wood vigas with the same wood truss configuration above the vigas, effectively making the vigas “decorative” or non-structural.

The courtroom roof originally pitched north and the main body of the structure’s roof originally pitched south. The roof is in extremely poor condition, with obvious delamination from the substrate, openings at the seams, and visible holes.

Efforts to insulate the roof in the later 1980’s or early 1990’s with spray applied poly-iso-cyanurate insulation have resulted in a roof surface that is uneven and poorly drained. The Town of Taos maintenance staff report that immediate removal of even small amounts of snow accumulation from the roof is essential in winter to prevent water damage to interior finishes. The EPDM membrane has been adhered directly to the uneven spray-foam insulation. This installation method is unconventional and not warrantable with roofing manufacturers today. Many areas of the roof have trapped air bubbles and delaminated membrane that allow for as much as 6” of vertical movement when walked upon. While not structurally dangerous, the current condition of the roof certainly warrants immediate replacement.



Figure 46. Roof side detail view of the upper parapet located at the front of the building

All metal coping, flashing, canales, downspouts and gutters need to be removed, refabricated and replaced. The north roof edge of both infill additions is a simple 2” galvanize metal drip edge that is in poor condition with exposed or missing fasteners that have rusted, separated seams, and ponding in the associated gutters.



Figure 47. Parapet detail located at the southwest corner of the upper roof, note the abandoned electrical insulator, sever cracking, and temporary water proof coating on the stucco

## Roof and Parapet Recommendations

1. Remove the existing roof membrane and insulation down to the wood decking or roof sheathing, add tapered rigid insulation and reroof with an EPDM or TPO membrane that is warrantable to a minimum of twenty years and able to be adhered directly to the new insulation.
2. Remove and replace all existing canales and roof scuppers with new heavy gauge galvanized metal replicas.
3. Restore the original roof configuration of the upper roof, so that it drains to the north and away from the structure as indicated on the 1932 construction drawings. Provide a network of surface mounted downspouts at the north façade that terminate in drop inlets at grade connected to buried storm-water piping that discharges to the Town of Taos municipal storm-water system.
4. Provide for a minimum of 8" of upturn at the roof edges, modify stucco location at interior face of parapets as required.

## Windows

The main, south, facade features four double-hung windows. The rear façade is distinguished by four unusually large one over one double-hung windows which light the courtroom. The windows appear to be consistent with the original design and should be retained and maintained. They contribute to the building's overall integrity. Windows are symmetrical on each floor. First floor windows on the primary, south, façade consist of fixed in place glazing installed in original double hung openings with metal trim and unusually high wooden sills fabricated out of 2x6 rough sawn lumber.



Figure 48. Concrete and rough sawn lumber window sill detail located at first floor Entry Portal

Second floor windows on the principal, south, elevation are non-original six over six double hung wood. Side and rear facades have one over one double hung wood windows. These date to at least 1950 as indicated on earlier courthouse interior photos.



Figure 49. Damaged concrete sill located at the second floor West Façade

Sills are slip-style concrete sills, added later. (Original sills were pitched adobe.) Many have spalled, leaving large aggregate exposed. Sills at second floor windows, in some locations, are encroached upon by poorly-designed roof pitches.



Figure 50. Infilled window opening located at the north Basement Façade

All windows currently are nailed, or screwed, shut, for “security.” They have not been painted or stained in some time, leaving the wood exposed to the weather. Many of the wood trim and frame pieces exhibit dry rot & cracking, the most severely damaged of these wooden window elements should be replaced.

Some windows at the rear of the building are secured by iron bars, providing security, but they have been covered over and painted to prevent damage (breaking glass). While this is an acceptable temporary solution, it leaves something to be desired in appearance and utilization of those interior spaces.

### Window Recommendations

1. Windows should be unscrewed and repaired as necessary so they function to allow for natural ventilation. Original brass locking mechanisms should be repaired or replaced with in kind replicas that allow the units to be secured from the inside.
2. Damaged concrete sills shall be removed and replaced in kind. The replacement sills shall be sealed with a UV resistant clear penetrating sealer.
3. Paint, stain or seal all windows to prevent further deterioration.
4. Uncover back elevation windows to allow for natural light of interior spaces.
5. Caulk around all windows, doors, and pipe openings in exterior walls to prevent water infiltration.
6. Deteriorated wood members should be repaired with epoxy or replaced in kind if necessary.
7. Retain and conserve existing hardware. Remove paint but do not refinish. Provide supplemental hardware as required.

## Doors

The primary, south second floor of the facade features a center door with a non-historic metal security grate. The primary first floor entrance to the structure is in the center of the front, south facade. The non-original front door is essentially a residential style patio door with flush frame and full glazing. All exterior doors are non-historic and generally in very poor condition. The majority of the doors throughout the building have serious hardware issues, and lack the ability to be locked or operated properly. Many of the locksets are non-functioning or without keys. The front entry door lacks the required egress hardware to allow for safe exiting from the building in emergencies.



Figure 51. Non-historic front entry door

## Door Recommendations

1. Remove all of the non-historic doors and replace them with new doors that are consistent with the historic character of the building. New interior doors should Match the historic carved wood doors that exist in the interior, with heavily carved panels of geometric designs. All of the interior doors should be stained the same color, dark brown, resulting in a cohesive design throughout.
2. New main entry doors should be fabricated based on the schematic designs shown on the 1932 Hesselden Exterior South Elevation. These doors are shown as having 5 horizontal panels and no lites.
3. Existing historic doors (none exist at the exterior) should be removed from their frames and be given a thorough rehabilitation, including the removal of built up paint from all hardware, cleaning, sanding and re-staining of all wood surfaces, and re-keying . Wood door frames exhibiting dings, gouges, and cracks should be repaired with epoxy wood filler, sanded smooth, and repainted. Rubber gasketing should be installed for acoustical reasons on all of the perimeter of all of the corridor doors.
4. The wood panel dutch doors on the interior of the first floor should be left in place. These doors are currently stained a dark color that needs minor cleaning and touch up of the scratched or dented areas.
5. The non-historic aluminum storefront entry door and frame located at the north façade of the second floor should be removed and replaced with a wood frame and door matching the 5 horizontal panel design of the main entry doors indicated on the 1932 construction drawings.

No glazed panels or lites should be incorporated into the design of this door due to security reasons.

### Door Hardware Recommendations

1. Many of the existing historic doors have inappropriate contemporary hardware. Replace all non-historic door hardware with contemporary hardware that is consistent with the original satin nickel (BHMA 619 or US15) finish of the historic door hardware.
2. Retain and repair all of the original door hardware that is in functioning order. The functioning elements are primarily the hinges, and some locksets. Remove paint from the hardware and retain the historic satin nickel (BHMA 619 or US15) finish.
3. Install weatherstripping at the perimeter of the new exterior doors. The material for this weather stripping shall be selected so as to be as non-obtrusive and historic as is feasible. Oil rubbed bronze (BHMA 613 or US10B) metallic weather stripping at the perimeter of all operable exterior door panels is appropriate.
4. Replace the lock cylinders of all of the doors, building wide with newly keyed units matching the oil rubbed bronze or satin nickel finish that exists.
5. Many of the doors have multiple, surface mounted locksets on a single door. This was likely done when keys were lost or locksets became obsolete. Non-functioning lock cylinders that have been abandoned in place should be removed from the doors and the holes plugged with material matching the adjacent surface.

### Room Finishes

Moderate remodeling has been completed on the interior, in the form of modern interior walls and wooden “storefront” glazing on the first floor. These remodeled interior partitions consist of 2x4 wood stud framing with ½” gypsum wall board sheathing that has been taped and mudded with modern gypsum finishing techniques, mostly “orange peel texture”, and finally painted. The second floor retains its original floor plan configuration. Many of the later infill and remodeled spaces of the first floor were constructed using inexpensive modern materials and poor craftsmanship that are not appropriate for a substantial public building of this type. Refer to *Figure 22* included earlier in this report for locations of these modern infill partitions.



Figure 52. Non-historic interior partitions, carved wood canales, and interior windows

Ceilings are the original painted lime plaster over wood lath, although they have been obscured throughout the building with a suspended ceiling system as described earlier in the report. The original lime plaster ceilings are in poor condition with many penetrations for later electrical and mechanical piping and conduit installations. The second floor Courtroom has large (12-14" diameter) wood vigas placed 30" on center and exposed 1x6 wood decking. All of the exposed wood elements in the Courtroom are in good condition with a dark stain applied. None of the vigas show signs of cracking, although they all exhibit slight sagging over the span of the room, typically about 1" at the mid-span. This is of no concern though, due to the fact that the vigas are non-structural. 2x trusses and 2x wood over-framing members, ripped lengthwise to construct the original roof slope, are found above the exposed viga/decking. This construction detail is shown on the Building Sections of the 1932 construction drawings.



Figure 53. Viga support @ Courtroom

The east & west alley infill additions, added between 1945 and 1960, are unique in that the older portions of these areas contain small diameter (8'-10") wood vigas that have been painted or stained. These members are in fair condition, with some minor

cracking, splitting, and twisting that is typical for wood members of this age and type.

The jail cell is unique in that it has ¼" steel plate on all surfaces, including the ceiling and floor. The steel plate in the oldest cell has been stripped of its lead containing paint and currently is in need of a new painted finish. The jail addition, located in the west alley, is constructed out of 8" thick concrete masonry unit (cmu). The cmu is painted and visible on the north alley façade. All of the exposed cmu walls are painted white. Ceilings, in the jail addition, are painted sheet metal panels placed within a metal trim system that is spaced two feet on center and mounted directly to what appears to be a cast-in-place concrete ceiling deck. The jail cell additions in the west alley have vinyl floor tiles that are in very poor condition.



Figure 54. Vinyl floor tile located in the west alley jail cells

The majority of the flooring in the remainder of the building is either two inch wide tongue and groove wood with a clear sealer, or modern carpet. The wood floors are in fair to good condition with evidence of refinishing performed in the last ten years. While the flooring is in good/fair condition, it is at the end of its useful life. It is too thin to be refinished. Further sanding will damage the substrate. Carpet throughout the building is in poor condition, with multiple ripples, tears, and taped seams. There is no significant

historic permanent casework in the structure, with the exception of the original wood staircase with its carved balustrades, profiled railing, and termination posts. The existing cabinetry is all nonhistoric, painted 1x shelving, installed in the past 30 years.



Figure 55. Wood flooring with radiator removed

### Room Finish Recommendations

1. Remove all cementitious rough textured plaster and replace it with smooth troweled lime plaster. If the rough textured plaster cannot be removed it should be mechanically scarified or coated with a synthetic bonding agent, such as *Mighty Bond*, manufactured by Merlex Stucco Inc. or a similar product, and given a veneer coat of smooth trowelled gypsum plaster.
2. Remove all suspended ceilings, patch and repair the original lime plaster ceilings to their original condition, repaint.
3. Remove all vinyl flooring and carpet that conceals original wood flooring. Repair existing wood by replacing deteriorated or damaged sections to match the existing

material, size, and installation, followed by re-sanding, and finally a durable satin finish clear urethane sealer.

4. Remove all vinyl wall base trim and replace with wood wall baseboard trim to match the original four quarter by 6 inch high baseboard trim.
5. Remove all surface mounted electrical conduit, low voltage wiring, and mechanical piping, patch and repair wall surfaces with gypsum plaster. See additional comments regarding mechanical and electrical items in the next section.

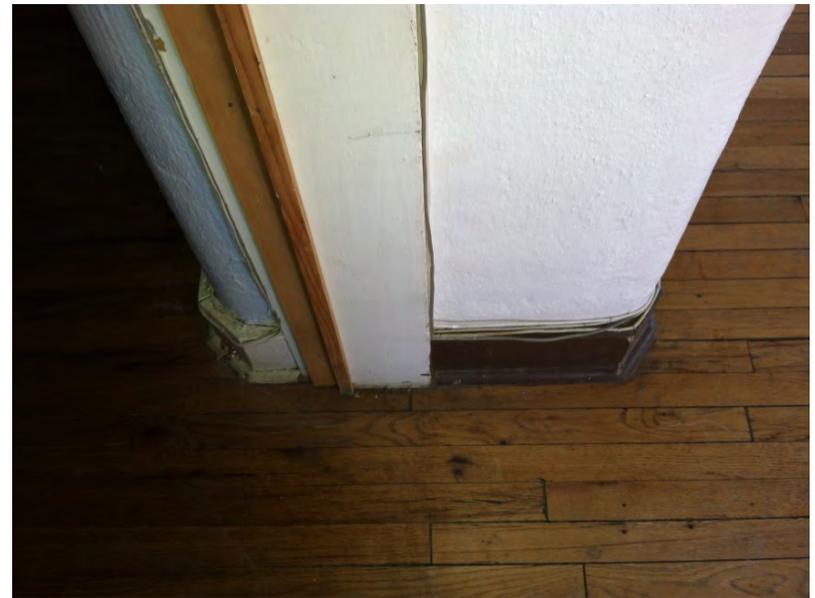


Figure 56. Exposed low voltage wiring located on the historic wood baseboard trim in first floor Corridor – typical condition at numerous locations

## Murals in the Courtroom

The existing murals are relatively stable and in great condition considering their age and location. The murals were rehabilitated by renowned artist Frederico Vigil in 1994. No evidence of cracking, fading, or deterioration is currently evident. Historical accounts of a two to three inch steel angle frame embedded in the plaster at the perimeter of each mural suggests that this has prevented cracking between the plaster finish of the surrounding wall and the murals themselves.

Humidity in the room should be kept stable and a preservation plan established for the works under the care of a professional art conservationist, preferably also alongside Frederico Vigil since he knows these pieces intimately. A vestibule constructed adjacent to the north entry door of the courtroom would help maintain a more static humidity level and minimize wind and heat impacts, but this becomes a design issue.

### Mural Recommendations

1. Do not attempt to clean, seal, or conserve the murals without professional assistance from a trained art conservationist.
2. Keep the humidity and temperature levels at a near constant temperature. Avoid drastic temperature and humidity fluctuations. Consider adding a vestibule at the north entry door to the courtroom.
3. The installation of a forced air heating system or any type of air conditioning system that would remove or add large amounts of humidity should be avoided.

## Mechanical and Electrical Fixtures

The building contains no historic light fixtures. The majority of the rooms have contemporary low voltage track lighting, surface mounted to the ceiling or 2'x4' recessed fluorescents suspended below the original ceiling. The second floor Courtroom has numerous suspended high wattage pendent light fixtures that are on 24 hours per day for security reasons, generating unnecessary heat and adding to the building's electrical bill. Throughout the building, lighting is either in very poor condition with exposed conduit, loose wires, loose lamps, and broken reflectors, or is incompatible with the original historic character of the building.

The building's plumbing system is deficient. Water closets, urinals, lavatories and sinks are either missing or in very poor condition. No restrooms exist in the building making it non-code compliant. The one exception is a single water closet and lavatory located on first floor in the historic jail. The fixtures in this small restroom are non-historic and in poor condition. The fixtures have not been maintained. They have grime and dirt build-up, mineral deposits, and un-insulated supply lines.



Figure 57. Abandoned restroom on second floor

Existing mop sinks appear to function, though they are towards the end of the useful life, and are non-historic exhibiting leaks, chips and severe grime/dirt build-up.

## Mechanical & Electrical Recommendations

1. The entire building needs a complete electrical upgrade with new power, data, and low voltage systems meeting modern standards.
2. New conduit for lighting, egress signs, security systems, and receptacles should be located as inconspicuously as possible or totally concealed. This can be achieved by channeling into the plaster finishes, adobe walls, or running conduit within wood framed partitions or ceiling cavities.
3. Remove all non-historic lighting and replace it with less visually conspicuous and higher quality contemporary fixtures. Many low profile interior fixtures that are suspended from ceilings by aircraft cables are available from contemporary lighting suppliers. Lamping of fixtures should be LED, T4 Fluorescent, or MR16 halogen track lighting surface mounted to the rehabilitated plaster ceilings. Exterior lighting should be dark-sky compliant decorative metal sconces in stamped tin or copper. The use of high lumen fixtures on the outside of the building should be avoided.
4. Install new water supply, waste, and vent piping throughout the entire building in conjunction with the installation of the planned restroom additions on each floor. New piping should be concealed within wall, ceiling or floor cavities.

## Hazardous Materials

### Lead Based Paint and Asbestos

Prior to this report being conducted the owner of the building had the original jail portion and the basement of the building tested, analyzed, and abated for hazardous materials. Only the original jail area and the basement received this treatment. The presence of lead paint and asbestos containing flooring materials were present.

These hazardous materials were removed from these areas only. The results of the study and the post-abatement air quality tests are contained in the Appendix "K". Based upon these results it can be assumed that the 12 inch square brown vinyl composite floor tiles, found on the floor of the west alley jail cells, will test positive for asbestos.

The only lead paint identified in the building is the black paint used in the old jail cell. No other black paint is known to exist throughout the building, but caution should be used if any black paint is encountered during construction activities associated with the preservation of this building.

## Hazardous Material Recommendations

1. Prior to any renovation work, the portions of the building that have not already been tested and remediated for hazardous materials should be done so in a fashion similar to that already performed in the original jail portion of the building.
2. The presence of lead paint in some of the interior painted finishes and the presence of asbestos containing floor tiles and mastics can be assumed based on the known results of portions of the building already tested.

3. A licensed, bonded, and insured hazardous materials abatement contractor should be engaged to safely remove the flooring materials that exist in the west alley jail cell addition portion of the building.
4. Care should be taken to not damage the underlying historic substrates of any windows or floor tiles that may contain hazardous materials if they test positive and are in need of remediation.

## Energy Enhancement and Thermal Comfort Improvements

The original mechanical system was a natural gas fired boiler with cast iron steam radiators distributed throughout the rooms of the building. All of the original quantity of twenty four cast iron radiators have been removed from their original locations and stored either in the basement of the building or in the Old Taos Armory by Taos County Facilities Department staff.



Figure 58. Exposed hydronic heating pipes on ceiling of first floor Corridor installed as part of mechanical upgrade in 2010

The mechanical system was upgraded in 2010. As part of this system upgrade, the historic radiators, described above, were replaced with modern cabinet style fan-coil units that are fed by a system of exposed hydronic piping run along the first floor ceiling and supplied with hot water by a new natural gas fired boiler located in a newly partitioned area of the original jail. A total of eighteen fan-coil-units were designed to be located on the first floor, and ten on the second floor. However, the new system was not installed as designed. Of the new fan-coil-units specified, the only rooms where they were installed are the following, as designated by room number and description of the existing building floor plans, Figures 28 and 29 located in the Building Construction Chronology section:

### First Floor

- Retail #103
- Retail #106
- Original Jail #109
- Retail #111
- Retail #E02

### Second Floor

- Office #202
- Office #204
- Courtroom #205, one at east wall and one at west wall
- Office #207
- Office #209



Figure 59. Typical contemporary fan-coil-unit installed in first floor room #106 as part of the mechanical upgrade in 2010

The new heating system is entirely hot water based, and steam is no longer used in the building. The cooling components of the new fan-coil-units were never installed, although there is room for them to be concealed in the cabinet housing of the units. Unfortunately, this type of heating and cooling system does not introduce any fresh air to the interior of the building.

Air to air heat exchangers should be installed on the roof of the building. A series of small diameter ductwork, both supply and return, installed within the ceiling cavities of each floor should be designed and installed to introduce a minimum of 0.06 cubic feet per minute of fresh air per square foot of occupiable space into the building. This is required per the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 62-2001 "Fresh Air Requirements to Maintain Indoor Air Quality".



Figure 60. New boiler and piping installed in newly partitioned mechanical room of first floor, adjacent to the original jail

The location, boiler size, and layout of the system has been designed to serve the heating and cooling loads of all spaces, although no cooling components have been installed because of lack of funding. This modern hot water heating system should serve the future needs of the building if routinely maintained.

### Energy Enhancement and Thermal Comfort Improvement Recommendations

1. Install additional fan-coil-units for heating in each of the spaces, per the 2010 design, as part of the future rehabilitation efforts.
2. Install occupancy sensors on all new lighting controls and new exhaust fans in proposed new restrooms.

3. Install the chilled water plant in the Basement and the chilled water supply and return lines to each fan-coil-unit, so that the cooling system can function as designed during the 2010 mechanical upgrades.
4. Install roof mounted air to air heat exchangers, ductwork, and supply and return registers, so that waste heat can be exchanged for semi-conditioned fresh air in the winter, and internal warm air exchanged with fresh outdoor air in the summer.
5. Install insect screens on all of the operable windows in order to introduce passive means for allowing fresh outside air into the building during summer, fall, and spring seasons.
6. Install removable single pane storm windows on all exterior windows. Design and detailing of these units should be carefully addressed so as to not distract from the historic site lines and appearance of the exterior windows. Taos County Facilities Department would need to be trained on how and when to remove these seasonal devices.
7. Install the highest possible R-value insulation as part of the roof replacement efforts. A minimum of two layers of four inch thick rigid poly-iso-cyanurate insulation is recommended, yielding an R-value of R80.

## Site Improvements

The exterior south portal sidewalk is a concrete slab on grade with multiple layers of later concrete topping and thin synthetic patches. The concrete slab and the upper portions of the patching material are separating and spalling. The walking surface is uneven, and contains numerous cracks, and gaps. The painted surface is worn

and in poor condition. The south portal concrete needs to be removed and replaced.



Figure 61. Raised grade of north alley

As explained earlier, ten foot wide alleys originally existed on the east and west side of the original Courthouse. These were infilled sometime between 1934 and 1961 using inexpensive construction of concrete block, hand-hewn stained wood timber frame openings, and exposed wood plank ceilings and vigas. The infill of the north end of the east alley, is structurally sound but in poor condition with severe water infiltration.

For the purpose of this report the east and west infill alleys are viewed as unsympathetic and non-historic additions to portions of the site that were originally open air alleyways. These alley infill areas should be removed and the alleyways paved with decorative pavers in order to facilitate an improved pedestrian connection between Taos Plaza and the popular John Dunn shops retail development located directly to the north of the Old Taos County Courthouse. By removing these unsympathetic additions the alleyways on either side of the building can once again contribute their natural light to the main building, as well as provide for the much needed side egress out of the main building.

Juan Largo Lane begins as Teresina Lane on the northwest corner of the plaza and then turns east to make up the northern boundary of the buildings site. The finished surface of Juan Largo Lane has been paved with contemporary concrete unit pavers in an interlocking herringbone pattern. When this work was completed in the late 1990's, the original grade of the dirt roadway was raised up approximately thirty inches. The modified elevation of this alley has severely impacted the surface flow of storm water on the Historic Old Taos County Courthouse site.



Figure 62. View of Juan Largo Lane, looking west, note that the elevation of the roadway is approximately thirty six inches higher than the first floor elevation of the Historic Old Taos County Courthouse

The elevated grade has been piled up against the building and topped with gravel. The current condition at the north façade of the building is that there are unstabilized adobe bricks buried by as much as two and a half feet of saturated wet soil. This condition is exasperated at the sunken courtyard just to the north of the east

alley infill, which currently sits approximately forty eight inches below the adjacent finish grade of Juan Largo Lane. Due to the contained open courtyard condition of this portion of the site, storm-water currently collects here and is assumed to be infiltrating under the foundation of this portion of the east alley infill building. The severely damaged exterior stucco and adobe walls in the vicinity, which exhibit signs of water infiltration, are proof that something needs to be done to re-grade the adjacent Juan Largo Lane portion of the site.



Figure 63. Sunken outdoor court area located at northern end of the east alley infill, note weeds, invasive Siberian Elm trees, and severely deteriorated condition of exterior stucco and windows

## Site Improvement Recommendations

1. The elevation of Juan Largo Lane to the north of the building should be lowered by approximately 30" so as to provide positive drainage away from the building.
2. Install perforated PVC perimeter foundation drains, with an silt fabric wrapping and a comprehensive system of storm-water piping that catches all of the rain and snow melt from the buildings gutters and downspouts. Surface drop inlets with decorative metal grates should be used at all low spots along the vicinity of the north façade.
3. Install accessible ramps or walks that will enable the transition from the proposed open alleyways adjacent to the building to the modified elevations of Juan Largo Lane.
4. Remove and replace the south portal concrete sidewalk. The new concrete should be unstained and uncolored to

match the historic concrete of the Taos Plaza, and have control joints at a minimum 4 feet on center. Install new concrete to have positive drainage of a minimum of .5% sloping away from the building.

5. Install decorative metal security fencing and/or a stucco and retaining wall with operable security gates along the northern property line adjacent to Juan Largo Lane. This would provide the opportunity for both night time security of the site and a way of transitioning from the lower elevation of the first floor of the Old Taos County Courthouse up to the higher elevation of Juan Largo Lane.
6. Create a new outdoor plaza area between the north façade of the building and Juan Largo Lane. Install native drought resistant landscaping, dark sky compliant site lighting in the form of decorative concrete bollards, and low stucco walls for use as outdoor seating.

## Recommendations for Possible Future Studies

### 1. Paint Color Analysis:

A systematic study, performed using microscopic paint analysis could provide samples that will allow for the accurate rehabilitation of the historic color schemes that once existed both within the building's interior and on the building's exterior finished materials. Professionally trained art conservators are often able to provide this service.

### 2. Professional Conservation and Monitoring of the Murals:

Engage a professionally trained and certified art conservator to assess, monitor and develop a long term conservation plan for the historic Works in Project Administration art works contained in the Courtroom. Humidity levels, extremely small amounts of horizontal and vertical movement within the Courtrooms walls, and the relative humidity and temperature are all items that should be monitored over the long term. Ultra Violet light and Infrared Light levels should also be assessed and monitored. The murals are an important legacy for Taos County, the state, and the art world in general. It would be a tragedy to lose these precious murals to careless acts over the life of the building.

## Program of Existing Spaces

Currently, the building has very few occupants. Taos County is only offering month to month leases for spaces within the building in anticipation of the future building wide renovation and construction activities. Concentration of occupants is in the first floor spaces adjacent to the south portal with exposure to the pedestrian traffic of the historic Taos Plaza. Tenants currently include Taos Accessories, Smoke Signals a Native American Smoke Shop, Taos Artists Co-Op, and a Native American owned and operated artisan gift shop.

The only second floor tenant is the Taos Historical Society located in the original District Judges office. The historic Courtroom is rarely open to the public because of limited staffing and funding shortages from Taos County Government.

Ironically, and likely due to recent press articles and public meetings regarding the future renovation plans of the building, several new short term tenants have moved into the building. These new tenants include the second floor office suite historically housing the Taos County Agriculture Agent and the Superintendent of Schools which is now leased for office space by the staff of the non-profit government agency Taos Arts and Cultural District. Additionally, a craft card maker who is also selling reproductions of historic downtown Taos photographs has leased a small space on the Taos Plaza side of the building that was originally part of the Taos County Assessor's office.

# Part III – Regulatory Requirements Overview

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## **Governing Code:**

- 2009 New Mexico Commercial Building Code (NMCBC)
- 2009 International Existing Building Code (IEBC)
- 2009 International Building Code (IBC)

## **Administration - Chapter 1 (IEBC)**

- Work area compliance method. Building must comply with Chapters 4-12 of IEBC (101.5.2 IEBC)
- Conditions. Buildings or existing equipment that are or hereafter become unsafe, unsanitary, or deficient because of inadequate maintenance, ... Unsafe buildings shall be brought up to code....or made safe, as the code official deems necessary and as provided for in this code.

## **Use & Occupancy - Chapter 3 (IBC)**

- Occupancy Group = "Mercantile", M (309 IBC)
- Accessory Use Areas = "Assembly" A-3. Exception #2, A room or space used for assembly purposes with an occupant load of less than 50 persons and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy. (303.1 IBC)

## **Prescriptive Compliance Method - Chapter 3 (IEBC)**

- Additions, alterations, renovations, or repairs to mechanical installations shall conform to the International Mechanical Code (IMC) without requiring the existing installation to comply with all of the requirements of this code. (302 IEBC)

- Additions, alterations or repairs shall not cause an existing installation to become unsafe, hazardous or overloaded (302.8 IEBC)

## **Classification of Work-Chapter 4 (IEBC)**

- Alteration Level 2, alterations include the reconfiguration of space, the addition or elimination of any door or window, the reconfiguration or extension of any system, or the installation of any additional equipment. (115.1 IEBC) (404.1 IEBC)

## **Repairs - Chapter 5 (IEBC)**

- Repairs as described in Section 302 shall comply with the requirements of this chapter. Repairs to historic buildings shall comply with this chapter, except as modified in Chapter 11. (501.1 IEBC)
- Existing mechanical systems undergoing repair shall not make the building less conforming than it was before the repair was undertaken (501.2 IEBC)

## **Egress Requirements - Chapter 10 (IBC)**

- Total Occupant Load of Building = 64 (table 1004.1.2 IBC)

## **Historic Buildings - Chapter 11 (IEBC)**

- Repairs to any portion of a historic building or structure shall be permitted with original or like materials and original methods of construction, subject to the provisions of this chapter (11.0 IEBC)

alteration are not required to comply with the code requirements for a new structure. (3403.1 IBC)

- Historic buildings. The provisions of (11.02.01 IEBC) relating to the construction, repair, alteration, addition, restoration, and movement of structures, and change of occupancy shall not be mandatory for historic buildings where such buildings are judged by the building official to not constitute a distinct life safety hazard

**Existing Structures - Chapter 34 (IBC)**

- Existing buildings or structures. Additions or alterations to any building or structure shall comply with the requirements of the code for new construction. ....Portions of the structure not altered and not affected by the

**Regulatory Requirement Summary**

Only a limited and preliminary building code analysis has been conducted for this project due to the schematic nature of the proposed adaptive reuse plans for the structure. A full building code analysis is beyond the basic scope of this study, and cannot accurately be performed without a complete and comprehensive adaptive reuse design package. The preliminary code analysis presented here is limited to the requirements of the 2009 International Building Code (IBC) and the 2009 International Existing Building Code (IEBC). Reviews for compliance with the Life Safety Code (NFPA) and the New Mexico Energy Conservation Code (NMECC) are also beyond the basic scope of this project, and difficult to perform without final design documents in hand. A comprehensive code analysis of all applicable Federal, State, and Local codes should be performed by the design professional of record prior to any rehabilitation work being undertaken on the property.

**Occupancy Classification:**

The adaptive reuse of this structure is assumed to contain a mix of retail shops and museum functions on the first floor. The second floor will most likely contain Business occupancies and Assembly functions in the courtroom space. The structure can be assumed to be classified as “M” and “B” occupancies with the “A” occupancies being considered accessory to the “B” and “M” occupancies as long the assembly spaces contain less than 50 occupants. This is important for fire and egress reasons. Additional occupants due to increased Assembly spaces will likely require the use of fire rated partitions, an automatic fire suppression system, or both. The building is also going through a “Change of Use” as defined by the IBC, this alone will likely trigger full compliance with all provisions of the IBC, including electrical and mechanical system upgrades to comply with the latest codes, as well as compliance with all accessibility codes. Thus entirely new mechanical, electrical systems are planned with the exception of the existing boiler and fan coil units that have already been replaced. An elevator will be required.

**Work Classification:**

Based upon the work area exceeding fifty percent of the aggregate area of the building the project will likely be classified as a “Level 3 Alteration”. Full compliance with all electrical, mechanical, and accessibility provisions of the IBC are required at this level of adaptive reuse.

## Part IV - Proposed Preservation Plan

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The Taos Arts and Cultural District Plan, dated January, 2012, advocates use of the updated Historic Old Taos County Courthouse as an Arts and Creative Center and as a “true anchor for the Arts and Culture District.” This nonprofit government agency has been identified as a prime tenant for the proposed second floor office space once the building is rehabilitated. Other proposed tenants and uses of the building include the following:

- Continued leasing of second floor office space for the Taos County Historical Society to house their administrative offices as well as their archives of historical documents, films, donated objects, and audio tapes of oral history relating to the history of Taos County
- Expanded Leasing of rehabilitated office space for local non-profit groups, primarily to be located on the second floor of the building.
- Leasing of first floor spaces that have direct views and access to the adjacent Taos Plaza for retail establishments focusing their efforts on selling, distributing, and promoting art, sculpture, jewelry, photography, and handmade craft items specifically manufactured by Taos County residents.
- Creation of a public museum space that would function within the first floor rooms originally occupied by the jail functions on the north side of the building. This museum would focus on the history of the building, especially the its former use as a jail, and would document the people, events, and history of the historic Taos County jail up through its demise and relocation to its current location today.
- Open and maintain the second floor Courtroom as a public space for regular daily viewing of the historic murals painted on the walls within. This room should also function as a multi-purpose space accommodating occasional special events for medium to large groups. Some of the specific uses for this room mentioned were: Screening room for films, rental space for weddings, funerals, graduation parties...etc., and occasional use as a lecture venue for academic talks.
- Removal of the side alley infill additions on the east and west and the creation of outdoor paved and landscaped “pocket parks” in these locations. These recaptured open spaces should promote pedestrian access to the historic John Dunn shops to the north of the building, as well as providing for easier access to the tourism based businesses located along Teresina Land and Juan Largo Lane.
- Install outdoor tables and benches within the protected confines of the newly captured and transformed spaces adjacent to the building on the east and west. These spaces should have ample landscaping, innovative and beautiful hardscaping, and security fencing or gates at the north and south ends so that these outdoor areas can be closed down and secured after hours.

See Appendix “I” for meeting minutes and the attendee sign in sheet associate with the plaza area merchants meeting and representatives of the Taos Arts and Cultural District regarding programming of the rehabilitated spaces of the building.

In order to accomplish the goals of the Taos Arts and Cultural District Plan and the desired visions of the various Taos Plaza area merchants, the following action items are proposed. These action items have been broken into two distinct phases in order of priority, with the most urgently needed items being listed in the first phase and the less urgent items listed in the second phase:

### **Phase I**

1. Installation of a hydraulic elevator for use by the mobility impaired. This is a key missing element in the current configuration of the building, as there is no access to the second floor for persons with physical disabilities without a fully accessible elevator.
2. Add multi-stall modern public restrooms for Men and Women on both floors of the building. The minimum plumbing fixture count shall comply with the 2009 International Building Code Chapter 29 requirements. or with the most recently adopted version of this code and its local and state amendments. These new restroom additions will require dedicated custodial closets on both floors to store the necessary cleaning supplies, paper goods, soap, and day to day items needed in order for the staff of the Taos County Facilities Department to maintain the restrooms in a manner acceptable to the tenants of the building and the general public.
3. Installation of new electrical power systems, emergency egress lighting, and low voltage telecommunications systems on both floors, including all conduit and wiring. All new conduit and wiring shall be concealed within ceiling or floor cavities and channeled into walls. Upgrade mechanical system with new fresh air exchanger and ductwork to all spaces. Install chiller plant and cold water piping to all rooms.
4. Comprehensive interior rehabilitation of the first floor spaces. Work would include:
  - Removal of the non-historic interior partitions
  - Restoration of all historic interior finish surfaces including the wood floors, gypsum plaster ceilings, and gypsum plaster walls, refurbishing of the first floor historic doors including new hardware, and the replacement of non-historic interior doors with historically appropriate replicas.
  - Installation of new light fixtures in all first floor spaces.

### **Maintenance Recommendations for Phase I Work:**

- Once the floors are re-finished via selective repair, sanding, and refinishing with a clear urethane sealer, the floors should be maintained. At a minimum the wood floors should be swept of loose debris and mopped with a mild detergent on a daily basis

- Prevent continued application of paint to the interior gypsum ceiling and wall finishes after they are restored to their smooth trowelled historic condition. A building wide color palette of acceptable paint colors should be agreed upon to prevent multiple layers of paint build up and unnecessary application of multiple layers of paint. Alternately, a clear sealer, consisting of fifty percent linseed oil and fifty percent turpentine can be applied to unpainted gypsum plaster walls.

## **Phase II**

1. Remove the east and west alley infill additions. By demolishing the sub-standard construction that was infilled on either side of the main structure, the main buildings side elevations can be restored to those shown on the 1932 Hesselden drawings. This approach, although controversial with the merchants that currently occupy the "alley" spaces, would greatly improve the building in the following ways:
  - Bring natural daylight and ventilation into the first floor rooms that do not front the plaza
  - Provide for much needed emergency egress and access to the majority of first floor room
  - Offers the opportunity to create shaded/sheltered walkways that could connect the main Plaza to the successful Bent Street shops existing directly to the north.
2. Modify the site grading and drainage infrastructure between the north façade and Juan Largo Lane. Remove all built up earth in this area to minimum of six inches below the finish floor elevation of the first floor. Install perforated perimeter foundation drains around the east, west and north sides of the building and connect to subsurface network of storm water piping that terminates at the Town of Taos storm water system. Grade the side alleys to drain, install accessible walkways or ramps constructed out of concrete pavers matching those found on Juan Largo Lane to the north. Install decorative metal security fencing and gates at the north and south boundaries of the newly created outdoor spaces.
3. Repair the exterior stucco as necessary, caulk around all window and doors and provide a new cementitious color coat to all exterior stuccoed surfaces matching the earth tone stucco colors that are prevalent on the Taos Plaza today.
4. Remove the existing roofing membrane, insulation, and any historic roof layers down to the original wood decking substrate. Reconfigure the roof slope to match the original 1932 roof plan with the upper roof draining to the north. Install a minimum of two layers of poly-iso-cyanurate rigid foam insulation, tapered to drain a minimum quarter inch per foot, and install a new 30 mil EPDM or TPO roof membrane with a minimum 30 year warranty. Terminate all stucco stops and counter flashing a minimum of 8" above the new roof membrane.

5. Remove all damaged and nonhistoric canales, scuppers, downspouts and gutters and replace with wood canales matching historic profiles and lined with a minimum 22 gauge galvanized metal that matches the historic detailing based on the 1932 construction drawings.
6. Rehabilitate all of the historic exterior window assemblies. Frames should be squared, corners reinforced using wood dowels. Deteriorated members should be repaired using epoxy consolidants and only replaced when damaged beyond repair. Replace non-historic units with new units fabricated to match the original windows as shown on the 1932 construction drawings. Remove and replace the damaged cast concrete sills with new cast concrete units matching the historic profile. Retain and conserve all of the original window hardware. Clean all built up paint from the finished hardware and apply supplemental hardware only where required, matching the original satin nickel or oil rubbed bronze finish.
7. Remove the non-historic front entry doors and replace with newly fabricated wood doors and side panels matching the design of the doors indicated on the 1932 construction drawings. Provide modern emergency egress door hardware in a period appropriate finish such as satin nickel or oil rubbed bronze matching the existing door hardware of the historic interior doors.
8. Repair or replace only the select few severely damaged wood columns, vigas, and wood corbels located at the south entry portal. New wood elements should match the material and profile of the remaining historic elements. Remove all loose paint, fill voids with epoxy, and repaint all of the portals wood elements.
9. Remove the damaged concrete walkway for the entire width of the south entry portal. Re-cast the walkway in four inch thick grey concrete with integral steel reinforcing using #3 steel reinforcing bars midway in the slab and oriented in both directions at a maximum eighteen inches on center. Cast the new walkway utilizing a concrete mixture with a minimum of five percent air entraining ad mixture.

*Maintenance Recommendations for Phase II work:*

- Use only cement-based stucco products. Do not apply synthetic stucco.
- Continue to apply integral color stucco patches as required to repair any cracking at the exterior stucco surfaces.
- Install and maintain operational low voltage electrical heating elements concealed in all metal downspouts, canales, and scuppers. This is an important step in preventing snow and ice buildup on the roofs. Discourage the removal of accumulated snow from the roof membrane as this activity only tends to damage the fragile roof membrane.
- Only apply supplemental door and window hardware as appropriate to insure the desired function of the restored and or replaced doors and windows. Remove paint from all exposed original hardware and prevent new paint from building up on hardware when doors and windows are repainted.

- Make ongoing repairs to window glazing with glazing compound and replacement wood trim and stops that match the historic profile and geometry of the original windows and doors.
- Insure that moisture does not have an opportunity to infiltrate into the exterior adobe wall system by keeping all adjacent grades a minimum of six inches below finish floor and draining away at a minimum half percent slope.
- Do not paint new concrete elements. Do not use salts or chemical snow and ice removals. Gently remove built up snow regularly with plastic or rubber edged tools. Do not let snow accumulations of more than three inches stand on new concrete for more than 24 hours in order to prevent ice from forming.
- Maintain painted wood finishes with periodic cleaning, touch up, and repainting of the finish coat. Do not apply touch up paint or re-finish coats in too heavy of a manner. Avoid dripping or running paint that is applied to heavily. Mask adjacent areas not receiving paint. Do not paint over door and window hardware.
- Clean debris from all downspouts, gutters, and storm drain piping regularly to avoid blockages and build up that may cause these devices to fail.

## **Adaptive Reuse Plan**

Refer to the following first and second floor proposed floor plans illustrating how the structure could be modified and re-used to better serve the Taos County community. The proposed plans work to rehabilitate the original historic spaces of the first and second floor.

# Proposed Floor Plan – First Floor & Site

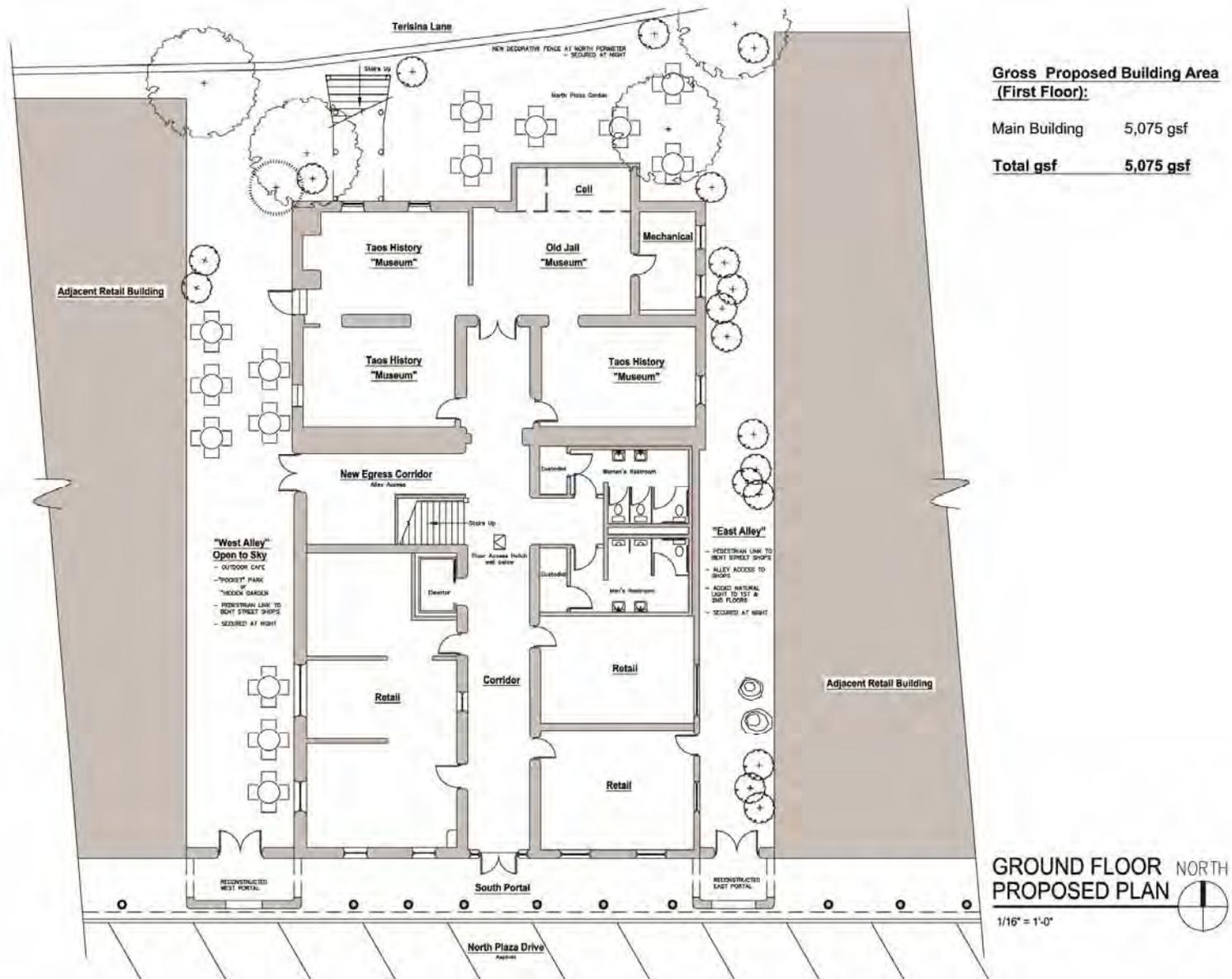


Figure 64. Proposed Floor Plan – First Floor and Site Vicinity

## Proposed Floor Plan – Second Floor

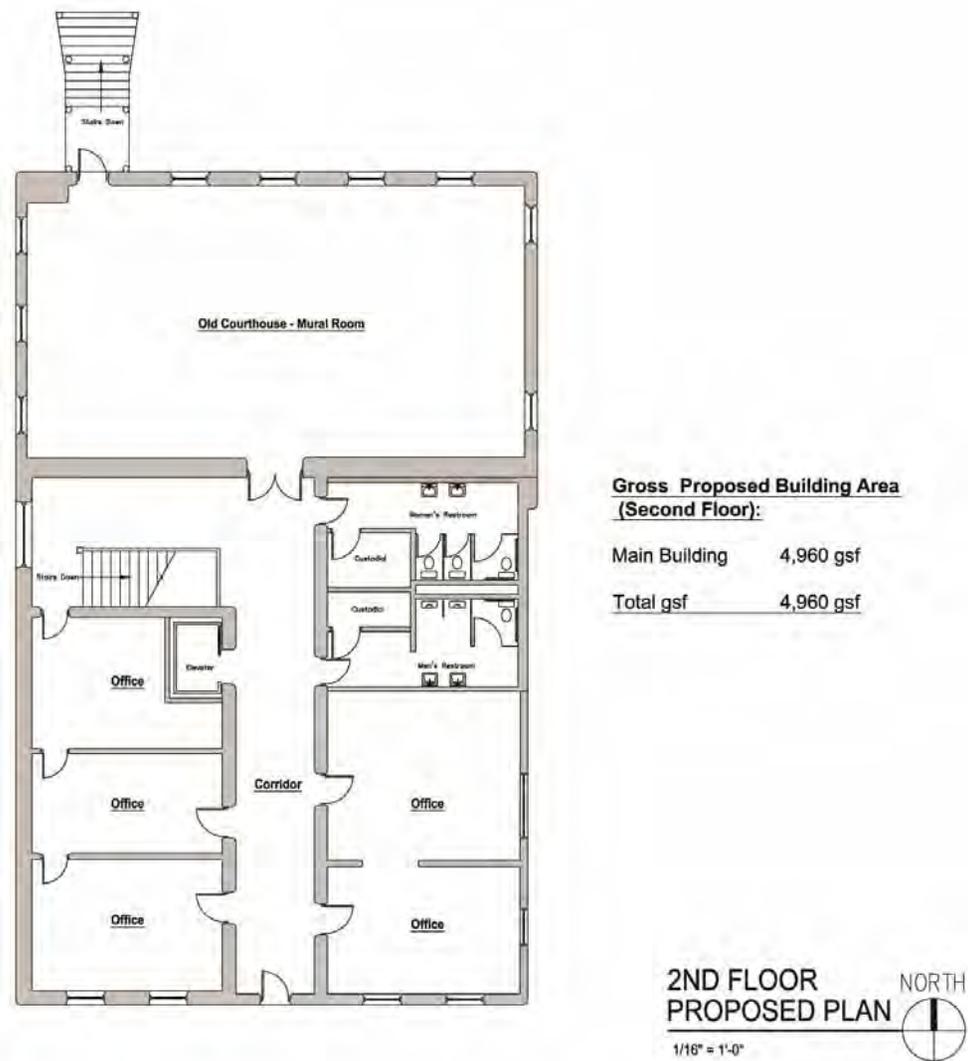


Figure 65. Proposed Floor Plan – Second Floor

# **Part V – Rehabilitation Priorities & Cost Estimate**

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## **Rehabilitation Priorities**

The following is a list of recommended phases which address the highest priority rehabilitation work consistent with the adaptive reuse proposed for the Old Taos County Courthouse. Refer to the Proposed Preservation Plan section of this report for specific details regarding the scope of work and preservation methods.

### **Phase I:**

- Install elevator for mobility impaired access to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- Install public restrooms on both floors
- Interior renovation of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Install mechanical upgrades and new electrical work building wide
- Construction duration = 9 months

### **Phase II:**

- Tear off all roofing and insulation and replace
- Exterior window & door rehabilitation and selective replacement
- Remove east & west infill additions
- Comprehensive exterior rehabilitation of the building
- 2<sup>nd</sup> floor interior renovation
- Rehabilitate south Entry Portal
- Regrade the north alley and install storm water improvements
- Landscape and install hardscaping for new east and west alley areas or “pocket parks”
- Construction duration = 18 months

## Construction Cost Estimate

The following estimates for the probable cost for the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the building assume that the work will be completed by a licensed and bonded contractor with proven experience in the rehabilitation of adobe structures. The work will be through a competitive Request for Proposals in a traditional Design/Bid/Build delivery method. No escalation figures are included since the work is assumed to commence in the near future once funding is obtained. All pricing includes contractor overhead and profit. Professional design fees for the work are excluded but can be assumed to be in the range of 8.5%-10% of the final construction price. Costs exclude New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax. A 10% owner's contingency is included in the estimates because this is schematic design allowing for unanticipated and unforeseen future conditions.

### The following additional assumptions apply to the estimate:

- i. New Mexico gross receipts taxes are not included in the summaries.
- ii. Estimates assume no cost escalations or inflation, and assume construction will occur in 2013-2014 fiscal year.
- iii. General contractors staffing costs, general requirements, and general conditions are included in the summarized costs.
- iv. Costs assume that work shall be performed during regular working hours from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday and assumes no overtime will be required to complete the schedule.
- v. Cost of work includes general contractor and sub-contractor bonding costs.
- vi. Cost of work assumes general contractor and its sub-contractors shall pay prevailing wage rates required by the State of New Mexico performed in Taos, NM.
- vii. Cost of work excludes all furniture, fixtures and equipment.
- viii. Cost of work includes full-time supervision by general contractor and temporary facilities.

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### Estimate of Probable Construction Cost - PHASE 1

Project Element	Area	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Notes
<b>Access for the mobility impaired</b>	unknown	Lump Sum	\$200,000	Access for the mobility impaired to all areas of the building including the original second floor courtroom. Hydraulic elevator.
<b>New Restrooms</b>	1,200gsf	\$185/sf	\$222,000	New restrooms on both floors, that comply with the minimum fixture counts required by the latest building codes
<b>Interiors - 1st Fl.</b>	4,000gsf	\$75/sf	\$300,000	Limited renovation of 1st Floor Spaces - remove non-historic partitions - new partitions - new interior doors & hardware - restored wood flooring, paint, finishes - restored ceilings in public spaces - updated electrical, lighting, phone/IT/data
<b>Hard cost subtotal</b>			<b>\$722,000</b>	Includes all Labor/Materials/Overhead/Profit
<b>Contingency</b>			20%	Owner's Contingency
<b>contingency amount</b>			<b>\$144,400</b>	covers unforeseen conditions if needed
<b>Total Hardcost</b>			<b>\$866,400.00</b>	excludes, NMGR, design & engineering fees

Note: Hard cost includes all labor, materials, overhead, and profit

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### Estimate of Probable Construction Cost - PHASE 2

Project Element	Area/unit	Unit Cost	Item Cost	Notes
<b>Demolish East &amp; West Infill</b>	2,275gsf	\$35/sf	\$79,625	assumes hazardous material abatement is completed by owner under separate contract, and that adjacent buildings are structurally sound and independent
<b>Earthwork</b>	1	Lump sum	\$125,000	regrade north alley, includes storm water improvements, utility work, waste lines
<b>Roofing</b>	4,960	\$18/sf	\$89,280	30 mil EPDM & 8" isocyanurate insulation
<b>New Canales</b>	12	\$750/each	\$9,000	includes downspouts and additional canales
<b>Stucco</b>	14,250sf	\$7.5/sf	\$106,875	extensive demo and repair included, 2 coat system
<b>Portal Repair</b>	1	lumpsum	\$35,000	miscellaneous wood framing, paint
<b>Windows</b>	54	\$1750/ea	\$94,500	restore historic units, replace non-historic with replicas
<b>Doors</b>	32	\$2,500/ea	\$80,000	assumes new custom wood doors, building wide, interior and exterior
<b>Hardscape</b>	4,000sf	\$25/sf	\$100,000	includes stuccoed cmu retaining walls at north alley, concrete portal walkway, decorative concrete pavers @ alleys, and decorative fencing and gates
<b>Landscaping</b>	2,800sf	\$10/sf	\$28,000	alleys only, includes irrigation system
<b>2nd Fl Interior</b>	4,960sf	\$100/sf	\$496,000	restored wood flooring, new plaster, paint
<b>Hard cost subtotal</b>			<b>\$1,243,280</b>	includes all labor/Materials/overhead/profit
<b>Contingency</b>			20%	owner's contingency
<b>Contingency amount</b>			<b>\$846,480</b>	covers unforeseen conditions if needed
<b>Total Hardcost</b>			<b>\$3,333,040.00</b>	excludes, NMGRT, design & engineering fees

Note: Hard costs include all labor, materials, overhead, and profit