



From Dirt Ash Kenneth Bolden









LOCATION OF THE CAPITOL



The location of a future State Capitol had been contested since 1890. When Congress passed the Organic Act creating Oklahoma Territory, Guthrie was designated as the temporary capital city until the new government could select a permanent location.

George Washington Steele, the first territorial governor, defeated attempts by Oklahoma City and Kingfisher leaders to move the capital and it remained in Guthrie. It took another 24 years to start construction on a building.

In a statewide election in 1910, voters chose Oklahoma City over Guthrie and Shawnee as the location of the state capitol. In November of 1910, after Guthrie leaders challenged the election results, the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that the state question to move the capital was invalid due to a technicality. In 1912, Oklahomans again went to the polls, where they voted to keep the capital in Oklahoma City.

The Oklahoma Legislature had to choose between two sites in Oklahoma City for the State Capitol. Businessman I. M. Putnam and John W. Shartel offered to donate land in present-day Putnam City. Oklahoma City leaders, including Charles Colcord, Griswold Jarvis, and E. K. Gaylord favored a site at Northwest 23rd and Lincoln on land donated by J. J. Cuthbertson and William F. Ham. The legislature voted for the 23rd Street location because of its proximity to downtown.

