

YANKTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE



Location: 410 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

Date: Constructed in 1974, dedicated in 1975 (addition in 2006-2008).

Architect: Duffy & Associates of Yankton (for the original building); Architecture Inc. of Sioux Falls (for the addition).

Description: The Yankton County Courthouse and Safety Center consists of a two-story cement block building faced with brick in a flat roofed modern style. The building has office space for courts and courtrooms on the second floor and the jail and law enforcement offices on the first floor. The original building was designed by Glen Mannes of Duffy & Associates of Yankton and built by Keller Construction at a cost of \$810,000. The addition which is currently being added (2006-2008) continues the original plan with court offices and three courtrooms on the second floor and law enforcement offices on the first floor with the addition of a two-story jail on the east side. The addition was designed by Architecture Incorporated of Sioux Falls and is being built by Welfl Construction Co. at an estimated cost of \$8 million.

History: Yankton County was established by the first territorial legislature in 1862 and organized on June 2, 1862. The first formal election was held in Yankton in September of that year but it was not until 1876 that a courthouse was built to house the county offices and records. The Territorial Supreme Court and both houses of the Dakota Territorial Legislature also met in the original courthouse at various times. It is still standing at 500 Douglas Avenue where it was used as the Odd Fellows Hall and is now a rental apartment building. When the county outgrew that building there was a countywide election in the fall of 1902 which authorized the issuance of bonds for a new courthouse.

The bond issue passed but construction was delayed for a year due to a dispute about the location. Eventually a site at the southeast corner of Third and Broadway Streets was donated to the county and building began. The construction moved slowly due to the death of both the architect and the contractor and controversy about the quality of the workmanship. Those concerns proved to be founded and by the 1970's there were concerns with the structural integrity of the third floor where the courtrooms and court offices were located.

All of the court offices and courtrooms were moved out of the 1905 courthouse and into the Yankton Public Safety Center (now Yankton County Courthouse and Safety Center) at 410 Walnut Street in 1975. The entire 1905 courthouse was determined to be unsafe in 2005 and the new Yankton County Government Center was built just south of the existing structure to house the remaining county offices, and the 1905 courthouse was then demolished.