

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-1052

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: United States Post Office and Court House

Other names/site number: Joseph C. O'Mahoney Federal Center

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 2120 Capitol Avenue

City or town: Cheyenne State: Wyoming County: Laramie

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

	<u>4/10/2017</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Federal Preservation Officer, U.S. General Services Administration</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

United States Post Office and Court House

Laramie County, WY

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In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Mary M. Hopkins

3/8/17

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Wy State Historic Preservation Officer

Title:

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)

Joe Elson H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

6-5-17
Date of Action

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

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Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/post office
GOVERNMENT/Federal courthouse
GOVERNMENT/government office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/post office
GOVERNMENT/Federal courthouse
GOVERNMENT/government office

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: New Formalism

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: _____

Foundation: CONCRETE

Roof: SYNTHETIC, asphalt composition, rubber

Walls: CONCRETE, STONE, granite

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The United States Post Office and Court House (now called the Joseph C. O'Mahoney Federal Center and hereafter referred to as the Federal Center in this document) is located at 2120 Capitol Avenue in downtown Cheyenne, Wyoming. The building, completed in 1965, occupies about 1.7 acres and consists of a two-story courthouse and post office, an eight-story office tower, and integral front plaza. The architectural firms, Porter & Porter and J.T. Banner & Associates, designed the building with elements of Formalist architecture: flat rooflines, smooth surfaces, sunscreens, geometric patterns, and clear expression of corners. The design's essential three-part composition of vertical office tower, horizontal public main block, and public plaza remains intact as do many of the original architectural elements, such as the red granite and precast concrete panel exterior cladding; the main block's tile solar screens; the tower's egg crate patterned facades; the lobbies' marble walls and terrazzo floors; and the courtrooms' walnut paneling and furnishings. The building still houses the United States Postal Service, federal courts, and other federal tenant agencies, retaining its original function.

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Narrative Description

Exterior

General

The United States Post Office and Court House (Federal Center) is located in downtown Cheyenne, Wyoming, bounded by West 22nd Street to the north, Capitol Avenue to the east, West 21st Street to the south, and Carey Avenue to the west, and is one block east of the 1933 Federal Building at 308 West 21st Street. The Federal Center was designed by two architecture firms, Porter & Porter and J.T. Banner & Associates. Completed in 1965, the reinforced concrete frame building has an exterior that incorporates elements of Formalist architecture.

The overall composition of the Federal Center consists of three parts. The building is composed of two distinct, generally rectangular blocks that form an approximate “L.” The southern block is a rectangular two-story section (hereafter called the main block) measuring approximately 182’ by 280’ that houses the post office and courthouse. The other block is an eight-story office tower positioned at the north end of the main block (hereafter called the tower) that houses a number of federal agencies. The only significant interruption to the building’s rectangular footprint is an approximately 40’ by 50’ projection at the southeast corner of the tower that serves as its entry. The third part of the composition is the rectangular plaza located at the front (east elevation) of the Federal Center.

The three-part composition of the Federal Center, with its strong contrast between vertical tower and horizontal main block, does not reflect the symmetry that many Formalist designs exhibit, but it incorporates several other characteristics of Formalist architecture. For example, the arrangement of its vertically oriented building volumes creates a clear expression of corners. Other Formalist features exhibited in the Federal Center include flat roofs, sunscreens, recessed windows, and elements that emphasize the verticality of the building. Formalist design also typically incorporates high quality materials, such as terrazzo, marble, precast concrete, and granite, all of which are present in the subject building (Photos 1 through 7).

In addition, Formalist designs often feature buildings integrated with the landscape. A rectangular plaza is located at front of the Federal Center (Figure 1 and Photos 1 and 2). The plaza has two raised planting beds containing trees and shrubs. The planting beds, divided by walkways, incorporate seating.

East Elevation

The main entry points to the building are located on the east elevation, on the main block, and within the angle formed by the intersection of the main block and tower. There were originally three entryways located within projecting vestibules adjacent to the plaza at the front of the building. Two, facing east, provided access to the first floor post office in the main block. Today,

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the southernmost of the east-facing entries retains its original vestibule of aluminum and glass and still provides access to the post office. Above it, an aluminum-lettered sign reads, "United States Post Office." The northernmost of the two east-facing entrances was altered circa 2002. Its doorway was replaced with glazed storefront windows and it no longer functions as an entrance. This entrance originally served to access post office lockboxes that were also moved circa 2002. The third original entrance, located in the intersection of the main block and tower, faces south and provides access to the office tower and to the federal courthouse that occupies the second floor of the main block. This entrance also retains the original vestibule of aluminum and glass.

The east elevation of the main block (Plate 1, Figure 5, and Photo 1) has a flush red granite base above which are smooth, lighter red precast concrete panels on the first story. Here, as elsewhere on the building, the windows are the original aluminum framed windows. Typically, those windows that are operable in the Federal Center are casement. There are eleven vertical narrow recessed rectangular windows along the southern third of the facade. The entries and large flush glazed windows with aluminum sashes characterize the rest of the east-facing elevation of the main block and the south-facing portions of the tower adjacent to the plaza.

A tan concrete tile solar screen spans the entire the second story of the east elevation of the main block, visually dominating this elevation of the building. The screen is made of 15" by 15" tiles. Two patterns are used with diamonds of two differing sizes inside the tile frame. The smaller diamonds are held in the center with vertical and horizontal braces to the diamond points. The other pattern has diamonds that extend to the frames. The pattern across the walls consists of two vertical courses of the larger diamond tiles separated by six vertical courses of the smaller diamond tiles. Windows are faintly visible behind the solar screen. Forty-four vertical rectangular windows span the entire east-facing portion of the main block on the second story.

A rectangular landscaped plaza extends along most of the east elevation, sitting within the "L" formed by the main block and tower. Two large rectangular planting beds surrounded by low retaining walls clad in red granite flank the entry to the post office and dominate the plaza (Photos 1 and 2). Linden trees growing in the planters provide shade for the simple seating offered by the retaining walls. There are also red granite-clad planters against the building along the ground level of the east- and south-facing facades. These planters contain Juniper shrubs. The plantings, planters, and layout reflect the original landscaping plan for the plaza (Plate 1 and Figure 1). Examination of the original plans for the plaza indicates the only significant change to the plaza area is the replacement of some of the original sidewalk paving (see Site Plan with Photo Points). The walkways were originally composed of Colorado red flagstone and concrete creating a geometric pattern. The present sidewalks are concrete with brick trim at the street edge and no longer have the same geometric patterning. A flagpole and contemporary signage are located on the plaza adjacent to the entrance to the tower.

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Plate 1. Oblique view of east (front) and southern elevations near completion (5 January 1965)

The office tower is differentiated architecturally from the main block, with flat precast concrete panels defining its east elevation (Photo 3). There are no windows on the first story of the east elevation of the tower and those on the upper stories are screened and barely visible. At the first story, the east elevation of the tower has red precast concrete panels and aluminum lettering spelling the building name and address, “Joseph C. O’Mahoney Federal Center,” “United States Courthouse,” and “2120 Capitol Avenue,” along with the obverse and reverse of the Great Seal of the United States. The sign was installed after 1976, when the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) renamed the building in honor of Joseph C. O’Mahoney. Above the first story, flat tan precast concrete panels clad stories two through eight. These panels sit about three inches out from the red precast concrete panels of the first story. The second through eighth stories of the office tower are characterized by a single continuous facade formed by nine rows of ten concrete panels. The bottom row of panels is approximately 9’ tall, shorter than the rest of the rows of panels, which are 12’ 8” tall. Wider end panels, each 6’ 4”, border the eight center panels that are 5’ wide. This pattern is maintained all the way up the office tower. Tan precast concrete tieback covers were installed at the corners of the panels sometime before 1976, apparently to stabilize the panel connections to the building framing. The tieback covers were not part of the original building plans, nor do they appear in early photos of the building. However, they are not overly obtrusive. Two recessed window openings located at the center of the elevation run from the second floor to the eighth floor. The windows are covered with vertical aluminum grills that are composed of five rows of evenly spaced rectangular elements, forming a continuous strip from the second story to the eighth story.

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North Elevation

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The north elevation (Figure 7 and Photo 3) of the building is mostly comprised of the tower which extends from the east corner of the elevation until it intersects with the main block about twenty feet from the western end of the elevation. The first story of the north elevation has a red granite base with red precast concrete panels above. There is a single, flush metal service door near the east corner of the elevation. Ten vertical narrow recessed rectangular windows are spaced along the eastern third of the facade. There are no additional windows on the first story. The second through eighth stories have rows of twenty-eight vertical rectangular windows grouped in clusters of four, except at the ends of the elevation where they are grouped in pairs. The windows are recessed and surrounded by protruding precast concrete aggregate in an egg crate pattern. Below each window and set within its own shorter protruding frame is a flat concrete panel. Above the eighth story windows, a shorter row of protruding frames containing concrete panels forms the tower's cap. Flat tan precast concrete panels define the corners of the office tower. The small section of the main block on the west end of the north elevation has a red granite base with red precast concrete panels on the first story. The tan geometric-patterned solar screen described above for the east elevation of the main block also clads the second story here. There are three vertical rectangular windows behind the solar screen. A low wall clad in red precast concrete extends west from the building. The wall defines the north end of the parking lot that is located on the west side of the building. A black metal fence, added at an unknown date, sits atop the wall.

West Elevation

The west elevation (Plate 2, Figure 6 and Photos 4, 5, and 6) of the Federal Center is the effective rear of the building. This area is characterized by a parking lot and driveway that together span the entire elevation. The driveway is located near the southern end of the elevation and provides access to a parking garage in the building's basement. A low wall clad in red precast concrete surrounds the parking lot. As on the north side of the building, a black metal fence tops the wall. In addition, gates of the same design and material as the fence secure the two vehicular entry points from Carey Avenue into the Federal Building site. The fencing is not part of the original plan and its exact installation date is unknown. Another low wall, evident in original construction photos, bounds the driveway to the parking garage. It does not have the black metal fencing.

The west elevation is dominated by the two-story main block containing the courthouse and post office with the office tower at the north end of the elevation. The tower is set back slightly from the west facade. Only the third through eighth stories of the office tower are visible on this elevation, behind the projecting main block.

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69 From top of Fed.
Bldg. looking Northeast
Progress 65

U.S. POST OFFICE & COURT HOUSE
J.W. Bateson Const. Co., Inc.

Cheyenne, Wyoming
L.M. Abrahamson
Const. Engineer

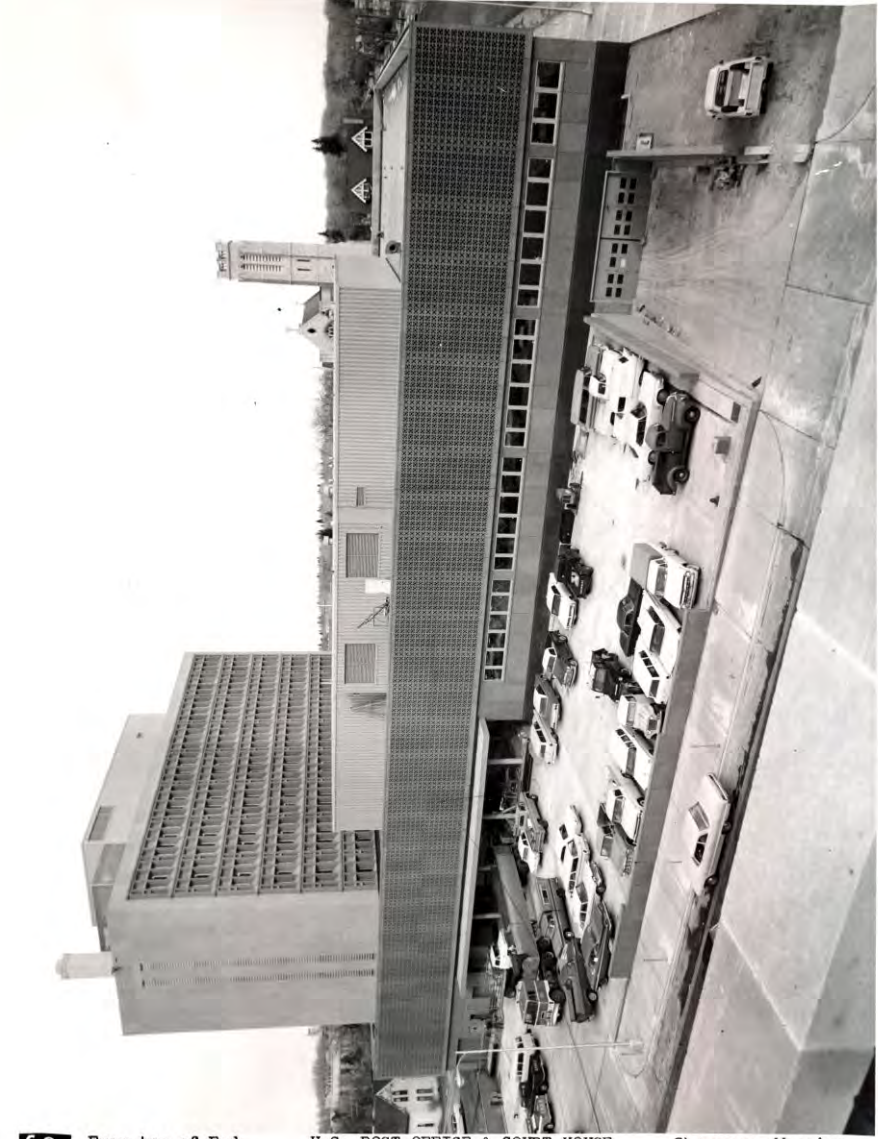


Plate 2. View of west elevation near the end of construction (5 January 1965)

The first story of the west elevation of the main block is clad in red granite with red precast concrete panels above. Multiple openings are spaced along the first story. The north end of the first story has a steel overhead-coiling door with two single, flush metal service doors directly to the south. The doors are above ground level and are accessed via five concrete steps. Another smaller overhead door is located just south of the service doors. These doors are for both people and freight. The middle third of the elevation originally had a recessed loading dock that has since been filled in with a wall clad in red precast concrete panels to match the original panels. There are three window openings, an overhead door, and a flush metal service door set within the new wall. The overhead door is accessed via a new concrete ramp. The area south of the loading dock originally had a band of horizontal rectangular windows, red precast concrete panels, and red granite facing. A new loading dock, built in 1980, is now located in this space. The loading dock projects out from the building, and is clad in an applied aggregate that is rougher than, but similar in color to, the original precast panels. Seven overhead doors are spaced across the loading dock. A single service door is located at the south end of the loading dock. The door is accessed via a concrete ramp. The driveway to the basement parking garage is located at the south end of the elevation. Two overhead doors serve as entrance and exit from the garage. The original band of horizontal aluminum windows, precast panels, and granite facing are still in place above the parking garage entrance on the first story of the elevation.

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The second story has the same tan precast concrete solar screen as the other elevations of the main block. Fifty-five vertical rectangular windows are spaced along the elevation behind the solar screen. As on the east elevation, the west elevation of the tower has a single continuous facade formed by rows of tan concrete panels. The top row of panels is shorter than the rest of the panels. Tan precast concrete tieback covers were installed at the corners of the panels sometime before 1976. Two recessed window openings located at the center of the elevation extend from the third story to the eighth story. The windows are covered with the same vertical aluminum grills that are seen on the east elevation of the office tower.

South Elevation

The south elevation (Plate 1, Photos 6 and 7) of the main block has a course of red granite panels along the first story, with red precast concrete panels above. Eleven narrow recessed rectangular windows are located along the eastern third of the facade. A single flush metal service door is located about twenty feet from the west corner of the elevation. The second story of the south elevation has the same precast concrete solar screen as all the other elevations of the main block. There are twenty-six rectangular windows behind the screen.

The south elevation of the office tower is almost entirely obscured on the first and second stories by the intersecting main block. The above-mentioned south facing entry vestibule comprises the first story at the easternmost end of the tower facade. Directly above the entry vestibule are the only second floor windows of the tower's south elevation. Rising above the main block are stories three through eight. Here, as on the north elevation, the tower is clad in protruding precast concrete aggregate panels forming an egg crate pattern. The windows are set within the vertical protruding frames formed by the panels. Below each window and set within its own shorter protruding frame is a flat concrete panel. Above the eighth story windows, a shorter row of protruding frames containing concrete panels forms the tower's cap. The window arrangement on each of these floors is identical. Thirty vertical rectangular recessed windows are grouped in clusters of four, except at the ends of the elevation where they are grouped in clusters of three. Narrow rows of protruding panels containing flat concrete panels, rather than windows, frame and separate the window groupings.

Penthouse

A penthouse (Photo 5) sits atop the main block. The penthouse is recessed from the building's main roofline and holds mechanical equipment. A second penthouse (Photo 6) is located atop the office tower. Like the penthouse on the main block, it is set back from the roofline. There is a large antenna attached to the tower penthouse. A chimney rises out of the tower just west of the penthouse. The exterior walls of both penthouses are composed of tan corrugated metal siding.

Site

The building and its associated spaces occupy a city block in downtown Cheyenne. The block is bounded by paved sidewalks and streets. As mentioned above, a landscaped plaza spans the east (front) side of the building. A large fenced and concrete-paved parking area on the west (rear)

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side of the building facilitates parking and vehicle movement related to the loading docks on that side of the building. Also located on the west side of building are a concrete ramp from the street to the underground parking garage and a small landscaped area south of the ramp. A small guard booth is located at the western end of the landscaped area. North and south of the building are sidewalks with concrete planters on the street side of the sidewalk preventing vehicular access to the site. These planters are not original to the design and likely date to security improvements made within the last two decades. On the south side of the site is a landscaped area measuring approximately 18' wide by 80' long, extending from the west corner to the west elevation. The area is currently planted in young deciduous trees and grass. Metal benches and tables are located within the landscaped area. This arrangement differs from the original landscaping plan which specified three spruce trees for the eastern half of the landscaped area and grass in the western half.

Interior

First Floor

The first floor of the main block has two rectangular lobbies along its east side. One lobby, to the south, provides access to the post office service counter (Figure 2 and Photo 8). The second lobby (Figure 3 and Photo 9) is larger and now the entry to the office of the U. S. Marshals Service. It was originally the lockbox lobby for the post office (Figure 3). The original lockboxes were removed in 2002 when the space was modified for U. S. Marshals Service.

There is a third lobby located in the office tower (Figure 4 and Photo 10). The tower elevators and doorway are located in the tower lobby just west of the entrance. There are offices located north of the tower lobby. These offices have been significantly modified over the years.

Most of the rest of the first floor, within the main block, was initially a large open workroom for postal employees, except for a small cluster of offices at the southeast corner of the building. The workroom and post office space have been modified. Most of the workroom is now office space for various tenant agencies. A large section of the workroom was converted to offices for the U.S. Marshals Service (Photo 12) in 2002. Modifications to the postal service area include the removal of the lockboxes from the original lockbox lobby and alterations to the service counter. A new corridor with lockboxes was constructed in the service lobby circa 2002. The corridor leads into the remaining workroom space.

The three lobbies retain their original layout and finishes to some degree. All the lobbies retain the original terrazzo flooring. The tower lobby flooring is laid in a geometric pattern approximating a checkerboard with grey, tan, and red terrazzo tiles. The former lockbox lobby flooring is composed of tan terrazzo, with a course of alternating red and grey terrazzo tiles against the exterior wall. The postal service lobby has uniform tan terrazzo with a course of alternating grey and red terrazzo tiles at the eastern and western edges of the original lobby. The new lockbox corridor has original asphalt plank flooring that was a feature of the workroom.

Wall treatments vary in the lobbies, but exhibit a considerable amount of original materials.

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There are red marble wall panels in all three lobbies. The office tower lobby has panels throughout from floor to ceiling. The red marble paneling is only used to wrap pillars and radiators along the exterior walls in the former lockbox lobby. The south wall of the postal service lobby has the panels from floor to ceiling on the south wall. Marble also wraps the pillars and radiators along the postal service lobby exterior wall. The interior walls of the postal service lobby are modern gypsum board with rubber base. The interior walls of the former lockbox lobby are modern gypsum board with a wood base. A continuous horizontal row of windows and a full light aluminum entry door with transom and sidelights define the tenant space in the former lockbox lobby. The ceilings in all the lobbies, installed in 2002, are composed of modern suspended acoustic tiles recessed in a gypsum board soffit.

The office tower and post office lobbies both retain their original wall clocks. A bronze bas-relief commissioned as part of GSA's Art in Architecture program, today part of the GSA Fine Arts Collection, is located on the east wall of the office tower lobby. The work by Wyoming artist Robert Russin entitled, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, was installed in 1968. It depicts a family looking toward an eagle perched on a boy's outstretched hand (Photo 11).

There are three staircases: two located in the office tower at its east and west ends, and a third located near the southwest corner of the main block. A single elevator is located near the center of the main block along the west wall. This elevator services the parking garage in the basement. Three south-facing elevators are located just east of center in the office tower's lobby. The building was constructed with air conditioning.

Second Floor

The second floor of the main block is dedicated almost entirely to courthouse functions and contains associated courtrooms, libraries, judge's chambers, and other offices. Both court offices and other tenants occupy the office tower space. The tower elevators open to a lobby with a corridor to the east and the courtroom lobby to the west. The courtroom lobby runs north/south, creating an L-shaped system of lobbies on the second floor (Photo 13). Three courtrooms are located prominently at the west side of the courtroom lobby. Two of the courtrooms are original, while the northernmost courtroom was completed in 2009. A new grand jury room, jury assembly room, library, and judge's chamber were added in 2010. These new court spaces were created by reconfiguring existing court-related and office spaces on the second floor.

The second floor and courtroom lobbies retain much of their original architectural detail. They have gold terrazzo flooring with courses of darker grey tiles at the edges near the walls. The plaster walls are clad in grey marble wall panels that are 4'-6" tall. Similar to those used in the original construction, modern suspended ceilings with recessed fluorescent lights have been installed throughout the lobbies. Public restrooms, located off the courtroom lobby, have original finishes, including 1" by 1" white and grey ceramic tile floors with grey 4" by 4" ceramic tiles from floor to ceiling. The ceilings are plaster and have recessed lighting. The toilets and sinks are original, although the hardware has been replaced.

The two original courtrooms still have much of their original furniture and are mirror images of

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each other (Photo 14). Newer carpet covers the courtroom floors, but most other features are original. The walls of the courtrooms have rectangular walnut wall panels with recessed black metal strips between the wood panels. The panels on the sidewalls are rectangular, while the panels at the front of the courtroom are narrow, evenly spaced slats. The panels in the back of the rooms are a combination of varied narrow slat panels and, by the doors, larger rectangular panels. A large white marble panel is fastened to the wall behind the judge's bench. A bronze seal is mounted in the center of the marble panel. The courtrooms have their original or sympathetic ceiling treatments and features. There is a large recessed light in the ceiling above the judge's bench. The sides of the ceiling have brown acoustic tiles and recessed lighting. The ceiling in the center of the room is raised above the adjacent acoustic tiles. Similar to the original treatments, white acoustic tiles and plaster have been used to create a geometric pattern along the center of the courtroom. Lighting is hidden in the soffit around this center section of ceiling.

The 2009 courtroom replaced a grand jury room, bailiff room, and witness room located north of the original courtrooms. It has red carpet flooring and gypsum board walls. Most of the walls have stained wood wainscoting with tan fabric wall covering above. The only exception is the wall behind the judge's bench, which has wood wall panels composed of vertical slats. The ceiling is composed of suspended panels recessed into a gypsum board soffit. Pendant and recessed fixtures provide lighting. The courtroom has built-in walnut furniture.

The corridor east of the elevator lobby has tan vinyl tile flooring that is not original. The original blue-green vinyl tile is visible in a corridor in the west side of the building, but most of the original flooring has been replaced with newer vinyl tile or carpet.

Except for the two original courtrooms and original public restrooms, all the office and related spaces, including the judges' chambers, have been modified. They typically have carpet flooring, suspended ceilings with recessed fluorescent lights and a combination of original plaster walls and newer gypsum board walls.

Office Tower

The third through eighth floors of the office tower were designed as open "general office space," ready for tenant build-out. Today, these floors remain as tenant office space, occupied by several federal agencies. The stairwells for each floor are located at the west and east ends of the building. Three south-facing elevators are located just east of center of the office tower. On each floor, they open to a small elevator lobby with restrooms directly to the south. Located just east of the elevators on some of the floors are the original stainless steel and glass mail chutes.

Most of the elevator lobby restrooms retain original materials (Photo 15). The restroom finishes include floors with 1" by 1" white and grey ceramic tiles and walls covered with 4' by 4" grey ceramic tiles from floor to ceiling. The ceilings are plaster and have recessed lighting. The toilets and sinks are original, although some fixtures have been replaced. The only public restroom that has been significantly modified in the office tower is on the third floor.

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The remaining office tower interior spaces were originally left open as “general office space” so that tenants could partition them to fit their needs. The only exception to the nonspecific designation of space as shown in the original architectural drawings for these floors is a small vending machine niche at the east end of the fifth floor. As expected, the interior space of each these floors has been modified extensively since the building was constructed. Except for a small courtroom on the eighth floor, most of the space has been divided into offices and support spaces, such as conference rooms, by the installation of permanent and demountable walls. Private restrooms and break rooms have been added to the originally open tenant space. The tenant office spaces, conference rooms, and courtroom have carpet flooring and suspended ceilings. The break rooms and restrooms have various finishes, including ceramic tile flooring or vinyl composition tile flooring and gypsum board walls.

Basement and Penthouses

A parking garage that follows the footprint of the main block takes up most of the building’s basement. The relatively unaltered parking garage has a concrete floor and concrete walls. Parking spaces are painted on the floor. Two non-original overhead doors located at the southwest corner of the parking garage provide entry and exit. There is a staircase leading into the main block near the overhead doors. An elevator is located approximately halfway down the parking garage along the west wall. The remaining basement spaces under the office tower are dedicated to building support functions. The organization of support space in the basement is unchanged from the original construction of the building. There are storage rooms, a workshop, men’s and women’s locker rooms, a cafeteria/break room, a mechanical equipment room, a boiler room, and associated spaces. Like all the floors in the office tower, there are two staircases, one at the west end of the building and the other at the east end. Three south-facing elevators also provide access to the rest of the office tower. The elevators open to a corridor with vinyl flooring and concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls. In general, the basement finishes are utilitarian. The boiler room and mechanical room have concrete floors with drains. The walls are a combination of concrete and CMU. Other rooms have various finishes ranging from concrete and CMU to gypsum board walls, carpet, and suspended ceilings. The locker rooms and break room have the original grey and white 1” by 1” ceramic tile flooring. The rest of the break room has been modified, while the locker rooms still retain some original wall treatments and fixtures.

Alterations and Integrity

The Federal Center’s exterior has experienced relatively few modifications. The building’s notable three-part composition of horizontal main block and vertical tower integrated with a plaza at the front remains unaltered. The Federal Center’s most prominent features, including flat roofs, sunscreens, recessed windows, vertical emphasis, and high quality exterior materials, such as the red granite, remain intact and convey its association with the Formalist style. On the east (front) elevation, the original lockbox lobby entry vestibule has been modified with storefront windows replacing the original aluminum and glass entryway. While this alteration changed the function and to a lesser degree, the appearance of the vestibule, it still occupies its original footprint projecting from the face of the building and is glazed. The other two entrance vestibules remain largely as originally constructed. The plaza also remains largely as designed, except for

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the loss of the original patterned pavement. Concrete tiebacks installed at the corners of the precast concrete panels cladding the east and west elevations of the office tower alter what was originally a smooth surface. However, their coloration, matching the precast panels, helps them to recede visually. The western (rear) elevation of the main block has been subject to a number of alterations. However, the alterations to the loading dock and parking and vehicle storage areas, the construction of a small security booth adjacent to the parking garage driveway, and addition of fencing and gates do not significantly affect the utilitarian character of this secondary facade.

Interior alterations are more numerous than those on the exterior. On the first floor, the postal lockbox area has been modified with the lockboxes moved to a new location and much of the open postal workroom has been converted into office area for the U.S. Marshals Service. On the second floor, office and court support areas were combined and remodeled to create a third courtroom. On the third through eighth floors, the tenant office spaces have been modified many times over the years, reflecting the shifting needs of the agencies and the original intent of the design, which left these floors open and flexible. However, the most significant public spaces retain their original spatial configuration, as well as their original appearance and some finishes. Modifications to the three lobbies have been executed carefully, preserving significant original architectural finishes, such as the terrazzo floors and marble wall paneling. The two original second floor courtrooms retain nearly all their original wall treatments and furnishings.

In conclusion, the Federal Center is in its original location in downtown Cheyenne and possesses its integrity of location. The urban context of the building and the landscaping on the lot remain much as they were during the period of significance and thus the Federal Center retains integrity of setting. The building still exhibits its most prominent exterior and interior design elements and characteristics, despite the modifications over time, and thus retains its integrity of design. The original materials and workmanship have been compromised somewhat by rehabilitation and maintenance activities; however, the changes, as described above, have been consistent with keeping the building viable as work patterns and space needs have evolved since the building originally opened half a century ago. Finally, the Federal Center retains its function as a center of federal activities in Cheyenne and the integrity of feeling and association remain.

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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 patterns 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Government

Period of Significance

1965-1968

Significant Dates

1965 – Building was completed

1968 – Robert Russin’s bas-relief sculpture, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, installed in lobby

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Frederic C. Porter, Sr., architect

Porter and Porter, architectural firm

J.T. Banner & Associates, architectural engineering firm

J.W. Bateson, Construction Company

Robert Russin, Sculptor

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Joseph C. O'Mahoney (Federal Center) is historically significant on the local level under Criteria A and C for the areas of significance for Government and Architecture for the period 1965 to 1968. The building is significant under Criterion A as a local manifestation of a transformative period in federal building construction. During the 1960s, in an effort to meet a growing shortage of space, great numbers of federal office buildings were constructed throughout the nation employing new design principles, materials, and methods. In addition, the building is representative of the important role of the federal government has played in Cheyenne's development and economy. The building is significant under Criterion C as an intact example of the work of regionally important architect, Frederic (also Frederick) C. Porter, Sr. The Federal Center was Porter's last major architectural project. In designing the building, Porter offered a local interpretation of the principles, goals, and directives then guiding federal architecture under the massive building program managed by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). The building employs a three-part composition and Formalist design characteristics to evoke the strength and permanence of the federal government. The incorporation of a prominent landscaped plaza, the use of high quality, but cost effective, materials, and the incorporation of art, Robert Russin's bas-relief sculpture, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, reflect GSA's design guidance. An internationally known artist who taught at the University of Wyoming and resided in Laramie, Russin's work appears in several public buildings in Wyoming. The period of significance is from 1965, when the building was completed, to 1968, when Russin's bas-relief sculpture, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, was installed in the tower lobby.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

GSA Design and Construction in the 1960s

The Federal Center was designed and built during a transformative period in the construction of federal buildings. Emerging from the Great Depression and World War II, the vastly expanded federal government sought to reorganize itself for efficient peacetime operation. GSA was established in 1949 as the agency responsible for the design, construction, and management of federal buildings, through its Public Buildings Service. Initially, GSA sought to meet the huge backlog of space requirements through a lease-purchase program, which allowed the government to first lease and then acquire private buildings, and through private sector financing of federal buildings. These efforts proved unsuccessful.¹ Seeking to reduce the effect of political "pork-barreling," cost overruns, and influence peddling and to ensure the orderly and systematic provision of general-purpose public buildings, the Public Buildings Act of 1959 firmly placed

¹ Robinson & Associates, Inc., "Growth Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s" (Washington, DC.: General Services Administration, Center for Historic Buildings) 38.

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the responsibility for the construction of federal buildings under GSA.² The new arrangement gave GSA greater control over the design and construction of federal buildings under its jurisdiction, vis-à-vis other federal civilian agencies and congressional intervention. The 1959 Act ushered in an era marked by an exponential increase in the design and construction of federal buildings.

GSA's role in the design and construction of federal buildings was further defined three years after the passage of the 1959 Act. Soon after his inauguration, President John F. Kennedy formed a committee to address problems concerning office space in Washington D.C. The committee, known as the Ad Hoc Committee on Office Space, asked Daniel Patrick Moynihan,³ a young Assistant Secretary of Labor in the Kennedy administration, to write a report on problems related to office space for federal employees. The sixteen-page report, titled *Report to the President by the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, June 1, 1962*, was subsequently endorsed by President Kennedy. Moynihan interpreted his task liberally and, on page 13 of the 16-page report, went far beyond addressing questions of office space in the nation's capital. In a single page, he codified a new construction philosophy for government buildings.⁴

The report asserted that the design of federal office buildings must meet two overarching principles and three key goals. The first principle stated that architectural designs should provide efficient and cost-effective facilities for the government that offered a visual testimony of the government's stability. The second principle was the collaboration of architects and artists in designing and decorating new federal buildings.⁵ The three goals included: 1) the style used should reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the government, 2) no official style should be developed, and 3) the selection of the building site should be made in cooperation with local agencies and include adequate space for the development of landscape.⁶ These principles and goals are known as the *Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture* and still guide GSA's design program.

The report also stated that, if possible, federal buildings should incorporate the work of living American artists and permit the "generous development of landscape."⁷ GSA, acting on the report's recommendation that federal buildings include the work of living American artists, expanded an existing program that allotted a portion of construction funds to the commission of

² The Public Buildings Act of 1959, as amended, 40 USC 601-619.

³ Moynihan went on to have a long career in the Senate.

⁴ Robert A Katzmann, *Daniel Patrick Moynihan: The Intellectual in Public Life* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 114.

⁵ Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Report to the President by the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, June 1, 1962," House Committee on Public Works, 87th Cong, 2nd Sess.

⁶ Moynihan, "Report to the President."

⁷ Moynihan, "Report to the President."

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public art reflecting the cultural heritage of the United States. The program enabled the incorporation of original works of art into new federal buildings throughout the United States. Artists of local and international acclaim completed the works.⁸

The Ad Hoc Committee report coincided with the florescence of the second wave of modernism in American architecture, which began after World War II as architects began moving away from the Art Deco, Streamlined Moderne, and Stripped Classical styles of the 1930s and 1940s.⁹ The modern buildings of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s are extremely diverse in their design, but typically fall into four general categories: International Style, Formalism, Brutalism, and Expressionism. Most federal buildings built during this era fall into one of these categories. Many incorporate elements of more than one style.

It is no surprise, therefore, that GSA embraced the striking modern designs of America's master architects in the 1960s. The directives of the *Report to the President by the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space* and the vitality of modern architecture served to transform federal building designs throughout the nation.¹⁰

Paradoxically, architects of the post-war modern era often approached the longevity of their creations differently than their predecessors. Whereas previous generations designed buildings to last centuries, many of the modern era architects considered the useful life of their buildings to be approximately 20 to 30 years, about as long as the mechanical systems would last.¹¹ The fact that the buildings are still in use belies the expectations of these architects.

As early as 1959, GSA stressed the functional efficiency and economy of design in the operation and maintenance of their buildings. Guidelines established in 1962 reiterated these values, and also expressed the need for the efficiency and malleability of interiors so that there would be as little unusable space as possible and maximum flexibility in how the interior spaces could be used. The centerpiece of these guidelines was the incorporation of an interior core with moveable partitions.¹²

A year later, GSA, in a further attempt to encourage efficiency and basic uniformity, stipulated building material standards for projects over \$1 million. Accepted exterior wall facing materials included brick, stone, cast stone, and ceramics. Trim could be comprised of stone, granite, aluminum, stainless steel, or enameled iron. Spandrels could be constructed of brick, tile, stone, marble, aluminum, or steel. Bronze, aluminum, or steel window frames were allowed and

⁸ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 9.

⁹ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 12.

¹⁰ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 45.

¹¹ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 17.

¹² "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 62-3.

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exterior doors could be made of aluminum or steel. Flat roofs had to be composition, while pitched roofs could have slate or copper coverings.¹³

The 1963 directive contained detailed guidelines for interior space. Basements and rooms containing mechanical equipment were required to be finished in unpainted concrete. Mid-grade materials were used for office spaces and public toilets. These included materials such as vinyl flooring, plaster or ceramic tile walls, and acoustical tiles or plaster ceilings. Higher quality materials, such as terrazzo or tile floors, marble or wood wainscot, and plaster walls and ceilings, were used for public spaces.¹⁴

The Federal Center clearly reflects the goals and directives of the 1960s' GSA building program and President Kennedy's Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space. The building was designed shortly after Moynihan and the committee established new policies for the design and construction of federal buildings. President Kennedy requested almost \$5,500,000 for the construction of the building in early 1962.¹⁵ The building plans were approved by GSA in late 1962 and finalized in March 1963. The Federal Center was built by the J.W. Bateson Construction Company, a Texas based contractor. J.W. Bateson, which became affiliated with Centex Corporation in 1966, built other federal buildings, including the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building (1977) in Oklahoma City.

The Federal Center embodies the principles and goals of the *Report to the President by the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, June 1, 1962*, in several ways. First, the Federal Center incorporates elements of Formalism, an architectural style that enjoyed popularity in the United States during the mid-1950s through the 1960s. Formalist design used features that referred to classical elements, including symmetry, smooth wall surfaces, columns, and stylized entablatures. Formalist buildings were often integrated into formal landscapes with plazas and fountains. The overall effect was of one of monumentality, a characteristic that aligned well with the Ad Hoc Committee report principle that federal buildings should "reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the government." The Federal Center's three-part composition links it to a number of other federal buildings of the period, for example, the Byron G. Rogers Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse (1965), Denver, Colorado; the John F. Kennedy Federal Building (1967), Boston, Massachusetts; and, the Strom Thurmond Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse (1979), Columbia, South Carolina. Each of these consists of a long low building housing a U.S. courthouse or post office, an office tower housing multiple federal agencies, and a landscaped plaza linking the two components. The three-part scheme can be traced to the general plan of the United Nations Headquarters (1952).¹⁶ The juxtaposition of the low and tall forms anchored in the landscape creates a sense of balance and permanence.

¹³ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 65.

¹⁴ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 65.

¹⁵ "Kennedy Asks Funds for Post Office," *Wyoming Democrat*, Volume II, No. 8 (January 1962). Congress had initially appropriated the money for building design and land acquisition two years earlier.

¹⁶ "Growth Efficiency and Modernism," 49.

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Secondly, in keeping with the Ad Hoc Committee report's recommendations, the Federal Center reflects the work of a regionally important architect, Frederic H. Porter, Sr. Porter is discussed in more detail below, but his work is ubiquitous in Cheyenne and appears throughout Wyoming. Porter's works have withstood the test of time. Many are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): the Boeing/United Airlines Terminal Building, Hangar, and Fountain at the Cheyenne Airport; the Boyd Building and Dinneen Building, contributing resources in the Downtown Cheyenne Historic District; the Deming School; the Mabel Fincher School (Triumph High School); the Lulu McCormick Junior High School (Emerson State Office Building); the Park Addition School (Chaplin School); multiple buildings in the Moore Haven Heights Historic District; and the Carbon County Courthouse in the Downtown Rawlins Historic District. Porter and the other architects involved in the design of the building embraced contemporary modern design and applied its principles to the Federal Center, which exhibits Formalist architectural characteristics employed in a cost effective manner within a three-part composition to create a notable civic space.

Thirdly, the report's guidelines required that federal buildings be located and designed to fit into the "general ensemble of streets and public places" where they are built. The Federal Center was constructed in downtown Cheyenne, within the existing street grid, near the State Capitol and other large governmental and institutional buildings. These include Porter's first architectural design in Cheyenne, the First Presbyterian Church (220 W. 22nd Street), located across the street from the Federal Center, and the 1933 Federal Building, located a block away (308 West 21st Street).

Lastly, the Federal Center reflects the Ad Hoc Committee recommendation and GSA policy that visual art be incorporated into the building. Laramie artist Robert Russin created a bronze bas-relief sculpture for the building entitled *Wyoming Pioneer Family*. Mounted in the tower lobby in 1968, the bas-relief depicts a family consisting of young daughter, father, mother with a baby, and son. They are all looking at an eagle on the son's outstretched hand.¹⁷ The installation represents the culmination of the design and construction phase of the building.

Russin, a professor at the University of Wyoming, was a well-known artist who specialized in bronze and stone sculpture. His work is on display throughout United States and internationally. Most of his works, however, are located in Wyoming, his adopted home of sixty years. There are several Russin sculptures at public buildings in Casper, Wyoming, and on the campus of the University of Wyoming in Laramie. A Russin sculpture is also located at the Wyoming State Capitol in Cheyenne. One of his most iconic pieces is located along Interstate-80 between Cheyenne and Laramie. Titled *Abraham Lincoln*, the 13-foot tall sculpture is a memorial to the President and his role in establishing the transcontinental railroad that contributed to the

¹⁷ A second piece of public art was commissioned by GSA's Rocky Mountain Region and installed at the Federal Center in 2010. *Mountain Diorama*, a large rectangular painting of an alpine vista by Laramie artist Joe Arnold, was placed in the office tower. However, this piece is not considered part of GSA's Fine Arts Collection.

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establishment of Wyoming as a territory and, eventually, a state.¹⁸

In addition to reflecting the principles and goals embodied in the Ad Hoc Committee report, the Federal Center reflects the 1963 GSA directives on interior and exterior materials. Exterior walls are clad in red granite and precast concrete panels and tiles. Aluminum is used for window and door frames and other building details, including lettering and other signage. These materials are all recommended in the exterior materials directive. Materials recommended in the 1963 interior directive are prevalent in the building interior as well. Most of the mechanical rooms are composed of unfinished concrete or CMU while most of the restrooms have the original mid-grade materials called for in the directive: ceramic tile on the floors and walls, and plaster ceilings. Similarly, the interior public spaces still exhibit recommended materials, including walnut wall panels; white, grey, and red marble wall panels; terrazzo flooring; and plaster walls.

Federal Center is an important reflection of modern era federal building construction in Wyoming. The only other comparable federal building in the state is the smaller and later Dick Cheney Federal Building and Post Office (1970), Casper, Wyoming. A number of other modern era buildings are located in Cheyenne. Several are found in the immediate vicinity of the Federal Center: the Wyoming Financial Center (2020 Carey Avenue), the Catholic Diocese of Cheyenne (2121 Capitol Avenue), and the Wyoming Department of Health (2300 Capitol Avenue). Other examples of modern architecture in Cheyenne are the current terminal at the Cheyenne Airport, a classic example of the Googie style, the Wells Fargo Bank, the American National Bank, and Laramie County Office Building. The state of Wyoming enjoys a rich modern architectural heritage, as well. For example, the University of Wyoming (Laramie) has a significant and varied collection of substantial modern buildings, including the Washakie Center, the Classroom Building, and the Crane-Hill Dining Hall

Architect

As was usually the case in the 1960s, GSA used local architects to design the new United States Post Office and Court House for Cheyenne. Two architecture firms, Porter & Porter and J.T. Banner & Associates, Inc., developed the building plans. The latter firm (now known as Banner Associates) was responsible for engineering components of the design. J.T. Banner & Associates went on to assist another architectural firm, Engstrom & Deines, in the design of the Dick Cheney Federal Building and Post Office in Casper.

Frederic (also known as Frederick) H. Porter, Sr., a principal with Porter & Porter, was a well-known Wyoming architect. He designed numerous public buildings, mostly in Cheyenne and Laramie, throughout his career, which spanned from 1919 to 1965. Porter's designs helped establish the tone of Cheyenne architecture and shaped the architectural character of the University of Wyoming. His buildings included schools, churches, university buildings, public

¹⁸ Maria Wimmer, "Robert Russin: A Legacy in Bronze and Stone." Accessed online August 14, 2014. Available at <http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/robert-russin-legacy-bronze-and-stone>.

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buildings, and residences. Nine Porter-designed institutional and commercial buildings in Cheyenne are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The first building in Cheyenne designed by Frederic H Porter, Sr., was the First Presbyterian Church, constructed in 1923-1924. The church, which he considered one of his greatest works, is directly across the street from the Federal Center. The Federal Center was Porter's last Cheyenne project before he retired. Thus, the two projects marking the beginning and end of this prominent local architect's career in Cheyenne are located immediately adjacent to each other and present a contrast in styles from the historicizing Gothic Revival design of the church to the modern Formalist composition of the federal building.

In addition to the First Presbyterian Church, Porter's early work in Wyoming includes two downtown Cheyenne commercial buildings: the Boyd Building (1920s), which, at six stories, was the tallest building in Cheyenne for a number of years, and the Dinneen Building (1927), a car dealership. Both buildings are contributing resources in the Downtown Cheyenne Historic District.¹⁹ Porter's next major project was the Boeing/United Airlines hangar at the then Cheyenne Municipal Airport, which was constructed in 1930 (NRHP listed and documented by HAER).²⁰

Porter willingly incorporated new architectural styles into his work throughout his career. This is well represented in his school designs. Porter and his associates developed plans for schools in Cheyenne from the 1920s into the 1950s. The schools, therefore, reflect the evolution of Porter's architectural style during a dynamic period in which American architecture was transitioning from the dominant traditionalist elements to an embrace of modern design. The schools Porter designed in the 1920s (Park Addition School, McCormick Junior High School, both of which are listed in the NRHP) are examples of the richly decorative Collegiate Gothic styles. By the 1930s and early 1940s, Porter was incorporating modern elements of the Art Deco and International styles (Mable Fincher and Deming elementary schools, both of which are listed in the NRHP) in his designs. The schools exhibit clean lines and simple detailing. The post-World War II years resulted in a further evolution of Porter's architectural designs. The Hebard School (NRHP listed), constructed in 1945, has been described as "a harbinger" of the modern designs that came to dominate Porter's post-war buildings. All traditionalist elements were discarded in favor of modern design with low clean lines, flat roofs, and banks of windows. These elements are also visible in the Rossman School and Storey Gymnasium (NRHP listed), constructed in 1946 and 1950 respectively.²¹

¹⁹ Robert G. Rosenberg, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, "Downtown Cheyenne Historic District (Boundary Increase)," June 1996.

²⁰ Maurice Plambeck, National Register Nomination Form, "Boeing/United Airlines Terminal Building, Hangar and Fountain," September 2, 1983; Robert Rosenberg, "Cheyenne Airfield, United Airlines Hangar," Historic American Engineering Record, WY-83-A, October 1998.

²¹ Robert G. Rosenberg, National Register Nomination Form, "Storey Gymnasium," December 31, 2004; Robert G. Rosenberg, National Register Nomination Form, "Mabel Fincher School," December 31, 2004.

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Frederic H. Porter, Sr., was particularly active in Laramie after World War II. He designed, or helped to design, many of the buildings on the University of Wyoming campus in the late 1940s and 1950s. His first post-war building in Laramie was the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Mines building that is located on the University's grounds. The building was constructed in 1945. Over the next decade and a half, Porter was involved in the design of the College of Education Building, Agriculture Building, War Memorial Stadium, Memorial Fieldhouse, and the William Robertson Coe Library. Like the Cheyenne schools he designed in the post-war era, the University buildings reflect his embrace of modern design.²²

The Federal Center was one of Porter's last projects. He retired in 1965 and passed away in 1976. The Federal Center is significant because it represents a culmination of Porter's embrace of modern design. The building, moreover, is located across the street from First Presbyterian Church, Porter's first project in Cheyenne.²³

Brief history of Cheyenne, Wyoming

The city of Cheyenne, Wyoming, traces its beginnings to June 1867 when Major General Grenville M. Dodge, the chief engineer of the Union Pacific railroad, selected the site as a supply depot for the railroad. Instead of being another community along the line, the settlement became a center of rail-related commerce and sociability. The town sprang up almost overnight. By the time the rails reached Cheyenne on November 13, 1867, the town had a population of about 4,000 people. In 1875, Cheyenne's development was boosted by the discovery of gold in the Black Hills. The community, already a center of commerce, became the preferred trading post for miners and others journeying to the mines.

The railroad contributed to the development of Cheyenne's economy in another way. The settlement became an important component of the open range cattle industry. In 1860, the legendary rancher Charles Goodnight drove a herd of Texas longhorn cattle through eastern New Mexico and over Trinchera Pass into the grasslands of southeastern Colorado. Ultimately the Texan ended his trek in Wyoming near the future site of Cheyenne. By 1867, this route, referred to as the Goodnight-Loving trail, attracted cattlemen who drove their cattle to the railroad at Cheyenne.²⁴ The town continued to serve as a center of the livestock industry after the demise of the open range cattle industry in the late 1880s. Ranching remained an important economic activity and Cheyenne retained its place as a prosperous center of commerce.

²² John F. Gane, A. I. A., ed., "Porter, Frederic Hutchinson Sr." in *American Architects Directory 3rd Edition, 1970* (New York, NY.: R.R. Bowker Company. 1970), 726.

²³ The church is not listed in the NRHP.

²⁴ J. Evetts Haley, *Charles Goodnight: Cowman and Plainsman* (Norman, OK.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949), 20.

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The railroad brought the first federal presence to Cheyenne. The Army established Fort D.A. Russell just outside Cheyenne in July 1867 to support the construction of the railroad. One month later the Army established the Cheyenne quartermaster depot beside Fort Russell. The quartermaster depot, known interchangeably as Cheyenne Depot and Camp Carlin, was the largest quartermaster depot in the United States. It provided provisions to twelve Army bases, some up to 500 miles away.²⁵ The decision to establish the fort and depot near Cheyenne was linked to the presence of the railroad and the settlement's stature as an important commercial center in the region. Fort D.A. Russell and the Cheyenne Depot were renamed Fort Francis E. Warren in 1930. Nineteen years later, the fort had become an important air base and was transferred to the newly established United States Air Force.

The U.S. Postal Service and U.S. Courts in Cheyenne

The early importance of Cheyenne as a commercial center and railroad depot contributed to the establishment of Wyoming's first municipal post office in the new town in August 1867. Originally, the post office was housed in a tent, but as the town developed, it moved into leased space in various buildings. This pattern lasted almost four decades as the post office moved from building to building as needs and circumstances changed.²⁶ The post office found a more permanent home in 1905 with the construction of the Public Building on 18th Street. The post office facilities were collocated with other federal offices, including federal courts and the General Land Office, in the Public Building, which was the first federal building constructed in Wyoming (not including military establishments) and stood until 1966.

In 1933, the post office and other federal agencies moved to the Federal Office Building at 308 West 21st Street. The four-story brick building with limestone trim was constructed in 1932 in the simplified classical style favored for federal buildings of the period. Originally three stories, an additional story was added to the building in 1937.²⁷ However, by 1960, this space became inadequate for the post office, which again moved to the newly completed United States Post Office and Court House (the Federal Center) in 1965. There it was assigned 40,000 square feet of the nearly 200,000-square-foot building. A post office is still located in the Federal Center, although the agency now occupies less than the original 40,000 square feet.

Cheyenne has played a major role in regional government, law, and politics since it was selected as the capital of the Wyoming Territory in 1869. The railroad town was also the seat of the

²⁵ Major Stephen L. Holland, ed. "From Mules To Missiles: A History of Francis E. Warren Air Force Base and Its Predecessors Fort David A. Russell and Fort Francis E. Warren" (Cheyenne, WY.: Francis E. Warren AFB, 2007) , n.p.

²⁶ I.S. Bartlet, ed., *The History of Wyoming* (Chicago, IL.: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918), Chicago Chapter XXXII: The Story of Cheyenne, accessed online August 15, 2014, <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wyttp/history/bartlett/chapter32.htm>

²⁷ Karen Waddell, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, "Federal Office Building," October 12, 2000. The Federal Office Building is still owned by the federal government and houses federal agencies.

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Territorial Supreme Court, which met annually to hear appeals from district courts related to territorial law.²⁸ When Wyoming became a state in 1890, Cheyenne was named the state capital and center of state government.

Statehood brought changes to the territorial court that had existed since 1869. The United States District Court for the District of Wyoming was established on July 19, 1890. Like the territorial court, the district court was comprised of three judges based in Cheyenne. The new court's jurisdiction included Wyoming and the area that is now Yellowstone National Park, located in parts of Montana and Idaho.²⁹ After over a decade of temporary quarters, the court took up residence in the newly constructed Public Building, remaining there from 1905 until 1933 when it relocated to the Federal Office Building at 308 West 21st Street. Like the post office, the U.S. District Court of Wyoming moved to the newly completed Federal Center in 1965. It continues to operate out of an approximately 18,000-square-foot space in the Federal Center.

Initial planning for a new federal building in Cheyenne began in 1960 when Congress appropriated \$1,127,000 for land acquisition and engineering and design work. Bids were solicited two years later.³⁰ Congress appropriated \$491,000,000 for the building. The plans were developed in 1962, approved by GSA in December of that year,³¹ and finalized in March 1963. In addition to the post office and courts, tenants were expected to include the office of the Departments of Defense; Health, Education and Welfare; Interior; Justice; Treasury; and GSA. Construction was completed in 1965, however, the artwork, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, was not installed until 1968. In 1976, the United States Post Office and Court House was renamed the Joseph C. O'Mahoney Federal Center. O'Mahoney was a journalist, lawyer, and politician who served as a Senator from Wyoming from 1934 to 1953 and from 1954 to 1961. Today, in addition to the post office and U.S. District Court, the building houses the U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, and various federal agencies.

The trends that shaped the early history of Cheyenne are still important today. Transportation continues to play a significant role in the local economy. The railroad is still important, although it is now complemented by highways, including Interstate 25 and Interstate 80. The rails and roads bring goods to and from Cheyenne, whose economic base still includes agriculture and livestock. The largest economic drivers in Cheyenne, however, are the federal and state governments and the military; together they comprise the city's biggest employer. Similarly, the federal government has always been an important employer and economic force in Wyoming. As of 2013, there were nearly 14,000 federal employees in the state, which accounts for 6

²⁸ Honorable James K. Logan, ed., *The Federal Courts of the 10th Circuit, A History* (Denver, CO: Government Printing Office, 1992), 81.

²⁹ Logan, *Federal Courts of the 10th Circuit*, 99.

³⁰ "Kennedy Asks Funds for Post Office," *Wyoming Democrat*, Volume II, No. 8 (January 1962).

³¹ U.S. General Services Administration, Press Release, December 14, 1962.

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percent of all employees in Wyoming. Federal funding represents approximately 40 percent of the state's revenue.³²

The Federal Center, the largest non-military federal building in Wyoming, is representative of the important role the federal government has played in the history and economy of Cheyenne and Wyoming. The Federal Center was constructed to house the U.S. District Court of Wyoming and the U.S. Post Office, which were outgrowing their previous spaces. The building has also housed various other federal agencies throughout the last half century.

Significance Statement³³

Area of Significance: Government

The Federal Center is significant at the local level under Criterion A as a local manifestation of the influence and economic importance of the federal government in the development and economy of Cheyenne, Wyoming. From its earliest history, Cheyenne served as a center of federal activities. The Federal Center is the third federal building to house court and postal functions in Cheyenne. Built by GSA as part of a massive construction program beginning in the 1960s to house the expanding federal government, it remains the largest non-military federal building in Wyoming. During the 1960s and into the 1970s, great numbers of federal offices, courts, and post office buildings were constructed throughout the nation employing new design principles, materials, and methods.

Area of Significance: Architecture

The Federal Center is significant at the local level under Criterion C as a local interpretation of GSA's building program of the early 1960s, which embraced the striking designs of America's modernist master architects and sought to improve the quality of federal building design throughout the country. The building reflects many of the principles and goals of President Kennedy's Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, as found in the committee's 1962 report, as well as GSA's directives of the early 1960s, which focused on efficiency. The building's lead architect, Frederic H. Porter, Sr., skillfully addressed the government's requirements with a three-part composition imbued with Formalist influences. The Federal Building marks the culmination of this regionally important architect's career. The inclusion of Robert Russin's bas-relief, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, in the tower lobby of the Federal Building is illustrative of the Ad Hoc Committee's goal of melding art with architecture. Russin was a

³² "Wyoming State Smart: Federal Funds in Wyoming," accessed online December 15, 2014, <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/smart/wyoming/>; "Wyoming: Where Independent People Rely on Federal Funds," GilletteNews Record [Wyoming], May 5, 2013, accessed online December 15, 2014, http://www.gillettenewsrecord.com/news/article_e9b925fc-8518-5326-a4db-bf5c01d67933.html.

³³ By letter dated September 2, 2016, Brian Beadles of the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office concurred with Andrea Collins, GSA Regional Historic Preservation Officer, that the property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

United States Post Office and Court House

Name of Property

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prominent Wyoming artist. The resulting building effectively reflects the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the government.

The period of significance is from 1965, when the building was completed, to 1968, when Russin's bas-relief sculpture, *Wyoming Pioneer Family*, was installed in the tower lobby.

United States Post Office and Court House
Name of Property

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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_____. "Downtown Cheyenne Historic District (Boundary Increase)." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. June 1996.

_____. "Mabel Fincher School." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. December 31, 2004.

_____. "Storey Gymnasium." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. December 31, 2004

Waddell, Karen. "Federal Office Building." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. October 12, 2000.

Wimmer, Maria. "Robert Russin: A Legacy in Bronze and Stone." Available at <http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/robert-russin-legacy-bronze-and-stone>.

Wyoming Democrat [Newspaper], 1962-1964.

Previous documentation on file (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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
X Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other

Name of repository: GSA Regional Office, Lakewood, CO

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.7

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

United States Post Office and Court House
Name of Property

Laramie County, WY
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Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

2. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

3. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

4. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 13T Easting: 515166.76 Northing: 4553963.51

2. Zone: 13T Easting: 515126.10 Northing: 4554048.48

3. Zone: 13T Easting: 515245.47 Northing: 4554003.09

4. Zone: 13T Easting: 515205.70 Northing: 4554088.44

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The United States Post Office and Court House (now known as the Joseph C. O'Mahoney Federal Center) is located at 2120 Capitol Avenue in downtown Cheyenne Wyoming. The site is the city block bounded by West 21st Street to the south and West 22nd Street to the north, Capitol Avenue to the east and Carey Avenue to the west.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the entire original and current site of the federal property known as the Joseph C. O'Mahoney Federal Center.

United States Post Office and Court House
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Steven C. Baker, Ph.D. Historian (Revisions by Elizabeth Hannold, U.S. General Services Administration, Center for Historic Buildings)
organization: Aarcher, Inc. (for Espinoza Cultural Services LLC)
street & number: 88 Inverness Circle E, Suite 106
city or town: Englewood state: Colorado zip code: 80112
e-mail cbaker@aarcherinc.com
telephone: 410-897-9100
date: October 8, 2014 (revised February 2017)

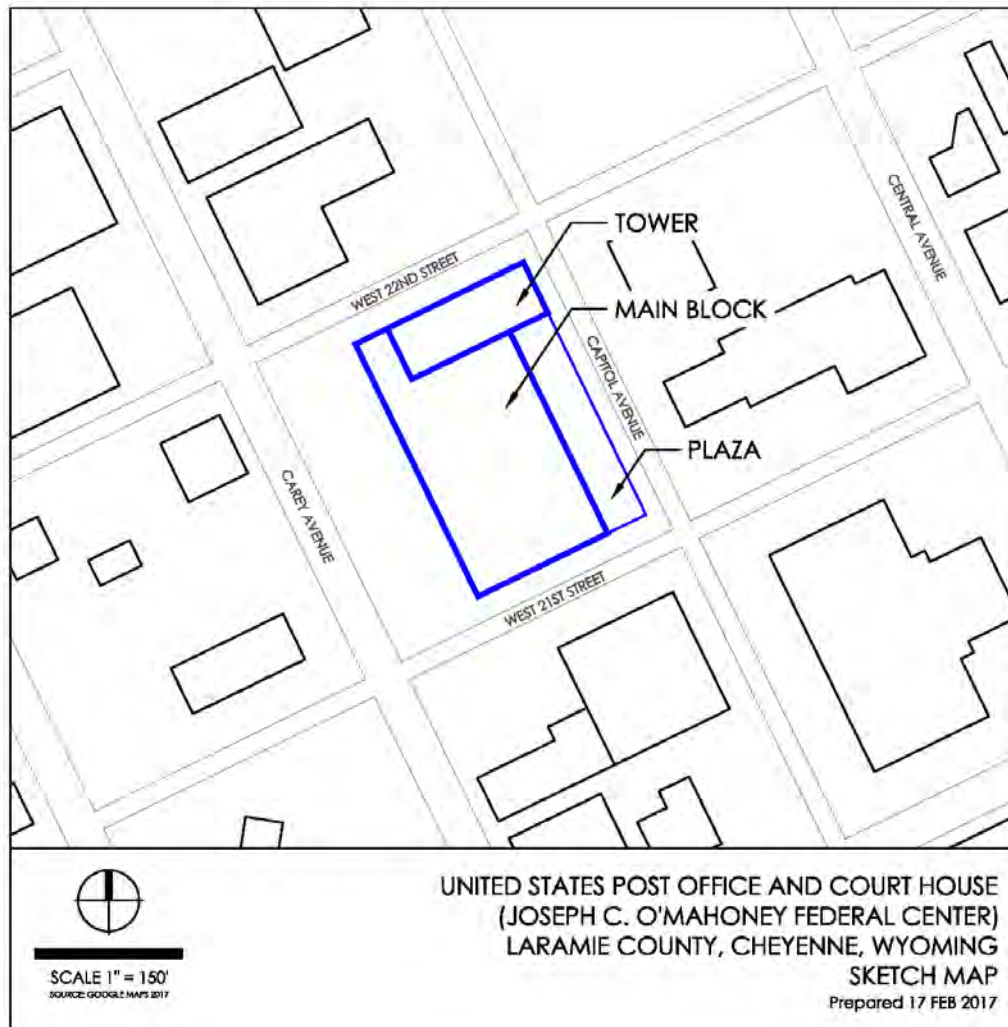
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

United States Post Office and Court House
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Figures



Figure 1: United States Post Office and Court House, Plaza, 1967

United States Post Office and Court House
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Figure 2: United States Post Office and Court House, Post Office Lobby, 1973

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Figure 3: United States Post Office and Court House, Lockbox Lobby, 1973

United States Post Office and Court House
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Figure 4: United States Post Office and Court House, Office Tower Lobby, 1973

United States Post Office and Court House
Name of Property

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County and State

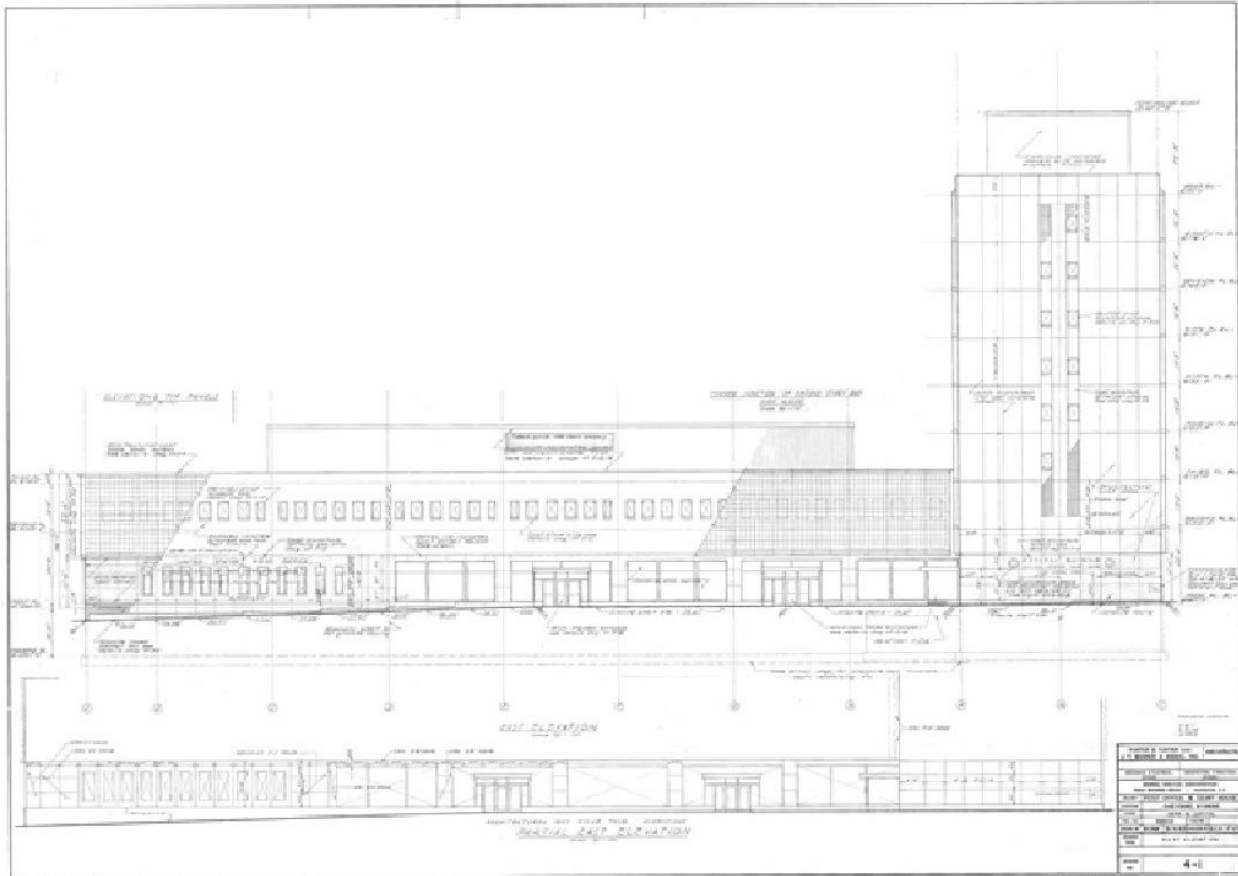


Figure 5: United States Post Office and Court House 1963 Plans, East Elevation

United States Post Office and Court House
Name of Property

Laramie County, WY
County and State

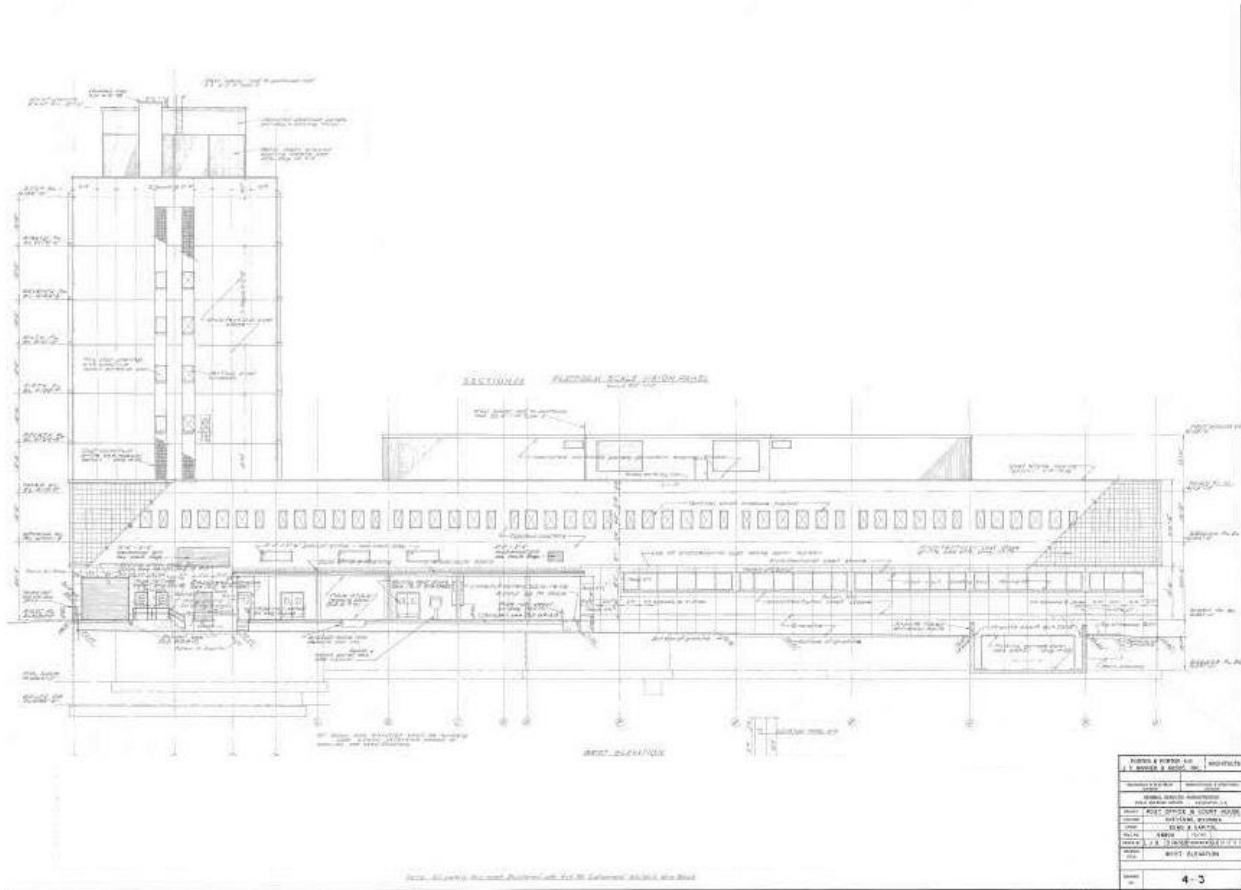


Figure 6: United States Post Office and Court House 1963 Plans, West Elevation

United States Post Office and Court House
Name of Property

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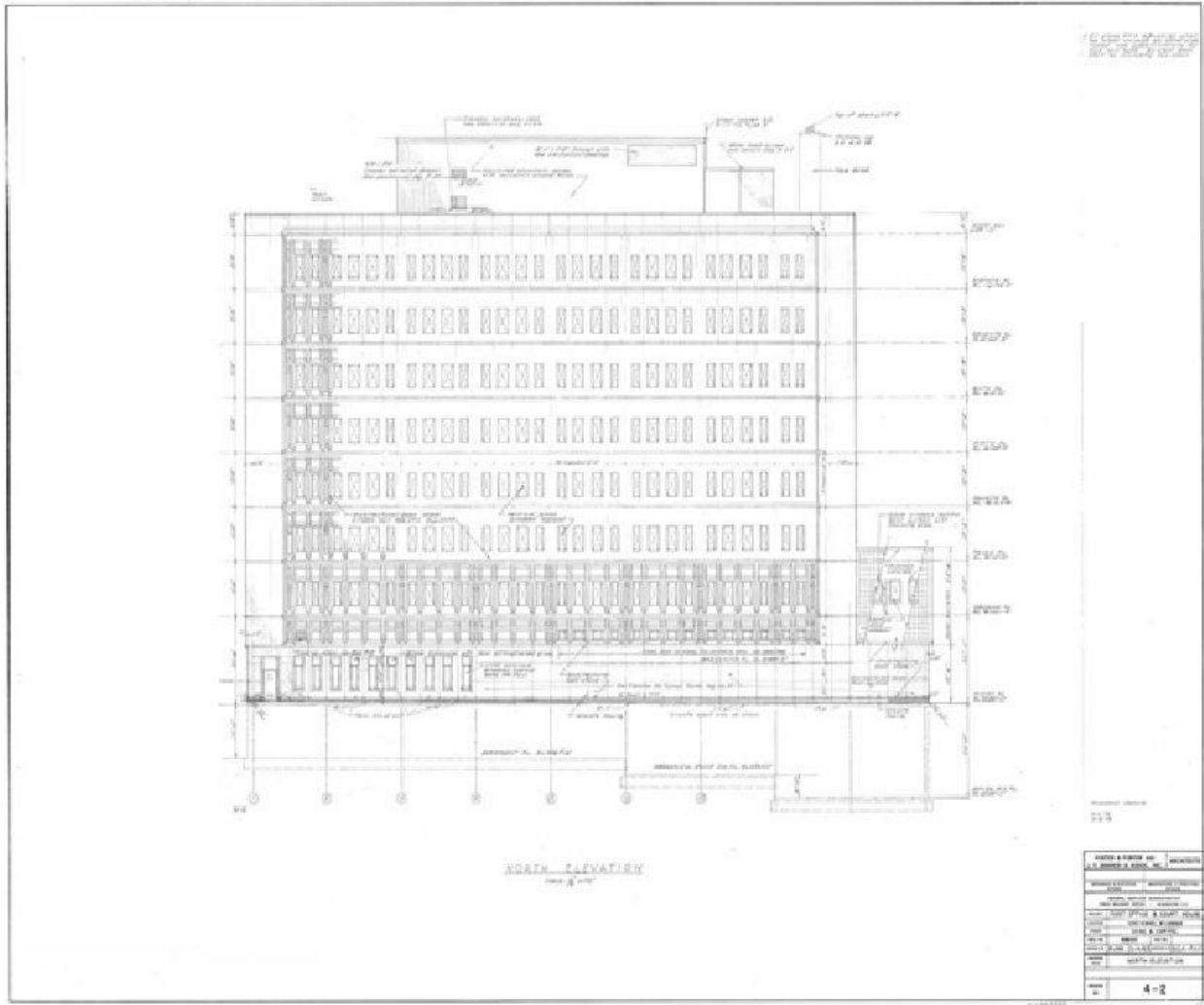


Figure 7: United States Post Office and Court House 1963 Plans, North Elevation

United States Post Office and Court House
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PHOTOLOG

United States Post Office and Court House, Cheyenne, Laramie County, Wyoming

Photographer: Steven C. Baker Date: August 29, 2014

Photo Number	Description	Direction	Photo Label
1	Exterior: East Elevation, South Facing Office Tower	Looking Northwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0001
2	Exterior: East Elevation, Plaza and Planters	Looking North	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0002
3	Exterior: North Elevation	Looking West-Southwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0003
4	Exterior: Corner of North and West Elevations	Looking Southeast	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0004
5	Exterior: West Elevation	Looking Northeast	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0005
6	Exterior: Corner of South and West Elevations	Looking North	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0006
7	Exterior: South Elevation	Looking Northwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0007
8	Interior: 1 st Floor USPS Lobby	Looking South	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0008
9	Interior: 1 st Floor US Marshals Lobby	Looking North	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0009
10	Interior: 1 st Floor Office Tower Lobby	Looking Northwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0010
11	Interior: 1 st Floor Office Tower Lobby <i>Wyoming Pioneer Family</i>	Looking East	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0011
12	Interior: 1 st Floor US Marshals Offices	Looking North-Northeast	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0012
13	Interior: 2 nd Floor, Courts Lobby	Looking South	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0013
14	Interior: 2 nd Floor, Original Courtroom	Looking Southwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0014
15	Interior: 8 th Floor, Original Restroom	Looking West	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0015

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1	Exterior: East Elevation, South Facing Office Tower	Looking Northwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0001
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United States Post Office and Court House
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2	Exterior: East Elevation, Plaza and Planters	Looking North	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0002
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United States Post Office and Court House
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3	Exterior: North Elevation	Looking West-Southwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0003
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United States Post Office and Court House
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4	Exterior: Corner of North and West Elevations	Looking Southeast	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0004
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United States Post Office and Court House
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5	Exterior: West Elevation	Looking Northeast	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0005
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United States Post Office and Court House
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6	Exterior: Corner of South and West Elevations	Looking North	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0006
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United States Post Office and Court House
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7	Exterior: South Elevation	Looking Northwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0007
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United States Post Office and Court House
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8	Interior: 1 st Floor USPS Lobby	Looking South	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0008
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United States Post Office and Court House
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9	Interior: 1 st Floor US Marshals Lobby	Looking North	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0009
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United States Post Office and Court House
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10	Interior: 1 st Floor Office Tower Lobby	Looking Northwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0010
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United States Post Office and Court House
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11	Interior: 1 st Floor Office Tower Lobby <i>Wyoming Pioneer Family</i>	Looking East	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0011
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United States Post Office and Court House
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12	Interior: 1 st Floor US Marshals Offices	Looking North-Northeast	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0012
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United States Post Office and Court House
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13	Interior: 2 nd Floor, Courts Lobby	Looking South	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0013
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United States Post Office and Court House
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14	Interior: 2 nd Floor, Original Courtroom	Looking Southwest	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0014
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United States Post Office and Court House
Name of Property

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County and State



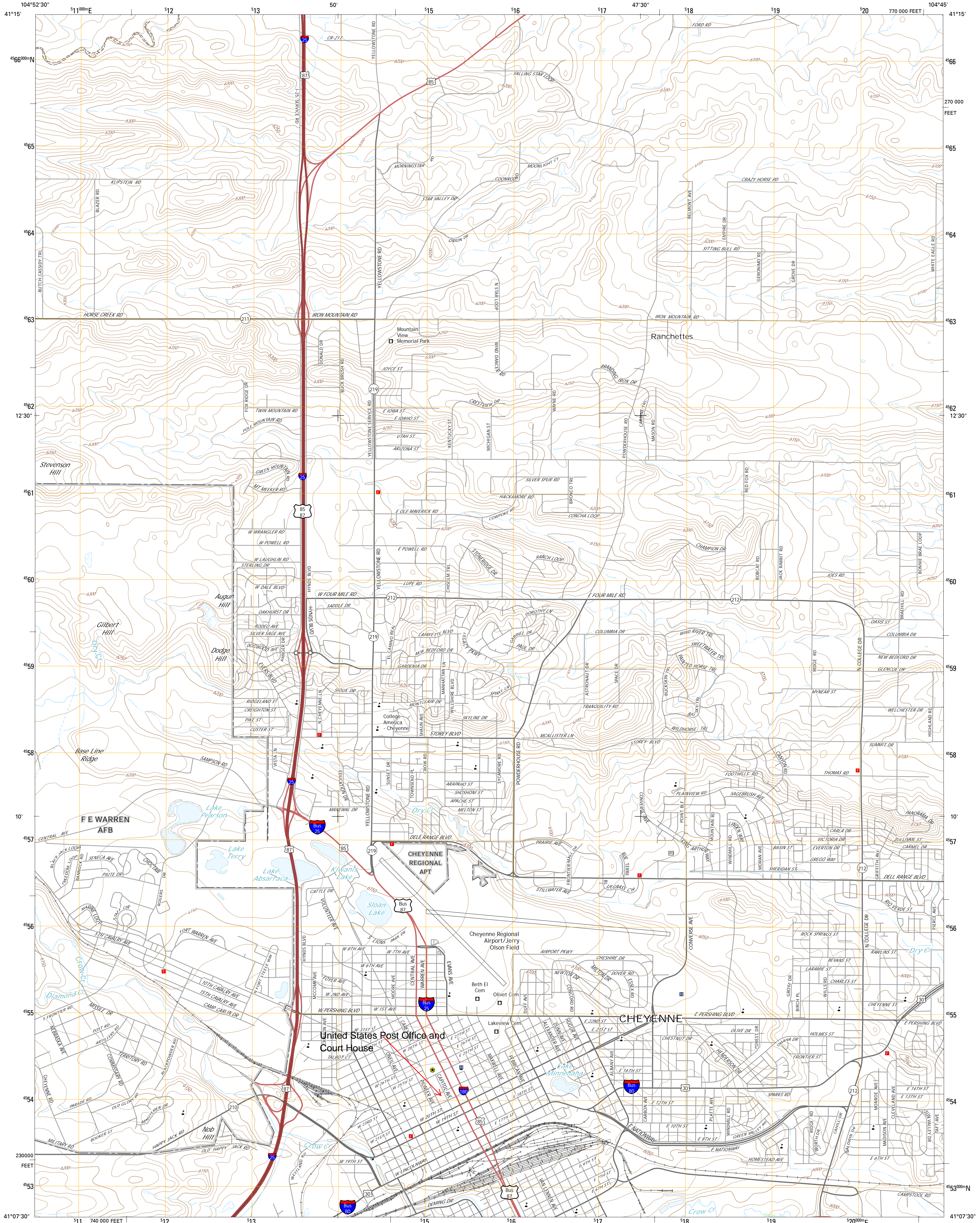
15	Interior: 8 th Floor, Original Restroom	Looking West	WY_Laramie County_United States Post Office and Court House_0015
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United States Post Office and Court House
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: 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.460 et seq.).

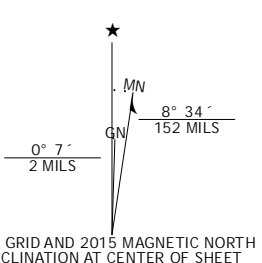
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



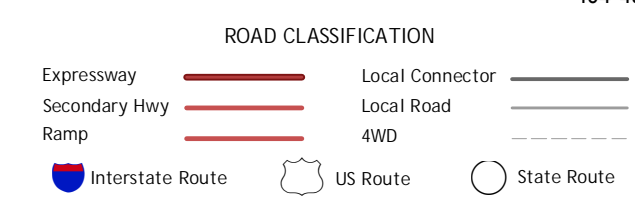
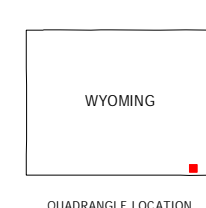
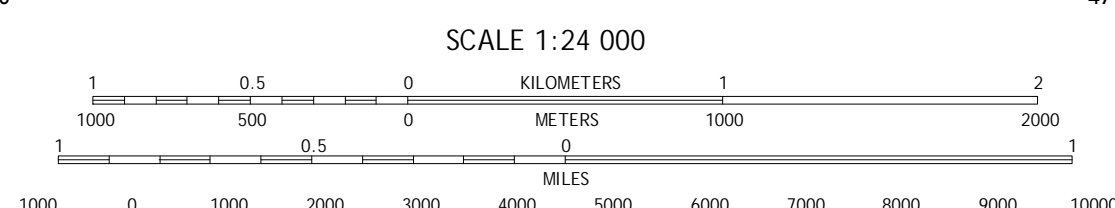
Produced by the United States Geological Survey
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84) Projection and
1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator Zone 13T
10 000-foot ticks: Wyoming Coordinate System of 1983 (east
zone)

This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be
generalized for this map scale. Private lands within government
reservations may not be shown. Obtain permission before
entering private lands.

Imagery: NAIP, June 2012
Roads: HERE, ©2013 - 2014
Names: GNS, ©2015
Hydrography: National Hydrography Dataset, 2012
Contours: National Elevation Dataset, 2008
Boundaries: Multiple sources; see metadata file 1972 - 2015
Public Land Survey System: BLM, 2011



U.S. National Grid
100,000-m Square ID
EF
Grid Zone Designation
13T



1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

ADJOINING QUADRANGLES

1 Farthing Ranch
2 P O Ranch
3 Pine Creek Ranch
4 Round Top Lake
5 Archer
6 Bork
7 Cheyenne South
8 Altvan

CHEYENNE NORTH, WY
2015









C. O'MAHONEY
CENTER
LEAS COURTHOUSE
CAPITOL AVENUE

W 22nd St
Capitol Ave







W 21st St



W 21st St
Capitol Ave



STOP

NO PARKING
ANY TIME











ROBERT R. SMITH
WINDING JOURNEY FAMILY
1987

ROBERT R. SMITH
WINDING JOURNEY FAMILY
1987









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Discipline

Telephone Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



GSA Public

April 18, 2017

Mr. Paul Loether
Chief, NRHP & NHL Program
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW (7728)
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to nominate the United States Post Office and Court House (current name: Joseph C. O'Mahoney Federal Center) located at 2120 Capitol Avenue, Cheyenne, Wyoming, for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination is hereby submitted on disk in accordance with the May 6, 2013 guidance and includes the following:

- Signed original first page of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form;
- Disk 1 - The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the United States Post Office and Court House, located in Cheyenne, WY, to the National Register of Historic Place; and,
- Disk 2 - The enclosed disk contains the .tif image files for the above referenced nomination.

In accordance with 36 CFR Part 60.9(c), the appropriate local elected officials were notified of GSA's intent to nominate the above referenced property to the National Register of Historic Places by letters dated February 22, 2016. No response comments were received.

If for any reason any nomination package that GSA submits needs to be returned, please do so by a delivery service as items returned to our offices via regular mail are irradiated and the materials severely damaged. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this nomination package, please contact Elizabeth Hannold at (202) 501-2863 or elizabeth.hannold@gsa.gov.

Sincerely,

Beth L. Savage
Federal Preservation Officer
Director, Center for Historic Buildings

Enclosures

cc: Mary M. Hopkins, State Historic Preservation Officer
Andrea Collins, Regional Historic Preservation Officer