

PHO 368 423

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 21 1976
DATE ENTERED	JUN 3 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

U.S. Post Office & Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Federal Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

102 North Fourth Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Grand Forks

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

First

STATE

North Dakota

CODE

38

COUNTY

Grand Forks

CODE

035

**2 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

—DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

—STRUCTURE

—SITE

—OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC

—PRIVATE

—BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

—IN PROCESS

—BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED

—UNOCCUPIED

—WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

—YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

—NO

**PRESENT USE**

—AGRICULTURE

—COMMERCIAL

—EDUCATIONAL

—ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

—INDUSTRIAL

—MILITARY

—MUSEUM

—PARK

—PRIVATE RESIDENCE

—RELIGIOUS

—SCIENTIFIC

—TRANSPORTATION

—OTHER:

**4 AGENCY** General Services Administration

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

STREET & NUMBER

18th & F Streets, N.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Grand Forks County Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Grand Forks

STATE

North Dakota

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

—FEDERAL —STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The United States Federal Building, originally the U. S. Post Office and Courthouse, was completed in 1906, and was designed during the tenure of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect of the Treasury. The building occupies the northern corner of Fourth Street and First Avenue North, which like all the original streets in Grand Forks were platted in alignment with the Red River of the North, and so are 45° off the cardinal directions.

The building is three storeys above grade over a full basement, and has a flat parapeted roof. The principal facade has five bays and measures 98' along Fourth Street. Originally the First Avenue facade had three bays and extended 51'. On the rear facade there was a 15' deep extension to the central three bays, reverberating the pavilion on the principal facade. A 1937 addition extended the building's depth to a total of seven bays; its northwest and southeast facades now measure 120 feet, 4 inches. In 1964 a small three storey enclosed fire escape was constructed on the northwest side of the building.

The building is faced with cream yellow brick and cut limestone; the basement is sheathed in granite ashlar. The building is constructed of wall bearing masonry with reinforced concrete beams and floor slabs. The roof is built-up composite roofing.

The building is composed of three horizontal zones. The first storey walls surmounting the limestone sill course are rusticated in alternating bands of brick and stone and form a visual basement. The second zone is articulated by the second and third storey windows and is emphasized by the colossal pilasters of the pavilion on the principal facade. The third zone is defined by the projecting cornice and balustraded parapet. The entablature of the building incorporates Doric and Tuscan elements. The Tuscan blank frieze is surmounted by a Doric cornice with mutules. The cornice is surmounted by a balustraded parapet, composed of alternating balusters and piers with raised panels, which continues vertically the pattern of alternating solids and voids.

The principal (Fourth Street) facade has a three bay central pavilion. The central entrance projects slightly beyond the pavilion. On the first storey, the fenestration is composed of pairs of double-hung one over one sash windows in segmentally arched openings with cut stone quoins and projecting faceted keystones. The first and second storeys are separated by a stone cornice surmounted by a projecting stone sill course. Surmounting the sill course is a stone belt course. The window enframements begin immediately above the cornice. The belt and sill courses project to form compound plinth blocks for the window's architrave. The windows contain a pair of one over one double-hung sash units, and are surmounted

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by a transom of bronze anodized aluminum which replaces the original two light transom. The window architrave is surmounted by a frieze and cornice.

The third storey apertures are glazed with paired small one over one double-hung sash windows. The window enframements about the entablature of the building.

The central pavilion is defined by compound projections on the first storey, one of which becomes the base of the two storey engaged unfluted brick Tuscan pilasters defining the bays on the second and third storeys. The central entrance bay is marked by a staircase flanked by plinths with raised panels. Cast iron post lamps formerly surmounted the plinths. The modern door with a four light transom is enframed by heavily rusticated projecting piers. The segmentally arched doorway is surmounted by festoons and an elaborately molded keystone. Fluted and scrolled consoles support the cornice which is surmounted by an audience balcony with a balustrade matching the parapet. In the central bay, the building's frieze is inscribed "Federal Building." The parapet has a large manteled and festooned cartouche the width of the bay, completing the vertical axis and ornamental articulation of the central entrance bay. A flagpole formerly rose behind the cartouche.

The original First Street (Southeast) facade contains three bays identical to the outer ones of the principal facade, with the exception of the middle first storey aperture. It contains a staircase leading to a double door with four vertical transom lights. The scrolled keystone and festoon reverberate those over the main entrance. Except for a slight change in brick color, the four bays added in 1937 are identical to the original. The addition has a light well; a railing with paired colonettes with finials sets off the basement from the sidewalk. On the first storey is a small window between the two southernmost bays of the addition. At the eastern end of the facade is a setback. Here the architectural ornament becomes greatly simplified: the rustication ends; the second storey sill and belt courses terminate; only a suggestion of the building's architrave and cornice continue; the frieze is brick; the balustraded parapet terminates -- it is brick with limestone coping.

The original northwest facade was identical to the southeast facade, except for the absence of an entrance. The northwest facade of the 1937 addition was identical to the southeast facade, except for the first storey which functioned as a loading dock. The four simple square apertures were covered

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by a marquee suspended from five rods. As a result of the 1967 addition, the two northernmost bays of the northwest facade are now no longer visible on all three storeys. On the first storey the visible bays are bricked up half way and set with louvres above. On the second storey, paterae from the marquee rods remain on the belt course.

The rear elevation faces a public alley. The two outer bays correspond to those of the principal facade, but are completely without ornamentation. The center three bays contain recessed windows with pairs of flat-arched one over one double-hung sash units.

Because the building no longer functions as a post office, the present interior bears little resemblance to the original. The lobby once extended across the ground floor of the Fourth Street side of the building, turning right at the First Avenue auxiliary entrance leading to the stair and public elevator. The 1937 extension creates a light court in conjunction with the original northwest facade. A skylight beneath this court once provided light for the postal workroom. The courtroom and related offices occupied the second storey and other Federal agencies the third. Recent remodeling has eliminated most original interior detailing and replaced the wood window sash with bronze anodized aluminum and bronze tinted glass.

Grand Forks, North Dakota

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1905-1906

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Knox Taylor

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Federal Building reflects James Knox Taylor's mannered use of the classical vocabulary to create an imposing architectural statement of the Federal Government's presence in Grand Forks. Taylor used the classical vocabulary to create a building of undulating textures that is nonetheless in repose. Because few of the older buildings in the central business district have survived unmodified, the Federal Building stands as an unusual example in Grand Forks of a monumental structure essentially unaltered. The building has become a landmark in Grand Forks both as the site of Federal activity for over 60 years and as the architectural inspiration for an enclave of Classic Revival buildings. The Central High School across Fourth Street and the City Hall diagonally to the northwest conform in both style and material to the earlier Federal Building. Thus, the building today stands as a visual focus as well as historic antecedent for this part of the city.

