

## **Pulaski County**

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After the Civil War, Indiana counties started to create huge, expensive courthouses in popular architectural styles including Second Empire, Italianate, Neoclassical, and Romanesque. Considered “county capitols,” these buildings served as the centerpiece of a county, allowing the citizens and commissioners to make a statement about their county’s prosperity and importance through the grandeur of their courthouse. While larger cities could afford lavish buildings like Allen County’s \$800,000 1897 courthouse and Knox County’s \$380,000 courthouse completed in 1876, counties with smaller populations or mostly-rural areas sometimes had trouble raising funds for a grand courthouse. When a local judge condemned Winamac’s 1862 courthouse in 1864, most citizens and even some government officials felt the building was still in fine condition and worried about how much the project would cost. County officials finally agreed to build a new courthouse with the stipulation that the building cost no more than \$50,000, a price that included all the furniture!

County commissioners hired the father-and-son architect team of A. William Rush and Edwin A. Rush who came up with a Romanesque design which was both grand enough for a public building and within the county’s tight budget. Since Romanesque buildings use rough hewn stone and can be as simple or complex as the client desires, this architectural style accommodated Pulaski County’s budgetary restraints. With a rusticated limestone exterior, a central, square clock tower, and decorative carved details, the resulting courthouse has many of the same features seen on other, more expensive Indiana courthouses, but was completed for a fraction of the price. Construction costs totaled \$42,000, leaving \$8,000 for furnishings.

The Pulaski County Courthouse, which sits on a *Shelbyville Square* plan in downtown Winamac, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.