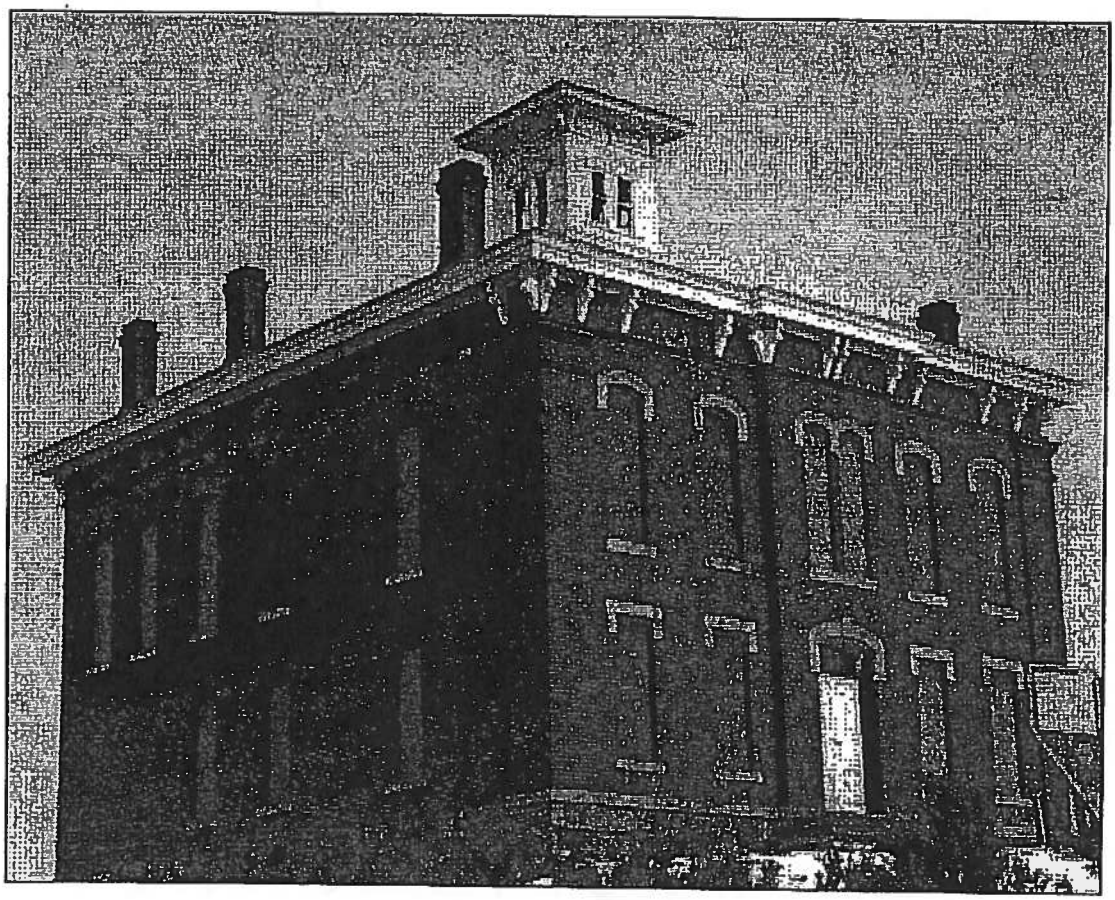
# BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## 1992



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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### A. PURPOSE OF PLAN

#### 1. WHY THE PLAN IS BEING WRITTEN

The purpose of this plan is to produce a long-range development plan for Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site. This is the first development plan which has been produced to address the needs of this site. This plan will realistically address the present and projected needs, as well as outline all operating procedures for the historic site. In addition, this master plan is an element of the comprehensive Nevada State Parks System Plan.

The plan begins with an introductory chapter which covers the description, location and setting of the historic site. Also included in this chapter is a section on the historic site's history. Chapter Two addresses the regional influences that directly or indirectly affect the area. In Chapter Three, the area's natural, historic, and cultural resources, along with the existing facilities and historic site uses are described. Chapter Four details the plan development process and the resulting master plan. Discussion of the recreational program, proposed facilities and their locations, as well as development phasing will be presented. The remaining two chapters deal exclusively with the management, operation and maintenance of the historic site's facilities and resources. Chapter Five recommends the proposed operations and management plan and Chapter Six describes procedures which are currently practiced.

#### 2. ISSUES - MAJOR

The main issues addressed during the planning process fall into two general categories: recreation need, and resource/user conflicts. In addition to these, health and safety, tourism, and environmental considerations must be evaluated.

##### a. SCORP Identified Issues

The 1987 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) identifies many aspects of recreational needs appropriate to Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site.

1) Opportunities to participate in recreational activities should be provided to all citizens through informative programs and literature. On-site educational programs should be

encouraged to assist the visitors in their enjoyment of the outdoor experience.

2) Historic Preservation has been identified as a major need in Nevada to help preserve the historic past of Nevada. The SCORP cites the need to conserve buildings, landmarks, and evidence of historic traditions for successive generations.

3) Efforts should be made to make recreational opportunities available to all of Nevada's citizens including those who are handicapped or have other special needs. (SCORP, 1987)

b. User Conflicts/Visitor Impacts

Efforts should be made to plan and locate together activities with similar demands. This historic site provides for limited day use activities. The historic nature of the site is easily impacted by the introduction of any modern intrusions.

c. Public Identified Issues

Surveys of historic site users and a public workshop have provided input into this plan. The surveys were conducted before the planning process was initiated. This survey did not include information collected at Belmont Courthouse, however, information and data was collected for Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park which provides some similar facilities. The results of the 1987-88 Park User Survey will be presented in Chapter Two of the plan.

One public workshop was conducted during the planning process for the historic site. The number of people who attended the meeting (10) is considered an excellent turnout for such a small and remote historic site. Major issues discussed at this meeting included: respect for and protection of private property, needed restroom facilities, interior building restoration, day use facilities and access improvements.

Prior to this workshop an annoucement was sent to approximately 100 individuals including all land owners in the town of Belmont. In addition a news release was sent to seven newspapers and announcements were sent to all local post offices and libraries.

The Courthouse location and its historic nature make it an excellent target for vandalism, fire, and theft. The historic site is contained

within a 1.6 acre parcel within the historic town of Belmont. The safety of the public is also a concern due to the remote location. A solor operated telephone is located at the town watchman's trailer.

The building tours which are given on a sporadic basis are very popular. However, presently there is a lack of exterior site interpretation, day use, shade, and outdoor exhibits which can occupy their time when tours of the courthouse are not available.

d. Governor's Tourism Program Identification Issues

The Governor's Tourism Program provides three additional issues the Division of State Parks considers when updating or creating master plans (Nevada Commission of Tourism, 1987). The first two are directly related to general tourism goals as stated by the Nevada Commission on Tourism: 1) increasing awareness of the state's wide variety of activities and 2) increasing the length of stay of each visit. State Parks protects historical, scenic and habitat areas, and promotes a wide variety of outdoor recreational experiences. This contributes to promotion of the "other Nevada" and can provide interesting activities to encourage visitors to lengthen their stay.

The third issue derived from the Governor's Tourism Program involves an inventory of places or activities that draw tourists to the state. All eight inventory items warrant attention during a historic site master planning process. They are: historic sites, natural heritage sites, recreation sites, museums, special events, wildlife, trails, and accommodations.

e. Environmental/Cultural Considerations

Mining sites occur near the area but their impact does not necessarily detract from the historic site. Since the development of Belmont was tied to mining the presence of these activities do not detract from the area. No mining operation are located near the historic site's boundary.

The historic site is not frequented by a large number of visitors and those that do visit typically have a low impact on the landscape. The historic site's isolation and distance from urban centers helps to provide a ghost town image for the town of Belmont.
Human activities have impacted the site throughout its history and

this impact in the form of buildings and use areas provide an excellent historic architectural and landscape resource.

## 3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### a. Legislated Goals and Objectives

The Nevada State Legislature has developed the following goals and objectives for the Division of State Parks:

> *"to acquire, protect, develop, and interpret a well-balanced system of areas of outstanding scenic, recreational, scientific, and historical importance for the inspiration, use, and enjoyment of the people of Nevada and that such areas shall be held in trust as irreplaceable portions of Nevada's natural and historic heritage (NRS 407.013)."*

### b. Natural/Cultural Resource Objectives

1) Cultural resources shall be protected and maintained in an appropriate manner; visitor safety and convenience should be kept foremost when considering maintenance projects on historical structures.

### c. Management Objectives

1) Operation and Maintenance procedures will be identified to ensure that changes in staffing or contract personel do not lead to deterioration of facilities and resources.

2) Administrative procedures will be outlined to ensure completion of routine reports and assignments according to established schedules and standardized formats.

3) Interpretative facilities, programs, and needs will be identified to assure that quality programs or services are offered to the public.

4) Staffing or contract personel procedures will be identified to provide supervisory guidelines, and to serve as a baseline for future needs.

## 4. PART OF STATE PARK SYSTEM PLAN

As previously stated, the Belmont Courthouse Master Plan will contribute to the Nevada State Park System Plan. The State Park System Plan is

a composite of individual park master plans with unifying goals and objectives. As such, it will provide a broad overview of long-range development plans for the various Nevada Division of State Parks administered areas and will serve as an information source for political subdivisions, state and federal agencies, legislators, etc. The System Plan is also intended to assure that the development themes, activities, and facilities of the various parks complement one another, providing optimum variety with minimal duplication.

a. Description of the Division of State Parks

The Division of State Parks is one of eight agencies within the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. As stated above, the division has the legislated intent to acquire, protect, develop, and interpret a well-balanced system of parks which have scenic, recreational, scientific, and historic importance (NRS 407.013).

The Division is charged with preparation and maintenance of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) that encompasses public recreation opportunities at all levels of government, as well as providers of privately owned public recreation lands or facilities.

In addition, the Division administers the awarding and disbursement of federal financial assistance programs to the state's various political subdivisions for recreation facility acquisition and development.

## B. DESCRIPTION, LOCATION AND SETTING

### 1. DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC SITE AND LOCATION

The Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site is located in Nye County, Nevada. The site is 43 miles northeast of Tonopah via US Highway 6, State Route 376 and a right turn on State Route #82. The latter is approximately 24 miles long with the last 1.5 miles graded gravel. The road is scheduled for paving by Nye County by the end of 1992. This will provide fully paved access to the town of Belmont. State Route 82 runs through the middle of Belmont and is named Main Street. (See Figure 1-1 Vicinity Map)

The historic site currently encompasses 1.6 acres and contains the courthouse building and no other structures.

2. PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE AREA

The historic site is situated on the eastern slope of the Toquima Range at an elevation of approximately 7,400 feet. The town of Belmont is situated on a small plateau overlooking the Ralston Valley. The town is 400 feet above the valley floor. Sparse tree cover of pinions and junipers is found surrounding the town and at higher elevations.

The historic site is one of the smallest in the Nevada State Park system and consists of the courthouse structure on slightly more than an acre and a half of land. There are no other historic site facilities.

3. ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

The entire historic site is located within the Cenral Nevada Divsion of Toiyabe National Forest. The town is located on the eastern edge of this National Forest which is managed by the Tonopah Ranger District in Tonopah, NV. The entire town of Belmont is held privately with numerous owners.

C. HISTORIC SITE HISTORY

1. HISTORY OF AREA

The first anglo explorers to enter this part of Nevada were Jedediah Strong Smith and his two companions Robert Evans and Silas Gobel. During June of 1827 they traveled eastward, surmounted the Sierra Nevada, skirted the south shore of Walker Lake and crossed the Pilot Range. According to legend they met indians at what is now Cloverdale Ranch, 30 miles south of the historic site. From there they traveled to near Manhattan, north of Tonopah, looking for water. The party next struck out northeasterly and entered Utah near present-day Grady. Near Grady, Smith half-buried his men in sand to prevent them from dying of thirst and dehydration. Smith went on to the big spring in Skull Valley and returned to their rescue.

John Charles Freemont, on his third expedition in 1845, crossed what is now known as Big Smokey Valley and stopped at Darrough Hot Springs, some 25 to 30 miles northwest of the town of Belmont.

The next impact on the area by white men was the establishment of the Pony Express, stage routes, and telegraph lines which followed a portion of what is presently U.S. Highway 50. One station was at Sand Spring 25 miles east of Fallon, another at Cold Spring.

The discovery of gold in the Reese River region and the establishment of Austin occurred in 1862. Union was the first of the mining towns, in the area. The district was located in May, 1863 when a small group of prospectors led by A.J. McGhee located a silver ledge in Union Canyon. Ione was the county seat of Nye county from 1864 through 1867.

Ione became a prominent town in the Union mining district. As can be seen from the surrounding area names, the district took great pride in its Civil War loyalties. Names such as Grantsville, East and West Union Canyon, all showed a strong allegiance to the North. The camp of Union located in Union Canyon still exhibits remains of an adobe, brick, and frame house as well as a smelter/mill and a brickyard. Union was situated just south of the eventual site of the town of Berlin. I, 1951)

The Nevada State Legislature moved the county seat in February 1867 from Ione with its failing mining economy to Belmont, a young boom town. (James, Manuscript)

## 2. HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF BELMONT

The first settler of Belmont was Antonio Borguez, who arrived in 1865. He was soon followed by A. Billman, H.G. Schmidt, J.M. Reed, C.L. Straight, R. Kelly, D.R. Dean, L. Marin, O. Brown, S. Tallman, J. Grover, D.E. Buel, Dr. Wm. Geller, Charles St. Louis, J.W. Gashwiler, S.M. Burk and others. (Angel, 1881)

The town of Belmont was first settled in October 1865 after an Indian discovered silver in the early part of that year. With the discovery of silver a camp was established on the eastern slopes of the Toquima Range above the Monitor Valley. This initial silver rush in 1866 lured many from the towns of Ione, Austin and other camps in central Nevada. The area had high-grade silver ore deposits which yielded from $200 to $3,000 a ton. This new district took the name Silver Bend or Philadelphia. A ten-stamp mill was constructed nearby in 1866 at a cost of $30,000. This development was followed by five local sawmills during the next two years. The sawmills provided cut lumber to the growing camp.

The camp's location provided many of the essential elements for sustained occupancy including: an ample supply of wood, water, rock and clay. The camp started to lose its temporary appearance when the townspeople started to construct many substantial buildings using stone and brick as well as numerous wood frame structures.

By the time the town had been designated the county seat, Belmont had become an important mining and milling area and was considered a trading center for settlements within a radius of 100 miles. (Paher, 1970)

The name Belmont comes from the french word *Beaumont*, "beautiful mountain," and was named for its location at the base of the Toquima Range above the Ralston Valley. (Carlson, 1974)

The town was laid out on a modified grid with eight streets. Belmont had a bank, a school, the competing *Silver Bend Reporter* and the *Mountain Champion* newspapers, telegraph service, post office and several stores. The stores and shops included Hatch's Meat Market which featured choice Chicago hams and Iowa butter. (See Figure 1-2 Town of Belmont)

Belmont population reached almost 2,000 in early 1868 and it was the most flourishing town in central Nevada. This high point in population was quickly followed by a decline in the tenor of local ores and the White Pine mining boom made heavy raids on the town's population in 1868 and 1869.

The town stagnated for the next four years until another rich strike was made in 1873 and resulted in another boom. The large mills built during the 1860s started processing ore from the discoveries at Arizona, Belmont, Highbridge, Monitor-Belmont and Quintero mines situated in the mineral belt one mile east of town. The *Belmont Courier* commenced publication in February 1874 and dwellings and business establishments faced streets shaded by maple, locust and Balm of Gilead trees.

This town which again featured a population of 2,000 provided an image of vitality with its beautiful ladies, troops of children, and its handsome church. The town had an active social scene with dances, coasting on bobsleds down Main Street, and croquet on grounds located at the lower end of Main Street. A race course known as Monitor Park was laid out southeast of the suburb of East Belmont.

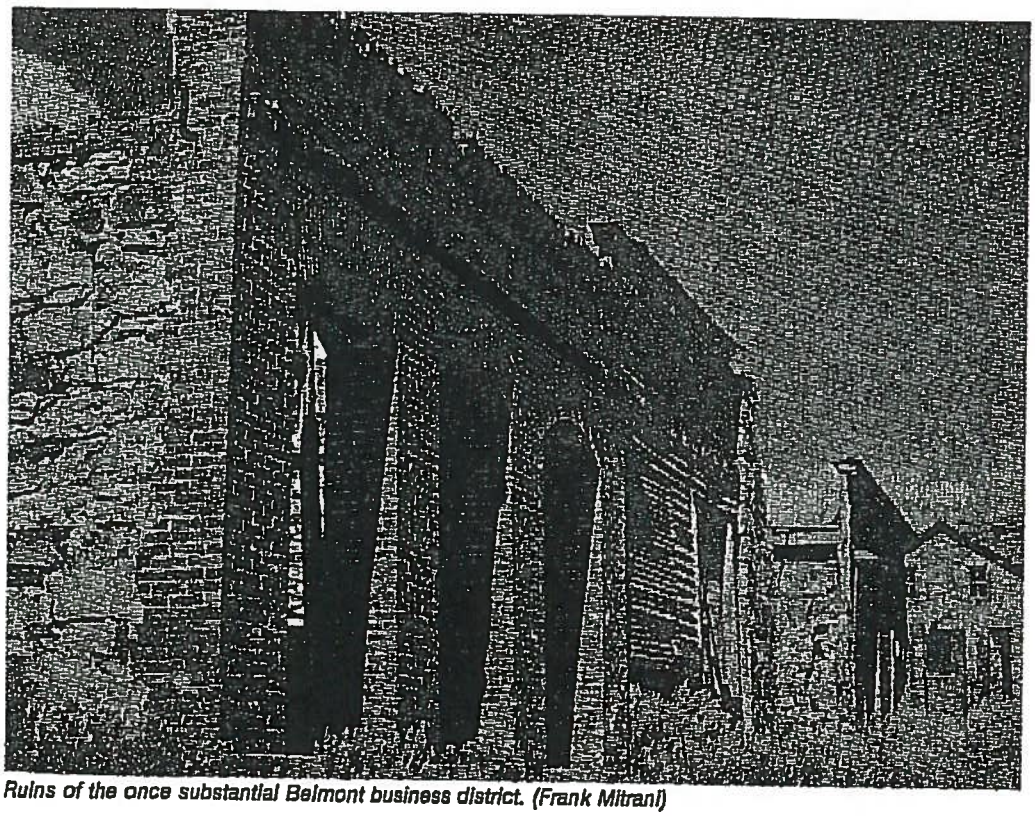
Production continued until 1887 when the mines were shut down after recovering over $15 million. By 1900 only a few businesses and a score

of people were left, and in May 1905 the county seat was moved from Belmont to newest boom town, Tonopah. (Paher, 1970)

Jim Butler, as the Nye County District Attorney, may have inadvertently led to the town's demise in 1900. Leaving his duties in Belmont to his assistant, Tasker L. Oddie, later governor of the state, Butler traveled south toward Klondike. While camped at a place called Tonopah Springs, he made one of the greatest strikes in Nevada history which drained Belmont's sagging population over night. (Moore, 1970)

The extensive Belmont dumps were reworked in 1907-08, and production during the World War I years fed the new Highbridge mill. Belmont now contains a small permanent population and many residences are used only in the summer. The town has slowly deteriorated and much of its historic structures are now gone. (Paher, 1970)

In 1976 an extensive interpretive history of Belmont was prepared by Robert Nylen of the Nevada Historical Society. This brief history detailed the elements of day to day life during a period which spanned 1865 to 1870. This research is broken down into various general headings.



*Ruins of the once substantial Belmont business district. (Frank Mitrani)*

a. Agriculture

Many individuals who participated in the rapid rushes to a remote region for mining often became discouraged and turned instead to ranching and farming. Agricultural settlements near mining camps usually made good profits from their sales to local merchants and miners. The first agricultural settlement near Belmont came about in 1866 when the Steinnger brothers claimed a tract of land in Monitor Valley. Soon afterward other agricultural settlers moved into both Monitor Valley and Smoky Valley -- the next valley over on the west side of the Toquima Range. The crops raised in both areas were pretty much the same; they consisted of corn, wheat, rye, alfalfa, apples, peaches, pears, apricots, strawberries, raspberries and gooseberries. The ranches also supplied the meat markets in Belmont with livestock and poultry.

The ranches in the vicinity could only provide Belmont with a limited amount of agricultural supplies; merchants in town had to find other agricultural sources to meet consumer demands. In 1867-1868 a regular trade developed between the Belmont merchants and the Mormon settlements -- Cedar City, Parowan and Beaver -- located southeast from Pahranagat Valley. Mormon traders appeared regularly in town with wagons filled with flour, eggs, potatoes, barley and apples. And occasionally a Mormon livestock drive -- of from thirty-five to forty steers and thirty head of milk cattle or three to four hundred head of sheep -- would stop in town to sell their livestock.

The Mormon trade with the merchants of Belmont became a very lucrative business for both parties during 1867-1868. The Mormons exchanged their agricultural goods for dry goods, groceries, agricultural implements, hardware, crockery, cutlery and other supplies that Belmont merchants had for sale. (Nylen, 1976)

b. Health

The fear of disease and injury was a constant danger to the inhabitants of a mining town. There was always a sense of relief when a doctor or druggist moved into a town where there was no medical care for the sick or injured of the community. Belmont during its early boom period had several doctors, one of the earliest was J.G. Riddle, who performed a number of major surgical operations during 1867-1868. In 1867, Dr. Riddle performed a delicate operation to remove a portion of shattered bone from P.O.

Putney's upper right arm after a gun fight in which a bullet had shattered the bone. On another occasion, Dr. Riddle had to amputate the lower leg of Jeremiah Quinn because of a severe case of frost bite. The most complicated operation, however, that Dr. Riddle performed was the removal of a tumor from John Bowman's right lung. Doctor Riddle was also called upon on numerous occasions to bandage up cuts and broken bones. One serious accident occurred when a Frenchman named Debreez, while working on the Combination Company's mill, fell forty feet to the ground when a scaffold collapsed. Debreeze landed head down on some machinery and Dr. Riddle was summoned to attend to his numerous cuts on both arms and legs.

Mining in the far West was a hazardous occupation in which many miners were seriously injured or even killed. During its early boom period there occurred several incidents in which miners were seriously hurt. One accident involved a miner named B.F. Oliver, who worked in the mine of the Combination Company. While holding a drill in the face of a drift and in kneeling posture a mass of rocks estimated to weigh at least a ton, fell from the roof of the gallery and caught his leg, and severely crushed it.

Another miner named Hueston George, a Slavonian, had a serious accident while descending a shaft about a half mile west of town. George lost his hold and fell to the bottom of the shaft, a distance of forty feet. He was not killed by the fall but suffered severe cuts and bruises to a large portion of this body.

Another danger to the miners' safety underground was their own carelessness. In April of 1867, at the Combination Company's mine, a rock was thrown clear from a bucket of ore being lifted to the surface. The falling rock struck one of the miners below named William Terry and inflicted a severe wound several inches in length between his elbow and wrist. The back of his hand was also badly cut and bruised.

Western mining towns were known for their generosity for the sick and the injured. In Nye County, the county commissioners established an "Indigent Sick Fund" to aid those individuals unable to pay medical expenses. In the case of P.O. Putney mentioned earlier, the county commissioners paid his medical bills of sixty dollars and one hundred and eighty dollars to Dr. Riddle and paid G.R. Alexander, the local druggist, $25.14 for medicine.

The real importance of having a doctor in a remote and harsh environment can only be understood by a person that lived there. And no one could better express those than Edward Vollmer, a Prussian immigrant, who wrote to a friend on March 4, 1869: "Both our doctors have left and Alexander the druggist is talking of leaving this month, so there will be no doctor or medicine and I have concluded to send Mrs. Vollmer and Henry as soon as warm weather sets in." (Nylen, 1976)

c. Ethnic Groups

The Indians formed the lowest rung of the social ladder in Belmont during the boom. In the period after the discovery of silver, the destruction of the Indian way of life occurred at a rapid rate. The land was cleared of the living things upon which the Indians had been dependent for food, shelter and clothing. Thus, the Indians, had to depend upon what means the white man placed at their disposal. In Belmont, they provided the whites with a cheap source of labor. The Indians did most of the menial jobs -- cutting wood, sorting ore, harvesting crops -- in town. The maximum wage paid to an Indian was six bits a day. The editor of the *Reporter* chided the local citizens for not making prompt and honorable payment to the Indians. He stated, "Don't hire a Shoshone to perform a certain amount of work for fifty cents and only give him two bits or tell him to charge it; because that course of action disgusts the aborigine and make it difficult for the next white man to hire him."

On August 8, 1897 news was received from Unionville that James A. Banks, Speaker of the Second Session of the Nevada Legislature was murdered by an Indian; the *Reporter* believed that, "There is but one way to prevent these horrid atrocities, and that is a war of extermination. Stern, speedy and relentless, sparing neither age, sex nor conditions -- butchery if you will, laying aside all mawkish sentimentality all mistaken philanthropy."

Indians did command the respect of the white miners when it came to the discovery of rich mining claims. Throughout the mining West prospectors had been led on numerous occasions to rich ore locations by Indians. So it is not surprising when Edward Vollmer stated in his letter to a friend (dated November 23, 1868) that Belmont was in an uproar over a rock an Indian had brought into town. He wrote:

*"Today our town was in a big excitement, some Indian brought some rock in which assayed over $800. Watson, Pridham and Myers had him locked up all night and started with him this morning in a buggy to the new Eldorado supposed to be about 30 miles from town. After they left, everybody who could get a horse started after them and overtook them about 15 miles from town, as soon as the parties met, Watson and company and the Indian turned back to town and locked the Indian in a room and have two watchmen employed and they think of leaving in the night, but they probably can't get away as the whole town is laying watch for them."*

Even though their traditional way of life had been destroyed by the whites, the indians still retained certain customs and manners. During the last week of April 1868, several hundred Indians gathered on the outskirts of Belmont to hold one of their traditional celebrations. It was reported by the *Silver Bend Reporter*, that Indians of both sexes and of all sizes and ages gathered for the event. They wore their traditional apparel with feathers and paint. The ceremony was reported to have consisted of monotonous dances and ceremonies, which lasted all night. The ceremony described in the Belmont paper probably was a circle dance. It was primarily for pleasure, serving especially as an opportunity for courting, but had various other minor functions. The circle dance was held around the beginning of May, it and the back and forth dance were performed ten nights in a row to produce good harvest. In Julian Steward's study of the Nevada Shoshone, one of his Indian informants remarked that he once saw a circle dance at Belmont in which women jumped, throwing grass seeds (wai), mentzelia (kuhwa) and pinenuts, which they carried in baskets. (Nylen, 1976)

d. Chinese

If Indians were the lowest on the social ladder, the Chinese were just one step above them. In Belmont the Chinese developed their own little Chinatown on High Street. During the early boom period the Chinese were principally cooks and wash men. In March 1867, the *Silver Bend Reporter* complained about the high cost of washing by the Chinese. "The celestials," it was charged "have combined against us and demand six dollars a dozen for washing. A few good washerwomen would do well here."

In 1868, anti-Chinese sentiments became evident in the coming election. M.D. Fairchild announced that the *Silver Bend Reporter* would support the Democratic party. He then called upon party

members in other counties (Lander & Lincoln) to sustain him in his effort to battle and overthrow the radical Negro and Chinese enfranchise enemies.

After Democratic victories in the Belmont school trustee election; the municipal election at Virginia City; and the school board election at Carson; the editor of the *Reporter* proclaimed that the people were tired of mongrelism in Nevada. He pointed out:

> *"Each little election which transpires shows in its result that the strength and glory of mongrelism is fast departing, and soon its vicious horde must soon scan the only renown their party ever achieved upon the most infamous pages that will ever deface and blacken the historical record of American politics... The Virginia City election, in which every Democratic candidate save a single alderman was elected, coupled with the fact that a strictly political and bitterly contested fight at Carson not long since for school trustee resulted in the discomfiture of blacks, tells us in the most eloquent and forcible language in which it can be uttered that the people again long the ascendancy of the Democratic party in the western portion of the state, and that they are determined no longer to tolerate a faction which degrades the Caucasian race and exacts the Mongolian and Negro... Fate is against the radicals after November next there will be none in the Pacific States so poor as to do reverence to the corpse of mongrelism; it will be remembered only by the loathsome record of infamy and usurpation which it unfortunately leaves behind."*

(Nylen, 1976

e. Immigrants

The mining in Belmont -- like other areas in the mineral West -- was dominated by the numerous European ethnic groups. This is pointed out clearly in the 1870 census; in which the foreign born miners made up 66% of the men employed in the mines. A few of these divergent European racial groups carried with them some of their age old animosity toward each other from across the Atlantic. The most well known was the conflict between Cornish and Irish miners. The most famous incident in Belmont between them occurred in 1867; when a group of Irish miners -- working at the Silver Champion -- were told the mine was going to close. Rumors spread around town that the company planned to rehire the cheaper Cornish miners and reopen the mine shortly. The Irish miners became angry and decided to punish the mine superintendent a man named, R.C. Canfield. They grabbed Canfield and placed him on top of a rail and paraded him down Main Street, finally stopping at the Highbridge Saloon. It was there

that Lewis M. Bodrow, a former marshall in Austin, told Canfield that he would not have to get back on the rail; this infuriated Pat Dignon, who punched Bodrow in the jaw. Another Irish miner stepped out of the saloon and fired his pistol; which escalated the fight into a shooting fray. When the shooting ended, Bodrow and Dignon were both dead. Canfield escaped from the fight unhurt.

The animosity between the Irish and Cornish seems to have persisted into the late 1870s. In an interview conducted in the late 1950s, William Pearce mentioned that there was a great deal of animosity between the Irish and Cornish miners in Belmont. He remembers that there was tremendous rivalry between Irish crews and the Englishmen, and that neither would think twice about transferring the other's work credit to their own daily tally. This rivalry sometimes spilled over into violence. Pierce mentions an incident in which his own uncle, Louis Roberts, nearly became a victim of an enraged Irish mob. Roberts was saved only when he proved to them that he had been born in Mexico, where his Cornish parents had been engaged in mining at the time. He was really of pure Cornish descent but the Irish figured that if he had been born in mexico he was not "a dirty Cornishman."

Eluded to before, in April 1868, the *Weekly Silver Bend Reporter* declared itself a democratic paper. Immediately, after the selection by the Republicans of U.S. Grant and Schuyler Colfax for their ticket, the *Reporter*, on May 30, 1868, published an article entitled "Grant and the Israelites," which commented upon the general's order number 11, which relieved Jews in Tennessee from positions of authority. This article published by the *Reporter* depicted Grant as "a man who did the Jewish nation a more shameless injustice than any other man in power has done in this country, in any civilized country."

On July 4, 1868, Belmont's foreign born residents were requested to cut out future reference. The article pointed out the *Silver Bend Reporter's* article on Colfax and paste it on their hat for future reference. The article pointed out that Colfax had joined the Know Nothing party in 1854 at South Bend, Indiana. The Know Nothing party stood for the removal of all foreigners, aliens and Roman Catholics from office and each member pledged to never appoint one.

Also in July of 1868, the *Reporter* responded to a statement made by a radical paper at Bangor, Maine called the *Whig*, which had stated that "Catholicism is the greatest evil of this country." The editor came to the defence of the Irish Catholics and all foreigners, when he wrote:

> *"When it wanted soldiers to enlist, for the battles of the wilderness, and called upon Irishmen to rally to the standard of Grant, it did not thus express itself. Had it thought that Recticent and Colfax would be the nominees of the Chicago convention it would have kept silent upon this question, for the latter is a Know-Nothing-sworn to do injustice to all foreigners whether Catholic or not."*

(Nylen, 1976)

f. Mexicans

The Mexicans were the active ethnic group socially in Belmont. They celebrated various holidays with parades and other ceremonies to mark those occasions. On May 4, 1867, the Mexican residents celebrated the anniversary of the battle of Pueblo, where the liberal General Zaragosa, achieved a victory over the French. The festivities were begun with an anvil salute in the morning, which was repeated at noon and again in the evening. On Oliver Street a staff was raised from which the flag of the United States and the banner of the Mexican Republic flew side by side. The day's activities were concluded with a dance that night.

The next Mexican celebration occurred on the anniversary of the Independence of Mexico in September 1867. The ceremonies started at midnight with a cannon and small arms salute, followed by a display of rockets. The same procedure was re-enacted at sunrise, at noon and at sunset and on the following night a rocket and fireworks display concluded the two day's of celebration. The editor of the *Silver Bend Reporter* made mention of the Mexican activities, praising them for their enthusiasm. (Nylen, 1976)

g. Lawlessness

Western mining camps were known for their wide open style of life; which was due in part to the diverse segments of society -- gamblers, prostitutes, thieves, confidencemen, and law abiding citizens -- that composed the community. Often these elements

became entangled in disputes -- that were settled by the use of the six shooter or knife -- rather than by more civil means. Belmont was one of the more violent of the early Nevada mining towns.

In October 1867, a shooting occurred in Dan Morgan's Cosmopolitan Saloon. The conflict took place between Harry Lehigh and a man known as Colonel Putney. It was reported that their quarrel arose over a faro bank. These two men met in the saloon and shortly afterward began to shoot at each other. Lehigh was killed and Putney was wounded by a bullet that passed through his arm and into his chest.

*The Cosmopolitan Saloon as it appeared in the mid 1970's. Unfortunately through neglect and vandalism the structure is no longer standing. (Frank Mitrani)*

Another homicide happened in February, 1868, when Jesse M. Peters was shot and killed by S. Goldstein. The cause of the shooting grew out of a disagreement over a claim to a salt field near Silver Peak. It was reported that Peters had made a threat on Goldstein's life; and had backed up his threat by putting a bullet through his hat. Goldstein was outraged but could do little at that time except submit to Peter's demands and wait for an opportunity for revenge. He got his chance in Belmont when he shot Peters at the bar of a local saloon. Immediately Goldstein gave himself up to the authorities and was later released after appearing before Justice Davis. The editor of the *Reporter*, when summing up the incident, had little sympathy for Peters, who he felt

> *"may have possessed some excellent qualities, but his bad associations and many bad acts overshadowed them all, and there are none in the community who will be sorry that he is gone. The atmosphere of Belmont is getting to be unhealthy for rowdies and those who court the title of desperado. They must hunt other quarters or be peaceable and quiet here. Let them be forewarned."*

Homicide was not the only crime in mining towns. Housebreaking became a serious problem as well. In Belmont, thieves broke into the cabin owned by Thomas Tyser near the Belmont Company mill and ransacked it; making off with a colt navy six shooter, two silver rings and a small Peruvian silver coin. The *Reporter* commented that several other minor thefts had occurred in town recently; and it advised the citizens to keep a watchful eye for the thieves.

Another source of difficulty came from ore thieves. In August of 1868 Sheriff Ranney of Nye County recovered a lot of amalgam which had been stolen from the Combination Company mill. Having business at Northumberland, Ranney took the local stage to there from Belmont. At Smith's Station, nine miles from town, a box was placed on board the stage which attracted the attention of the sheriff. There were two reasons for his curiosity; first was the fact that the box was so heavy and second because it was supposed to be bolts and screws, an unusual shipment from Belmont to Austin. Then, he discovered a few drops of quicksilver upon the floor of the coach, which led him to believe the box contained amalgam. The sheriff immediately returned to Belmont and got the Combination Company clerk C.O. Barker to go with him to Austin. The next afternoon two men named James Smith and William Brannan came after the box, and they were promptly

arrested. After further investigation it was learned that they had both been employed in the Combination Mill, having quit their jobs ten days before. (Nylen, 1976)

h. Recreation

Western mining camps were usually located in remote and isolated regions; where the environment was often harsh and the work tedious. Miners searched for social activities that would help them overcome their feeling of loneliness. The theater was an ever present and popular institution on the American frontier. It provided members of the community with an escape form the harsh realities of their daily existence. Nowhere in the West was the stage as vital and well patronized as in the mining camps.

In June 1867, a traveling theatrical group, the Chapman Family, gave several performances in Belmont. They presented two plays "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and the "Young Widow", both given before packed houses. Another group, the Stone and Beally's Combination Star Company, appeared later in the year at Eder's Hall. This group also presented two plays for the miners' enjoyment, one was an emotional drama called the "Female Gamblers", and the other was an amusing piece entitled the "Maid and the Milking Pail."

In April 1868, a Belmont Operatic Minstrel Troupe was offered by Dan Morgan. They rented a building on Main Street and converted it into a theater. The editor of the *Silver Bend Reporter* applauded their initiative, by pointing out, "The theater fills a large void experienced in the community by the lack of any suitable place for lectures and amusing performances."

The Belmont Troupe gave their first work a week after forming. Their opening night was presented to a crowded house, with a number of ladies in attendance. The entertainment was started by Dan Morgan with a couple ballads followed by a challenge dance between Grant and Echternoch. A challenge dance was an endurance dancing contest in which dancers were the object of wagering. Betting included coins, hats, boots and shirts and the dances were held in the local saloons.

A fiddler by the name of Ainsworth provided the music for the contestants; but it was not reported who won the contest. The performance concluded with a comical burlesque entitled "Scenes About Town." (Nylen, 1976)

i. Saloons

The most prosperous social institution was the saloon where men gathered for drinks, cards and conversation. One of the more popular activities in the saloon was a game of billiards. In 1868, a local resident named Tip Orndorff arranged for a billiard match against the state champion Wallace W. Wright of Virginia City. The prize was the honor of winning the 'jeweled champion cue' of the state and winner take all of an additional side bet of $500. The match was held on January 24, 1868 in the opera house at Virginia City. The outcome of the match was a disappointment to the citizens of Belmont, when Wright won it easily. (Nylen, 1976)

j. Sports

Miners usually enjoyed all types of competitive sports, and one of their favorites was wrestling. In October 1867 a match was arranged in town between James Hiles and another man whose name was not given. Each put up one hundred dollars; the 130 pound Hiles won the bet easily over his opponent.

Another favorite sport of the western mining camps was horse racing; on Christmas day 1867 a race was held at Smith's Ranch, on the Austin road, between a black horse known as 'Nigger Baby' and a bay mare belonging to L.D. Smith, with each side wagering $400. It was decided that the two horses would race a distance of four hundred yards. It was reported that the track was in poor condition because of the bad weather; but the race was run anyway and L.P. Smith's little mare won. One spectator was sarcastic about the event, as he remarked to the editor of the *Reporter*, that "his grandmother had a cow that could distance them both." (Nylen, 1976)

k. Dancing

Dancing was always in western mining camps, a favorite pastime. Holidays usually provided excellent occasions for dances and Belmont had its Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years balls. Dancing became such a significant social activity that, Levi Gheen,

a local resident decided to start a dancing school. The class was open to the general public and met every Monday and Thursday at the Belmont House. (Nylen, 1976)

l. Band

With the approach in 1867 of the national independence day, it was decided to organize a band. The major obstacle was the fact the members had no instruments or sheet music. Fortunately, three men from Austin generously donated a number of horns and fiddles and other similar instruments for the Belmont Band. They also sent sheet music entitled "Mormon Ann's Quickstep." The Belmont Band leader, Hoe Dumors, was quick to respond to the generosity of the Austin group. He wrote:

> *"As our friends in Austin, aware of our destitute condition in regards to musical instruments have furnished us with the means of awakening patriotic feeling by a concord of sweet sounds on the glorious fourth of July, I beg favor, through the column of the Reville to return them our warmest thanks for the kinds of interest they have manifested for the success of the band... By diligent study and sharp practice it shall be our endeavor to give, on the coming fourth of July, a musical festival unparalleled in the state, when our only regret will be the absence of the generous donors. We are delighted with music sent and the instruments."*

(Nylen, 1976)

m. Fraternal Orders

Belmont society became more complicated and highly organized, when the Masons and Odd Fellows started having meetings in 1867. On September 7, 1868, the Belmont Oasis Lodge held it first official meeting. The organization of a lodge offered the members quarters where they might enjoy fraternal contact and observe the landmarks of Masonry.

The Masons are known for their solidarity at the death of a fellow brother. In September, 1867, a meeting was called for the purpose of making arrangements to escort the remains of John Sparks, a native of Suffolk, England to San Francisco. At the meeting a committee drew up a resolution; which resolved that the Masonic members of Belmont would wear the usual badge for mourning for a term of thirty days in order to pay tribute to Brother John Sparks, a worthy Mason.

The other fraternal organization was the Independent Order of Odd Fellows association. It did not establish a regular lodge, just a quasi-organization. It was not until March of 1873 that a fully sanctioned lodge was started in Belmont. The Odd Fellows had their first public meeting at the Belmont House in November 1867. E.C. Brearly, chairman, made a few introductory remarks about the history of the organization; then introduced Thomas Fitch who delivered a lecture on "The Coming Empire." It was decided at the meeting to continue this type of gathering -- with lectures, reading essays and debating -- once a week. In Belmont, the case of Tim Cronin is an example of their devotion to a fallen brother. Cronin had fallen out of a second story window and was paralyzed from the neck down. It was reported by the *Silver Bend Reporter* that local Odd Fellows devotedly attended to Cronin and without their assistance he would have died. The editor praised their efforts and predicted "If Cronin walks again he owes it to the Belmont Odd Fellows Association." (Nylen, 1976)

o. National Holidays

National holidays provided an additional opportunity for the miners and their families to celebrate. In 1867, Belmont observed its first national independence day with great festivities. Evergreens were planted in front of every business house and festoons ornamented every saloon, shop and dwelling in town. At ten o'clock a parade followed a designated course through the streets, ending up in front of the Theatrical Hall. First in line after the band, was an artillery piece. Next came the firemen with the car of state -- containing thirteen little girls with banners representing the original states and one representing the Goddess of Liberty, by whose side sat two little boys to represent the army and navy. The firemen numbered about sixty and wore uniforms or red shirts, black pants and hats. Then came the carriage with the president of the parade, James M. Banks, and the orator of the day E.C. Brearly. Then followed the stage of the Austin and Belmont Company, decorated with garlands and ribbons and drawn by a six horse stage followed by many carriages and a large number of horsemen.

Arriving at the Belmont Theatrical Hall the citizens gathered together to listen to patriotic songs from the Belmont Glee Club, and a reading of the the Declaration of Independence by C.C. Hubbard. The orator of the day, E.C. Brearly, briefly sketched the county's history from its early settlement to the Civil War. It was reported that Brearly attributed the whole problem of the Civil War to the

system of African slavery. He then mentioned that Ireland appeared on the verge of open rebellion against her foes and it also someday must gain its freedom.

The meeting ended with a patriotic song. That night the military fired another salute, then a display of fireworks and finally the day's festivities ended. (Nylen, 1976)

p. Fire

One of the greatest threats to a mining camp was the danger of fire. Most camps organized some method to fight fires. In February 1868, a local resident C.S. Lytle constructed on Main Street two water tanks with powerful force pumps and a sufficient length of hose to extinguish any fire in the business section of the town. It was reported that the pumps could supply sufficient power to propel water over the highest buildings and flood them in a short time.

The fire hazard was particularly acute during the windy season when stovepipes were occasionally blown from the roofs. In December 1867, a Belmont fire started in this fashion. Fortunately, Lytle's lower reservoir was full of water and the fire was quickly extinguished. The editor of the *Silver Bend Reporter* commented that there were many defective stovepipes in town. The newspaper suggested that as yet there were no municipal ordinances, the citizens ought to meet to consider the matter.

Incendiaries were also a problem in western mining towns. In March 1868 an attempt was made to burn down the San Francisco Restaurant at East Belmont. In the crawl space was found a large quantity of cotton cloth, saturated with coal oil and one side of the building was also smeared with the same substance. A man across the street was awakened and spread the alarm before the fire could do much damage.

Another cause of fire was the carelessness of the local residents. Behind a row of wooden buildings a pile of shavings and rubbish ignited due to either a match or fire cracker. The alarm was raised by an Indian and the blaze was quickly put out. It was reported that if the fire had not been discovered it would have caused total destruction of Main Street. The editor commented, "That our citizens can't be too cautious. An hours time might destroy the town and entail a heavy loss." (Nylen, 1976)

## 3. HISTORY OF THE BELMONT COURTHOUSE

Nye County, unlike many other Nevada mining regions, approached courthouse construction methodically during the nineteenth century. The county was organized in 1864 and named after James Warren Nye, Governor of the Nevada Territory and one of the first US Senators from Nevada. The first county seat was established in Ione and the county commission allocated $800 for the building of a courthouse. The courthouse was never constructed and in February of 1867 the county seat was moved to Belmont. County government was conducted out of several scattered building for the next eight years. A small brick structure was purchase in September 1868 for $5,750 to serve as the Nye County Courthouse. The building was remodeled for county needs, however the space for the sheriff and jail had to be rented elsewhere. It was not until the mid 1870s that the county started to purse the construction of a monumental courthouse. (James, Manuscript)

In May of 1875, the county commissioner reviewed seven sets of drawings and selected J.K. Winchell of Carson City as the Architect for a fee of $350. The building was planned as a two story structure which measured 50 feet by 60 feet. The roof was to be capped by an elaborate Tuscan cupola and eight brick chimneys. The prisoner's cages and jail were placed in a single-story annex attached to the rear of the building. The large courtroom was the core of the structure, with the judges' chambers and jury room on the second floor and county offices on the first floor. A site was purchased from the Belmont Mining Company for the sum of $650. The courthouse would be located west of Main Street on Cedar Street. The construction contract was awarded to I.T. Benham of Reno for the sum of $22,000.

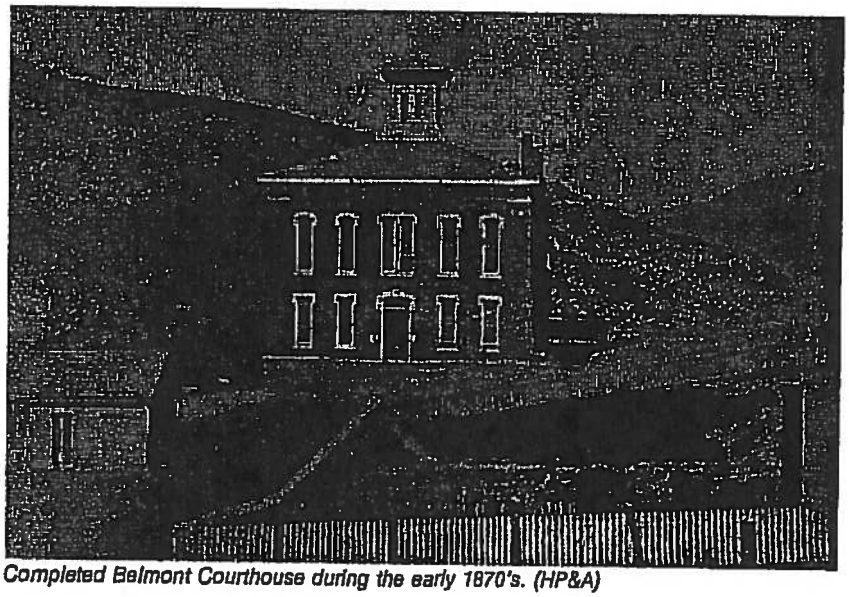
Bricks for the construction were fired locally; 25,000 were ready by mid-September, when all grading work had been completed. The stone foundation was finished two weeks later, and masons began work on October 11. The last kiln of 50,000 bricks also was fired that day.

The commissioners had authorized the issuance of $25,000 in construction bonds on October 4th. The debentures were to be sold in units of $1,000 as money was needed and carried an interest rate of 10.5 percent. The first load of lumber arrived from western Nevada on October 15th, and the second load came in two weeks later, by which time the walls of the first story had been completed. By mid-December, the outer walls were up.

Construction was hampered by bad weather in January and February 1876, but work resumed in March with the completion of the jail. The roof, cupola and chimneys were completed during the next phase of construction. The interior walls and finish work followed soon after.

The county commissioners accepted the building on May 12, 1876 and authorized the payment of the remaining $3,500 to the contractor. A contract for furnishing the building was signed in June and the old brick courthouse on Main Street was put up for sale.

The Independence Day Ball on July 4, 1876, was the first public function to take place in the new courthouse. A few days later, county officials started moving in to take up their public duties.



*Completed Belmont Courthouse during the early 1870's. (HP&A)*

Unfortunately, the completion of the courthouse coincided with an borrasca (unproductive) phase in the mines. In 1873, production in the Belmont District amounted to $460,488. Three years later, 1876, the figure had plummeted to $143,088, the best year for the next three decades. Belmont maintained the county seat until booming Tonopah snatched it away in 1905. By that time, the population of Belmont had dwindled to fewer than 25 permanent residents. (Earl, 1989)

## 4. WHEN THE HISTORIC SITE WAS AUTHORIZED

Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site was establish in 1973 by the Fifty-Seventh Session of the Nevada Legislature. The legislature appropriated

the money under Assembly Bill No. 964 - Committee on Ways and Means, Chapter 769, Section 68, subsection 6. The bill states:

> *"The sum of $25,000 to the state parks division of the department of conservation and natural resources for the restoration of the Belmont Courthouse in Nye County provided the Nye County first transfers to the State of Nevada the courthouse and the real property upon which the courthouse is located."*

On August 20th, 1974, the state acquired the Belmont Courthouse from Nye County by Quitclaim Deed. The county turned the property over to State Parks under the stipulation that the state restore the courthouse within the limits of appropriated funds. The deed describes the transfer of all of Block 6 in the town of Belmont which consists of approximately 1.6 acres.

The Belmont Courthouse is listed as part of the historic district of Belmont. The town of Belmont was listed as a historic district with the National Register of Historic Places on June 13, 1972. (HP&A, 1991)

## D. PLANNING PROCESS

### 1. PAST PLANS FOR THE AREA

This development plan is the first master plan which has been prepared for the Belmont Courthouse. An architectural study was completed in 1975 by Edward S. Parsons, AIA of Reno, Nevada. This study was to establish the basic parameters for stabilization and restoration of the courthouse. The state received a federal grant from the National Park Service for Phase 1 restoration on April 23, 1974. This grant provided $15,000 for building restoration and supplemented the total of $30,000 needed to complete Phase 1. A second federal grant provided $10,600 toward a total of $21,200 for completion of Phase 2.

In addition to these stabilization projects, several interpretive history reseach studies have been completed.

Development of the Statewide System Plan including standardization of all individual park master plans has prompted the plan. The town of Belmont has become increasing accessible by road improvements and has been influenced by the expansion of the state's population. There are increasing management pressures which are related to the protection of the historic and cultural resources of this unique site.

## 2. PROCESS FOR THIS PLAN UPDATE

The planning process for this update was initiated in the last months of 1991. It has been written with the assistance of the District Ranger, Park Administrators, and Planning and Development staff.

Information for the master plan was collected while on-site at the historic site as well as through research. Information collected includes: air quality, archeology, circulation, climate, geology, historical data, hydrology, land use, ownership, perceptual attributes, slopes, topography, utilities, vegetation and wildlife. Chapter Two, Regional Influences and Chapter Three, The Existing Historic Site, details the findings in these categories. Chapter Four, Development Plan, details the proposed plans for the historic site including the alternatives and summaries. (See Planning Process, Figure 1-2)

The last two chapters of the plan, Chapter Five, Park Management Plan, and Chapter Six, General Operational Procedures, are presented to give direction for operation and maintenance of the historic site.

Information from Chapter One through Three were analyzed and development constraints and opportunities identified. The resulting site analysis, brings together all this information and presents it as a single drawing.

The planning team, consisting of a planner and staff from State Parks, presented site inventory/analysis information and three planning alternatives at a public workshop held on March 19th, 1992. This workshop was well attended by the public. A wide range of discussions took place at the meeting but it was the consensus of the participants as well as park staff that Alternative 2, with several minor modifications, held the most appealing elements for the future development. The people who attended provided valuable information which was used to formulate the recommended plan.

The three alternatives represented a wide range of planning options with Alternative 1 containing the minimum amount of development/restoration and Alternative 3 the greatest amount of development/restoration. Alternative 1 provides for the least amount of interior building restoration and site development. Alternative 2 contains the renovation of part of the courthouse, outdoor historic display, an interior historic display area, inclusion of limited day use facilities and a new site access. Alternative 3 provides for the restoration of the entire courthouse, outdoor historic display, limited interior historic displays, day use facilities and a n

access. A descriptive account of each of the alternatives is presented within Chapter Four, Development Plan.

3. PARTICIPANTS IN THIS PLAN

In addition to State Park's personnel, comments and information were provided by the public, the State Park Advisory Commission, and the U.S. Forest Service.

4. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This planning effort facilitated public involvement in two ways: at a public workshop where discussion on the existing historic site and future development proposals was carried out and through written comments.

## CHAPTER II: REGIONAL INFLUENCES

### A. DEMOGRAPHICS

#### 1. HISTORIC

The population within Nye County has had little growth through much of this century. Within the 1970 - 1980 decade, Nye County grew by only 4.9 percent. During this time, Tonopah , the closest populated city to Belmont Courthouse, showed only a 1.3% increase. The mining industry has been the primary factor behind the population fluxes in the county. (Nevada Statistical Abstract, 1990)

#### 2. EXISTING/PROJECTED

Population studies indicate a net migration into the state of Nevada. Annual population increases have two and one-half as many new immigrants as new residents compared to those resulting from a natural population increase. This natural population increase will become a greater factor in the next several decades when added to the increasing immigration.

Trends in population for Nevada show distinct patterns of rapid increase in some counties, moderate growth in other counties, and slow growth or even decline in others. The population trends for Planning Region II which includes the counties of Esmeralda, Mineral, and Nye show a projected average increase in population of 4.1% from 1990 through the year 1995. Nye County, in which Belmont Courthouse is located, projects an increase of 2.1% for the same time period. However, the 1989 county population only accounted for 1.5% of the state population. This places Nye County as the eighth most populous. (Nevada Statistical Abstract, 1990)

TABLE 2-1
**REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**

| Region II | 1990 | 1995 | % Increase |
|---|---|---|---|
| Esmeralda | 1,260 | 1,370 | 8.7 |
| Mineral | 7,590 | 7,710 | 1.6 |
| Nye | 19,990 | 20,400 | 2.1 |
| Sub Total | 28,840 | 29,480 | 2.2 |

SOURCE: Nevada Statistical Abstract, 1990

## B. RECREATIONAL DEMAND

The Division of State Parks uses recreational demand as one criteria in the programming of activities in state parks. That demand can be evaluated by identifying popular activities, conducting user surveys, as well as other techniques. A Park User study was completed in 1988 and provides a wealth of site specific information for all staffed Nevada State Parks. However, Belmont Courthouse was not included in this survey due to its remote location and lack of staff. The closest and most similar type of park is Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park.

### 1. EFFECT OF POPULATION INCREASES IN CREATING DEMAND

The figures represented in Table 2-1 indicates that recreation demands will increase in Region II through the end of the century. This growth of 2.2% is much less than the statewide percentage of growth which is 23.5% over the same period of 1990 to 1995. However, as indicated by the 1987-88 park user survey visitation in Region II parks is heavily influenced by Region I. Almost half of Berlin-Ichthyosaur visitors originate from Region I, which has a projected population increase of 21.9% thru 1995.

### 2. AFFECT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA ON DEMAND

A primary reason for conducting the aforementioned 1987-88 park use survey was to help establish recreational demands. This data, in turn, is useful in programming activities for the state parks. The survey measured recreational demands for most of the parks within the system and includes information concerning the visitors and their preferred activities.

According to the survey, the largest number of visitors to Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Parks were from Region I (47%) which includes the urban areas of Reno, Sparks, and Carson City. The second highest visitation rate is from Northern California (20%). Attendance from the region in which Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park is located, only accounts for an estimated 11% of all visitors. The expanding growth of the urban centers in Region I will account for increasing visitation. The low park attendance from the immediate park area (11%) indicates the park is not considered a "local" state park. (Visitor Survey, 1988)

Direct comparisons between Berlin-Ichthyosaur and Belmont Courthouse are difficult due to the differences in park size, attractions and facilities. However, both are remote and have historical elements. Visitors to Berlin find an entire town with numerous buildings. Conversely, Belmont Courthouse is the only portion of the town of Belmont which is managed by the state.

## 3. ACTIVITY PREFERENCES

Visitors to Belmont have a strong preference for visiting historic sites. This is due primarily to the nature of the resource. The ghost town remains spark peoples' interest as to the historical daily life within the town. The remote location and limited access make this historic site a primary destination. Visitors also arrive at the site as part of a wider tour of other historic mining towns.

Building tours are the only specific activities which are organized for visitors. These tours are conducted once a month by contract personnel which give the tour during the months of June, July and August. No other organized activities are presently offered at the historic site.

The only interpretation which is offered on site is the location of a State Historic Marker outside the courthouse.

## 4. DEMAND FOR EXISTING ACTIVITIES

With no available data concerning the demand for activities within the historic site, it is very difficult to evaluate specific needs. However, it is possible to generalize the demand for activities due to the limited scope of the historic site resources. The vast majority of visitors come to Belmont to visit a "ghost town" and as such are in need of interpretive information concerning the history and daily life within the town. The 1987 SCORP provides Resident Activity Occasions for Planning Region II. The following table, Table 2-2, represents residence activity occasions for activities which are common to Belmont Courthouse.

Table 2-2 indicates there will be an increase in activity occasions of approximately 17% between 1990 and the year 2000 for both historical site visits and picnicking.

TABLE 2-2

**RESIDENT ACTIVITY OCCASIONS - PLANNING REGION II**

| ACTIVITY: | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Historical Sites | 6455 | 7279 | 8111 | 7783 | 9805 |
| Picnicking | 39823 | 44721 | 49675 | 53402 | 59747 |
| Hiking/Walking | 32441 | 36385 | 40369 | 39511 | 48477 |
| Pleasure Driving | 75220 | 84309 | 93503 | 99908 | 112196 |
| Relax Outdoors | 290053 | 319153 | 348604 | 37081 | 408472 |

SOURCE: SCORP, 1987

Guided tours of the courthouse are very popular but some type of self-guided tours which would include interpretive plaques, visitor acitivated audio programs and viewing windows for the building interior should be considered. Presently there are no interpretive services provided to the public, except for the occasional guided tour of the courthouse.

5. LATENT DEMAND FOR VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

Visitors who visit the courthouse are also visiting the town of Belmont and interpretive programs or elements should strive to place the courthouse into a historic context. Since this historic site is the only public recreation resource within the town, it should be used to interpret the entire town and not just the building.

The acre and a half site is largely under-utilized by visitors to the site. Picnic tables with grills would be a welcome addition which would give visitors a place to sit and relax after the long drive to the historic site. Providing these amenities may also help to curtail the unwanted invasions onto adjacent private property.

C. RECREATIONAL SUPPLY

Belmont Courthouse offers visitors the opportunity to view a fine example of Italianate architecture. The site provides an excellent location for interpreting the town of Belmont.

Offered activities include periodic tours, informal picnicking, photography and pleasure driving through the town.

Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park, located nearby in Nye County, is the closest state recreational area. Toiyabe National Forest surrounds the historic site and offers several recreational areas within a short driving distance.

Pine Creek Campground is located 16 miles north of Belmont in the Toquima Range and offers 22 family camping units, a picnic area, restrooms, fishing and a trailhead for Mount Jefferson. The Pine Creek runs through the campground and it is typically open from May 1 to October 15. (USFS, 1987)

Saulsbury Campground is a state operated roadside rest area located approximately 38 miles south of Belmont in the Monitor Range. Saulsbury offers 12 family camping units, picnic area and restrooms which are open year round. (USFS, 1987)

Carvers is a state operated roadside rest area located in the Big Smoky Valley with restrooms and picnic tables. It is located approximately 20 miles northwest of Belmont. (USFS, 1987)

The nearest Bureau of Land Management recreation site is Hickison Petroglyph Site located east of Austin.

## D. SUPPLY/DEMAND ANALYSIS

The 1987 SCORP identifies supply, demand and needs for recreational activities in Region II. Since these figures are compiled for the entire region, it is difficult to isolate the needs of a specific park. Due to the natural and cultural resources unique to each park, recommended activities may not be appropriate to any one park. In the case of Belmont Courthouse, picnicking is the only appropriate activity for which data is available. (See Table 2-3)

Table 2-3 indicates activities which would be considered appropriate to Belmont Courthouse.

TABLE 2-3

**REGION II SUMMARY OF SUPPLY,DEMAND AND NEED**

| | 1986 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Picnicking - Number of Tables | | | | |
| Demand | 73 | 81 | 87 | 98 |
| Supply | 128 | 128 | 128 | 128 |
| Need | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

SOURCE: SCORP, 1987

## E. LAND USE TRENDS

### 1. OWNERSHIP

The historic site is surrounded by land owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The Toiyabe National Forest encompasses large areas of the Shoshone, Toquima and Monitor Ranges. There are a total of approximately 40 private land holders who own 123 parcels in the town of Belmont with the majority of owners located in Tonopah. The courthouse is located on a parcel which is surrounded by 23 private and county parcels. (See Figure 2-1, Ownership.

### 2. LAND USE

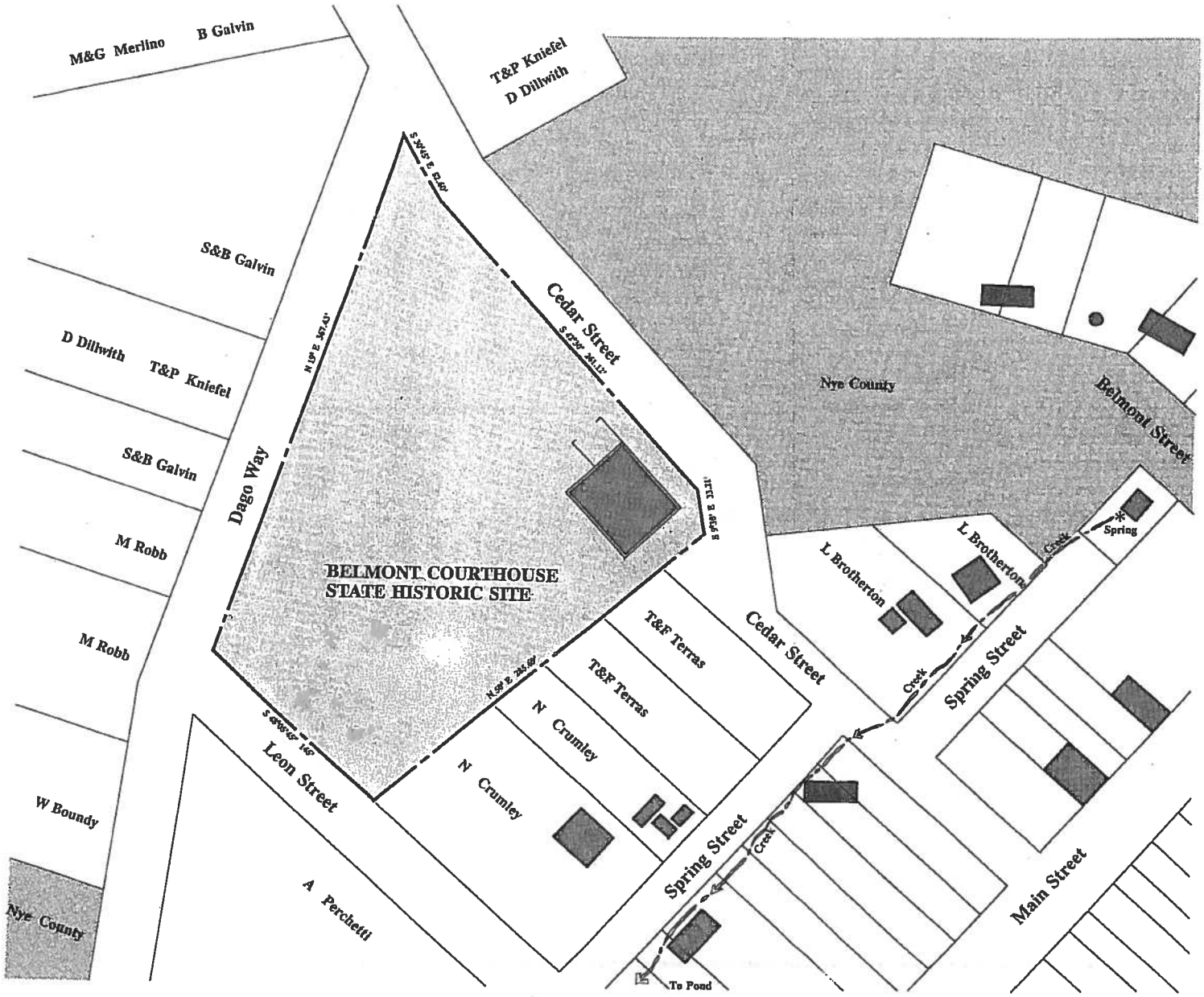
Land use in the area surrounding the historic site reflects uses associated with remote open land and federal multiple-use land holdings. Residential activities near the historic site and within the town of Belmont are a primary land use which could influence the park. Most residential properties are used only on a seasonal basis with only a few which exhibit year round occupancy. Agricultural activities are far removed from the area so that there is no impact on historic site activities. Mining, excavation, and borrow pits within the view of the historic site are all land uses which could have a significant negative impact on the historic site in the future. However, the impact of mining has to be considered in the context of this historic site. Belmont is an old mining town and as such certain mining activities may not necessarily pose the same threat as they would to a purely resource oriented park. A cemetery is located south of town and is considered an asset due to its historic nature.

### 3. ZONING

Nye County has no zoning plans due to its primarily rural character. The area represents the same attributes as a rural open land classification (RU) and as such impacts from incongruous land uses are unlikely. (Williams,1990)

### 4. ACCESS/TRANSPORTATION

The site is 43 mile northeast of Tonopah via US Highway 6, State Route 376 and State Route 82. This paved road, is approximately 24 miles long with the last 1.5 miles graded gravel. The remaining portion of gravel road will be paved prior to the end of 1992. State




# BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*

North

Scale: 1"=30'

Legend:

## OWNERSHIP

- Private Ownership
- State Ownership
- Nye Co. Ownership
- Existing Structures
- * Spring
- Creek

*Figure 2-1*

Route 82 runs through the middle of Belmont and is named Main Street.

A left turn off of Main Street on to Cedar Street provides the most direct access to the front door of the courthouse. Another access to the rear of the site is provided by Leon Street and Dago Way. (See Figure 2-2 Circulation & Access)

5. TRAILS

There are presently no interpretive or hiking trails within the historic site.

6. UTILITIES

a. Water

Although the historic site does hold water rights no delivery system in present.

b. Power

The historic site is not serviced by any utility and as such provides no electricity for use by visitors. Power is not available anywhere within the town of Belmont and any need for electricity would have to be provided by solar cells or generator.

c. Telephone

The historic site has no telephone service. A solar operated telephone is located near the trailer of the town watchman. The town watchman answers the phone.

d. Sewer

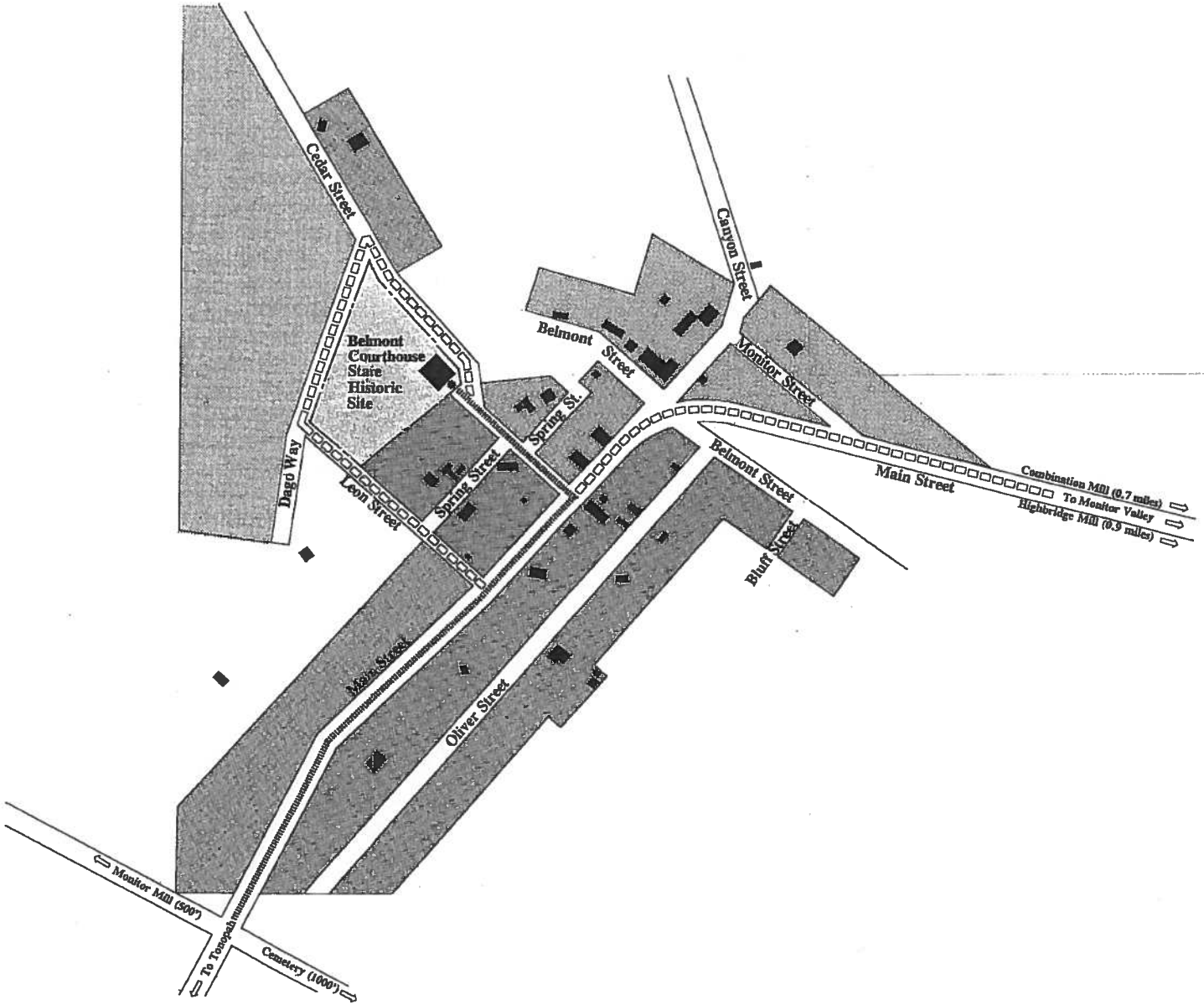
Due to its rural and isolated location the historic site is not tied into any municipal waste treatment plants. The historic site has no restroom facilities.

# BELMONT
## COURTHOUSE
## STATE HISTORIC SITE

*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*

North

Scale: 1"=100'




*Legend:*

## CIRCULATION & ACCESS

- Major Access Route
- Minor Access Route
- Existing Parking
- Belmont Structures

*Figure 2-2*

## CHAPTER III: THE EXISTING HISTORIC SITE

### A. NATURAL RESOURCES

#### 1. PHYSIOGRAPHY/SLOPES

##### a. Physiographic Features/Geographical Location

Belmont Courthouse and the town of Belmont is located in Nye County, Nevada (range 45 E, township 9 N), approximately 43 miles northeast of Tonopah. Belmont lies on the eastern slope of the Toquima Range, overlooking the Ralston Valley. It lies within the Great Basin physiographic province, which has north-south trending ridges and valleys.

Belmont is located at an approximate elevation of 7,400 feet, and 400 feet above the floor of Monitor Valley. The courthouse is located in the northern part of the town at a slightly higher elevation.

##### b. Slopes/Aspects

The courthouse is sited on a parcel of approximately 1.6 acres which is slightly sloping away from the building. The building is located in the extreme eastern corner of the site.

#### 2. GEOLOGY

##### a. Geology of Area

Pre-Tertiary rocks of diverse lithologies crop out across the region. Paleozoic marine sedimentary strata predominate in the east and central parts, whereas in the far western part late Paleozoic and Mesozoic marine sedimentary strata interbedded with metavolcanic rocks occur. Most of the Paleozoic strata change in facies from east to west, grading from a mainly carbonate assemblage (platform facies) westward to mixed carbonate-shale transitional assemblage possibly of back-arc origin. A volcanic-detrital assemblage with near-shore elements dominates the late Paleozoic (?) and Mesozoic sections in the extreme western part of northern Nye County and is possibly of island-arc or back-arc basin origin.

The intermontane valleys generally are filled with Pleistocene alluvial fill locally as thick as several thousand feet, and are covered with a veneer of Holocene sediments.

A succession of late Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic compressional tectonics events have affected the region. The two oldest recognized events, the late Paleozoic Antler and the early Mesozoic Sonoma orogenies, are characterized by large-scale eastward-directed low-angle faulting. Both events led to the juxtaposition of the diverse Paleozoic facies in the region of the Monitor, Toquima and Toiyabe Ranges.

Basin-and-range normal faults, which generally strike north to northeast, represent the latest stage of structural development and account for the present topography. These faults apparently were initiated in the middle Miocene, had major movement in the Pliocene, and have been recurrently active to the present. Uplift of the ranges may have locally generated gravity slides and low-angle faults that place pre-Tertiary bedrock on Tertiary and Quaternary deposits.

The Toquima Range, 8-14 miles wide extends for nearly 70 miles southward from Hickison Summit in Lander County to a broad divide at the northern end of the San Antonio Mountains. Wildcat Peak (10,507 feet) and Mount Jefferson (11,949 feet) are the highest points in the range.

The range has been elevated along its eastern flank by normal faults that bound the range between Ikes Canyon and Belmont. Paleozoic strata and Jurassic and Cretaceous plutonic rocks are extensively exposed. A thick sequence of ash-flow tuffs and minor tuffaceous sedimentary strata that possibly represent caldera fill composes the central part of the range at Mount Jefferson and separates the two main areas of exposure of pre-Tertiary rocks.

The principal metallic and nonmetallic commodities produced in northern Nye County have been gold, silver, lead, molybdenum, tungsten, mercury, petroleum, barite and magnesite. The volume of magnesite production far exceeds that of any of the other commodities, and its total dollar value ranks among the highest of all the commodities. (Ziony, 1984)

b. Seismic Zone Designation

The historic site as well as the entire town of Belmont is located within Seismic Zone #3. Zone 3# represents the possibility of severe damage from earthquakes. Since the courthouse is constructed of unreinforced solid brick walls the structure is highly suseptible to severe earthquake damage. (Uniform Building Code, 1991)

c. Belmont District

The areal geology may be described as Ordovician shale and limestone intruded by a large mass of granite that extends to the Round Mountain District. The Belmont ore occurrences are briefly described as quartz veins and lenses occurring in slates and limestones at or near their contact with intrusive siliceous granites. The alteration of the intruded rocks to mica schists and jasperoid is noticeable. The metallic minerals occur in the quartz as bunches and no banding is evident.

Stetefeldite, a rather rare argentiferous antomonial sulfide reported to contain silver, antimony, copper, lead, iron and sulphur is said to be the source of the silver in the Belmont ores. If this combination is a mineral rather than a mixture, and it may be the latter, it would probably be partzite due to the lead content. Dana's System of Mineralogy shows stetefeldtite to contain no lead. Regardless of the primary mineral, the oxidized ores containing the silver chloride were probably of the greatest importance.

Sheared quartz veins containing wolframite are found in several places in the granite south of Belmont. Only minor work has been done on these occurrences and no known tungsten production has been made.

Turquoise is found in the extreme southern part of the district at a camp called Monarch. Shaly limestone here has been highly altered and silified to jasper.

In the Barcelona or Spanish Belt area, which is in the northwestern part of the district, molybdenite has been found in and near the workings of the old Barcelona silver mine. The molydenite reportedly occurs in the metamorphics near the granitic intrusives.

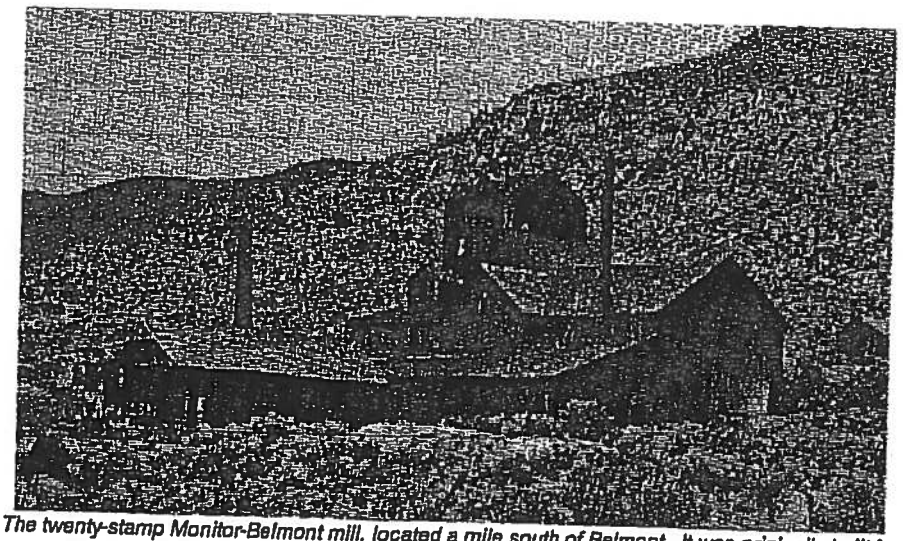
In the Meadow Canyon area, in the extreme northern part of the district, a small mercury mine and gold and silver deposits are found in metamorphics. (Kral, 1951)

d. Mining

Since mining and ore processing is the only reason the town of Belmont was founded, it is important to include a section on the type of mining and operation which existed. A detailed history of mining and town operations will be found in the historical section of the plan under Cultural Resources.

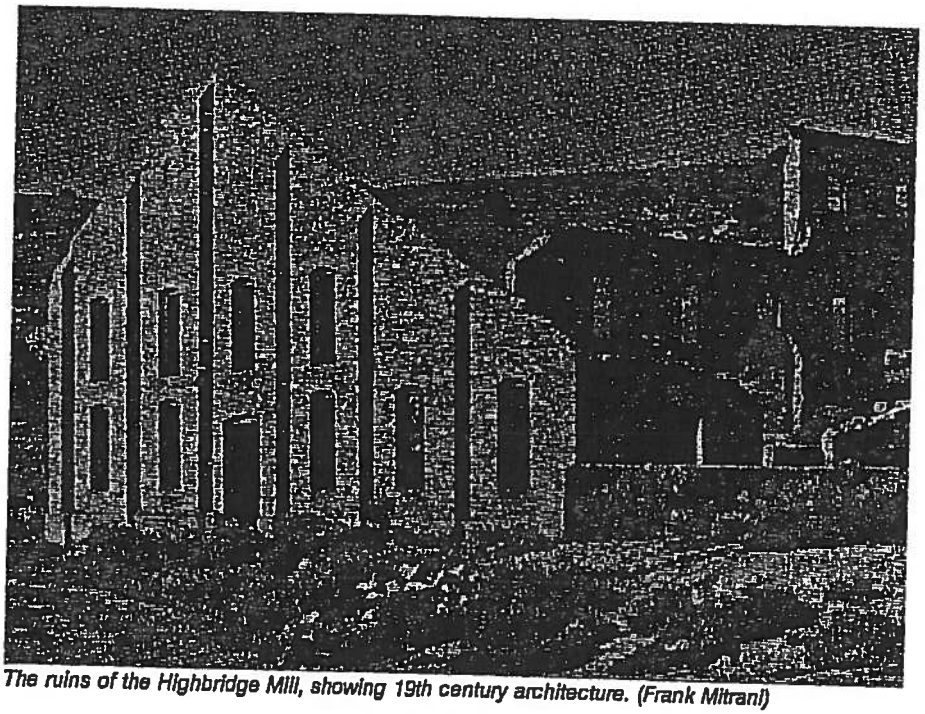
Ore was discovered by an Indian, and the first locations were made in October, 1865, soon after which a district was organized called Philadelphia (Belmont). The quartz veins are found between slate and porphyry formation, which runs north and south, the veins running with it, and dipping easterly at an angle of from thirty-seven to forty-five degrees. The ore is base, containing copper, lead and antimony, and is worked by milling and roasting.

The first mill was built in 1866, having ten stamps. During the following year a twenty-stamp mill was put up, and in 1868 a forty - stamp mill. The first mill erected ceased operations in 1869. The second was idle from 1868 until 1878, after which it ran at intervals for two years, and was then taken down and moved to Gold Mountain. The third stopped running in 1876.



*The twenty-stamp Monitor-Belmont mill, located a mile south of Belmont. It was originally built in 1887 and is presently in ruins. (Griffen Collection, Nevada Historical Society)*

The deepest shaft in the district is in the Belmont Mine, and penetrates to the depth of 500 feet. At the depth of 360 feet a level has been run in the vein for the distance of 1,400 feet. In sinking winzes from this level two chimneys of ore were discovered, pitching south, which were so remarkably rich that the stock of the company rose from $1.50 to $30 per share within a few days. One of these chimneys was within 200 feet of the locality from which the Canfield Company took half a million dollars' worth of ore a few years ago. Considerable difficulty was experienced in working the Belmont Mine, on account of the flow of water. Pumping 200 gallons of water per minute could scarcely keep the water levels in check. The shaft of the Monitor-Belmont was sunk to a depth 250 feet, and large amounts of rich ore was taken. (Angel, 1881)



*The ruins of the Highbridge Mill, showing 19th century architecture. (Frank Mitrani)*

## 3. Water Resources

### a. Watersheds

The property is slightly sloping and all surface water runoff is handled by sheet drainage.

b. Impoundments

There are no water impoundment located on the site.

c. Groundwater/Aquifer/Wells

The historic site does not have any developed wells.

d. Water Rights

Nevada Division of Parks holds certificated water rights to the Belmont Springs. The original water rights were conveyed to the Nye County through a deed executed in 1875. These rights were provided for the use of the Belmont Courthouse. The total amount of flow from the Belmont Spring distribution system is .15 cubic feet of water per second for domestic purposes. The flow is divided by an unknown number of users. The distribution system consists of a collection box and 2, 2" pipelines.

A second water appropriation was also granted to the county in the amount of .008 cubic feet of water per second. This second spring has several names including Mexican, Garden and Mill Springs.

4. Vegetation

a. Natives

The historic site is located at an elevation between 6,500 and 8,500 feet and this places the site within the Pinyon-Juniper Community. The following plant listing is a general listing for plants common to this elevation and location within the Toquima Range.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Grasses** | |
| Squirreltail | *Sitanion hystix* |
| Needle and thread grass | *Stipa comata* |
| Indian ricegrass | *Oryzopsis hymenodies* |
| **Shrubs** | |
| Antelope bitterbrush | *Purshia tridentata* |
| Sagebrush | *Artemisia tridentata* |
| | *Artemisia nova* |
| Cliffrose | *Cowania stansburiana* |
| Rabbitbrush | *Chrysothamnus species* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Forbes | |
| Lupine | | *Lupinus species* |
| Milkvetch | | *Astragalus species* |
| Aster | | *Aster species* |
| | Trees | |
| Pinyon pine | | *Pinus monophylla* |
| Juniper | | *Juniperous osteosperma* |

(Ziony, 1984)

b. Introduced

The site presently does not contain any introduced plant material. However, historically the courthouse may have had some ornament plants or trees which were planted during the occupation of the courthouse.

c. Uncommon, Sensitive, or Endangered

There are no known sensitive plants located on the site or in the surrounding area. (Nevada Heritage Program Database, 1992)

5. Soils

A soil survey has not been completed for this part of Nye County. The Department of the Interior, Soil Conservation Service has completed a survey of the Big Smoky Valley just to the west of the Toquima Range. Due to the small size of the site needed soils surveys could be obtained by direct testing. (SCS, 1992)

6. Wildlife

The courthouse is situated on approximately 1.6 acres and as such does not provide the varied habitats necessary to support a large number of species. Most wildlife which would be seen at the historic site are passing through the historic site and are not full time residents. Small animals found in the area, include jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, coyotes, mice and other rodents, rattlesnakes and several species of lizards. Deer are also present in the Toquima Range.

TABLE 3-1

**WILDLIFE INHABITING BIG SMOKY/MONITOR VALLEY, NV**

| Wildlife species: | Openland | Wetland | Rangeland |
|---|---|---|---|
| American perigrine falcon | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Badger | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Bald Eagle | ▪ | 2 | 1 |
| Bobcat | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Chuckar partridge | ▪ | ▪ | 1 |
| Cottontail | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Coyote | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Golden eagle | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Kit Fox | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Mountain lion | ▪ | ▪ | 2 |
| Mourning dove | 1 | ▪ | 2 |
| Mule deer | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Other rabbits | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Reptiles | 2 | ▪ | 1 |
| Rodents | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Shorebirds | 2 | 1 | ▪ |
| Songbirds | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Waterfowl | 2 | 1 | ▪ |

1 Indicates habitat type of major importance to this species
2 Indicates habitat type of minor importance to this species
▪ Indicates habitat not applicable to this species
SOURCE: SCS, 1980

There are no rare, threatened or endangered species located on site. (Nevada Natural Heritage Program Database, 1992)

7. Climate

a. Temperature

The historic site is located in a semi-arid climate characterized as a mid-latitude steppe. This mid-latitude steppe encompasses more than half of the state. The temperature is continental, the winter months averaging near or below freezing and the summers are warm to hot.

The location of the historic site, above Ralston Valley does account for temperature readings slightly below those found on the valley floor. As in many desert areas the effects of radiational cooling are great due to the lack of clouds through most of the year.

Although the area does experience four very distinct seasons, it does offer more variety than areas in the extreme southern tip of the state. The greatest range in high/low temperatures occur during the summer months and average a differential of 30 degrees.

A weather reporting station has been established at Belmont by Cooperative Observer Program of the Weather Service Forcast Office. Since this station has been in operation a short time data is incomplete at this date. (John James, 1992)

TABLE 3-2

| | AVERAGE TEMPERATURES* 1986 - 1989 | | 1988 TEMPERATURES* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High | Low | High | Low |
| January | 36.6 | 18.2 | 45.1 | 22.5 |
| February | 42.3 | 21.0 | 46.5 | 25.2 |
| March | 51.0 | 29.5 | 52.7 | 28.7 |
| April | 70.6 | 39.4 | N/A | N/A |
| May | 65.2 | 41.4 | 61.3 | 39.0 |
| June | 78.5 | 49.8 | 79.8 | 49.7 |
| July | 87.5 | 56.4 | 90.0 | 59.5 |
| August | 86.5 | 57.5 | 87.0 | 57.7 |
| September | 78.6 | 48.6 | 80.0 | 47.2 |
| October | 69.4 | 42.4 | 76.3 | 45.4 |
| November | 49.0 | 27.8 | 50.5 | 27.2 |
| December | 42.1 | 23.9 | 47.0 | 28.2 |

[* the closest NDSP weather recording station is located at Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park, all temperatures degrees F were recorded at that park station]

b. Precipitation

Rainfall within the historic site is slight which is typical of most high desert areas. The entire state is located within the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada, which claim most of the moisture as storms pass from west to east. The rainshadow effect is repeated on a smaller scale throughout the Great Basin. West facing slopes tend to receive more moisture than east facing slopes. The majority of precipitation falls during the summer and winter months. Winter precipitation is generally in the form of snow. Severe snowstorms may leave up to 18-24" of snow, with total snow depths of 3 to 4 feet.

TABLE 3-3

| MONTH | AVERAGE RAINFALL*† | 1988 RAINFALL * |
|---|---|---|
| January | .37 | .27 |
| February | .44 | .40 |
| March | .44 | .0 |
| April | .62 | .0 |
| May | 1.72 | .53 |
| June | .86 | 1.20 |
| July | .30 | .67 |
| August | .37 | .75 |
| September | .03 | .0 |
| October | .69 | .65 |
| November | .94 | .77 |
| December | .63 | 1.89 |
| **TOTALS:** | **7.41** | **7.13** |

[* all rainfall measured in inches at Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park which is the closest NDSP monitoring station (average for years 1986 through 1988 which were drought years)] [† amounts may be slightly less due to Belmont location on an southwestern slope]

c. Sunshine

The historic site receives full sun an average of 77% of the time. Summer days exhibit a higher amount of solar radiation which in part is due to the length of days. The sparse cloud cover and higher elevation combine to give the area more sunshine than is typically found at similar latitudes. (Houghton, Sakamoto, Gifford, 1975)

The location of the town of Belmont on the southwestern slope of the Toquima Range results in early sunsets due to the afternoon shadow of the range.

d. Wind

Surface winds in Nevada are governed primarily by the prevailing storm tracts and the basin-range topography. The prevailing winds for the historic site are northerly and northwesterly.

The diurnal effects of wind result in calm morning winds with winds strengthening in the afternoon. This is typical to most valleys in Nevada with upslope heated air in the day and downslope movement of air at night.

The diurnal affects are especially evident on the southwestern facing slopes of ranges which will receive early morning sun. This early morning heating increases the upslope winds.

e. Electrical Storms

Thunderstorms, often without rain, are common during the late summer. These storms are typically of a very short duration and are generally in the late afternoon. Tornados and funnel clouds are possible but are very rare and no known sightings exist in the area.

8. Air Quality

a. Existing

Air at the historic site is usually of high quality. Because of the remoteness of the historic site, there is little to no urban or industrial sources of pollution affecting air quality.

The Round Mountain and Manhattan mining operations located in the Big Smoky Valley do produce above average Total Suspended Particles (TSP) due to mechanical crushers and mining operations. These particulates are typically confined to the Big Smoky Valley and rarely cross the Toquima Range into the Monitor and Ralston Valleys located due east. (NDEP, 1991)

Occasional strong winds will create dust storms, but air quality returns to normal soon after the winds calm. Additionally, cars on the dirt roads will cause dust clouds, but this is a highly localized degradation along the roadways.

b. Projected

There are numerous patented mining claims in the area surrounding the historic site which may at any time become active and contribute to the amount of suspended particulates within the town of Belmont.

9. Perceptual

a. Scenic Attributes

Activities at the town of Belmont and Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site includes photography and historic site touring. The historic buildings in the town of Belmont are the primary subject of this activity. The town has many ruins and falling structures which gives a ghost town appearance to visitors. These ruins are located in the midst of some well restored historic structures and newer structures.

b. Location and Direction of Views

A distant view of Belmont captures the attention of visitors approaching from the south and Belmont Courthouse becomes a focal point. The courthouse with its bright red brick and well maintained white trim stands out from other historic structures. Many of the other structures in town are single story and built of native stone in contrast to the large two story courthouse.

In addition to the sight of historic structures there are excellent views of the Ralston Valley and Toquima Range. The most impressive views are oriented in a southerly direction.

The most visited structure is the Belmont Courthouse which is located slightly above town with broad vistas of the surrounding town and distant views of the Ralston Valley to the South.

c. Significant Areas Outside Historic Site Boundaries

The town of Belmont is surrounded by the Toiyabe National Forest. This National Forest is managed by the Tonopah Ranger District located in Tonopah, NV. The courthouse is surrounded by privately owned parcels along what was a well defined street system. (Wyrick, 1991)

The existing acreage incorporates all of the significant historical and cultural resources which were associated with the courthouse building. The state does not own or have any management authority over any other portion of the historic town of Belmont.

d. Sounds, Smells, and Sources

The historic site location on the southwest slope of the Toquima Range isolates it from all modern intrusions including pollution and traffic noise.

e. Spatial Patterns

The structures which are still standing in Belmont give the town the spatial impact of a small ghost town. After passing through the town along Main Street, visitors turn north onto Cedar Street and pass the intersection of Spring Street. At the intersection of Spring Street a grouping of trees provide a canopy which visitor pass through on the way to the front of the courthouse.

The courthouse is located on a high point above most of the town and is exposed with no other defining elements.

## B. CULTURAL RESOURCES

### 1. Archeological/Ethnology

The area surrounding Belmont has not been extensively surveyed for archeological remains. The occupation of the town during the late 1800s could yield significant finds for this period in the history of Nevada.

The prehistory of the area has not been extensively researched except for information concerning the ethnology of the region. The Monitor Valley is situated between two high ranges the Toquima Range to the west and the Monitor Range to the east. Both have summits above 10,000 feet and a general elevation which produced considerable moisture but no important rivers in the valley.

Information suggest that the Great Smoky Valley Shoshoni were like other Nevada Shoshoni in all important aspects.

Subsistence activities resembled those of the native occupants of the Reese River Valley, except that there was no ownership of seed areas. Thus, Hot Springs people gathered seeds in their own valley and in the Toquima and Toiyabe Ranges where they pleased. There was probably no danger of their trespassing on Reese River pine-nut groves in the Toiyabe Range, for they ordinarily gathered on their own side of the summit.

The Great Smoky Valley 5-day fall festival was held, after pine nuts were harvested, at Hot Creek, Millet's Ranch, Manhattan, or elsewhere. They were directed by Captain John. After the dance, Captain John would announce the 10-day rabbit hunt, held at various places in the valley.

Belmont became the center of a fairly large white and Indian population at an early time and seems to have had local festivals and rabbit drives under a special director, Old Joe. After he retired, Bill Kawich, who had come from the Kawich Mountains, became director.

Festivals at this time drew Indians, from most neighboring valleys. Bogombits Dagwani was director of the joint festivals held by the people of Belmont and Stone Cabin. At what period he has director is not known. (Steward, 1938)

2. Historical

   a. Structures/Buildings/Landscape

      1. Architectural Style

         The two-story, brick Belmont Courthouse is an excellent example of the Italiante style of architecture, which was popular in America from 1840-1880. Architectural features such as the tall, narrow windows, hipped roof, bracketed eaves, and lantern emphasize the vertical orientation of this

style. The Italianate style, also known as the Tuscan, Lombard, or Round Bracked style, looked to the rural architecture of northern Italy for inspiration. Introduced in England in the 1830s by Alexander Jackson Davis, the style was popularized by the books of Andrew Jackson Downing. The simplest form of the style included a near square building with a low pyramidal roof, bracked eaves and perhaps a cupola or lantern. The architecture also exhibited both round-headed windows of Tuscan villa and the classical architraves of Renaissance palaces frequently were used to ornament the facades of urban row houses and commercial buildings. The Italiante style could be as picturesque as the Gothic style or as restrained as classic architecture. Buildings of immense popularity were produced during the height of the style's influence during the decade before the Civil War. (Poppeliers, 1976) (McFadden, 1992)

2. Courthouse Structure and Details

The Belmont Courthouse measures 49'4" by 60'0", and has a one-story addition in the rear which served as a jail. The addition measures 21'0" by 24"; the roof and rear wall have been demolished. The brick building rests on a granite foundation, 24" thick, which has been face cut. The granite was laid with with a cement mortar. An articulated water table separates the foundation from the first story. The brick is laid in common bond, with no exposed headers on the exterior. Headers are visible from the interior every sixth course. The brick, manufactured at a nearby kiln, is of a variegated salmon color. The bricks measure 4 1/8" wide by 9" long by 3 2/4" high. Four wythes of brick create a wall thickness of 18 1/2".

The facade of the building is divided into five bays. The centrally located entrance bay projects from the facade. The main entrance has panelled double doors, a semi-circular two-lite transom, and a segmented keystone arch. Broad self-returning steps terminate at the entrance; at one time two wooden bulletin boards were located on either side of the doors. The doors are surmounted by paired windows and flanked by two bays of windows on either side, with a total of four windows and an entrance on the first floor and five windows on the second floor. The narrow, one-over-one lite, double hung sash windows are counter balanced with iron weights. The windows are surmounted with straight stone

lintels on the first floor and segmented lintels on the second floor. The windows have stone sills as well. The rear of the building exhibits the location of an upstairs door.

Two, two-story wide brick pilasters with simple capitals grace the corners of the building's main elevation, terminating in a entablature which includes an architrave, frieze and cornice. The pilasters support a full entablature. Ornamental wood brackets, originally paired, are irregularly spaced under the eaves.

The hipped roof of the Courthouse terminates in a flat, rectangular deck. The roof covering is tin (terne) standing seam. A wooden lantern rises from a low base, and measures 10'0"square. Pedimented, paired windows are set in square panels on each of the four sides. The hipped roof of the lantern has a full entablature supported by ornamental brackets, three per side. Additionally, eight brick chimneys rise from the walls of the building. Six are located on the main structure and two were originally located on the jail structure; only one remains. Each chimney has corbelled courses above recessed panels.

The interior of the first and second floors is bisected by a central corridor and stairway. The framing is of full dimension, rough cut, Douglas fir. The floors are 3/4" thick tongue and groove boards 6" in width. The flooring is nailed, at right angles, directly to the floor joists, without the additional support of a subfloor. Plaster covers the brick support walls and interior walls and ceilings of wood lath. The plaster has a smooth finish and is painted white.

(Parsons, 1975) (Poppieliers, 1976)
(Blumenson, 1977) (Harris, 1975)
(McFadden, 1992)

3. Restoration Work

The greatest deterioration to the building was caused by wind to the roof covering, by ice to the cornices and eaves, by the weight of the massive cupola, and by the lack of understanding on the part of builders on how to frame for transferring of roof loads to the bearing walls and their foundations. (Parsons, 1975)

The state undertook preservation efforts to restore the courthouse by replacing the roof, correcting faulty and weak structural systems, bracing the stairs, and restoring the cupola. This work was accomplished in two phases. Phase 1 consisted of correcting several deficiencies in the structure where time was of the essence because of potential irreparable damage from the elements. Phase 2 is a continuation of Phase 1 concentrating on correcting deficiencies that involved more "detail" as well as additional structural corrections and stabilization.

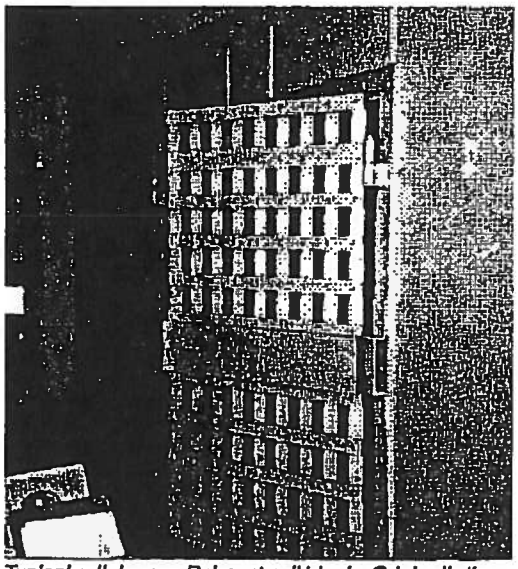
The structural restoration of the courthouse was accomplished between June 30, 1975 and October 30, 1975 by the Leonard Smith Construction Company of Reno. All work was done in conformance with plans and specifications provided by Edward S. Parsons, AIA, the architect selected for the restoration. The entire roof structure was strengthened, reinforced and braced with the cupola being rebuilt. The old metal roofing material was removed and new plywood decking installed on all roofs. Terne roofing was installed on all roofs with appropriate flashing. The members of the cornice, including the facia and soffit were completely rebuilt, including new rafter ends and blocking.

In addition to the replacement of the roof, the stabilization of the building included the leveling and plumbing of sagging attic beams, posts and structural members with dense select structural grade Douglas Fir. As a protection from inclement weather, translucent plastic sheeting was installed on exterior openings excluding the cupola. Temporary protective wood railings were installed on both stair systems in accordance with O.S.H.A. guidelines. The cupola was repaired and rebuilt with eight new sashes installed, including glazing.

The brick in the chimneys above the roof level were replaced. In addition, all joints were scraped and pointed. The mortar which was used was: 1 part Portland cement; 1/4 - 1/2 part lime putty; and 3 parts sand. (HP&A, 1975)

All exposed exterior woodwork, both new and existing, was painted with three coats of white paint. The new roof was painted with 2 coats of grey paint.

In 1991 a block of cells was moved to Belmont Courthouse from the Gabbs jail. The cells were originally from the Belmont Courthouse but there is no references as to how the cell block was placed within the jail. The original cell block had 4 individual cells with doors. This was later modified to two cells, one the original size and the other claimed the rest of the block resulting in a large L-shaped cell. The entire steel cell block measured 14'6" X 10'6" and both remaining doors were located on the same side. These one piece cell blocks were typically placed within the center of the jail allowing a walkway around all sides. The cell door typically would face toward the jailer.



*Typical cell door on Belmont cell block. Originally there were four doors servicing four cells. (NDSP, 1990)*

4. Historic Landscape

There is not much information on the uses of the grounds which surrounded the courthouse during its occupation. What is known is that the site never had any type of developed ornamental gardens. The location of the building in a working mining town and the length of time it was in use are probably factors which precluded the development of the civic landscape or gardens which are found in association with such monumental architecture.

Research of photographs available through the Nevada Historical Society provides information on the location of features such as outbuildings, fences, etc. which are no longer in evidence. Belmont Photo #186 (c 1873) indicates the location of a very tall 12' solid wood stockade. This stockade was built of vertical planks over a square frame. The stockade was constructed with the frame to the exterior and smooth planking on the interior.

The stockade surrounded the jail structure at the rear north-eastern corner of the courthouse. By scaling information from architectural plans and photographs the stockade measured 64' on the east and west sides and, 42' along the back. Framing consisted of three equally spaced horizontal braces with vertical support posts every 8'. Vertical 6" (+or-) boards were placed on the interior of the stockade.

Photo #186 also indicates that two 5'swing gates were located on the rear northeast corner of the fence. The gates can be differentiated from the stockade wall by the use of diagonal wood braces which are typically used to help carry the load from the hinges. Photo #243 (c 1895) indicates a set of double swing gates on the southeastern corner of the stockade. This set of gates would be in direct line with the other set of gates located on the northeast end of the stockade.

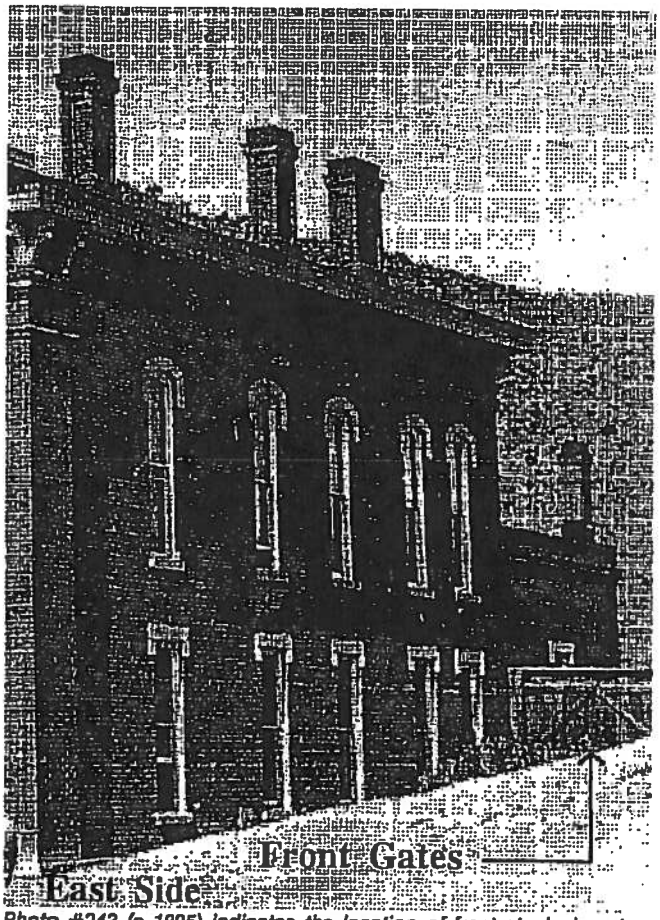


*Photo #243 (c 1895) indicates the location of front stockade gates. (Nevada Historical Society)*

Two sets of gates would allow a wagon to pull into and exit the compound without having to turn around. Gate hardware is not in evidence in any historic photograph which suggests that gate hinges and hasps were located inside the stockade and the gates opened to the interior.

The stockade was of poor construction as it appears to be falling and braced at the time of photo #186 (c. 1873). Winds coming up Ralston Valley may have contributed to pushing the west section of the stockade inward.

The purpose of this stockade could only logically have been used as jail yard or exercise yard for prisoners. The height and solid construction of this stockade does not suggest that it was used for a livery or corral for horses. The smooth frameless interior would also make climbing of the stockade difficult by prisoners.

Photo #186 also indicates that the roof of the jail was a two plane shed type of roof. A small chimney was located on the north wall of the jail and a larger chimney is located on the eastern wall. A small shed roof connects the jail to the western side stockade wall. This small shed roof provided weather protection to a door which at one time entered the central hall of the courthouse.

A small separate structure (approximately 14'X10') with a simple peak roof is also located within the stockade just north of the jail. This structure was probably used as a privy. Photo #186 also indicates the presence of what appears to be a vent pipe. Other uses of this small structure such as a kitchen is unlikely since meals would have been provided by a local merchant on contract with the county. (Nevada Historical Society, 1992)

The present building also provides many clues as to the location of the stockade and other lost structures. Bricks have been removed along the east side of the building which correspond to the location of the stockade wall and in particular the double swing gates. This suggest that these holes in the brick facade were used to tie the stockade into the building. Another set of holes is also found along the north wall of the courthouse which also corresponds to the photographed location of the stockade.

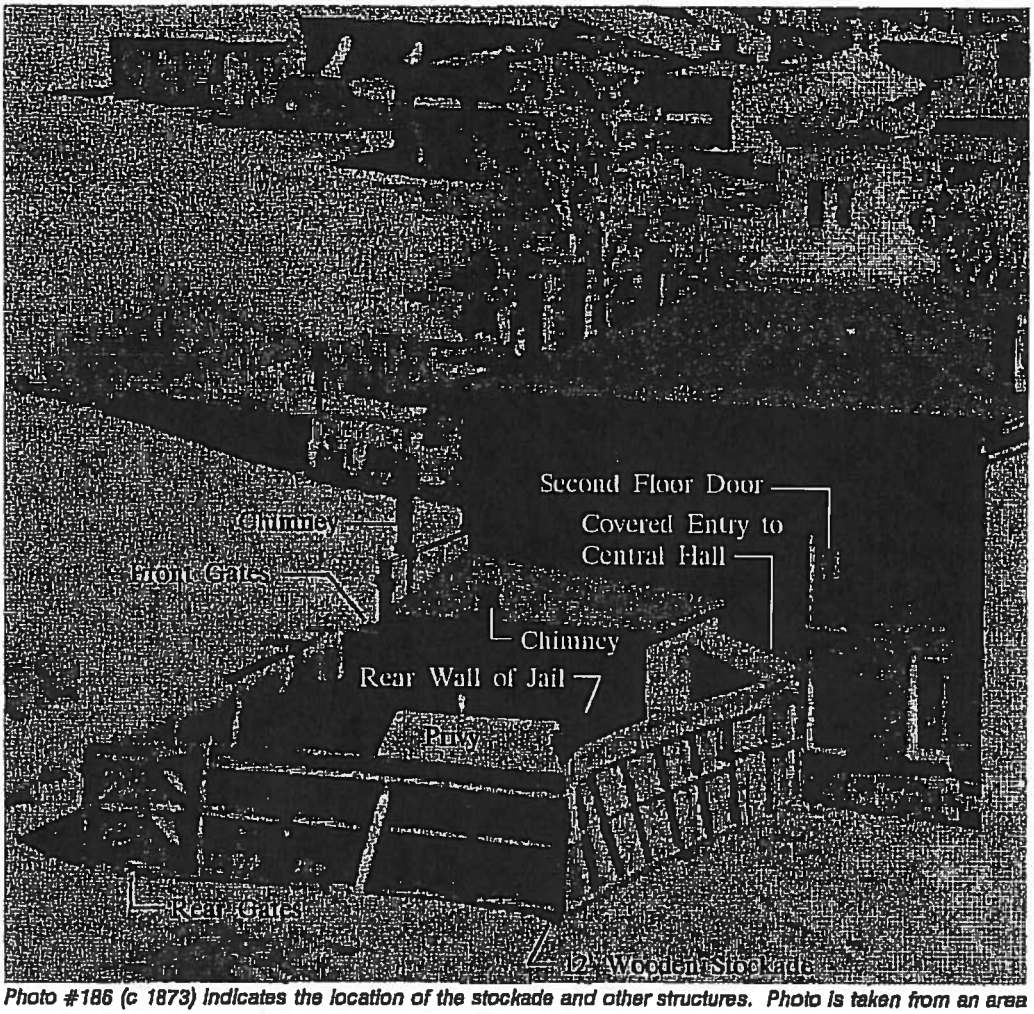



*Photo #186 (c 1873) indicates the location of the stockade and other structures. Photo is taken from an area northwest of the Belmont Courthouse. (Nevada Historical Society)*

The shed roof located between the jail and the stockade is still evidenced by discoloration of the bricks located above the doorway. The roof structure for the jail is also indicated by the brick discoloration along the parapet wall which is part of the courthouse's east wall. The second floor doorway and central hall door were probably in use at the same time but the upper door was eliminated once the stockade was built. Photo #186 indicates the door was in place but no stairs provided access to it. There is no evidence of how the stairs were constructed or their original location.

A large depression is located near the rear of the building and corresponds to what appears to be the privy. Archaeologic

investigations of this depression may be able to prove or disprove the presence of a privy structure.

A second smaller chimney was located along the back wall of the jail and this chimney may have been tied into one or more heating stoves.

## C. SITE ANALYSIS

The Site Analysis indicates the constraints and opportunities available within the historic site. This analysis identifies areas which offer good views, points of interest, historic interpretive opportunities and recreational opportunities. The primary vistas begin with views of the town from along the entry road. The views as you approach the historic site are uninterrupted with the surrounding Toquima Range as a back drop. Once at the courthouse the views back to the southwest are expansive due to the size of Monitor Valley and the elevation of the historic site. Views toward the town are excellent from the front of the courthouse. (See Figure 3-1 Site Analysis)

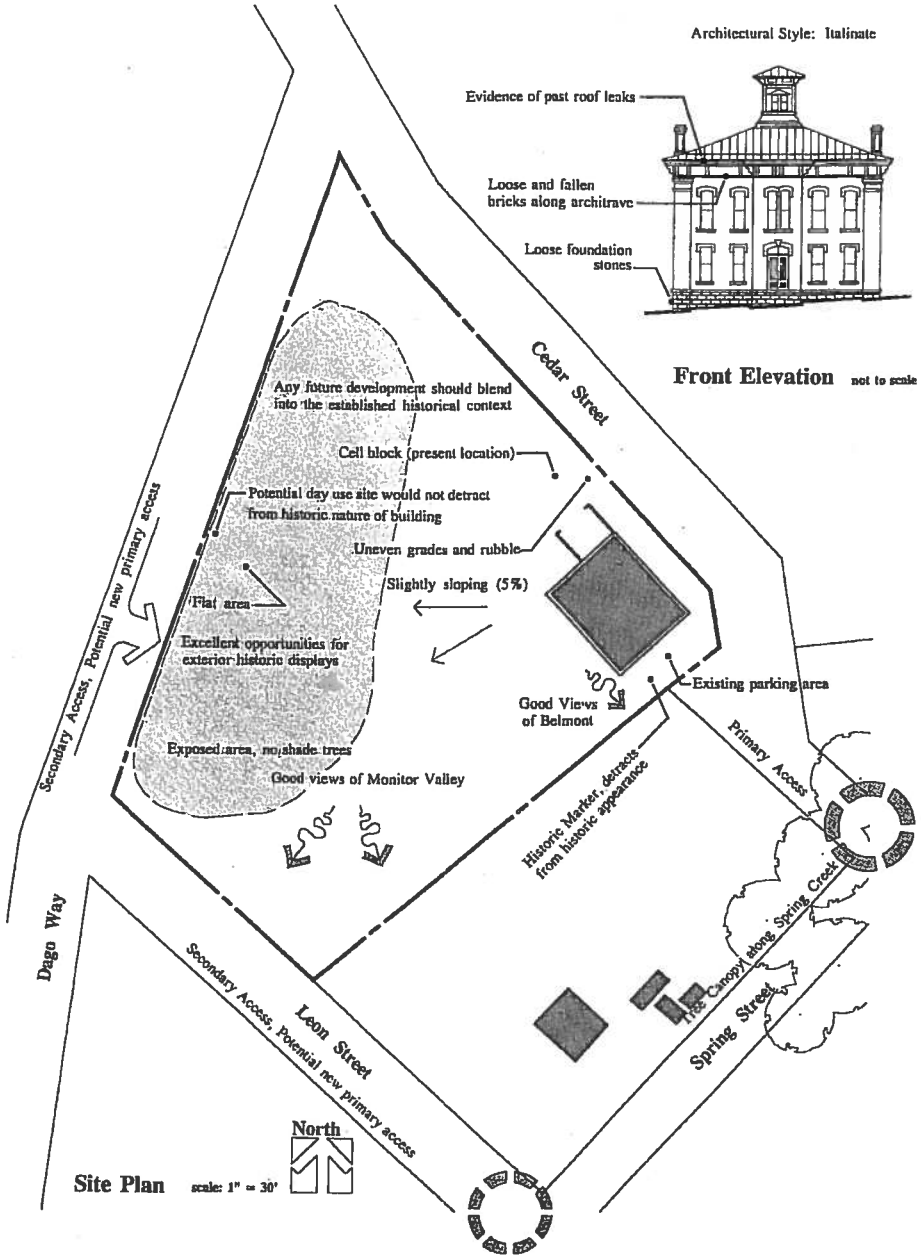
A large flat to slightly sloping area located to the rear of the courthouse would provide an excellent location for picnicking and/or historic interpretation. This potential day use site is located with full view of the building but does not detract from overall views of the structure. There are no trees to provide shade in this area and shade would be needed to help moderate the sun if a picnic area is proposed. Access to this area is excellent with Dago Way paralleling the site and Leon Street providing access to Main Street. This could divert traffic from arriving at the door of the courthouse and encourage a short interpretive walk. Moving vehicles away from the front door will also make photography of the building easier with less modern intrusion from automobiles.

Currently a State Historic Marker is located at the front of the building and detracts from the historic appearance. Replacement of this dated marker could be accomplished with a bronze plaque attached to the building using approved methods that will not damage the existing wall.

Walking around the courthouse is easy except in the rear and east side of the building where rubble and uneven grades make it difficult. An opportunity exist for reestablishing the perimeter of the stockade wall which once surrounded the jail. This wall could help to provide a sense of enclosure and in conjunction with the exposed jail could provide an excellent interpretive display when the building is locked.

# BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

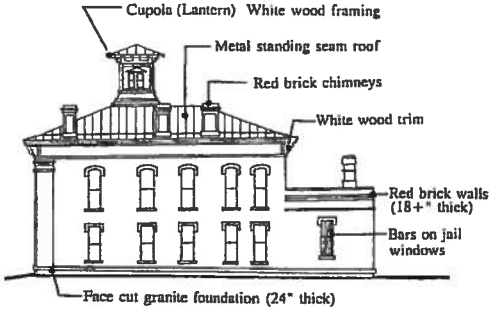
*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*




**Site Plan** scale: 1" = 30'

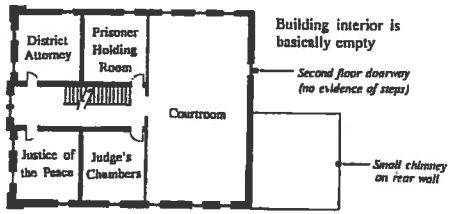



**Front Elevation** not to scale



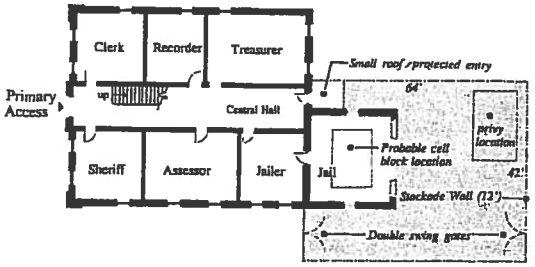

**Side Elevation** not to scale

Building interior has many opportunities for providing general interpretive displays and period rooms




**Second Floor** not to scale

Potential exist for reestablishing the Jail Stockade
Excellent opportunities for exterior historic displays




**First Floor** not to scale

*Legend:*

## SITE ANALYSIS

- Good Views
- Major Access
- Minor Access
- Potential Development Area
- Historic location of Stockade

*Figure 3-1*

Presently, the cell block is located outside the jail house and should be relocated to the interior of the jail. The relocation of the cell block will help to provide visitors with a better jail interpretive theme. Present visitors enjoy operating the cell door but there is a concern for safety due the weight of the doors. A simple door stop could be provide which would prevent hands from being injured. The remaining jail walls will need to be cleaned and stabilized.

The interior of the courthouse provides many interpretive opportunities including areas for general interpretive displays and restored period rooms. Presently one of the rooms (Sheriff Office) is being used to display some collected artifacts while the rest of the building is vacant and under-utilized. The courthouse has several major physical constraints to development. The restoration of historic structures requires a great deal of research and is typically a very expensive undertaking. The most important constraint to development is to make sure that construction work is historically accurate but even more importantly the structure is secure, safe and structurally sound.

A major cultural constraint which must be considered is the historic character of the site. All development must blend in or be located away from the historic structure to avoid visual and contextual conflicts. All development should also not detract from the remaining historic town of Belmont.

## D. EXISTING FACILITIES AND USE

The existing facilities at Belmont Courthouse consist of one plaque provided by the Nevada Historic Marker Program. The courthouse is presently closed and kept locked to prevent theft and vandalism.

### 1. ROADWAYS

Roads border the historic site on three sides with Cedar Street the existing main site entrance. The site can also be accessed from Leon Street and Dago Way. These streets are basically unimproved but well graded. All streets in Belmont can become muddy and difficult to drive after winter storms and poor road conditions can persist for weeks.

### 2. UTILITIES

The site presently has no utilities.

3. STATISTICS

During 1991 Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site was visited by 3,564 visitors. This visitation represents an increase of 21% over the average of 2,794 over the past 10 years. Since Belmont Courthouse is not near a growing metropolitan center, any increases or decreases will be tied to statewide visitation and recreational opportunities provided at the historic site.

TABLE 3-4

**BELMONT COURTHOUSE VISITATION 1982 to 1991**

| YEAR: | NUMBER OF VISITORS: |
|---|---|
| 1982 | 4,515 |
| 1983 | 4,500 |
| 1984 | 525 |
| 1985 | 1,574 |
| 1986 | 1,458 |
| 1987 | 2,478 |
| 1988 | 2,166 |
| 1989 | 3,911 |
| 1990 | 3,256 |
| 1991 | 3,564 |
| TEN YEAR AVERAGE | 2,794 |

SOURCE: NDSP, 1992

Visitor numbers are kept by a contract employee who lives near the courthouse and keeps tract of the number of cars which stop at the site.

Monthly visitation at the historic site is strongest in the month of August with the other spring and summer months of April, May, June, July, August, and September accounting for approximately 70% of yearly

visitation. The months with the lowest visitation rates are in the winter with January being the lowest month of visitation. Visitation closely parallels weather conditions at the historic site.

TABLE 3-5

**BELMONT COURTHOUSE MONTHLY VISITATION**

| | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | AVG. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| JANUARY | 32 | 43 | 83 | 127 | 71.3 |
| FEBRUARY | 53 | 71 | 150 | 209 | 120.8 |
| MARCH | 147 | 281 | 258 | 156 | 210.5 |
| APRIL | 207 | 426 | 386 | 292 | 327.8 |
| MAY | 228 | 416 | 449 | 393 | 371.5 |
| JUNE | 168 | 350 | 297 | 386 | 300.3 |
| JULY | 305 | 626 | 343 | 488 | 440.5 |
| AUGUST | 392 | 616 | 343 | 568 | 479.8 |
| SEPTEMBER | 305 | 382 | 386 | 186 | 314.8 |
| OCTOBER | 158 | 308 | 255 | 382 | 275.8 |
| NOVEMBER | 85 | 225 | 216 | 276 | 200.5 |
| DECEMBER | 86 | 167 | 90 | 98 | 110.3 |

SOURCE: NDSP, 1992

## CHAPTER IV: DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### A. PROCESS

Chapter IV completes the development planning process by bringing together all the information that has been gathered and analyzed, and then applying it directly to specific development plans. The initial development plan alternatives are produced so that the widest range of options may be considered before the park staff generates the recommended development plan.

#### 1. ALTERNATIVES

The general planning process followed throughout this update was outlined in Chapter I, Introduction. At each step in the process, new information and input helped direct the plan to the next step. The process was streamlined with the presentation of alternatives and resource information presented at the same time. Predetermined criteria formed the basis of evaluation at each step insuring an orderly process. The following paragraphs provide more detail and insight into the planning effort. For a complete summary of public comments received throughout the process, see Appendix 1.

The public workshop for Belmont Courthouse was held March 19, 1992, at the Blue Room of the Tonopah Convention Center in Tonopah, Nevada. The attendance at this meeting was excellent and individuals attending included field personnel, planning staff, a Nye County Commissioner and numerous Belmont landowners. Resource analysis and three alternatives were presented as well as a discussion of the future direction of the historic site. Several themes were repeated during the course of the meeting including: respect for and protection of private property, needed restroom facilities, interior building restoration, day use facilities and access improvements.

Alternatives, which were presented at the workshop, provided a means of looking at historic site development from several points of view. Since none of the alternatives are mutually exclusive, the production of several alternatives often generate ideas which could be incorporated into the recommended plan.

The number of alternatives which are considered depends on the number of issues and the complexity of the historic site. In some instances up to four alternatives may be produced, but with the size and complexity of Belmont Courthouse it was decided that three alternatives would adequately express all concerns. All three alternatives were generated with a concern for the physical and cultural resources in addition to improving the visitor's experience. Appendix 2 contains a complete summary of all the alternatives.

The three alternatives do not include any property acquisition since the 1.6 acres of the existing historic site is adequate for all future development. Providing better access to the historic site will help to preserve the historic setting of the courthouse and enhance the visitors experience.

All alternatives are more concerned with viewsheds within the historic site. Several elements are common to all three alternatives and includes the removal of the existing historic marker from the front of the building. This would be replaced by a bronze plaque which will be attached to the building. Care should be excercised to prevent permanent damage to the exterior of the courthouse when attaching the plaque. All three alternatives also include the regrading of uneven slopes which are found surrounding the building. The placement of the existing jail cells to a site within the jail is also considered in all alternatives. The location of the historic privy will be the subject of archeological dig. A major issue which will be addressed regardless of the alternative is the ongoing maintenance of the buildings exterior and its structural integrity.

Parking in Alternative 1 would be retained at the front of the courthouse and access would remain via Cedar Street. This is the minimum development alternative and as such calls for no interior restoration of the building.

Alternative 2 proposes to eliminate vehicles altogether from the front of the building by providing another access point off of Dago Way. This alternative also provides for a small day use picnic area along Dago Way with six sites and trees would be planted for shade. An interpretive trail would be established with photometal signs. A portion of the day use area would also provide a outdoor historic artifact display. This alternative would propose the use of a low stone wall to define the location of the stockade with the use of decomposed granite (DG) or some other material within the defined walls. The stockade area would have interpretive photometal signs to show the historic use of the stockade and other related elements. The interior of the courthouse would be partially restored with the sheriffs office and courtroom restored to a late 19th century appearance. Two other rooms (clerk's office and recorder's office) would be renovated to accommodate an interior exhibit space.

Alternative 3 proposes and expands on many of the elements of Alternative 2. This alternative again calls for the relocation of the present access to a location along Dago Way. The alternative will provide for a larger day use area which will also incorporate group picnicking and bus/trailer access. Day use will also include a outdoor historic artifact display area and restrooms.

The stockade area in this alternative calls for the rebuilding of the wooden stockade wall and the use of DG or some other material within the defined walls. The stockade area would have interpretive photometal signs to show the historic use of the stockade and other related elements. The interior of the courthouse would be fully restored with all offices and rooms restored to a late 19th century appearance. A limited amount of display space would be provided within the central hall.

With comments received at the workshop and written comments received throughout the process, it was determined that Alternative 2 was the most widely accepted. Several changes were made to this alternative to incorporate new ideas and ideas from Alternative 3. These ideas were incorporated into the Recommended Plan.

## 2. PLAN CONCEPT

Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site provides an excellent example of historic mining town architecture. The protection of this cultural resource is a primary objective of State Parks. The separation of various site uses is necessary to maintain the unique character of the historic site. Protection of the historic building from modern intrusions will be a priority. Along with cultural resource protection, State Parks is also looking into ways of increasing visitation and providing better and more complete interpretive services. Since the courthouse is not open on a regular basis, it is important to provide visitors with a historic experience regardless of entrance to the building.

The park should strive to interrelate both the courthouse and the town of Belmont. Since there is no other public parks or historic sites within Belmont, it is important that the historic site also be used to interpret the town. The courthouse is presently under utilized and this plan will propose increased usage and interpretation.

## 3. RECREATIONAL PROGRAM / PROGRAM RELATIONSHIPS

The recreational program proposed by this plan for Belmont State Historic Site is based on the cultural/historical resources found at the historic site and the recreation needs of visitors. A complete listing of these program elements are found in the following table (Table 4-1). Although these elements may vary from alternative to alternative, the ones presented here represent the widest possible range.

TABLE 4-1

**PRIMARY PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

ROADS AND ACCESS

- improve existing roads
- consider appropriate placement or screening of parking
- provide new access along Dago Way
- new entry signage at Main Street
- provide better access around the courthouse
- regrade uneven slopes and clean up rubble

DAY USE FACILITIES

- provide Clivus restrooms
- provide 12 picnic tables and grills
  - provide two frost proof hydrants
  - build one trash enclosure to service all sites
  - provide shade trees in picnic area
- provide 2 large grills within a six table grouping for group picnicking
- establish a bus/trailer turnaround parking area for large groups
- provide new parking area to accommodate 12 spaces
- provide a interpretive loop trail from day use area to the courthouse
- establish a outdoor display area near the picnic area for exhibiting various historical artifacts.

HISTORICAL ACTIVITY AREA

- eliminate modern elements from viewsheds
  - relocate/remove historic marker from front of building
  - relocate parking to rear of building
- continue to stabilize and maintain structural integrity and appearance of courthouse
- increase interpretive efforts concerning the courthouse and the town of Belmont
- acquire additional artifacts which help to complete the interpretive program
- restoration of the interior of the courthouse to a late 19th century appearance
- provide an exhibit space within the building
- improve views into building (i.e. solar lighting)
- provide handicap access to the building via the rear entrance
- rebuild the stockade to historical proportions

- conduct an archeological dig at the site of the privy
- rebuild rear roof entry in conjunction with the stockade
- exhibit artifacts within stockade including a "jailwagon"
- place the jail cells into the jail

STAFF FACILITIES AND CONCERNS

- since no staff is available at the park support should be provided to the contract employee when needed
- increase the number of tours and times in which building in open

The program elements are interrelated to the resources as well as to one another. Before these program elements are physically located onto the site, they must first be analyzed to determine how they interrelate regardless of site. (See Figure 4-1 Program Relationship Diagrams). Once these relationships are studied the next step is to place the program elements onto the site in relation to the resource and in such a manner as to avoid program conflicts.

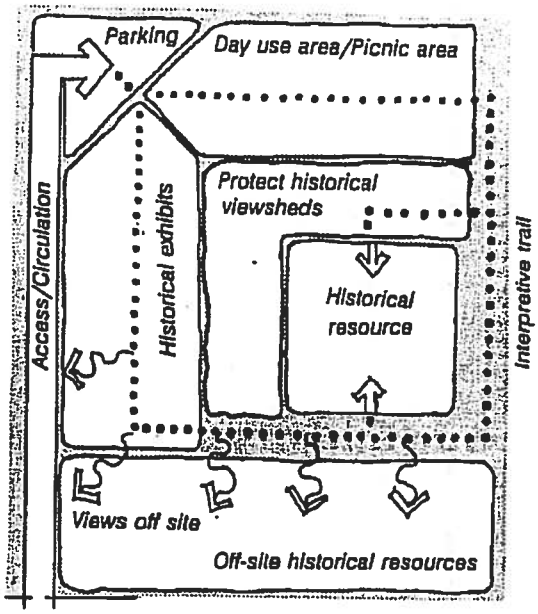



*Figure 4-1* Program Relationship Diagram

## B. PLAN

### 1. PLAN SUMMARY

The Recommended Development Plan for Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site (See Figure 4-2) proposes activities which will increase the use of existing resources and make available additional interpretive resources. The plan will incorporate a interpretive trail which will provide historic information about the town and the courthouse. The plan will also reduce the impact and influence of modern intrusions on the courthouse building. Additional needs and constraints have been considered which were not considered in the initial three alternatives. These new elements have been incorporated into the final plan.

Elements of the plan include the expansion of existing areas and access to areas not presently accessible within the park. In addition to providing these new recreation areas the plan also calls for improvements to existing facilities and resources.

The plan includes several issues which are not facility specific. It calls for the relocation of the historic site's existing access to Dago Way. Visitors will turn onto Leon Street and proceed north to Dago Way. This new access will provide several benefits including; elimination of parking in front of the courthouse, provide better access for buses and trailers as well as other day use visitors. A visitor parking lot will be located along Dago Way which will be located below and to the rear of historic viewsheds. The new access will provide an excellent location for a day use area which would be accessible to all visitors upon entry to the historic site. The existing historic marker will be relocated to the day use area from the front of the building.

The plan does not call for any property acquisition since all facilities and activities can easily be accommodated within the existing 1.6 acres.

A major issue which will need to be addressed prior to future building restoration/renovation is seismic stability. This is an important issue even if nothing is done to the building interior since visitors could be injured while standing near the unreinforced exterior walls. This unreinforced masonry building is highly susceptible to earthquake damage sine the courthouse is located in a #3 Seismic Zone. (Uniform Building Codes, 1991)

The degree of reinforcement will be determined by how the building will be utilized. This plan does not reflect cost of seismic stabilization but this cost will need to be factored into the overall restoration/renovation cost estimates.

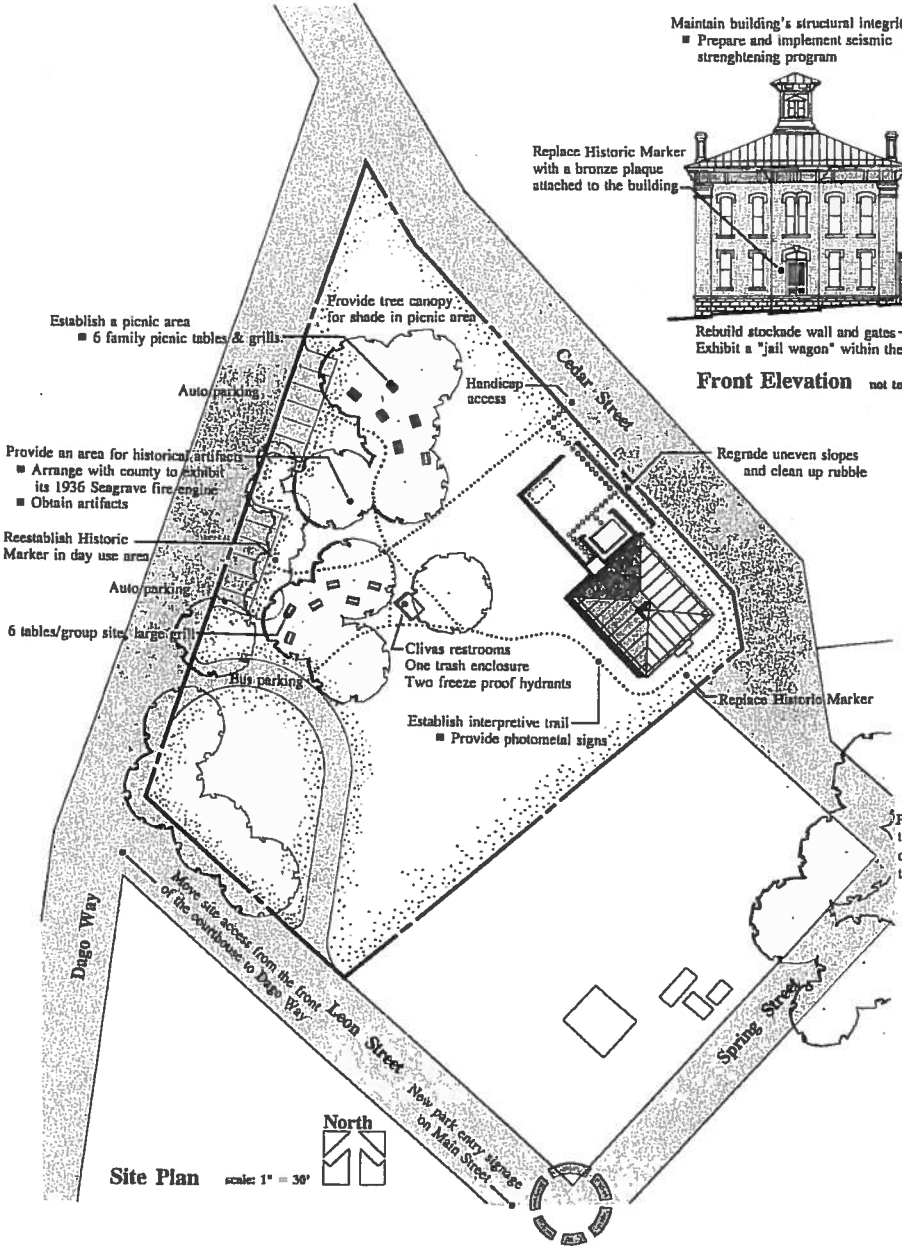
Another factor which will influence the implementation of this plan is the new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which was passed into law in 1992. This new act will require a higher degree of access for handicapped individuals. This access must be addressed on a facility by facility basis. Handicapped access to historic structures is a difficult issue since access should be provided but without detriment to the historic structures.

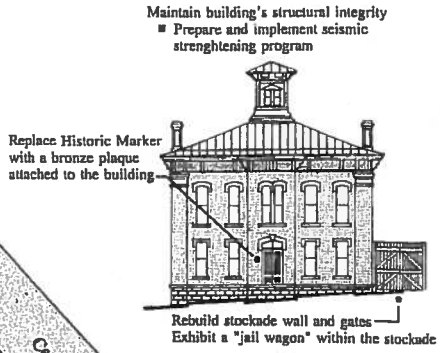
a. Day Use Area

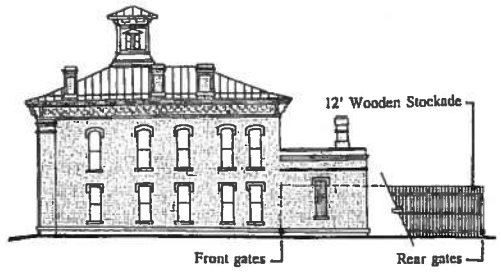
The new day use area is located on an under utilized portion of the property located at the rear of the courthouse. It will provide 12 picnic sites with grills and tables. Six of those site would also have two large grills so that the sites could also double for use by large groups. The picnic area will also be serviced by Clivus restrooms and a trash

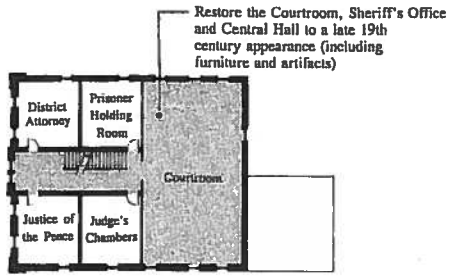
# BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

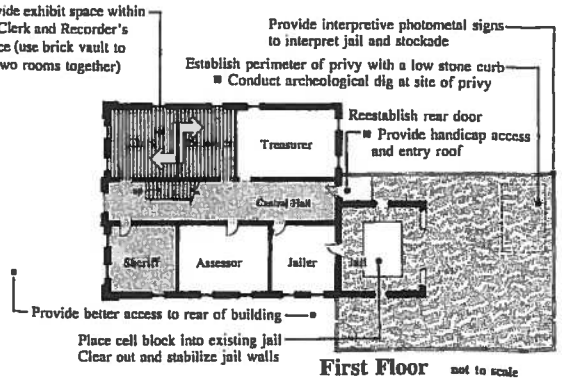
*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*




*Legend:*

## RECOMMENDED PLAN

- Major Access
- Park Boundary
- Interpretive Trail
- Handicap Trail
- Low Stone Curbing
- Exhibit Space
- Restored Rooms (late 19th century)

*Figure 4-2*

D-1892

enclosure which will be constructed of materials compatible with this historic site. Two freeze proof hydrants will also be provided to the picnic area.

A bus/trailer loop will be provided for improved access and parking of large vehicles. A 12 space parking area will also be provided along Dago Way for automobiles.

The day use area will also contain a outdoor display for historic artifacts. This will provide visitors with additional interpretive opportunities when the courthouse is not open.

The newly established day use area will help to discourage visitors from wandering onto private property.

An interpretive loop trail will be establish at the historic site which will lead visitors from the parking area to and around the courthouse. This trail will make use of photometal signs to help interpret the town of Belmont and the courthouse.

b. Courthouse Stockade

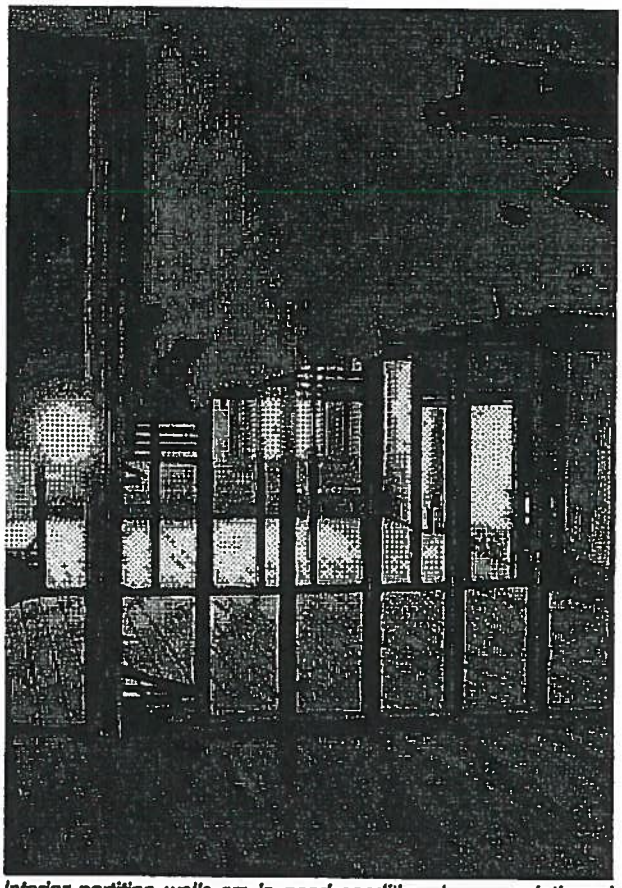
This plan calls for the full reconstruction of the historic 12' wooden stockade which surrounded the rear of the courthouse. Reconstruction of the stockade will provide visitors with a tangible and important interpretive feature. It will provide additional historic interpretation to the exterior of the courthouse. This will be highly valued when the building is not open. A simple low stone curb could initially provide an inexpensive way of defining the perimeter of the stockade with a later phase including its full reconstruction. Some type of surfacing such as DG will provide ease of access regardless of season.

The gates to the stockade are an important interpretive element which should be included in the final reconstruction. However, due to the potential for vandalism and safety these gates should be locked in an open position. This will allow free access at any time and improve security checks.

The stockade will also provide a location for outdoor, period displays. Unlike the outdoor display within the day use area. This interpretive display should represent the late 19th century and include artifacts which would be found in association with a courthouse stockade (i.e. "jail wagon", etc.). The stockade also contains the courthouse privy which should be the subject of an archeological dig.

c. Building Interior Restoration

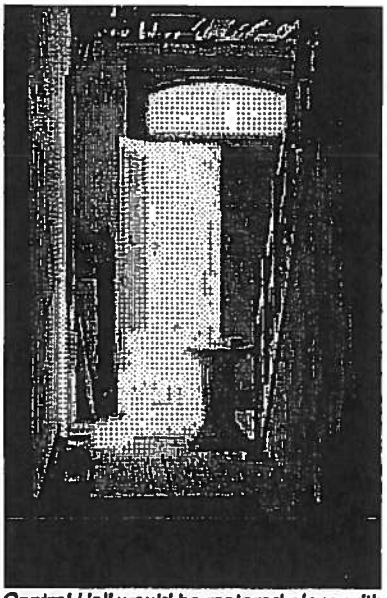
Restoration of the entire building is a costly and time consuming proposal. The cost of seismic stabilization and interior restoration may preclude the ability of state parks to restore the entire building. A predominant theme which was expressed at the public workshop and through written comments is the desire to keep Belmont "low key" and not to encourage large numbers of visitors. The political and practical concerns of spending millions of dollars on a facility which has limited visitation needs to be considered. It is for this reason that this plan does not call for the full restoration of the building interior at this time.



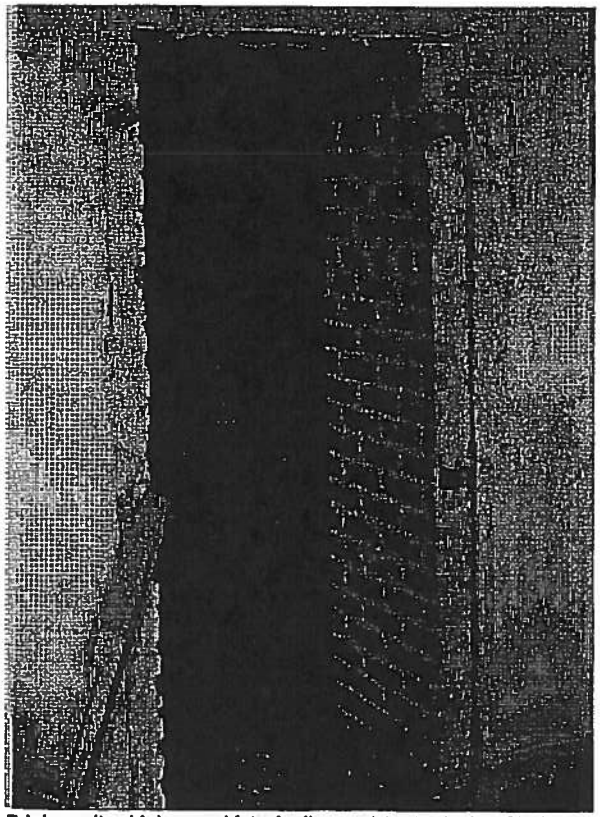
*Interior partition walls are in good condition, however, lath and plaster is needed throughout much of the building. (NDSP, 1992)*

Since the total restoration of the building would exceed the usable life of this plan, this plan calls for the restoration of a portion of the courthouse's interior.

The sheriff's office, central hall and courtroom would be fully restored to a late 19th century appearance. These rooms are the rooms that most visitors would expect to find within a courthouse. The courthouse restoration should remain as open as possible so as to accommodate other special functions. This period restoration would include complete restoration of all surfaces (walls, floors, ceilings, etc.) and the furnishing of these rooms with period furniture and artifacts. To improve viewing from the building exterior, solar operated lights would be installed in period lamps. The central hall would also be finished to provide continuity. Closed doors will give the illusion that all rooms have been



*Central Hall would be restored along with the Sheriff's Office and Courtroom. (NDSP, 1992)*



*Brick vault which was historically used by both the Clerk and Recorder's Office, could be used as a interpretive passage between rooms. (NDSP, 1992)*

restored. Interpretive signs would be provided at each closed door to provide information concerning the historic use of each room.

The clerk's and recorder's office would be renovated to accommodate an interior display space. This display would include all types of artifacts which will help to interpret the town of Belmont and the courthouse. These artifacts will not be limited to a late 19th century period but would instead interpret various past decades. These two offices could easily be tied together by a brick vault which also could be part of the interpretive elements.

## 2. MANAGEMENT AREAS

Due to the limited size of the Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site the site will be managed as a single management area.

3. FACILITIES LOCATION

The following table (Table 4-2) shows the number and type of facilities that will be available for the Recommended Plan at build out.

TABLE 4-2

**FACILITY LOCATION MATRIX**

| | DAY USE AREA | STOCKADE | COURT-HOUSE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Picnic Sites | 12 | | |
| Restrooms (2) | ■ | | |
| Interpretive Trail | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Historic Display | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Archeological Dig | | ■ | |
| Shade Trees | ■ | | |
| Water Hydrants | 2 | | |
| Trash Enclosure | 1 | | |
| DG Surfacing | | ■ | |
| Jail Cells | | ■ | |
| Parking | 12 | | |
| Site Access | ■ | | |
| Period Restoration | | ■ | ■ |

4. PLANTING SCHEME

a. Existing Areas

The park has not undertaken any significant landscape planting programs but has relied on existing trees and their canopies which are located off site and provide some degree of enclosure along Spring Street.

b. The Planting Concept

The overall concept for planting within the park should include modification of visitor use areas by using shade trees which have some historical ties to the town. This concept will allow for some planting to modify the environment but will give the park a natural appearance.

TABLE 4-3

**RECOMMENDED PLANT SPECIES:**

In the event a site has been damaged or is in need of revegetation, native shrubs and grasses should be used. In determining which plants to specify for revegetation, the staff should contact nurseries which offer native stock to determine availability.

Recommended Shrubs:

| | |
|---|---|
| *(Artimesia tridentata)* | Big Sage |
| *(Cowania stanburiana)* | Cliff Rose |
| *(Ephedra viridis)* | Mexican Tea |

Recommended Grasses:

| | |
|---|---|
| *(Elymus cinereus)* | Great Basin Wild Rye |
| *(Elymus triticoides)* | Beardless Wild Rye |

In addition to the proposed native plants list, this plan also address the historic nature of the site. Past historical accounts of the town of Belmont stated: *"Its streets are partially shaded by maples, locusts and Balm of Gilead trees"*. (Thompson, 1881)

The plan calls for the establishment of these trees within the day use area and can become a living interpretive element. These trees are excellent for shade and tolerant of growing conditions found in Belmont.

| | |
|---|---|
| *(Populus candicans balsamifera)* | Balm of Gilead |
| *(Acer spp.)* | Maple |
| *(Robinia p.)* | Black Locust |

## 5. EVALUATION OF PLAN

### a. Evaluation of the Plan Pertaining to Issues

Chapter One outlines several issues addressed during this planning document. Following is an evaluation of how the proposed plan addresses the various issues.

#### 1) SCORP Identified Issues

The preservation of this historic structure should be kept in the context of a mining town and should be a primary issue guiding development at Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site. The preservation of this structure provides visitors with a glimpse into Nevada's past. The SCORP further states that;

> *"It is important to recognize the significant role played by Nevada's early residents in the development of our communities and institutions. There is a need to study the past, understand its spirit, and preserve its message. The goal of historic preservation is to search out signs of our past and work to insure their continuance into the future and to conserve evidence of historic traditions among successive generations of Americans. The urban and rural landscape is being altered by new construction and development, and as a result, our nonrenewable historic resources are suffering increased attrition."*

This plan also addresses the issue of handicap accessibility by making more of the park's facilities available to this segment of the state's population. Hardened trails and making some structures accessible to wheel chairs will help to address this identified issue. Development of all facilities will be designed with the recent Americans with Disabilities Act as a guiding reference.

#### 2) User Conflicts/Visitor Impacts

The Recommended Plan addresses several conflict/impact issues which were identified in Chapter One of the plan. The establishment of a day use/picnic area will help to minimize unauthorized trespass onto private property within the town of Belmont.

Problems concerning the intrusion of modern elements into the historic building site have been addressed in two ways. The elimination of through traffic and haphazard parking patterns will help to preserve the historic appearance of the building. The conflict of modern day elements has been resolved through the relocation of the historic marker and other modern signage. These facilities will be relocated to other portions of the historic site where their visual impact will not cause conflicts.

The establishment of a visitor parking area along Dago Way on the north side of the site will help to get people out of their cars and to experience the site by foot. Although traffic through town has historically been light, it is generally accepted that all traffic is obtrusive and increased traffic would be likely in the future.

3) Public Identified Issues

Public input helped to form principal elements of this plan including: improved access, protecting the historic appearance of the courthouse, increased interpretive information for visitors concerning the town and courthouse, input on restoration options for the building's interior and support for day use facilities.

The plan accommodates several differing groups including: handicapped visitors, visitors with historical interest, and day users.

4) Governor's Tourism Program Identified Issues

By protecting the cultural and scenic resources of Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site, this plan helps increase the awareness of Nevada's historic past.

The rather limited activities presently at this historic site should be expanded and promoted. The ability of the public to visit a site which has historical significance in Nevada is relatively rare and should continue to be developed. Providing an increase in day use facilities will offer visitors conveniences and additional opportunities.

5) Environmental/Cultural Considerations

The town of Belmont has had a history of mining which has left long-term scars on the land. But, if viewed as part of the history of the area these disturbed areas can become opportunities for interpretation. The Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site should

provide interpretive information concerning the surrounding town and the ruins of several mills. Providing visitors with a more complete interpretive visit will help to preserve the town of Belmont. Instilling within visitors a sense of history and a committment to preservation of historical assets for the future would help to reduce theft and vandalism. This plan provides for increased interpretive activities concerning the history of Belmont Courthouse and the town through additional historical displays.

b. Evaluation of the Plan Pertaining to Goals and Objectives

Chapter One describes the goals and objectives for this planning document. This plan meets these requirements by providing increased day use opportunities while providing protection for the existing cultural resources of the park.

A major objective of this plan is to provide visitors with increased interpretive services and to educate the public in the history of the town of Belmont and the courthouse. Management objectives are also addressed by the relocation of the existing park entrance and establishment of a new parking area along the north side of the historic site.

c. Evaluation of the Plan Pertaining to Plan Concept

The Recommended Plan for Belmont Courthouse State Historic Site adheres in many ways to the plan concept. The site's historic quality will be preserved and enhanced through the removal of some elements and the protection of historic view sheds.

The interpretive trail and elements will provide the visitor with an increased awareness of the site's historical past. This would include information concerning the town of Belmont and the history of the courthouse.

This plan will provide increased protection to the historical resource of the site by eliminating traffic, parking and other modern elements from the front of the building.

## C. IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. DEVELOPMENT PHASES

Phase 1:
- Replace existing historic marker with bronze plaque attached to building
  - Reestablish historic marker in day use area
- Provide new site access along Leon Street and Dago Way
  - Furnish new site entrance signage
- Build new parking area for 12 cars
- Construct a bus/trailer turnaround parking area
- Establish 12 picnic sites
  - Two large grills (group use)
  - Ten upright grills
  - 12 tables
- Build Clivus restrooms with historical appearance
  - Incorporate one trash enclosure into structure
  - Provide handicap accessible drinking fountain
  - Provide 2 frost proof hydrants
- Establish an outdoor display area
  - Exhibit county owned 1936 Seagrave fire engine
  - Obtain other historical artifacts and interpret
- Conduct an archeological study of the courthouse privy
  - Provide low stone curb to define perimeter
- Build an interpretive loop trail
  - Provide photometal signs to interpret Belmont
  - Interpret building and stockade structure
- Regrade and clear site of rubble
- Place jail cells within jail walls
  - Stabilize jail walls
- Establish perimeter of stockade
  - Provide a low stone curb to define stockade
  - Use DG, compacted stone dust, etc. as a surfacing material within stockade area (handicap compatible)

Phase 2:
- Rebuild stockade to original materials and historic proportions
  - Lock gates in an open position for security
- Provide handicap access off of Cedar Street to stockade area
- Prepare and implement a seismic strengthening program to stabilize exterior walls of courthouse and interior spaces

Phase 3:
- Renovate interior of the Clerk's and Recorder's office and provide interpretive exhibits from various periods in the history of Belmont and the courthouse (use vault as pass-through)
- Research and restore the interior of the Sheriff office, central hall and courtroom
  - Restoration of a late 19th century appearance
  - Acquire and display period artifacts and furniture
- Provide interpretive plaque at the closed door of each unrestored room to indicate its use and basic layout
- Provide handicap access to the rear of the central hall from the stockade area
- Establish a better exterior view window
  - Provide solar lighting for Sheriff's office (retrofit period lamps to 12V)
  - Locate solar panels out of view shed (flat roof section)

2. LAND ACQUISITION

The 1.6 acres of the historic site is considered adequate for future development and protection of view sheds. This plan does not call for any future property acquisitions.

D. SIGN PLAN

1. ON-SITE

Signs on-site should orient, educate, and direct. In conjunction with Phase 1 site development, signage will need to be completely readdressed. The new signage for the park will include removal of all existing signage which presently occurs on site.

The Historic Marker and other signage will be relocated from the front of the courthouse to an area directly adjacent to the new picnic area. Exterior interpretive signage will be developed for the proposed interpretive trail. The interpretive signage will make use of photometal signs which will address both the courthouse and the town of Belmont. Photographs for these signs may be obtained from the extensive collection located at the Nevada Historical Society in Reno. Additional interpretive signage will also be needed in the outdoor historical display area located next to the picnic area.

In accordance with the State Parks Sign Policy #15, all non-standard signs will be replaced with standard signs as they are retired from service. In the event

a non-standard sign is necessary, this non-standard sign will be modeled after standard sign color, size, shape, wording, symbols and abbreviations. Elements of the sign plan will also be used to provide conformity to all traffic signs with the park. (Policy Manual, 1987)

2. OFF-SITE

The entrance signage will be relocated to a point on the northeast corner of Main Street and Leon Street. This directional sign will turn visitor on to Leon Street which runs along the west side of the historic site. Additional directional signage will be needed to separate and direct both bus/trailer and auto parking along Dago Way. Additional access signage may also be needed to direct visitor approaching from Ralston Valley. This is not considered a high priority since a majority of visitor come from the Tonopah area.

The size of this directional signage need not be as large as those typically used on highways since the approach road is gravel and speeds are generally 35 miles per hour.

3. SIGN MANUAL

The signs proposed in this plan follow the direction provided in the sign manual. All verbiage should be of a coordinated design and presented with clear concise language.

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John James, Weather Service Forecast Office, 1992

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**PUBLIC WORKSHOP - COMMENTS**
**BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE: MARCH 19th, 1992**

A single workshop was held to discuss the future development for the Belmont Courthouse and its surrounding site. Attendance (10) at this workshop was excellent considering the size and remote location of the park. In addition to Belmont land owners, a Nye County Commissioner was also present. The workshop presentation included information concerning the past historic uses of the site, circulation, ownership and site analysis. After presenting limited site resource information, the focus of the meeting turned to the planning alternatives.

Written comments were solicited when workshop announcements were mailed to approximately one hundred land owners and other individuals. A total of five responses were received.

The Recommended Plan was mailed to all individuals who attended the workshop or expressed interest through written comments.

**Written Comments:**

- Remove all sage brush from the immediate area. (1)
- Clean entire site. (1)
- Fence site with a historically compatible material (i.e. split rail). (1)
- Reconstruct jail to original configuration. (1)
- All restoration should be to a late 19th century appearance. (1)
- Restore interior of the courthouse before any other site development is completed. (2)
- Will support any efforts to preserve the building and the town of Belmont. (1)
- Retain Belmont's "low key" atmosphere; a large influx of visitors will destroy that which we are trying to preserve. Move at a snails pace. (2)
- Retain Belmont Courthouse as a State Historic Site and do not make it into a State Park. (2)
- Do not introduce camping or any overnight facilities. (1)
- When will the plan be completed and who will oversee the project. (1)

**Meeting Comments:**

- Restrooms are definitely needed for visitors to Belmont.
- Some type of accommodation should be made for group use.
- Full restoration of the entire courthouse was proposed by many individuals.
- In the advent of a total restoration, use of the building would have to be increased some comments included: increase building tours by establishing a Docent

program for showing the building on a more consistent basis; rent portions of the building to some other use such as town offices; use the building for special county events (i.e. traveling plays, concerts & presentations).

- The full restoration of the jail would provide a historically accurate exterior to the courthouse, however, this will reduce the amount of exterior display when the building is not fully opened for tours.
- Limited restoration with interior display space was also supported by several individuals.
- The greatest amount of support was given to Alternative 2 with site improvements from Alternative 3.
- In addition to the restoration called for in Alternative 2 it was also suggested that the central hall should also be restored to a 19th century appearance. This would give the visitor the illusion that the entire building has be restored. The replacement of doors along the central hall will prevent viewing of unrestored rooms. An interpretive plaque could be placed on the doors which would interpret the use of each room.
- Improvements should be made for viewing into the building from the exterior. Viewing though the clear panels could be improved during restoration of the interior. The placement of solar operated lighting would greatly enhance the building's restored interior. The use of old lamps converted into 12V solar would provide lighting within a 19th century context. Solar panels which are typically difficult to disguise could be place on the flat roof area to the rear of the cupola.
- Handicap access ramp could be provided to the rear of the building and a drop off area can be provided off of Cedar Street. The placement of a ramp at the rear of the structure would help to preserve the historic appearance of the front of the structure which is a prime concern in this development plan.
- The placement of a stone curb to define the stockade was seen as a good temporary solution to the eventual rebuilding of the stockade wall. A change of ground textures such as the use of DG will help to define the stockade and provide better handicap access.
- Gates on the stockade could be locked into a fixed position to reduce vandalism.
- Place cell into existing jail with doors facing to the rear. This will allow for better picture taking and discourage walking around cells.
- A "jail wagon" is presently being built for use in the Jim Butler Days celebration. This jail wagon could be used at the stockade during the remaining portion of the year.
- Support was shown for establishing an outdoor historic display for the county owned 1936 Seagrave fire engine and other donated or acquired artifacts.
- Development of a picnic site with 12 sites was also highly supported and the use of some of the area for use by groups was also seen as a plus.
- The use of the local Honor Camp for site work and other labor jobs was offered as a way of accomplishing site work at a cost savings. Strict supervision would be needed to insure the quality of work.
- The county will be receiving a large DOE grant which may be used to provide some improvements to the site.
- Include Belmont Courthouse in future county tourism efforts.

**DIVISION STAFF PRESENTATION: COMMENTS**
**BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE: MARCH 26th, 1992**

**Meeting Comments:**

- The building is built of unreniforced masonry and as such is highly susceptible to seismic damage.
- The town of Belmont is located within Seismic Zone #3.
- Seismic strengthening is extremely expensive and should be researched prior to any restoration.
- Some seismic strengthening would be necessary to protect visitors walking alongside the exterior of the structure.
- A full restoration of the interior along with seismic strengthening would be extremely expensive and potentially cost prohibitive.
- Cost of restoration must be balanced by other considerations including numbers of visitors.
- An important element of concern for the public was to keep the site "low key" but this is incongruous with major capital expenditures.
- The new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will have a direct impact on this project and handicap access points to the site and building are needed.
- The proposed site development will provide visitors the needed day use facilities for this historic site.

# PLANNING ALTERNATIVES
# BELMONT COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

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## ALTERNATIVE 1

- Maintain the building's structural integrity and exterior appearance.
- Eliminate the existing State Historic Marker which does not contribute to the historic appearance of the building.
- Provide a bronze interpretive plaque and attach it to the front of the building.
- Maintain the existing parking area in the front of the courthouse with access off of Cedar Street.
- Regrade uneven slopes and clean up the rubble at the rear and sides of the building.
- Improve physical access with a trail from the front of the building to the rear.
- Place the cell block into the rear portion of the jail with cell doors facing to the rear.
- Conduct a archeological dig of the courthouse privy and provide a low stone curb around its perimeter.
- Continue the limited use of the courthouse with no interior restoration.

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## ALTERNATIVE 2

- Maintain the building's structural integrity and exterior appearance.
- Relocate the existing State Historic Marker which does not contribute to the historic appearance of the building. The historic marker should be relocated to the picnic area.
- Provide a bronze interpretive plaque and attach it to the front of the building.
- Move the parking area and site access from Cedar Street to Dago Way at the rear of the courthouse. Provide new access signage at the intersection of Main Street /Leon Street and Leon Street/Dago Way.
- Provide six family picnic sites with tables, grills, parking and shade trees. One trash enclosure and two frost proof hydrants will also service the picnic area.
- Establish a outdoor display area for historical artifacts including a county owned 1936 Seagrave fire engine.
- Regrade uneven slopes and clean up the rubble at the rear and sides of the building.
- Improve physical access with a trail from the front of the building to the rear.
- Place the cell block into the rear portion of the jail with cell doors facing to the rear.

- Provide a low stone curb or wall which will define the location of the historic stockade and provide DG or some other type of surfacing within the walls.
- Establish an interpretive loop trail from the picnic area and around the courthouse. The trail would use photometal signs to help interpret the town of Belmont in addition to the courthouse and stockade.
- Conduct an archeological dig of the courthouse privy and provide a low stone curb along perimeter.
- Restore the sheriff's office and courtroom to a late 19th century appearance including furniture and artifacts.
- Renovate the clerk's and recorder's office into interior exhibit space. The rooms may be tied together with a brick vault which joins both rooms.
- The remaining portions of the building will be left in its present state.

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## ALTERNATIVE 3

- Maintain the building's structural integrity and exterior appearance.
- Relocate the existing State Historic Marker which does not contribute to the historic appearance of the building. The historic marker should be relocated to the picnic area.
- Provide a bronze interpretive plaque and attach it to the front of the building.
- Move the parking area and site access from Cedar Street to Dago Way at the rear of the courthouse. Provide new access signage at the intersection of Main Street /Leon Street and Leon Street/Dago Way.
- Establish a separate bus or trailer access with adequate turning distances.
- Provide six family picnic sites with tables, grills, parking and shade trees.
- Provide six family picnic sites which may double as a group site with two large grills and four small grills, parking and shade trees.
- The picnic area would be serviced by Clivus restrooms, one trash enclosure and two frost proof hydrants.
- Establish an outdoor display area for historical artifacts including a county owned 1936 Seagrave fire engine.
- Regrade uneven slopes and clean up the rubble at the rear and sides of the building.
- Improve physical access with a trail from the front of the building to the rear.
- Place the cell block into the rear portion of the jail with cell doors facing to the rear.
- Rebuild to historical proportions the stockade wall and provide DG or some other type of surfacing within the walls.
- Place historic elements within the stockade (i.e. "jail wagon").

- Establish an interpretive loop trail from the picnic area and around the courthouse. The trail would use photometal signs to help interpret the town of Belmont in addition to the courthouse and stockade.
- Conduct an archeological dig of the courthouse privy and provide a low stone wall along its perimeter.
- Restore the entire Belmont Courthouse to a late 19th century appearance with all appropriate furniture and artifacts.
- A limited amount of interior display space would be provided within the central hall.


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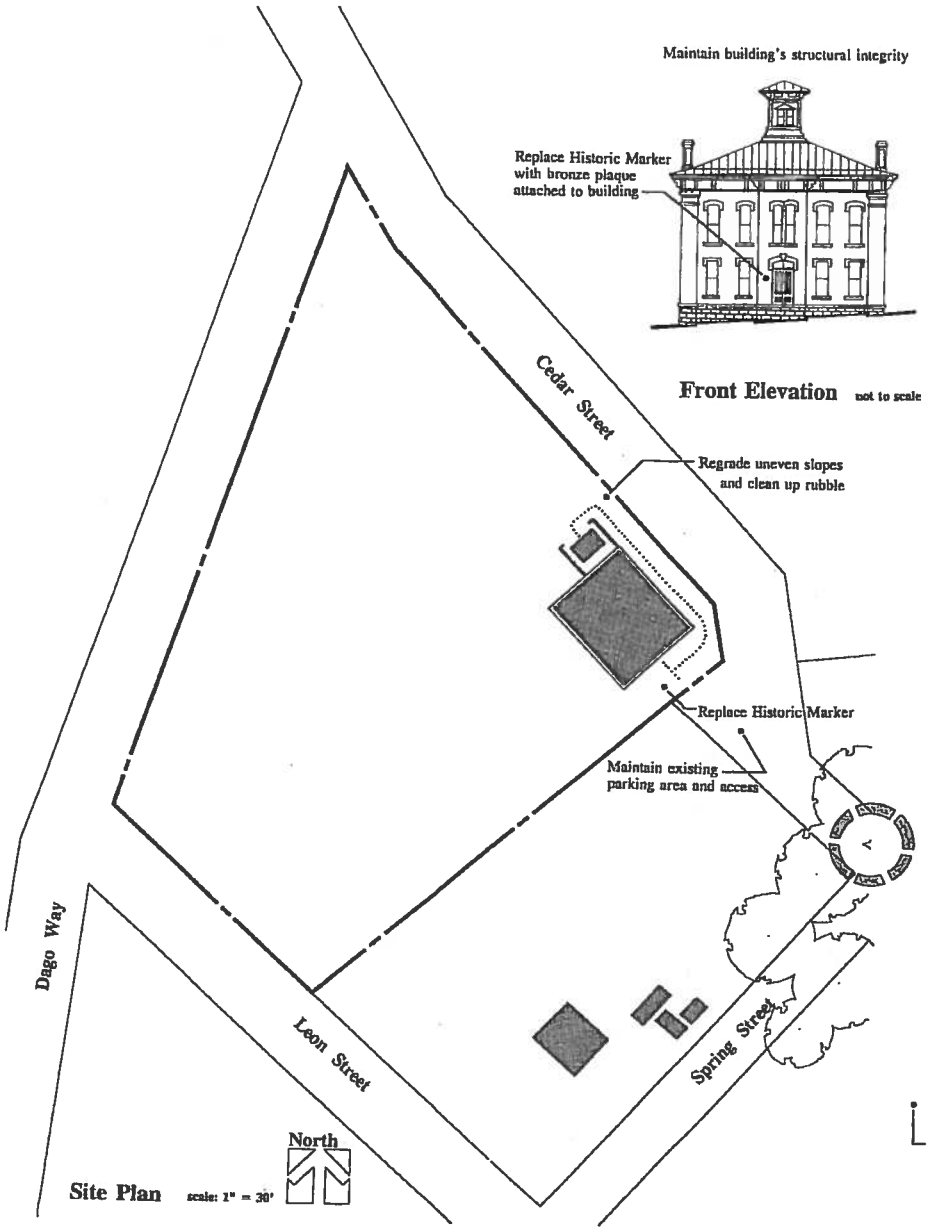
# BELMONT
# COURTHOUSE
## STATE HISTORIC SITE

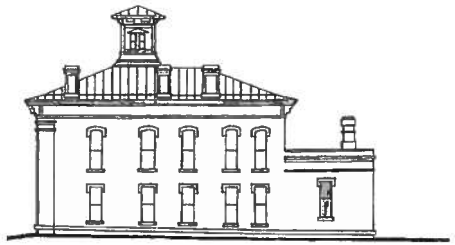
*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*



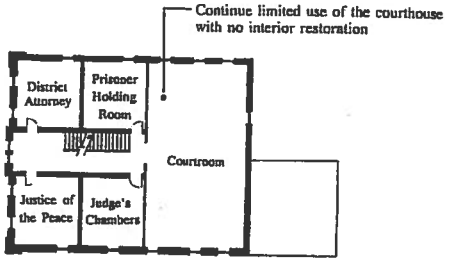

**Site Plan** scale: 1" = 30'



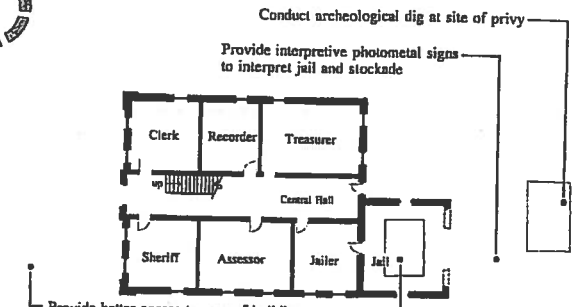

**Front Elevation** not to scale



**Side Elevation** not to scale




**Second Floor** not to scale




**First Floor** not to scale

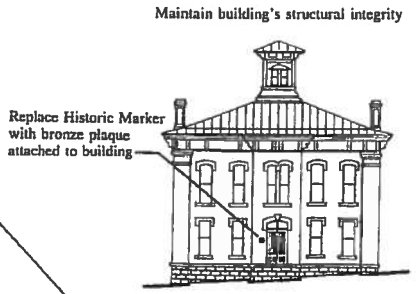
*Legend:*

## ALTERNATIVE *1*

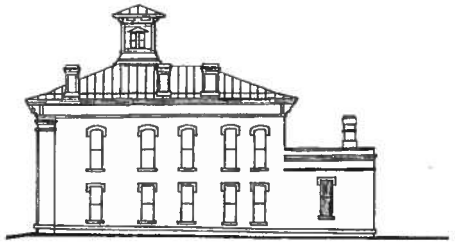
- Major Access
- Park Boundary
- Trail

# BELMONT
# COURTHOUSE
## STATE HISTORIC SITE

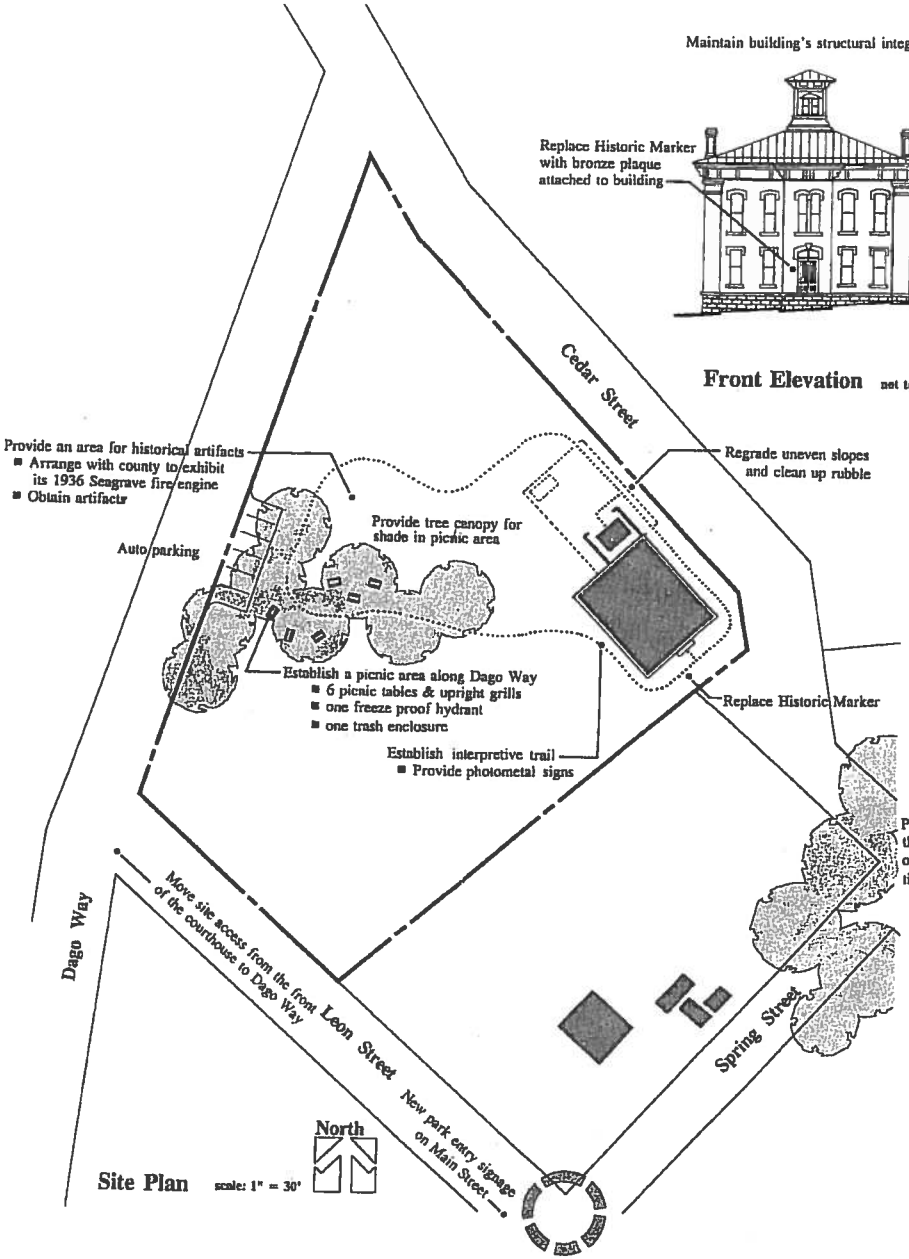
*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*



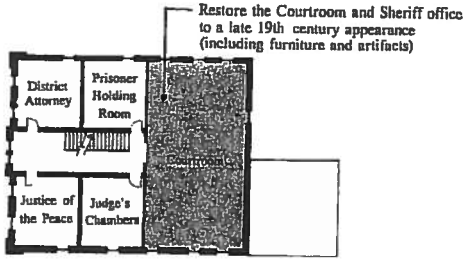

**Front Elevation** not to scale



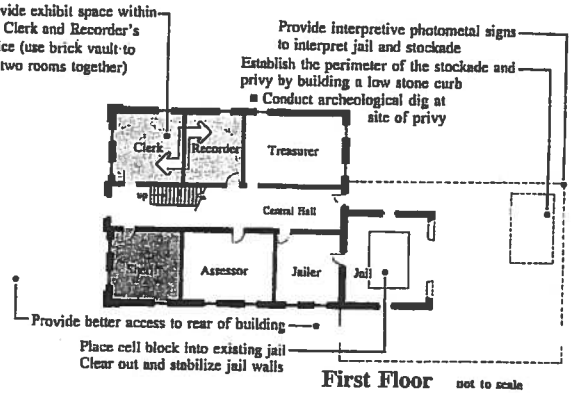
**Side Elevation** not to scale




**Site Plan** scale: 1" = 30'




**Second Floor** not to scale




**First Floor** not to scale

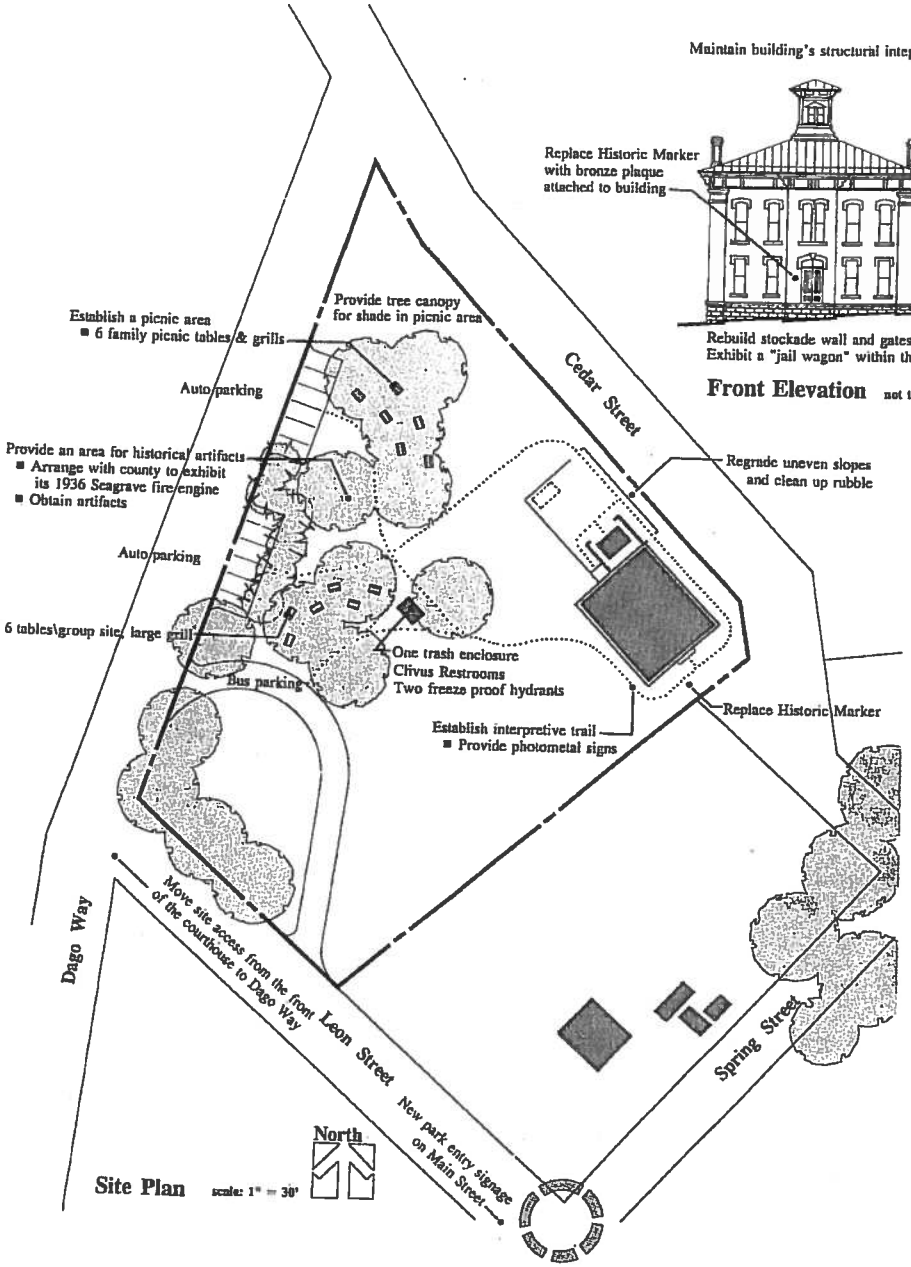
*Legend:*

# ALTERNATIVE 2

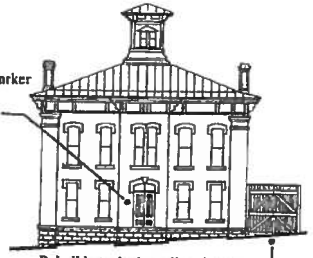
- Major Access
- Park Boundary
- Interpretive Trail
- Low Stone Curbing
- Exhibit Space
- Restored Rooms (late 19th century)

# BELMONT
# COURTHOUSE
## STATE HISTORIC SITE

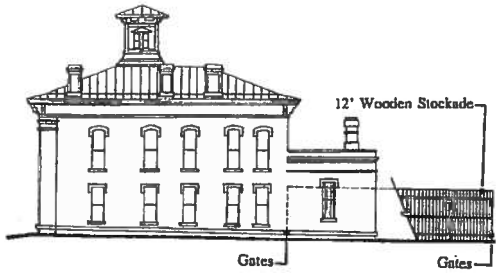
*Nevada Division of State Parks*
*Planning Section 1992*



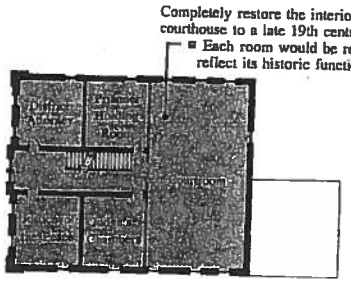

**Site Plan** scale: 1" = 30'



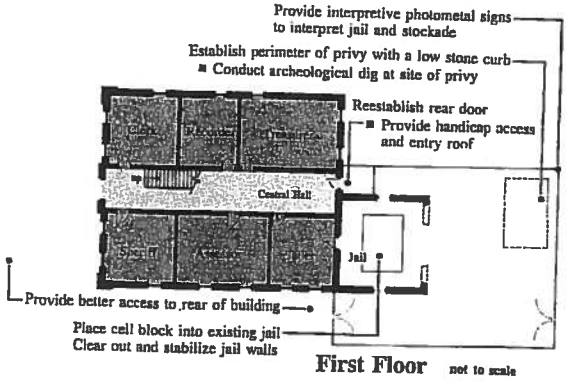

**Front Elevation** not to scale




**Side Elevation** not to scale




**Second Floor** not to scale




**First Floor** not to scale

*Legend:*

## ALTERNATIVE 3

- Major Access
- Park Boundary
- Interpretive Trail
- Low Stone Curbing
- Exhibit Space
- Restored Rooms (late 19th century)