

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Other names/site number John W. McCormack U. S. Post Office and Courthouse

2. Location

Street & Number 5 Post Office Square Not for Publication N/A
City or Town Boston Vicinity N/A
State Massachusetts Code MA County Suffolk Code 025
Zip Code 02109

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 ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] GSA, 2/18/11
Signature of certifying official Federal Preservation Officer Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon SHPO February 9, 2011
Signature of commenting official/Title Date

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

4.8.11

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
☐ private	☒ building(s)	<u>1</u>	☐ building(s)
☐ public-local	☐ district	☐	☐ sites
☐ public-state	☐ site	☐	☐ structures
☒ public-federal	☐ structure	☐	☐ objects
	☐ object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Government</u>	Sub: <u>Post Office</u>
<u>Government</u>	<u>Courthouse</u>
<u>Government</u>	<u>Government Office</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Government</u>	Sub: <u>Government Office (under rehabilitation)</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>CONCRETE, METAL: Steel</u>
roof	<u>METAL: Steel (frame), OTHER: Composition</u>
walls	<u>STONE: Marble, Granite, Limestone</u>
other	<u>METAL: Aluminum (decorative features)</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 7 Continuation Sheets.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Description

General

The John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse is located on the one acre Post Office Square city block in downtown Boston. Built between 1931 and 1933, the Art Deco style skyscraper contains 628,007 square feet of multi-use space including Post Office workrooms, court rooms, judge's chambers, court support space and general office space. The McCormack building is a steel and reinforced concrete frame building clad in New England granite and Ingalls limestone with terra cotta, marble, and aluminum ornamentation. Its irregular massing consists of three towers of varying height rising above a five story base to a total of 331 feet on the main block.

The vertical emphasis of the stone pilasters and window openings and the use of stepped parapets rather than horizontal cornices are all features of the Art Deco institutional design. On the building interior, fine finishes were generally limited to public areas, principally court rooms and post office, main corridors, stairs, and elevators. In an unusual collaboration, the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department, James A. Wetmore, produced the building plan with a general interior layout and the noted Boston architectural firm of Cram and Ferguson designed the building's façade and the primary interior spaces. The structure is bounded on four sides by Water, Congress, Milk and Devonshire streets. The building is a city of Boston landmark.

Exterior

The McCormack building is a freestanding, granite and limestone skyscraper occupying an acre-sized parcel measuring 227 feet x 207 feet x 248 feet x 201 feet. Thirteen bays rise along Congress and Devonshire streets and eleven bays on Water and Milk streets. Sub-base stories and a below grade basement, operating as an entry pavilion, are partially exposed. These floors, together with the floors above them, comprise the structure's five story base and central core. Three towers are massed in a 'U'-configuration. The sixteen story main mass rises to a height of 258 feet on Post Office Square, while the six additional stories of the Devonshire Street tower result in a total height of 331 feet on Devonshire Street and 336 feet on Congress Street with a set-back tower that adds another seventy-eight feet and six stories, making the recessed central tower twenty-two stories in height. The lower flanking towers each terminate at the seventeenth story. A deep central court spans the fifth through fifteenth floors to provide air circulation and light. The foundation rests on a reinforced nine foot thick concrete mat.

Several New England granites were chosen to face the seventeen stories of the main block rather than limestone in order to provide work for local quarries. Polished dark Quincy, Massachusetts, granite was used for the sub-base stories; Concord, New Hampshire, granite for the first two stories; and Chelmsford, Massachusetts, granite for the upper stories. Since granite was more expensive than limestone, interior marble was deleted and terra cotta substituted for some exterior ornament. The six story tower and light well were faced with "Ingalls" Indiana limestone.

Façade Descriptions

Congress Street/Post Office Park

The east-facing Congress Street or Post Office Park façade presents the five story main entrance of the building and displays both a vertical and a three-dimensional emphasis. This interplay, a hallmark of the Art Deco style, is typical

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of the entire building. The "ziggurat" massing, consisting of the full block base rising through to the setback upper tower; the vertical emphasis of the stone pilasters and window openings; and the use of stepped parapets rather than a horizontal cornice are all features of the Art Deco style.

The Post Office Park façade is the tallest due to the downward slope of Milk and Water Streets. The five story main entrance pavilion is highly elaborated. Four colossal granite pilasters, rounded and scored, with shafts embellished with running fleur-de-lis ornament, rise from the basement entry level to the third story. Inset between the four columns are three pairs of entrance doors clad in anodized aluminum and having glass windows set behind bronze grilles. Each of the windows is surmounted by a transom and framed with a polished black marble surround decorated by an incised eagle-and-wreath motif. A balcony at the fourth story level is embellished with roundels displaying a classical urn and scroll design. The pavilion culminates in a highly ornamented crenellated parapet. The portico is finished with short slender pilasters whose chamfered capitals, embellished with palmetto motifs, divide three sets of small double-hung windows.

Two flanking symmetrical twelve story towers rise seventeen stories above Congress Street. Each tower consists of a one story polished dark granite covered sub-base which disappears along the Milk and Water street facades as the sidewalk rises along Devonshire Street. The sub-base incorporates aluminum sash windows covered with decorative metal grilles. Overhead doors provide access to basement loading bays. Above the bays is a water table featuring Greek fretwork.

The two story base is topped by a solid balustrade with recessed carved masonry panels below each window bay. Above the base, the eleven story shaft has granite faced walls with vertical ribbons of aluminum sash windows separated by aluminum spandrel panels. Midway up the shaft, two belt courses conceal an intermediate floor housing mechanical equipment. These belt courses feature a broad frieze band with carved panels above each of the vertical window strips. A decorative element, identified as a battle axe in the original drawings, is located in the frieze band at all major corners formed by setbacks and recesses.

From the fourteenth to the seventeenth floor, the profile of the towers is defined by a series of setbacks from the main body and projecting pilasters, culminating in a flat, undecorated parapet of the same masonry as the body of the tower. A one story carved masonry eagle with outspread wings is placed above each of the dual window strips. The setback center tower rises thirteen stories above the entrance to the seventeenth floor, where a decorative band concealing an intermediate floor features carved panels in a wheat flower motif above four of the seven pairs of vertical window strips. Above the seventeenth floor, the tower continues to the twenty-second floor and the elevator machinery penthouse. Window columns continue to the nineteenth floor where the outer columns terminate in setbacks. The flat tower parapet features a faceted band of carved terra cotta. Limestone faces the central tower on the Post Office Park side for its entire height.

Devonshire Street

The west-facing Devonshire Street façade is the most massive with its twenty-two story central tower. The composition of the elevation is similar to that of the Congress Street primary façade, consisting of sub-base, base, shaft, and cap. The sub-base, which incorporates grille-covered windows, is only a one-half story height on this elevation due to the difference in height between Congress and Devonshire streets. The base is separated from the sub-base by a continuation of the ornamented Greek fretwork water table.

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The Devonshire Street façade's portal is a single bay in width and two stories in height. The tower façade is divided into three segments. The slightly recessed center section contains the Devonshire Street entrance portal. A single bay in width and two stories in height, it occupies the middle bay of a shallow central setback measuring five bays in width. One of the five vertical bays rises continuously to the full height of the building. This setback articulates the width of the building's twenty-two story tower.

Two seventeen story sections flank the center portion. Each contains four bays of vertical window groupings of aluminum sash windows and spandrel panels. Separating the base from the tower shaft is a decorative frieze band identical to that on the Post Office Park façade. The shaft continues to the mechanical floor that separates the thirteenth and fourteenth floors, where wheat-motif carved panels replace windows. The tower extends three more stories to the seventeenth floor break. At this point, limestone facing replaces granite facing. The wheat motif panels distinguish the broad portion of the building below from the tower section above.

The two corner segments of the Devonshire Street elevation terminate at the seventeenth floor while the central tower continues to the elevator penthouse level. The parapet at the top of the tower is similar to that on the Post Office Park façade with the two inner vertical columns of window pairs surmounted by similar one story tall carved eagles. The battle axe corner ornaments reappear at major setbacks and projections and the upper section of the Art Deco style tower is stepped back in four successive levels.

Milk and Water Street

The south-facing Milk Street entry and north-facing Water Street entry are on axis with the first story Post Office lobby. Essentially one block long, seventeen story compositions, the focus of these two side street elevations is mass rather than decoration. The one story sub-base following the street slope, exhibits double windows with bronze grilles. The two story base above it is set above the continuous Greek fretwork water table.

Both the Milk and Water street elevations have slightly projected single bay entrances with a set of double doors carrying aluminum transom panels, polished black marble surrounds, and the characteristic eagle at the door head. Each bay carries a frieze band below a carved medallion. The Water Street panel carries a row of paterae and stylized palm motifs. Stairway light comes from a two story window with bronze grilles.

Light Well Elevations

The side elevations of the tower, faced in granite, oppose each other across a light well. Fenestration, which consists of three bays of single window transom columns, is similar to that of the main elevations with belt courses and carved panels at the thirteenth to fourteenth floor's intermediate mechanical floor. Projections and setbacks increase toward the top of the building, culminating at the seventeenth floor and at penthouses, where walls are capped with flat, undecorated parapets.

Interior Features

While the Office of the Supervising Architect drew the plans for the McCormack building, utilizing standardized government models, Cram and Ferguson were challenged with designing an exterior for the predetermined spaces and the interior finishing of the federal courts, post office, important corridors and other public areas. The interior plan reflects the building's 'U'-shaped massing. The basement level and the first three floors cover the entire parcel.

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The fourth floor is 'O'-shaped, due to the central light well and freight elevator penthouse. The fifth through sixteenth floors are 'U'-shaped in plan. Ten elevators provide service to the upper floors.

Entrances and Stairways

The primary entrance to the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building was placed at the basement level, off Post Office Park. Three sets of double doors lead to the first floor ahead. The stairway approach and the former parcel post lobbies feature surfaces clad in smooth and carved marble with walls broken into bays by fluted marble pilasters. Four types of marble distinguish the floor area. There is a different pattern for the floor field, borders, inlay, and wainscot base. The coved plaster ceiling drops to form beams at the pilasters. Carved marble is used as a frieze band below the ceiling coffers and at transom panels over the exterior doors. A set of four bronze doors and frames with three light transom windows and ornamental marble lintels were originally used at each elevator bank to create a small elevator lobby and entrance to the two fire stairs. However, as built, the elevator frames were unembellished metal in a marble field with a smooth-painted metal door.

The stairway leading to the first floor rises steeply towards the first story extension lobby. Stairway side walls and ceiling continue the decorative motifs and extensive use of marble with a slight difference in pilasters and deeper ceiling coffers placed perpendicular to the ascent at close intervals. Walls of Roseal polished marble rise to a decorative marble frieze band and D'Or Fossile marble is utilized for the stairway base. Polished bronze center and side railings complete the stair composition.

Matching stairways and entrances at Milk and Water streets originally terminated the north-south corridor lobby. However, the Water Street entrance and stair were obscured by the later renovation of the Water Street lobby. The stairway features remain under newer materials. The Milk Street entry remains as originally designed with marble walls, marble treads and risers, floors of Beaver Dam marble, and decorative plaster ceilings.

The Devonshire Street entry has also been renovated. The principle change is the replacement of doors. The entrance contains the second major staircase with two parts: one runs from the street to the first floor level; the other from the first floor to the second floor. At the midway point between the two floor levels, is an open landing at the base of a seventeen foot high, three part aluminum window group covered with a massive geometric bronze grille. This area has been identified as the most significant architectural space in the building. Light entering through the windows combined with the monumentality of the stair, results in a dramatic spatial effect. Walls of the staircase space are executed in Roseal marble with marble pilasters embellished with bronze inserts—a feature unique to this location.

Lobbies and Corridors

The second floor Registry Lobby is intact and displays the use of ornamental materials characteristic of the building. Its most distinctive feature, one not found elsewhere, is a long wall of service windows designed with vertically oriented decorative bronze grilles over fixed translucent glass. Ornamental bronze work is featured along with marble counters, wainscot panels, base and floor borders. In addition, at the top of the walls is a concave plaster ceiling with low relief panels springing from a decorative plaster band.

The twelfth floor lobby and corridors were the locations of five of the seven original courtrooms. In the center of the elevator lobby, an inlaid floor medallion composed of Swanton Black, Beaver Dam, and Verde marble with bronze

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borders, indicates the importance given to the U.S. District Court spaces and the circulation scheme. The elevator lobby itself consists of nine bays defined by engaged columns on the elevator wall and pilasters on the opposing wall. The five bay, side corridors provide access to the courtrooms and main library. Elevator surrounds are elaborately modeled in bronze. All courtrooms exhibit bronze detailing and door heads. Painted metal trim distinguishes lesser entryways.

The fifteenth floor elevator lobby, which serves original courtroom Nos. 6 and 7, is nine bays long with a small corner bay at the south end leading to non-public spaces. It is distinguished by its elaborate floor. While the black and white check ceramic tile border is typical, floor tile bands corresponding to the ceiling beams crossing over head between pilasters and columns, have been added. As originally built, the fifteenth floor is the only floor with this special ornamentation.

Courtrooms and Main Library

Together with the basement and Devonshire Street stairway spaces, the most architecturally significant interior spaces of the Boston Federal Building are the original seven courtrooms and Main Library. Many decorative finishes are repeated in each one, but the designers took care to plan a distinguishing feature for each one.

Courtroom Nos. 1 and 5 are mirror images of each other. Their Art Deco style civic interiors echo the composition of the exterior's building elevations. Of particular note is the wall containing the judge's bench which contains a towering back panel with two ziggurat-type pilasters of fluted wood with the same bronze as the elevations, detailed in a larger scale.

The panels are capped with a carved wood ornamental band and the pilasters are terminated with a tooled bronze plaque repeating the ziggurat motif in miniature. The raised bench of decorative wood paneling sits two feet above floor level. Wood panels with bronze diamond-shaped inlays and vertical bronze stripes decorate the judge's bench and the clerk's desk. Centered over the judge's bench is an octagonal plaster medallion, three feet across, depicting the scales of justice with a rising sunburst in the background. This design is repeated on the paneled end wall, a tooled bronze plaque of the scales of justice overlaying a sword.

Courtroom Nos. 2 and 4 on the twelfth floor were matching spaces and also designed as non-juried courtrooms. Each has been converted into a juried courtroom. Both still retain most original features. The most characteristic feature of Courtroom No. 2 is the end wall behind the raised judge's bench. It has walnut paneling stepped, in the ziggurat motif, reflecting its Art Deco style. Setbacks are highlighted by carved walnut corner blocks which contrast with the classical cornice and fluted columns that serve as door casings. Centered over the door and recessed in the wood is a bronze eagle in a sunburst pattern.

Courtroom No. 4 had more extensive alterations in the course of a renovation project undertaken to create a suite of courtroom support space. This was accomplished by taking space from the east end of the library.

Courtroom No. 3, the most definitively Art Deco in style of the courtrooms, has a unique floor plan. Its rear gallery is noticeably narrower as a result of the major setback at the exterior southwest corner. Material such as cork floors, Royal Red marble floor borders and Swanton tile baseboards are similar to other courtrooms. Two end wall doors behind the judge's bench are leather covered with bronze tacks. An ornate metal grille is located above each door. Double doors on the interior side of the wall are also leather covered with bronze tacks. Each of these doors has an

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abstract geometric glass vision light in a bronze frame. Changes in Courtroom No. 3 include a new back panel behind the judge's bench and a wood wainscot raised to window sill height, matching the paneling behind the bench. Courtroom No. 6 also has distinctive Art Deco ornament and space planning with the judge's bench platform at the west end being somewhat narrower. The room is divided into three bays by free standing columns on the north wall and pilasters at all walls. The ceiling is slightly concave and divided into three cross bays by beams rising from the pilasters and columns. A plaster proscenium sets off the narrowed judge's platform which has an edge band of decorative plaster tile. Panels of pink Lepanto marble with a French Grey base rise to thirteen feet above the platform. The tallest of five centered marble panels is surmounted by a bronze eagle with a six foot wingspan, extending above the panel to the plaster wall above, creating a three dimensional illusion. Two ten foot high bronze grilles flank the ten foot center panel. The judge's bench and clerk's desk are original marble rectangular tables with bands of bronze fretwork on the front and sides.

Courtroom No. 7 is the smallest and most traditional of the seven original courtrooms. Finished almost entirely in American Walnut, it has none of the marble or bronze elements that characterize the others. Six pilasters divide the back panel behind the bench into three bays separated by plain bands of walnut paneling. To separate the bench from the rest of the courtroom, a wide pilaster projects from the wall plane, echoed in a false beam at the ceiling. Two panels have bronze grilles in the lower portion.

Main entrance double doors are finished on the courtroom side in leather with bronze tacks and bronze frames, with a rectangular glass light in each leaf. Wood casing, that includes a Greek "elephant ear" widening toward the top of the jamb, supports a flat-arched head with center keystone, all rendered in walnut. Changes to the courtroom have been minimal—mainly new light fixtures and ventilation grilles.

Ancillary Offices and Suites

All judges' suites continue to be occupied. Most have had some alterations, but retain some original features. Original oak parquet flooring can still be seen arranged in square foot tiles in a basket weave design. Walnut wainscot panels, up to five feet in height, have distinctive features: fluting at the top, a wood peg about a third of the way up, and 'V' joints between each board. The detailing ends in a plain wood base. The ceiling treatment has stepped low relief plaster coves with a flat center field. The postmaster's office wall, floor, window and ceiling treatments are identical to those of the judge's chambers.

The District Attorney's office is intact with all walnut wainscoting, doors, and bookcases remaining in place. The office features a unique ceiling of coved plaster with a linear, stepped unornamented cornice. Plain soffits set off low relief steps in the main ceiling panel. Plaster beams with the same stepped pattern, at a smaller scale, span building columns within each space.

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.
- 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.
- ☒ C
- ☐ 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 a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

Architecture

Period of Significance

1931-1933

Significant Dates

1931-1933

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cram, Ralph Adams; Wetmore, James A., architects;
Hull, Franklin M., construction engineer

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 8 Continuation Sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 9 Continuation Sheets.

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 (concurring with GSA on 1985-11-14)
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

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 (GSA) New England Region (GSA Region 1)

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

Statement of Significance

Summary

Constructed between 1931 and 1933, and rededicated in 1972 as the John W. McCormack U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building is significant under Criterion A of the National Register as an outstanding example of a skyscraper, built during the Great Depression to house government offices whose jurisdiction included the Boston community and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The building stands as a monumental architectural and historic expression of the city's regional and national stature.

The structure is significant under Criterion C, as a property possessing representative elements of architectural design that embodies distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction, and the work of an architectural master. Exhibiting elements of the Moderne and Art Deco styles, the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building is an unusual transition building exhibiting a conservative, classical approach to planning government architecture as promulgated by the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department.

The completed building shows that the federal planning approach was modified by Boston master architect Ralph Adams Cram and his firm, Cram and Ferguson, in their rendering of the exterior and interior finishes of the building. The result of the collaboration is an impressive decorative design of a twentieth century skyscraper. The building is significant under Criterion A as a property identified with important aspects of the social and political history of the city, commonwealth and nation; and under Criterion C as a property representative of elements of architectural design embodying distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco style skyscraper with ornamented and highly decorative interior finishes.

Architectural Context

The United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building (now named the John W. McCormack U.S. Post Office and Courthouse) replaced another government building on the same site, built in the 1870s--the Second Empire style U.S. Post Office and Sub-Treasury Building designed by Alfred A. Mullet, the Assistant Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. In 1927, Massachusetts Congressman Tinkham filed for appropriations to replace the Old Post Office Square Building. Following approval, the older structure was vacated. However, with the onset of the Great Depression, the large commission was seen as a means to employ local labor and Massachusetts representatives lobbied for the use of New England granite. Despite lower bids received for a limestone building, a granite-clad structure was eventually approved. The building's cornerstone was laid on January 5, 1932.¹

When the twenty-two story Art Deco style structure replaced the four story mansard-roofed predecessor in 1933, its skyscraper design revealed not only advances in the engineering of tall public buildings, but also an evolving architectural taste and the novel use of decorative materials that characterized the burgeoning Art Deco style. The structure accommodated a post office with specialized areas for postal operations, in addition to courtrooms and offices for the United States District Court. However, other government agencies occupied most of the space, specifically the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Interior, Judiciary, Labor, Navy, State, Treasury, and War. Upon its completion, the building effectively operated as the headquarters for the operations of the federal government in the greater Boston area.

¹ *The John W. McCormack Post Office and Court House*, Boston Landmarks Commission Environment Department (Boston, Massachusetts, 1997).

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
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The United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building is one of approximately 1,300 federal office structures built under the 1926 Public Building Act. This act instructed the U.S. Treasury Department to assess the government's spatial requirements. Furthermore, the act lifted a thirteen year moratorium on new federal office building construction.² The intent of the legislation was to encourage the use of private firms in the construction of public buildings. By the time the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building was designed, the architectural community had grasped the important effect the legislation had on design. The focus of the September 1933 issue of *Architectural Forum* was "The Planning of Public Buildings." The *Forum* outlined the standardized plans which the federal architects had produced, noting that "efficiency and functional analysis would allow architects an avenue for creative expression while organizing the building in accordance with the standard plans." The scope of this issue indicates the influence of public sector commissions on private architectural practice since the passage of the Public Buildings Act. The United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building, which was illustrated in the *Forum* issue, reflects that influence, representing a close collaboration between the public and private sector.

The Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department, James A. Wetmore, produced the general plan for the subject building, using standardized models that the office had developed. The private Boston-based architectural firm of Cram and Ferguson designed the building interior. Cram later reported that the Treasury Department had made all of the plans and working drawings, while his firm understood it would apply an exterior finish to the predetermined plans and frame. However, Cram and Ferguson did more--re-planning the floors assigned to the courts and designing their finishes, along with that of the main corridors.³ In his autobiography, Cram reported "this was not a very happy arrangement, nor one that gave us to show what we could do along a line so widely severed from our usual practice."⁴

Shortly after the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building's construction, *American Architect* published a detailed architectural review of the structure, approving its adaptation to a dense urban site. Almost no ornament appeared above the lower stories, hemmed in by narrow, dark streets.⁵ The structure's height was emphasized by ornament concentrated on the lower stories and a vertical alignment of windows, separated by dark aluminum spandrels while recessed behind a veneer of thin granite piers. While no legislation limited the height of federal buildings, a 1928 city of Boston zoning amendment allowed building heights to exceed 155 feet, provided setback rules were respected. The United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building's design followed the city ordinance.

Designers

James A. Wetmore

James A. Wetmore joined the federal government service as a court stenographer after completing his education as a lawyer. He remained in the federal service until his retirement in 1933, serving under the administration of four presidents: Wilson, Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. He was close to the end of his career during the construction of

² Lois Craig, ed., and the staff of the Federal Architecture Project, *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics and Symbols in United States Government Building* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1978), 20.

³ Candace Jenkins, *John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse: Historic Building Preservation Plan Appendix* (Boston, MA: Ann Beha Associates, 1994) 5.

⁴ Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture* (Boston, MA: Little Brown & Co., 1936), quoted in Ann Beha Associates, *John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse: Historic Building Preservation Plan* (Boston, MA: Ann Beha Associates, 1994), 5.

⁵ Charles G. Loring, "The Boston Federal Building," *American Architect*, Vol. 143, November, 1933. Even the main entrance, Loring reported, had an unobstructed view of only 150 yards across Post Office Square.

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building. Architectural historian Candace Jenkins reports that Louis A. Simon may have made design decisions for the Boston Federal Building as the Architectural Division Superintendent in Wetmore's office during the 1931-1933 period of construction. After Wetmore's retirement, Simon became Supervising Architect from 1933 to 1939.⁶

Ralph Adams Cram

Cram, the dean of the American Gothic Revival style, was particularly noted for his use of the idiom in college and church buildings. A graduate of Princeton University, Cram opened his first office in Boston at the age of twenty-four in partnership with Charles Wentworth. Bertram Goodhue and Frank W. Ferguson then joined the firm. At the time the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building was constructed, the firm was known as Cram & Ferguson, as Goodhue had moved his architectural practice to New York. Ferguson died in 1926 and architect biographer Henry Withey reports that Cram went into semi-retirement in 1930. Since Cram had made three younger office architects--Frank Cleveland, Chester Godfrey and Alexander Hoyle--partners in 1925, it is possible that they influenced the architectural composition and its execution.⁷

The choice of the Cram firm for the commission must have been somewhat surprising at the time. While the firm's practice was eclectic, by 1929, Cram had championed the Gothic Revival as the supervising architect of Princeton University and consulting architect to Rice University, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke and Wellesley Colleges, among others. Earlier in his career, Cram had received numerous commissions, including the United States Military Academy at West Point, the Japanese Garden Court at The Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and various churches. Although Cram began the exterior design of the Boston Federal Building with medieval iconography, apparently he soon abandoned that interpretation. Perhaps with foreshortened hindsight, he wrote in his 1936 autobiography:

For a stock exchange or department store, a moving picture palace, a garage, or a hangar, a skyscraper, a cocktail bar...it would be as irrational, perverse and misleading to revive the motive and forms of the past ages as it would be to design a Greek railroad train, a Byzantine motor car, a Gothic battleship, or a Renaissance airplane.⁸

In 1933, after funding was authorized, the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department developed standardized plans to address the spatial requirements of each government function.

Architectural Significance

The United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building is significant under Criterion C as a structure whose design represents a collaborative effort between the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department and Boston master architect Ralph Adams Cram and his firm, Cram & Ferguson. Although not a textbook example of the Art Deco skyscraper, the building stands as an unusual use of this style by Cram in the only government building he designed. Almost from the beginning of his career, Cram had been identified with the Gothic Revival Style, particularly in the English ecclesiastical form incorporated into the many churches and schools he designed. However, Cram proved to be flexible. Although his first renderings used Gothic decoration and he had stated his

⁶ Jenkins, *John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse: Historic Building Preservation Plan Appendix*, 5-6.

⁷ Henry F. Withey and Elsie Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles, CA: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.)

⁸ Cram, quoted in Ann Beha Associates, *John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse: Historic Building Preservation Plan*, 367.

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National Park Service

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Section 8 Page 10

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

dislike of high-rise buildings, he showed that he was able to reconcile the dilemma posed by the engineering requirements of the skyscraper and the decoration of its architecture.⁹

When federal funds became available for public buildings, city and state governments vied for new post office building and courthouses to be built in their communities. *The Federal Architect*, the monthly publication of the Association of Federal Architects, endorsed the building, ornamented with traditional government emblems such as eagles and the scales of justice. The staff of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department, Cram's collaborating colleagues, claimed that the classical style was "either historically correct or uniquely expressive of democratic values."¹⁰ Cram and his office colleagues were able to successfully integrate the planning demands of the federal architects and their own expertise in the decorative arts.

The interior of the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building shows that, in fact, Cram did not desert the decorative emphasis that exemplified his Gothic Revival work. Public spaces such as corridors and staircases are lavishly embellished with columns, plaster ceilings and running ornament, walnut wainscots, along with ziggurat motifs and an extensive use of aluminum. The building is particularly significant for its use of many varied examples of New England marble used in a multitude of patterns and effects throughout the building.

The irregularly massed exterior of the building indicates that Cram and his colleagues were aware of the use of modern and modernistic developments in architecture, particularly the use of materials such as glass, aluminum and bronze. The monumental Post Office Square portal offers a wealth of ornament identified with the classical and Art Deco styles: stone and terra cotta ornament, colossal granite pilasters with a running band of carved fleur-de-lis moldings, black marble surrounds, and glazed aluminum doors.

This building is significant under Criterion A as a property associated with important aspects of the political and social history of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the nation. Boston area headquarters for nine federal departments, the structure is identified with federal government administration in Massachusetts. The building is also associated with the administration of law as a federal courthouse and the seat of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. Successful in achieving the programmatic needs of federal agencies, while providing local jobs for construction and the marble quarries, the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building fulfilled the city's desire for the imposing Art Deco style civic building that reflects the successful and unique collaboration of its planners and architects.

⁹ Ibid., 267.

¹⁰ Cram, quoted in Ann Beha Associates, *John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse: Historic Building Preservation Plan*, 26.

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

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Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20240.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

PHOTOGRAPHS

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, east elevation, looking northwest from Milk Street and Pearl Street.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding1.tiff



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Section Photos Page 13

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, main lobby, looking south, exhibiting fluted marble piers and carved marble frieze bands.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding2.tiff



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Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, upper elevation of northeast wing, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding3.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 15

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Elevated exterior view, east and south elevations, looking northwest.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding4.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Elevated exterior view, upper east and south elevations with six-story set back tower, looking northwest.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding5.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 17

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Elevated exterior view, main entrance of east elevation, looking west exhibiting balcony embellished with roundels and portico pillars with chamfered capitals.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding6.tiff



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***United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts***

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, central upper east elevation with setback center tower defined by limestone belt course, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding7.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 19

***United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts***

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior detail view, columns of main east entrance with colossal pilasters embellished with running fleur-de-lis ornament and carved panels, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding8.tiff



United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 20

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, west façade detail at south end, exhibiting vertical window groupings of aluminum panels and sash behind incised balcony panels, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding9.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 21

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, main entrance of east façade, looking west with door set of anodized aluminum and glass, surmounted by black marble frame featuring eagle-and-wreath motif.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding10.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
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Section Photos Page 22

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

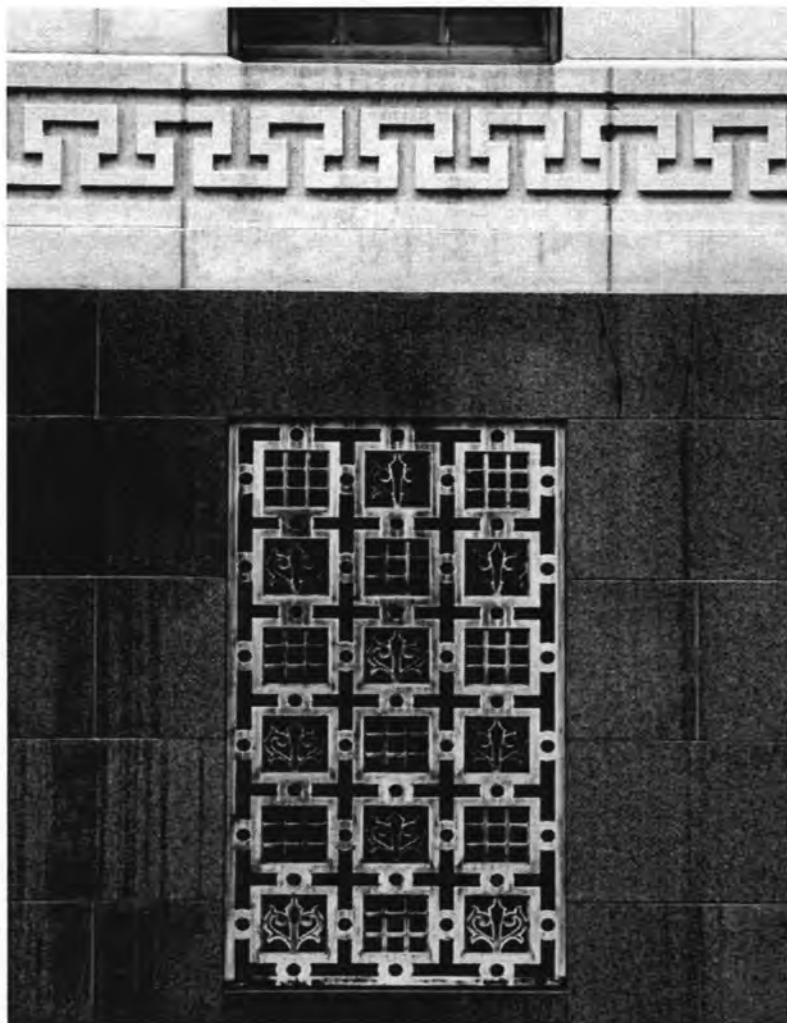
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior detail view, decorative metal grille below marble water table with applied Greek fretwork, east facade of north end, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding11.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 23

***United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts***

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, main entrance of south façade, looking north from Milk Street exhibiting two story windows with bronze grille and frieze ornamented with carved medallion, floral ornament and panels with stylized battle-axe.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding12.tiff



United States Department of the Interior
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Section Photos Page 24

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, main entrance of west façade, looking southeast from Devonshire Street with paired vertical windows and fretted water table.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding13.tiff



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Section Photos Page 25

***United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts***

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, east and part of north elevations, looking southwest from the corner of Congress Street and Water Street with sub-base of dark Quincy granite below Greek key fretwork.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding14.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
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Section Photos Page 26

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 19, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Exterior view, east elevation, looking south along Congress Street.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding15.tiff



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Section Photos Page 27

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, Court Room 6 located on 15th floor with cornice moldings at edge of ceiling bays and judge's platform behind proscenium arch, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding16.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation**

Section Photos Page 28

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, Court Room 6, main exit leather double-doors and columns of pink Lepanto marble with French Grey base, looking north.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding17.tiff



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, French Grey marble podium of Court Room 6, with bronze eagle and continuous bands of bronze fretwork, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding18.tiff



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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, Court Room 6 main wood entrance doors, with stepped bronze surround, looking east.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding19.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, Court Room 3, 12th floor with plaster walls finished in ashlar pattern and leather doors with black marble casings and metal grills, looking east.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding20.tiff



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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, Court Room 3, main exit leather double-doors with geometric vision light and Black Swanton marble surround with stepped head and octagonal bronze eagle inset, looking north.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding21.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
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Section Photos Page 33

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, Court Room 2, 12th floor, exhibiting decorated plaster cornice above stepped walnut door surround with carved corner blocks and bronzed eagle inset in sunburst pattern.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding22.tiff



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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

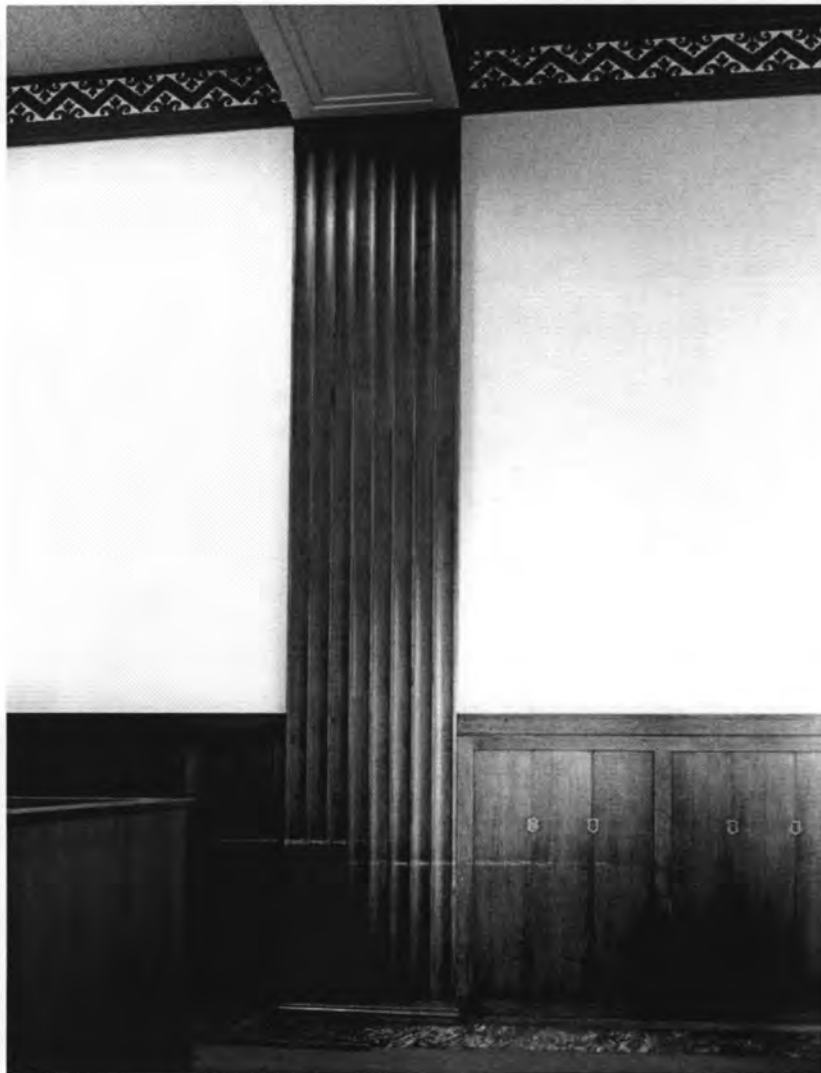
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior detail view Courtroom 2 fluted pilaster with carved wood capital and ornamented plaster border, looking north.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding23.tiff



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet—Additional Documentation

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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, main Law Library, 12th floor, doorway with marble fluted columns, architrave of fluted black marble, and above-door panel with octagonal medallions, looking south.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding24.tiff



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section Photos Page 36

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, main Law Library, entrance door fabricated in two-panel hammered and etched bronze, with carved bronze transom, lower panel decorated with wheat sheaf clusters and upper panel with compass rose in octagonal medallion, looking south.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding25.tiff



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*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, main lobby 12th floor, elevator doors with ornamented surround set in marble wainscot, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding26.tiff



**National Register of Historic Places
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Section Photos Page 38

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, marble column with carved capital, and bordered ceiling panels located on the 1st floor main lobby, looking east.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding27.tiff



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
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Section Photos Page 39

*United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: April 20, 2006.

Negative: General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect

Description of view: Interior view, marble stairs and polished bronze railing located at east main entrance leading up to main 1st floor lobby, looking west.

Photo number: MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding28.tiff



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY United State Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 2/23/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4.1.11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3.17.11
DATE OF 45TH DAY: ~~3/31/11~~
4.10.11

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000160

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4.8.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006.

GSA

Exterior view, east elevation, looking
northwest from Milk Street and Pearl
Street

MA-SuffolkCounty-BostonFederalBuilding1.tiff



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

April 19, 2006

GSA

Interior view, main lobby, looking south,
exhibiting fluted marble piers and carved
marble frieze bands.

MA_SuffolkCounty-BostonFederalBuilding2.tiff



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior view, upper elevation of northeast
wing, looking west

MA_Suffolk County_Boston Federal Building 3.tiff



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Elevated exterior view, east and south elevations,
looking northwest

MA_SuffolkCounty-BostonFederalBuilding4.tiff



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Elevated exterior view, upper east and south
elevations with six-story set back tower,
looking northwest.

MA_Suffolk County_Boston Federal Building 5.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Elevated exterior view, main entrance of
East elevation, looking west exhibiting
balcony embellished with roundels and
portico pillars with chamfered capitals

MA_Suffolk County_Boston Federal Building b.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior view, central upper east elevation
with setback center tower defined by
limestone belt course, looking west

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 7.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior detail view, columns of main
East entrance w/ colossal pilasters embellished
w/ running fleur-de-lis ornament &
carved panels, looking west

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Buildings 8.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk, Massachusetts

David Greenwood Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior view, west facade detail at south end,
exhibiting vertical window groupings of
aluminum panels & sash behind incised
balcony panels, looking west

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 9.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

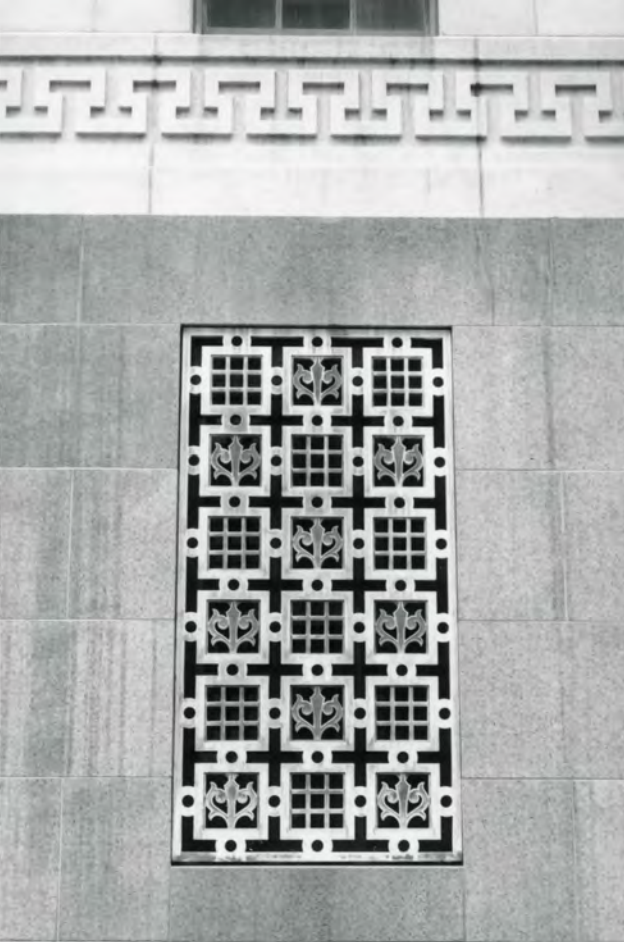
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior view, main entrance of east facade,
looking west w/ door set of anodized
aluminum and glass, surmounted by black
marble frame featuring eagle-and-wreath
motif.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 10.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior Detail view, decorative metal grille
below marble water table w/ applied Greek
Fretwork, east facade of north end, looking
west

MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding11.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building,
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006
GSA

Exterior view, main entrance of south facade
looking north from Milk Street exhibiting
two story windows w/ bronze grille and
frieze ornamented w/ carved medallion,
floral ornament and panels w/ stylized
battle-axe.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building R



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
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GSA

Exterior view, main entrance of west
facade, looking southeast from Devonshire
street w/ paired vertical windows & fretted
water table.

MA_Suffolk County_Boston Federal Building B



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 14, 2006

GSA

Exterior view, east & part of north elevation
looking southwest from the corner of Congress
Street & Water St w/ sub-base of dark

Quincy granite below Greek Key framework

MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding14.tiff



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Exterior view, east elevation looking South
along Congress St.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 15.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006

G&A

Interior view, Court Room 6 located on 15th
floor w/ cornice moldings at edge of
ceiling bays and judges platform behind
proscenium arch, looking west
MA_SuffolkCounty_BostonFederalBuilding16.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Interior view, courtroom 6, main exit leather
double-doors and columns of pink Lepanto
marble w/ French Grey base, looking north
MA_Suffolk County Boston Federal Building 17.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006

CoSA

Interior view, French Grey Marble podium of
Court Room 6, w/ bronze eagle and
continuous bands of bronze fretwork, looking
west

MA_SuffolkCounty-BostonFederalBuilding18.tif

COURT ROOM N°6

Please Turn
Off All Cell
Phones and
Pagers
Before
Entering
Courtroom

ALL PEOPLE IN ROOM
MUST BE TURNED OFF
BEFORE ENTERING ROOM

COURTROOM
6

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal
Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, ICF Jones and Stokes

April 20, 2006

GSA, Office of the Chief Architect

Interior View, court room 6 main wood
entrance doors, with stepped bronze surround,
looking East.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 19.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Interior view, courtroom 3, 12th floor w/
plaster walls finished in ashlar pattern &
leather doors w/ black marble casings &
metal grills, looking east

MA_suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 20



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006

GSA

Interior view, Court Room 3, main exit leather
double-doors w. stepped head & octagonal
bronze eagle inset, looking north

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 21.
t.f

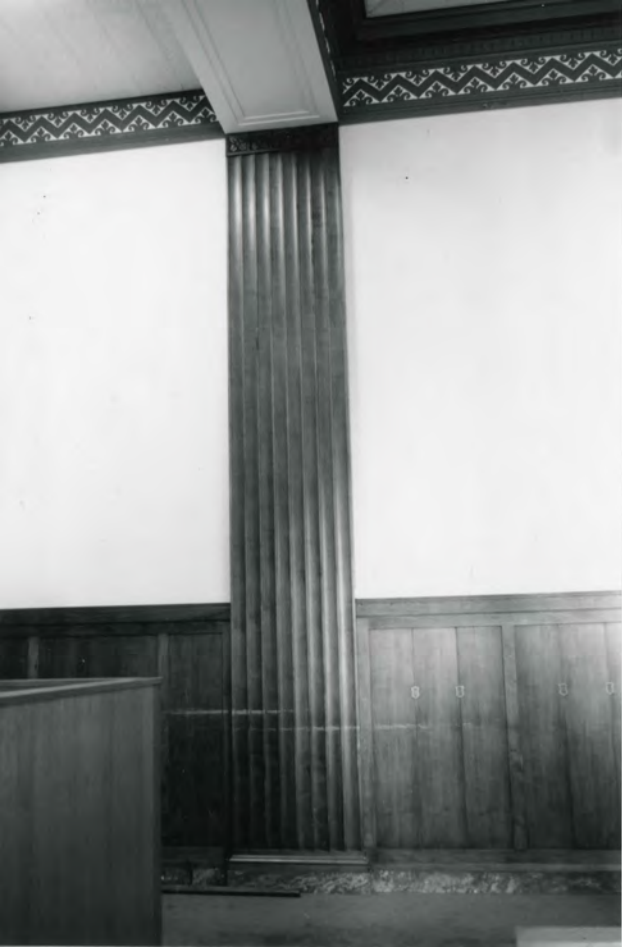


United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006

GSA

Interior view, Court Room 2, 12th floor,
exhibiting decorated plaster cornice
above stepped walnut door surround
w/ carved corner blocks & bronzed eagle
inset in sunburst pattern.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 22⁸



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2016

GSA

Interior detail view Courtroom 2 fluted pilaster
w/ carved wood capital and ornamented
Plaster border looking north

MA_Suffolk County_Boston Federal Building 23.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006
68A

Interior view, main Law Library, 12th floor,
doorway with marble fluted columns,
achitrave of fluted black marble, and
above-door panel w/ octagonal medallions,
looking south
MA_Suffolk County_Boston Federal Building 24.tif



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
Paul & Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2206
GSA

Interior view, main law library, entrance
door fabricated two-panel hammered & etched
bronze, w/ carved bronze transom, lower panel
decorated w/ wheat sheaf clusters & upper panel w/
compass rose in octagonal medallion, looking
south
MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 251f



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building
Suffolk County, Massachusetts
David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
April 19, 2006
GSA

Interior view main lobby 12th floor,
elevator doors w/ ornamented surround
Set in marble wainscot, looking west.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 26.40



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

April 19, 2006

GSA

Interior view, marble column w/ Carved Capital, and bordered ceiling panels located on the 1st floor main lobby looking east.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 27. title



United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal
Building

Suffolk County, Massachusetts

David Greenwood, ICF Jones and Stokes

April 20, 2006

GSA, Office of the Chief Architect

Interior view, marble stairs & polished bronze
railing located at east main entrance leading
up to main 1st floor lobby, looking west.

MA - Suffolk County - Boston Federal Building 28.tif

Boston South MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map



7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth
of Massachusetts agencies

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1978. Field checked 1979. Map edited 1987.
Supersedes Newton and Boston South 1:25,000-scale
maps dated 1979.

Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS charts 13270 (1982)
and 13272 (1980). This information is not intended for navigational purposes.
Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal
Transverse Mercator, zone 19
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate
system, mainland zone
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,
move the projection lines 6 meters south and
42 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks.
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map.

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTINENTAL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.3 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.3 METER
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN METERS
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS UNSTABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE
OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.5 METERS

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet		1	2	3
1	3.2808		4	5	
2	6.5615		6	7	8
3	9.8423				
4	13.1230				
5	16.4038				
6	19.6845				
7	22.9653				
8	26.2460				
9	29.5268				
10	32.8075				
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808		UTM grid convergence (GN and 1987 magnetic) at center of map Diagram is approximate			
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048					

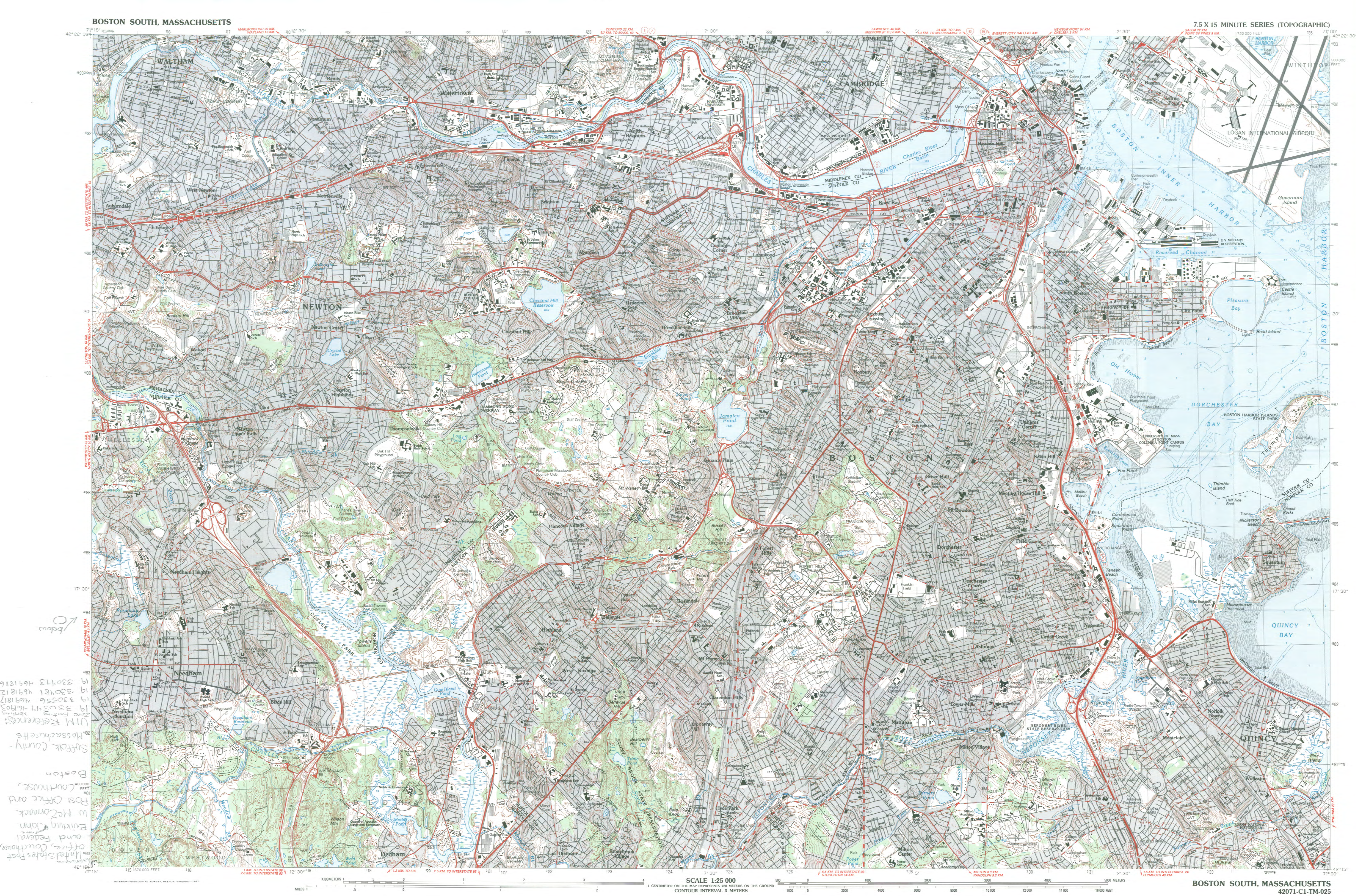


Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road, trail	
Route marker: Interstate, U. S. State	
Railroad: standard gauge; narrow gauge	
Bridge: drawbridge	
Footbridge: overpass; underpass	
Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	
House, barn; church; school; large structure	
Boundary:	
National, with monument	
State	
County, parish	
City township, precinct, village, ward	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation; small park	
Land grant with monument; round section corner	
U. S. public lands survey; township section	
Range, township; section line; location approximate	
Fence or field line	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; dam with lock	
Cemetery; grave	
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave	
Control: barometric station; vertical station; spot elevation	
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand	
Soundings: depth curve	
Personal lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	
Straw; meadow	
Orchard; vineyard	

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092



UTM References:
Suffolk County -
Boston
Post Office and
w McCormack
Building
and Federal
office, Courthouse
United States Post
Office