



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

other names Robert C. Weaver Federal Building

2. Location

street & number 451 Seventh Street, S.W. not for publication

city or town Washington vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county District of Columbia code 001 zip code 20410

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Islands James Camp 7.16.08
Signature of certifying official/Title FEDERAL PRESERVATION OFFICER Date
U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

DAVID MALONEY, DC SHPO 7-7-2008
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

8/26/2008

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/government office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/government office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT
Other: Expressionism

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	CONCRETE
walls	CONCRETE, STONE, GLASS
roof	ASPHALT
other	_____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Description Summary

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is an exceptional Modern-era design by the internationally recognized architect Marcel Breuer (1902-1981). The HUD building was constructed between 1965 and 1968 and was the first Federal project in the nation's capital built under the 1962 "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture," which codified the use of quality design for Federal buildings. Contemporary critics and Federal administrators considered the HUD building a national model – the standard against which future projects were evaluated.

The 10-story building (1,352,500 gross square feet) has a distinctive double Y-shaped plan that provides more than 700,000 square feet of office space; it has been continuously occupied by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for nearly forty years. Breuer's innovative structural design consists of a system of interior concrete columns and beams with an outer skin of load-bearing, precast-concrete, modular window units making it the first Federal building in the United States to use precast concrete as the primary structural and exterior finish material. Additionally, it was the first fully modular design for a Federal office building.

The structure's massive, sculptural, concrete facades demonstrate Breuer's masterful handling of modern building materials. By regularly repeating the faceted form of the modular units across the building facades, Breuer created a striking visual composition – a dynamic interplay of sun and shadow. The end walls of the building wings and the ground-level walls are given a contrasting material finish of French Creek "Cherry Hill" granite. At ground level the facade is boldly set back with the upper floors supported on 44 W-shaped concrete *pilotis*.¹ The structure has a flat roof and was designed with a double penthouse, basement, subbasement, and underground parking. Architecturally significant spaces include the ground level entrance lobbies, elevator lobbies, and cafeteria and the upper level executive suites.

The HUD headquarters is located in the southwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., on a rectangular 5.5-acre (238,800 square foot) site bounded by D Street on the north, Seventh Street on the east, the Southwest Freeway/I-395 frontage road on the south, and L'Enfant Plaza/Ninth Street on the west. Given this location, the building played a key role in the master plan of the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area. The building grounds consist of landscaped pedestrian plazas on the east and west sides of the site and surface parking on the north and south. Breuer designed a 76' high monolithic concrete entrance banner for the east plaza that provides a bold, modern statement for the entrance to the building.

¹ *Pilotis* is a French term for pile or support that was adopted by architects of the Modern era to refer to the concrete stilts or pillars used to raise a building and create a free and open space at the ground level.

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The HUD building has been well maintained and is in good condition. The formal, rational, yet sculpturally expressive design has not been significantly altered over time, and the building retains a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Exterior Description

Conceptually, the design of the HUD building is composed of two massive, sweeping, curved facades that meet at a central core to form a double Y-shape. The building is 588'-½" long, 368'-7 ½" wide overall, and 129'-9" high, topped with a 28'-6" high penthouse.² The multifaceted wall surfaces of the building's four principal facades are composed of a total of 1,584 load-bearing precast concrete modular units (each 3' thick and weighing 12 to 13 tons) that also serve as window units. The molded form of each module serves to prevent direct sunlight from hitting the window panes, thereby keeping the building cool and energy efficient. The creative and resourceful design of the modules also integrates heating and air-conditioning systems and piping into each individual unit. The height of the concrete window units varies from the bottom of the facade to the top, but the size of the plate glass window panes is consistent at 6'-4" wide by 3'-9" high. (The uppermost row of window units is comprised of modules that are 10' wide and 17' high. The window units used on the fifth through eighth floors are 10' wide and 12' high, and the units used on the second, third, fourth, and ninth floors are 10' wide and 11'-10½" high.) The width of the mullions (each mullion is formed by two adjoining modular units) also varies from the bottom of the building to the top. The window frames are aluminum, and additional shade is provided by 2" wide interior flexible horizontal blinds. The principal facades are highly standardized and lack ornamentation, but the overall effect of the wall surface is a dynamic interplay between sun and shadow, a shifting patchwork of light and dark.

At ground level, the facade is set back to create an open arcade around the building. This design feature – one that was embraced by many architects of the Modern era – integrates outdoor areas through and around the building, thereby blurring the line between exterior and interior spaces. On a more practical level, the arcade provides a sheltered approach from the surrounding streets. The upper floors are supported by 44 W-shaped, chamfered, cast-in-place reinforced concrete *pilotis* placed on 40' centers. The *pilotis* measure 17' high, 40' long, and 4' thick. Concrete girders (each 40' long and 5' deep) span the space between the *pilotis* and provide a base to support the lowest level of the modular window units. Both the *pilotis* and the girders are finished with wood-grain formwork markings that create a visually appealing bas-relief surface texture. Additionally, this finish creates an interesting contrast to the smooth finish of the window modules above. The building facade was cleaned in 2001-02, but there are few instances of water staining or rust discoloration due to exposed steel reinforcements. Generally,

² Quinn Evans/Architects and Oehrlein & Associates Architects, "Historic Structures Report, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Building" (Washington, D.C., 1999): 248. All future citations related to the size and dimensions of the building and its components are from Chapter IV of this report.

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however, the concrete elements of the building facades are in good condition. The ground-level facade is a combination of glass curtain walls set in aluminum frames and cast-in-place concrete walls faced with French Creek "Cherry Hill" granite. The secondary exterior facades of the upper floors (the unfenestrated ends of the four wings of the building) are also finished with granite. These secondary exterior facades are constructed of cast-in-place concrete walls attached to a steel frame; concrete stair towers are connected to the secondary exterior facades. A two-story penthouse is located in the center of the flat roof and contains mechanical rooms. The penthouse has concrete walls with large aluminum louvers. To the south of the penthouse is an observation deck laid with square pavers and furnished with picnic tables and benches. The observation deck was installed on the roof in 1970 and was originally constructed of redwood decking. The roof of the building was replaced in 1992-93.

Interior Description

The HUD building contains 1,352,500 gross square feet and provides more than 700,000 square feet of office space. The building has 10 stories, a double penthouse, basement, subbasement, and a multilevel underground parking area. At the time of its construction, the building was heralded for its modern amenities and functionality.

The subbasement has concrete floors and concrete walls, which are finished with wood-grain formwork markings. This area contains storage space and a document distribution area. The subbasement is accessed from multiple stairways – two from the parking garage on the east side of the building, four from the building core, and four located at the ends of the building wings. The basement is finished with tiled floors, tiled ceilings, concrete walls in the elevator lobby areas, and plaster walls in the corridors. Basement facilities include a multimedia room, document management division, mail room, fitness center, and the agency's printing operations. The mail room contains a vertical mail conveyor system that was part of the original design of the building and is still in operation. The conveyor system travels a total of 143'-3" and serves the subbasement, basement, and the second through tenth floors with a total of 11 receiving stations.³ A loading dock, accessible from the service entrance in the south plaza, is located in the southwest portion of the basement.

The ground level of the building is set back from the primary facade and has less square footage than the upper levels. It contains the north and south elevator and entrance lobbies, as well as the cafeteria, service area, kitchen, and auditorium. The primary entrances to the building are located at the north and south ends of the east and west facades. (Secondary entrances include: two additional openings on the east facade, which lead to fire stairs and the lower levels of the building; three openings in the central portion of the west facade that access the cafeteria; and four openings that lead to the concrete stair towers at the ends of the building wings.) The southeast entrance is historically the main entrance to the

³ Ibid., 281.

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building. The northwest entrance is also heavily used due to its proximity to neighboring L'Enfant Plaza; it is currently restricted to employees only. In general, the ground-level entrances and entrance lobbies have been modified only as necessary to meet current circulation patterns and security requirements. Currently, the east entrances consist of two single and one automatic exterior doors set into glass curtain walls. Inside these entrances are glass vestibules with one single and two automatic interior doors. Originally, these entrances did not feature the interior glass vestibules, and the exterior doors consisted of a pair of revolving doors flanked by single glass and aluminum frame doors. On the west facade, the two main entrances at the south and north end of the building originally consisted of three single glass and aluminum frame doors with a glass transom. The southwest entrance has not been modified. A stainless steel airlock vestibule, constructed in 1994, has been added to the exterior of the northwest entrance.

The interior walls of the north and south ground-level elevator and entrance lobbies are bush-hammered concrete with horizontal and vertical joints. The floors are paved with bluestone flagging, the same material used for the exterior arcade and plaza spaces. The ceilings are finished with gypsum board, and lighting is provided by recessed ceiling-mounted fixtures. Originally, the ground-level ceiling finish was white cement plaster, but this was replaced with the installation of a sprinkler system.⁴ Security equipment, including x-ray machines and metal detectors, has been installed in the southeast, northeast, and northwest entrance lobbies. The lounge areas of the southeast and northeast entrance lobbies are framed by curved concrete walls inset with glass panels. (Originally, the glass panels were part of display cases that were backed with sliding plywood boards.) The size and configuration of the entrance lobbies were modified with the addition of the interior entrance vestibules. The southeast entrance lobby has a built-in guard's observation window. This lobby historically had a granite-faced built-in reception desk. The north and south ground-level elevator lobbies each have eight elevator banks, as well as restrooms, phone alcoves, and other amenities.

Principal historic spaces of the ground level include the cafeteria, service area, and kitchen, located in the central core of the building. The cafeteria is on the west side of the building and features a glass curtain wall overlooking L'Enfant Plaza. It is accessible through interior doors at the north and south ends of the building and through three exterior doors in the glass curtain wall. The cafeteria has an open floor plan, and a double-columned corridor runs through the room from the north entrance to the south entrance. The columns are concrete, painted white, with wooden capitals. The eastern half of the south end of the cafeteria has been converted into an auditorium space with temporary wall dividers and removable seating. Originally, the cafeteria ran the full length of the space and was divided into three parts by two low partition walls that ran east-west and were decorated with a 3' high ceramic mosaic tile wainscot. The seating areas of the cafeteria and auditorium are carpeted, and the columned corridor that runs through the rooms is floored with vinyl tile. Other than the exterior glass wall, the cafeteria walls

⁴ Ibid., 265. Between 1992 and 1993 sprinkler and fire alarm systems were installed throughout the HUD building.

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are the original plaster. The ceiling is finished with acoustical tiles. Original finishes include carpeted floors, plaster and glass walls, and tiled ceilings; the columns were exposed concrete from floor to ceiling. The service area, which now contains a variety of kiosks with overhead canopy awnings, and kitchen are located in the east half of the ground floor. These spaces still retain many original finishes such as ceramic tile-wrapped columns, ceramic tile floors in the kitchen, and vinyl tile floors in the service area.

The second through tenth floors of the HUD building are primarily used as office space. The floor plan for the upper levels consists of four curved interior hallways linked by a central core. The building's structural system allows for a flexible interior floor plan for the office spaces, thus the layout of the offices has changed as required over the years. The upper floors contain elevator lobbies, curved office corridors, staff offices, conference rooms, and executive office suites. Secondary service spaces on each floor include freight elevator lobbies, maintenance closets, and restrooms. The building was designed with special-purpose rooms such as a staff dining room and pantry on the second floor, a snack bar and credit union on the third floor, a health unit on the seventh floor, and a library on the eighth floor. The staff dining room and pantry have been converted into general office space. The credit union, health unit, and library all remain in their original locations.

The elevator lobbies of the upper floors are similar to the ground level elevator lobbies, except the floors are finished with vinyl tile rather than bluestone flagging. Originally the upper-level elevator lobbies had plaster ceilings, but with the installation of the sprinkler system the ceilings were lowered and finished with plaster-covered gypsum board. The office corridors have acoustical tile ceilings with recessed lights, plaster walls, and tile floors. Offices are accessed from the corridors through steel doors, and the door frames and transoms are painted in a color-coded scheme according to which quadrant of the building the office is located.⁵ Typical staff offices are subdivided by a combination of historic metal partition walls and new dry-wall partitions. Finishes in a typical staff office include carpeted or tiled floors and acoustical-tiled ceilings. (The original ceiling tiles and light fixtures have been replaced.) Historically, conference rooms were located between the north and south elevator lobbies on the second, third, fifth, sixth, seventh, ninth and tenth floors. These have been converted into general office space and are finished with materials similar to the staff offices.

Each of the executive office suites (located on the fourth through the ninth floors behind the south elevator lobbies) originally included a reception area, large conference room, executive office with private dressing room and bathroom, small conference room, and three staff offices. With few exceptions, the executive office suites retain a high degree of integrity and remain as originally constructed. The executive office suites were designed with higher quality finishes than the typical staff

⁵ Ibid., 265. The corridors are coded in the original color scheme with orange designating the northwest corridor, yellow the northeast, blue the southwest, and black the southeast.

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offices and include ash plywood and cherry vertical tongue and groove paneled walls, birch interior doors, and carpeted floors. The door hardware in the suites is satin finish stainless steel, and polished brass is used in the executive office. The departmental conference room, deputy secretary's suite, and secretary's suite on the tenth floor have tiled ceilings; vertical tongue-and-groove, cherry-paneled walls; carpeted floors; and polished brass door hardware. The secretary's suite and the deputy secretary's suite are well maintained and in excellent condition. Two glass partitions with guard stations have been installed in the corridors leading to the secretary's and the deputy secretary's suites. At the roof level, the penthouse has been made accessible, but otherwise remains as originally built.

Site Description

The HUD building is located in the southwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., two blocks south of the National Mall. It is in an urban area that was renewed during the 1950s and 1960s as part of the city's plan for the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area. The building is sited on a rectangular 5.5-acre parcel bounded by D Street on the north, Seventh Street on the east, the Southwest Freeway/I-395 frontage road on the south, and L'Enfant Plaza/Ninth Street on the west. Although modifications have been made to the pedestrian plaza on the east side of the site, the remaining landscape around the HUD building remains true to Breuer's original design intent.⁶

The Seventh Street plaza, located on the east side of the building, was designed with a flagged pedestrian area, a curved, paved driveway pickup area, and an opening for entrance and exit ramps to underground parking. The plaza was paved with rectangular, random-sized bluestone flagging, which continued under the arcade around the entire ground-level facade. The pedestrian area had a flagpole at the southern end and was delineated from the driveway pick-up area by concrete pyramidal concrete bollards. The plaza was illuminated by concrete light standards with custom-designed globes. Of these landscape features, the driveway pickup area, parking ramps, and flagpole are intact. Another important original feature of Breuer's design for the Seventh Street plaza is the building's signage, which marks the main entrance at the south end of the east facade. The signage is monumental in character, measuring 76' high, and is constructed out of two slabs of concrete arranged perpendicular to one another, one on top of the other. Stainless steel lettering affixed to the top of the street-facing side of the vertical component of the signage spells out "U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development," and the original, but currently non-operating, spotlights are mounted on the opposite side. Other landscape features of the Seventh Street plaza included street trees and planting boxes. Below the Seventh Street plaza is a three-level underground parking garage with 345 spaces. In 1990 the Seventh Street plaza was redesigned by Martha Schwartz, a nationally recognized landscape architect. The redesign included the addition of six low, round, concrete planters that double as seating, seven circular

⁶ Ibid., 63. Landscaping of the HUD building site took place after the building was constructed, with the west side completed in 1976 when the walkway to L'Enfant Plaza was added.

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plastic canopies set upon 14' high steel poles, and a round, low performance stage with a screened backdrop. These elements are illuminated at night with colored lights. With the redesign, the bluestone flagging was taken up, the plaza was repaved with concrete, and the original light standards were removed.

The site on the west side of the building is divided into two sections and retains its original design configuration of an elevated area with ventilation grills and a recreational space for employees and visitors. On the north is a recreational area that includes a landscaped courtyard, a paved pedestrian walkway with steps to L'Enfant Plaza, and a playground. On the south is an elevated grassy area with ventilation grills for the service entrance located underneath. The pedestrian areas of the west plaza are paved with bluestone flagging. Minor modifications to the landscape on this side of the building include the replacement of trees, the construction of a playground area, and the addition of benches.

At the north and south ends of the site, the grounds are used for off-street parking and are paved with asphalt. Parking attendant booths are located at both ends. These are constructed of wood and finished with stucco. (The parking attendant booths were installed after the building was complete. The U.S. General Services Administration contracted with Breuer to design the booths in 1970.) Planting in the north and south grounds is limited to trees and ground cover. On the west side of the south end of the site is a service entrance that leads to the underground loading dock.

Conclusion

Still displaying its sweeping form, the exterior of the HUD building demonstrates a high level of integrity and remains an accurate reflection of Breuer's original design intent. Significant architectural details such as those found in the ground floor lobbies and the executive suites are intact, and other significant interior spaces have remained relatively unchanged since their construction. Minor alterations to the building fall into two categories – those that have involved the reassignment of space (in the case of the cafeteria, the upper level conference and special-purpose rooms, and the Seventh Street plaza) and those that involved the modification of architectural features due to current circulation and security requirements (such as the building entrances). The HUD building is highly intact to its original architectural design, period of significance, and historic character and retains an exceptionally high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)
Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1963-1968

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Breuer, Marcel

Beckhard, Herbert

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

U.S. General Services Administration, National Capital
Region, Technical Library

Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art

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Summary Statement of Significance

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), constructed between 1965 and 1968 by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and designed by the internationally recognized master architect Marcel Breuer, possesses significance under National Register Criterion C as a design of high artistic value. Marcel Breuer ranks alongside architects such as Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as a major twentieth-century figure and is highly regarded for his pioneering and influential designs. The HUD building epitomizes the monumental work representative of Breuer's mature career and is a primary example of an Expressionist-style building of the Modern era. The HUD building and the Hubert H. Humphrey Federal Building (1972-76) are the only structures in the national capital designed by Breuer and are two of only a dozen institutional buildings he designed in the United States. Breuer's dramatic and highly sculptural design for HUD employed a groundbreaking structural system. It was the first Federal building in the United States in which precast concrete was the primary structural and exterior finish material and was the first fully modular design for a Federal office building. Additionally, the HUD building was the first Federal project in Washington, D.C., built under the 1962 "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture" developed by President John F. Kennedy's Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space. The "Guiding Principles" codified the use of quality design for Federal buildings, and HUD was singled out by architects, critics, and Federal officials as a national model for Federally-sponsored building projects. It became the standard for future public building projects of the Modern era. Furthermore, the HUD building was a key element in the master plan of the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, taking on additional significance considered within the context of the national urban renewal movement. In consideration of the building's status as a significant work by Marcel Breuer and as a benchmark for both high Federal design and urban renewal, the HUD building displays exceptional significance and satisfies Criteria Consideration G (properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years). The HUD building is nationally significant in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and Development for the period of significance 1963-68. The period of significance begins when Breuer received the commission to design the building and ends the year construction was finished and the building was dedicated.

Resource History and Historic Context

History of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a Cabinet-level agency, was created in 1965 with the passage of the Housing and Urban Development Act. Its mission was to provide "a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family."⁷ In the late 1950s the various divisions and bureaus of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA), the precursor agency

⁷ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Signing Ceremonies of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C., 1968, photocopy): 2. The Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA), created in 1947 to replace the National Housing Agency, was the precursor agency to HUD.

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to HUD, were located in twenty separate buildings across the city. Of these buildings, only two were owned, and the rest were rental properties that held a high cost for the Federal government.⁸ The agency clearly required one centralized building with enough office space to house all of the disparate divisions scattered across the city. This need was met with the passage of the Public Buildings Act of 1959, which authorized the construction of a new headquarters building for the HHFA and allocated the necessary funds. A site was chosen in the southwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., in a blighted area of the city that had been selected for urban renewal.

Marcel Breuer, Architect

Hungarian-born Marcel Breuer (1902-1981) was trained at the Bauhaus, the celebrated trade school established in Weimar, Germany, by architect Walter Gropius. Gropius founded the Bauhaus on the philosophy that the traditional distinction between artist and craftsman should be eliminated. Students studied materials and craft while concurrently receiving instruction on the theories of form and design.⁹ After receiving his degree in 1924, Breuer was made the chief of the Bauhaus furniture department. It was during this period that he created the "Wassily" and "Cesca" chairs, timeless and well-recognized pieces that proved his design acumen and demonstrated his skill at handling the combination of a craft aesthetic with modern materials and technologies. Breuer left the Bauhaus in 1928 to practice architecture and design in Berlin. With the exception of a one-year period spent traveling throughout Europe and North Africa, Breuer remained in Germany until 1935. Encouraged by his close friend and colleague Walter Gropius, Breuer immigrated to London in 1935 to start a practice with British architect F.R.S. Yorke.¹⁰ After only two years in London, Breuer made the difficult decision to cease his partnership with Yorke and relocate to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he took a position as Research Associate at Harvard University. Several factors influenced his decision to move. First, Breuer was generally unsatisfied by the "static character of modern architecture in England" and perceived the situation in America to be more supportive of progressive aesthetics.¹¹ Additionally, a salaried position on the faculty at Harvard offered increased financial stability, and the move would reunite Breuer with Gropius. In fact, upon establishing himself in Cambridge, Breuer and Gropius immediately set about on an architectural partnership that lasted until 1941, when commissions grew scarce as construction activity at the national level tapered off due to the war. During their partnership, Breuer and Gropius

⁸ "HUD Building Seen as Turning Point for Department and Public Architecture," *The Journal of Housing* 25 (September 1968): 407.

⁹ The Bauhaus operated from 1919 to 1933 and was originally located in Weimar, Germany. In 1925 the school was transferred to Dessau, Germany, and later, under Nazi pressure, the school made one last move to Berlin. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe served as Director of the Bauhaus from 1930 to 1933. For an overview of the teachings and influence of Gropius and the Bauhaus, see Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 3rd ed., (New York: Thames and Hudson, Inc., 1992), especially Chapters 14 and 26.

¹⁰ The firm was called Breuer & Yorke. At the time, English regulations mandated that émigré architects could work legally as long as they were part of a partnership with an established British architect. For further information on Breuer's career in England, see Isabelle Hyman, *Marcel Breuer, Architect* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2001).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 89.

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collaborated on many projects, most notably the Hagerty House in Cohasset, Massachusetts (1938), Breuer's first American building, and the Breuer House in Lincoln, Massachusetts (1939). During his ten years on the faculty of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard, Breuer was a well-regarded teacher, respected by both his colleagues and students. Both through his teaching and through the example of his completed projects Breuer "left a profound impression on a new generation of American architects" who would later go on to successful and acclaimed architectural careers.¹² Through his role as a teacher and mentor and as a practicing architect whose work earned him an international reputation, Breuer helped shape the course of American architecture in the second half of the twentieth century.

Breuer was a leader among a small group of architects who introduced and disseminated Modernism to the architectural field in the United States. During his early career in America, Breuer established his reputation creating private residences and small institutional buildings. In 1946, Breuer moved to New York City where he established his firm, Marcel Breuer and Associates. Herbert Beckhard, who received his architectural training at Princeton University, joined Breuer's firm in 1951 and became a partner in 1964.¹³ His New York practice focused primarily on residential work, such as the Robinson House in Williamstown, Massachusetts (1947-1948) and his own house in New Canaan, Connecticut (1947-1948). A turning point in Breuer's career came in 1953 when he was chosen as part of a team of architects that included the pioneering Italian engineer Pier Luigi Nervi and the French architect Bernard Zehrffuss to design the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Headquarters in Paris (1952-1958). The project was Breuer's first large public building, and it was while working on this project with Nervi that Breuer began to fully develop an understanding of the formal and structural qualities of reinforced concrete. The commission "marks the beginning of the mature Expressionist style for which Breuer is known."¹⁴ Furthermore, with the UNESCO commission Breuer developed his personal aesthetic of precast concrete modules that served as structure, enclosure, and sun protection which would transpire in later commissions such as the IBM Research Center in La Gaude (1960-1962) and the HUD building. The UNESCO building received international acclaim, and its structural and stylistic components – modular construction, exposed concrete, sweeping faceted facades, and multiwinged plan – were devices that would be used in other projects, "most notably, in the opinion of many critics, in [the] HUD headquarters in Washington."¹⁵

In the mid-1950s the U.S. Department of State embarked on a building campaign to construct embassies that would "create diplomatic monuments to American architectural talent."¹⁶ Projects were awarded to

¹² Gerd Hatje, *Encyclopedia of Modern Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1964): 58. The list of architects who studied under Breuer at Harvard includes I.M. Pei, Paul Rudolph, John M. Johansen, Sarah P. Harness, and Philip Johnson.

¹³ Quinn Evans/Architects and Oehrlein & Associates Architects, "Historic Structures Report, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Building," 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁵ Paul Goldberger, "Marcel Breuer, 79, Dies; Architect and Designer," *New York Times*, 2 July 1981.

¹⁶ Hyman, *Marcel Breuer, Architect*, 139.

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notable architects working in the U.S. including, for example, Gropius, Richard Neutra, Eero Saarinen, and Edward Durrell Stone. Breuer was chosen to design the U.S. Embassy in The Hague (1956-1959). Besides the embassy project and HUD, other Federal projects include the Hubert H. Humphrey Federal Building (1972-1976) and the Grand Coulee Dam, Columbia Basin Project (1972-1978). Breuer was invited to submit proposals for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, D.C., (1966-1967, not built) and the Oglala Community High School on the Pine Ridge Reservation (1973-1975, not built). Projects such as these for the Federal government often meant Breuer was working with a restricted budget. Yet, because of his commitment to standardization and economy Breuer was able to successfully produce designs appropriate for civic and governmental projects. "Concrete may have been a workaday material for budget-minded institutions, but Breuer, trained to bring out the best in less expensive materials, was able to elevate it to high levels of expressiveness by exploiting its possibilities for formal invention, dramatic cantilevers, and wide, uninterrupted interior expanses."¹⁷

Construction Chronology

In 1963 the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) awarded the contract for the HUD building (still the HHFA at the time) to the New York firm of Marcel Breuer and Associates. The decision to give the commission to Marcel Breuer was received with enthusiasm by architectural critics and supported by Federal officials. Ada Louise Huxtable, then the architectural critic for the *New York Times*, lauded Breuer as "one of the profession's top men" and reported the enthusiasms of one Federal official who pronounced that, "a sense of victory attends [GSA's] selection. It vindicates our humble hope that this giant machine of government can respond to cultural values."¹⁸

As principal architects on the project, Marcel Breuer and Herbert Beckhard were responsible for the design of the building and site. Nolen-Swinburne and Associates of Philadelphia completed the working drawings, final revisions, and project construction; John McShain, Inc., of Arlington, Virginia, served as general contractor under the supervision of the GSA. Construction began in 1965, with Congress appropriating \$29 million for the project. The GSA purchased the land from the Redevelopment Land Authority, paying \$1.4 million for the 238,800-square-foot site in the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area. In choosing the site, the GSA was demonstrating the Federal government's commitment to urban development across the country. Speaking to this issue in 1963, Robert C. Weaver, Secretary of the HHFA, wrote, "In light of [HUD's] responsibility for urban renewal it seemed important that [the Agency's] new building be identified with this program."¹⁹ The building program required that the design provide enough space to accommodate 6,000 office workers with the maximum allowable peripheral offices. The building had a double Y-shaped plan, a form Breuer used previously for the IBM Research Center in La Gaude, with building wings that extend to the four corners of the

¹⁷ Ibid., 156.

¹⁸ Ada Louise Huxtable, "Building's Case History," *New York Times*, 9 August 1963.

¹⁹ Robert C. Weaver, "Current Trends in Urban Renewal," *Land Economics* 39, no. 4 (November 1963): 339.

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building site.²⁰ This plan allowed him to meet the spatial requirements of the agency, provide natural light to as many offices as possible, and also stay within the city's building height restrictions.²¹

Architecture of the Modern era, such as Breuer's, placed an emphasis on functionalism – individual offices were omitted in favor of flexible plans and plazas served as gateways to sites, eliminating the need for grand interior lobbies. Modernism embraced new technologies and sought to create functionally and economically efficient structures. This resulted in new methods of construction, such as the use of prefabricated elements, and the use of steel, glass, concrete, and plastics. Modern architects sought the free expression of structure and did away with ornamentation and embellishment. In light of this, the HUD building can be seen as a major work of the Modern movement in the United States, particularly the “new expressive freedom that was characteristic of the early 1960s” and now referred to as the Expressionist style.²²

Breuer bracketed the building with plazas and, at ground level, recessed the facade to create a pedestrian arcade around the entire perimeter of the building. Breuer used massive concrete *pilotis*, or structural stilts, to support the upper floors. *Pilotis* were a characteristic feature of Modern architecture, canonized by Le Corbusier, and with the HUD building Breuer employed cast-in-place concrete to create pairs of wedge-shaped columns. The space between the *pilotis* was spanned by 40' long concrete beams. By setting the ground-level facade back under the upper floors, Breuer was in effect able to continue the plaza pavement under the building blurring the boundary between interior and exterior space and “filtering the plaza through and around the building.”²³ In this way, he was able to integrate the building with the site.

In the spirit of Modernism, Breuer made use of technologically advanced construction techniques. The building was assembled from 1,584 prefabricated concrete modular window units that functioned as both a load-bearing structural system and as an exterior skin, making the HUD building the first Federal building in the United States in which precast concrete was a primary structural and exterior finish material and the first fully modular design for a Federal office building. The height of the modular units varied slightly from top to bottom and housed utilities in addition to providing natural light to the interior offices. Breuer exploited the plastic quality of concrete, creating a highly faceted three-dimensional facade that provided sun protection and gave surface texture to the monumental wall expanses. The modular units were cast with a smooth finish to contrast with the diagonal formwork markings of the *pilotis* and beams. The overall assemblage was highly standardized and made minimal

²⁰ The first manifestation of the double Y-shaped plan occurred as early as 1936 in Breuer's utopian town plan called the “Garden City of the Future.” See Hyman, *Marcel Breuer, Architect*, 84.

²¹ “A Bold Solution to a Difficult Problem,” *Architectural Record* 137 (March 1965): 137.

²² Dan Cruickshank, ed., *Sir Banister Fletcher's A History of Architecture*, 20th ed. (Oxford: Architectural Press, 1996): 1517.

²³ “Horizontal Monument,” *Architectural Forum* 98 (June 1953): 105.

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use of ornamentation, yet Breuer was able to draw on the regularity of the molded forms to create dynamic contrast between sun and shadow, light and dark. The overall effect is a formal, rational, but sculpturally expressive composition. The HUD building is an important example of Breuer's body of work and a stunning example of the Expressionist style of Modern architecture in the United States.

The building was finished in 1968 at a cost of \$26 million dollars – \$6 million lower than estimated and \$3 million less than appropriated.²⁴ The site included underground and street-level parking that provided space for 550 cars. A typical floor plan consisted of four curved interior hallways linked by a central core. The area designated for office space was left open, allowing for flexibility and change. The building was highly modern in its amenities, providing a cafeteria, library, and health services unit to meet the physical needs of the HUD employees. Breuer designed a mechanical vertical conveyor system with 11 receiving and sending stations to efficiently move documents throughout the building. President Lyndon B. Johnson presided over the dedication of the building and called for the Federal government to create a nation that “will always be like this building – bold and beautiful.”²⁵ The HUD building and the Hubert H. Humphrey Federal Building (1972-1976) are the only buildings in Washington, D.C., designed by Breuer and are two of only a dozen institutional buildings he designed in the United States.

The HUD building is significant in the history of American architecture as an outstanding example of the work of Marcel Breuer, a major figure of twentieth-century architecture. Breuer received critical acclaim during his career and won numerous awards and recognition. He was ranked as a twentieth-century “form giver” by *Time* magazine in its July 2, 1956 issue, a list that included only twelve other notable architects.²⁶ In 1968 Breuer was presented with the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects, the highest award bestowed upon an individual and representative of “distinguished achievement and contribution to architecture.”²⁷ The same year, Breuer was awarded the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Architecture, presented for notable achievement in design and for distinguished contributions to the field of architecture. Previous recipients of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal included Alvar Aalto (1967) and Mies van der Rohe (1966). In 1973, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for the first time in the institution's history, honored an architect with a solo show, exhibiting models and photographs of Breuer's buildings and furniture. Three years later, he was presented with the Grande Medaille d'Or, the highest honor of the French Academie d'Architecture.²⁸ Lastly, in

²⁴ “Evaluation: Housing the Department of Urban Development,” *AIA Journal* 66, no. 4 (April 1977): 53.

²⁵ “Johnson Dedicates HUD Offices,” *Washington Post*, 10 September 1968.

²⁶ Other architects featured in the article included Frank Lloyd Wright; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe; Le Corbusier; Gropius; Richard Neutra; Alvar Aalto; Wallace K. Harrison; Philip Johnson; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; Edward Durell Stone; and Buckminster Fuller. See Hyman, *Marcel Breuer, Architect*, 139.

²⁷ Richard Guy Wilson, *The AIA Gold Medal* (New York: The McGraw-Hill Company, 1984): 3.

²⁸ Paul Goldberger, “Marcel Breuer, 79, Dies; Architect and Designer,” *New York Times*, 2 July 1981.

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1981, as one of a five-part series of exhibitions on the twentieth century's most profoundly influential designers, Breuer was honored with a one-man show at the Museum of Modern Art.²⁹

Context: President Kennedy's "Guiding Principles"

During the New Deal era, huge sums of money and national resources were committed to Federal building projects. While the public buildings of the 1930s and 1940s exhibited some signs of Modernist influences, they were essentially designed to follow the principles of Classicism "extending the previous generations' and administrations' traditions of austerity and authority."³⁰ This classically influenced style is often referred to as "Modern Classic" or "Stripped Classic" because it employed a simplified aesthetic that rejected ornament and embellishment and "satisfied the current taste for sleekness."³¹ The tenets of Modernism, as instituted by Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and others working in Europe, did not have a real impact on the design of public buildings in the United States until the 1950s. At the same time, the Federal government began to embrace Modern design in part because of its emphasis on functionalism, its use of flexible plans, and its adoption of new technologies. Federal administrators also recognized that an additional advantage to Modernist-style architecture was that the methods and materials of construction were more economical than previous construction techniques. Consequently, the private architects responsible for Federal buildings were creating curtain-wall towers and monolithic office blocks that were "more concerned with efficiency and economy than with aesthetics."³² The product was a cautious use of Modernism that resulted in varying degrees of success, and professional observers of the period were contemptuous of the "pedestrian dullness of official building in most American cities, including the nation's capital."³³

A milestone development in the design and construction of Federal buildings occurred in 1961 with the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space. The Committee was created at the suggestion of President John F. Kennedy, who expressed dissatisfaction with the Federal government's approach to the provision of public buildings in the District of Columbia and across the country and concern about the declining caliber of Federal construction. Although the Public Buildings Act of 1959 was passed to progress the issue, Kennedy requested that the problem be revisited. Thus, the Ad Hoc Committee was formed to advise the administration on immediate and long-term building needs and to make recommendations for improvements. The Committee ultimately expanded its inquiries to consider the decrepit condition of Pennsylvania Avenue and

²⁹ The other four exhibitions featured Charles Eames, Mies van der Rohe, Alvar Allto, and Le Corbusier. See Hyman, *Marcel Breuer, Architect*, 166.

³⁰ Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60, and 70s* (Washington, D.C., U.S. General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect, Center for Historic Buildings, 2003): 24-25. Although pervasive, the Stripped Classic style was never institutionalized, and during this period buildings of other styles – Art Deco, Spanish Colonial Revival, English Colonial Revival, and rustic styles – were also common.

³¹ Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture* (New York: Plume, 2001): 107.

³² Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60, and 70s*, 37.

³³ "U.S. Plans a Building in Capital as Center for Housing Agencies," *New York Times*, 9 August 1963.

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the “increasingly perceived mediocrity of Federal building design.”³⁴ In June, 1962, the Committee presented its findings, *The Report to the President by the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space*, which contained the “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture,” penned by the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The report identified numerous problems with government owned and leased buildings, and recommended both the elimination of temporary and obsolete buildings and new construction. The goals of the “Guiding Principles” were summarized as follows:

1. The policy shall be to provide requisite and adequate faculties in an architectural style and form that will reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the Federal government. Major emphasis should be placed on the choice of designs that embody the finest contemporary American architectural thought. Where appropriate, fine art should be incorporated in the building design, with emphasis on the work of living American artists. Buildings should be economical to construct, operate, and maintain and should be accessible.
2. The development of an official style must be avoided. The government should avoid excessive uniformity in the design of Federal buildings and seek the advice of distinguished architects prior to the award of important design contracts.
3. The choice and development of the building site should be considered as the first step of the design process and should be made in cooperation with local agencies. Special attention should be given to the assemblage of streets and public places and to the development of landscape.³⁵

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, in the years following the release of the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations, the GSA commissioned a few notable projects that stand out as masterpieces of the era. These include the HUD building, the U.S. Tax Court by Victor Lundy (1972-1975, Washington, D.C.), the John F. Kennedy Federal Building by Walter Gropius and The Architects Collaborative (1964-1966, Boston), and the Federal Center by Mies van der Rohe (1964-1969, Chicago).³⁶ The HUD headquarters, the first Federal project in Washington, D.C., built under the “Guiding Principles,” was held up as a model and prototype for future public building projects and inspired a new sense of optimism for the direction of Federal design. With the HUD building, the GSA satisfied all of the principal recommendations put forth in the “Guiding Principles.” First, by awarding the commission to Marcel Breuer, an established Modernist architect of international prominence, the GSA was assured that the building’s design would be of the highest caliber, embody the finest

³⁴ John Wetenhall, “Camelot’s Legacy to Public Art: Aesthetic Ideology in the New Frontier,” *Art Journal* 48, no. 4 (Winter, 1989): 304.

³⁵ U.S. General Services Administration, “The Design Excellence Program Guide: Building a Legacy” (Washington, D.C., U.S. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service, Office of the Chief Architect, 2000). The Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture are reproduced on page 10 of this guide.

³⁶ More than 600 GSA-owned buildings were constructed between 1950 and 1979, in what can be called the post World War II Modern era of architectural history. To promote responsible portfolio management these buildings were analyzed and evaluated by the GSA to identify the highest quality and most distinctive buildings of the inventory. The results of the context study were reported in Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60, and 70s*. At the time of publication, the GSA was responsible for 1,600 owned and 6,400 leased buildings nationwide.

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contemporary American architectural thought, and would not be at risk of uniformity or dullness. Second, when the award was announced, Breuer was at the point in his career when he had successfully completed several large-scale building projects that took advantage of the innovative technological capabilities afforded by the use of precast-concrete modular building units and the efficient spatial arrangement of open floor plans. Thus, Breuer was able to give the GSA a building that would be economical to build, operate, and maintain. Lastly, the GSA purchased land for the HUD building in the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, thereby ensuring that the building would be developed in accordance with a plan that would take into account the building's relation to the general ensemble of streets, public spaces, and landscape.

When the HUD building opened, the significance of the structure was immediately recognized within the architectural establishment of the time. Ada Louise Huxtable, then the architectural critic of the *New York Times*, wrote:

The HUD building, therefore, has a double significance. It is not only notable in its own right, as an individual structure and as part of the Washington scene, but because it is one of a handful of buildings that is being treated as a kind of Federal demonstration project for better government architecture. It is the final result of the original Kennedy directive for higher standards of Federal design and construction.³⁷

Reporting on the project, the journal *Architectural Record* commented favorably on Breuer's design stating, "As the center from which many key Federal design and planning strategies emanate, it is most appropriate that the new building succeeds so well in setting a high standard of public architecture which ideally should prevail throughout the country."³⁸ At its dedication ceremony, the HUD building's bold aesthetic and technological advances were heralded as a turning point for public architecture nationwide. The architectural critic of the *Washington Post*, Wolf von Eckardt, acknowledged that the Breuer project "gives new substance to [the GSA's] old promise to elevate the quality of Government architecture."³⁹

Context: Urban Renewal in the National Capital

The Urban Renewal movement, a response to theories related to community planning and public housing espoused by Le Corbusier and others in Europe, emerged in the United States during the post-war period to combat blight, promote slum clearance, and revitalize inner-city neighborhoods. After World War II, the problems that plagued many of the nation's cities – poor housing, traffic congestion, inadequate sites for commercial and industrial growth, decay of downtown areas, and neighborhood deterioration – began to

³⁷ Ada Louise Huxtable, "The House that HUD Built," *New York Times*, 22 September 1968.

³⁸ "Headquarters for HUD by Breuer and Beckhard: A Major Landmark for a Political Era Which Aspired to a Public Architecture of Quality," *Architectural Record* 144, no. 6 (December 1968): 99.

³⁹ "Invitation to Excellence," *Washington Post*, 13 August 1963.

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command the attention of municipal leaders and the Federal government.⁴⁰ Planners saw urban renewal, the process of clearing impoverished, overcrowded neighborhoods and decrepit or underutilized building stock followed by reconstruction and rebuilding urban centers and public works, as a solution to the problems that plagued many of the nation's cities. The core components to urban renewal projects included the construction of vital public spaces such as office buildings, government centers, institutional complexes, and cultural facilities, the improvement of transportation infrastructure, and the creation of residential areas.⁴¹ In the 1940s, local redevelopment agencies were formed in many cities across the country to implement renewal strategies in the hope of generating both social and economic benefits.

In Washington, D.C., the process of urban renewal started with the Redevelopment Act of 1945, which created the D.C. Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA) and "vested in the National Capital Park and Planning Commission authority to plan the rebuilding of all Washington's slum-ridden areas, to lay out a vast new highway system, to purchase land for additional parks and playgrounds, and to specify the sites for new public buildings."⁴² The Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area encompassed 560 acres of land covering the area bounded by Independence Avenue on the north, Washington Avenue, South Capitol Street, and Canal Street on the east, P Street on the south, and Maine Avenue and Twelfth Street on the west.⁴³ Demolition in the area started in 1954 and the majority of construction was complete by 1970. In total, approximately 4,800 structures were demolished and in their place were built apartment high-rises, townhouses, and communal residential squares, a theatre, a shopping center, a government office building, as well as a public plaza and promenade, highway, and revitalized waterfront.

The Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area is significant for being one of the earliest urban renewal efforts in the United States and for being the first such effort in Washington, D.C. The renewal area was located in the shadow of the nation's Capitol, and the Southwest redevelopment project was seen as "an early pioneer and intended prototype in national urban renewal," a pilot project that would help test and set national standards

⁴⁰ Francesca Russello Ammon, "Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, HABS No. DC-856" (National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington, D.C., 2004): 8. The HABS report cites the 1963 study *20 Questions & Answers on Urban Renewal* by the Urban Renewal Administration and the Housing and Home Finance Agency as a source on the contemporary rationale for urban renewal.

⁴¹ Richard Longstreth, "The Difficult Legacy of Urban Renewal," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 3, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 8. Longstreth raises the issue of the *physical* significance of urban renewal areas and argues that urban renewal has given communities places of lasting value that, despite being less than 50 years old, merit study and evaluation.

⁴² Constance McLaughlin Green, *Washington: A History of the Capital, 1800-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962): 492.

⁴³ Ammon, "Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, HABS No. DC-856," 1. The boundaries of the urban renewal area are defined in the HABS study as Independence Avenue on the north (between Twelfth Street and Washington Avenue), Washington Avenue on the northeast (between Independence Avenue and D Street), South Capitol Street on the east (between D and M streets), Canal Street on the southeast (between M and P streets), P Street on the south (between Canal Street and Maine Avenue), Maine Avenue and the Washington Channel on the southwest (between P and Fourteenth Streets), Fourteenth Street on the west (between D and F streets), D Street on the northwest (between Fourteenth and Twelfth streets), and Twelfth Street (between D Street and Independence Avenue).

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and policy.⁴⁴ Although many of the mid-century urban renewal plans are now regarded as failures, examples of planning principles to be avoided, the Southwest renewal area undoubtedly has merit for its historic and architectural value. The project represented one of the nation's "primary manifestations of important tendencies in design and urbanism of the period."⁴⁵ Historian James M. Goode calls the Southwest urban renewal project "the most important urban renewal project in the country," one that qualifies as "a monument to Modernism from the 1950s and 1960s."⁴⁶ Furthermore, the redevelopment project is significant for its "employment of many Modernist architectural and planning ideals – such as the implementation of the superblock and the attention paid to the separation of automobile and pedestrian space."⁴⁷ The HUD building was a key element in the master plan of the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, and evaluated within the context of the national urban renewal movement, the HUD building has exceptional significance. Breuer's building was and remains an important landmark for HUD – a physical symbol of the activities and principles of the agency.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 3. Other early urban renewal projects include Detroit's Lafayette Park (1956-65), Chicago's Hyde Park (1957-61), and New Haven's Church Street (1957-67).

⁴⁵ Longstreth, "The Difficult Legacy of Urban Renewal," 10.

⁴⁶ James M. Goode, *Best Addresses* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988): 412.

⁴⁷ Ammon, "Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, HABS No. DC-856," 3.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

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Section number 9 Page 3

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<table border="1"><tr><td>1</td><td>8</td></tr></table> Zone	1	8	<table border="1"><tr><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>0</td></tr></table> Easting	3	2	4	5	2	0	<table border="1"><tr><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>0</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>2</td><td>0</td></tr></table> Northing	4	3	0	5	6	2	0	3	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table> Zone			<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> Easting					<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> Northing				
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith H. Robinson and Daria A. Gasparini
organization Robinson & Associates, Inc. date April 23, 2008
street & number 1909 Q Street, N.W., Suite 300 telephone 202-234-2333
city or town Washington state District of Columbia zip code 20009

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name U.S. General Services Administration, National Capital Region
street & number 7th and D Streets, S.W. telephone 202-708-5891
city or town Washington, DC state D.C. zip code 20407

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et. seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is located at 451 Seventh Street in the southwest quadrant of Washington, D.C. The property is bounded by D Street, S.W., on the north, Seventh Street, S.W., on the east, a frontage road along the Southwest Freeway/I-395 on the south, and L'Enfant Plaza/Ninth Street, S.W., on the west.

Boundary Justification

The current legal boundaries of Square 435, Lot 60 in southwest Washington, D.C., are used to define the boundaries of the nominated property. The HUD building as well as the surrounding plazas and surface parking areas comprise the city block described above in the Verbal Boundary Description. The entire city block has historically been part of the HUD site since the land was purchased from the D.C. Redevelopment Land Agency by the U.S. General Services Administration. The boundaries correspond to the property lines during the period of significance 1963-1968, and the historic boundaries have remained unchanged.

United States Department of the Interior
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PHOTOGRAPHS

All photographs are of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the District of Columbia. Electronic images on CD-R are held by the Center for Historic Buildings, U.S. General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

IMAGE 1

Photographer: Anice Hoachlander
Date: 2004
View: East elevation and plaza, looking south
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image1.tif

IMAGE 2

Photographer: Daria Gasparini, Robinson & Associates, Inc.
Date: 2006
View: East elevation, looking southwest
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image2.tif

IMAGE 3

Photographer: Anice Hoachlander
Date: 2004
View: East elevation, detail, looking west
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image3.tif

IMAGE 4

Photographer: Anice Hoachlander
Date: 2004
View: South elevator lobby, looking west
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image4.tif

IMAGE 5

Photographer: Anice Hoachlander
Date: 2004
View: Sixth floor office corridor, looking northeast
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image5.tif

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS

IMAGE 6

Photographer: Daria Gasparini, Robinson & Associates, Inc.
Date: 2006
View: Fifth floor office, looking southwest
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image6.tif

IMAGE 7

Photographer: Anice Hoachlander
Date: 2004
View: Window, detail, looking north
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image7.tif

IMAGE 8

Photographer: Daria Gasparini, Robinson & Associates, Inc.
Date: 2006
View: Executive office suite, looking northeast
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image8.tif

IMAGE 9

Photographer: Anice Hoachlander
Date: 2004
View: Cafeteria, looking southwest
File Name: District of Columbia_HUD_Image9.tif

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS

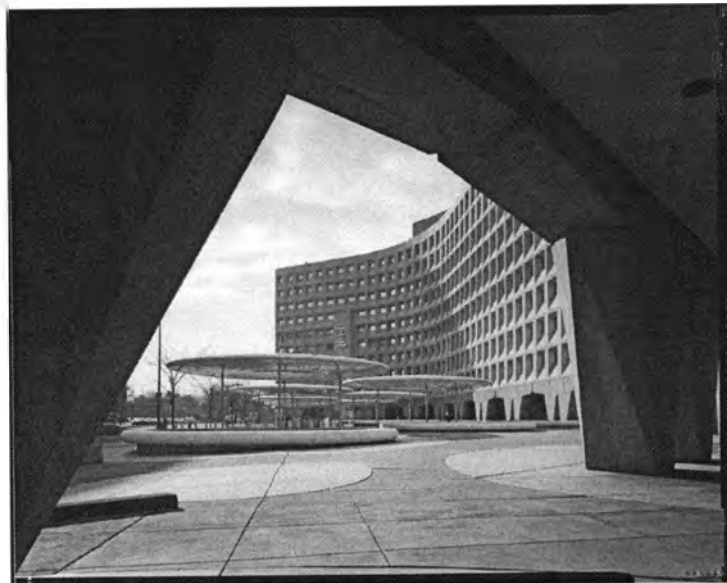


Image 1

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS



Image 2

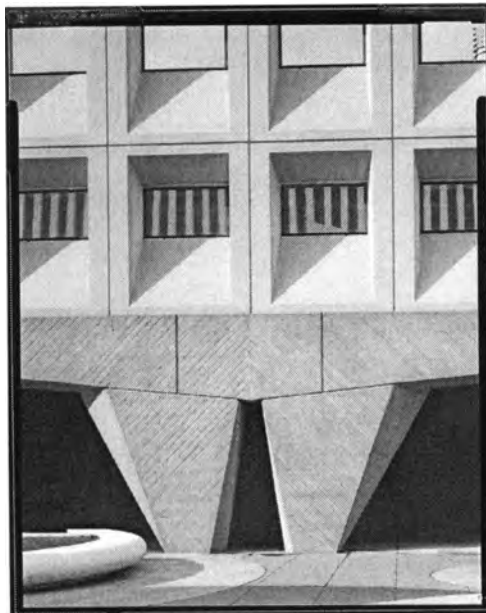


Image 3

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS



Image 4

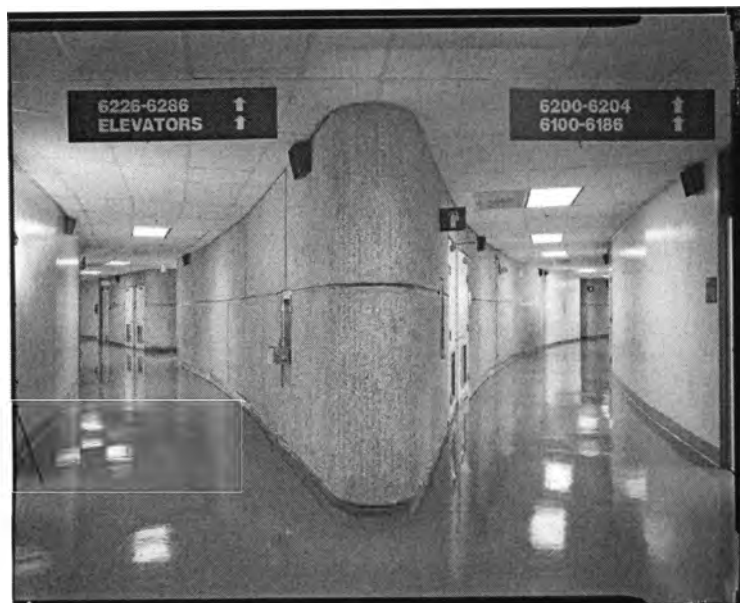


Image 5

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS

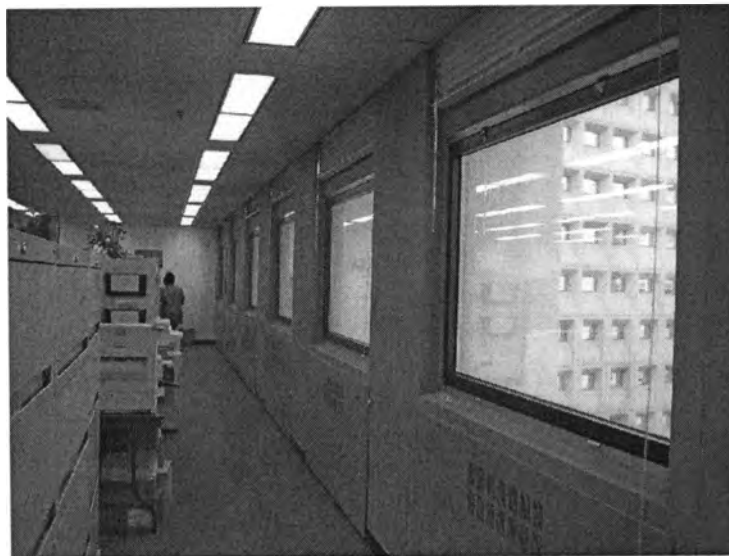


Image 6



Image 7

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development

Name of Property

District of Columbia

County and State

PHOTOGRAPHS



Image 8

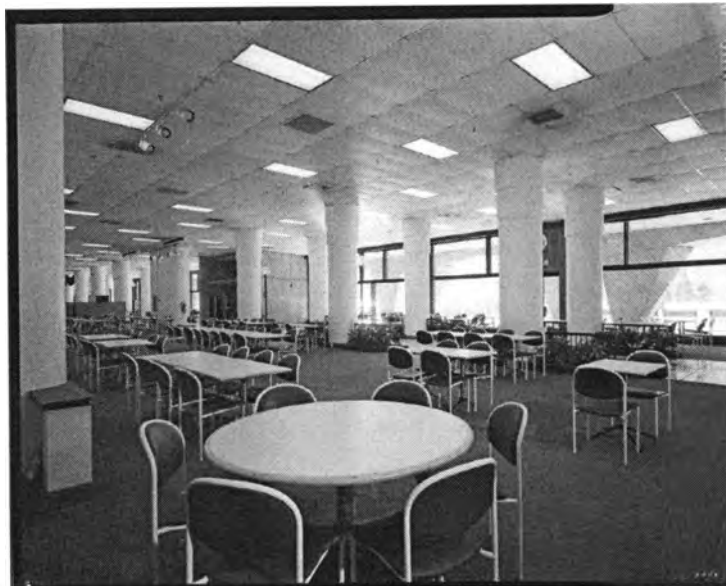


Image 9

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 7/16/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/04/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/19/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/29/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000824

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 8/26/2008 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Designed by the internationally recognized master architect Manuel Breuer and constructed between 1965 and 1968, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development building is of exceptional architectural importance and listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept c

REVIEWER _____

DISCIPLINE Patrick Andrus/Historian

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 8/26/2008

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 1



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 2



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 3



Evacuation



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE A

**6226-6286
ELEVATORS**



**6200-6204
6100-6186**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 5



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 6



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 7



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

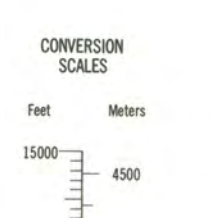
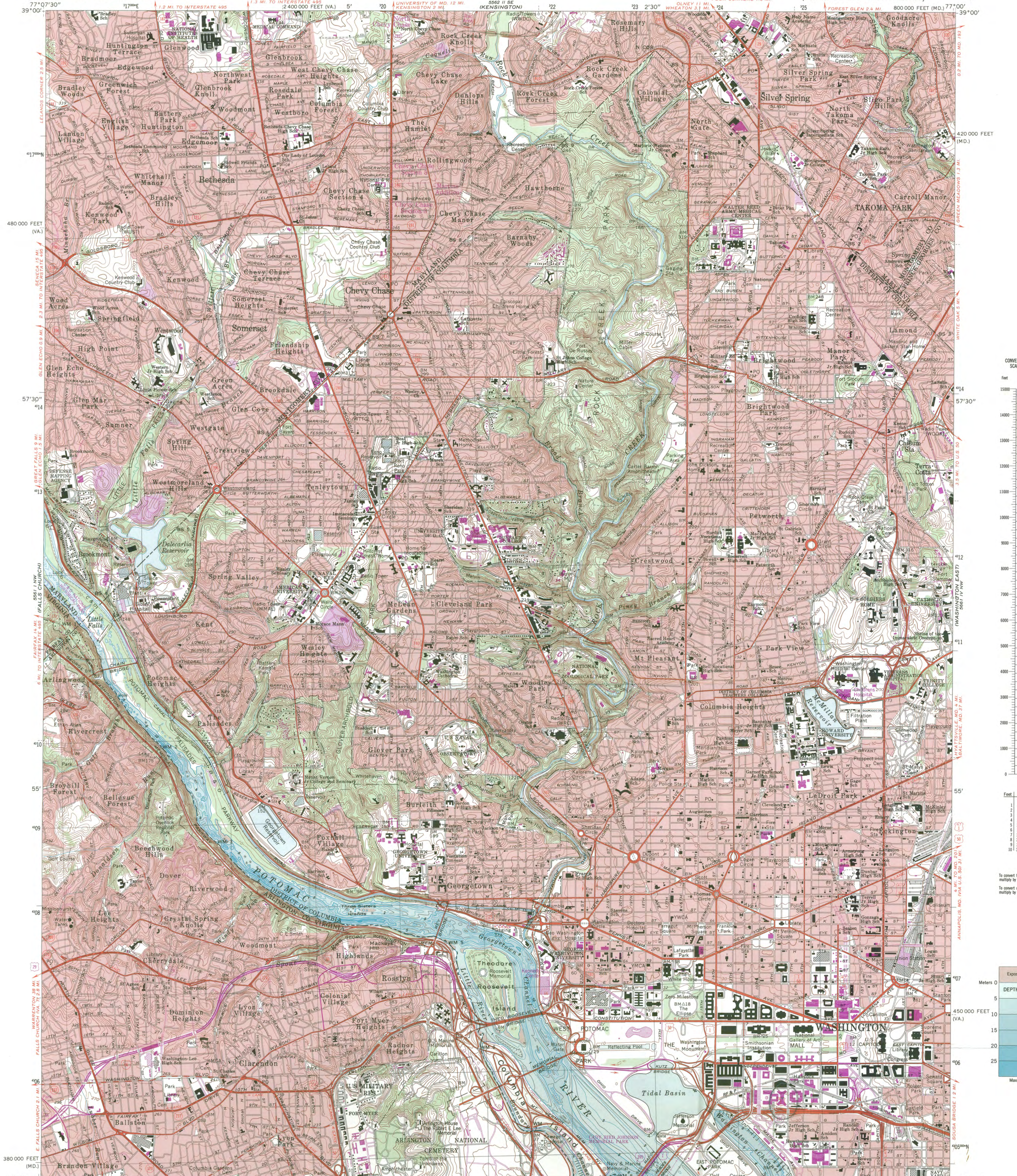
IMAGE 8



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

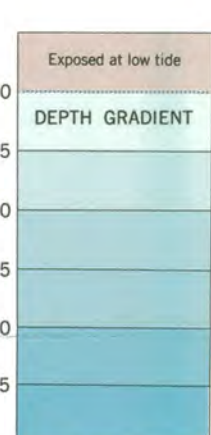
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IMAGE 9

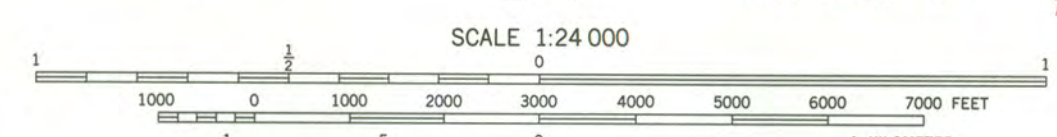
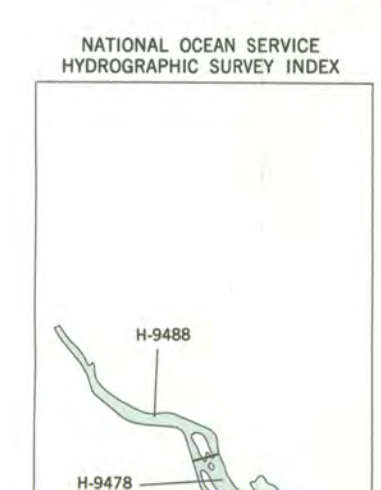


Feet	Meters
1	0.3048
2	0.6096
3	0.9144
4	1.2192
5	1.5240
6	1.8288
7	2.1336
8	2.4384
9	2.7432
10	3.0480

To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey and the National Ocean Service
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, NCPS, and WSSC
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1955. Field checked 1956. Revised 1965
Bathymetry compiled by the National Ocean Service from tide-coordinated hydrographic surveys. This information is not intended for navigational purposes.
Mean low water (dotted) line and mean high water (heavy solid) line compiled by NOS from tide-coordinated aerial photographs. Apparent shoreline (outer edge of vegetation) shown by light solid line
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland coordinate system, and Virginia coordinate system, north zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 8 meters south and 26 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private buildings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1981 and other sources. This information not field checked
Map edited 1983
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
BATHYMETRIC CONTOUR INTERVAL 1 METER WITH SUPPLEMENTARY
0.5 METER CONTOURS-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.4 METER



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty
- Medium-duty
- Light-duty
- Unimproved dirt

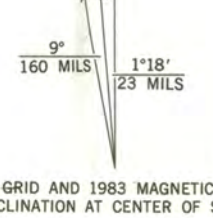
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

WASHINGTON WEST, D.C.-MD.-VA.
38077-H1-TB-024
1965
PHOTOREVISED 1983
BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
DMA 5561 1 NE-SERIES V833

HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY INFORMATION

Survey Number	Survey Date	Survey Scale	Survey Line Spacing (Naut. Miles)
H-9478	1977	1:5,000	01-08
H-9488	1976	1:5,000	01-05

BASE MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
BATHYMETRIC SURVEY DATA COMPLIES WITH INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION (IHO) SPECIAL PUBLICATION 44 ACCURACY STANDARDS AND/OR STANDARDS USED AT THE DATE OF THE SURVEY
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22082
NATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHIC SERVICE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



NAME OF PROPERTY: U.S. DEPT. OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
LOCATION: 451 7th STREET, S.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410
UTM REFERENCE: 18 324520 4305620