

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received OCT 9 1986

date entered NOV 19 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Casa Alcaldía de Ponce (City Hall)

and or common Same

**2. Location**

street & number South, Las Delicias Square

N/A not for publication

city, town Ponce

vicinity of N/A

state Puerto Rico

code 072

county Ponce

code 0760

**3. 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 checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Ponce Municipal Government

street & number South, Las Delicias square

city, town Ponce

vicinity of N/A

state Puerto Rico

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds, Ponce

street & number Ponce Government Center, Las Américas Avenue

city, town Ponce

state Puerto Rico

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Ponce has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date July, 1984  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town San Juan

state Puerto Rico

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Casa Alcaldía de Ponce (Ponce City Hall) is an attached, plastered masonry structure at the south side of the Plaza Degetau, occupying a lot at the center of the block between Calle Marina and Calle Cristina. The building's neoclassical austerity and strong symmetrical character are typical of the civil architecture of the Spanish 19th century.

The main facade consists of two storeys, divided into five bays: a three-bay central section flanked by and only slightly projecting single-bay section on either side.

At the ground level, a very distinctive feature of the City Hall is the continuous, projecting water table which creates the appearance of a fortification wall. The central entrance consists of a wide rectangular void, framed by an elliptical archivolt molding. This composition is emphasized by a frontispiece consisting of flanking pairs of banded pilasters supporting decorative brackets which, in turn, support a balustered balcony accessed through the second level.

The single bay sections have smooth rustication only at the ground floor, terminating at a continuous string course which divides this level from the upper.

All openings other than the main entrance and the second and fourth bays at ground level are articulated with full-height, wooden, double doors with louvre panels. The central entrance houses decorative, wrought-iron railings and its flanking windows begin at a height of approximately four feet. At the upper level bays, baluster rails create balconettes. Planar surrounds frame the window openings, extending above to incorporate separate architrave moldings.

A continuous cornice and parapet extend across the facade. A pedimented frontispiece composed of a clock, flanked by pairs of small pairs of Tuscan pilasters, capped by an entablature and supported at either side by a scroll element emphasizes the central bay above the running cornice. In addition, a weather vane rises up above the pediment, further strengthening the symmetrical quality of the facade.

## 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	History	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1846

**Builder/Architect** Spanish Royal Corps of Engineers

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

By 1848, the population of the settlement at Ponce had grown sufficiently to merit recognition as a city by Queen Isabel II of Spain. The construction of the City Hall coincides with this decree, thus qualifying the building as a landmark to the founding of Ponce.

As the first governmental structure of the city, the building incorporates elements designed to display its authoritative role. In fact, the design is contemporary to the 1848 addition to the Royal Palace (La Fortaleza) of San Juan and displays defensive, military characteristics, such as the buttressed street wall, similar to those of the Fortaleza. Most importantly, the vocabulary utilized is purely "Neoclásico Isabelino" of the Spanish 19th century, representative of the works performed by the Royal Corps of Engineers of Spain and satisfying the demands of the growing aristocratic population of Ponce.

According to the Laws of the Indies, established in the 16th century to regulate the colonization of towns in the Americas, a settlement was to be planned around a central plaza, with the Holy Catholic church facing westward and the town hall or "Cabildo" (seat of government power) either opposite or adjacent, emphasizing the major and joint role of the church and state in Hispanic society. Located at the southern fringe of the plaza, at the center of the block between Calle Marina and Calle Cristina, the City Hall dominates the street wall between buildings of similar character and demonstrates faithfully the Spanish concept of the urban plaza. Although the interior has been altered during the 20th century in response to the growing needs of the municipal government, the exterior has maintained its individual and contextual integrity. Along with the Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Guadalupe, in the town plaza, the City Hall forms an essential element of the urban concept of Plaza in Ponce, a Spanish-Colonial town flourishing during the 19th century.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Brau, Salvador, Historia de Ponce, Ponce, Puerto Rico, 1908

La Gran Enciclopedia de Puerto Rico, Vol XIX, ed. Rumbo, Madrid 1976

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Ponce

Quadrangle scale 1:20000

UTM References

A 

1	9	7	5	2	6	0	0	1	9	9	3	1	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification Alcaldía de Ponce (City Hall)

The property is bounded to the North, 27.16 mtrs., by Villa and Comercio streets; to the South, 27.10 meters, by Luna Street; to the West, 75.00 mtrs, by the properties of Moscoso Brothers and a lot owned by Mario Mercado Succession (Estate); and to the East, 79.10 mtrs.,

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries See enclosed location Plan.

state NA code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Félix Julián del Campo /State Historian

Puerto Rico

organization State Historic Preservation Office date May, 1986

street & number Box 82, La Fortaleza telephone (809) 721-2676/721-3737

city or town San Juan state Puerto Rico

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Mariano G. Coronas Caceres

title State Historic Preservation Office date August, 1986

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

Amy Schlegel

date 11/19/86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Continuation sheet Casa Alcaldía de Ponce  
(City Hall)

Item number 10

Page 1

(verbal boundary description and justification, cont.)

by the properties Sánchez Frasuero Succession (Estate) and a lot owned by Ponce Municipal Government.