

Historical Marker - S587C - Lansing Becomes the Capital City / Lansing's First Capitol Building (Marker ID#:S587C)



Front - Title/Description

Lansing Becomes the Capital City

The territorial courthouse that served as Michigan's first state capitol was completed in Detroit in 1828. However, Michigan's first constitution made Detroit a temporary capital and said that a permanent site should be chosen by 1847. As the deadline approached, nearly every town in Michigan was proposed. James Seymour, a land speculator with a mill in what is now North Lansing, campaigned for Lansing Township, pointing out its location equidistant from Detroit, Monroe, Mount Clemens and the mouths of the Grand and Kalamazoo Rivers. The house voted on thirteen sites before selecting Lansing; and the senate voted fifty-one times before it accepted the house's recommendation that the wilderness township with less than one hundred people become the new state capital.

Significant Date:

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

Registry Year: 1987 **Erected Date:** 1987

Marker Location

Address: South Washington Square

City: Lansing

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Ingham

Township: Lansing

Lat: 42.73242300 / **Long:** -84.55218400

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Lansing's First Capitol Building

Early in 1847 three commissioners were appointed to select an appropriate site for the capitol in Lansing. The contract for construction was awarded on June 3, 1847. Building materials were shipped by boat on the Grand River, or by rail from Detroit to Jackson and by wagon on cut trails through the woods to Lansing. Gradually, the capitol rose on this site. It was described as "a churchlike little structure of wood, painted white." The building measured sixty feet by one hundred feet, was two stories high and had a cupola. A white picket fence set it off from the surrounding forest. It contained legislative and supreme court chambers, an office for the governor, a few other offices and a library. Completed in late 1847, it was used until the present capitol was completed in 1879.