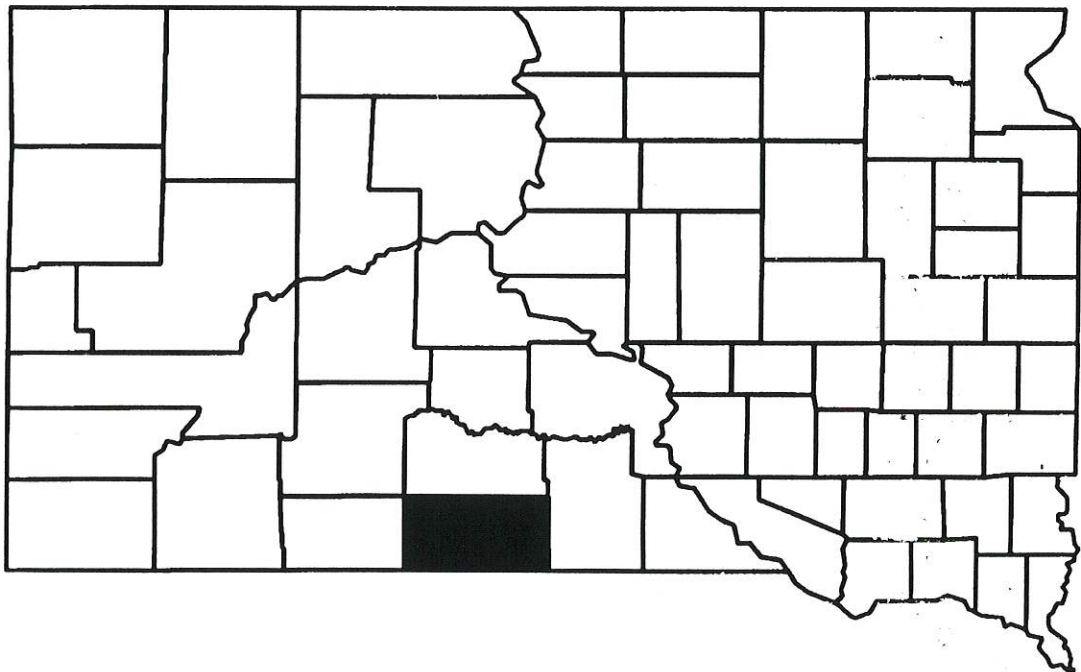


# Community Wide Activities

## Section 1, Lesson 1



## Landscape

St. Francis Mission • St. Francis, South Dakota





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## LANDSCAPE-St. Francis Mission

**Objective:** Introduce the concept of landscape.

**Method:** Compare and contrast a variety of landscapes.

**Background:** If you flew over South Dakota in an airplane 200 years ago, it would look much different than it does today. There would be no gridwork of section roads, shelterbelts, railroad tracks, stock dams or buildings like the ones people use today. South Dakota's original landscape was a largely treeless plain with short prairie grasses in West River and longer grasses East River.

An aerial view is a good way to examine a landscape. All landscapes have natural and manmade features. The natural features will, to some extent, dictate and influence the placement of manmade features.

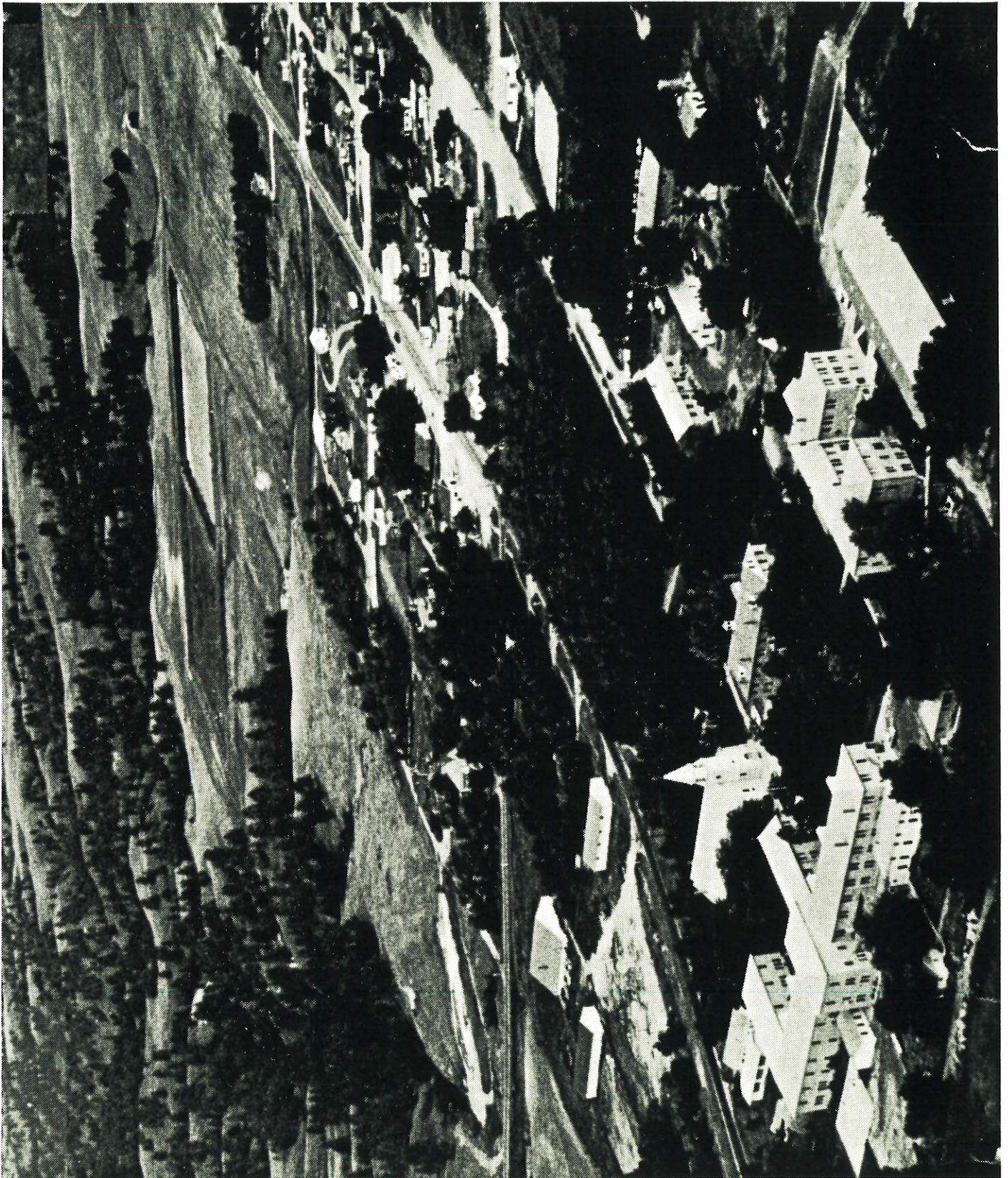
The aerial photograph of St. Francis, the Catholic mission on the Rosebud Sioux reservation, shows how the mission landscape is different from the surrounding Todd County landscape. The 26 building mission complex is located in the lower left corner. It was started in 1885 and almost entirely rebuilt after a disastrous 1916 fire. All the major buildings surround a courtyard with the smaller ones on the perimeter. The complex includes a church, dormitories, barns and a museum. As part of the mission's development, numerous shade trees were planted and fields were plowed.

An important aspect of St. Francis is its continuity in rhythm and scale. The four major buildings are all about the same height and have the same construction method and exterior color. Their stylistic features are similar and symmetrical. All in all, the mission shows planning and buildings are grouped in specific units for use and size.

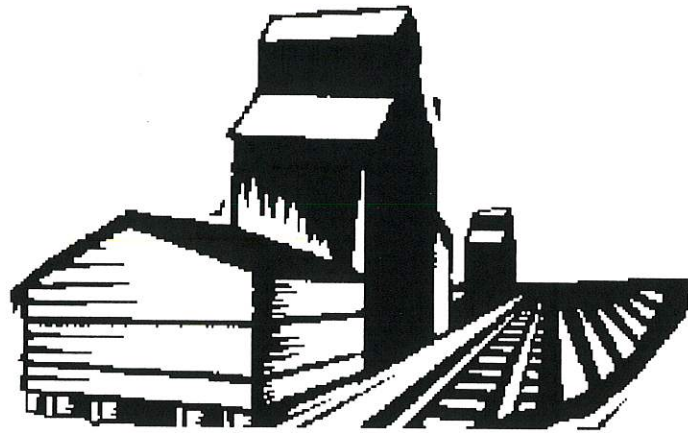
**Materials:** aerial photo of St. Francis, aerial photos or maps of town from different years

**Procedure:** Have students examine aerial photo of St. Francis. How does the mission area in the lower left corner differ from the town in the upper right and the natural landscape in the top part of the photo? Using the photos, maps or imagination have the class try to describe and/or sketch the town landscape 200 years ago, 100 years ago, 50 years ago and 50 years in the future. Do the same for the rural landscape surrounding your town. List the new manmade features that appear in each landscape. What can be learned by studying old maps and aerial views that may be valuable in planning the town's future growth?



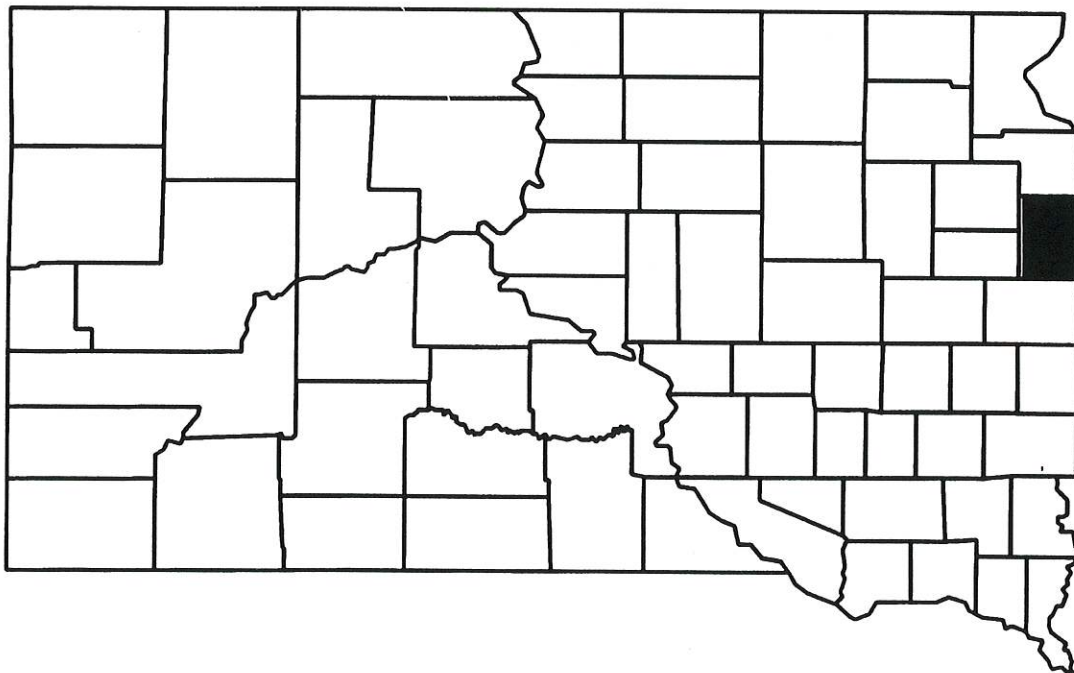






# Community Wide Activities

## Section 1, Lesson 2



### Town Identity

School for the Blind • Gary, South Dakota





## TOWN IDENTITY-School for the Blind

**Objective:** Help students better understand the history and identity of their town.

**Method:** Students will research and discuss the creation of their community and the early events and buildings that established its identity.

**Background:** Although the South Dakota School for the Blind, established in 1899 in Gary, South Dakota, was a state institution, it helped define and support the local community. The complex consists of four main brick buildings, three farm barns and several outbuildings. Thirty to thirty-five students lived at the complex. The National Register nomination states, “Advocated by a prominent local publisher, the school was nurtured by the local community and was a vital part of the social and economic environment in Gary.” When Gary lost a county seat battle with Clear Lake in 1894, they were left with an empty wood frame courthouse. The city offered to donate this building to the state of South Dakota if the School for the Blind was awarded to Gary. Wary of the fire dangers a wood frame building posed, state officials agreed to “a deal ...whereby the city would construct and donate to the state a new brick building, and in return the state would establish a school for the blind in Gary.”

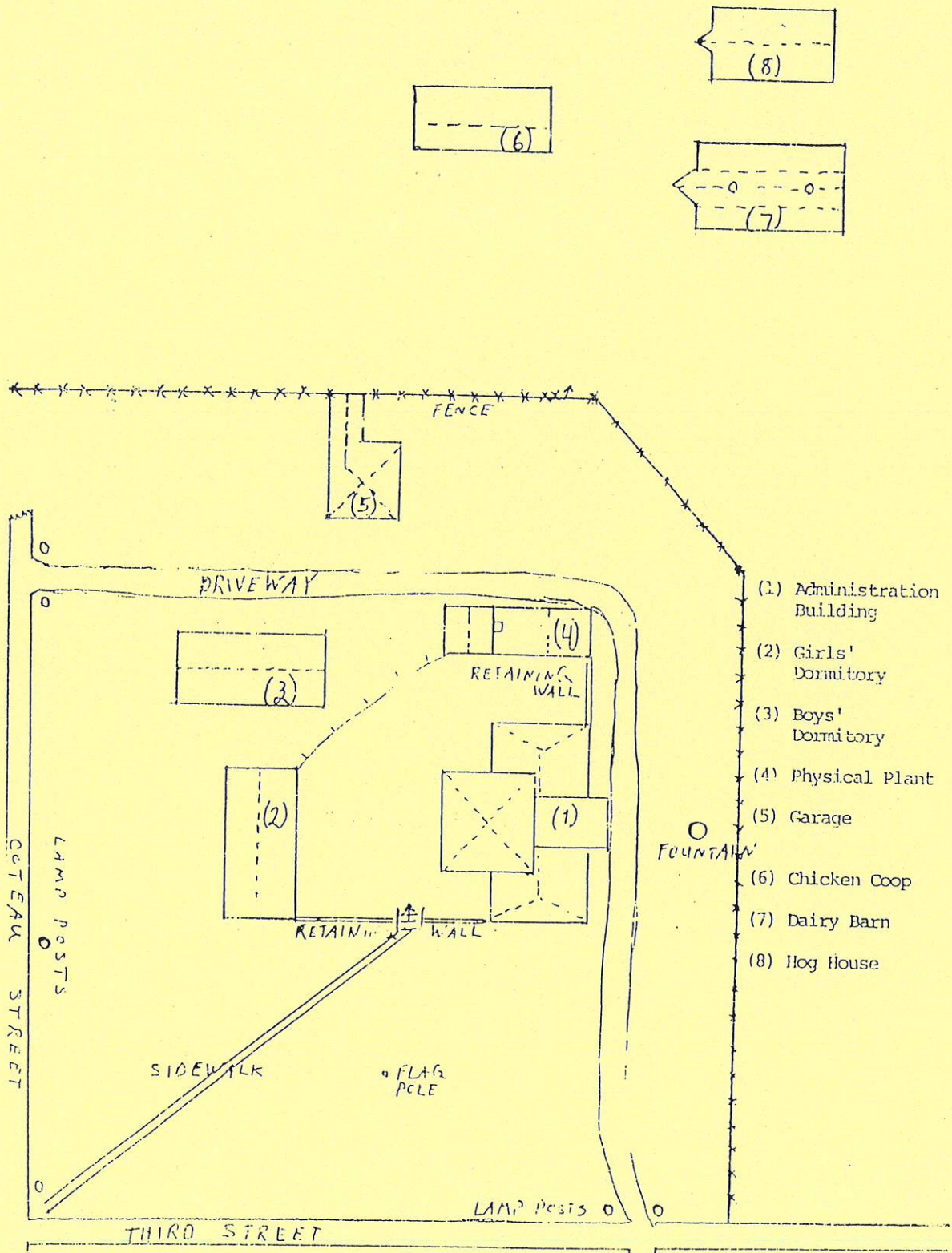
The National Register nomination summarizes the relationship between the school and the Gary community.

The local community always supported the school and its activities. It was a source of cultural activity and personal income for citizens of the small town. Students were often invited into private homes when severe winter weather did not permit them to go home for the holidays. Naturally, Gary did not welcome the idea of moving the school, when it was proposed by Superintendent Hack in the late 1950s. In fact two years of heated debate erupted before the school was officially moved to Aberdeen amid disappointment and hard feelings.

**Materials:** Local history source such as a county history book, brochure published by local historical society or historic preservation commission or a local history buff willing to make a class visit.

**Procedure:** Ask students what they know about the town’s beginnings. When was it founded? Why did people establish a community here? Did the railroad pass through? Was a state institution located in town? What structures remain from these early industries and institutions? For example, if your town was established by a railroad, is the depot still standing? Make a list of these early industries and their structural remains. Discuss what industries and institutions are important to and help define your town today. Make a list of these and their associated structures. Compare the 2 lists. Should the community be concerned if there are no structural reminders of a town’s early years? Does this mean there is absolutely no physical evidence of the past? (No, the archeological record is still present unless the ground has been disturbed.)





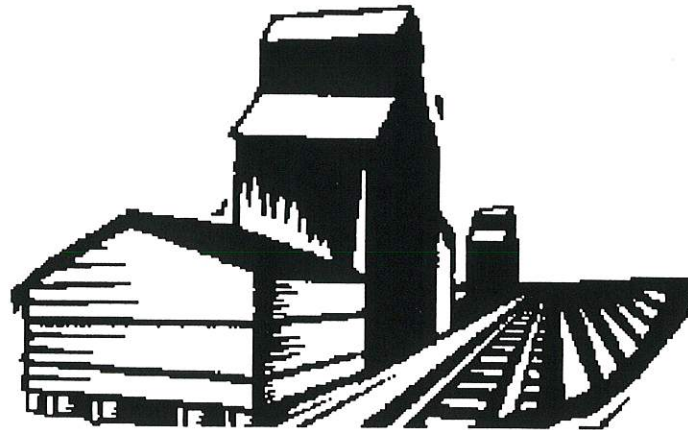
- (1) Administration Building
- (2) Girls' Dormitory
- (3) Boys' Dormitory
- (4) Physical Plant
- (5) Garage
- (6) Chicken Coop
- (7) Dairy Barn
- (8) Hog House

Site Plan - School for the Blind

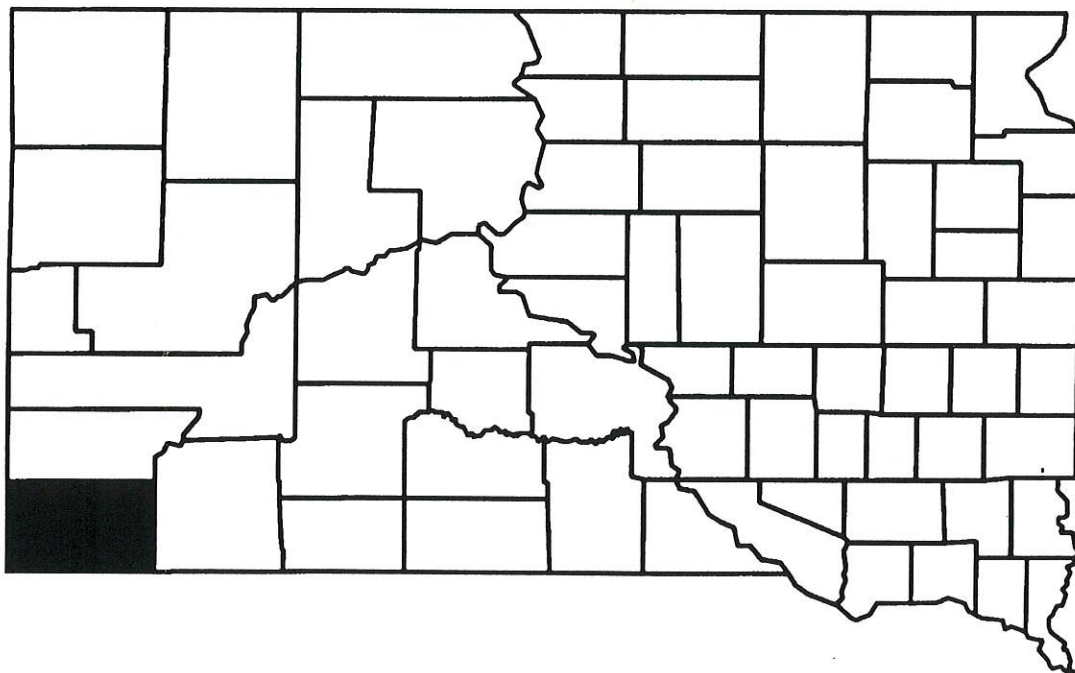








## Community Wide Activities Section 1, Lesson 3



# Historic Photograph Detectives

Evan's Hotel • Hot Springs, South Dakota





## HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH DETECTIVES-Evans Hotel

**Objective:** Explore what architecture and historic documents can tell about a particular place.

**Method:** Students are challenged to extract as much information as possible from historic photos and improve their observation skills.

**Background:** Figure 1 shows the Evans Hotel, a massive structure built in the 1890s and located in Hot Springs, South Dakota, in the southern Black Hills. Similar to many historic buildings in Hot Springs, the Evans Hotel is made of local reddish pink sandstone. Hot Springs was the center of a thriving health spa industry in the late 19th and early 20th century. Families combined cures and pleasure trips to this picturesque community.

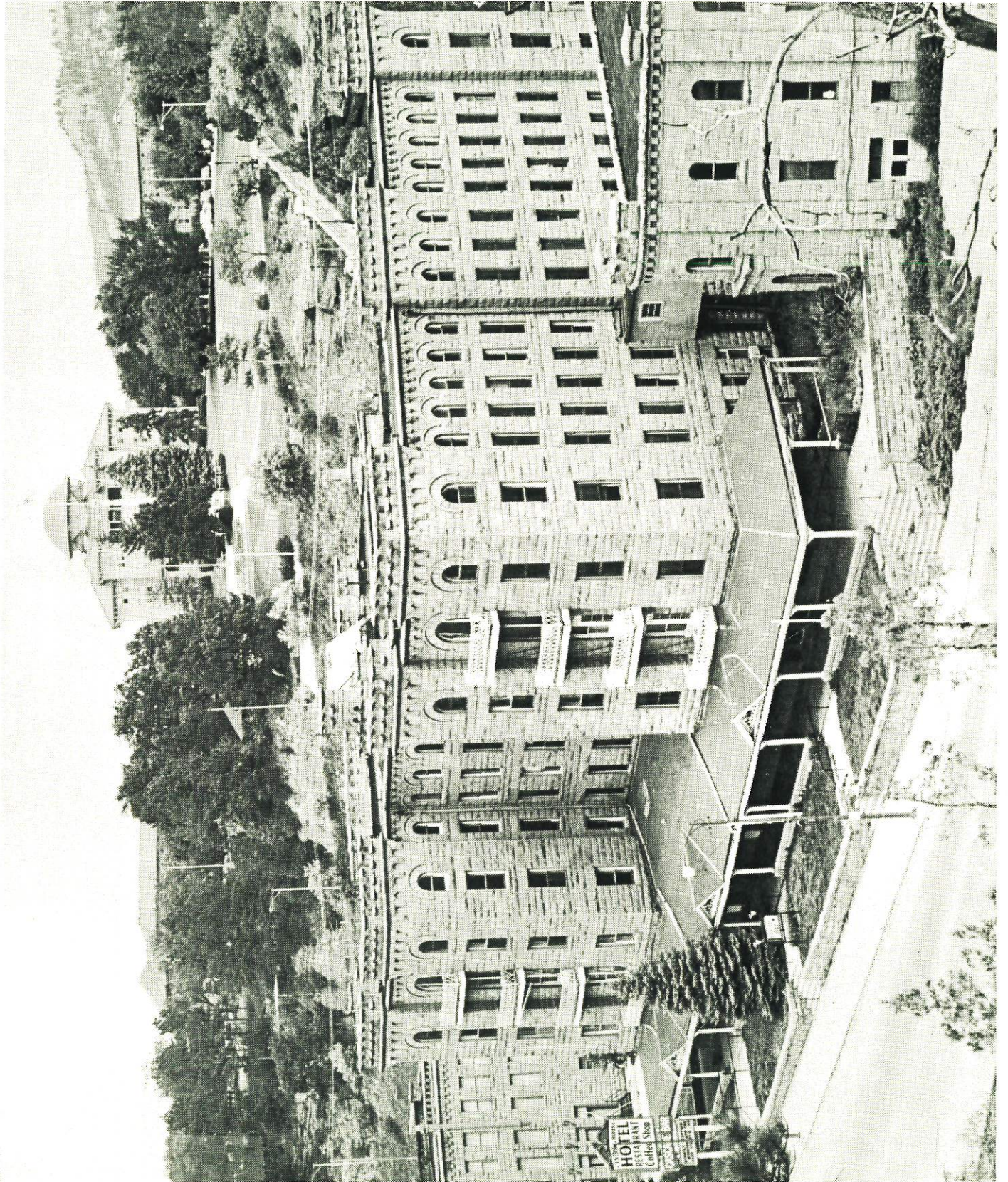
**Materials:** photo of Evans Hotel, historic photos of your community

**Procedure:** Let the class closely examine the photo. Ask them to imagine they are museum curators who are trying to locate and date this photo. All of the original photo label has rubbed off except a line that says "South Dakota". Ask them to look for clues in the picture that can help them identify the place and possibly the date when the photo was taken. For example, what does the landscape tell us about the region of South Dakota shown in the photo? Things that can help place and date a photo include background landscape or landmarks, building materials, signs, clothing and hairstyles, cars and architectural styles. What written and human resources could students consult to help determine the location of the photo? Using these clues, ask the class to identify the approximate place and date of the local historic photos. You may want to have the class go to the approximate location and try to identify the spot where the photographer stood.

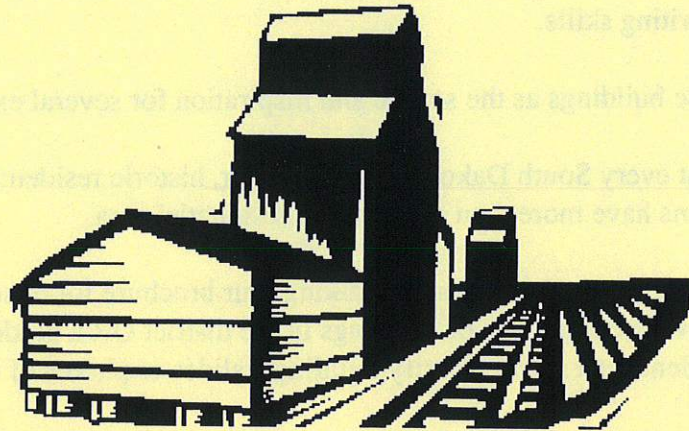


Evans Hotel illustration by Peder Vagle from *Historic Sites of SD-A Guidebook*, published in 1980 by SD Historical Preservation Center and USD Business Research Bureau, Vermillion. SD



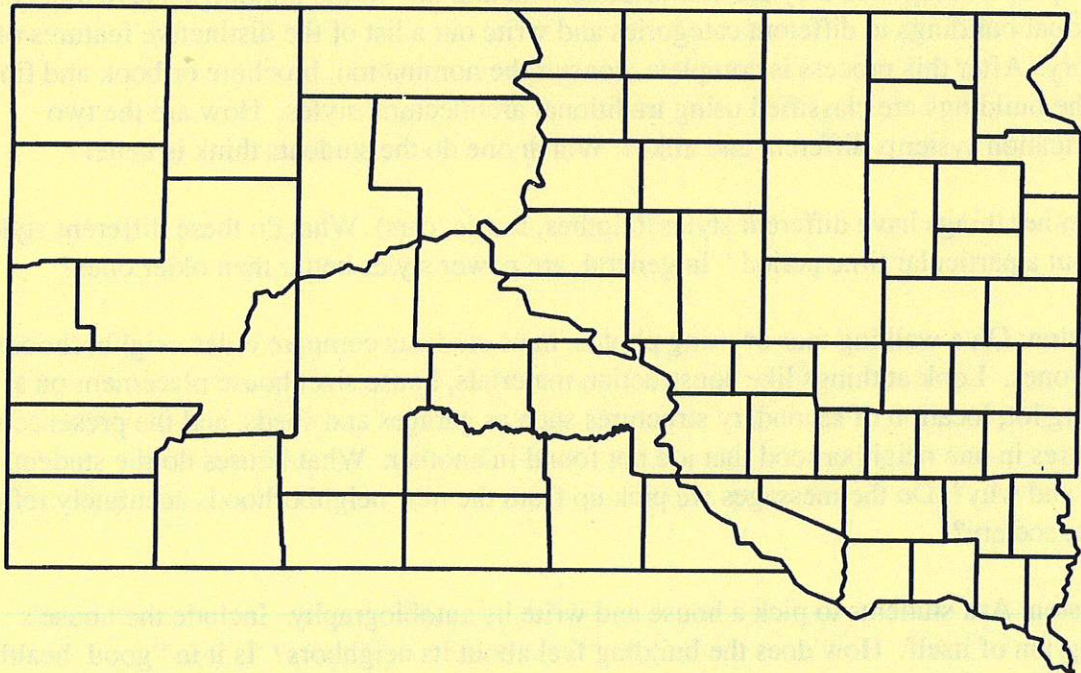






# Community Wide Activities

## Section 1, Lesson 4



# Discovering Historic Neighborhoods

Local Historic District





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## DISCOVERING HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS-Local Historic District

**Objective:** Develop students' appreciation of local historic resources; strengthen observation, classification and writing skills.

**Method:** Use historic buildings as the source and inspiration for several exercises.

**Background:** Almost every South Dakota town has older, historic residential and commercial sections. Some towns have more than one historic residential area.

**Materials:** National Register nomination or walking tour brochure for historic district in your town that lists the architectural style of buildings in the district OR a guide to architectural styles that teacher and students can use to classify buildings, slides or photos of historic buildings in the district

**Procedure:** Identify an old neighborhood in your town. A local historic preservation commission will be able to tell you where the town's historic districts are. They may be able to provide you with copies of the National Register nomination for the historic district that lists the architectural style of the buildings within the district.

Take the students on a walk around the district or show slides/photos of the buildings in class. Tell the students they need to devise a classification scheme for the buildings. It can be based on anything that relates to the buildings such as roof shape, building size or color. Let the students come up with categories they are comfortable with and that fit the buildings. Have them assign individual buildings to different categories and write out a list of the distinctive features of each category. After this process is complete, consult the nomination, brochure or book and find out how the buildings are classified using traditional architectural styles. How are the two classification systems different and alike? Which one do the students think is better?

What other things have different styles?(clothes, music, cars) What do these different styles tell us about a particular time period? In general, are newer styles better than older ones?

**Extension:** On a walking tour or using photos, have students compare older neighborhoods with newer ones. Look at things like construction materials, house size, house placement on a building lot, location of secondary structures such as garages and sheds, and the presence of structures in one neighborhood that are not found in another. What houses do the students like better and why? Do the messages we pick up from the new neighborhoods accurately reflect our current society?

**Extension:** Ask students to pick a house and write its autobiography. Include the house's description of itself. How does the building feel about its neighbors? Is it in "good health" or does it need repairs?

**Extension:** Have students design a house that has a specific personality. For example, its structure might somehow reflect its interests and hobbies.





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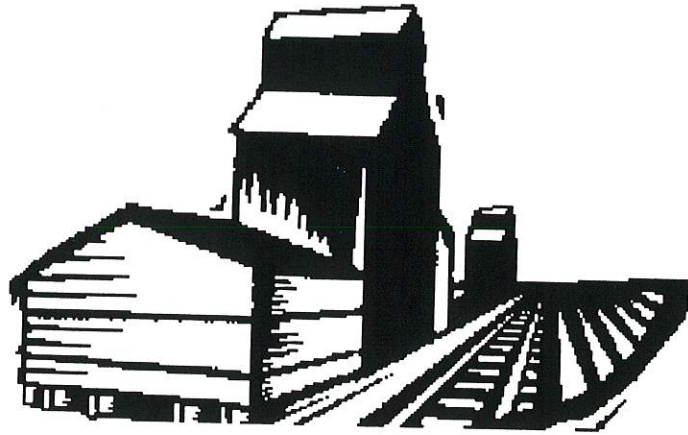
Local Historic Districts in South Dakota Listed on the National Register of Historic Places  
(as of April, 1996)

Aberdeen Commercial Historic District  
Aberdeen Highlands Historic District  
All Saints Historic District in Sioux Falls  
Armour Historic District  
Brookings Commercial Historic District  
Brookings Commercial Historic District  
Bell Fourche Commercial Historic District  
Campbell Park Historic District in Huron  
Deadwood Historic District  
Dell Rapids Historic District  
Forest Avenue Historic District in Vermillion  
Fort Meade Historic District  
Geddes Historic District  
Hot Springs Historic District  
Lead Historic District  
Madison Historic District  
McKennon Park Historic District in Sioux Falls  
Mitchell Commercial Historic District  
Rapid City Commercial Historic District  
Rapid City West Boulevard Historic District  
Scotland Residential District  
Sioux Falls Downtown Historic District  
Sioux Falls Historic District (St. Joseph's Cathedral District)  
Spearfish Historic District  
Vermillion Historic District  
Watertown Commercial Historic District  
Yankton Residential Historic District  
Yankton Commercial Historic District



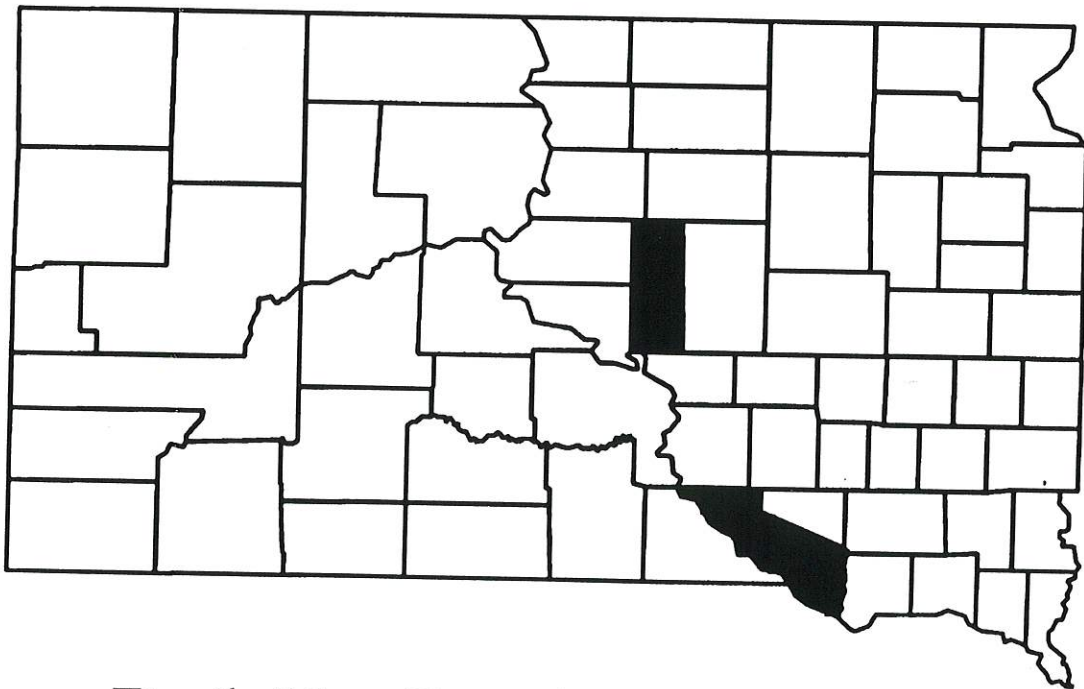






# Community Wide Activities

## Section 1, Lesson 5



# Public Buildings and Town History

South Dakota County Courthouses

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PLACES WORTH EXPLORING





## PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND TOWN HISTORY-South Dakota County Courthouses

**Objective:** Students will learn what architecture can tell them about their community's history.

**Method:** Students will discuss and construct a time line of one public building type in their community.

**Background:** Most South Dakota public buildings such as city halls, libraries, fire stations, police stations, community centers and schools are second or third generation structures. New towns usually built small wood frame or brick buildings to house their public organizations. Some communities rented space in a downtown commercial building or bought an existing building for their public offices. As a town grew, it could afford to build larger, more permanent homes for these organizations. Second generation buildings were usually built of cut stone or brick. A town may even have a third generation, modern version of a public building that is one story for accessibility purposes. It probably lacks some of the decorative detail of first and second generation buildings and is made of modern materials such as metal panels, asphalt shingles, concrete block and vinyl siding. Few South Dakota communities still have all the "versions" of a particular public building type still standing.

County courthouses provide good examples of public building evolution in South Dakota. Many early county courthouses were wood frame or brick structures built in a late 19th century architectural style. The Old Hyde County Courthouse, pictured in Figure 1, is an example of a first generation county courthouse in the Second Empire style. Originally built in 1892 as a hotel, the building was purchased by the county in 1893 after the original courthouse burned. It served as the county judicial seat until 1911 when it was replaced by a multistory, stone courthouse that occupies an entire block.

The Charles Mix County Courthouse (Figures 2-4) is a second generation courthouse built in 1917 in the Prairie School style. The original county courthouse was a wood frame structure built in 1881 for \$2,000 and located in Wallace, a small town on the Missouri River and the original county seat. The battle for the county seat is summarized in the National Register nomination for the County Courthouse.

Charles Mix was one of many South Dakota counties which engaged in a spirited "county seat war" during its developing years. The county's settlement pattern changed dramatically during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, shifting somewhat away from the Missouri River and towards a railroad branch line which had been constructed through the county beginning in 1890. Consequently, the town of Wheeler remained a tiny hamlet, while the communities of Lake Andes, Wagner, Platte and Geddes were increasing in size and importance. The first attempts to move the county seat from Wheeler were made by Geddes, which tried unsuccessfully to obtain the seat in 1900, 1904 and 1908. Later elections saw Lake Andes and Wagner enter the fray, and Lake Andes finally prevailed in 1916. The night following the official canvas of the 1916 county seat election, Lake Andes residents secured their hold on the seat by dispatching a 30 vehicle motor caravan to Wheeler to obtain the county records.





Charles Mix County spent \$150,000 (a relatively large amount for the time) on its new courthouse which was started in May, 1917 and finished in October 1918. It was architect designed in the latest architectural style, the Prairie School. As the site plan in Figure 4 shows, it occupies an entire block, typical of second generation courthouses. Figure 3 reveals the building's rich interior detail.

Materials: Copies of historic photos

Procedure: If your community has several "generations" of a public building type standing, bring students to each one. If your community only has the latest version of the building type you want to work on, find some historic photos of the earlier "versions" and make photocopies. Good places to look for historic photos include a county history book, local historical society or museum, the library, the walls of the local cafe or in the public buildings themselves. Many modern public buildings contain photos of their historic predecessors.

After the students have looked at the photos or visited the buildings, discuss the physical similarities and differences. Have the students attempt to determine the order of construction. Discuss events in community history, such as a county seat war, that are related to the buildings. With the students' help, create a time line on the board showing important construction dates and related community events. Ask students what "feeling" or "message" they think the building's architect or builder was trying to convey. For example, the architects and builders of second generation county courthouses used multistory construction and placement of the building on an entire block to emphasize the economic success of the county and the importance of the judicial and administrative functions carried out in the building. Ask students which version of the public building type they like best and why.



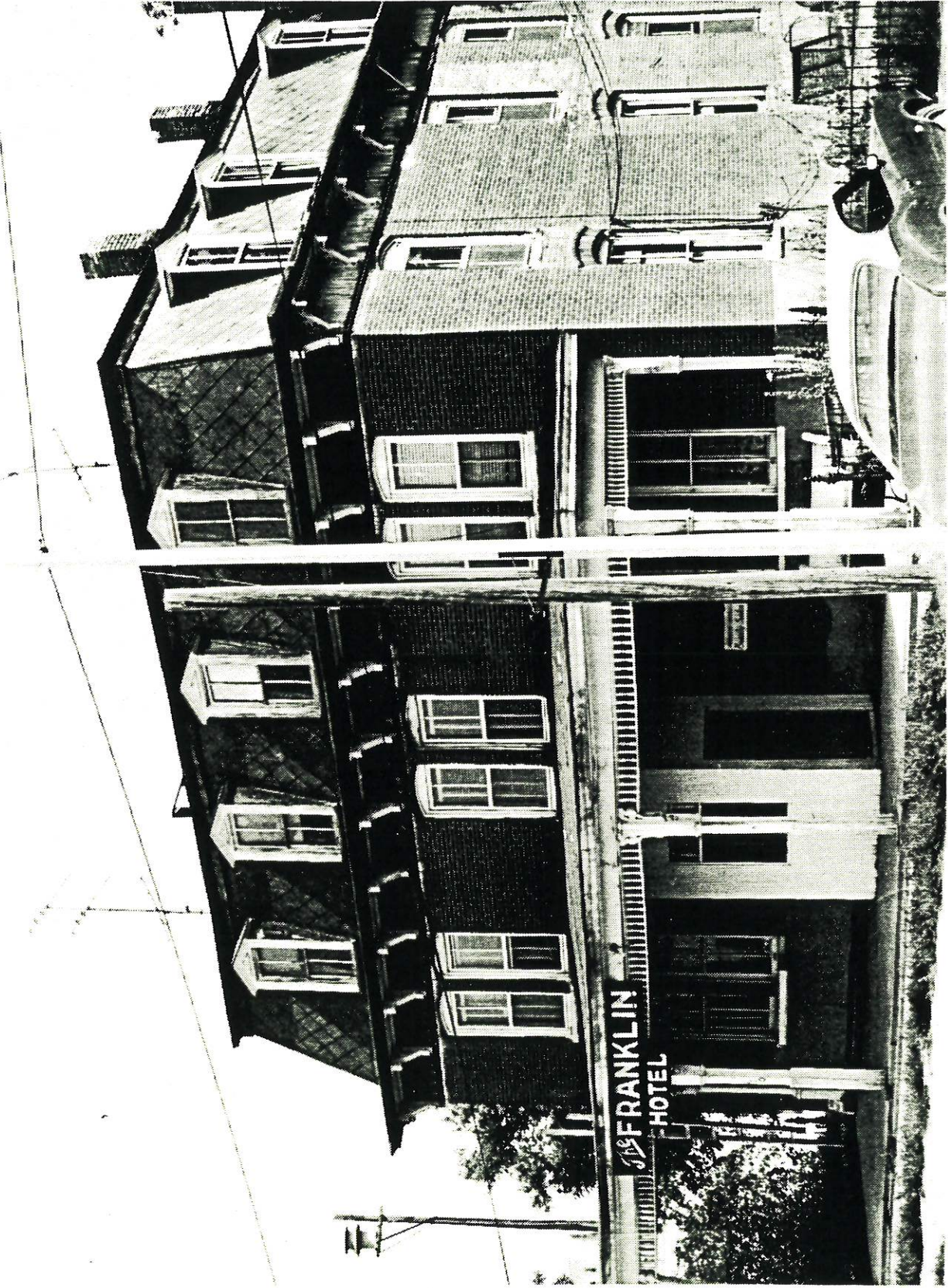


Figure 1-Old Hyde County Courthouse



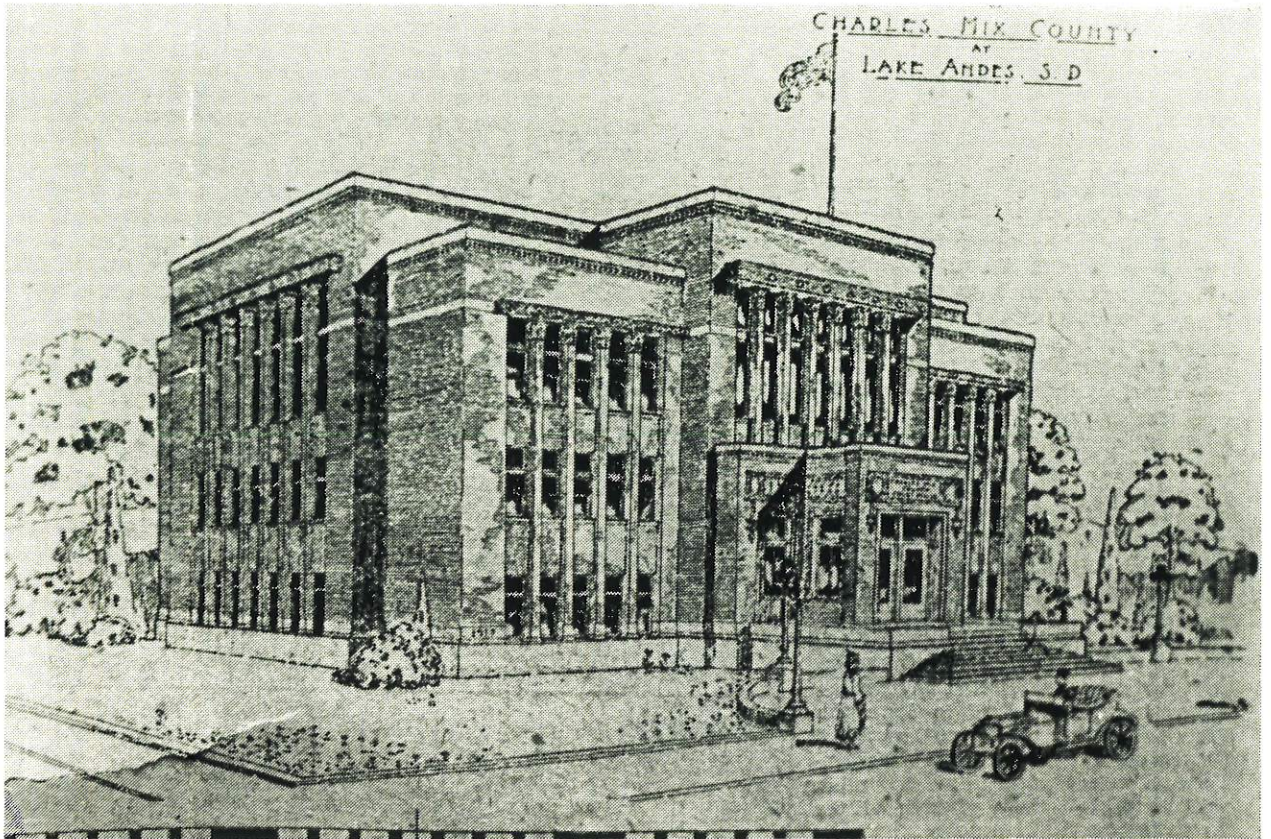
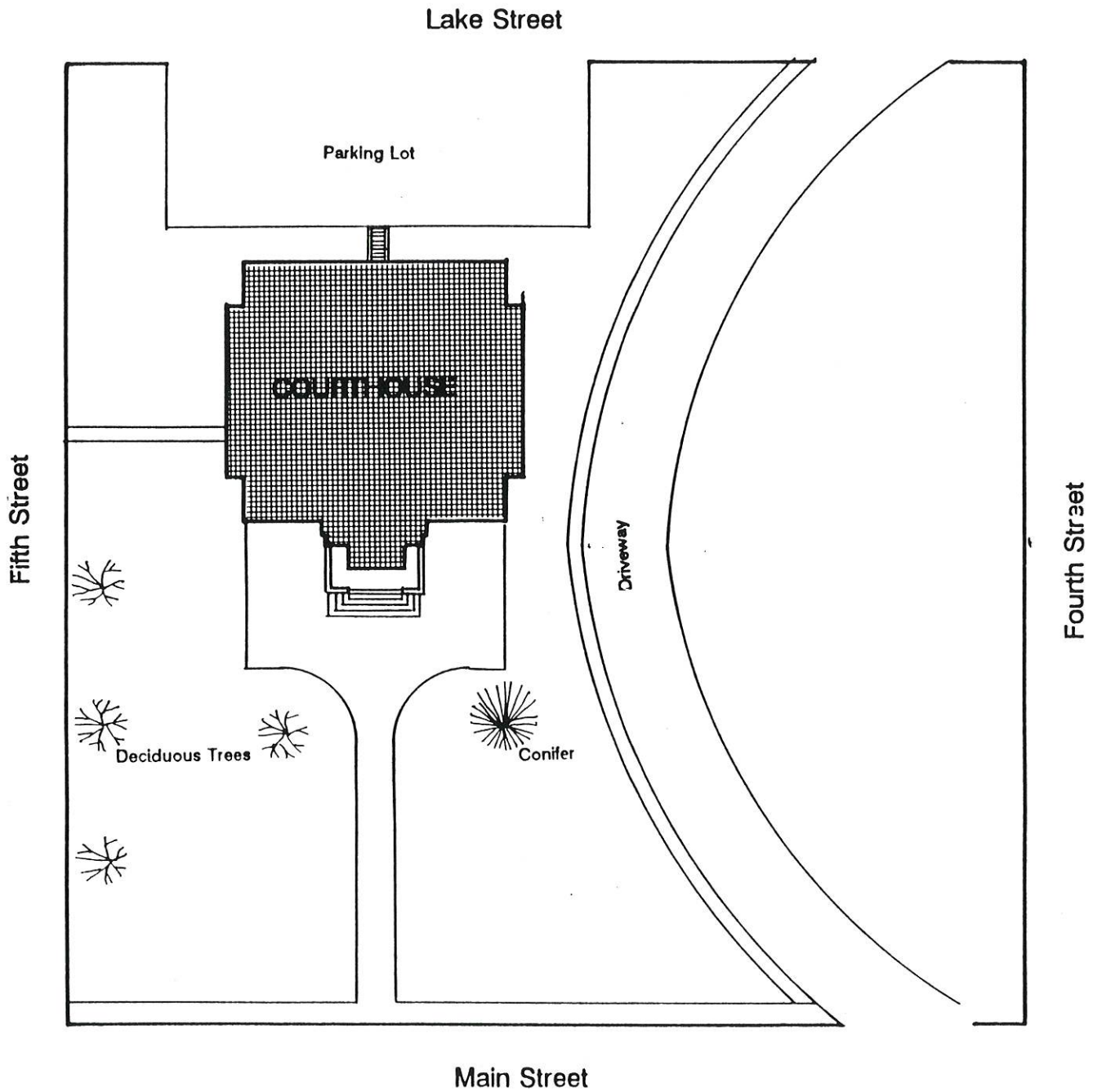


Figure 2 - Charles Mix County Courthouse



Figure 3 - Charles Mix County Courthouse Interior





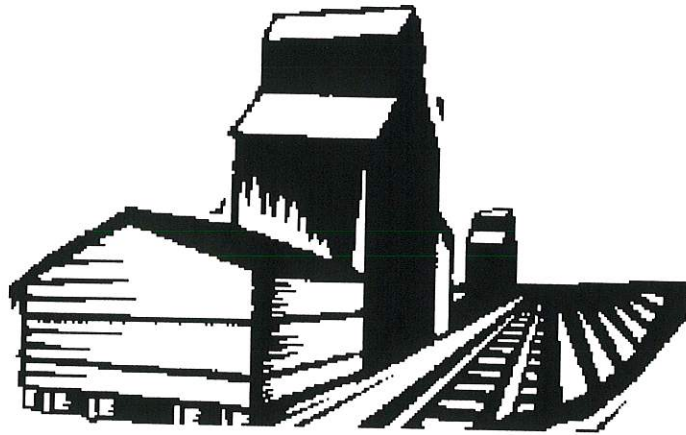
Scale: 1" = 50'

**CHARLES MIX COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
 Lake Andes, South Dakota

All of Block 26 - Original Townsite

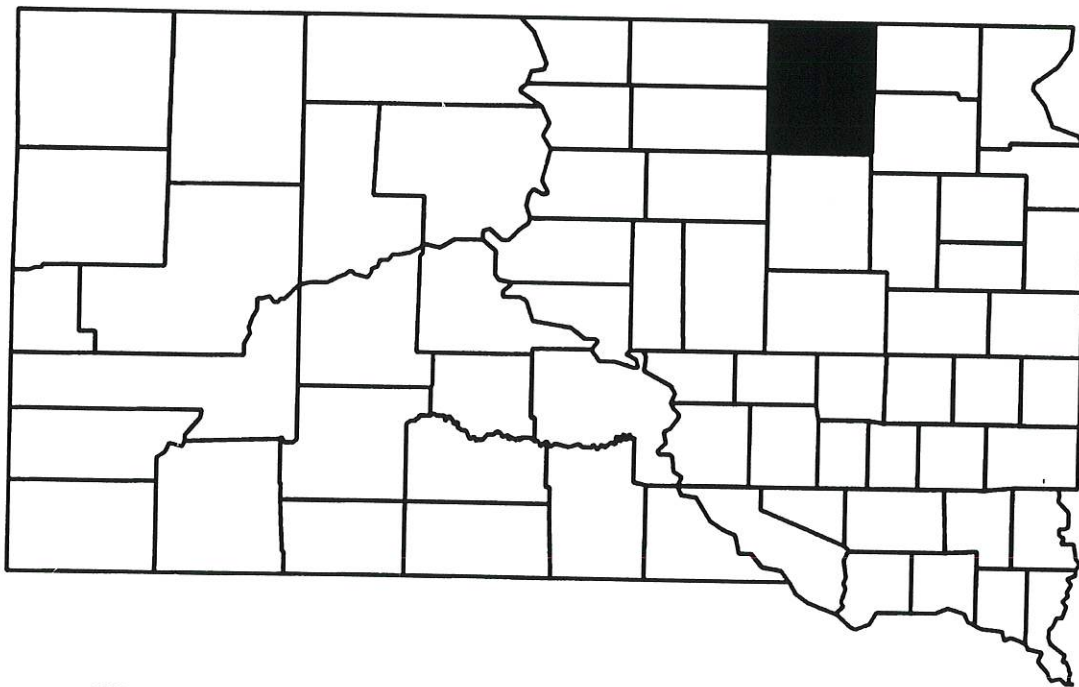
Figure 4 - Charles Mix County Courthouse Site Plan





# Community Wide Activities

## Section 1, Lesson 6



# Community Parks and Recreation

Wylie Park Pavilion • Aberdeen, South Dakota





## COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION-Wylie Park Pavilion

**Objective:** Students will consider why a community's recreational spaces are important and how these spaces have changed over time.

**Method:** Students will either visit or view snapshots of a community park. They will discuss the types of structures found in the park and make suggestions for future improvements and additions to the site.

**Background:** Originally built in 1907-1908 and expanded in the 1920s, the National Register listed Wylie Park Pavilion in Aberdeen is one of the earliest community recreation sites in South Dakota. The pavilion was mainly used as a summer facility. It has many screened windows, a large open dance floor, a stage and several counters used as concession stands. The Pavilion hosted many community events including public dances. The bandleader Lawrence Welk played at the Pavilion in 1936.

Many community parks in South Dakota contain historic structures such as the Wylie Park Pavilion. Examples of these structures are decorative rock walls and bridges, statues and monuments commemorating local residents who served in the military, bandshells, bath houses, fountains, benches and athletic facilities. Many of these improvements date from the Great Depression when organizations such as the Works Progress Administration hired local people for public improvement projects.

**Materials:** If the class is not able to visit the park, the teacher should take snapshots of different structures from community parks. Include modern and historic structures. Try to include dates and inscriptions from items such as monuments. Also try to capture images of buildings with varying degrees of upkeep.

**Procedure:** Discuss why communities have recreation spots. Why do cities experiencing growth keep their parks even though the land could be sold for a large profit? Why do these spaces become even more valuable as time goes on? (less available land, more people living in spaces such as apartment buildings where they do not have their own yard) How can you tell which facilities in a park are older? (condition, building materials, date or plaques) What types of facilities does every park need? How would you improve parks in your community? (for example adding facilities that are handicapped accessible or adding recycling bins near picnic tables and barbeque grills) If your community has both an historic park and a modern park, discuss the differences in the two (size of plantings, location in town, layout, facilities such as parking and bathrooms) Give students 20 minutes to design their own park for the community-factors to consider include location, theme, layout, facilities and construction budget.







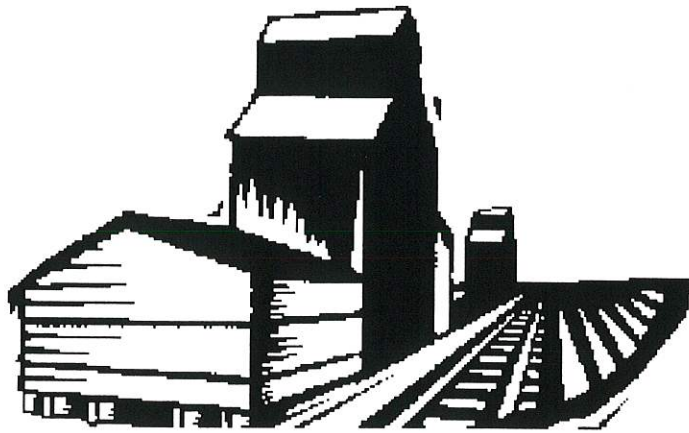
Figure 1 - Wylie Park Pavilion, Aberdeen



Another National Register listed park pavilion is the Japanese Gardens, located in City Park in Flandreau. Constructed in 1919, this dance hall measures 60 by 100 feet. The interior contains the original wooden benches and a homemade mirrored "disco ball". The facility got its name from the Japanese ornaments and lanterns used for decoration. During World War II, the name was changed to Flandreau Park. It became Japanese Gardens again in the 1970s. This picture also shows the concession stand built at the same time as the dance hall.

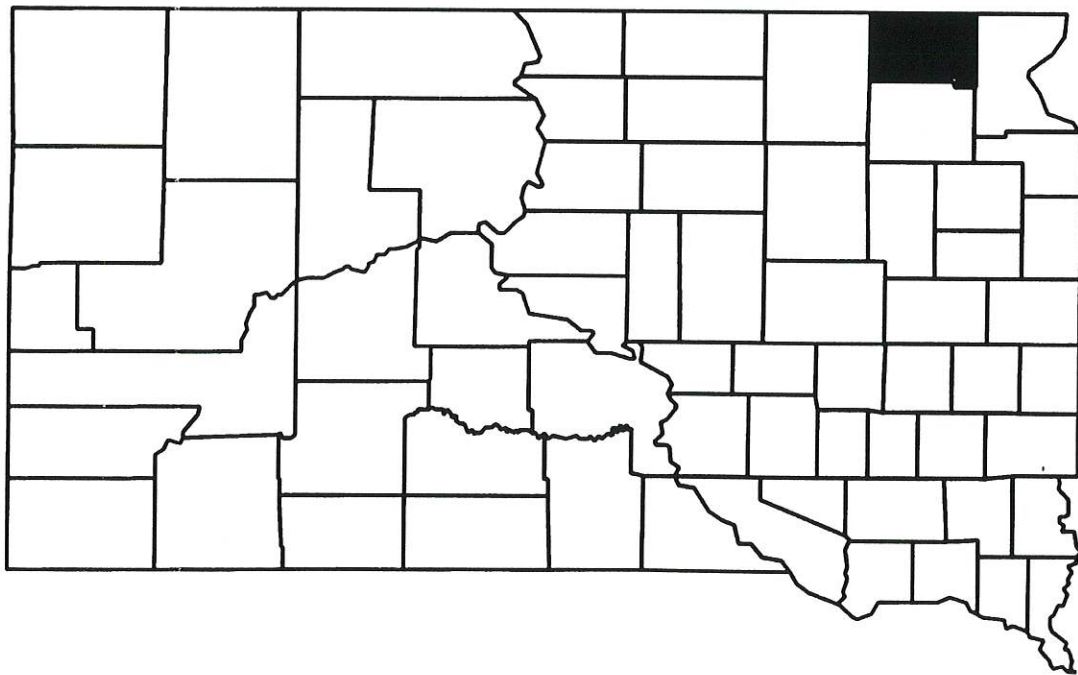






# Community Wide Activities

## Section 1, Lesson 7



# Urban Design

Fort Sisseton





## URBAN DESIGN-Fort Sisseton

**Objective:** Consider how and why communities came to look like they do.

**Method:** Students will lay out and design a military fort and then compare their design to the layout of an actual historic fort.

**Background:** The following information on Fort Sisseton is taken from pages 1-3 of the pamphlet *Fort Sisseton State Park-History and Tour Guide-National Register of Historical Places* published by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks-Division of Parks and Recreation. The site plan is from pages 8-9 of this pamphlet.

Fort Sisseton was established in 1864 in direct response to the Santee Sioux uprising along the Minnesota River in 1862. The uprising resulted in almost 1,000 casualties and subsequent panic on the frontier. Fort Sisseton was built as part of General John Pope's Dakota campaign to sweep the Sioux north and establish a series of forts with patrols between them to prevent further conflicts.

A site on the head of the Coteau des Prairies (hills of the prairie) was chosen for its strategic importance. The position on the 600 foot rise above the plains controlled access to Lake Traverse, Big Stone Lake and the Minnesota River Valley. In addition, the site was surrounded by a number of lakes that limited direct access. The military reservation was 9 by 15 miles and contained 82,000 acres. The fort served as a military outpost for 25 years until it was abandoned in 1889, the year South Dakota became a state.

**Materials:** drawing supplies and paper

**Procedure:** Give students the following information about the site and the design criteria.

It is 1864 and you are to design a military fort that will be the permanent home to approximately 300 soldiers. There is at least one horse per man. The fort has to be designed so it can be defended and must contain everything the soldiers will need in their daily lives. The site is surrounded by a group of lakes. Natural resources include thick stands of trees along the lakes, lime and clay for bricks and fieldstones.

Have each student do a site plan for the fort. Use an appropriate scale. For each structure designed, indicate its function, the construction method used and its relative size on the plan. Indicate the order of construction (i.e. which buildings are important and need to be built right away-in reality the first structure built at Fort Sisseton was a log horse stable with a roof of branches and slough grass)

When students have finished, compare their designs with the actual site plan of Fort Sisseton. What are the similarities and differences in the overall layout, defense features, placement/grouping of buildings, size of buildings and the number/type/function of the buildings and structures used in each design? Have the class develop guidelines for future fort designers including recommendations for each of the above aspects of the site.

Invite the city planner or local equivalent to class to discuss what guidelines govern the growth of your town. How are these guidelines similar and different to the ones developed by the class for fort designers?



