

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 27 1984
DATE ENTERED JAN 1 1985

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

U.S. Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

San Bernardino Downtown Station

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

390 West Fifth Street

NA

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

San Bernardino

NA VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

36

STATE

California

CODE
06

COUNTY

San Bernardino

CODE

071

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

x Thematic
Group

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

NA PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
— BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

ACCESSIBLE

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

U.S. Postal Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Avenue

CITY, TOWN

San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

CA 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

San Bernardino County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

172 West 3rd. Street

CITY, TOWN

San Bernardino

STATE

CA

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>NA</u>

4/27/84

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The San Bernardino Main Post Office is an Italianate Beaux-Arts inspired structure. The architects made extensive use of cast terracotta ornament, some of which was glazed with bright blue and green. The central arcade on the front elevation was a conventional way of monumentalizing the structure.

LOCAL CONTEXT

San Bernardino is an incorporated community with a 1982 population of 106,500. When the town was founded in 1841, the economy was based on the citrus industry, which supported the area for almost a century. Urban sprawl came to San Bernardino in the 1950s; today, little architecture from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remains.

No archaeological or paleontological resources are known to exist within or adjacent to the subject property. Subsurface investigation or additional research do not appear to be justified.

The site was previously occupied by four wood frame houses, with a total interior area of roughly six thousand square feet.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building has two stories and a full basement. It is constructed of reinforced poured concrete and is topped with a red tile roof. Specific features of note include:

- Acanthus leaf pattern terracotta tile capitals and voussoirs on intrados of arches on front arcade;
- Seven-bayed groin-vaulted entrance vestibule;
- Second-floor balcony with wrought iron railing.

The surrounding land uses are primarily commercial; the post office is three blocks north-east of the San Bernardino Civic Center.

The portion of the roof facing the main elevation is pitched, and covered with red terracotta tiles. The workroom is covered with a flat asphalt composition roof. A dentil molding expresses the interior second-floor lines. The rigid symmetry of the facade indicates the structure's Beaux-Arts parentage, though the detailing and roof treatment give it a Mediterranean/Italianate feeling.

The lobby has plaster walls and a gray and white marble wainscoting, and the workroom retains its hardwood floor.

ALTERATIONS

The building is in excellent structural condition and is well maintained. The only modification visible from the exterior is the replacement of the original wooden doors with aluminum frame glass doors. The lobby has been extensively remodeled. The original lockboxes and service counter have been removed, and bays of new lockboxes have been installed. A metal and glass partition separates the lockboxes and self-service area from the new service counters.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES **Site acquired 1913, 1929; completed 1931.** BUILDER/ARCHITECT **OSA/James A. Wetmore, Louis A. Simon**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This building is a good example of the federal building program in the 1930s, which resulted from a simple acceleration of the Keyes-Elliott Act of 1926. The building is a locally important example of early twentieth century architecture, in a town with few surviving buildings dating before 1950.

ARCHITECTURE

The San Bernardino Downtown Station is a stylistically ambiguous blending of Mediterranean and Renaissance Revival ornamental motifs, applied to a classical box. The second story federal offices have access to a large veranda, which is currently unused. This building is actually on the margin between the small-scale combined federal building/post office, and the large buildings constructed in Los Angeles and San Francisco; and the structure is less monumental than the urban post office/courthouse building type in both size and scale. The building is one of a very few which have survived from the first half of this century in San Bernardino, and it therefore contributes to the continuity of the urban fabric more than it would in a town with a more active preservation movement. Its local significance is increased due to the paucity of surviving buildings from the 1930s and earlier in San Bernardino. The building has retained substantial integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship, and the alterations to the public lobby have not significantly impaired the integrity of the interior spaces.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Building records at San Bernardino Main Post Office: building blueprints, progress photographs.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .75

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	4 7 3 1 9 0	3 1 7 1 0 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The site is on the northeast corner of the intersection of 5th Street and D street in the City of San Bernardino. It has a 200-foot frontage on 5th Street, with an approximate 213.5' frontage on D Street, and its eastern border.

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

STATE NA	CODE NA	COUNTY NA	CODE NA
STATE NA	CODE NA	COUNTY NA	CODE NA

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Doug Robertson, Planner

ORGANIZATION

Beland/Associates, Inc.

DATE

April 27, 1984

STREET & NUMBER

16 S. Oakland Ave. #204

TELEPHONE

(818) 796-8093

CITY OR TOWN

Pasadena

STATE

CA 91101

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ___ NO ___ NONE ___

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

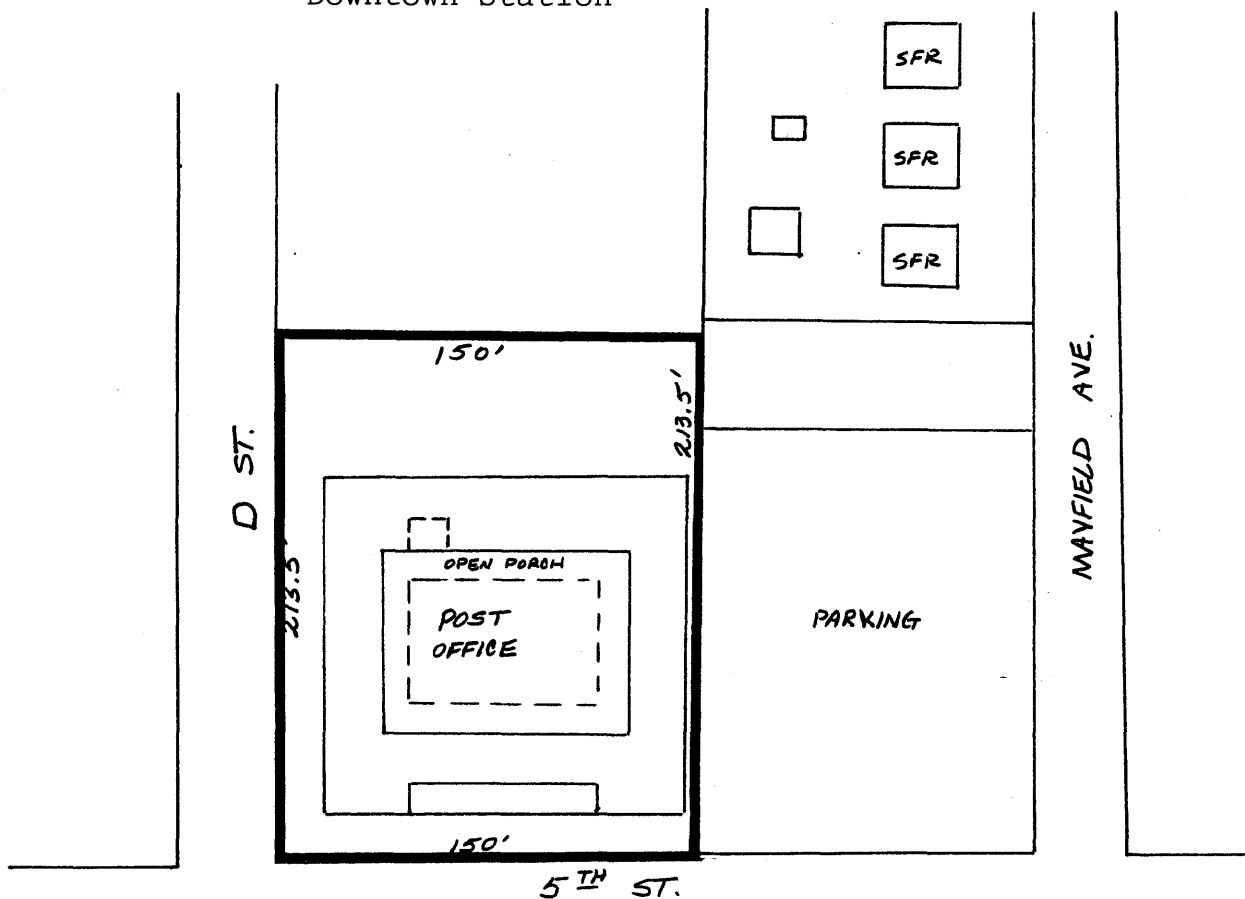
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CONTINUATION SHEET San Bernardino ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE one

Downtown Station



Note: Post office site outlined in red.

Source: Sanborn Map, San Bernardino Book, page 28, 1951-53;
Geography Department, California State University,
Northridge, California.