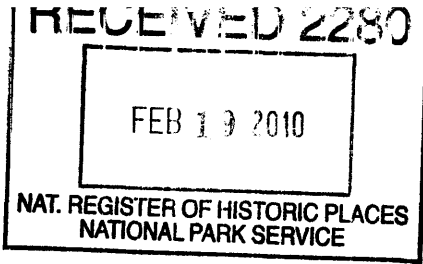


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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name United States Post Office

Other names/site number United States Federal Office Building

2. Location

Street & Number 212 3rd Avenue South Not for Publication N/A
City or Town Minneapolis Vicinity N/A
State Minnesota Code MN County Hennepin Code 053
Zip Code 55401

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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official [Signature] Date 2/16/10
GSA, Federal Preservation Officer
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of commenting official/Title Britta L. Bloomberg Date 2/5/10
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
X entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other (explain):

Signature of Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 4/1/2010

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>Post Office</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>Government Office</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>Government Office</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS

Classical Revival

Neo-Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof COMPOSITION

roof METAL: Copper

walls STONE: Granite

walls \_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please see Section 7 Continuation Sheets.

**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.  
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
- C 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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Period of Significance

1912-1915

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Dates

N/A

Architect/Builder

Taylor, James Knox / H.N. Leighton Co.

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

Please see Section 8 Continuation Sheets.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

Please see Section 9 Continuation Sheets.

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

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property Approximately 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	47922.0	498088.0	3	15	47909.0
2	15	47918.0	498080.0	4	15	47914.0

     See continuation sheet.

## Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the United States Post Office encompasses Block 40 in Auditor's Subdivision Number 155 in the City of Minneapolis.

## Boundary Justification

The boundary reflects the original property lines for the 1912-1915 construction of the United States Post Office.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/Title	<u>Andrew J. Schmidt</u>	Date	<u>1/2010</u>
Organization	<u>ICF Jones &amp; Stokes</u>	Telephone	<u>213.627.5376</u>
Street & Number	<u>811 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 800</u>	State	<u>CA</u>
City or Town	<u>Los Angeles</u>	Zip Code	<u>90017</u>

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

Photographs

Representative photographs of the property.

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

**Property Owner**

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

Name	<u>U.S. General Services Administration</u>		
Organization	<u>Great Lakes Region</u>	Telephone	<u>312-353-5572</u>
Street & Number	<u>230 South Dearborn Street, Room 3500</u>		
City or Town	<u>Chicago</u>	State	<u>IL</u>
		Zip Code	<u>60604</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

### Description

The United States Post Office is located in the downtown area of Minneapolis, Minnesota at 213 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South. The property occupies the entire block bounded by Washington Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> avenues, and the building's main entrance is oriented to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. A wide concrete sidewalk surrounds the property and encloses grassy lawn areas on the north, south, and east elevations of the building, and on the west, there is an asphalt paved-parking lot with a guardhouse and gate. There are trees within the grassy area on the east side and additional trees in the sidewalk extensions on the other three sides. In addition, there is a flagpole on the east side, and modern lampposts on the east, north, and south sides. There are no additional buildings, structures, or objects on the property.

The United States Post Office was completed in 1915 and illustrates a Neoclassical Revival style design. The building is constructed of stone, brick, and concrete with a raised basement level, a three-story main mass, and single-story wings on the north, south, and west. Significant stylistic elements include: a symmetrical façade; paired Corinthian order columns supporting a richly developed entablature; projecting end pavilions; employment at window and door openings of a mix of round and flat arches with keystones, as well as pediments with scrolled brackets. Granite is used on all façades except for the west, which is faced in brick. In addition to classical architectural features on the exterior, there are a number of significant interior elements, particularly in the public lobby and north/south corridors on the first floor, which are generously adorned with terrazzo, marble, hardwoods, and molded plaster.

The building is symmetrically organized along its north-south axis. There is a three-story main mass with a large single-story section to the west, and both sections are flanked by single-story wings on the north and south. The main mass has a flat roof at the center and a mansard roof around its perimeter, while the single-story sections all have flat roofs. The building is constructed of steel and concrete framing with solid brick masonry walls with granite facing on the three major elevations. The roof sections are supported by steel trusses.

The integrity of the building is very good, with some exterior modifications. Changes are predominately found in the interior conducted in the 1930s in non-public spaces. Exterior door modifications occurred in the 1930s and 1959. Also in 1959, rear "wagon court" walls were removed and the current parking lot was installed. In 1970, the east entrance on the north elevation was reconstructed to repair damage from a bomb explosion. In 1971, the north and south elevation exterior granite stairs were replaced with concrete, and two story multi-light window sashes on the east elevation were replaced with the present steel sash windows. However, these windows retain their original frames and mullions. In the following years, all exterior sash above the basement level was similarly replaced.

### Exterior

#### *East (Primary) Elevation*

The primary façade of the United States Post Office building is the east elevation. Three stories in height, it appears to be two stories with a raised basement. Symmetrically arranged, the elevation is composed of a central section flanked by slightly projecting bays, which are in turn flanked by single-story wings. The central section contains a series of paired, two-story Greek Corinthian fluted columns flanking recessed window and entry bays. The window bays have oversized fixed-glass steel sashes with cast iron frames and mullions that extend two stories in height. The columns support a granite entablature adorned with floral motifs and the words, "United States Federal Office

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Building" all within the frieze portion. Over the frieze, there is a projecting denticulated cornice and a parapet wall with alternating recessed bas-relief panels.

The main entrance is accessed via granite steps that flare outward at the base and are flanked by granite knee walls. The entrance consists of three doorways with rounded cast-iron frames where revolving doors were once installed. The existing hinged and single leaf doors are steel framed with single glass panels. Above each doorway, there is a round-arched wood-framed fanlight with a scrolled keystone. Directly above the fanlights, there are second-story windows with original cast-iron frames and replacement fixed, steel sash. The doorways' bays are flanked by four sets of two-story window bays, consisting of original cast-iron frames and mullions and replacement fixed, steel sash.

The central recessed window and entry bays are flanked by three-story single bays dominated by a first-floor window with an enclosed pediment supported by scrolled brackets. A patterned stringcourse separates the first and second floors, and there is a fixed-sash rectangular window with a slightly raised surround on the second floor. The windows are flanked by paired, two-story Corinthian style pilasters. The three-story section is flanked at either end by one-story sections, each one bay wide and containing a slightly recessed, flat-arched window with a projecting keystone, fixed steel sash, and slightly raised pilaster-like surrounds. The entablature and parapet on the outer sections are more simplified than what are found in the central section.

### ***South Elevation***

The south elevation consists of a symmetrical 13-bay, single-story wing with a raised basement and a setback three-story section, all faced in granite. The three-story section has a cornice and parapet similar to the east elevation, while the single-story wing has a similar parapet, but the cornice is plainer. Each entry bay is accessed via concrete stairs leading up to porticos framed by paired Corinthian columns supporting a denticulated entablature adorned with bas-relief floral motifs and a denticulated, enclosed pediment. Three bays in from each corner, the recessed entries have round-arched wood-framed transom windows with projecting keystones over glazed steel doors that are set into iron frames. Although the western entrance has been walled off from the inside, it appears to be an entrance from the exterior. Each window bay is recessed and contains pilaster-like surrounds, a flat arch with projecting keystone, and replacement fixed steel-sash windows. Below each window, there is a basement-level original-wood-sash window.

### ***North Elevation***

The north elevation is similar to the south elevation. The difference between the two elevations is that the north elevation has only one first-floor entrance with a portico and has two basement-level entries. Otherwise the portico, window openings, materials, and architectural features of the north elevation are the same as those of the south. One basement entrance is located below the first-floor entrance, and the other basement entrance is toward the western end of the elevation.

### ***West (Rear) Elevation***

The west elevation is the rear of the building and much less ornate than other elevations. There is a projecting single-window bay at each end of the west elevation that corresponds with the north and south wings, and has the same granite facing and architectural features as the other elevations. The main plane of the west elevation is faced with beige-colored brick, and it contains 14 window bays and a centered entry bay. The entrance is covered with a flat-roofed canopy and is accessed via concrete steps and an access ramp. The canopy, ramp and steps are

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Section 7 Page 3

modifications to the original design. The fixed steel-sash windows are recessed and have flat arches. The entire west elevation contains a granite water table, cornice, and parapet wall.

Within the one-story west section, there are two interior light courts constructed during the 1935 conversion from post office to office building. The walls are faced with brick, and the windows, which were originally wood sash, are steel fixed sash.

### Interior

Significant spaces within the interior of the United States Post Office include the central lobby area and the primary north/south-running corridors that extend the full length of the building and connect the eastern entrances on the north and south elevations. The interior area west of the north/south corridors, as well as the entire interior of the second and third floors, have been extensively modified several times over the years and do not contribute to the significance of the building.

The main lobby is a very intact original space. It is divided into three bays separated by two sets of paired smooth-marble columns. The walls are generally plaster with marble pilasters supporting a stepped projecting cornice. The north and south bays of the lobby have plaster ceilings consisting of coffered rectangular panels. The north bay has walls faced with marble and contains a stairwell leading to the second floor with marble treads and risers and a cast-iron balustrade. The south bay is dominated by a modern built-in information desk. The walls are plaster with marble wainscot. The center bay has a plaster barrel-vaulted ceiling with square coffered panels decorated with floral medallions. The east wall of all three bays contains the three main entrances, which are flanked by marble pilasters. The west wall of the central bay is dominated by a large arched opening connecting to the north/south corridors. The floors are mainly white ceramic tile with insets of black tile, and there are inset white marble floor panels between the columns.

The main interior corridor runs north-east to south-west and is relatively intact. In its middle is a central connecting section that has been modified through multiple-light glazed wood partitions with large doorway openings. The corridor's ceiling is a vaulted, plaster surface, and its floor consists of white ceramic tile with inset black tiles. The corridor's walls consist of a series of arched bays that are divided by plaster pilasters with projecting cornices inset with wood-and-glass screens. The majority of the arches in the corridor contain original tripartite, leaded glass windows. Marble wainscot runs the length of the corridor. Some of the bays contain doorways with glazed wood doors topped with projecting, enclosed wood pediments. Light fixtures are suspended glass globes. At each end of the corridor is a vestibule with a domed plaster ceiling, denticulated at its base, and each has a stained-glass oculus. The walls and floors are of materials similar to the corridor. The arched bays have been in-filled with gypsum board on the west wall of the corridor's south-west arm.

### Integrity

The United States Post Office is exemplary of the Neoclassical Revival style in 1912-1915 government construction. The structure retains exterior integrity, with relatively few modifications made during modernization efforts over the years to original character-defining spaces, features and materials on the interior of the ground floor.

A number of construction drawings are extant and located in the basement level of the building. Original drawings dating to 1911 (revised in 1912 and 1913) were produced by the Office of Supervising Architect and approved by James Knox Taylor. The modifications that have occurred on the building since its 1915 completion have not compromised the ability of the building to convey its historic significance under Criterion C as an example of

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## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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***United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota***

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Neoclassical Revival design. The exterior in particular retains very good integrity. In 1936, during its conversion from a postal facility to a federal office building, the interior of the post office was completely remodeled, except for the main lobby and north-south corridors. The exterior was modified slightly in 1939, when the revolving doors at the main entrance were replaced with flush doors, though the original metal entrance enclosures remained. In 1959, rear "wagon court" walls were removed and the current parking lot was installed. Also in 1959, the original revolving doors at the main entrance on the east elevation were replaced with double single-leaf doors. In 1970, the east entrance on the north elevation was reconstructed to repair damage from a bomb explosion. The following year in 1971, the original granite entrance stairs at the north and south elevations were replaced with concrete. The original two-story multi-light wood frame sashes on the east elevation were replaced with the present steel sash windows in 1971. However, the window frames and mullions are original and in following years, all other exterior window sashes above the basement level were similarly replaced.



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

### Significance

The United States Post Office is a distinctive example of the Neoclassical Revival style of architecture and is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C for Architecture. The building relates to the statewide context developed by Minnesota SHPO staff, "Urban Centers, 1870-1940." The Period of Significance is 1912-1915, representing the period when the building was constructed. The building retains very good design integrity to convey historic significance under Criteria C; the United States Post Office is a fine example of a federal building in Minneapolis that represents the distinctive characteristics of the Neoclassical Revival style. The United States Post Office compares favorably to other extant examples in the city and is the most prominent example of the style in the downtown area. The materials and ornamental treatments illustrate many Neoclassical Revival design elements. The building plan is symmetrical, and the primary façade is a symmetrical composition of paired Corinthian order columns supporting a richly developed entablature and flanked by a pair of end pavilions. Pediments, pilasters, and freestanding columns adorn window and door openings.

### Historic Context: Construction of Federal Buildings

The late nineteenth century was a time of growth for the federal government, as Government departments, bureaus, and agencies were established or expanded to administer the growing national economy. The number of federal civilian employees grew steadily and, to house the growing federal workforce, the United States Treasury Department, which was responsible for federal buildings, constructed custom houses, mints, post offices, and courthouses throughout the country. The Office of Supervising Architect, established within the U.S. Treasury Department in 1864, oversaw design and construction of federal civilian facilities. From the 1860s to the 1890s, the number of buildings constructed and operated by the U.S. Treasury Department increased 17-fold.<sup>1</sup> Federal buildings were the public face of the federal government, and they embodied the federal presence at the local level. Supervising architects consistently sought to convey dignity and refinement in their designs through the proportions, siting, materials, and overall solidity of the buildings.<sup>2</sup>

From 1895 through World War I, the federal government grew even faster than before, as Progressive Era reformers advocated government intervention to address problems that emerged as American society transformed from primarily rural and agrarian to urban and industrial. To accommodate the growing federal workforce, the U.S. Congress passed the first omnibus public buildings law in 1902, which allowed for construction of vastly more federal buildings.<sup>3</sup> As a result, the number of federal buildings administered by the Supervising Architect's Office grew from 399 in 1899 to 1,126 by 1912.<sup>4</sup>

The federal building campaign coincided with the successful construction and exhibition of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892-93. Featuring building designs by some of the most noted architects of the time, the unifying style of the exposition was the Neoclassical Revival, a style that utilized classical motifs and emphasized symmetrical plans, monumentality, and highly ornamented façades. The architecture of the exposition was so well-received by the public that it would popularize neoclassical designs in public buildings for decades to follow. By the turn of the twentieth century, neoclassical forms dominated public building design.

<sup>1</sup> Lois Craig, ed., and the staff of the Federal Architecture Project, *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in the United States Government Building* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979), 148.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>3</sup> Emily Harris, "History of Federal Policy Concerning Post Office Construction, 1900-1940," Draft report for the U.S. National Park Service, *History of Post Office Construction, 1900-1940* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Postal Service, 1982), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 1979.

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James Knox Taylor, who served as Supervising Architect from 1897 to 1912 and oversaw the design and construction of many federal buildings, was an advocate for Beaux Arts Classicism; an influence in the last phase of the American Neoclassical Revival. Through classical architecture, Taylor sought to provide the symbolic appearance of federal authority at the local level, as well as architectural sophistication in local communities. Indeed, most post offices built or designed in Minnesota during Taylor's tenure reflected either the Beaux Arts Classical or Second Renaissance Revival styles.<sup>5</sup>

In 1912, Taylor resigned, signaling a shift in the planning and design of federal buildings. Although Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth continued to design federal buildings in the individual manner of his predecessor during 1913-1914, legislative action and policies were developing that would end this era.<sup>6</sup> The Public Buildings Act of 1913 directed the U. S. Treasury Department to economize costs and led to the standardization of plans, specifications, and materials for different classes of federal buildings. After 1916, standardized plans were commonly used under the direction of Acting Supervising Architect James Wetmore, and they typically retained the basic Neoclassical Revival style, massing, and plan, but with less detail on smaller buildings.<sup>7</sup>

The trend of standardized designs continued during the 1920s and 1930s. With the onset of the Great Depression, the Public Works Administration (PWA) was established in 1933 to oversee planning and construction of public works projects. Under the PWA, government architecture was designed in a simplified classical revival style and often featured murals or sculptures.<sup>8</sup> The Reorganization Act of 1939 created the Public Buildings Administration within the Federal Works Agency (FWA), removing control of federal architecture from the U.S. Treasury Department and abolishing the title Supervising Architect. The Public Buildings Act of 1949 established the new U.S. General Services Administration, which now subsumed the FWA, including the long established Office of the Supervising Architect.<sup>9</sup>

### Historic Context: Development of the United States Post Office

Although downtown Minneapolis developed on the west side of the Mississippi River, the earliest commercial activity was on the east side of the river in St. Anthony. Ard Godfrey established a sawmill operation in St. Anthony in 1847, and in the following year, the first store opened on Main Street. Other business establishments soon followed. The first commercial district on the west side of the river was centered on Bridge Square, where Hennepin and Nicollet avenues meet. Following annexation of St. Anthony by Minneapolis in 1872, a new city hall was constructed at Bridge Square (the current Municipal Building at 350 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street was built between 1888 and 1909).<sup>10</sup>

With bountiful waterpower provided by St. Anthony Falls and equally bountiful wheat from western prairie lands, the Minneapolis riverfront became home to massive flour milling operations during the late nineteenth century, including Pillsbury and Washburn Crosby (later General Mills). From 1880 to 1930, Minneapolis was the leading milling center

<sup>5</sup> David Gebhard, and Tom Martinson. *A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 30.

<sup>6</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 25.

<sup>9</sup> Beth M. Boland, *National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 13: How to Apply National Register Criteria to Post Offices*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1994, 5.

<sup>10</sup> Majorie Pearson and Charlene K. Roise, "Downtown Minneapolis: An Historic Context", unpublished manuscript (Minneapolis: Heritage Preservation Commission, 2000), 4:8.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

in the world. During that period, the population of Minneapolis expanded rapidly. From 47,000 in 1880, the Minneapolis population grew to 202,000 in 1900, and by 1930, it reached 464,000.<sup>11</sup>

As the riverfront became dominated by industry and the Bridge Square area became more congested, the central business district shifted south of Washington Avenue. The office and financial district developed on Marquette and Second avenues. Nicollet Avenue became the main commercial-retail hub with the opening of department stores Powers (1881), Donaldson's (1884), Young Quinlan (1894), and Dayton's (1902). Although construction of the Lumber Exchange building in 1885 helped establish Hennepin Avenue as an office district, during the early twentieth century, the street became the city's theater district. At least 25 theaters operated on Hennepin Avenue by 1916.

As the population grew and commerce expanded, government operations also expanded in Minneapolis. The city joined with Hennepin County to build a new City Hall/County Courthouse at Washington Avenue and Third Street, beginning in 1888. At the federal level, by 1889, federal courts, a Federal Reserve Bank, and numerous offices were located in a new federal building. The first federal presence in Minneapolis, however, was the United States Post Office.

The first post office in Minneapolis was established in Ard Godfrey's sawmill office in 1847 on the St. Anthony side of the Mississippi River pre-dating the 1849 plat of the town. The post office brought regular delivery of the mail from St. Paul (the head of steamboat navigation on the river) to St. Anthony via stagecoach. The first post office on the west side of the river was located at Second Avenue and High Street, the site of the 1935 post office building. After numerous location changes during the 1850s and 1860s, by 1873 the main post office was located in the new city hall, where it remained until completion of the federal building in 1889. The four-story Romanesque Revival federal building, located at First Avenue between Second and Third streets, housed the main post office, the United States District Court, and other federal offices.<sup>12</sup>

As Minneapolis grew during the 1880s and 1890s, the volume of mail greatly expanded, both for the general population and for the burgeoning business community. As a result of this growth, the existing main post office had become inadequate by the turn of the twentieth century. Planning was begun for a new post office building, and in 1907, the U.S. Treasury Department purchased and cleared the block bounded by Washington Avenue, Second and Third streets, and Second Avenue. This site was not a popular choice locally because the area was considered to be a less desirable location, and Washington Avenue in particular housed low-rent hotels and cheap saloons. However, the land at this site was less expensive to acquire, and it provided access to the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad freight depot across Third Avenue and to the proposed Third Avenue bridge over the Mississippi River.<sup>13</sup>

The design of the United States Post Office resulted in a fine Neoclassical Revival style public building. Under the supervision of James Knox Taylor, the building was individually designed and evolved through a series of drawings between 1909 and 1912. Construction drawings completed in 1910 oriented the building towards Washington Avenue; in 1912 a second set of construction documents changed the proposed orientation to Third Avenue South. This was a result of lobbying by city officials. Construction began in 1912 and was completed in early 1915 at a cost of \$1,267,162. The new facility officially opened on January 18, 1915.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Pearson and Roise, *Downtown Minneapolis*, 12, 23.

<sup>12</sup> Hasbrouck Peterson Associates, *Historic Structure Report: Federal Building, 212 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota* ([Washington D.C.]: U.S. General Services Administration, 1991), 4:6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

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The building opened in 1915 and the facility handled increasingly heavy volumes of mail until 1929. At that point the U.S. Post Office Department established separate operational facilities to handle the increased demand.

Although planning for renovation of the 1915 United States Post Office had begun in 1926, by 1929 local officials were lobbying for a new postal facility. Ultimately, the decision was made to construct a new post office building and to convert the 1915 building to house federal offices. The new post office building was completed in 1934, and the 1915 building vacated in 1935. The 1915 post office building was vacant for about a year, then the U.S. Treasury Department remodeled the interior during 1936, and in 1937, the Internal Revenue Service Collector's Office moved into the building. In recognition of its new function, the 1915 United States Post Office was renamed the United States Federal Office Building in 1937. Over the years, the Federal Office Building has provided office space for a variety of federal agencies.

### Architectural Significance of the United States Post Office

The United States Post Office is a fine example of a federal building in Minneapolis that represents the distinctive characteristics of the Neoclassical Revival style. Growing out of the revival styles of the late nineteenth century, classically inspired architecture was the preferred style for federal buildings and for public buildings generally from the 1900s through the 1920s. Benefiting from a federal building boom, Neoclassical Revival architecture became a standard style for post offices, courthouses, and federal office buildings.

The architecture of public buildings during the late nineteenth century, mirroring commercial architecture, represented a break from the formal classicism that dominated the early nineteenth century. Exuberant designs utilizing motifs from a variety of historic periods resulted in the "revival" styles – Romanesque, Italian Renaissance, English Renaissance (particularly Georgian), and French Second Empire. By the 1890s, Richardsonian Romanesque thoroughly dominated public buildings; so much so, for example, that the five federal courthouse buildings constructed in Minnesota between 1889 and 1901 all represented that style.

By the turn of the twentieth century, however, tastes were changing. In the wake of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and in no small measure due to Progressive Era preferences for orderliness, architectural styles shifted to more formal symmetrical compositions. Beaux Arts, Neoclassical Revival, and the Second Renaissance Revival styles all sought to discipline the eclecticism and perceived excesses of High Victorian styles. In the case of Beaux Arts classicism, adherents of the style expressed in their designs the orderliness, symmetry, and balance found in classical monuments.<sup>15</sup>

The early twentieth century search for order in the urban built environment extended beyond the design of individual buildings. The City Beautiful Movement was a series of localized efforts by civic and business leaders throughout the country to apply rational planning and design work to whole sections of cities, usually downtown areas. For example, in 1910 the Civic Commission of Minneapolis commissioned Chicago architect Edward Bennett to develop the *Plan of Minneapolis*.

Although the *Plan of Minneapolis*, which was published in 1917, was never adopted, a number of classically inspired, Neoclassical Revival style buildings and monuments were constructed in Minneapolis between 1900 and 1920. For example, the Gateway Park and Pavilion (1915, razed) utilized a classically inspired design to implement a City Beautiful-era desire to impose order on a declining area of the city. Built at Bridge Square as a formal entrance to the city, the park had a classical fountain, a pavilion, comfort stations, and formal gardens. Other examples of

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classically inspired Beaux Arts or Neoclassical Revival designs in Minneapolis are the Pillsbury Library (1904), the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (1915), and the University of Minnesota Mall (designed in 1908) along with a number of its flanking buildings.

The United States Post Office is a well-designed example of the Neoclassical Revival style that compares favorably to other extant examples in the city and is the most prominent example of the style in the downtown area. The materials and ornamental treatments illustrate many Neoclassical Revival design elements. The building is symmetrically organized along its north-south axis, and the primary (east) façade is a symmetrical composition of paired Corinthian order columns supporting a richly developed entablature and flanked by a pair of end pavilions. Pediments, pilasters, and freestanding columns adorn window and door openings. Granite is the primary exterior material.

The 1912-1915 Neoclassical Revival style United States Post Office represents an example of federal architecture under Supervising Architect James Knox Taylor, incorporating classically inspired designs with strong symbolic federal presence and high-quality construction. Within the context of downtown Minneapolis, this facility replaced a block of small, deteriorating buildings with a monumental building conveying order and dignity. Although its location may have been unpopular locally, its Neoclassical Revival design was a companion to the contemporary Gateway Park and Pavilion.

### **Finding of Significance**

#### **Eligibility under Criterion C**

The United States Post Office is a well-designed example of the Neoclassical Revival style of architecture, and it was executed in high quality materials, as was the policy of Supervising Architect James Knox Taylor. The building retains all aspects of integrity that convey the characteristics of the Neoclassical Revival style. The building reflects one of the prevailing early twentieth century architectural styles for public buildings in the context of a modern post office constructed in the Minneapolis downtown area. For these reasons, the United States Post Office meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion C.

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### Historic Context—U.S. Post Offices, Courthouses and Federal Buildings designed and constructed by the Treasury Department, 1864-1939.

#### *Treasury Department Design, 1864-1896.*

The history of design and construction of federal buildings falls into distinct eras typically defined by congressional authorizations for public buildings, the preferences of the Supervising Architect and the extent of involvement of private architects. In the nineteenth century, federal civilian facilities were designed and constructed by the U.S. Treasury Department and military facilities by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the U.S. Treasury Department primarily purchased existing buildings for its own use, typically custom houses and marine hospitals. Monumental buildings built for the U.S. Treasury Department at that time were designed in the Classical style by Robert Mills, the Federal Architect, including the U.S. Treasury Building (begun 1836), U.S. General Post Office (1836), U.S. Patent Office (1839), and four U.S. Custom Houses at New Bedford, MA; Newburyport, MA; New London, CT; and Middletown, CT (1836).

In 1854, increasing demand for new federal buildings caused Secretary of the U.S. Treasury James Guthrie to create the Office of Construction. Captain Alexander H. Bowman from the U.S. Corps of Engineers was named Engineer-in-charge and Ammi B. Young was named Supervising Architect of the Office of Construction. Young had previously assisted Federal Architect Robert Mills until 1842 and served as Architectural Advisor for the U.S. Treasury Department in 1842-1852.<sup>16</sup> Young remained in the position of Supervising Architect when it was formally established in the U.S. Treasury Department in 1864. Young designed about 70 buildings from 1853-1862, mostly two- to three-story structures in remote locations, with standardized designs reviving the appearance of Renaissance villas.<sup>17</sup> Until the 1890s, the design of federal buildings tended to follow the favorite style of the Supervising Architect.<sup>18</sup> Alfred B. Mullet was the most notable among the early Supervising Architects, serving from 1865-1874. Mullet designed in a variety of classical styles, but his most well recognized works, such as the State, War, and Navy Building (1871-1888), were designed in the French Second Empire style and often were monumental in scale.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, the post of Supervising Architect was not particularly well paid, which meant that it did not attract prominent architects, and the heavy burden of work often meant that the federal buildings, especially outside Washington D.C., were designed by assistants and apprentices.<sup>20</sup> The responsibilities of the Supervising Architect had grown from its inventory of 23 buildings in 1853 to 297 buildings in 1892, with 95 in the process of completion, but the position was criticized for cost overruns and construction delays.<sup>21</sup>

In 1893, near the end of President Benjamin Harrison's administration, the U.S. Congress passed the Tarnsey Act, which permitted the U.S. Treasury Department to contract out for private sector architectural services through competition or to continue design within the Treasury.<sup>22</sup> Passage of the Tarnsey Act coincided with the successful

<sup>16</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 99, 195.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 99, 105.

<sup>18</sup> Boland, *National Register Bulletin* 13, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 155, 162.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas S. Hines, *Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 126.

<sup>21</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 202.

<sup>22</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 3.

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construction and exhibition of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892-93. The exposition was largely planned by one of Chicago's most influential architects, Daniel Burnham, who served as Director of Works. Featuring designs by Burnham & Root; Richard Morris Hunt; McKim, Mead & White; Adler & Sullivan; Peabody & Stearns; and George B. Post, it was so well received by the public that it would popularize the Beaux Arts and Neoclassical Revival styles for the design of monumental architecture for decades to follow. In 1893 and 1894, Burnham was elected president of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), which had long opposed the role of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury, and had lobbied for passage of the Tarnsey Act. In 1893, the AIA represented less than 20 percent of the nation's architects.<sup>23</sup> In January 1894, Secretary of the U.S. Treasury John G. Carlisle of President Grover Cleveland's new administration announced that a new federal building in Buffalo, NY was to be designed by the Supervising Architect and not by a private sector architect. This caused a confrontation between Secretary Carlisle and the Burnham-led AIA that effectively stalled implementation of the Tarnsey Act until the McKinley administration took office in 1897.<sup>24</sup>

### **Individual Design, 1897-1914**

In 1897, President McKinley appointed Lyman Gage as Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. Gage was one of the financiers of and served as president at the World's Columbian Exposition. Gage was also a good friend of Daniel Burnham and was aware of the AIA's issues.<sup>25</sup> In 1897, Secretary Gage and the new Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury, James Knox Taylor, began implementing the Tarnsey Act, and the Beaux Arts and Neoclassical Revival styles began to dominate the design of monumental federal buildings. The Colonial Revival style was also used for smaller scale buildings or where a more traditional American design was warranted. From 1897-1912, 35 buildings were designed under the provisions of the Tarnsey Act by some of the country's most prominent architects, including McKim, Mead and White; Albert Kahn; Cass Gilbert; and Daniel Burnham.<sup>26</sup>

As stated in the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Register Bulletin 13, "During the tenure of James Knox Taylor (1897-1912) as Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury, the federal government promoted the concept that government buildings should be monumental and beautiful, and should represent the ideals of democracy and high standards of architectural sophistication in their communities. Taylor preferred styles derived from classical or early American traditions. Believing that federal buildings should be built to last, he also emphasized the use of high quality construction materials. Private architects worked on many of the larger projects, while the Office of the Supervising Architect produced mostly smaller buildings, including many of the post offices. In either case, the buildings were individually designed; Taylor firmly resisted suggestions that designs be standardized."<sup>27</sup>

In 1902, the first omnibus public buildings law was passed which saved authorization time in the U.S. Congress and allowed construction of vastly more federal buildings. It provided an increased limit of cost on over 60 buildings and authorized approximately 150 new projects.<sup>28</sup> After an experiment by Taylor in 1903-1904, it was learned that

<sup>23</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 202.

<sup>24</sup> Hines, *Burnham of Chicago*, 127-133.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 203.

<sup>27</sup> Boland, *National Register Bulletin 13*, 3.

<sup>28</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 239.

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smaller valued projects did not attract skilled architects. As a result, most post offices and federal buildings outside of major cities were designed within the U.S. Treasury Department after 1904.<sup>29</sup> Five of Taylor's U.S. Treasury-designed smaller buildings were published in 1907, in the architectural journal *The Brickbuilder*, illustrating his Neoclassical Revival and Colonial Revival designs for buildings costing under \$100,000.<sup>30</sup>

Among the buildings designed and constructed during James Knox Taylor's tenure (1897-1912) were: Ellis Island Main Building (1898-1900, by Boring and Tilton); West Point improvements (by Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson); National War College Building, Washington D.C. (1903, by Stanford White); the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia (1898, by Cass Gilbert); U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, Chicago (1905 by Henry Ives Cobb); Customhouse, New York (1901-1907, by Cass Gilbert); Federal Building, Cleveland (1905, by Brunner and Tryon); Federal Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming (1906, by William Dubois); and the U.S. Post Office or Farley Building, New York (1913, by McKim, Mead and White).<sup>31</sup> The vast majority of these buildings was designed in the Beaux Arts and Neoclassical Revival styles, and stressed the importance and permanence of the federal government through monumentality, prominent site selection, and quality of materials.

In 1911, a congressional committee recommended that the Tarnsey Act be repealed because of "pork barrel" criticism and because the fees of private architects were considered greater than those for the same services rendered by the Supervising Architect.<sup>32</sup> In 1912, both the Tarnsey Act was repealed and Taylor resigned, signaling the beginning of the end of the emphasis on individual plan and design and high quality materials and construction used for federal architecture. In 1913-1914, however, Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth continued to design federal buildings in the individual manner of his predecessor, typically in the Renaissance Revival style with arcaded loggias, but legislative action and policies were developing that would end this era.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 4.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>31</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 230, 243.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>33</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 7.



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### ***Standardized Design, 1915-1930.***

In 1913, an omnibus Public Buildings Act was enacted and the Public Buildings Commission was established, both of which sought to economize costs and led to the standardization of plans, specifications, and materials for different classes of federal buildings. For example, while it authorized construction of a large number of public buildings, the Act stipulated that communities with postal receipts totaling less than \$10,000 would not receive authorization for a new post office building.<sup>34</sup> This policy culminated in 1915, when William McAdoo, Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and Chairman of the Public Buildings Commission, established a classification system for four classes of federal buildings. McAdoo's classes were differentiated by the value of post office annual receipts and the value of metropolitan real estate adjoining the proposed site. The higher the class, the higher the quality of design and materials allowed, including exterior facing, windows and doors, interior finishes, and ornament in public spaces.<sup>35</sup>

In 1916, standardized plans were developed under the direction of Acting Supervising Architect James Wetmore, and they typically retained the basic Beaux Arts and Neoclassical Revival styles, massing, and plan, but with less detail on smaller buildings.<sup>36</sup> In actuality, between 1913 and 1926, the U.S. Congress authorized no new spending for public buildings.<sup>37</sup> The Public Buildings Act of 1926, also known as the Keyes-Elliott Act, was a general enabling Act that allotted \$100 million for federal buildings outside the District of Columbia. This Act allowed the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and the U.S. Postmaster General to select towns and cities and specific sites for new buildings. As a result, a survey report was prepared in 1927 that listed towns and cities with no federal buildings, including 799 with postal receipts over \$20,000 and 1,512 with postal receipts between \$10,000 and \$20,000. The estimated cost of implementing construction was \$170,420,000, but the actual construction was delayed by economic conditions, including the stock market crash of 1929.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 7.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>37</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 281.

<sup>38</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 13-14.

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Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo's Classification System for Federal buildings, 1915 <sup>39</sup>					
Class	Definition	Exterior	Windows and doors	Interior Finishes	Public spaces
<b>A</b>	Include a first class post office with annual receipts exceeding \$800,000 and would be sited as part of a city development plan or on an important thoroughfare of a great city with adjacent property reaching the higher valuation of metropolitan real estate.	Marble or granite facing; fireproof throughout.	Metal frames, sashes and doors	Interior finish to include the finer grades of marble, ornamental bronze work, mahogany, etc.	Monumental treatment, murals; special interior lighting fixtures.
<b>B</b>	Include a first class post office with receipts between \$60,000 to \$800,000 with adjacent property improvements somewhat below the higher valuation of metropolitan real estate.	Limestone or sandstone facing; fireproof throughout.	Exterior frames and sash metal; interior frames, sash and doors wood.	Exclude the more expensive woods and marbles. Ornamental metal to be used only where iron is suitable.	Restricted ornament in public spaces.
<b>C</b>	Include a second class post office with receipts over \$15,000 or of the first class to \$60,000, with surrounding property values that of a second-class city.	Brick facing with stone or terra-cotta trimmings; fireproof floors, non-fireproof roof.	Frames, sashes and doors wood.	Exclude the more expensive wood and marbles; the latter used only where sanitary conditions demand	Public spaces restricted to very simple forms of ornament.
<b>D</b>	Include a post office having annual receipts of less than \$15,000 with real estate values meeting only a limited investment for improvements.	Brick facing, little stone or terra-cotta used; only first floor fireproof.	Stock sash, frames, doors, etc., where advisable.	Ordinary class of building, such as any businessman would consider a reasonable investment in a small town.	

### Public Works Administration Design, 1931-1939.

With the onset of the Great Depression, the architectural profession and construction trades were extremely hard hit by unemployment. On May 31, 1930, the U.S. Congress amended the Public Buildings Act of 1926, with increased funding and further authorized the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury to contract with private firms and individuals.<sup>40</sup> To meet spatial requirements of the U.S. Treasury Department and the U.S. Post Office Department, the Hoover Administration and the U.S. Congress increased funding for the federal building program in 1928, 1930, and 1931, for a total of \$700 million.<sup>41</sup> The Federal Employment Stabilization Act of 1931, directed federal construction agencies to prepare six-year building plans and increased appropriations for that year by \$100 million. As a result, 133 architectural firms were commissioned to design federal buildings in 1931, and this number increased to 301 by 1934.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>40</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 17.

<sup>41</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 281.

<sup>42</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 15, 17, 19.

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This practice of commissioning private architects ended, however, on June 29, 1934, with an order that the Office of the Supervising Architect design all remaining federal buildings.<sup>43</sup> The Public Works Administration (PWA) was established in 1933 to oversee the planning and construction of public works projects. "In 1933, many of the properties of the federal government were in poor condition. In a number of cities, post offices were in disrepair, federal justice was being dispensed in buildings with sagging floors and leaking roofs, and in scattered customs houses along our far-flung borders, customs men in some instances had to work in poorly heated and equipped buildings. Federal prisons failed to live up to the standards set by the federal government's own penologists. There was a shortage of post offices, prisons, veteran's hospitals, and other public facilities."<sup>44</sup> As of February 28, 1939, the PWA federal building construction projects totaled 3,167 buildings at \$105,984,762, including 30 courthouses and city halls with an allotment of \$1,312,012, and 406 post offices with an allotment of \$43,607,814.<sup>45</sup>

Louis A. Simon was Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury from 1933-1939, but had been with the office continually since 1896. Simon had effectively directed the office during Judge James Wetmore's tenure (1915-1933) as Acting Supervising Architect, because Wetmore had no formal training in architecture.<sup>46</sup> Under the PWA and Simon's direction, government architecture in the 1930s was designed in either a simplified classical revival style, identified by Lois Craig et al as "Starved Classicism", or in the Colonial Revival style, and often-featured murals or sculptures.<sup>47</sup>

"By the 1920s, the federal role in transforming the American environment was assuming immense proportions and implications. Massive dams, extensive highway systems, multitudinous new buildings pervaded the land. The antecedents were nineteenth-century, but the scale of endeavor was new, reflecting the burgeoning growth of the administrative style ... recalling scholar H.P. L'Orange's description of the change between the early and later Roman Empire: '...the new "block-style" in art emerged contemporary with the formation of massive structures in the state and community, and...in both contexts the traditional individualization and articulation of the various elements were gradually reduced or disappeared altogether.'<sup>48</sup> Classical architecture had become the dominant style conveying the federal presence across the nation. The need to provide government space but save the cost of unnecessary ornament during the 1930s fit well with the principles of Modern architecture being then introduced, stressing functionality, open plans with interchangeable work areas, and exterior surfaces in uninterrupted simple planes and volumes. Yet the Supervising Architect's Office did not adopt the Modernist vocabulary on the exterior, but held steadfast to references to the Classical style, albeit unelaborated in detail, to convey the underlying role of the U.S. Government. Today, typically it is this restrained Classicism, rather than the correct Roman forms advocated by Jefferson, the Greek temples of Robert Mills, or the ebullient Beaux-Arts style of the early 1900s, that most Americans think of when they think of federal architecture.

<sup>43</sup> Boland, *National Register Bulletin* 13, 3.

<sup>44</sup> U.S. Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (PWA), *America Builds: The Record of the PWA* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), 106.

<sup>45</sup> PWA, *America Builds*, 20, 290.

<sup>46</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 328.

<sup>47</sup> Harris, *History of Federal Policy*, 20, 25.

<sup>48</sup> Craig, *The Federal Presence*, 280.

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Buildings and structures constructed during the PWA era that convey this restrained classicism, also known as the PWA Moderne style, include: Hoover Dam (1933, by Gordon B. Kaufmann); U.S. Mint, San Francisco (1937); and U.S. Post Offices in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Waterbury, Connecticut; Norfolk, Virginia; Manchester, New Hampshire; and Memphis, Tennessee (1932 remodel).<sup>49</sup> The U.S. Government's architects embraced the Modern movement. The Association of Federal Architects (AFA) was organized late in 1927 with Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect of the Treasury as its first president. The AFA held dinners with prominent Modernist speakers such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Eliel Saarinen, and Richard Neutra, and published a quarterly magazine from 1930 to 1946, which largely defended the U.S. Government's designs.<sup>50</sup> Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Modernism became accepted and employed for federal buildings domestically as well as internationally.

### ***Federal Works Agency Design, 1940-1948.***

The Reorganization Act of April 3, 1939, created the Public Buildings Administration as part of the Federal Works Agency (FWA), removing control of federal architecture out of the U.S. Treasury Department, and the title of Supervising Architect was abolished. According to National Register Bulletin 13, under FWA, "Although some variations to facades were allowed, standardized interior plans were well established by this time, and outlined in a publication entitled "Instructions to Private Architects Engaged on Public Buildings work under the Jurisdictions of the U.S. Treasury Department."<sup>51</sup> Federal building design and construction slowed during the war years.

### ***General Services Administration, 1949-present.***

In 1949, the new U.S. General Services Administration was established, and absorbed the design function of the Federal Works Agency. The Public Buildings Act of 1949 allowed the Office of the Supervising Architect to rely on private architecture firms to carry out public building designs. When the Office employed its standard designs, the result was extremely utilitarian with the emphasis on stripped modern design, functionality, and automobile access.

The following table provides examples of representative properties from the contextual periods from 1897 through 1939.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 280-287.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 298.

<sup>51</sup> Boland, *National Register Bulletin 13*, 5.

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## Historic Context Representative Properties

U.S. Post Offices, Courthouses and Federal Buildings designed and constructed by the Treasury Department, 1864-1939

Building Number	Building Name	Address	City/State/Zip	Date	Comments	Style Architect
<b>Treasury Department Design, 1864-1896</b>						
None under consideration for National Register eligibility, 2005-2006						
<b>Individual Design, 1897-1914</b>						
MN0021ZZ	U.S. Post Office & Courthouse	118 S. Mill St.	Fergus Falls, MN	1903	Determined eligible/DOE process USPS/Keeper 04-29-1980	Second Renaissance Revival/ James Knox Taylor
WV0003ZZ	Elizabeth Kee Federal Building	601 Federal Street	Bluefield, WV	1909-11	Determined eligible/DOE process GSA/Keeper 10-18-1979	James Knox Taylor
MN0036ZZ	Federal Office Building	212 Third Avenue South	Minneapolis, MN 55401	1912-15		Neo-Classical Revival/
CT0024ZZ	(Richard C. Lee) New Haven US Courthouse	141 Church Street	New Haven, CT, 06510	1913-19	Determined eligible/DOE process GSA/Keeper 10-31-1974	Beaux Arts/ James Gamble Rogers
<b>Standardized Design, 1915-1930</b>						
TN0011ZZ	(L. Clure Morton) USPO/Courthouse	9 East Broad Street (at Walnut)	Cookeville, TN 38501	1916	NR eligible consensus determination GSA/SHPO	Renaissance Revival/Italianate Architect: N/A
NY0181ZZ	Federal Building	Margaret Street	Plattsburgh, NY 12901	1928		Colonial Revival/ James A. Wetmore
NY0218ZZ	Alexander Pirnie Federal Building	10 Broad Street John Street	Utica, NY 13501	1928-29	Determined eligible/DOE process GSA/Keeper 06-10-1982	Neo-Classical Revival/ James A. Wetmore
MA0113ZZ	Harold C. Donohue Federal Building and Courthouse	595 Main Street	Worcester, MA 01601	1930-32	HABS No. MA-1261, February 1993	Neo-Classical Revival with Greek elements/ James A. Wetmore
<b>Public Works Administration and Federal Works Agency Design, 1931-1948</b>						
NJ0088ZZ	Clarkson S. Fisher Courthouse	402 East State Street	Trenton, NJ 08608	1931-32	Eligible, in process of being nominated	Neo-Classical Revival/ James A. Wetmore
MA0013ZZ	Boston Federal	5 Post Office	Boston, MA	1931-	Determined eligible/DOE Process	Modern Movement/Art Deco

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<i>Building Number</i>	<i>Building Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>City/State/Zip</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Style Architect</i>
	Building John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse Building	Square	02109	1933	GSA/Keeper 11-14-1984	Ralph Adams Cram; James A. Wetmore
NJ0015ZZ	U.S. Post Office and Courthouse	4th and Market Streets	Camden, NJ 08101	1932	Eligible, in process of being nominated	Neo-Classical Revival/ James A. Wetmore
IA0087ZZ	Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse	316-20 6th Street	Sioux City, IA 51101	1931-34	Determined eligible/DOE process USPS/Keeper 10-31-1980	Art Deco; Art Moderne/ Beuttler & Arnold; James A. Wetmore
LA0034ZZ	F. Edward Hebert Federal Building	600 South Street	New Orleans, LA 70190	1935-39	Eligible, in process of being nominated	Art Deco/ Howard Lovell Cheney
AK0005AK	Federal Building	648 Mission Street	Ketchikan, AK 99901	1938	NRHP listed, 4/28/2006	Style: N/A Garfield, Stanley-Brown, Harris & Robinson

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

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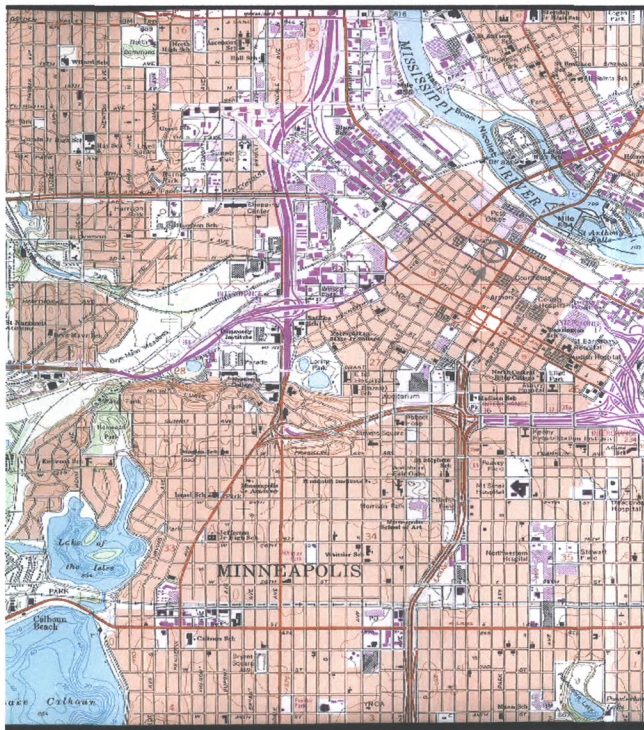
United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

### USGS Map

Image from USGS National Map Viewer, <http://nmviewogc.cr.usgs.gov/viewer.htm>

Hard copy of original USGS Map to be submitted with registration form

United States Post Office—Minneapolis, MN is located on the right side of the map, south of the Mississippi River.





## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 21

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota  
*Photographer:* Charles P. Gibson  
*Date:* c. 1915  
*Negative:* #59356, Minnesota Historical Society  
*View:* northwest, south and east elevations.  
*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice1.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 22

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

United States Post Office – Minneapolis

Hennepin County, Minnesota

Photographer: Andrew Schmidt

Date: October 1, 2005

Negative: GSA

View: southwest, east elevation and partial north elevation.

Photo Number: MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice2.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 23

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

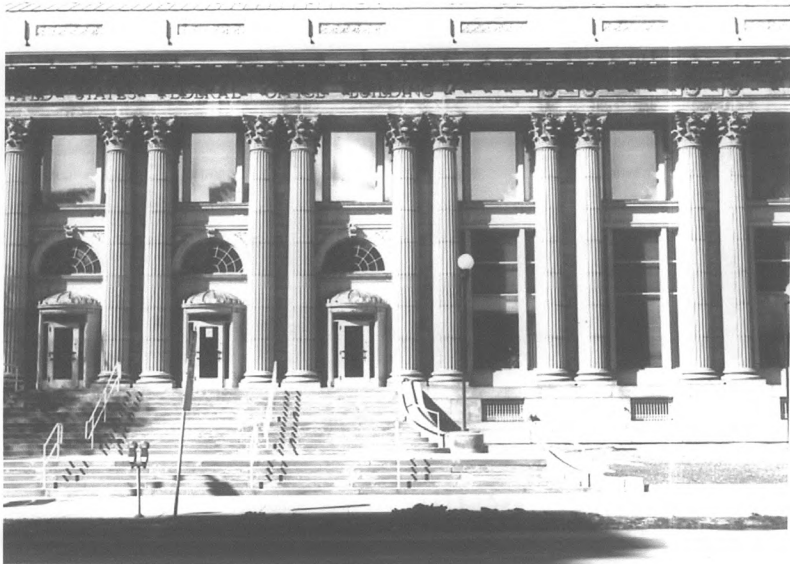
*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* west, east elevation, main entrance detail.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice3.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 24

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

United States Post Office – Minneapolis

Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* northwest, east elevation and partial south elevation.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice4.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Section Photos Page 25

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota  
*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt  
*Date:* October 1, 2005  
*Negative:* GSA  
*View:* north, south elevation, entrance detail.  
*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice5.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 26

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota  
*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt  
*Date:* October 1, 2005  
*Negative:* GSA  
*View:* north, south elevation.  
*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice6.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 27

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis

Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* northeast, west elevation and partial south elevation.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice7.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 28

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* south, north elevation, entrance detail.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice8.tiff





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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 29

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* interior, main lobby and corridor.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice9.tiff



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 30

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

United States Post Office – Minneapolis

Hennepin County, Minnesota

Photographer: Andrew Schmidt

Date: October 1, 2005

Negative: GSA

View: interior, main lobby and stairwell.

Photo Number: MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice10.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 31

United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* interior, main lobby, corridor partition detail.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice11.tiff



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 32

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* interior, north-south corridor.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice12.tiff



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 33

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* interior, Entrance Lobby at north end of corridor, ceiling detail.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice13.tiff



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

Section Photos Page 34

*United States Post Office—Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota*

United States Post Office – Minneapolis  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

*Photographer:* Andrew Schmidt

*Date:* October 1, 2005

*Negative:* GSA

*View:* interior, Entrance lobby at north end of corridor.

*Photo Number:* MN\_HennepinCounty\_PostOffice14.tiff

