Willett Engineering Company
Consulting Structural Engineers

Structural Assessment Report

Subject: Historic Spalding County Jail

Location: Broad Street, Griffin, Georgia

Prepared for: Bruce Ballard, Downtown Development Authority

Prepared by: J. Mac Willett, P.E., Willett Engineering Company

Date of Inspection: 10-16-25

1. Introduction

At the request of the Downtown Development Authority, a cursory structural review was conducted on the historic Spalding County Jail, originally constructed in 1860. The building currently houses a nonprofit organization on the first floor, while the upper jail level remains unoccupied.

2. Building Description

Structure Type:	Loadbearing masonry over crawl space
Levels:	Two stories with porches front and rear
Access:	Stone steps and handicap ramp on the north side
Original Use:	Offices and courtrooms (first floor); jail cells (upper level)

3. Structural Elements

Foundation:	Stone wall bearing on grade
Walls:	Multi-wythe loadbearing brick (interior and exterior)
First Floor:	Wood joists spanning east-west
Second Floor:	5-inch concrete one-way slab spanning 12 feet between concrete beams
Roof:	Hip roof with heavy timber trusses; includes a non-structural 5-inch concrete slab below framing
Porches:	Reinforced concrete slabs (front and rear)
Boiler Room:	Reinforced slab over original location

4. Observations

Exterior Masonry:
- Painted brick has trapped moisture, leading to deterioration of mortar and brick
- Vegetation growth observed in corbelled brick areas
- Chimney top appears unbonded and poses a fall hazard

Roof and Wood Elements:
- Fascia and soffit show signs of rot due to prolonged exposure
- One roof truss top chord shows rot
- Non-structural concrete slab under roof supported by jail cell bars

Interior Conditions:
- No significant structural deterioration in jail cell areas
- First floor joists show deterioration near water lines
- Floor tiles may contain asbestos (further testing recommended)

Porches:
- Rusting reinforcement due to moisture exposure
- Requires cleaning and rust-preventive treatment

Windows and Trim:
- Deteriorated wood trim and blocking
- Glazing requires remedial work

5. Recommendations

1. Masonry Restoration: Engage a historic architect for a detailed brick and mortar condition assessment.
2. Roof Repairs: Replace rotted wood elements and inspect trusses.
3. Porch Maintenance: Treat exposed reinforcement to prevent further corrosion.
4. Window Restoration: Repair or replace deteriorated trim and secure glazing.
5. Flooring Evaluation: Investigate potential asbestos in floor tiles.
6. General Maintenance: Remove vegetation and address deferred maintenance.

6. Conclusion

While the building does not meet modern code standards due to its historic nature, it is generally structurally sound. With targeted repairs and preservation efforts, the facility can be made fully habitable with minimal intervention.

Photo 1

Photo 2

Concrete Slab Above Cells
LoadBearing Masonry Walls
Concrete Slab Floor

Photo 3

Deteriorated Wood @ Windows
Photo 4

Photo 5

Deteriorated Brick &
Mortar Behind
Painted Wall
Photo 6

Rusting Reinforcing Bars Under Porch Slab
Photo 7