

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **MAR 12 1984**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic U.S. National Bank Building

and or common Ford Building

2. Location

street & number 601 Main Street not for publication

city, town Vancouver vicinity of

state Washington code 053 county Clark code 011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Wayne Rembold

street & number 1022 S.W. Salmon

city, town Portland vicinity of state Oregon 97205

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clark County Courthouse

street & number 1200 Franklin Street

city, town Vancouver state Washington 98668

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Washington State Inventory of Cultural Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town 111 West 21st Avenue, Olympia state Washington 98504

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The U.S. National Bank Building is a five-story Commercial Style structure with Renaissance and Classical Revival Style ornamentation. The building is constructed on a 100 foot by 50 foot lot at the northeast corner of Main and Sixth Streets in Vancouver, Washington. The major entry is located on the narrower west side, which fronts on Main Street. The U.S. National Bank originally occupied most of the ground floor, with a small stores at the northwest and southeast corners. The building has a steel frame and is clad in cream-colored brick with cast stone and terra cotta decoration. The area surrounding the bank is primarily composed of two-story commercial buildings. Many date to the first decades of the century, but most have suffered from substantial alterations.

The west facade is divided into three bays. The small bay in the center reflects the central interior stairwell and corridors. The ground floor bays are divided by rusticated brick pilasters. The most prominent feature of the west facade is the recessed entry in the center bay. It is framed by a pair of fluted Roman Doric columns on granite pedestals and an entablature which projects from the building's face. The entablature is decorated with two garlands on the frieze and an egg and dart molding along the cornice except at the corners, which are decorated with acanthus leaves. The cornice of cast stone becomes a belt course that visually divides the base from the upper floors. The entablature's frieze is of cast stone, but brick is used as it continues around the face of the building. Set between the columns is a round arch with supporting pilasters of cast stone. This arch is decorated with an ornamental keystone, egg and dart molding, and coffers. The entry has black and white marble wainscoting and small hexagonal floor tiles. Attached to the wrought iron rail above the entry on the second floor is a cartouche with the U.S. National Bank emblem.

The left bay contains a storefront with a separate street entry. Four lights in the transom run the length of this bay. The comparable transoms in the bay occupied by the bank entrance are about half as tall. As a result, the plate glass windows of the bank are taller, reflecting its status. Alterations to the west facade are limited to the bank's windows and doors which have been replaced with aluminum frames.

In the upper floors, the narrow center bay consists of two one-over-one wood sash windows separated by a strip of brick. The two end bays contain three one-over-one wood sash windows placed side by side. There are cast stone tiles on the window sills and along the belt courses. Below the third and fourth floors, are plain spandrels framed by corbeled brick.

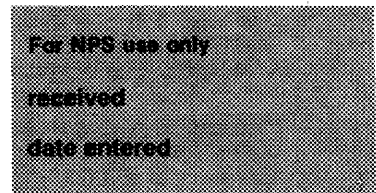
The attic story is articulated by a second cast stone belt course. The pilasters are terminated at the attic level with simple cast stone capitals. The center two pilasters also have pine cone decorations and recessed panels. The west and south facades are capped by a projected cornice with dentils, modillions, antefixes, and bead and reel molding.

The south facade is divided into five 20-foot bays. On the ground floor, the west corner and interior bays were occupied by the bank. The bays are divided by rusticated pilasters with cast stone capitals and bases that rest on granite pedestals. There is a granite watertable along the base due to a lower street elevation along the south side. Corbeled brick spandrels occur beneath the bank windows. These windows are comprised of a large plate glass window with narrow side-lights and five lights in the transom. All the windows are fixed wood frames. There was a store in the final bay on the east side, but, unlike the bank, it is at street level. The transom is also larger in this bay, similar to the storefront on the bank's west side. The lower portion of the storefront has been replaced with glass block and a new door.

The middle floors of this facade are separated from the base by the frieze and belt course wrapping around from the front. Brick pilasters divide the bays. At the corners

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of the building, the pilasters are rusticated like quoins. All the pilasters have simple bases at the base of the second floor. The spandrels have corbeled brick panels similar to those below the bank windows. The second bay from the right has an exterior iron fire escape. Each bay consists of a set of three one-over-one wood sash windows.

The attic floor is divided from the floor below by the second cast stone belt course. The attic windows are identical to those below in size and placement. The four center pilasters have inset panels and pine cone ornaments at the top. The brick frieze and projected cast stone cornice that caps the building is identical to that on the front facade. The south and west elevations are in good condition and the few alterations have not significantly impaired the building's integrity.

The east and north facades are fenestrated, undecorated secondary facades.

Upon entering the main entrance on the west facade, a small lobby area provides access to the elevator, stairs, small retail space and major ground floor space. The lobby has a tiled floor and marble baseboard and wainscot.

The major space of the ground floor, once occupied by the U.S. National Bank, continues the Classical and Renaissance Revival decoration of the exterior of the building. Although having been painted over the years and showing some water damage, the coffered plaster ceilings and capiteled columns are in fair condition.

Access to the upper floors is provided by a large iron stairway and an elevator. Each of the upper floors is divided into 16 offices, restrooms and utility rooms. The upper floors have remained relatively intact and are in fair condition. Entrances to each of the offices is through a glass paneled door with transom. Window and door surrounds have molded wood trim. The inner offices are of varying sizes, and many are connected by interior doors. Several early lavatories survive with original porcelain fixtures.

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 1912 **Builder/Architect** unknown **Contractor:** C.S. Voorhees

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The 1912 U.S. National Bank Building is significant for being the earliest large commercial structure erected in the city of Vancouver. The bank is an attractively detailed building designed in the Commercial Style and is one of the most architecturally distinguished structures in Vancouver's central business district.

The U.S. National Bank Building was the home of Vancouver's fifth banking institution. Major stockholders in the firm included J.M. Langsdorf and son as well as a number of local Vancouver men. The contract to build the structure was awarded to C.S. Voorhees whose bid for construction was around \$42,000. As described by the newspapers of the time:

The bank will occupy sumptuous quarters on the lower floor, with modern office buildings (sic) upstairs and in every way the directors are endeavoring to make the building a credit and honor to Vancouver. The ground floor will be used by the bank as a banking house and will be equipped with every fixture known to modern science.

The bank obviously reflects a significant period in the city's economic history. Other cities in the state also experienced growth during this period and similar structures, such as the Bellingham National Bank Building and the Finch Building in Aberdeen, have already been listed in the National Register.

As soon as the structure was completed, its tenants included attorneys, physicians, dentists, accountants, insurance agencies, and various other professionals. The importance of this building to Vancouver's professional community is evidenced by the fact that it was fully occupied for almost forty years. By 1934, the building had been sold to the Clark County National Bank (affiliated with the U.S. National Bank of Portland) which occupied the bank until 1950. The building became known as the Ford Building during World War II. After 1950, the main floor remained essentially unoccupied and, by 1959, the building was practically vacant on all floors. Today, the structure is completely vacant. Despite this long period of disuse, the building exhibits no obvious signs of structural deterioration.

The building is a good example of Commercial Style architecture. As is typical for this style, the structure has a visually delineated storefront base, simple repetitive office stories, and an attic story with cornice. Another element of the style is the arrangement of the office floors. The regularly spaced office windows are separated by slightly projecting piers which accentuate the vertical emphasis of the design.

The Classical and Renaissance inspired ornamentation that was applied to the building is not usually associated with the purer examples of the Commercial Style. However, it is extremely common to see such stylistic combinations, particularly in banks. It was also common practice for banking firms to erect such multistory office buildings combining banking spaces, storefronts, and upper story offices.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Clark County Directory, 1911.
 Vancouver City Directory, 1912-13.
 Vancouver City Directory, 1928-29.
 The Vancouver Daily Columbian, February 5, 1912; April 9, 1912; December 9, 1912, December 17, 1912; August 6, 1941.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one
 Quadrangle name Vancouver, Wash.-Oreg. Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>

Verbal boundary description and justification The south 50 feet of Lots 5 and 6, Block 28, of East Vancouver as recorded in Plat D, Page 70, records of Clark County.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>n/a</u>	code	county	code
state	<u>n/a</u>	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>John M. Tess, President</u>	Edited by	<u>Mark L. Brack</u>
organization	<u>Heritage Investment Corporation</u>	Archaeology and Hist. Pres.	
street & number	<u>813 S.W. Alder, Suite 800</u>	date	<u>October 15, 1983</u>
city or town	<u>Portland</u>	telephone	<u>(503) 228-0272</u>
		state	<u>Oregon 97205</u>

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Jacob E. Tison
 title State Historic Preservation Officer date March 5, 1984

For NPS use only **Determined Eligible**
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

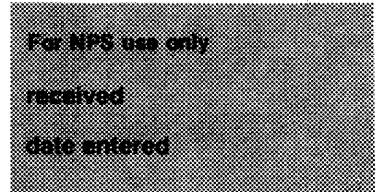
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Keeper of the National Register [Signature] date 4/15/1984
new owner owner objection withdrawn Entered in the National Register DP

Attest: [Signature] date 12/29/88
 Chief of Registration

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Since the U.S. National Bank Building was the city's first large multistory office building, it is likely that it was also the first to employ modern techniques of steel framing.

Much of the downtown area consists of two story commercial structures, and many have classically-derived details. However, most have suffered from serious alterations and the U.S. National Bank Building is one of the most intact. While later structures would imitate the bank's stylistic features, few in the city would imitate its scale. In the downtown area, only three other buildings approach its dimensions. To this day, it remains one of the most prominent buildings in Vancouver, a notable example of early twentieth century commercial design.