

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:

Massachusetts

COUNTY:

Suffolk

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

APR 26 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:

The Ames Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

Same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

One Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston, Massachusetts

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

9th

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Suffolk

CODE

025

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
(Check One)

- ☐ District ☒ Building
☐ Site ☐ Structure
☐ Object

OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Public
☒ Private
☐ Both

Public Acquisition:

- ☐ In Process
☐ Being Considered

STATUS

- ☒ Occupied
☐ Unoccupied
☐ Preservation work
in progress

ACCESSIBLE
TO THE PUBLIC

- Yes:
☐ Restricted
☐ Unrestricted
☒ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park
☒ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious
☐ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific

☐ Transportation☒ Other (Specify)☐ Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Zoppo Enterprises Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:

One Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Suffolk County Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

Pemberton Square

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DATE OF SURVEY:

☐ Federal☒ State☐ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Massachusetts Historical Commission (617) 727-8470

STREET AND NUMBER:

40 Beacon Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

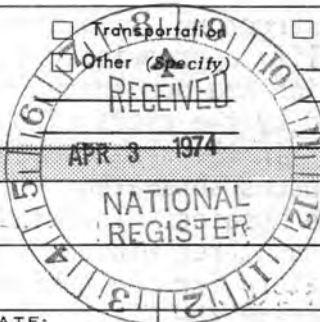
STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
MassachusettsCOUNTY:
Suffolk

APR 26 1974

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☒ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

✓ The Ames Building, a thirteen story granite and brick structure, is located at the corner of Washington Mall and Court Streets. It is 196 feet high from sidewalk to the roofline. The three story base of huge granite blocks quarried in Milford, Massachusetts, carries a ten story super-structure which on the Washington and Court Street facades is Ohio sandstone and is brick on the intra-block walls. The first eight floors of the superstructure are bisected in a five story arcaded section and a three story rectilinear section each having four bays on the Court Street facade and three bays on the Washington Mall facade. The two story attic is capped by a heavy cornice with an extreme projecting profile which emphasizes the flat roof.

The lower floors combine a basement level of battered wall-bearing blocks pierced by large square windows. Above was the principle banking floor, which were lit by three monumental arches on both facades, and, finally, a small continuous arcaded story. An elaborately carved stringcourse (imitating a cornice) with complete return separates the base from the superstructure. Carved ornamentation is limited to the extrados of the arcade and intrados of the large arches. The entrance, on Court Street is recessed under the central arch and has elaborate stonework.

The superstructure has a strong vertical thrust (a counterpoint to the horizontality appropriated to its basement) created by massive corner piers, which are penetrated by a single rectangular window at each floor, and by the piers of the arcade and are repeated by clustered colonettes in the upper section. Within each bay of the arcade are double windows separated by a slender colonette. In the spandrels are polychrome mosaics. The window rhythm quickens in the upper section; each bay has three windows with colonnette mullions; the rhythm visually is preparatory for the horizontality of the attic. Polychrome mosaic bands separate the floors of the upper section. A projecting continuous stringcourse separates the attic from the lower floors. Immediately above the string course is a continuous arcade of small windows. The elaborate cornice is carried on ornate stone corbels between which are the small top story windows.

✓ Inside the building, the walls of the first floor were of marble as was the monumental stairway that once stood there. These stairs led up to the two-story high banking room, the most important room of the building, now divided into two working floors. The motifs of the Byzantine-Romanesque carvings on the outside of the building are repeated inside in mosaic work. The back stairways are elaborately designed iron forms, and were once paved and wainscotted in marble. The four elevators of the building formerly were finished in oak and iron of unique pattern. Many of the doors remain, and these are made of a dark wood, decorated with delicate molding around the panels. The door knobs were oval-shaped with a fancy "A" embossed on the surface.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Suffolk

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

APR 26 1974

(Number all entries)

Ames Building, Boston, Massachusetts

7. Description (cont.)

In 1952 the existing wooden front doors were replaced with new extruded aluminum doors. The ground floor has been severely altered; on the other floors the most major change has been the removal of the terra cotta partitions in some of the offices which were replaced with sheet rock and stud partitions.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1889

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ames Building in Boston is the work of the firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, the immediate successors of Henry Hobson Richardson. The designs of the Ames Building include some of Richardson's more popularized forms and details such as the Romanesque arch, the delicate ornaments, polychromy, and the use of rich materials. The boldly cut cornice has pronounced Italian antecedents, thus, the design of the building can be seen as a compromise between Richardsonian Romanesque and the increasingly favored Italian Renaissance Revival.

The Ames Building was Boston's first skyscraper and represents one solution to the increasing demand for office space which was produced by the heightened business activity of Boston in the last decades of the 1800's. In order to build the thirteen stories, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge made use of the newest developments in elevator operations by installing a hydraulic plunger, whose pistons were extended 126 feet down into rock.

The Ames Building is a typical example of American elevator architecture. Because of its immense height (for its time) and ornate design, it was one of the most distinguished buildings in Boston in the 1890's. It was described by Montgomery Schuyler as impressive and dignified and a most successful example of the adaption of Romanesque to an extreme requirement of elevator building. The Ames Building remains an example of the Richardsonian style of commercial architecture and a symbol of Boston's growing economy and active business life in the nineteenth century.

It is interesting to note that the Ames Building is adjacent to the Government Center Urban Renewal Project. In the developer's kit prepared for the parcel immediately adjacent, Parcel 9, the design objectives included specific mention of the Ames Building: "The developer should carefully relate his design to this structure (Ames Building) since they stand in contiguous relationship to each other." The new building's architect, Edwardo Catalano, did, indeed, respect the Ames Building.

6/8/82

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cohn, Amy, "The Ames Building: Boston's First Skyscraper," unpublished paper, Boston University, 1968.
 Damrell, Charles, A Half-Century of Boston's Buildings, Boston: Louis P. Hager, 1895.
 Forbes, J.D., "Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbot, Architects: An Introduction", Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, vol. XVII, Fall, 1958.
 Schuyler, Montgomery, "The Romanesque Revival in America", Architectural Record, vol. I, 1891-92.
 Boston Globe, July 2, 1889

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE					
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	42°	21'	32.23"	71° 03' 30.74"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"				
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"				
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 6233 square feet less than one

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: <u>Elizabeth Amadon, Survey Director</u>		by <u>Boston Landmarks Commission</u>	
ORGANIZATION <u>Massachusetts Historical Commission</u>		DATE <u>December 1973</u>	
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>40 Beacon Street</u>			
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Boston</u>	STATE <u>Massachusetts</u>	CODE <u>025</u>	

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name John F. X. Davoren
 Title Honorable John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission

Date

3/22/74

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

4/26/74

ATTEST:

Keeper of the National Register

Date

4.24.74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UTM Ref Wm 9-22-73
 19/330460/4691460

PROPERTY

The Ames Building

STATE

Mass.

WORKING NUMBER

4.3.74.522

TECH REVIEW

PHOTOS

2

MAPS

*2**Suffolk*

CONTROL REVIEW

#10 Acreage is missing

Cm

*4.4.**74**otherwise*

OK

HISTORIAN

*Nice**Accept
W.R. Luce
4/5/74*

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

*An important building - accept.**Hazard
4/5/74*

ARCHEOLOGIST

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

*Accept
Cole
4-12-74*

BRANCH CHIEF

*Beautiful -**accept
Hunt
4-24-74*

KEEPER

*W. Luce
4/24/74*

National Register Write-up

6-10-74

Send-back

Federal Register entry

June 4, 1974

Re-submit

Entered

APR 26 1974



FORM 10-301 A
(6/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME

COMMON

Ames Building

AND/OR HISTORIC

same

NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)

APR 26 1974

2. LOCATION

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Suffolk

TOWN

Boston

STREET AND NUMBER

One Court Street

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Boston Redevelopment Authority 1968

DATE

NEGATIVE FILED AT

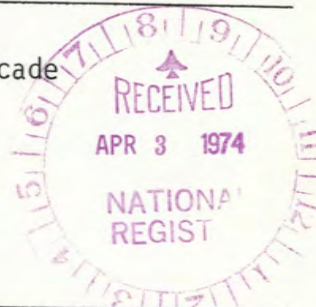
Boston Redevelopment Authority
City Hall, Boston, Mass.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View looking north from Washington Street towards Court Street facade

#1 of 2 photos



GPO 932-009

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME

COMMON

Ames Building

AND/OR HISTORIC

same

NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)

APR 26 1974

2. LOCATION

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Suffolk

TOWN

Boston

STREET AND NUMBER

One Court Street

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Boston Redevelopment Authority

DATE

1968

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Boston Redevelopment Authority
City Hall, Boston, Mass.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View of upper stories, Court Street facade to left, Washington Place facade to right, looking towards northwest.

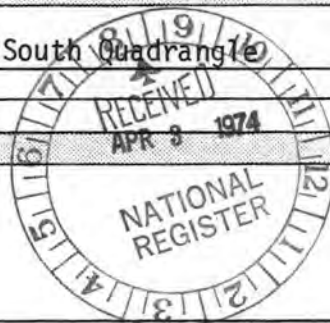
#2 of 2 photos

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Suffolk	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER APR 26 1974	DATE

1. NAME			
COMMON: Ames Building			
AND/OR HISTORIC: same			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: One Court Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Boston			
STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	COUNTY: Suffolk	CODE 025
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U.S. Geological Survey, 7.5 minute series, Boston South Quadrangle			
SCALE: 1" = 24,000'			
DATE: 1970			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			



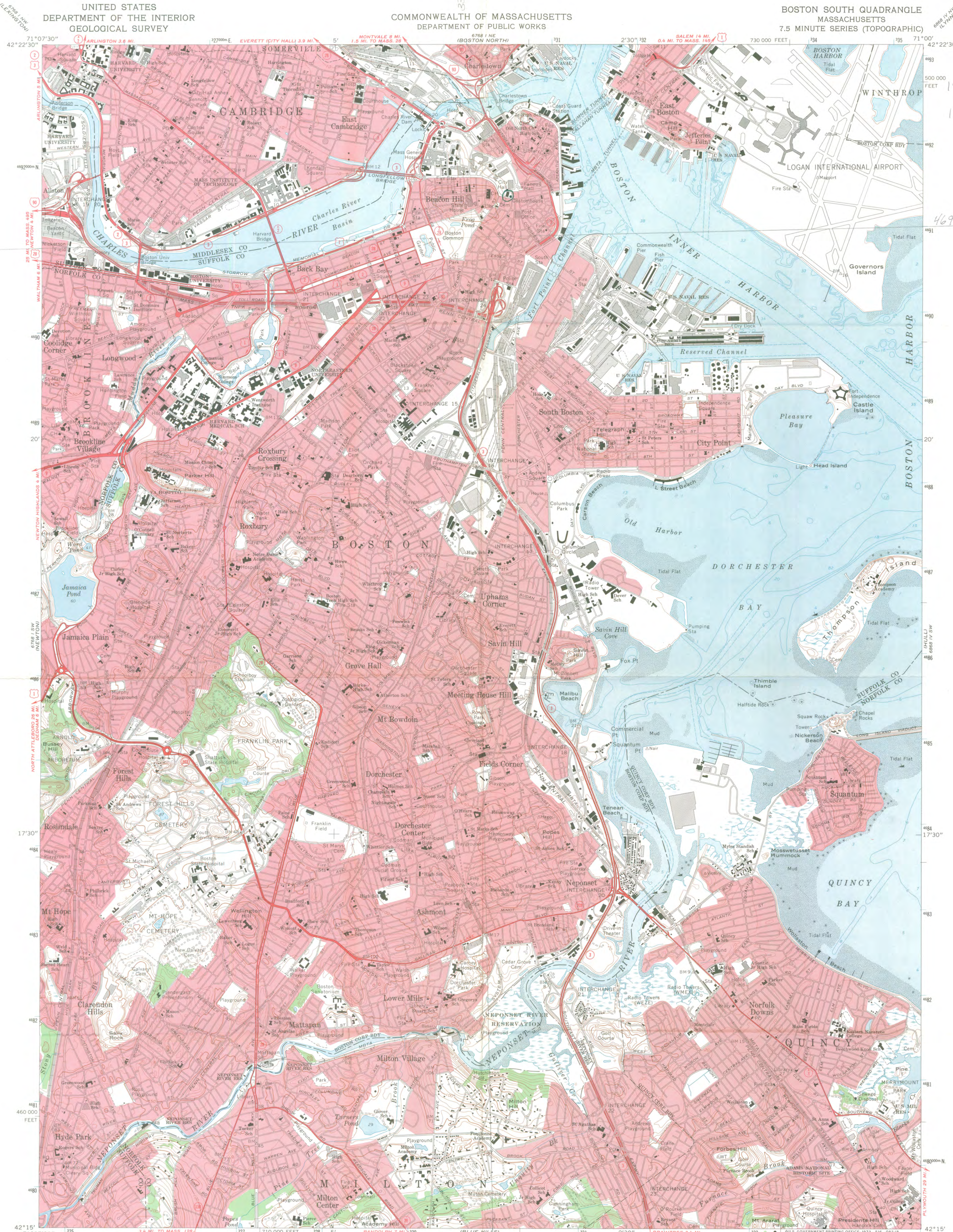
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

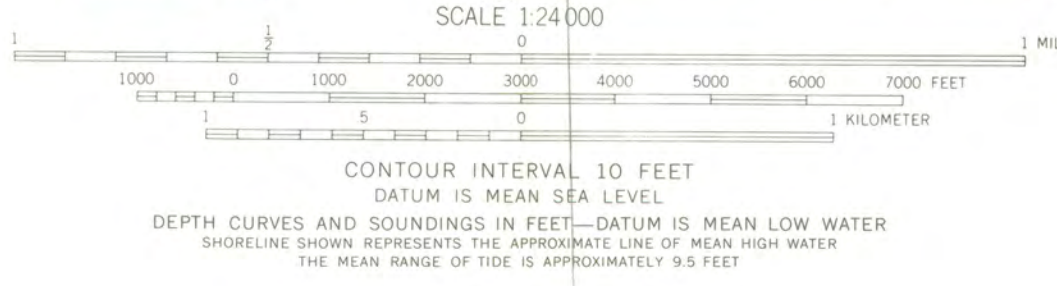
BOSTON SOUTH QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

AMES Bldg.
UTM REF
922-75 Wm
19/330460
19/4691460



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 246
and 248 (1971). This information is not intended for navigational
purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route
Light duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

BOSTON SOUTH, MASS.
N4215-W7100/7.5
1970
AMS 6768 I SE-SERIES V814

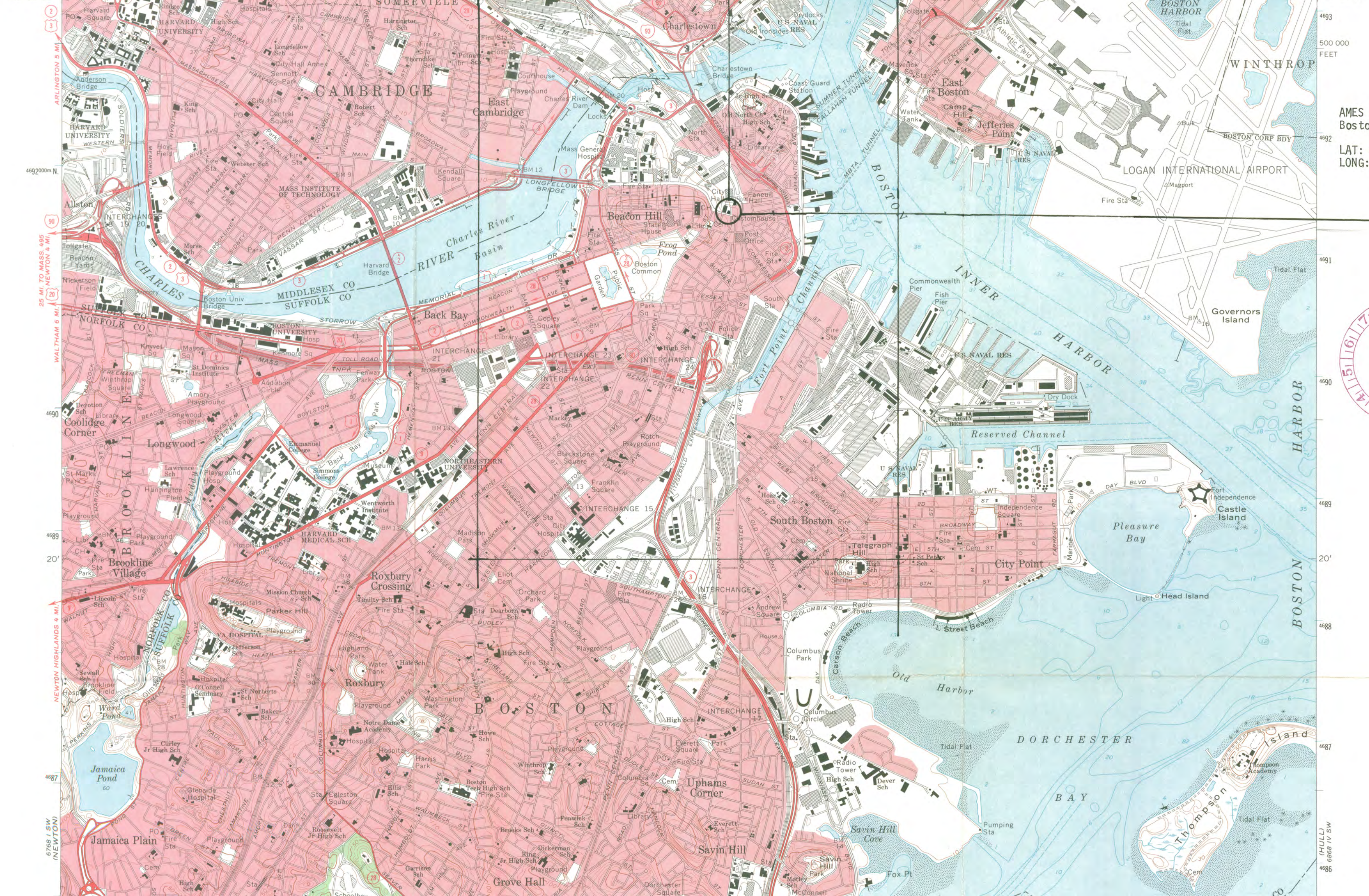
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

BOSTON SOUTH QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6768 1 NW (LEXINGTON) 71°07'30" 42°22'30" 3270000 E. EVERETT (CITY HALL) 3.9 MI. 1.5 MI. TO MASS. 28 MONTVALE 8 MI. 1.5 MI. TO MASS. 28 6768 1 NE (BOSTON NORTH) 331 2'30" 332 0.4 MI. TO MASS. 145 SALEM 14 MI. 730 000 FEET 1956 71°00' 42°22'30" 6868 1 V NW (LYNN)

AMES BUILDING
Boston, Massachusetts
LAT: 42° 21' 32.23"
LONG: 71° 03' 30.74"



Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Suffolk

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

APR 26 1974

1. NAME

COMMON: Ames Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

One Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Suffolk

CODE

025

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

Boston Redevelopment Authority

SCALE: 1" = 100'

DATE: June 1965

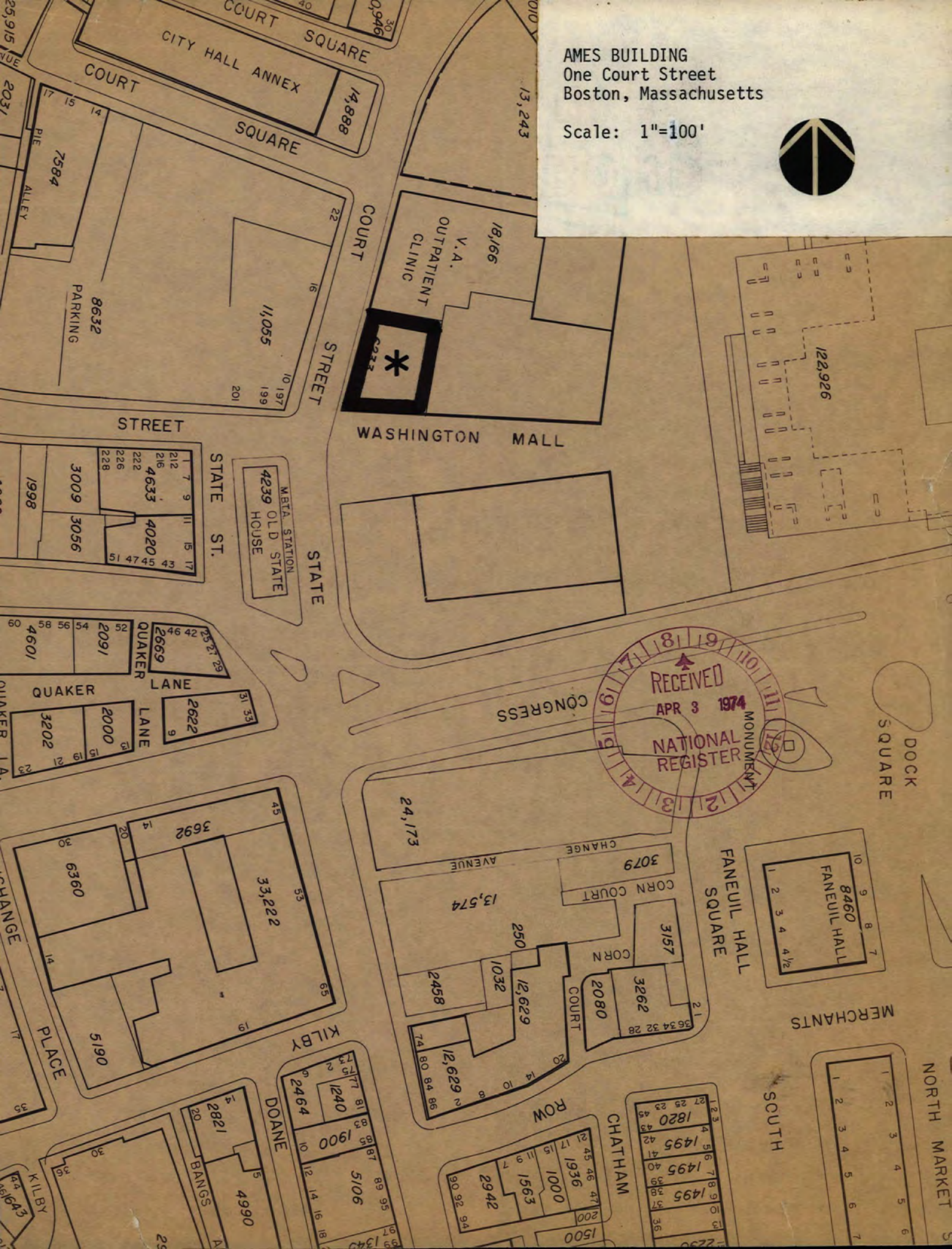
4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE **MASSACHUSETTS**

Date Entered **APR 26 1974**

Name

Location

The Ames Building

**Boston
Suffolk County**

Pierce House

**Boston (Dorchester)
Suffolk County**

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy

Hon. Edward W. Brooke

Hon. John J. Moakley

Hon. James A. Burke

**Regional Director, North Atlantic
Region**

State Historic Preservation Officer

Hon. John F. X. Davoren

Secretary of the Commonwealth

**Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission**

40 Beacon Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02108

PR

MMott 4/26/74