PS Form 10-900 (Rev. Aug. 2002)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

RECEIVED 2280 OMB No 1024-0018 (Expires 1-31-2009) JUN 28 2013

National Register of Historic Places Registration Formonal Park Service

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 any contraction and supply to the property being documented. For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

complete all items.					
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Other names/site numb	oer U.S. Appraisers Stores an	nd Immigration Build	ling, Appraisers Bu	ilding	
2. Location					
Street & Number 63	0 Sansome Street			Not for Publication	N/A
City or Town Sa	n Francisco			Vicinity	N/A
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Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 7 Continuation Sheets.

8. Statemen	t of Significance					
Applicable Register list		nore boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National				
х А	x A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.					
В	Property is associated with the lives of persons	significant in our past.				
c		s of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the ues, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose				
D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield informa	tion important in prehistory or history.				
Criteria Cor	nsiderations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)					
Α	owned by a religious institution or used for religi	ous purposes.				
В	removed from its original location.					
_ c	a birthplace or a grave.					
C D E F G	a cemetery.					
— Е	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.					
— F	a commemorative property.					
G	less than 50 years of age or achieved significan	ce within the past 50 years.				
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•	ks, articles, and other sources used in preparing the Section 9 Continuation Sheets.	this form on one or more continuation sheets.)				
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Name of re	epository: G.S.A. Regional Office 450 Golden G	ate Avenue, San Francisco				

Number

City or Town

450 Golden Gate Avenue

San Francisco

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Name	e/Title	Portia Lee,	Architectural Histo	rian, and David	d Greenw	ood, pho	tographer		
Orga	nization	ICF Jones					April 3, 20	st 18, 2009,	_
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 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.

State

CA

Zip Code

94102

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 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.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station San Francisco County, California

Description

Summary Description

The sixteen story U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, now known as the Appraisers Building, is a structural steel and reinforced concrete structure clad in concrete panels above a granite base that extends around three sides of the building. Located at 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, California, the building occupies the western half of the block bounded by Washington, Jackson, Sansome and Battery streets. The primary (west) elevation fronts on Sansome Street; the secondary elevations are on Washington and Jackson streets and the rear (east) elevation is situated on Custom House Place, a government-owned alley that separates the Appraiser's and Immigration Building from the adjoining U.S. Customs House (1911). Rising in steps as it ascends, the building presents a rectangular shape for Floors 1-4 and 15-16, varied by a C shape design for floors 5-14. Multiple roofs are flat with parapet walls.

Designed in 1939 by architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood acting as consultant to the Public Buildings Administration (PBA) of the Federal Works Agency, the building had designated tenants by 1940, but wartime shortages of material and manpower delayed its completion until 1944. The building's exterior composition is an austere and restrained example of the Public Works Administration (PWA) Art Moderne building style favored for public structures in the 1930s; the main building entrance and elevator lobbies exhibit the influence of the Art Moderne style.

The Appraisers Stores and Immigration Building was purpose-built for two government operations: storage and appraisal for customs evaluation, and temporary housing for new immigrant arrivals awaiting entry processing. The first four floors were allotted to the appraisal and valuations process; floors ten through thirteen, sixteen and seventeen, together with roof areas, housed the activities of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. Floors between these areas were allotted to other government offices.

Original interior features of the building include main lobby ornamentation of Montana travertine; elevator lobbies faced with cream-colored ceramic tile and terrazzo floors in public spaces. The wood paneled fourth floor immigration court room and judge's chambers remain intact as does the corridor configuration. This space was recently rehabilitated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. On the exterior, the original granite surround and American eagle carved in granite remain in place at the main entrance. Original loading docks on the east side of the building are still in place. Steel double hung sash windows and porcelain enamel spandrel panels above the first floor are also original.

Alterations to the building include the replacement of the building's original terra cotta panels and granite base due to extensive water damage behind the cladding. Beginning in 1986, a modernization plan was undertaken that narrowed the corridors to increase assignable tenant space. The main entrance was modified for handicapped access, which eliminated the original vestibule. Parapets were originally pierced with ceramic grilles for views to the outside. In 1986, these were replaced with precast elements approximating the same design, cast and installed along with the new exterior wall panels in 1987-1988. Window frames at the first floor were changed at the same time from steel to aluminum.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Exterior

Design Plan

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is rectangular in plan, 275 x 125 feet, with floors one through four occupying the entire site at the base. Massing on the upper floors is an architectural composition of three setbacks: the fifth through twelfth floors are an elongated 'C'-shaped mass with a light court facing Custom House Place; the twelfth through fourteen floors are also 'C'-shaped in massing with the wings shorter than those of the floors below and re-entrant angles occurring at the intersection of the corridor legs; the fifteenth and sixteenth floors are rectangular in plan, set back on the east, north and south. The corner setbacks above the twelfth floor and the setbacks above the thirteenth and fourteenth floors emphasize the geometric modeling of the upper section of the structure.

Floors are served from a bank of six passenger elevators in the lobby adjacent to the main entrance, which occurs at the midpoint of the building's Sansome Street elevation. Offices and other spaces are accessed from central, double-loaded corridors leading from the elevator lobby on each floor. Stairways are located at both ends of the main north-south section of the corridor

Elevations

A one story high base creates a strong horizontal division at the ground floor level, extending around the three street frontages (Washington, Jackson, and Sansome), turning the corners at the rear façade and ending at the rear elevation (Custom House Place). In contrast, on the main elevations vertical bands of window bays alternate with formed spandrels to emphasize the height of the building. The central section of the Sansome Street elevation presents nine bays with two windows in each bay. This section is flanked by bays which contain a single window and are set one foot back from the central section. The Washington and Jackson Street elevations are similar, although the central section has three bays with two windows per bay. Above the first floor level, double hung sash windows and spandrel panels on the building are original porcelain enamel on steel. First floor replacement windows are aluminum dating from 1988.

At the east, Custom House Place, elevation, loading and receiving docks occupy almost the entire length of the first floor base. They are surmounted by a long metal canopy and four story high glass and metal screen wall that originally enclosed warehouse space. The screen wall alternates steel awning windows and metal panels similar to other windows and transoms of the building. The existing roof of the fourth floor is an empty surface, a space accessed through a window-door and steel stairs from the fifth floor elevator lobby that was originally an exercise yard for detainees. The elevation recedes at the sixth floor level to make the light court.

Ornament

The absence of applied exterior ornament on the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is in harmony with the austere design of architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood and the principles of simplified classicism that characterize the Art Moderne style. The single applied exterior decoration consisted of small ceramic grilles embossed in a stylized geometric pattern. The ceramic grilles, which were replaced with precast recreations, appear at the top of the building just below the roof parapet walls. Underwood is quoted in an article in *Architect and Engineer* in November 1936 commenting on the architectural style of the structure: "The design follows the straightforward lines

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station San Francisco County, California

of contemporary architecture in which the building relies on a subtle effect of voids and solids, pure ornament being held at a minimum."

Original Cladding

Original cladding on the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station was a ceramic veneer, described by the manufacturer Gladding McBean & Company as a "modernization of hand-made terra cotta." The material, essentially extruded terra cotta blocks glazed in a "Granitex" finish, colored to match the granite surface of the neighboring United States Custom House, faced the entire U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station from the first story to a coping at the top of the building. Blocks were anchored to vertical rods approximately 1 inch from the wall by means of tail-on-loop dowels imbedded in the concrete of the wall. Pieces varied in size, reaching a maximum of 47 inches in length to a maximum of 30 inches in height.²

Alterations

Cladding

At the time of construction, the cladding was considered to be as durable as stone facing, and original drawings called for the material to be waterproofed. However, leakage began within a decade of construction and became progressively worse over time. In the early 1980s, the U.S. General Services Administration commissioned the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, San Francisco, to assess the performance of the exterior wall and present a variety of replacement strategies. The alteration proposed substituting pre-cast concrete panels with a larger unit size to replace the original terra cotta, with care taken to score the new material to resemble the divisions of the original blocks. The design of the base of the building, which had been a ceramic veneer over a low granite base, was proposed as alternating bands of honed and polished granite for the full height of the base. This redesign program was carried out. The ornamental ceramic grilles were replaced in their original positions and designs with precast replacements after the re-cladding. The work began in 1985 and was finished in 1988.³

Entrance

The main entrance to the building pierces the Sansome Street facade about midway along the frontage. Originally characterized by a wide, grey granite surround with polished black granite jambs, a carved eagle by architectural sculptors Lombard and Ludwig and an interior vestibule, the entryway was reconfigured for emergency and handicapped access, widening the entry opening. As originally built, entry doors led directly into a vestibule with its own set of doors leading into the lobby. In the 1988 renovation, a new entrance was constructed, eliminating the original interior vestibule and two large adjacent closets. At the present time, two sets of doors are used to create a high ceiling space inside the entry doors which exhibits the original salmon-colored terrazzo floor area with brass division strips, travertine wall cladding, marble baseboards and two wall-mounted building directories. A second set of doors leads into the lobby with a lowered ceiling at the elevators. The eagle was remounted above the exterior

⁴ Page and Turnbull, Supporting Material, 7-2.

¹ Frederick Calvin David, "Appraisers Building Faced with Ceramic Veneer," Architect and Engineer, November, 1936, 32. ² Ibid.

³ J. Gordon Turnbull, AIA, "U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station," Draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form found in: Page and Turnbull, Supporting Material for Determination of Eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station (San Francisco: U.S. General Services Administration, 1993).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station San Francisco County, California

doors which retain the original granite surround. A band of salmon terrazzo is visible on the floor within the inset entrance into the building.

Interior

Plan

The building is organized around a central elevator core, containing six passenger elevators that open into public elevator lobbies at all floors except the service areas. On the ground floor, the elevator lobby is located on axis with the main entrance, which is oriented perpendicular to the main leg of the 'C'-shaped first floor corridor. Stair wells are located at the intersections of the legs of the 'C'-shaped corridors. The interior spatial organization of the upper floors of the building corresponds to the structure's exterior geometric design plan.

First Floor Lobby

The building's entry lobby has retained a high degree of architectural integrity. Located at the first floor, directly off Sansome Street, it is the most important public interior space, exhibiting the style and materials of the Art Moderne and the late 1930s of the structure's design. When the building entrance was reconfigured, two lobby areas were created: a high ceiling space directly within the entry doors and an inner lobby with a lowered ceiling at the elevators. The spaces are divided from one another by two broad columns and a circulation path that cuts across the lobby to the elevators.

Distinctive features of the lobby are Montana travertine walls and salmon-colored terrazzo floors. Bronze elements include elevator doors with fretwork details, wall edge trim and grilles, a cove light trough and wall bulletin boards. A continuous back-lit bronze louvered band around the inner lobby above the elevator doors was the original light source for the lobby space which left the flat plaster ceiling uninterrupted. Recessed can lights are now installed on the restored plaster ceiling throughout the space to augment the back-lit louvered band.

Fourth Floor Courtroom

With the exception of changes in lighting, the U.S. Customs court on the fourth floor is substantially intact, conveying its original significance and judicial use. Windows set into deep recesses light the space from the west and doors open into it from the corridor and the adjacent judge's chamber. A small room measuring 22 feet x 36.5 feet, the courtroom features floor-to-ceiling book-matched walnut paneled walls with bronze separator strips. Detailing on the flat acoustical plaster ceiling includes a ribbed plaster band at the perimeter in the Moderne style.

Two elliptical coves are recessed into the ceiling at each end of the room which also has a ribbed plaster perimeter molding. Concealed perimeter fixtures originally threw indirect light onto the coves. However, the ceiling was altered to accommodate fluorescent lights with lenses set flush to the adjacent flat ceiling area. The original fixed judge's bench had a full height recessed wall section with curved bronze edge jambs behind it. It was subsequently altered by the placement of a travertine panel over the wood. A similar wall recess at the back of the courtroom retains the original bronze clock hands and numerals superimposed on the wood wall. This space was recently restored to its original condition in accordance with Secretary of the Interior Standards.

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station San Francisco County, California

Elevator Lobbies and Corridors

With the exception of alterations on floors twelve and thirteen, elevator lobbies of the U.S Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station are largely intact and typical on all other floors. Centrally located in the building, elevator lobbies are open to the north-south corridors that pass alongside their west ends. Lobbies below the fifth floor are contained within the building volume. At the fifth floor and above, the lobbies have windows facing east. All original elevator doors are hollow metal with a painted finish. Each of the original lobbies is finished with cream-colored ceramic panels that curve on walls as they turn into corridors. Floors of both the lobbies and corridors are a red-toned terrazzo with aluminum separator strips dividing the floors into a rectangular grid. A continuous flat plaster ceiling also extends from the lobbies into and throughout the corridors. Ceiling mounted fluorescent fixtures are now used instead of the original incandescent dome-shaped ceiling fixtures.

Corridors of the building have been substantially altered through their narrowing as part of the process of renovating the interior spaces, leaving only corridors one, four, and fourteen substantially unchanged. Alterations have also occurred to the office doors and walls on floors five, six, eight, ten, twelve, and thirteen. Original doors were typically half-panel with upper lights and brass knobs. Floors two and seven have had many of these doors recently replaced but have not undergone the corridor narrowing as present upon the above-mentioned floors. Original materials retained on floors two and seven include the terrazzo floors and the ceramic wall panels.

The twelfth floor elevator lobby and corridor and thirteenth floor corridor have renovated walls and floors. On the twelfth floor, new wall covering with wood trim and rubber base have replaced the ceramic with a terrazzo base that is characteristic of the original lobbies. The thirteenth floor corridor has been altered with similar wall covering, trim, and base. Floor areas have been covered with carpeting and the original ceiling is hidden by a suspended acoustical tile ceiling.

Tenant Spaces

Offices occupy the majority of building space in the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station. Some office locations are original, but most have been altered to accommodate changes in tenancy. Areas allotted to the building's original purposes, such as the Immigration Department dormitory and residential facilities located on floors eleven, twelve and fifteen, have been converted to office space. Original customs facilities, such as testing laboratories located on floors thirteen through fifteen, have also been removed and altered for office use.

Other tenant use areas are the interior receiving and loading areas on the first floor, and warehousing, holding and related general use areas on floors two through four. Situated within the original general warehousing area at the east side of the building, these areas are directly adjacent to the portion of the building enclosed by the glass and metal screen wall. All spaces are rough-finished utility areas not intended for use by the general public.

Toilet rooms of the building are situated off the corridors on each end of the public floors, typically one to the north and one to the south of each elevator lobby. Most have been altered by a modification of layout, removal or replacement of marble stall partitions, and changes in doors, walls, floors and fixtures. Some rooms have been modified for handicapped access. Original material can be found in some locations, but no toilet room appears completely intact. Generally toilet rooms are finished with ceramic tile, with floors exhibiting a 1" square mosaic tile with tile or marble wainscoting. Above the wainscot, walls are flat plaster. Many original porcelain ceramic fixtures remain in use.

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station San Francisco County, California

Building Service Areas

The basement, loft, upper penthouse, mezzanine and a portion of the sixteenth floor each contain custodial storage and mechanical spaces. As originally built, the building shared many of its mechanical systems with the neighboring U.S. Custom House, its neighbor on the east side of Custom House Place.

Four large freight elevators service the basement through fourth floors, originally designed for the U.S. Customs Service to transport freight to warehousing areas on each of these floors. Two smaller service areas located at the north ends of the building's corridors occur on all floors. Mechanical shafts and risers, as well as electrical and telephone equipment, are provided at each floor.

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Building
San Francisco County, California

Statement of Significance

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is eligible under Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for its association with events that have made an important contribution to the broad patterns of American history. Appraisal functions of the federal government have been maintained on the site since 1874 and the subject building has maintained both appraisal and immigration functions from its construction, between 1939–1944, to the present time. While the immigrant detention facilities, which were built into the structure's design, are no longer in use, the continuity of historic customs and appraisal functions from 1944 to 1960, together with the continuity of immigration functions from the building's completion to the present time, constitute the building's historic importance in international and Pacific Coast commerce. Its service as a primary gateway for Asian entrants to the United States, as the successor to the Angel Island Immigration Station, documents historic demographic and legislative changes in United States immigration policy from the late 1930s to the 1960s.

Building History

Appraisers Stores⁵

With the rise of American influence following the Gold Rush and the Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo, the early Spanish settlement, Yerba Buena, grew into the city of San Francisco, an important commercial center and transfer point between international and local freight. In 1876, the first Appraisers Stores Building, a four-story brick warehouse designed by Alfred B. Mullet, Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury Department, was constructed at the edge of Yerba Buena Cove to inspect and store goods in conjunction with a neighboring U.S. Customs House. Construction of the sea wall of 1877 and the subsequent infill of the Bay moved the water's edge away from the building, but the appraisal and storage use of the buildings had become fixed at that location, particularly after a new federal Customs Building, erected in 1911, replaced the earlier structure.

Planning and construction of the present U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station began in 1939 in an era when most freight and goods were still shipped by sea. The new building continued to serve most of the historic uses for appraisal, storage and testing, just as truck transport was becoming an important means of domestic transportation. To accommodate this new development, the east side of the subject building was designed with loading docks.

After World War II, transportation changes continued to impact the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station. The development of the Oakland Naval Supply Depot across San Francisco Bay accelerated the expansion of the Port of Oakland, drawing freight commerce away from San Francisco. By 1950 air freight had also impacted freight tonnage at sea. These developments required inspection and investigation at other ports of entry, reducing the need for warehousing, appraisal, and laboratory testing at the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station in San Francisco. ⁶

⁶ Ibid.

⁵ Page and Turnbull, Supporting Material, 8-2.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Building
San Francisco County, California

Immigration and Naturalization

One of the major reasons leading to the replacement of the earlier appraisers Building was the closure of Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. Since 1892 Angel Island had been the primary site for detention and quarantine of immigrants, pending approval of their entry into the United States. By 1941 the Island facilities had become too expensive to maintain for a small number of detainees. In addition, it appeared more efficient to hold immigrants at the same location as their subsequent examination and hearings.

Accordingly, a new building was proposed to be built for both uses. Architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood, acting as consultant to the Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency, was chosen as the architect of record. Underwood's design for the upper floors of the building included complete facilities for immigrant detainees. Private rooms, dormitories, day rooms, outdoor rooftop terraces, and multiple kitchens provided for the individuals' needs. The new structure was renamed the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station. Detained immigrants were held and processed at the subject building from 1945 to 1960.

Changing modes of transportation also brought about the obsolescence of facilities at the subject building. When the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station was constructed, most immigrants arrived by ship. However, in the 1960s, legislation by the United States Congress made it possible for a much larger group of immigrants, particularly those from Asian nations, to enter the United States, and a large number arrived by air on immigrant visas. Immigration facilities at the subject building's site were too small to serve as a detention center and those functions shifted to other facilities. The original detainee housing was converted to offices for a regional administrative center, serving day visitors needing to process citizenship papers, obtain green cards, and attend immigration and naturalization hearings.⁷

The Federal Architecture Context

Federal Building 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 Treasury Department to contract with private firms and individuals.⁸ To meet spatial requirements of the U.S. government, 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.⁹ 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 1934.¹⁰ This practice of

⁷ Page and Turnbull, Supporting Material, 7-2, 7-3...

⁸ Emily Harris, *History of Post Office Construction, 1900-1940* (Washington, DC: U.S. Postal Service, 1982), 17.

⁹ Lois Craig, ed., and the staff of the Federal Architecture Project, The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics and Symbols in United

Government Building (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1978), 280.

¹⁰ Harris, History of Post Office Construction, 15, 17, 19.

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commissioning private architects largely ended, however, on June 29, 1934, with an order that the Office of the Supervising Architect within the Department of the Treasury design all remaining federal buildings. However, a limited number of private architects were retained as consulting architects for large projects. The Public Works Administration (PWA) was established in 1933 to oversee the planning and construction of public works projects, both federal and non-federal, with the aim of stimulating the economy and expanding employment. In 1933, many of the properties of the federal government were in poor shape. In a number of cities, post offices were in disrepair, federal justice was being dispensed in buildings with sagging floors and leaky roofs, and in scattered courthouses along our far-flung borders, U.S. Customs Service 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 federal facilities. As of February 28, 1939, PWA federal building construction projects totaled 3,167 buildings at \$303,581,146, including 30 courthouses and city halls with an allotment of \$1,312,012 and 406 post offices with an allotment of \$43,607,814. Large numbers of federal buildings were constructed in the 1930s under the aegis of the PWA and while the agency emphasized economy and efficiency, it also sought to ensure a lasting legacy through quality construction.

Louis A. Simon was Supervising Architect of the 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. ¹⁴ Under the PWA and Simon's direction, federal architecture in the 1930s was designed in the Colonial Revival style or a simplified Classical Revival style, which often featured murals or sculptures. ¹⁵

Classical architecture had become the dominant style conveying the federal presence across the nation. However, the need to provide federal government space but save the cost of unnecessary ornament during the 1930s fit well with the principles of Modern architecture then being introduced, stressing functionality, open plans with interchangeable work areas, and exterior surfaces in uninterrupted simple planes and volumes. The government's architects were not unaware of 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 Wright, Eliel Saarinen, and Richard Neutra, and published a quarterly magazine from 1930 to 1946, which largely approved of the government's designs. ¹⁶

Yet the Supervising Architect's Office did not wholly adopt the modernist vocabulary on the exterior, but held steadfast to references to the Classical style to convey the underlying role of the government. What resulted was a restrained classicism, denoted as much by white masonry and the rhythm of wall and window as by vestigial columns.

¹¹ Beth M. Boland, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 13: How to Apply National register Criteria to Post Offices (Washington,

DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1994), 3.

¹² United States Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (PWA), *America Builds: The Record of the PWA* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), 106.

¹³ Ibid., 290.

¹⁴ Craig, et al., The Federal Presence, 328.

¹⁵ Harris, History of Post Office Construction, 20, 25.

¹⁶ Craig, et al., The Federal Presence, 298.

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-02) United States Department of the Interior

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Today, it is this style of classicism, rather than the correct Roman form as advocated by Jefferson, the Greek temples of Robert Mills, or the ebullient Beaux-Arts style of the early 1900s, that most Americans know as federal architecture. The Potter Stewart U. S. Courthouse in Cincinnati, Ohio, designed by architects with the Office of the Supervising Architect, under the direction of Louis A. Simon, and dedicated in 1939, is a representative example of the federal architecture of the period. Other 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, also by Gilbert Stanley Underwood); and U.S. Post Offices in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Waterbury, Connecticut; Norfolk, Virginia; and, Manchester, New Hampshire.¹⁷

Federal Works Agency Design, 1939-1948.

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 from the Treasury Department. Although the Office of Supervising Architect survived in the new agency, its role in the design of federal buildings was further circumscribed. According to National Register Bulletin 13, under FWA, "[a]lthough 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 Treasury Department." Federal building design and construction slowed during the Second World War years.

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

Architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood

Gilbert Stanley Underwood received a Master's Degree in architecture from Harvard University in 1923 and in that year moved to Los Angeles to open a private practice. In the following decade, his practice specialized in work for the railroads and the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service. He is well known for his designs of rustic visitor's lodges in Bryce and Zion National Parks, constructed in the 1920s, the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park, constructed in 1925, and for the Art Deco Union Pacific Station in Omaha, Nebraska, constructed in 1931. The Zion Lodge burned in 1966 but the other buildings remain and all are listed in the National Register.

In 1933 Underwood moved his practice to Washington, D.C. and became a consulting architect for the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury. Consulting architects were primarily responsible for the design of larger federal buildings assigned to the Office of the Supervising Architect. Projects designed by Underwood during the period when he acted as consulting architect include twenty post offices; the William Kenzo Nakamura U.S. Courthouse in Seattle, constructed in 1940 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980; the U.S. Courthouse and Post Office in Los Angeles, constructed in 1940 and listed in the National Register in 2006; the

¹⁷ Craig, et al., The Federal Presence, 280-287.

¹⁸ Boland, National Register Bulletin 13, 3.

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United States Mint in San Francisco, constructed in 1937; and, the Harry S. Truman Federal Building (U.S. State Department) in Washington, D.C., constructed in 1941. During World War II, as consulting architect, he was responsible for the design of numerous wartime public building projects. In 1944, Underwood became the Supervising Architect within the Federal Works Agency's Public Buildings Administration.

Architectural Style

PWA Art Moderne style denotes a design program following the tripartite classical column form of the Art Moderne style – base, shaft, and capital – while emphasizing an intricate plan of design elements to provide a pleasing aesthetic effect. Like the Art Moderne style, PWA Moderne abstracted classical design elements and emphasized verticality, utilizing flat roofs with parapet walls, smooth wall surfaces, and simplified or streamlined ornament. Cladding frequently featured horizontal grooves or lines in walls. Window treatment was generally horizontal, but vertical rows were often used to affect a decorative contrast. This program proved particularly suitable for government structures because it subtly referenced the appearance of traditional classical courthouses, post offices, and other public buildings.

The architectural style of the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is important in the context of progressive influences in architecture beginning at the end of the 1920s and continuing through 1940. Beginning in 1927, a group of government architects in Washington D.C. founded the Association of Federal Architects (AFA) in order to foster an exchange of ideas among the various federal agencies concerned with architecture and building construction. Louis A Simon, then Chief of the Architectural Division of the Supervising Architect's Office, served as the organization's first president. In July, 1930 the AFA began to publish a quarterly, *The Federal Architect*. Its pages mirrored the growing divide between architects who favored traditional designs with express classical elements and those with the urge to formulate a new style for public buildings. Simon's tenure as president ended in 1933, the year that the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station's architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood began working for the Supervising Architect's Office. Federal architectural design remained split until World War II when attention shifted to wartime housing and emergency public works while World's Fair spectacles such as the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress Exhibition and the 1939 San Francisco and New York World's Fairs presented futuristic visions and promises of a new architectural style in a post-war world.²²

For the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, Underwood's PWA Moderne composition employed a simple geometry of interlocking volumes, slightly offset, to animate a building without external ornament. Surface planes rise through the height of the building, and then reveal themselves as volumes terminating at different heights, creating a simple yet powerful emphasis on the roofline. The corner setbacks above the twelfth floor and the setbacks above the thirteenth and fourteenth floors complete the dramatic modeling of the upper section of the structure, effectively elaborating the architectural geometry characteristic of the Moderne style of the late 1930s. The bold rhythmic variation of the upper floor geometry heightens the visual drama of the building. The

²² Ibid., 404-405.

¹⁹ "P.B.A. Residence Halls for Women," Architectural Record, July 1942, 40-43.

²⁰ Personnel Records for Gilbert Stanley Underwood, Center for Historic Buildings, Office of the Chief Architect, U.S. General Services Administration, Washington, DC.

²¹ Craig, et al., The Federal Presence, 219-220.

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absence of a cornice expresses a horizontal rather than a vertical relationship to the sky, referencing the work of emerging European modernists and the tenets of early progressive architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright

Previous Determinations of Eligibility

In the early 1980s, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) commissioned a study by San Francisco architects Skidmore, Owings and Merrill to assess the performance of the exterior walls. At that time, the State Office of Historic Preservation was asked to comment on the proposed change in the cladding. GSA records indicate that in 1984 a determination of "no effect" was issued by SHPO staff member Lucinda Woodward in 1984, stating that the determination did not reflect on the property's National Register eligibility, but rather on the fact that the building was not yet 50 years old. Nine years later, GSA commissioned the architectural firm of Page and Turnbull, San Francisco, to prepare a report titled, "Supporting Material for a Determination of Eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places." This report found the building eligible under Criterion A for its association with a wide range of immigration functions from 1944 until 1960, as a vital point of international commerce for San Francisco and the West Coast, and as a primary gateway for immigrants from Asian-Pacific nations.

Criterion A

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is significant under Criterion A as a building associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of United States customs and immigration history. The site has been in continuous use as an appraisers stores facility since 1876 when the first Appraisers Stores Building - a four story freight warehouse - was constructed on the site. The present U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, constructed in 1939 on the same site, continued the previous operation. In addition, the building was equipped with truck docks along Custom House Place to meet the continuing need for appraisal, storage, and testing. The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station has had an enduring association with the commercial history of the city of San Francisco and the development of international freight and water commerce coming into the city at a time when the Port of San Francisco dominated the region and operated as the Pacific Coast transfer point between international and domestic shipping.

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is also significant under Criterion A for its association with the history and development of immigration to the West Coast, primarily from countries in Asia. As built, the building designated specific floors and floor areas for dormitories, kitchens, day rooms, and roof exercise facilities to accommodate immigrants who required quarantine and detention prior to hearings that determined eligibility for entry to the United States. As the successor to the Angel Island Immigration Station, which had become too small and expensive to maintain, the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station facilities were the primary focus of immigration control and detention from the end of World War II until the 1960s when congressional legislative changes allowed an exponential rise in the admittance of foreigners to the United States. U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station in turn became too small to process the influx effectively, and the building became the regional administrative center for the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Under Criterion A, the building is significant at the local level; the period of significance is 1944–1960 from its opening for appraisal and immigration functions until 1960. Appraisal functions ceased in 1960. The building now serves as immigration headquarters for the region.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION
PROPERTY U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station NAME:
MULTIPLE NAME:
STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, San Francisco
DATE RECEIVED: 6/28/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/23/13 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/07/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/14/13 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:
REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000590
REASONS FOR REVIEW:
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N
COMMENT WAIVER: N
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:
Entered in The National Register of Historic Places
RECOM./CRITERIA
REVIEWERDISCIPLINE
TELEPHONE DATE
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N
If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

1725 23rd Street, Sulte 100 SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-7100 (916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053 calshpo@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

May 15, 2013

Beth L. Savage, Federal Preservation Officer Director, Center for Historic Buildings c/o Elizabeth Hannold, Preservation Specialist US General Services Administration Office of Design and Construction 1800 F Street, NW, Suite 5400 Washington DC 20405

Subject:

US Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station San Francisco, San Francisco County, California National Register of Historic Places Nomination

Dear FPO Savage,

Enclosed please find the original archival National Register of Historic Places Registration Form signature page I have signed as commenting official.

I concur that the property is eligible for listing at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government.

Thank you for sending a copy of the nomination and photographs for our records.

I understand that Amy Crain of my staff spoke with Ms. Hannold regarding our concern with the nomination forms prepared several years ago. We recognize the nomination was in process for some time, and no funds are available to update the documentation to current National Park Service requirements.

In the interest of listing this eligible property, we respectfully request the National Park Service accept this nomination in its current format.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact Ms. Crain at 916-445-7009.

Singerely

Carol Roland-Nawi, Ph.D.

State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure







June 20, 2013

Timothy Frye
Preservation Coordinator
Certified Local Government
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Frye:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) appreciates your efforts in ensuring that the National Register nomination for the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station was reviewed by the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission and that the Commission's comments were returned to us within the official 45-day time frame. We read the Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 707 with interest and were pleased to learn that the Commission recommends nomination of the property to the National Register of Historic Places.

While we appreciate the Commission's thorough review and helpful recommendations for additional documentation, we regret that we do not currently have the resources necessary to follow through on those recommendations. This nomination is part of a massive effort by GSA to nominate all of our eligible properties. The multi-year effort was undertaken via multiple contracts with three different historic preservation firms and concluded with the delivery of more than one hundred nominations. All contracts were closed out some time ago and since that time our small historic preservation staff has been processing the nominations while they also perform numerous other duties. Unfortunately, the agency's current fiscal situation precludes the expenditure of any additional time or money on this effort.

We will keep the Commission's resolution on file so that, if in the future we are able to devote resources to additional research and documentation, we might address these recommendations. In the meantime, should your office, or perhaps a local volunteer, be willing to undertake the research necessary to address any of your recommendations, we would be happy to receive the documentation and possibly incorporate it in an amendment to the nomination.

At this time, we are able to respond to the Commission's recommendation that the property be considered under Criterion C for its design and construction and as the work of a master architect. While we agree that the building has architectural merit, we concluded that it lacked sufficient integrity for listing under this Criterion due to extensive alterations undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s, including re-cladding the exterior and eliminating the original corridors on all levels. These alterations are addressed in the nomination.

As the California State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the listing of the property at the local level of significance under Criterion A by letter dated May 15, 2013, and as we believe it is in the interest of all to list this eligible property, GSA will be forwarding the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places without further revisions. As we noted previously, a final copy of the nomination will be available through the National Register of Historic Places upon listing.

We do appreciate the knowledgeable review and comments provided by the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission.

Sincerely,

Beth L. Savage

Federal Preservation Officer

Director, Center for Historic Buildings

Enclosure

cc: Jane Lehman, GSA, Regional Historic Preservation Officer Carol Roland-Nawi, Ph. D., State Historic Preservation Officer



June 20, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull Interim Keeper, National Register of Historic Places National Park Service 1849 C Street, NW (2280) Washington, DC 20240



Dear Ms Shull:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to nominate the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station (current name Appraisers Building) located at 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, California, for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The following documents are enclosed:

- Signed original National Register of Historic Places Registration form;
- U.S.G.S. Map;
- Original labeled black and white photographs along with a disk of TIFF images; and,
- Copies of correspondence from the California State Historic Preservation Office and the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission.

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

Sincerely,

Beth L. Savage

Federal Preservation Officer

Director, Center for Historic Buildings

Enclosures

Cc: Jane Lehman, Regional Historic Preservation Officer