

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

SG-1481

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: U.S. Department of State Building  
Other names/site number: U.S. Department of War Building; Harry S Truman Federal Building  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

### 2. Location

Street & number: 2201 C Street, NW  
City or town: Washington State: DC County: District of Columbia  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national \_\_\_ statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A \_\_\_ B  C \_\_\_ D

*Beth Savage* 6/30/2017  
**Signature of certifying official/Title:** Federal Preservation Officer **Date:**  
U.S. General Services Administration  
**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
*David Maloney* 6/6/2017  
**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**  
DC SHPO / DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
**Title :** **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

*Patrick Anderson*  
Signature of the Keeper

8/21/2017  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/Offices  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/Offices  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne  
MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Stone/Limestone; Reinforced Concrete

Walls: Stone/Limestone; Stone/Granite; Glass/glass curtain walls; Reinforced Concrete

Roof: Asphalt

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The U.S. Department of State Building, located at 2201 C Street, N.W., occupies a two-block area in the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., bounded by D Street on the north, C Street on the south, 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the east and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street on the west. The building consists of two components, the U.S. Department of War Building (1939-1941) and the U.S. Department of State Extension (1957-1960).<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Department of War Building is located in the northeast quadrant of the site at D and 21<sup>st</sup> streets, while the U.S. Department of State Extension wraps around the western and southern sides of the older building (see Figure 1 and Building Plan). The two components of the U.S. Department of State Building represent two distinct but harmonious stylistic expressions of the Modern Movement.

The U.S. Department of War Building is notable as a Modernist-Classical hybrid --often referred to as Stripped Classical --a style favored by the federal government in the 1930s and 1940s and commonly used for public buildings constructed throughout the country as a result of New Deal programs. The building's façade retains vestiges of Classicism in its Giant Order central colonnade, suggestive of the temple form; its symmetrical composition; and its horizontal delineation of base, body and entablature. However, it is stripped of all ornamentation save for

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<sup>1</sup>For reasons of clarity, the earlier building will be referred to by its original name "U.S. Department of War Building" and the later addition will be referred to as the "U.S. Department of State Extension." Throughout the nomination, the name "U.S. Department of State Building" will be used when the two buildings are referred to as one.



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the geometric sculptural panels at the cornice level which refer back to a Classical entablature. The projecting side wings are also devoid of ornamentation, but the windows, arranged in vertical bays, also recall the columns of Classical buildings. The U.S. Department of State Extension exhibits much more mature Modernism, incorporating elements of the International Style and abandoning any vestige of Classical form or treatment. The extension eschews the temple form and is devoid of ornamentation of any sort. The windows are either punched openings without any vertical or horizontal emphasis or a curtain wall. Although the use of stone cladding defers to the public building tradition of the past, the swooping aluminum and stainless canopy at the extension's south elevation forecourt announces a new aesthetic, one that embraces modern materials and technologies.

While designed and constructed nearly twenty years apart for two different federal agencies, the buildings are related by their predominant materials – buff limestone and granite – and by their complementary architectural expressions, which both use planar surfaces and minimal ornamentation. The buildings are now linked for internal circulation, but were designed as two independent buildings by different architects. The U.S. Department of War Building and the U.S. Department of State Extension are best understood as separate, although interconnected, entities that function as a single building.

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## Narrative Description

### *Site/Setting*

The U.S. Department of State Building occupies a two-block area in the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., bounded by D Street on the north, C Street on the south, 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the east and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street on the west. The approximately 12.1-acre site is located in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood. To the north of the site is the eastern terminus of the E Street Expressway, constructed on the alignment of E Street, N.W., circa 1963. To the east of the site is a park through which Virginia Avenue cuts a diagonal path and the Federal Reserve's William McChesney Martin, Jr. Building. To the south of the site are the National Academy of Sciences and American Pharmacists Association buildings. Immediately to the west, across 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, N.W., is Potomac Hill, an 11.8-acre federal campus that serves as a State Department Annex.<sup>2</sup> Beyond the immediate area, further to the east, a linear park runs down the center of E Street, N.W., flanked by several large federal headquarters buildings, including those for the U.S. General Services Administration, the Department of the Interior, and the Office of Personnel Management.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the vicinity of the U.S. Department of State Building is characterized by large federal and institutional buildings within an open and park-like setting.

### *U.S. Department of War Building (1939-1941)* *Exterior*

The U.S. Department of War Building has an irregular footprint composed of a U-shaped configuration to the east and an E-shaped configuration to the west, connected by a central spine, designed to serve as a major connector to the second phase of construction—later to become the U.S. Department of State Extension. The building has numerous setbacks and an irregular roofline. Constructed of steel sheathed in shot-sawn buff limestone, it rises to a maximum of eight stories above a basement and sub-basement with prominent wings that project at each of the four corners. A smaller eight-story wing projects from the center of the west elevation. The building's design allowed for a series of open courtyards—two large courts on the north and south, two smaller courts on the west, and a large forecourt on the east elevation. The original deep forecourt at the main entrance on the east is now occupied by the newly constructed United States Diplomacy Center pavilion. The double-height pavilion projects from the center of the east elevation, framed by the wings of the U-shaped eastern section of the building (see Photo 1).

The U.S. Department of War Building was designed in substantial accord with surrounding structures, particularly the U.S. Department of the Interior Building to the east. The U.S. Department of War Building is divided horizontally in a manner that reflects Classical precedent,

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<sup>2</sup> This campus is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as Observatory Hill (SG100000479).

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. General Services Administration Building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as Interior Department Offices (86003160) and the Department of Interior as The New Interior Building (86002898).

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with stringcourses and cornices forming a base-shaft-capital system. Differing materials further articulate the base, with the walls surrounding the areaways faced in Select Dark Carnelian granite and the terminating stringcourse in Dun Mountain Pink granite. The walls of the remainder of the building are buff Indiana limestone with a shot-sawn finish. Windows throughout the building were architectural bronze casements (except on the basement level, where anodized aluminum was used) divided into three panels, each with a large central light with smaller lights above and below. Nearly complete, a security upgrade will result in the replacement of all original windows with blast resistive windows that closely match the appearance of the originals, but are fixed. From the basement through the second story, and on the upper stories of the central core, the windows are set flush with the walls. In the upper stories of the wings, the windows are grouped vertically and recessed with spandrels of polished Carnelian granite, producing the effect of alternating piers and recesses.

The composition of the east elevation (main entrance) is carried out as a series of tripartite features surrounding a deep forecourt with two, six story wings flanking the north and south sides of the court. The new Diplomacy Center pavilion stands within the forecourt abutting the original entry pavilion. A steel framed cubic form clad in glass panels, the east face of the Diplomacy Center pavilion projects slightly beyond the façades of the flanking wings. Entered at grade, the pavilion's entrance bay is composed of clear glass panels into which are set two revolving and six fixed glass doors. The rest of the pavilion is clad in off-white, translucent glass panels. As originally constructed, the entrance to the U.S. Department of War Building was a double height, limestone-clad pavilion lacking fenestration with a central recessed section flanked by rectangular bays and capped with a projecting cornice (see Figure 2). The east façade of the original entry pavilion is encapsulated within the new Diplomacy Center pavilion, where it continues to serve as the east entrance to the Department of State.

Above the Diplomacy Center pavilion, the central part of the main block repeats the tripartite division. At either side of the pavilion, the first setback is six stories high, three bays wide, and one bay deep. Centered directly above the entrance is a colossal colonnade of four square piers, capped with a projecting cornice. Behind the colonnade, the central block rises to the full building height of eight stories, with only the third through sixth stories defined by fenestration. The wall above is blank, except for a terminating row of square sculptural panels.

The north elevation, fronting D Street, N.W., is composed of the broad side of the corner wings, flanking an open light court (see Photo 2 and Figure 3). Starting at the third story, the court is set off center within the eleven-bay wide eastern wing and the eight-bay wide western wing. The central block of the building rises behind the open court. A low connector, set one bay back from the north face of the building, links the two wings, obscuring views into the court from street level. As constructed, the south elevation mirrored the north. However, the south light court was later infilled up to the third story by the addition of an auditorium for the U.S. Department of War Building. As originally intended, the construction of the U.S. Department of State Extension obscures the original south and west elevations of the U.S. Department of War Building (see Figure 4).

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### *Interior*

The Diplomacy Center pavilion now serves as the entry point for visitors to the United States Diplomacy Center and for staff and visitors entering the U.S. Department of State Building from 21st Street, N.W. (see Photo 3). A single, light-filled volume, the Diplomacy Center pavilion will house exhibits and will provide access to additional Diplomacy Center exhibit halls located within the original U.S. Department of War Building. Ramps at the front of the new pavilion move visitors from the at-grade entrances to the slightly elevated first floor level of the original building. The east face of the U.S. Department of War Building's original entry pavilion serves as the rear or west wall of the Diplomacy Center pavilion. Within the original entry pavilion are three doorways with plain stone architraves and jambs. Each doorway contains glass double doors with architectural bronze frames, kick plates, and push bars.

The U.S. Department of War Building's interior, particularly the entry lobby, is an excellent example of Art Moderne finishes and detailing. The first floor of the U.S. Department of War Building contains the most architecturally significant spaces in the building. In plan, the sequence of spaces aligns with the central axis running east to west and consists of the east lobby vestibules, the east lobby and stairs, the east elevator lobby, and the grand stair. The U.S. Department of War Building's lobby has two purposes. As the first public space encountered in the building, it serves as a symbolic statement about the building's function and the nature of business conducted therein. It is also the central distribution center for the building's circulation system. Most visitors' primary destinations are reached by elevators, which are located directly on axis with the entrance lobby.

Visitors proceed into the U.S. Department of War Building through one of the three entrance doorways into three small two-story vestibules. Each of the vestibules has two pairs of original doors, on which all of the door hardware is original.<sup>4</sup> Beyond the vestibules is the east lobby, a two story, rectangular space that is surrounded by a colonnade of piers (see Photo 4). Four large pendant up-lights, distinctive original features of the lobby, light the lobby, supplemented by square fixtures along the perimeter. The floors in the lobby are terrazzo, made with granules of Virginia Royal Black marble, and the walls and piers are sheathed in Colorado Colorosa travertine. The Art Moderne finishes and detailing are particularly prominent in the main lobby's sleek, streamlined design features, integrated furnishings, and highly polished surfaces. The east lobby opens directly into the elevator lobby, which contains all of its original six architectural bronze circular pendant lighting fixtures (see Photo 5).

The rear half of the east lobby is occupied by glass and brass security barricades installed circa 1990. Two new architecturally integrated guard desks have replaced the lobby's original information desk, located approximately in the same position. Above the desks, in the western quarter of the lobby, the ceiling is dropped to the first floor height due to the second floor mezzanine above. The mezzanine's parapet wall supports a 12 foot high by 50 foot long fresco entitled, *The Defense of Human Freedoms* (see Photo 6). Located on either side of the east lobby

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<sup>4</sup> The doors of the central entrance have been automated to enhance accessibility.

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are flights of black terrazzo steps leading to the north and south mezzanines. The steps have architectural bronze handrails, brackets, and balusters (see Photo 7).

The east elevator lobby is divided into a central elevator hall with two flanking corridors. The walls are of Colorado Colorosa travertine and Tennessee Morocco Black marble. The elevators retain their original architectural bronze elevator doors, jambs, and panels above the doors (see Photo 5). Originally eight, two of the elevator cabs were removed and reused in the U.S. Department of State Extension when it was added. The six operational elevators have indicators which appear to have been added at the same time as the extension. The six cabs retain their original walnut paneling. An inscription regarding the design and construction of the War Department Building is located in the elevator lobby (see Photo 8).

The second floor mezzanine, located east of the elevator lobby, is finished in the original black and grey terrazzo on the floor with Colorado Colorosa travertine and black structural glass covering the walls. The second floor elevator lobby is similar in plan to that of the first floor, with a central elevator hall with two flanking corridors. Also located on the second floor is an auditorium, which was a later addition in 1943. Built in the south light court, the auditorium is rectangular in plan and is connected to the building by means of a short corridor leading to the southeast office hallway.

As described above, the building essentially is divided into three parts: a U-shaped section to the east, an E-shaped section to the west, and a central spine connecting the two. Horizontal circulation follows these divisions with U-shaped double-loaded corridors in the eastern and western sections, the longer portions of which are on a north-south axis. Circulation in the central section of the building is organized on an east-west axis through three corridors, arranged to form elevator lobbies. Standard corridors retain their original gray terrazzo floors, with black terrazzo borders, marble baseboards, and painted plaster walls and ceilings. However, in some locations, corridor ceilings have suspended acoustical tile. Doorframes and doors are painted steel, as constructed. The original incandescent globe fixtures have been replaced by modern ceiling-mounted or recessed fixtures. Elevator lobbies, which on most floors are the chief public spaces, feature high-quality materials in simple forms: Colorado Colorosa travertine walls, architectural bronze moldings at the junction of the walls and ceiling, and floors of black terrazzo.

A number of birch and walnut paneled offices on the third and fourth floors remain from the original construction of the U.S. Department of War Building (see Photo 9). These offices are arranged as L-shaped suites in the corners where the north and south wings meet the east block. As originally planned, the offices were to be used by executive officers of the U.S. Department of War. On the east side of the U.S. Department of War Building is the premier complex of executive offices. Located on the fifth floor, the complex consists of a lobby opening immediately off the elevator lobby and is flanked by two rooms that originally served as reception areas (see Photo 10). An oil-on-canvas mural measuring 8 feet 11 inches high by 8 feet 7 inches wide and entitled *Liberty or Death: Don't Tread on Me*, is located on the east wall of the lobby (see Photo 11). Similar to those offices on the third and fourth floors, each fifth



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floor suite is L-shaped in plan with an outer reception area connected to a large corner executive office.

The north executive suite and south executive suite (intended for the chief of staff and secretary of war, respectively) are located at the intersection of the projecting wings and the east block of the building. The large, two story office spaces are arranged similarly, with a large rectangular corner office surrounded by ante-offices and dressing rooms. The walls and doors are finished in yellow birch with architectural bronze hardware. The ceiling is acoustical plaster and lighting consists of circular pendant up-lights that are similar to those in the east lobby.

The ancillary spaces surrounding the corner offices consist of ante-offices and dressing rooms. Two outer offices in the south executive suite originally were designated as an anteroom and vestibule. The spaces have walnut veneer walls and architectural bronze picture moldings and sconces. The north executive suite ancillary spaces are finished similarly to those in the south executive suite, but also contain a secondary executive office suite located at a 90-degree angle to the original corner office. Overall, the function and appearance of these office spaces have changed very little.

Outside of the major suites, standard offices and conference rooms extend from corridor wall to exterior wall and are of the simplest finish. As constructed, floors were clad in linoleum, walls and ceilings were plaster, and base trim and chair rails were metal. Light was provided by pendant incandescent fixtures. The original plaster walls and ceiling are typically still present, although some have had additional finishes, such as wallpaper, applied. The linoleum floors have been carpeted. The original hanging light fixtures have been replaced with ceiling mounted fixtures. However, the original hemispherical architectural bronze wall sconces remain.

A mechanical floor, open except for enclosures around stairs and elevators, is located above the sixth floor. A portion of the uppermost floor, designated the 7<sup>th</sup> floor although 8<sup>th</sup> in order, is also devoted almost entirely to mechanical equipment. As constructed, the basement housed support services, mechanical areas, and offices. A parking garage was located in the south central section of the basement. These uses continue today. Finished areas of the basement have floors clad in linoleum with metal base, ceilings and walls of plaster, and metal doors.

*U.S. Department of State Extension (1957-1960)*  
*Exterior*

The U.S. Department of State Extension was designed as a massive structure containing more than one million square feet of useable space. It is constructed of reinforced concrete and is comprised of a basement and eight stories capped by a series of penthouses of varying sizes and heights. At the first and second floors, the overall footprint of the building is rectangular with shallow indentations on the south and west, and a large „notch“ at the northeast corner where new construction wraps around the U.S. Department of War Building. In addition, three large courtyards perforate the interior of the rectangle (see Figure 1 and Building Plan).

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The principal materials of the exterior are polished Iridian granite and a buff-colored, sand-rubbed limestone veneer. The limestone of the U.S. Department of State Extension was intended to match the limestone of the existing U.S. Department of War Building. Aluminum and glass curtain walls admit light into the south, west, and north entrances, and serve as connectors on the north and east sides of the U.S. Department of State Extension. Windows throughout the U.S. Department of State Extension consisted of pairs of vertically pivoted rectangular lights set into an aluminum frame with a central mullion of the same material. Nearly complete, a security upgrade will result in the replacement of all original windows with blast resistive windows that closely match the appearance of the originals, but are fixed. On the lower three stories, polished Iridian granite spandrels are present between the windows.

The south elevation (C Street) is, functionally and architecturally, the most significant of the four elevations of the U.S. Department of State Extension (see Photo 12). The main ceremonial entrance and lobby as well as the principal offices are located on the south side of the building. The south elevation is the longest of the four elevations, with the main entrance positioned off-center to the west and setback from the vertical building plane to form an entrance forecourt (see Photo 13). The section of the façade adjacent to the entrance forecourt is divided into thirteen bays by buff limestone piers that run from ground level to a narrow beltcourse at the top of the third story. Polished Iridian granite clads the three bays flanking either side of the glass entrance wall. The piers of the seven central bays are set in front of a continuous curtain wall of aluminum and glass that lights the south side of the three story south lobby. On either side of the seven central bays are three bays, each with two standard paired windows set in the first and second stories and a row of four, square windows in the third story. A rectangular canopy with a concave curve at the forward edge covers the center of the entrance forecourt and is composed of aluminum-bonded plywood, stainless steel clad columns, and a mosaic glass soffit (see Photo 14).

To either side of the forecourt recess, limestone piers span the first and second stories. The narrow bays between the piers are recessed slightly, with each bay containing a paired window and a spandrel of polished Iridian granite at each story. Above the second story, the elevation is stepped back to the same vertical plane as the recessed forecourt. At the third story, the beltcourse above the entrance piers is continued across the entire façade. The fourth through seventh stories consist of a sheer limestone wall, broken only by rows of the typical paired windows running across each story. At the top of the seventh story, the limestone cladding extends up the front of a low parapet and is capped with an aluminum railing. The eighth story is set back to allow room for a terrace spanning the western half of the south elevation (see Photo 15).

The four-bay northern and southern sections of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (west) elevation are identical to the adjacent portions of the north and south elevations, with which they form the building corners (see Photo 16). The most important feature of the west elevation is the auditorium, which is expressed clearly on the exterior of the building. Because of the change in site topography, the ground level at the auditorium entrance is actually the second floor of the U.S. Department of State Extension. The entrance canopy to the auditorium is composed of the same

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materials as those on the north and south elevations—aluminum-bonded plywood, stainless steel clad columns, and a mosaic glass soffit. The outer face of the one story entrance vestibule is a rectangle of glass in a heavy aluminum frame. The segmentally curved front wall of the auditorium is set within a two-story rectangular limestone frame (see Photo 17). The lower section is filled with a curtain wall of glass in aluminum framing, and the upper section consists of highly polished Iridian granite. At either side of the auditorium, the west elevation of the U.S. Department of State Extension consists of a clear glass curtain wall, with ceramic-coated spandrel glass in aluminum framing. Above the second story, the portion of the wall between the four-bay northern and southern sections of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street elevation is stepped back. The third through seventh stories are identical in treatment to the corresponding stories on the north and south elevations.

Only the second through eighth stories on the D Street (north) elevation are visible from the street due to the slope of U.S. Department of State Building's site. The same system of limestone piers and a beltcourse used on the south elevation divides the lower stories from the upper stories. The entrance is located between the sixth and the eighth bays of the north elevation's eighteen bays. A forecourt surrounds the entrance and is covered by a rectangular canopy. The inner edge of the canopy overlaps three vestibules, each in front of an entry bay. The outer face of each vestibule contains two pairs of doors of plate glass with aluminum panels across the doors' tops and bottoms.

Identical doors at the inner side of each vestibule open onto the north lobby of the U.S. Department of State Extension. The two bays on either side of the entrance are clad in a solid span of polished Iridian granite up to the row of square windows at the third story. Infill in the remaining bays on the north is similar to that of the bays flanking the south entrance. The fourth through seventh stories of the north elevation consist of limestone facing blocks and rows of standard paired windows. A limestone parapet and coping run across the top of the seventh story, with the eighth story set back behind the parapet and only extended across the eastern thirteen bays. A glass and aluminum connector at the east end of the north elevation links the U.S. Department of State Extension to the original U.S. Department of War Building. The connector is recessed from the plane of the flanking structures and is only seven stories high.

The east elevation of the U.S. Department of State Extension is composed of design elements repeated from other elevations of the building (see Photo 12). The lower stories, which are sixteen bays wide, repeat the design of those levels on the east end of the south elevation. Continuous limestone beltcourses run across the tops of the basement and second stories. On the first and second stories, limestone piers alternate with bays containing typical paired windows set above polished Iridian granite spandrels. The east elevation is stepped back at the third story and divided into two components. The south half of the upper east elevation is the same as the corresponding south elevation, ending in a parapet and aluminum railing. The north half of the upper east elevation is recessed and consists of a clear glass curtain wall with ceramic-coated spandrel glass in an aluminum frame. This part of the east elevation continues across the northeast corner of the U.S. Department of State Extension and links it to the original U.S. Department of War Building. The two buildings are also connected visually by an aluminum

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canopy, which is set over the entrance to the driveway and overlaps the corners of the flanking buildings.

The three major courtyards that pierce the U.S. Department of State Extension are located in the southwest, northwest, and southeast quadrants. The southeast courtyard, which extends from the second story up, has become a utility area, largely filled with equipment and equipment sheds. The two remaining courtyards, known as the south courtyard and the north courtyard, are paved in Sunset Red, Oxford Grey, and Rockville granite in a grid with square openings. The grids are formed in two alternating patterns of four equal squares of red stone and four overlapped rectangles of gray granite set around a small central square of red. On all sides of the two courtyards, piers clad in polished Veined Ebony granite rise to a continuous lintel at the third story. The piers are set in front of a curtain wall of glass and aluminum framing. In the south courtyard, a glass curtain wall forms the north side of the three story main entrance.

The south courtyard is the only location of artwork executed as part of the U.S. Department of State Extension. *The Expanding Universe* consists of a statue set within a shallow basin rimmed with polished granite and lined with mosaic tiles (see Photo 18). The statue itself is a 26 foot tall male figure holding a planet in either hand and seated on a sphere, around which is a ring symbolizing the speed and movement of heavenly bodies in space. The statue is cast in architectural bronze. Above the third story in the two courtyards, the walls are faced with buff limestone as used on the building's outer elevations and the windows are standard paired units in aluminum frames.

### *Interior*

The interior of the U.S. Department of State Extension is in excellent condition and has been well maintained. Most of its interior is devoted to utilitarian spaces such as offices, file rooms, and small conference rooms. The most architecturally significant spaces that remain are those accessed by the public on the first and second floors in the western half of the building extension. They consist of the south lobby, international conference area, exhibition hall, and auditorium. The south lobby constitutes the primary ceremonial entrance to the U.S. Department of State Extension. Located on C Street, N.W., the space is rectangular and situated with its long axis running east to west (see Photo 19). The lobby is entered through three one-story vestibules that puncture the exterior three-story glass curtain wall.

The floor throughout is Venetian terrazzo consisting of a dark gray matrix and a black, dark gray, and white aggregate. The east and west walls of the lobby are finished in St. Genevieve Breche Rose marble with a polished surface. Within the lobby, there are a number of special architectural features. The most notable feature is two rows of six piers each, arranged along the north/south axis of the space and faced with polished Veined Ebony granite on the east and west sides, and St. Genevieve Breche Rose marble on the north and south sides. At either end of the lobby is a freestanding stairway composed of two short runs of steps with an intermediate landing. The stairs lead to a walkway that extends across the front of the lobby on the second

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floor. Beneath each staircase is a shallow reflecting pool, from which a V-shaped structural base supporting its staircase rises.

The international conference area of the U.S. Department of State Extension is located in the southwest quadrant of the building and is composed of three elements: the conference room proper on the west, a lobby, and a delegates' lounge to the east (adjacent to the south court). The international conference room lobby has a one story elongated rectangular plan. Its floor is covered in Venetian terrazzo with brass and zinc dividing strips and the walls are highly polished Cliffdale marble. The east side of the lobby is open to the delegates' lounge for its entire length (see Photo 20). The west side of the lobby is formed by an information booth that is set into a distinctive curved wall finished in Georgia Grande Antique Narrow Vein marble (see Photo 21).

Like the adjacent lobby, the delegates' lounge is a one story rectangular space (see Photo 20). The north and south walls are sheathed in white oak with a natural finish. The east wall of the lounge, which overlooks the south courtyard, consists of a glass and aluminum curtain wall that is broken by three structural piers. The piers are faced on the east and west with Georgia Verde Antique Narrow Vein marble, and on the north and south sides with mosaic tile. The floors of the lounge are carpeted. Both the lobby and delegates' lounge remain the same in appearance and function as when the building was originally constructed.

The international conference room (now called the Loy Henderson conference room) is a two story rectangular space. The floor is three levels, stepped up from the center of the room to the corners, and is carpeted. The walls have an 8 inch Verde Antique marble base that is broken at regular intervals by brass grilles. Major wall areas consist of paneling that projects over the base and is supported by heavy battens made of walnut that divide the space into twelve bays. The wall paneling consists of white oak and walnut, both in natural finishes. Entrances are located in the second and eleventh bays of the east and west walls, each consisting of a pair of oversized solid wood doors with white oak veneer.

The speaker's platform is set along the west wall of the conference room with a concave Cliffdale marble wall providing a backdrop for the platform. The central six bays of the east wall are occupied by two levels of interpreters' booths. At each level, the space between the pairs of battens is filled with a plate glass window set over a spandrel of burl walnut. There have been no major modifications to this room since its original construction.

The exhibition hall is the third of the three significant spaces on the ground floor. Located at the central western portion of the U.S. Department of State Extension between the north and south courts, the hall is a large one story, rectangular room that contains a number of exhibits and display cases, including one containing the press used to affix the department's Great Seal to official documents. The floor is covered in Venetian terrazzo with brass and zinc dividing strips. The north and south walls consist of glass curtain walls with three pairs of doors on each wall. The doors give access to the north and south courtyards. The east and west walls of the exhibition hall are faced in Cliffdale marble and are interrupted by solid wood doors with white oak veneer.



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The second floor consists of two significant spaces, the north lobby and the auditorium with its associated lobby. The north lobby is located on the north side of the building, on axis with the main (south) lobby. Because of the change in the site's elevation, the north lobby is located on the second floor. The two-story space is T-shaped in plan and not intended to be used as a ceremonial entrance. Flooring in the north lobby is typical of flooring in most of the prominent spaces in the U.S. Department of State Extension, Venetian terrazzo. The walls are sheathed in Cliffdale and St. Clair Golden Vein marbles. One distinctive original feature of the north lobby is the balcony, which runs the full length of the south wall, and along half of both the east and west walls. Opening off the center of the south side is a single flight of open stairs that connects the second floor of the lobby with the first floor.

The auditorium (now called the Dean Acheson Auditorium) and its lobby are located on the west side of the building on axis with the space between the north and south courtyards. The overall footprint of the space is that of a truncated wedge, with segmental curves at the east and west ends. The auditorium lobby is a one-and-one-half story space with floors of Venetian terrazzo (see Photo 22). The lobby's long east and west walls both follow segmental curves, which are convex on the east and concave on the west. The west wall is a glass and aluminum curtain wall with concrete piers that divide the wall into bays. A pair of plate glass and aluminum entrance doors is set in each of the three central bays. The inner pair is set at the center of the bay and is flanked by single pane sidelights. The east wall, as well as the north and south walls of the lobby, are faced with highly polished St. Clair Golden Vein marble. A stainless steel-clad pier with chamfered corners stands near either end of the lobby.

The auditorium extends from the first floor through the third floor of the U.S. Department of State Extension. The room is slightly wedge-shaped with concave walls at both the east and west ends (see Photo 23). The floor is stepped up from front to rear in a series of twenty platforms. A row of fixed chairs runs across each platform and aisles divide the seating into three banks. The stage spans the full front (east) of the auditorium, and on either side, five California redwood cheekwalls project into the room. The cheekwalls are set at an angle to the main walls and at diminishing intervals from the stage to the midpoint of the auditorium. A plate glass strip window is set into the upper portion of the wall between each pair of cheekwalls. The windows on the north wall open into interpreters' booths, and those on the south wall into press booths. The ceiling of the auditorium is composed of both acoustic plaster and 1 inch thick vermiculite plaster, molded in a series of wave-like coves.

On the south side of the U.S. Department of State Extension, on the seventh floor overlooking the south entrance and south courtyard, are the suites occupied by the secretary and undersecretary of state. The area contains numerous supporting spaces, including foyers, reception rooms, inner foyers, waiting rooms, conference rooms, staff offices, administrative areas, and the offices of the secretary and undersecretary of state. These areas originally had walls paneled in flush American wild cherry with marble base of Tennessee Royal Fleuri. Ceilings were plaster and floors carpeted. In 1989, the secretary and undersecretary suites were redesigned as early American period rooms with ornamental woodwork and plasterwork evoking

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the Colonial and Federal periods. In general, the redesign was overlaid on the original floor plan. However, the seventh floor Treaty Room Suite is the exception (see Photo 24). Here an oval room was inserted in what had been a long rectangular room once used as an outer reception area.

On the eighth floors on the south side of the U.S. Department of State Extension are the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, a suite of rooms for the use of top government officials when entertaining dignitaries and conducting high-level diplomatic negotiations. In keeping with the restrained modern treatment found elsewhere in the building, the rooms originally featured curtain wall windows, large open doorways, wall-to-wall carpeting, full height flush wood paneling, acoustical tile ceilings, and recessed lighting. From 1979 through 1985, the rooms were redesigned in a concerted effort to elevate the appearance of the suite and showcase American culture. The floor-to-ceiling plate glass windows extending around three sides of the Diplomatic Reception rooms were left in place, but are now covered with the interior finish shell of the period rooms, which range from the intimate Martha Washington Ladies' Lounge to the monumental Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room (see Photo 25). The State Department accepted donations and loans of American fine and decorative arts dating from the period 1750 to 1825 to furnish and decorate these rooms. Today the historically evocative suite consists of forty-two rooms housing a museum-caliber collection of 5,000 objects.<sup>5</sup> A rooftop terrace on the south and west side of the U.S. Department of State Extension is accessed from the Diplomatic Reception Rooms (see Photo 26).

Standard offices, arranged in interconnected banks on both sides of the corridors on the first through seventh floors, are simply finished with plaster walls, rubber base, asphalt tile floors, and acoustical tile ceilings. With few exceptions, corridors are finished in the same manner throughout the building and retain original finishes. The floors are beige vinyl tile and the walls are plaster with black vinyl coved base. The ceiling is clad in perforated metal acoustic tiles, however, this has been replaced in some areas with lay-in acoustic tile. Office doors are typically solid wood with quarter sawn white oak veneer. Lighting typically consists of pairs of flush fluorescent fixtures running lengthwise down the corridor.

There are six elevator lobbies with 23 passenger elevators located at corridor intersections throughout the U.S. Department of State Extension. Elevator lobbies have red vinyl tile floors, which are original or in-kind replacement, and walls paneled in Golden Melange marble. The ceilings are perforated metal acoustic tiles. The ceiling stops short of the wall forming a light cove in which fluorescent tubes are mounted. The elevators are original and unaltered. The elevator doors and frames at the north end of the building are apricot color baked enamel steel, while the others have stainless steel doors and frame. The cab walls are stainless steel with vertical pine strips on three sides. The ceiling is a basket weave pattern of aluminum strips which

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<sup>5</sup> Conger, Clement E, "The Diplomatic Reception Rooms: A Tribute to the Generosity of the American People," U.S. Department of State website, available from <https://diplomaticrooms.state.gov/Pages/History.aspx>, accessed April 24, 2017.

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act as a lighting grid over a series of fluorescent tubes. The floor is black vinyl tiles. Two elevators (numbers 29 and 30), located near the east end of the auditorium, were moved from the War Department Building in 1957.

The basement retains its original finishes. The floors are either concrete or linoleum tile. The walls are of structural facing tile and painted concrete block. The ceiling is perforated metal acoustic tile. In some places the block walls and ceiling are finished in plaster.

### *Landscape*

The U.S. Department of State Building's landscape is typical of an urban site, being comprised of curbed lawn panels with deciduous trees and evergreen foundation shrubs. One notable exception is seen at 21<sup>st</sup> Street, N.W., where deep perennial beds flank the Diplomacy Center pavilion.

Tree species include Sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*; London Plane Tree, *Platanus orientalis*; American Elm, *Ulmus Americana*; Beech, *Fagus sp.*; Crape Myrtle, *Lagerstroemia sp.*; and, unique to the north façade, Holly, *Ilex sp.* Several large American Elms stand in the south lawn panel at C Street, N.W.; this planting is echoed to the north, where American Elms have been planted in curbed beds flanking the Diplomacy Center pavilion. Sycamores and London Plane Trees dominate the corner lawn panel at 23<sup>rd</sup> and C streets, N.W. A single, large Dawn Redwood, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, stands to the south of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street entrance.

Yews, *Taxus sp.*, and Junipers, *Juniperus sp.*, dominate as foundation shrubs at all façades. The foundation plantings at 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, N.W., include Pine, *Pinus, sp.*, and Barberry, *Berberis sp.* Heavenly Bamboo, *Nandina sp.*, has been planted at the building corner at 21st and C streets, N.W.; a single, large Red Tipped Photinia, *Photinia x fraseri*, stands at a recessed corner at C Street; and Winter Jasmine, *Jasminum nudiflorum*, spills from a raised granite-walled bed at D Street, N.W.

The 21<sup>st</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and C street entrances are fronted by large planters variously planted with groundcovers, perennials, low-growing shrubs, and small trees. The C Street façade is further distinguished by several terraced granite-walled beds, planted with a variety of low-growing shrubs.

Generally, the building is ringed by concrete sidewalks. Decorative paving is seen only in two areas: (1) large square gray granite paving at the Diplomacy Center pavilion at 21<sup>st</sup> Street, N.W., and (2) large granite squares, rectangles, and circles, in shades of gray and red, in a repeating pattern, along C Street, N.W. A semi-circular drive leads to the south entrance. Drives accessing the underground parking garage penetrate the sidewalk and planted panels on the north, east, and south sides of the building. Jersey barrier-style planters abut the sidewalk at 23<sup>rd</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> streets, N.W. Bollards are located at the Diplomacy Center pavilion and at the vehicular entrance at D Street, N.W. The 200 block of C Street, N.W., alongside the building, is closed to normal vehicular traffic with security gates and guard booths located at either end.

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Two monumental bronze flagpoles flank the south entrance at C Street, N.W. These are original to the U.S. Department of State Extension's design. Standard city streetlights, consisting of an upright pole with double globes, are present around the perimeter of the site.

### *Alterations*

Modifications to the exterior of the U.S. Department of State Building, particularly the entrance forecourts, have taken place for security reasons. The original appearance of the U.S. Department of War Building's east entrance forecourt was modified in 1987 with the addition of two canopies: one to the face of the building over the main entrance and the other freestanding next to a new U-shaped driveway with two large L-shaped planting boxes and a row of bollards (see Figure 5). These 1987 elements were removed recently with the construction of the Diplomacy Center pavilion, completed in 2017.

As described above, the double-height Diplomacy Center pavilion fills most of the original forecourt area and now serves as the east entrance. The pavilion was designed to abut the original U.S. Department of War entry pavilion, leaving it intact and visible. The Diplomacy Center is planned to extend into adjacent areas within the original U.S. Department of War Building, creating a publicly accessible museum devoted to the history of U.S. diplomacy and the mission of the U.S. Department of State. As the Diplomacy Center construction and the exhibit development, fabrication, and installation is funded by a private fund raising campaign, there is no a definite deadline for completion of the project.

The other entrances have had more modest alterations. The 21<sup>st</sup> Street entrance forecourt, one of the original entrances to the U.S. Department of State Extension, was modified through the addition of a planting box set on a diagonal axis and placed in the middle of the wide walkway. A one-story security building was constructed on the south side of the walkway. The simple structure is painted buff to match the limestone of the building. At the south entrance court, planting boxes were also installed as vehicle barriers, and security barriers in the form of bench seats. Small structures painted buff to match the limestone of the building were added to either side of the south entrance to handle visitor queues. Planting boxes were added to the north entrance forecourt.

In recent years, many of the U.S. Department of State Building's exterior windows have been replaced with new windows, replicating the appearance of the original windows, but incorporating ballistic and blast resistant glass. At the time of this nomination preparation, this project was still underway on the north side of the U.S. Department of State Extension.

The east lobby of the U.S. Department of War Building has been altered by the addition of security barricades. While some materials replacing original marble and architectural bronze are insensitive to the original design, they do not greatly diminish the architectural significance of this prominent space. Similarly, the south lobby of the U.S. Department of State Extension has been altered through the addition of granite and glass security desks and barriers, and a corner

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coat check room. The security barriers run between the six north piers and the coat check room is located in the southwest corner of the lobby between the west wall and the west flight of stairs.

Perhaps the most notable interior alteration has been the transformation of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms and the offices of the secretary and undersecretary of state on the seventh and eighth floors of the U.S. Department of State Extension, carried out from 1979 to 1989. This project, directed by Clement Conger and designed by several noted restoration and Classical architects, replaced the original starkly modern interiors with museum quality period rooms. In time, this work may be deemed significant; currently, however, there is insufficient perspective to warrant an evaluation for exceptional significance.

### *Integrity*

Overall, the additions and modifications to the U.S. Department of State Building have not impaired its historical character and it continues to function as originally intended. Both the U.S. Department of War Building, and the U.S. Department of State Extension, are generally in excellent condition. Both buildings have been and are well maintained, a factor contributing to their current condition.

Given the monumental size of the building and its intensive use over the past seventy years, the extent of alterations it has sustained is relatively minor. Rehabilitation and modernization projects have been undertaken in a sensitive manner to ensure that its most significant features and overall architectural character are preserved. Thus, the U.S. Department of State Building retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The building retains its original location, and the immediate area has developed in large part as intended by the Northwest Rectangle plan, of which it was an integral part. Its monumental character and its location within an enclave of federal buildings contribute to the U.S. Department of State Building's integrity of association as a governmental entity. The integrity of all these elements result in the building's retention of feeling as a departmental headquarters building constructed in 1941 and 1960 in two distinct but harmonious stylistic expressions of the Modern Movement.



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Politics/Government

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1939-60

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1939-1941

1957-1960

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Gilbert Stanley Underwood; William Dewey Foster (1939-1941)

Louis A. Simon, Office of the Supervising Architect (1939-1941)

Harley Probst Associates (1957-1960)

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The U.S. Department of State Building, consisting of the earlier U.S. Department of War Building (1939-1941) and the later U.S. Department of State Extension (1957-1960), is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level for Community Planning and Development. The period of significance under Community Planning and Development is 1939-1960, encompassing the construction of both sections of the building. The U.S. Department of War Building was sited and designed as a direct result of the efforts to effectively plan and develop federal buildings within Washington, D.C.'s northwest quadrant, while the construction of the U.S. Department of State Extension represents fulfillment of the earlier planning effort for the Northwest Rectangle. In addition, the U.S. Department of State Building is eligible under Criterion A at the national level for Politics/Government. The period of significance under Politics/Government is 1957-1960, representing the construction period for the U.S. Department of State Extension. U.S. Department of State Extension was designed specifically as the headquarters for the U.S. Department of State and incorporates features specific to the needs of the federal agency responsible for the international relations of the United States.

The U.S. Department of State Building is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level for Architecture. The period of significance under Architecture is 1939-1960, encompassing the construction of both sections of the building. The U.S. Department of State Building is significant as an example of federal architecture indicative of its period in time. At the time of its completion in 1960, the U.S. Department of State Building was the largest office building in the District of Columbia, and the second largest federal office building in the country, surpassed only by the Pentagon (1941-1942), the subsequent home of the U.S. Department of War. Although the two buildings that compose the U.S. Department of State Building are different in their concept and design, once completed, the spaces have continued to function as two interconnected entities. Both the U.S. Department of War Building and the U.S. Department of State Extension retain their design character as originally built and together illustrate the evolution of federal design in the first half of the twentieth century. The U.S. Department of State Building exhibits a high degree of architectural integrity.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Resource History and Historic Context**

#### *Planning and Design 1931-1939*

At the turn of the twentieth century, Pierre Charles L'Enfant's 1791 plan for Washington, D.C. was largely unrealized. Because of the growing prominence of Washington, D.C., Congress decided it was necessary to revitalize L'Enfant's initial ideas for the future growth of the city. While relying on the scope of L'Enfant's original designs, the 1901 McMillan Plan focused on a more comprehensive plan for the city and formed the basis for more specialized government planning in the coming decades.<sup>6</sup> Federal planning in the 1920s and 1930s focused greatly on the monumental core of the District of Columbia, most notably areas flanking the National Mall, including the location of the U.S. Department of War Building. In 1926, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission (NCPPC) – originally created in 1924 as the National Capital Parks Commission and charged with acquiring land to complete a park, parkway and playground system for the city – was reestablished, giving it responsibilities for overall planning for the National Capital Region.<sup>7</sup> The NCPPC was responsible for implementing and carrying out proposals based on the McMillan Plan for development of public space within the city.

With federal planning and design for the development of the Federal Triangle (1926-1935) well underway in the early 1930s, the NCPPC sought to develop a corresponding governmental core west of the Ellipse, known as the Northwest Rectangle. First recommended in 1931, the area was to consist of a complex of federal and institutional buildings within a landscaped rectangle at Foggy Bottom–bounded by Constitution Avenue on the south, New York Avenue and E Street on the north, 17<sup>th</sup> Street to the east and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to the west – that would complement the Federal Triangle area and provide a suitable setting for the Lincoln Memorial to the south. Ultimately, the Northwest Rectangle did not achieve full expression as a formally planned federal neighborhood; however, the construction of the U.S. Department of War Building and, subsequently, the U.S. Department of State Extension provided legitimacy to the effort and resulted in the largest federal building constructed in the plan area.

From its inception, the Northwest Rectangle was specifically envisioned as accommodating new headquarters buildings for the Navy and War Departments. These departments, along with the U.S. Department of State, for a time shared the State, War, and Navy Building (1871-1888), now known as the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. However, overcrowding caused the agencies to seek alternative space as early as 1918. By 1938, War and Navy had moved to other

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<sup>6</sup> Gutheim, Frederick, *Worthy of the Nation: History of Planning for the National Capital* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1977), 133-136.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 159-160.

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locations and EEOB was dedicated to the use of the State Department and, subsequently a variety of White House offices. An early version of the Northwest Rectangle plan showed the Navy and War Department buildings located on either side of the intersection of New York and Virginia avenues between 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> streets, N.W.

By the commencement of construction for the U.S. Department of War Building in 1939, the Northwest Rectangle plan had been partially realized, with three federal buildings completed: the Public Health Service Building (now Interior Department South, 1933), the U.S. Department of the Interior Building (1936), and the Federal Reserve Board Building (1937). The headquarters building of the American Pharmacists Association Building (1933) was also completed in this period.<sup>8</sup> In keeping with the original vision of the Northwest Rectangle, these large governmental and institutional buildings exhibit a respect for Classicism in their exterior design. To varying degrees, they also draw upon the tenets of Modernism and thus are representative of the spectrum of expression within the Stripped Classical style. The area continued to receive federal buildings after the U.S. Department of State Extension was completed, with the most recent being the Office of Personnel Management Building (1963) and the Federal Reserve Board Annex (1975). Today, according to a draft National Register nomination for the area, the Northwest Rectangle is “a cohesive district consisting of buildings landscaped by numerous parks and parklets filled with plantings, memorials, sculptures, fountains, and reflecting pools.”<sup>9</sup>

The U.S. Department of War Building, along with the Federal Triangle and the U.S. Department of the Interior, were products of a federal building program established under the Public Buildings Act of 1926. As a result of World War I, a severe delay in federal building construction led to a crisis in the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department, which was responsible for the design and construction of federal buildings throughout the nation. The Public Building Act enabled the Office of the Supervising Architect to contract with private architects for the design of federal buildings and was the precursor to one of the country’s largest construction programs. Initially, the Office of the Supervising Architect was reluctant to hire private architects, but as the Great Depression forced many of these architects out of work and the American Institute of Architects made demands that the federal government contract out some of its work, the office complied by hiring architects as consultants to work under the close direction of the supervising architect.<sup>10</sup> In 1934, pursuant to an order from the secretary of the treasury, this practice of commissioning private architects was sharply curtailed. In an effort to economize and shift expenses away from design and into construction, all future federal buildings were to be designed by the Office of the Supervising Architect. However, a small number of consulting architects could be engaged on a temporary salaried basis to work within the Office on the design of its largest projects.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> National Register of Historic Places Draft Nomination Application, “Northwest Rectangle,” prepared by Emily Hotaling Eig and Laura V. Trieschmann, E.H.T. Tracerics (7 December 1998), Section 8, 30-31.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 8-17.

<sup>10</sup> Lee, Antoinette J, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect’s Office* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 238-241.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 255-256.



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Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the Office of the Supervising Architect underwent a series of reorganizations, intended to improve the management and efficiency of the federal building program. In 1933, the Office of the Supervising Architect was placed under the Treasury Department's Procurement Division, in the Public Works Branch. In 1939, as the federal government geared up for war, the Public Works Branch of the Procurement Division was moved from the Treasury Department to the Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency. Ultimately, after the close of World War II, the office overseeing the public buildings program was renamed the Public Buildings Service and was placed within the U.S. General Services Administration, a new agency authorized in 1949 to manage and support the basic functioning of federal agencies.

A site for the new U.S. Department of War Building was chosen near the center of the Northwest Rectangle by 1935. Preliminary decisions regarding the building's size, design and construction schedule had been made as well. At the time of the site selection, the U.S. Department of War was expanding and occupied space scattered in a number of federal buildings, rented offices, and World War I „temporary“ structures on the Mall. The Public Works Branch of the Treasury Department proposed to construct the new facility to consolidate and meet the immediate needs of the War Department. From the beginning, the U.S. Department of War Building was intended to consist of two units constructed in stages – a smaller east building and a larger west building. The site chosen for the U.S. Department of War Building in 1935 was large enough to accommodate both units.<sup>12</sup>

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt visited the proposed site for the new U.S. Department of War Building in 1936, but did not succeed in appropriating funds until 1938. In 1937, Roosevelt began pushing five- and ten-year plans for new government buildings. The U.S. Department of War Building would be the first executed. Design and planning for the new building occupied the second half of 1938 and almost all of 1939.<sup>13</sup> Two of the consulting architects working under contract within the Public Works Branch, Gilbert Stanley Underwood and William Dewey Foster, were assigned to design the building, while the Office of the Supervising Architect, headed by Louis A. Simon, remained firmly in charge of all designs and drafting.

Designs submitted by the architects were subject to the review of three different agencies: NCPPC, the Department of War, and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). In August 1938, Simon submitted preliminary designs for both units of the U.S. Department of War Building to CFA and NCPPC. The review agencies accepted a preliminary plan that called for the closing of New York Avenue through the site. During the design development phase, NCPPC's consulting architect, William T. Partridge, questioned whether the building would be large enough. The selected site was in an already congested area of the city, leaving very little room for expansion. Partridge recommended the closure of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street as well as New York Avenue, as the street

<sup>12</sup> Short and Ford Architects, *Historic Structure Report and Preservation Manual: State Department* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration, 1990), 17.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

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would run through the building, bifurcating its basement and first floor. With the prospect of war becoming more certain, Partridge's concerns were echoed by the Office of the Quartermaster General in April 1939. The U.S. Department of War was becoming increasingly concerned that the capacity of the file and mailrooms would be inadequate should the United States go to war. As a result, the structure of the new U.S. Department of War Building was designed to carry a heavier live load throughout the building. Final designs for the new U.S. Department of War Building were completed in late 1939.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Construction (1940-1941, 1957-1960)*

Acquisition of the site, which included west to 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and south to C Street—not just the quarter of the site where the U.S. Department of War Building would be located—continued throughout most of 1939. Occupied by two and three story houses and apartment buildings, only the section of the site where the U.S. Department of War Building was to be built was cleared (see Figure 6). By the spring of 1940, construction commenced and proceeded quickly thereafter.<sup>15</sup>

The construction contract for the new U.S. Department of War Building was awarded to John McShain, Inc. of Philadelphia in February 1940. By June of that same year, the caissons were completed and erection of the steel framework had started. At the time of the building's construction, the U.S. Department of War Building incorporated the latest in office design technology, which included central air conditioning, fluorescent lighting, and acoustical plaster.<sup>16</sup> The building was ready for occupancy by July 1941, but it never became the headquarters for the U.S. Department of War.

William T. Partridge's concern that the U.S. Department of War Building would be obsolete by the time of its completion proved to be true. In July 1941, Congress authorized and appropriated funds for the construction of the Pentagon across the Potomac River in Arlington, Virginia. The Pentagon was far larger than any building that could have been accommodated in the Northwest Rectangle. Completed in 1942, it had the capacity to house 20,000 workers. Although a few sections of the U.S. Department of War did relocate to the 21<sup>st</sup> Street, N.W., building, they moved out completely in 1944.<sup>17</sup> Although preliminary plans for the extension of the building already had been submitted to CFA and Roosevelt was committed to seeing it to completion by the end of his third administration,<sup>18</sup> the onset of World War II delayed many projects that were deemed non-essential, including this one.

Like the U.S. Department of War, the U.S. Department of State experienced rapid growth at the onset of World War II. Leaving the State, War, and Navy Building in 1947, the agency was scattered about the city in nearly 48 different locations. The idea of the U.S. Department of War

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 24.

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Building extension was brought up again in 1947 when the first unit of the U.S. Department of State moved into the former U.S. Department of War Building.<sup>19</sup> By 1951, the building had clearly become the U.S. Department of State's new headquarters. In July 1955, the expansion was formally reactivated by President Eisenhower, at which time funding was requested from Congress.<sup>20</sup> Among the arguments for constructing the new space was that the concentration of employees in one central location would improve efficiency and economy, and it would also provide facilities for international conferences as well as an auditorium large enough for both public and departmental functions.

The contract for the design of the U.S. Department of State Extension was awarded in 1956 to Harley Probst Associates. The company was a joint venture between two firms—Harley, Ellington & Day of Detroit, which would have responsibility for engineering, and Graham, Anderson, Probst & White of Chicago, which would lead the architectural design. After several months of revisions, the final plans for the U.S. Department of State Extension were approved in February 1957 (see Figure 7). Congress appropriated \$46.7 million for the extension and John McShain again won the contract for construction. At this time, 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, which still ran north-south from D Street to C Street, dividing the site of the U.S. Department of War Building and U.S. Department of State Extension, was closed and demolition proceeded. Among the buildings on the site, to the south of the U.S. Department of War Building, were three brick apartment houses and four smaller buildings, all of which were being used to house various agencies of the State Department. In addition, to the west of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, were three large temporary buildings erected by the government during World War II as well as an earlier brick government building.<sup>21</sup> The U.S. Department of State Extension was completed in December 1960 and dedicated the following month in January 1961.

### *Landscape (1941, 1960)*

A 1941 planting plan for the U.S. Department of War Building shows a simple, but complete landscape scheme. However, completion photographs for the building suggest that the 1941 planting plan was not fully implemented. It is unclear whether this was due to budgetary concerns, wartime constraints, or some other factor. The only landscaping visible in these images is a grass strip between the sidewalk and areaway, and a row of American elms planted across the east front in a strip of Belgian block paving between the sidewalk and the street. They also show large shrubs at either side of the entrance doors, which were not part of the planned landscaping. The plans called for a variety of perimeter plantings, plantings in the courtyards, and special paving at the east entrance. Special lighting fixtures were designed as streetlights for the U.S. Department of War Building. These consisted of a tapered iron base and slender round shaft of cast iron, bearing a cylindrical lantern of glass surmounted by a bellcast cupola and topped by a spike finial. A photograph dated November 17, 1941, shows two of these standards

<sup>19</sup> "State Department Units to Move to War Offices," *Washington Post*, 28 November 1946, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Lyons, Richard L, "\$60 Million State Department Addition Approved by Congress Conferees," *Washington Post* 30 July 1955, 1.

<sup>21</sup> Short and Ford Architects, 99

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in place adjacent to a parking area on the west side of the building (see Figure 4). However, none of these standards are extant today and it is unclear how many others were installed.<sup>22</sup>

Although references to a U.S. Department of State Extension landscaping plan or program exist, they do not provide specific information. General information is contained in the site plan prepared in 1957. However, because the building was designed to occupy nearly all available space on its site, opportunities for landscape treatment were limited to the perimeter of the property, the forecourts at the south, west and north entrances, and the south and north interior courtyards.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Artwork (1939-1943, 1956-1963)*

As the design of the U.S. Department of War Building solidified, attention turned to another component of its design, which included various forms of painting and sculpture. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, the design of federal buildings incorporated art. The incorporation of art in design reflected the government's desire to create lasting civic monuments that would demonstrate the nation's cultural attainments and instruct the public through artistic representations of democratic and inspirational themes. With the Great Depression, the government's motivations for embellishing its buildings expanded to include providing employment for artists. The Section of Painting and Sculpture, later the Section of Fine Arts, was administered by the Procurement Division of the U.S. Treasury Department from 1934 to 1943. The Section awarded commissions through competitions and paid artists a lump sum for their works of art for newly constructed federal buildings and post offices. With the establishment of the U.S. General Services Administration in 1949, the Section of Fine Arts moved to the new agency along with the Public Buildings Service. Today, the Fine Arts Collection includes many thousands of paintings, sculpture, graphics, and textiles located in buildings and public institutions across the country.<sup>24</sup>

The Treasury Department allocated funds for a lobby mural, two statues flanking the front door, three sculptures over the main entrance pavilion, and a frieze above the main doors, all on the 21<sup>st</sup> Street side. Each was to be awarded through a separate competition. The first commission was for the sculptures above the main entrance. Harry Kries (1899-1963) succeeded in gaining the commission. Kries was also selected for sculpture commissions for the Wilbur J. Cohen Federal Building and the Robert J. Kennedy Department of Justice Building, both in Washington, D.C., and for the Federal Building and U.S. courthouse in Erie, Pennsylvania. All were successfully executed and installed between 1933 and 1941. However, over a series of months culminating in late 1941, mock-ups of the sculptures were displayed on site as full-size silhouettes, but were rejected by the CFA and never installed. The same fate befell the work of the sculptor Earl Thorp (?-1951), who was commissioned to sculpt two freestanding statues to

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>24</sup> „About the Collection,” U.S. General Services Administration website, available from <https://www.gsa.gov/fa/#/about-the-collection>, accessed April 24, 2017.

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flank the entrance. His contract was terminated after full-size plaster models of the statues were displayed on site.

A third sculptor, Jean de Marco (1998-1990), was initially more successful after winning the commission to execute a large bas-relief over the 21<sup>st</sup> Street entrance doors. Jean de Marco was born in Paris and studied at the Ecole Nationale des Arts Decoratifs. He came to the United States as an assistant to Malvina Hoffman, and established his own studio in 1934. His work includes art in federal buildings across the country, including the United States Capitol and the U.S. Post Offices in Weldon, North Carolina, and Danville, Pennsylvania. De Marco completed a plaster model for a bas-relief at the U.S. Department of War Building, entitled *Peaceful Pursuits of American Life*, which depicted allegorical figures representing agriculture and industry flanking a central figure of Liberty. However, the carving was postponed in 1942 due to World War II, and the relief was never executed.

In addition to sculpture, places were designated as mural locations within the building. Kindred McLeary (1901-1949) completed the mural commissioned for the 21<sup>st</sup> Street main lobby in the summer of 1942. McLeary was born in Weimar, Texas, and studied architecture at the University of Texas, as well as fine arts at the Fontainebleau School in France. McLeary carried out most of his career as a muralist while teaching architecture at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (Carnegie-Mellon University) in Pittsburgh. His mural in the U.S. Department of War Building lobby is entitled *The Defense of Human Freedoms*. It depicts, under a swarm of eagles and airplanes, the five freedoms: freedom of worship, freedom of assembly, freedom in the pursuit of happiness, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press. Flanked at either end are their defenders: American fighting men operating the machines of war. In the mural, McLeary employed the style of Social Realism predominant in federal government art of the 1930s. Combining bold, somewhat abstracted forms and strong contrasts of light, the mural is filled with a plethora of realistic detail. McLeary also painted murals in the Madison Square Postal Station in New York City, the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Post Office in South Norwalk, Connecticut.

The second work of art completed for the U.S. Department of War Building was for the fifth floor lobby of an executive suite. James McCreery (1901-1970), trained as an architect at the University of California, designed the mural, which was completed in 1943. The mural, entitled *Liberty or Death: Don't Tread on Me*, is composed of maps, cannons, and other armament with flags of the American Revolutionary era. McCreery's work is symbolic of military activity associated with the Revolutionary War, a fitting choice for the U.S. Department of War Building. Besides his work for the U.S. Department of War Building, McCreery's other federal work includes a mural in the U.S. Post Office in Monett, Missouri.<sup>25</sup>

Although references to mural paintings were made in the preliminary plans for the U.S. Department of State Extension, no proposals for that type of artwork were ever made.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 42-44.

<sup>26</sup> Lyons, Richard L, "\$60 Million State Department Addition Approved by Congress Conferees," *Washington Post* 30 July 1955, 1.

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Sculpture groups were intended to flank the south entrance of the building and Albert T. Stewart (1900-1965) was selected for the project. Although Stewart revised his designs several times, CFA failed to approve any version and after Congress failed to appropriate funds for the groups, Stewart's contract was cancelled. The only work of art installed in the U.S. Department of State Extension was the sculpture entitled *The Expanding Universe* by Marshall Maynard Fredericks (1908-1998). Fredericks' work is known in many federal buildings across the country and includes *American Eagle* for the Federal Building in Cincinnati, *The Family* for the U.S. Post Office in Sandwich, Illinois, and *The Horseless Carriage* for the U.S. Post Office in River Rouge, Michigan. In 1957 Fredericks was chosen to execute his sculpture in the south courtyard of the U.S. Department of State Extension. Funding was finally secured for the fountain and statue in 1960 and it was installed in the south courtyard in 1963.<sup>27</sup>

### Architectural Context

The U.S. Department of State Building was one of a number of governmental and institutional buildings completed in accordance with the Northwest Rectangle plan of Washington, D.C., and is indicative of federal architecture occurring during its period in time, such as the U.S. Department of the Interior Building and the Federal Reserve Board Building. Designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood and William Dewey Foster, the U.S. Department of War Building is representative of style known as Stripped Classical, combining elements of the Modern Movement: influenced by industrial design and characterized by simple geometric forms, sleek surfaces, and sharp, clean contrasts, with references to the Classical forms that had dominated federal building design in the preceding decades.

Gilbert Stanley Underwood (1890-1961) studied architecture at the University of Illinois and the University of Michigan before obtaining a bachelor's degree from Yale and a master's degree from Harvard. In 1934, after his successful private practice was greatly affected by the Great Depression, Underwood moved to Washington, D.C., as a temporary consulting architect with the Office of the Supervising Architect. He eventually became a permanent government employee and, for a period in the mid- to late 1940s, served as supervising architect of the Federal Works Agency's Public Buildings Administration. While much of his early career was spent working with the National Park Service designing in a more rustic style, his later career was distinctively more modernistic.<sup>28</sup> William Dewey Foster (1890-1958) received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, worked in a number of private firms in New York City, and established his own firm, Foster and Vassar, before becoming a consulting architect with the Office of the Supervising Architect in 1934. At the time of his death, Foster was a partner in the firm of Howe, Foster and Snyder, which he first organized in 1947 as Howe & Foster with George L. Howe.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Short and Ford Architects, 42-43.

<sup>28</sup> Wheaton, Rod L, "Gilbert Stanley Underwood, 1890-1960" in *National Park Service: The First 75 years Bibliographical Vignettes*, National Park Service website, available from [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/sontag/underwood.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/sontag/underwood.htm), accessed April 24, 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Determination of Eligibility, "West Heating Plant," prepared by Patti Kuhn, The Louis Berger Group, Inc., for D.C. State Historic Preservation Office (July 9, 2012), 6.

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During the 1930s and 1940s, without formally endorsing Modernism, the federal government moved away from the Beaux Arts style, while still working within the Classical vocabulary. This first wave of Modern-era buildings combined aspects of Art Deco and Streamlined Moderne with the basic form and symmetry of Classicism. The result, commonly referred to as Modern Classic or Stripped Classical, displayed large expanses of blank walls, simplified ornamentation (often derived from Classical motifs), and minimal sculptural elements.<sup>30</sup> Federal architects were not unaware of modern architectural trends, but were reluctant to depart from the tradition and symbolism that Classicism conveyed. However, the economic constraints of the Great Depression gave impetus to further attenuation of the Classical forms and ornamentation as the emphasis in design turned toward utility and economy. The Stripped Classical style was disseminated throughout the country by New Deal building programs and continued to be utilized for federal buildings in architecturally conservative Washington, D.C., well after World War II. During the 1940's, the style's tendency toward minimalism and purely functional expression increased. Concurrently, the Modern movement's acceptance was accelerated by the exigencies of World War II and the innovative materials and production techniques spawned by the war effort. Initially executed in a tentative fashion, Modernism finally made an impact on federal building design in the 1950s as the federal government began to explicitly encourage Modern design.<sup>31</sup> Non-federal Washington, D.C., was also slow to embrace Modern design; the city's first Modern office building, the Longfellow Building, designed by William Lescaze, was not constructed until 1940.<sup>32</sup>

The U.S. Department of War Building is a characteristic building of the federal government's early Modern period, combining aspects of Moderne and Classical styles in an austere example of Stripped Classical. It is horizontally divided in a manner that reflects Classical precedent, but is also composed of block-like forms stressing planar wall surfaces, and prominent setbacks, like many federal buildings of this time period. Clearly less wedded to Classicism than its Northwest Rectangle neighbors, such as the U.S. Department of the Interior Building and the Federal Reserve Board Building, the U.S. Department of War Building shares many characteristics with the Health and Human Services Building (Wilbur J. Cohen Building) at 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., and the Railroad Retirement Board Building (Mary E. Switzer Memorial Federal Building) at 330 C Street, S.W., both completed in 1940. All three buildings make their architectural statement through the bold and simple massing of rectangular forms, rather than through applied ornament, but still cling to Classical symmetry and reliance on receding and projecting planes.

The Government Accounting Office Building at 441 G Street, N.W., also designed by Underwood but completed a decade after the U.S Department of War Building, provides a more fully modern example of federal design of the early modern period. It was the first large office

<sup>30</sup> Kostof, Spiro, *History of Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 716.

<sup>31</sup> Robinson, Judith H. and Stephanie S. Foell, Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 1960s, and 70s*. (U.S. General Services Administration, 2003), 25.

<sup>32</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., *DC Modern: A Context for Modernism in the District of Columbia, 1945-1976* (January 23, 2009), 16.

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building in Washington, D.C., to have a continuous floor plate; lacking the interior courts that had typified large federal offices of the first half of the twentieth century, the full-block Government Accounting Office Building would be dependent on air conditioning and artificial lighting.<sup>33</sup> Its block-long façades are marked by continuous flat surfaces broken only by the regularly arrayed punched windows; any allusions to Classical massing or motifs are eliminated.

The U.S. Department of War Building shares many characteristics with other federal buildings designed by Underwood in the same period, including the U.S. Mint in San Francisco (1937), the U.S. Courthouse in Los Angeles (1940), and the U.S. Courthouse in Seattle (1940). Foster was also responsible for the design of notable Stripped Classical or Moderne federal buildings including the U.S. Post Office in Great Neck, Long Island (1940) and the West Heating Plant in Washington, D.C. (designed 1941, completed 1948).

The U.S. Department of War Building is representative of the government's readiness to incorporate in federal buildings new technologies that enhanced workplace efficiency. Central air conditioning, fluorescent lighting, and acoustical plaster, were all part of its original design. Beginning in the 1920s, movie theatres became the first buildings commonly air conditioned. In 1928, the technology had debuted in a Texas office building. By the time the U.S. Department of War Building entered design, air conditioning already had been incorporated in several other federal buildings, including the National Archives, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Auditorium, and the Department of the Interior, and was on its way to becoming a standard feature. However, more innovative was the use of acoustical plaster—plaster containing fibers or aggregate so that it absorbs sound. Developed in the 1920s, it was not manufactured in quantity until the end of the 1930s. It was widely employed in the U.S. Department of War Building. Considerable attention was also paid to the acoustical properties of the movable metal partitions between offices in the building, although there is no evidence of the methods used to minimize transmission of sound.<sup>34</sup>

The U.S. Department of War Building may have been the first federal building in Washington to employ fluorescent lighting. Fluorescent tubes were introduced by both Westinghouse and General Electric Company in 1938.<sup>35</sup> They were available only in linear form; circular fluorescents were not manufactured until 1945. At the U.S. Department of War Building, no attempt was made to take advantage of their superior illuminating qualities for file rooms and offices. Instead, they were used in more ceremonial spaces, such as corridors and adjacent to elevator lobbies and the exhibition rooms.<sup>36</sup>

The U.S. Department of State Extension to some degree continued the characteristics of the U.S. Department of War Building, but the design elements were even further pared down to reflect the prominent International Style of architecture. As a result, there is a greater stress on

<sup>33</sup> Maarja Krustenhttp, "How GAO Built Its Dream House," Government Accounting Office website, available from <http://www.gao.gov/about/history/building.html>, accessed April 24, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Short and Ford Architects, 51.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.



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horizontal and more emphasis on a balance of unlike parts rather than axial symmetry. The massing of the building is an arrangement of straight-line geometric shapes, and ornamentation is achieved through the handling of materials rather than the application of decorative elements. While clearly embracing Modernist principles, the U.S. Department of State Extension was designed to complete and to complement the existing U.S. Department of War Building and thus was unable to express those principles to the same degree as other federal buildings of the same period. For example, although clad in limestone, a traditional Washington building material, the Lyndon B. Johnson Federal Building (1961) at 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., introduced a new form of federal building to the nation's capital. The rectangular structure is raised on pilotis with a recessed curtain wall at the ground level and set within a landscaped plaza.

The design for the U.S. Department of State Extension, like that for the U.S. Department of War Building, incorporated central air conditioning, fluorescent lighting and acoustical plaster. However, by the time the U.S. Department of State Extension was constructed, these features no longer represented innovative technology, but instead were standard features of large-scale office buildings. At the time of its completion in 1960, the U.S. Department of State Building was the largest office building in the District of Columbia, and the second largest federal office building in the country, surpassed only by the Pentagon.

The firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, consulting architects for the U.S. Department of State Extension, has a distinguished history that traces back to the prominent architectural firm of Burnham and Root in Chicago during the 1870s. Known for its "Chicago School," Burnham and Root was instrumental in setting precedents for the Modern architectural movement. The firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst & White was formed in 1917, a few years after Daniel H. Burnham's death. The firm became a corporation in 1948 and soon after began working on the U.S. Department of State Extension.<sup>37</sup>

## Significance

### *Criterion A - Community Planning and Development*

The U.S. Department of State Building, consisting of the earlier U.S. Department of War Building (1939-1941) and the later U.S. Department of State Extension (1957-1960), is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A on the local level representing the effort to develop a cohesive federal district within Washington, D.C.'s northwest quadrant. The development of a governmental core west of the Ellipse, known as the Northwest Rectangle, was first recommended in 1931 and was envisioned as a complement to the Federal Triangle, then underway. Securing the U.S. Department of War Building was key to the effort. As completed, the U.S. Department of State Building stands as the largest federal building constructed in the Northwest Rectangle, which developed over the following four decades as an area of large federal and institutional buildings within a park-like setting.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 37-38.

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*Criterion A - Politics/Government*

The U.S. Department of State Building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A on the national level for its association with the Department of State, as the headquarters for the federal agency responsible for the nation's international relations. The U.S. Department of State Extension transformed the offices inherited from the U.S. Department of War into a purpose-built headquarters appropriate to the diplomatic mission and activities of the Department of State, providing the highly specialized and grand spaces necessary to statecraft.

*Criterion C- Architecture*

The U.S. Department of State Building is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C on the local level as an example of federal architecture indicative of the mid-twentieth century. Although the two buildings that create the U.S. Department of State Building are different in their concept and design, the construction of the U.S. Department of State Extension was the completion of a much larger plan initiated in 1935 with the first proposals for the U.S. Department of War Building. Once completed, the spaces have continued to function as two interconnected entities. Both the U.S. Department of War Building and the U.S. Department of State Extension retain their design character as originally built and together illustrate the evolution of federal design in the first half of the twentieth century. The two components represent two distinct but harmonious stylistic expressions of the Modern Movement.

*Period of Significance*

The period of significance for the U.S. Department of State Building is 1939 to 1960, encompassing the construction periods for both the original building and the extension.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: U.S. General Services Administration

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 12.1 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 18 | Easting: 323380 | Northing: 4305395 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The U.S. Department of State Building and its grounds at 2201 C Street, N.W., occupy the two blocks bounded by D Street on the north, C Street on the south, 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the east and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street on the west, in Washington, D.C., which comprises Square 61.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

All property lines are as they existed at the time of the building's construction. The nomination includes all property historically associated with the building.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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date: Revised. December 2013; May 2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

Name of Property: U.S. Department of State Building

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: District of Columbia

Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.

Date Photographed: October 10, 2007 and February 23, 2017 (2007 photographs have been verified to accurately reflect the current conditions of the U.S. Department of State Building).

Number of Photos: 26

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1

Exterior, U.S. Department of War Building, East Elevation with Diplomacy Center Pavilion, Looking West (2017)

Photo #2

Exterior, War Department Building, North Elevation, Looking Southwest (2017)

Photo #3

Interior, War Department Building, Diplomacy Center, Looking West to Original East Entrance (2017)

Photo #4

Interior, War Department Building, First Floor, East Lobby, Looking Northeast (2007)

Photo #5

Interior, War Department Building, First Floor, East Elevator Lobby, Looking West ((2007)

U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

Photo #6

Interior, War Department Building, First Floor, East Lobby Mural, *The Defense of Human Freedoms*, Looking West (2017)

Photo #7

Interior, War Department Building, First Floor, Grand Stair, Looking West (2007)

Photo #8

Interior, War Department Building, First Floor, East Lobby, Detail, Looking North (2007)

Photo #9

Interior, War Department, Third Floor Office (2007)

Photo #10

Interior, War Department, Fifth Floor, South Executive Office (2007)

Photo #11

Interior, Fifth Floor, War Department Reception Room Mural, *Liberty or Death: Don't Tread on Me* (2007)

Photo #12

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, East and South Elevations, Looking Northwest (2017)

Photo #13

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, South Elevation at Entrance, Looking North (2017)

Photo #14

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, South Elevation, Detail South Entrance Canopy, Looking Northeast (2017)

Photo #15

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, South Elevation, Looking Northeast (2017)

Photo #16

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast (2017)

Photo #17

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, West Elevation at Entrance, Looking Northeast (2017)

Photo #18



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, South Courtyard, *The Expanding Universe*,  
Looking Southwest (2007)

Photo #19

Interior, U.S. Department of State Extension, First Floor, South Lobby, Looking East (2007)

Photo #20

Interior, State Department Extension, First Floor, International Conference Room Lobby and  
Delegates Lounge, Looking East (2007)

Photo #21

Interior, U.S. Department of State Extension, First Floor, International Conference Room  
Lobby, Looking West (2007)

Photo #22

Interior, State Department Extension, Second Floor, Dean Acheson Auditorium Lobby,  
Looking East (2007)

Photo #23

Interior, U.S. Department of State Extension, Second Floor, Dean Acheson Auditorium,  
Looking East (2007)

Photo #24

Interior, U.S. Department of State Extension, Seventh Floor, Treaty Room (2007)

Photo #25

Interior, U.S. Department of State Extension, Eighth Floor, Benjamin Franklin State Dining  
Room, Looking East (2017)

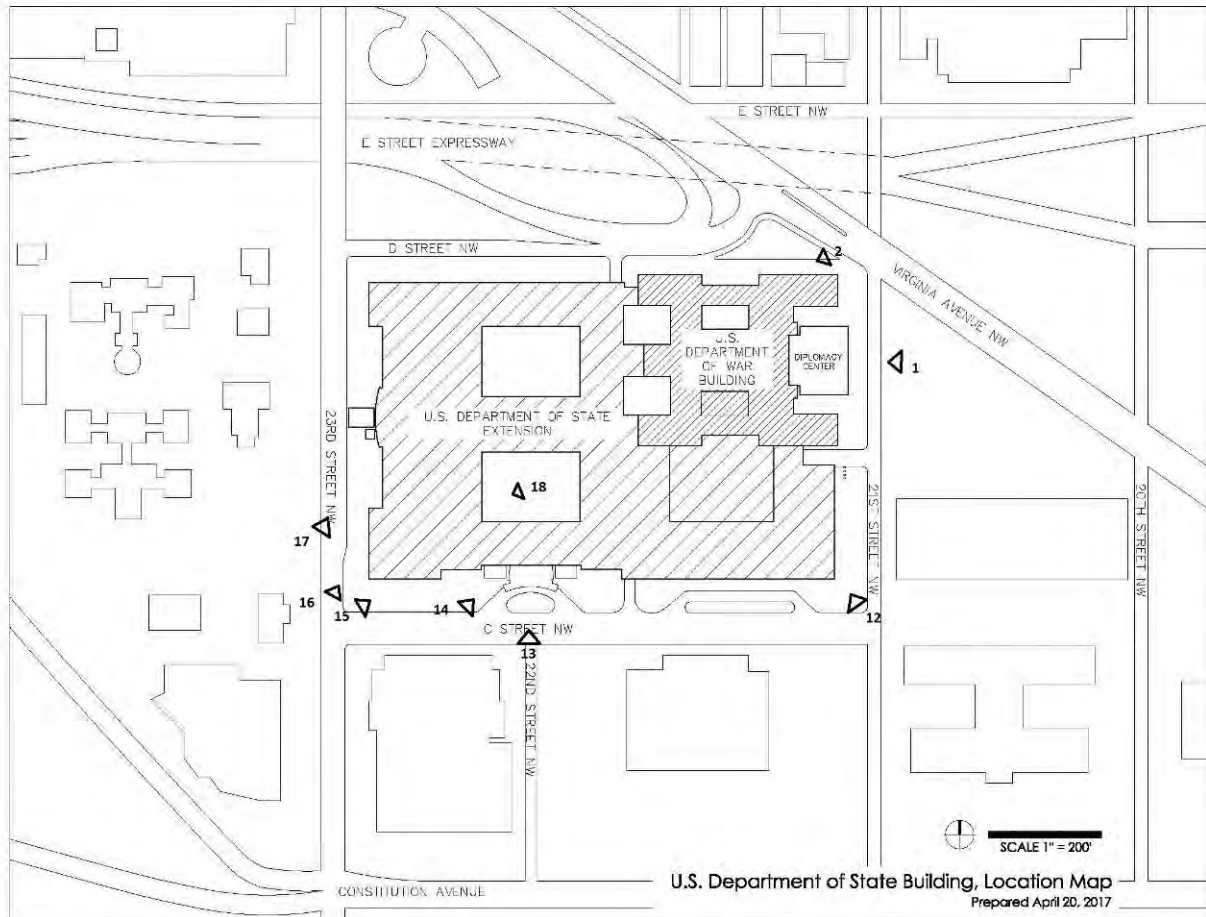
Photo #26

Exterior, U.S. Department of State Extension, Eighth Floor Terrace, Looking East (2017)

U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

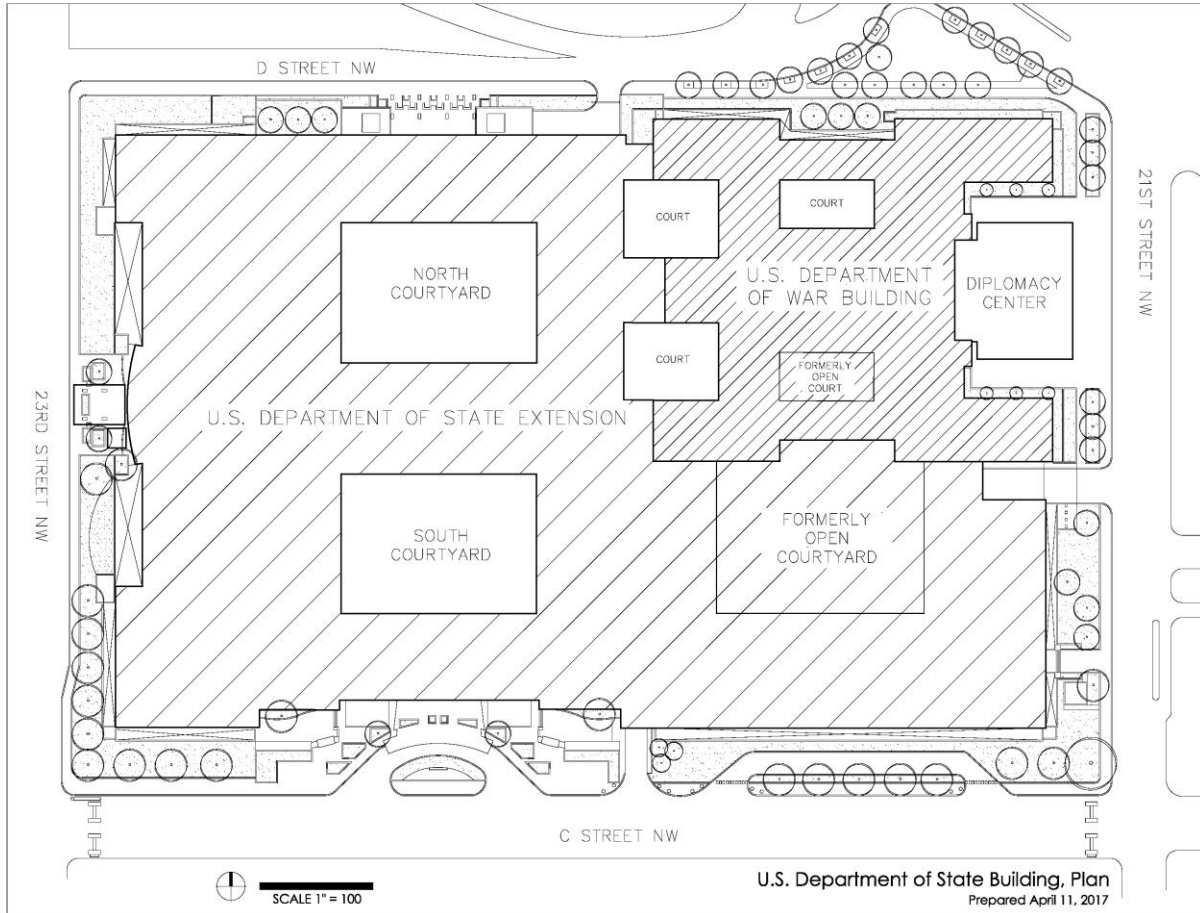
**Photo Key**



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

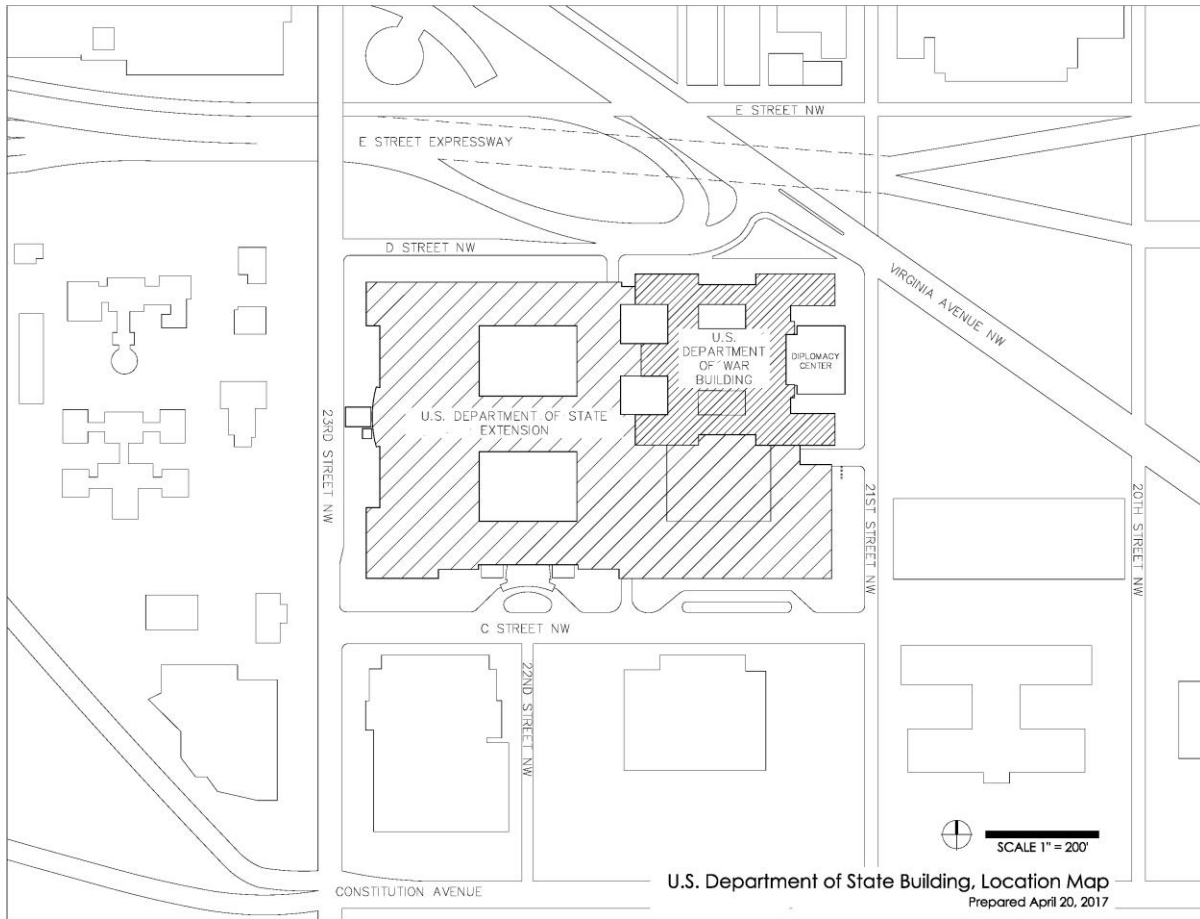
**Building Plan**



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Location Map**



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 1** – U.S. Department of State Building, U.S. Department of War Building in Upper Left, U.S. Department of State Extension in Upper Right and Entire Lower Portion, Looking East, No Date



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 2** – U.S. Department of War Building, East Elevation, Looking Southwest, April 1941



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 3** – U.S. Department of War Building, North Elevation, Looking Southeast, June 1941



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 4** – U.S. Department of War Building, West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast, November 1941





U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 5** – U.S. Department of State Building, East Entrance Forecourt before Diplomacy Center Pavilion, Looking Northwest, October 2007



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 6** – U.S. Department of War Building Site, Looking Northwest, April 1940



U.S. Department of State Building  
Name of Property

District of Columbia  
County and State

**Figure 7** – U.S. Department of State Extension, Rendering of South Entrance circa 1957



**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

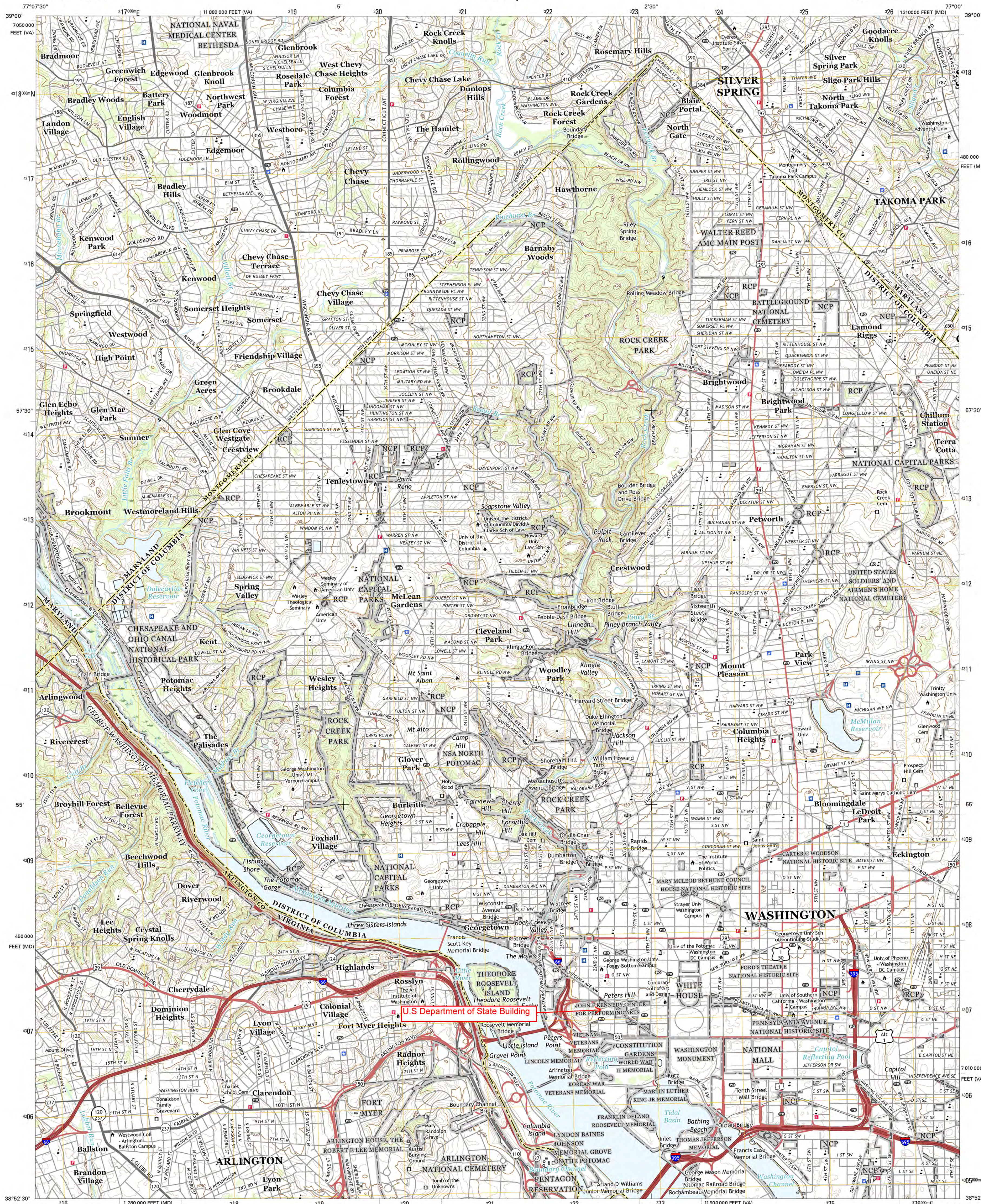




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



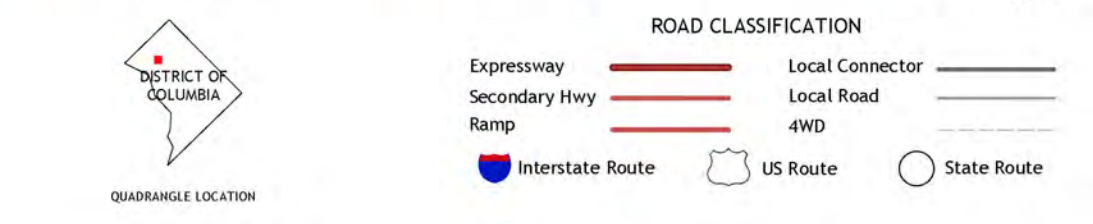
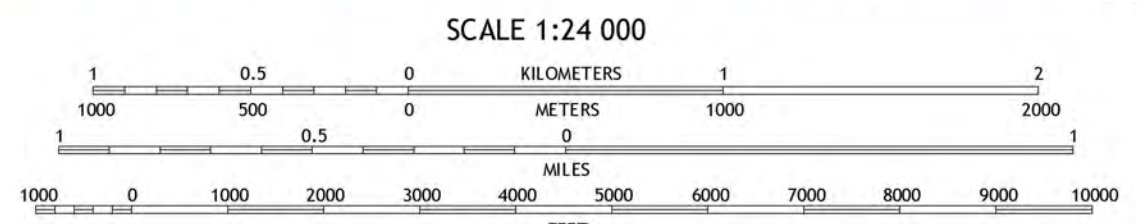
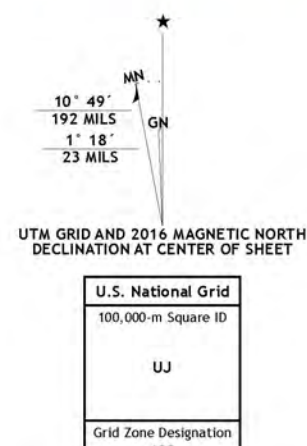
WASHINGTON WEST QUADRANGLE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA  
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84). Projection and  
1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, Zone 18S  
10 000-foot ticks: Maryland Coordinate System of 1983, Virginia  
Coordinate System of 1983 (north zone)

This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be  
generalized for this map scale. Private lands within government  
reservations may not be shown. Obtain permission before  
entering private lands.

Imagery:.....N.A.P. September 2015  
.....U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 - 2016  
Names:.....GNIS, 2016  
Hydrography:.....National Hydrography Dataset, 2015  
Contours:.....National Elevation Dataset, 2015  
Boundaries:.....Multiple sources; see metadata file 1972 - 2016  
Wetlands:.....FWS National Wetlands Inventory 1977 - 2014



1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

1 Rockville  
2 Kensington  
3 Beltsville  
4 Falls Church  
5 Washington East  
6 Annapolis  
7 Alexandria  
8 Anacostia

WASHINGTON WEST, DC-MD-VA  
2016















EXIT

Small plaque or sign on the wall to the right of the central doors.



















THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED  
UNDER THE ACT OF CONGRESS  
APPROVED JUNE 25 1938  
COMPLETED UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF  
**FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT**  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

**HENRY L STIMSON**  
SECRETARY OF WAR

**ROBERT P PATTERSON**  
UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR

**GENERAL GEORGE C MARSHALL**  
CHIEF OF STAFF

**MAJOR GENERAL EDMUND B GREGORY**  
QUARTERMASTER GENERAL

**JOHN M CARMODY**  
FEDERAL WORKS ADMINISTRATOR

**W ENGLEBERT REYNOLDS**  
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS

**LOUIS A SIMON**  
SUPERVISING ARCHITECT

**NEAL A MELICK**  
SUPERVISING ENGINEER

**GILBERT S UNDERWOOD** **WM DEWEY FOSTER**  
ARCHITECTS

**JOHN MCSHAIN**  
BUILDER













LIBERTY OR DEATH  
DON'T TREAD ON ME

76

YORKTOWN  
SARATOGA  
BENNINGTON









HARRY S. TRUMAN BUILDING























































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: U.S. Department of State Building

Multiple Name:

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received: 7/7/2017      Date of Pending List: 8/2/2017      Date of 16th Day: 8/17/2017      Date of 45th Day: 8/21/2017      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001481

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept       Return       Reject      8/21/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria      Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer      Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus*

Discipline      Historian

Telephone      (202)354-2218

Date      8/21/2017

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



June 30, 2017

Mr. Paul Loether  
Chief, NRHP & NHL Program  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to nominate the U.S. Department of State Building (current name: Harry S Truman Federal Building) at 2201 C Street, NW, Washington, DC, for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination is hereby submitted on disk in accordance with the May 6, 2013 guidance and includes the following:

- Signed original first page of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form;
- Disk 1 - The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the U.S. Department of State Building, located Washington, DC, to the National Register of Historic Place; and,
- Disk 2 - The enclosed disk contains the .tiff image files for the above referenced nomination.

The nomination reflects extensive input from the DC Historic Preservation Office and the DC Historic Preservation Officer has concurred that the property meets the National Register criteria for listing. In accordance with 36 CFR Part 60.9(c), the appropriate local elected official was notified of GSA's intent to nominate the above referenced property to the National Register of Historic Places by letter dated May 15, 2017. No response comments were received.

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](mailto:elizabeth.hannold@gsa.gov).

Sincerely,

Beth L. Savage  
Federal Preservation Officer  
Director, Center for Historic Buildings

Enclosures

cc: Nancy Witherell, Regional Historic Preservation Officer, GSA, National Capital Region  
Kristi Tunstall, Director, Historic Preservation and Arts Division, GSA, National Capital Region  
David Maloney, DC Historic Preservation Officer