

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 19 1986
DATE ENTERED 1/24/86

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Delta Post Office and Federal Building
AND/OR COMMON
Delta Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
360 Meeker Street
CITY, TOWN
Delta
STATE
Colorado
VICINITY OF
~~NA~~
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
3
COUNTY
Delta
CODE
029

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
United States Postal Service, Western Regional Office
STREET & NUMBER
850 Cherry Ave.
CITY, TOWN
San Bruno
STATE
CA
VICINITY OF
~~NA~~
94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Delta County Assessor
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Delta County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
5th and Palmer Streets
CITY, TOWN
Delta
STATE
CO 81416

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
None Known.
DATE
____ FEDERAL ____ STATE ____ COUNTY ____ LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Delta Main Post Office is a rectangular, two story flat roofed structure. The architectural form of the building is typical of "Starved Classicism" design common to Post Offices of the late 1930s. The front facade is symmetrical, with the entrance in the center of the elevation flanked on either side by two windows.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Delta is an agricultural center with peaches and apples being the major products. The area was first settled by Antione Robidoux, a trapper who built a fort near Delta in 1830. It was later destroyed by Utes. The present town dates from the coming of the railroad in the late-1800s. Delta is named for the lowlands at the confluence of the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers near which it is located.

The Post Office is located one block east of the principal commercial street in Delta in the northwestern portion of the community. It is removed from other governmental buildings.

The original topographic survey dated 11/10/35 indicates that there was a frame house with a concrete foundation on the site. A note on the survey states that it was removed by the owner. There are no known archaeologic or paleontologic sites within or adjacent to the site. Additional subsurface investigation does not appear to be warranted. Basement construction has probably eliminated any trace of previous structures.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building appears to be in excellent condition and both it and the grounds are being well maintained.

The building is constructed of tan brick with a concrete foundation. It has a flat composition roof, a linoleum floor in the workroom, and a tile floor with tile wainscoting in the lobby. The steps leading to the second floor are terrazzo. The marble exterior detailing appears to be from the Marble, Colorado quarry, located approximately 75 miles to the northeast of Delta. Marble observed on several other post offices in Colorado; (e.g., Rocky Ford, Las Animas, and Gunnison) may also be from this quarry. The front steps are granite.

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The structure is rectangular, with the front entrance facing west. The building is two stories with a full basement; floor plans are attached.

Notable features of the Delta Post Office include; three large marble panels each with the same Art Deco-inspired flora relief in the middle; original iron lamps flanking the front entrance; marble detailing consisting of molding band, parapet band, and window sills. There is fluted oak paneling in the lobby, as well as two carved or cast panels done by Mary B. Kittredge in 1942. These panels depict cattle and figures of what appear to be aboriginal inhabitants of the area.

The Delta Main Post Office exhibits a basic design common to combined Post Offices and Federal Buildings of the period. It does not have a court room as many such buildings do. The building is a particularly well conceived example of the "Starved Classicism" architectural style, and contains detailing of fine wood and marble, which is quite uncommon for the period.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1938

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

OSA/Louis A. Simon, Sup Arch.
Harry B. Carter, Consulting Arch.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although the Delta Main Post Office is not yet 50 years old, it possesses exceptional significance on the local level as Delta's sole example of the Starved Classical design, the only major building constructed in Delta (public or private) during the Depression, and as a manifestation of the federal presence during a period of national economic emergency. Further, the building has statewide significance as a rare example of the use of Starved Classical design in the Neo-Classical tradition for a post office.

ARCHITECTURE

As the county seat of Delta County, the city possesses public buildings representing local, county, state and federal governments. These buildings include a variety of architectural styles and span the era of the city's primary growth through the late 1950s. The major growth period from which Delta's downtown and public buildings date includes the early 1900s and the 1920s. As a result of the Depression, no major construction took place during the 1930s. The city hall, a two story brick, Beaux-Arts vernacular building was constructed in 1910 as the Delta National Bank. This was followed in 1911 by the single-story brick and sandstone Public Library. The two story Romanesque Revival brick Colorado National Guard Armory, located to the rear of the post office was constructed in 1921 (now used as a church). Finally, the present County Courthouse was constructed in 1958 (aluminum curtain wall construction). Not only is the Delta Post Office the only example of a public building in the community in the Starved Classical motif, it is the first and one of the few buildings influenced by the modern or International movement in the city.

With respect to its significance on the state level, it is the finest example of a Neo-Classical interpretation in the Starved Classic form in Colorado. The building is an almost archetypal example of Starved Classicism and retains substantial integrity of design, location, setting, feeling and aesthetic integrity. The use of a central, raised

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Delta Independent various articles January 1935-August 1938

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY + .50 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 2	7 5, 4 7, 6, 0	4, 9 9, 18, 8, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 17 through 32; Block 3; original Delta Townsite.
(see attached maps)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA	NA	NA	NA
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA	NA	NA	NA

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Paul R. Secord, Vice President/H. James Kolva

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Beland/Associates, Inc./Institute for Urban & Local Studies Aug 1984/Aug 85

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

16 S. Oakland Ave. Suite #204/W. 705 1st Ave. (818) 796-8093 / (509) 458-6219

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Pasadena / Spokane

CA 91101 / WA 99204

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Barbara Sudler

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Director, Office of Real Estate

DATE

December 17, 1985

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

See Continuation sheet for listing DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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entrance was characteristic of post office construction throughout the first four decades of this century, and is found in strongly Beaux-Arts classical buildings as well as later Italianate and Starved Classical buildings. The scale, proportion and vertical emphasis provided by two-storied marble panel demarking the central entry and flanking window bays provide a monumental quality that is not found in the 17 or so post offices constructed in Colorado after 1933. Though Starved Classicism was used extensively in these buildings, the designs are typically anonymous and lack the fine execution of the Delta Post Office

Also of note is the display of fine craftsmanship in an otherwise typical lobby. Typically detailing the lobbies of this late-1930 period was utilitarian with little attention to detail (as the case in other Colorado examples). The Delta lobby includes unusually well crafted (for even the pre-1920 buildings) oak molding around the post office box insets and built-in heavy marble writing stands. The woodwork is executed in a reed motif for both the molding and paneled insets.

ECONOMICS/POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Although it is unlikely that the construction of the post office made a noticeable impact on the local economy during the Depression, the building represents a decade during which little or no major construction was taking place in the community. According to Esther Stephens, a local historian who was raised in Delta during the Depression era, nothing was being constructed locally and the construction of the post office was a major event of the decade. The building also symbolized the effort of the federal government in its helping hand to depressed areas, particularly to an area that had traditionally been at odds with the federal government over the use of the vast public lands for lumbering and grazing. Congressman Edward Taylor who was instrumental in finally getting a post office for Delta was a strong influence in other federal programs designed to aid the agricultural economy.

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The procurement of the post office was a major local event, one that involved intensive lobbying by the local Chamber of Commerce. Although the possibility of a federal building had been alive since the beginning of the decade it was not until 1935 that hope again prevailed. On July 12, 1935, The Delta Independent reported that the Chamber had received a letter from the Fourth Postmaster General that Delta was being given careful consideration of a building. Senator Edward P. Costigan had also replied that he would provide assistance. When the Independent reported that bids had been called for the site on August 23rd, it was stated: "At last Delta is certain to have a new federal building..."

On February 29, 1936, the Independent reported a notice from Representative Taylor that the plans for the federal buildings were being formed. Finally, the selection of a site by the federal government "brought new encouragement to Delta residents." (Independent May 22). During the month of June news accounts centered on the efforts of the Chamber to reorient the front of the building from 4th Street to Meeker Street, Representative Taylor's assistance, the decision to drop the effort so as not to delay construction or increase cost and, finally, the government's decision to make the change (19th and 26th).

A year passes, before encouraging news was received about the post office. A July 20, 1937 article reported that bids would be called and an additional \$45,000 was under request. "Delta's dreams for a new post office building moved a step nearer realization.." "...looking forward to this event for a number of years." After the disappointment of the previous year when construction bids were rejected as being too high, Taylor's effort to secure additional appropriation had apparently been successful. Work on the building finally began in September 1937 and proceeded through 1938 with an expected dedication in July or August. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had been invited to the dedication ceremony and it was hoped that he would make a stop in Delta on his trip through the west. However, a July 8, 1938 article reported

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that a letter from F.D.R. had been received by Theodore Douglas, president of the Chamber, in which the President stated he could not attend. Finally, the building was dedicated on August 11, 1938, in "an impressive ceremony" befitting a public building.

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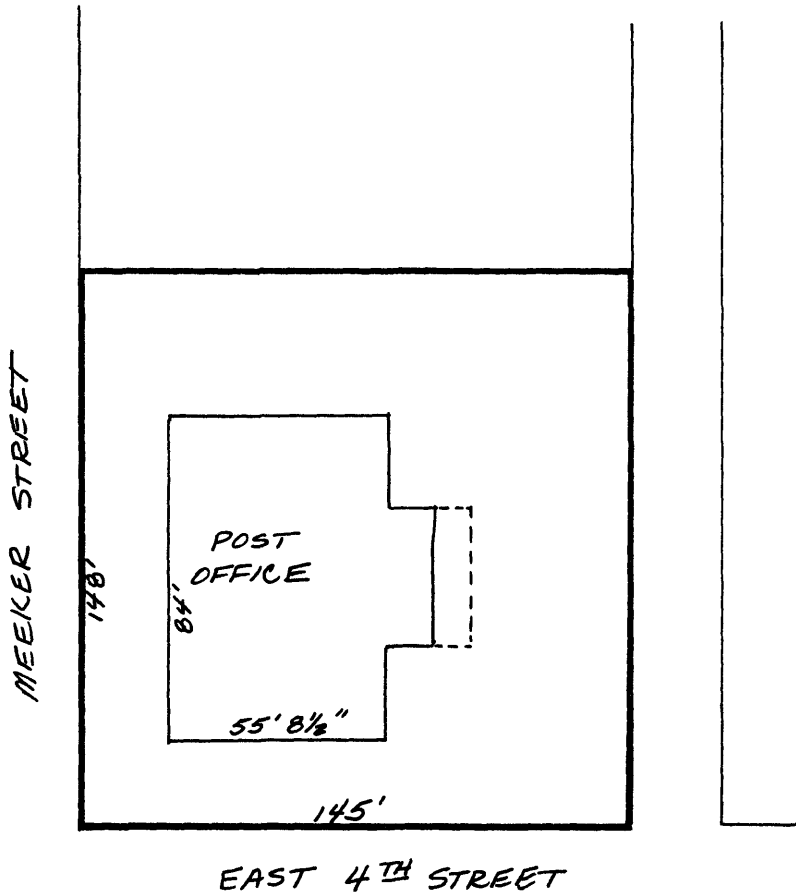
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CONTINUATION SHEET Delta MPO ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Source: Sanborn Map, Delta, Colorado,
May 1930, page 2.



1" = ± 50'