

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 16 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Washington County Courthouse
other names/site number: CBD-126

2. Location

street & number: 110 East Main
city, town: Brenham
state: Texas code: 048 county: Washington code: 477
N/A not for publication
N/A vicinity
zip code: 77833

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of Brenham, Texas
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Curtis J. Jernell
Signature of certifying official
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau
Date 9 Feb. 1990

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

Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper
3/29/90
Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions):

Government/Courthouse

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions):

Government/Courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions):

Art Deco

Material (enter categories from instructions):

foundation: Concrete

walls: Stone/Limestone

roof: Built-up

other:

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

[X] See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

[] nationally [X] statewide [] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria []A []B [X]C []D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) []A []B []C []D []E []F []G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture

Politics/Government

Period of Significance:

1939

Significant Dates:

1939

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Significant Person:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Broesche, Travis of Henrick and Lindsley, Inc.

Contractor: Browning, C.L., Jr.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

[X] See continuation sheet

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Continuation Sheet

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7. Description

Constructed in the traditions of the Art Deco style, the Washington County Courthouse combines a smooth limestone veneer with rhythmical metal-sash windows and stylized detailing. The 3 1/2-story structure is composed of geometric building blocks which are arranged symmetrically around a central mass. The courthouse is prominently located in the center of Brenham on the historic courthouse square.

The Washington County Courthouse is a 3 1/2-story structure with a full basement. Built on a concrete slab foundation, it features steel structural components faced with limestone veneer. The classically inspired plan is rectangular, resulting in a symmetrical composition with an elevated central mass flanked by stepped wings.

With its smooth limestone veneer and stylized geometrical detailing, the Washington County Courthouse exhibits features associated with the late Art Deco period. Tension between the vertical thrust of window shafts and horizontal massing marks the symmetrical classically-inspired composition. Detailing includes stylized eagles, decorative light standards, incised geometric reliefs, and metal-sash windows with dark marble spandrels.

Centrally sited in its square, the courthouse exhibits austere axial facades. The principal (north and south) facades consist of symmetrically stepped rectangular blocks with flat roofs. Symmetrically arranged 2- and 3-story blocks front the central 3 1/2-story block. Centered on each elevation, 5-bay entry blocks project slightly. Double-door entries are characterized by large transoms, geometric metal detailing, and dark marble surrounds. Entry stairs feature low stone walls with decorative light standards. Vertical emphasis is lent to the composition by bays of metal-sash windows linked with dark marble spandrels. Incised linear motifs visually continue lines of the windows to the parapets, where denticulated banding alludes to classical detailing. Centered above entries, stylized clocks appear below this incised banding. Two-story blocks with voluted corners flank each entry block and provide visual transition with the side elevations.

The side (east and west) elevations are characterized by similar treatment. Narrower than those on the principal facades, projecting entry blocks rise four stories and contain only three ribbon window components. Access is gained via the basement level, with the visual focus provided by dark marble entry surrounds surmounted by metal eagles. Detailing corresponds to that on the principal facades.

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Interior spaces and detailing remain largely intact. The plan is organized around central axial corridors with marble wainscoting and terrazzo floors. Circulating stairs in the east and west ends of the structure provide access to the upper floors and feature curvilinear aluminum balustrades. The high-ceilinged district courtroom occupies the top story-and-a-half of the central block. Although not visible from the street, clerestory windows light the courtroom. Original furniture, a wood wainscot, and a decorative ceiling with geometric floral motifs grace the space.

A modern gazebo is at the southwest corner of the square; no significant monuments or markers are on the square.

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8. Significance

The Washington County Courthouse (1939) is eligible under Criterion C for being the major building in Brenham in the Art Deco style. It is eligible under Criterion A for its role in the government and politics of Washington County. The property is associated with the local context "Community Development and Regional Expansion, 1870-1941."

The Washington County Courthouse is the fourth courthouse. Previous courthouses were constructed in 1844, 1852, and 1883. This building was built with Works Progress Administration assistance in 1939 under the direction of C.L. Browning, Jr., as contractor. Travis Broesche of Henrick and Lindsley, Inc., served as architect.

This property is one of the few buildings in Brenham designed in the Art Deco style. It retains its architectural integrity and is a good example of the style.

In addition to its architectural significance, the Washington County Courthouse serves as the center of county government and as a visible reminder of local government. For these reasons, it is recognized for its role in the government and politics of Washington County.

(See historic context for more information on this property.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

See bibliography of context statement

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
 preliminary determination of individual listing
(36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey #
 recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record #

Primary location of additional data:
 State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository:

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, TX

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property: less than one

UTM References:

A 1/4 / 750/640 333 /9960
Zone Easting Northing
C / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

B / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing
D / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description: Washington Square (courthouse square) City of Brenham, Texas.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes the nominated property and entire city
block that historically has been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dwayne Jones/Preservation Planner date: 1984; 1989
organization: (with assistance from Sally Victor) telephone: 512/463-6094
street & number: Texas Historical Commission state: TX zip code: 78701
city or town: 1511 Colorado, Austin

2/14/90

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Brenham ~~COUNTY~~ MPS Washington County, TEXAS

DATE LISTED

21. Southern Pacific Railroad Freight Depot
Substantive Review

3/29/90

22. St. Mary's Catholic Church
Substantive Review

3/29/90

23. Synagogue B'nai Abraham
Substantive Review

3/29/90

24. US Post Office--Federal Building--Brenham

3/29/90

25. Washington County Courthouse
Substantive Review

3/29/90

26. Wood-Hughes House

3/29/90

27. Schmidt House

Substantive Review

12/10/90

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90000447

Date Listed:

Washington County Courthouse
Property Name

Washington
County

TX
State

Brenham MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

3/29/90
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Statement of Significance: The Washington County Courthouse is significant in the area of Politics/Government. National Register Criterion A should be checked.

This information was confirmed with Dwayne Jones of the Texas SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Washington County Courthouse
NAME:

MULTIPLE Brenham MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Washington

DATE RECEIVED: 2/16/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/27/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/15/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/02/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000447

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/29/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Washington County Courthouse is significant as representative of the
key role the county seat played in the history of Brenham, Texas. A
brilliantly version of the Art Deco style, it also is significant as representative
of this rare style in the community.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accurate
REVIEWER Antoinette Lee
DISCIPLINE Historian
DATE 3/27/90

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

CLASSIFICATION

___ count ___ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___ historic ___ current

DESCRIPTION

___ architectural classification
___ materials
___ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- ___ summary paragraph
- ___ completeness
- ___ clarity
- ___ applicable criteria
- ___ justification of areas checked
- ___ relating significance to the resource context
- ___ relationship of integrity to significance
- ___ justification of exception
- ___ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___ acreage ___ verbal boundary description
___ UTM's ___ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___ sketch maps ___ USGS maps ___ photographs ___ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



WASHINGTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE (CBD-#126)

BREHAM, TEXAS

WILLIAM BEAN

1984

NEGATIVE ON FILE - TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

CAMERA FACING SOUTH

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500628