DAY TRIP TO BELMONT

From Platteville · Lafayette County, Wisconsin

Photo: Carol M. Highsmith, Wikimedia Commons, Public domain

CLOSED FOR THE SEASON

Historic site closed until May 2027 after its May 23 to September 6, 2026 season, per the Wisconsin Historical Society's page archived October 4, 2026.

First Capitol is a short drive from Platteville and an easy hour or two on a summer weekend. The buildings open only on Saturdays and Sundays from late May to early September; the 2027 dates had not been posted when we checked.

A SAMPLE DAY

☐ 10:00	Drive County Road B from Platteville, about 13 minutes.
☐ 10:30	Tour the Council House, where the first legislature met in 1836.
☐ 11:15	See the lodging house and the markers on the grounds.
☐ Noon	Drive the three miles southeast to today's village of Belmont, where the town moved in 1867.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The two buildings together.** Stand back across the lawn to fit both white fronts in one frame, as in the hero photo.
- **The Council House front.** Its tall false front faces the walk; shoot it square on.
- **The view south.** The farmland toward the new village shows where the town went.

USGS topographic map, 1902 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	7 mi, about 13 min each way from downtown Platteville. From Madison: 67 mi, about 1 h 27 min.
OPEN	2026 season: Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., May 23 to September 6. Closed now; the Society says it reopens in May 2027.
ADMISSION	Free, no tickets needed; a $2 donation per person is suggested.
PARKING	Free on site.
ACCESS	Wheelchair ramps on both buildings; inside access is limited by the historic scale. Call 608-987-2122 about accommodations.
RULES	No pets on the museum grounds; service animals welcome. No guns, knives or weapons.
CONTACT	First Capitol, 608-987-2122, firstcapitol@wisconsinhistory.org.
WEBSITE	firstcapitol.wisconsinhistory.org

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Keep out of unstable buildings and off fenced ruins.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 42.76844, −90.36233 · 42°46′06″N 90°21′44″W

Directions Google Maps

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/wisconsin/belmont/

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.