

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 OCT 25 1985

DATE ENTERED 10/25/85

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Nogales Main Post Office and Immigration Station

AND/OR COMMON

Nogales Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Hudgin Street and Morley Avenue

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Nogales

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

Arizona

CODE

04

COUNTY

Santa Cruz

CODE

023

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	NA IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	NA YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)

United States Postal Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Avenue

CITY, TOWN

San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

California 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Santa Cruz County Assessor

STREET & NUMBER

222 Plum Street

CITY, TOWN

Nogales

STATE

Arizona 85621

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Arizona State Historic Property Inventory, Nogales, Arizona

DATE

August 1984

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Phoenix

STATE

Arizona 85007

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Nogales Main Post Office is an extremely simplified version of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture (basic form is Neo-classical with Spanish Colonial influence). There is limited ornamentation consisting principally of the two columns and cornice surrounding the front entrance. The building is located approximately one block east of Morely Avenue, the principal commercial street in the community. It is one block north of Santa Cruz County Courthouse. There are no other governmental or civic buildings in the immediate vicinity.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building appears to be in excellent structural condition and is being well maintained. No cracks or structural defects were observed on a tour of the building. It has two and one-half stories and a full basement and is constructed of reinforced poured concrete. The exterior is stucco. The building is topped with a flat asphalt composition roof.

The building is rectangular in shape and the public lobby forms a long, narrow rectangle on the building's west side. The workroom is nearly square with the loading dock on the east side, and the swing room and lunch room on the north adjacent to the Postmaster's office. Various federal offices are located on the second floor.

The Nogales Post Office is an example of an extremely simplified version of the Spanish Colonial Revival style which would become common in later years for post office construction in the Southwest and in Southern California. The only ornament consists of two eagles above the front entrance and two slender columns supporting an entablature containing the sign which identifies the building as the post office. The applied ornament is made of carved sandstone and the original cast iron light fixtures flank the front entrance.

The Nogales Post Office has not been significantly altered. It, therefore, possesses a high degree of functional and architectural integrity.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Designed 1921; built 1923 BUILDER/ARCHITECT OSA/Wetmore

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Nogales MPO is one of six post offices constructed in the entire western region between 1920 and 1926, a period during which even nationally few post offices were being constructed.

The building's design, in its suggestion of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, is greatly simplified in comparison with the Beaux-Arts buildings associated with this pre-1926 era, yet presents a character of refinement and dignity. The building is also the first federally constructed post office in Nogales and was constructed during the city's most significant growth period. As such, the construction of the building was a major local event and one that involved the interaction of the local citizens with the federal government.

ARCHITECTURE

The Nogales MPO was constructed in an era of federal building programs when no new building programs were being funded. Those buildings constructed were hold-overs from the last major public buildings appropriation act in 1913. Most all of these hold-over buildings were not constructed until the late 1920s to early 1930s. As stated previously, only six post offices were constructed in the western region from 1920 to 1926. The entire nation only received 75 buildings during this seven-year period (compared to 275 in the preceding six years or 93 in the single lowest year of the New Deal period).

The few numbers of examples from this era make it difficult to make generalizations or compare the relationship of the Nogales building to its 1920 to 1926 counterparts. Two relatively unaltered buildings constructed in Utah in 1923 suggest that design styles used during that period were extremely simplified. Both Utah examples are characterized by flat stucco facades that have been stripped of embellishing or detailing. Both are grounded in the Classical with a faint flavor of Spanish influence. The most obvious characteristic of the Nogales and Utah examples is that they have made a strong departure from the Beaux-Arts Classicism of their predecessors. They share the characteristics of the 1930s Starved Classicism. It is quite possible that these buildings were victims of federal economizing. On the other hand, they may have been experiments in standardization that would set the standards for future design programs. However, neither supposition is verifiable at this time.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

James Woodward (Janus Associates, Inc.). "Historic Building Survey, July 1984, Nogales Herald. Various articles--1920-1924.
 Sanborn Map, Nogales Arizona. November 1930. p. 3.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.680 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,2 5,0,6,10,2,0 3,4,6,6,8,3,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1 and 2, part of Lot 13, Block B; original Nogales Townsite (see attached maps).

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

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

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Paul R. Secord, VP H.J. "Jim" Kolva

ORGANIZATION

Beland/Associates, Inc. Institute for Urban and Local Studies

DATE

August 1984/August 1985

STREET & NUMBER

16. S. Oakland, Suite 204 W. 705 First Avenue

TELEPHONE

818-796-8093 509-458-6219

CITY OR TOWN

Pasadena, CA 91101 Spokane, WA 99204

STATE

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Donna Schuber
 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

James T. Coe Director, Office of Real Estate

DATE **OCT 22 1985**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

See Certification Sheet for listing
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET Nogales ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The design of the building is based in the Classical traditions of proportion and scale. The stylistic influence suggests the Spanish Colonial Revival, a traditional southwestern style. Strong vertical and decorative emphasis is placed on the entry--the only detailing of the facade. Distinguishing features include the ornate carved stone arch order surrounding the main, central entry bay against a flat stucco field; flat, simple window surrounds; embellished bas relief panels depicting eagles above and flanking the entry; and a stepped pediment centered over the entry.

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

The Nogales MPO is the city's first federally constructed post office building and its construction, most particularly its site selection, was a major local event. The period between the authorization of the building by the Public Buildings Omnibus Act of 1913 and the building's completion in 1924 coincided with the city's major growth period. As such, the siting of the post office was a decision of great importance to the growth of the burgeoning city.

Captain L.W. Mix, one of the city's dominant figures in business and political circles, was the Chairman of the federal building site committee. Site selection involved litigation, a dream of a majestic civic center that was shattered, strong dissent regarding the final site selection, and finally, acceptance of the site so that "what was wanted"--a federal building--would be realized. The process of obtaining funding appropriations and the selection of the site also involved interaction between the local citizens and their elected officials in Washington. The building not only symbolizes the presence of the federal government, but perhaps more importantly, that government's recognition of the potential and stability of the developing city of Nogales.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Nogales, with a 1984 population of 18,165, is the seat of Santa Cruz County and its commercial and trade center. Situated on the U.S./Mexican border, which it shares with its sister city Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, Nogales is a major entry point along the international border. The city's economy is based on international trade, manufacturing, wholesale/retail trade, services and transportation, communications and public utilities.

The first permanent settlement from which Nogales developed took place in 1880 when Jacob Isaacson established a trading post on the Arizona side of the U.S./Mexico border. By the spring of 1882, the construction terminus of the New Mexico and Arizona Railroad (extended from Benson) had reached the border near Isaacson's trading post. A tent city housing railroad workers grew at this point. On May 31, 1882, the

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CONTINUATION SHEET Nogales ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

collection of tents, named "Issacton", had its first post office with Jacob Isaacson as postmaster. The post office was officially changed to Nogales on June 4, 1883. As a result of the railroad and regional mining activity, Nogales grew steadily from approximately 900 persons in 1883 to 1,194 in 1890 and 1,761 by 1900. By the early 1890s Nogales had become established as an important commercial, transportation, and political center. The city was incorporated in 1893 and soon following the formation of Santa Cruz County was named county seat in 1899.

The prosperity of the railroads serving Nogales, the growth in trade between Mexico and the United States, and the establishment of several local and regional industries continued to support a growth in population which doubled from its 1900 level of 1,761 to 3,514 in 1910. A direct rail line between Tucson and Nogales was established in 1910 and in the same year the first garrison of U.S. military troops was established. The presence of the military, which peaked in 1917 with 12,000 troops, played a significant role in the growth of Nogales between 1910 and 1933. This was the period of the city's most extensive growth. By 1920 the population had increased to 5,199 and increased again to 6,006 in 1930. With the departure of the Army in 1933 and the wrath of the Depression, the population of Nogales declined to 5,135 in 1940, and thereafter climbed slowly to the 1970s.

LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE OF THE NOGALES POST OFFICE CONSTRUCTION

The Nogales Post Office and Custom House was authorized in the Public Buildings Omnibus Act of March 4, 1913. Actually, the legislation included a site and building to a new custom house and a site for a new post office. Limits of \$100,000 and \$10,000 were established for the custom house and post office site, respectively. Appropriations for the project were provided on July 20, 1914 (custom house site) and June 12, 1917 (\$25,000 for custom house). An act of November 21, 1918 authorized the combining of the post office and custom house sites. Another building appropriation was provided on July 19, 1919 in the amount of \$79,000. However, by the beginning of 1920, a site had not been purchased.

Between January 1920 and June 1923, the Nogales Herald reported the trials and tribulations of site selection and the construction of the Nogales MPO. The news in January of 1920 opened with the announcement that a \$355,000 bond issue for a new city water system and city hall had been approved and that plans were being drawn for a new intermediate school. On January 30th, an article with the caption "Senator Mark Smith Will Be Asked to Secure Federal Building" reported that the Chamber of Commerce would request that the Senator assist Nogales in resolving the site selection problem. For a number of years Nogales citizens had endeavored to secure a federal building. The appropriation had been granted and a site chosen. However, litigation blocked the acquisition of the site. It was felt that with Smith's support the building would come in short time.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Nogales

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

An article of February 21st announced that the "City Must Do Its Bit In Fight for U.S. Building". Senator Smith was in Nogales and while speaking to the border problem with Mexico was asked what support could be expected for the federal building. Smith placed the responsibility with the city in stating: "That is up to you people entirely. Whenever you line up here the necessary site, and do those other things which are your manifest share of work, I assure you I will get behind your project as strenuously as I have ever gotten behind any other similar one in Arizona." Smith added in response to the condemnation of the Southern Pacific lumber yards for the post office site: "The time is coming when a railroad will run direct from San Francisco to Nogales and to Mexico City. When this time arrives, Nogales will immediately become a mammoth port of entry." From Smith's remarks, it was concluded that instead of wasting time seeking condemnation proceedings, the efforts should be directed to casting about for a new site.

The casting about was apparently successful, for in rapid order the Herald reported on February 27th that a report regarding the federal building site would be given at the evening Chamber of Commerce meeting. A site had been offered and Captain L.W. Mix, Chairman of the Building Site Committee, had received word from Senator Ashurst that a federal representative would visit Nogales in a few days to select a site. The meeting was reported on February 27th. The Chamber of Commerce had committed to backing the site offered by the School Board. A portion of the school site on which the high school was located at Plum Street and Arroyo Boulevard, would be offered to the federal government for a price of \$8,000. Mr. T.J. Wylie spoke in behalf of the Nogales School Board and stated the following:

. . . [W]hen Nogales is ready to build a municipal building, unless the present structure is transferred to the city as has been contemplated, the School Board will offer a site for a city hall. Also, the School Board will, from the school grounds, devote a site for a Carnegie Library. Thus, with the new high school building, a federal building, a city hall and library, Nogales will have a civic center in keeping with its size and importance.

This proposition was also backed by the Young Business Men's Association. The visit of the federal site inspector, J.W. Roberts from San Francisco, was reported on March 19th. The local civic organizations agreed to support any site selected. The article concluded that the "dream of a civic center may be realized at the earliest possible movement."

Articles of March 22nd, 24th, 26th, and 27th reported the upcoming city-wide vote of March 27th that would enable the School Board to sell school property to the federal government. The YMBA Publicity Committee made pleas on the 22nd and 24th to the

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Nogales

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 4

citizens of Nogales for their approval of the School Board's site proposal. The proposal was backed by such "big men" as Bert Cumming, Joe Wise, James Harrison, W.G. Bowman, Captain L.W. Mix, Mayor Fiedler, T.J. Wylie, and R.E. Butler, as well as the Nogales Herald, Morning Oasis, Chamber of Commerce, City Council, and YMBA. The approval of that site would provide a new civic center that would aid in the expansion of the business district. The School Board's site proposal even entered into the election of School Board trustees. It had been rumored that Mrs. Mollie Barry (who was running for a School Board position) had opposed the desires of the city and the selling of the school property. Mrs. Barry declared "emphatically" that she was not opposed to the project and was offended that this issue would be used against her in the election. On March 27th, it was certain that the School Board's right to sell the site would be supported.

The work and the dreams that had gone into Nogales' proposed civic center were abruptly rejected when, on April 22nd, the Herald announced "Morely Avenue Site For Federal Building Selected". The school site had been knocked out of the running. A second blow came with the notice that the building of Carnegie libraries would be delayed until the high prices of materials were reduced. An article of April 26th urged the citizens to boost for the federal building: "The site probably doesn't meet everyone's approval, but the site has been selected and it is now the duty of everyone to assist the government in every possible way."

The issue of April 27th reported the activity of the YMBA meeting the night before. The following caption greeted Nogales' readers: "Federal Site Kickers Losers At Meeting To Investigate Selection". Many of Nogales' citizens had voiced strong disapproval of the federal government's selection, stating that they would fight the selection even at the loss of the federal building. Therefore, a special meeting had been called and held at City Hall to discuss the important issue of site selection. According to the account, City Hall was crowded to capacity and many talks were made by those for and those against. Captain L.W. Mix addressed the assembly stating that "what the committee wanted was a federal building" and that he "would personally back any site chosen by the government and thought all citizens should do the same." He received loud applause. Joseph Wise felt that the YMBA should protest against the selection of the Morely Avenue site on the fact that the residents of Nogales had voted for the civic center site.

With the site issue settled, Nogales returned to normal. Two months after the "town meeting" to debate the federal site, on June 18th, the Herald reported that the U.S. was eager for final action on the building site. Captain Mix received a telegram that indicated that the site would be finalized in the next couple of days. It was also mentioned that \$100,000 had been appropriated for the building's construction. Articles of July and August were silent on the federal building but reported growth

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CONTINUATION SHEET Nogales ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

and progress in the "key" city: new construction in the last six months had totaled \$310,019, the largest amount for a like-sized city in the Southwest; postal receipts at the Nogales Post Office had doubled in the past five years; the world's largest fumigation house to sterilize Mexican imports was under proposal; and Nogales was the primary market in the world for garbanzo beans. On December 31st, Emory Miller was appointed acting postmaster of Nogales.

The year 1921 brought only sporadic news on the post office: January 18th: "Chamber of Commerce Working Committees Have Been Appointed" (included the federal building committee headed by Captain Mix); and February 4th: "Chamber of Commerce In Important Meeting" (Chairman Mix reported that the federal building site would soon be transferred).

Soon after the year changed to 1922, it was announced: "Site for \$112,000 Federal Building Purchased Today" (January 16th). Three months elapsed; then on April 26th the Herald reported that "Work on New \$100,000 Federal Building Will Start in July". J.C. Elliott of the Treasury Department was in Nogales gathering site data.

The second day of 1923 began with the notice that the federal building site would be cleared immediately. Postmaster Charles E. Beatty was given authority to notify the property owners to vacate the site. The call for construction bids was announced on January 15th and the arrival of plans for the building was reported on January 22nd. According to the article of the 22nd, the building "will be handsome and a credit to the city".

Several articles of March and April reported the bidding process and the May 7th edition announced that the contract for the federal building had been given. Devault & Deitrick of Canton, Ohio, received the contract with a bid of \$90,823. Excavation commenced in June and by July 3rd, the Herald reported that foundation work had started with 50 men on the job. A progress report of November 1st indicated that the walls and roof were in place and plastering was underway.

It had been ten years since the post office in Nogales was authorized, and the building was ready to open its doors to the public. A June 11, 1924 article reported that the new federal building would open on July 1st. The building would be occupied by the post office, immigration and customs. The building was described as ". . . one of the most beautiful edifices of its kind in the Southwest with all modern building facilities. . . ." The article further credited Senator Ralph Cameron with securing the building appropriation. Finally, a June 30th article reported "New Federal Building Open". The "beautiful new building" was thrown open to the public and mails for the first time were distributed to the Nogales population.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Nogales MPO

Item number 10

Page 1

Sanborn Map, Nogales Arizona, November 1930, page 3.

