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U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Cultural Resources  
Interagency Resources Division

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## HOW TO APPLY THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA TO POST OFFICES



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*Cover Photo: Pawtucket Post Office, Pawtucket, Rhode Island, constructed 1896-97. The new post office was welcomed by the community, which regarded its first Federal building as a symbol of the prosperity and progress it had achieved as a major industrial center during the 19th century. The building is an excellent example of Beaux Arts classicism, which dominated the style of public buildings after the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. (Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission)*


# **NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN 13**

## **HOW TO APPLY THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA TO POST OFFICES**

by  
**Beth M. Boland**

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Interagency Resources Division  
National Register of Historic Places**

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# PREFACE

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Post offices constitute the most common form of Federal government buildings in the nation. Located in large cities, small towns, and rural areas, post offices provide an important presence of the Federal government in communities. They play an essential role in facilitating communication and promoting economic development, reducing the isolation of rural locales, and disseminating products and ideas across geographical areas. Historically, in times of economic stress, the construction of post offices has stimulated local economic recovery and provided work.

Many post offices are significant civic monuments that beautify the cities and towns in which they are located. Architecturally, post offices have served as symbols of the Federal government's authority, conveyed regional historical themes, and exemplified high art forms. Some post offices were designed in an "official" national style and serve as notable examples of classicism in their respective communities. During other phases in the Federal government's public building program, post offices were designed to reflect regional

styles and influences. For much of the 19th century and throughout the Depression, artwork, such as ornamental sculptures and murals, was integrated into the architectural design of post offices.

This **National Register Bulletin** provides guidance on how to apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation to post office buildings. It should be used by anyone evaluating the historic significance of post office buildings or completing a National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (NPS Form 10-900) for a post office building. It should be used in conjunction with *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*; *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*; *National Register Bulletin 16B: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*; *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years*; *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*; and *National Register Bulletin 39: Researching a Historic Property*.

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. National Register properties may be of national, State, or local significance. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior. **National Register Bulletins** provide guidance on how to identify, evaluate, document, and register important properties.

The intent of this publication is to assist individuals with the evaluation of historic post office buildings. The methodology outlined and the chronology of Federal government building history are useful in evaluating other types of government, civic, and institutional buildings and in increasing public appreciation of their historical and architectural contributions to the life and culture of American cities and towns.

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Chief of Registration  
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U.S. Department of the Interior

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This bulletin was originally prepared by Beth M. (Grosvenor) Boland, Historian, National Register of Historic Places, in 1984. This publication is now in its second edition. The author would like to thank everyone involved with the development and review of the original text. Special thanks go to Emily J. Harris and Antoinette J. Lee, whose studies of U.S. post office and Federal building construction policies contributed substantially to the bulletin's context statement; to Susan Harrison for her bibliographic research; to the late Karel H. Yasko, General Services Administration, for generously sharing his detailed knowledge of Depression Era artwork in Federal buildings; to Rita Moroney for her assistance in using Postal Service records and documents; to the staff of the National Archives for guidance in locating and using appropriate record

groups; and to John S. Sorenson for numerous consultations on Postal Service organization and policies, and for his efforts to shepherd Postal Service policy toward historic resources surveys and appreciation of the Service's history.

The author also gratefully acknowledges the helpful comments of the following reviewers of the 1984 text: Myra F. Harrison, Charles E. Lee, Knox Mellon, Doug Robertson, J. Walter Roth, Donna J. Schober, Arthur Stewart, Barbara Sudler, Valerie A. Talmage, Cherilyn Widell, and the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, especially Carol Dubie and Bruce MacDougal.

The revised text contains contextual information for evaluating post offices built after World War II, which was derived from Dr. Lee's study of the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury.

This publication has been prepared pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop and make available information concerning historic properties. *National Register Bulletin 13* was developed under the general editorship of Carol D. Shull, Chief of Registration, National Register of Historic Places. Antoinette J. Lee, historian, coordinated the publication of the second edition of *National Register Bulletin 13*, and Tanya M. Velt provided editorial and technical support. Comments on this publication may be directed to Chief of Registration, National Register of Historic Places, Interagency Resources Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Suite 250, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.





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# I. INTRODUCTION

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Governmental, civic, and institutional buildings represent an important type of property eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This type encompasses post offices, hospitals, town halls, schools, and other similar buildings. The institutions housed in these buildings provide important, sometimes essential services, and are found in or near almost every community in the country. They form a part of each community's identity and help determine its values and the course of its history. In addition, their buildings are often architectural focal points of their respective communities. The historic or architectural significance of these properties can be evaluated for National Register eligibility within a national, State, or local context.

Post offices are important examples of this type of property. In order to facilitate the evaluation and nomination of post offices, the National Park Service conducted a study of various factors in the establishment, role, and design of post offices in order to establish a consistent policy for applying the National Register Criteria for Evaluation to these buildings. The study focused on the history of post offices prior to 1939 to accommodate the impact of major Federal programs of the Depression. The following guidance for evaluating the significance of post offices using the National Register Criteria resulted from this study. This second edition of *National Register Bulletin 13* also looks at post offices built after World War II. This publication is intended to assist anyone in the evaluation of the eligibility of post offices for inclusion in the National Register, and to suggest an appropriate approach for evaluating other similar resources.



*Old Post Office and Clock Tower, District of Columbia, 1891-99. One of Washington's few Romanesque Revival Buildings on a monumental scale, this was the city's third tallest building when completed, exceeded only by the Capitol and the Washington Monument. The Old Post Office was the first Federal building erected in the area now known as the Federal Triangle. It served as headquarters for every Postmaster General from 1899 to 1934. (William Edmund Barrett)*

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# II. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF POSTAL SERVICES AND POST OFFICE CONSTRUCTION

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Historically, governments have maintained control over postal systems, since the effective organization and control of society depend upon the ability to communicate. In America, the new United States government also assumed control over mail service, but incorporated democratic principles by constitutionally placing the power to establish post offices and post roads in the hands of Congress. The establishment of postal service throughout the country provided an example of democracy at work: citizens petitioned Congress, which established post roads and instructed the Postmaster General to provide postal service along the routes. By 1820, the number of post offices and miles of post roads were approximately quadruple that of 1800. In addition to providing tangible reminders to otherwise isolated communities of the role and ideals of the central government, post offices, through their number, distribution, and types of service, represented many politically advantageous opportunities to Members of Congress. Using their franking privileges, Congressmen could widely and inexpensively distribute speeches and campaign materials, and they also could gain political support from the press by purchasing space for notices concerning postal business. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, Congressmen sought favor from constituents through the establishment or

improvement of postal services and facilities in their districts.

With the development of political parties in the early 19th century, the operation of the Post Office Department became subject to political manipulation. After gaining cabinet level status in 1829 under Andrew Jackson, the Postmaster General served as a major distributor of rewards to party supporters through appointments to thousands of postmaster positions. Postmasters were often, therefore, important political activists and local organizers for the party in power. The political vulnerability of the postmaster positions, as well as their large numbers, made them major targets in the history of civil service reform in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Throughout the 19th century, the postal system served as the principal, and for a long time the only, means of long distance communication. It provided both a physical and intellectual link between great distances as the nation expanded across the continent. In the process of providing and increasing its services, the Post Office Department also influenced the development of aspects of the nation's history other than communications, including transportation, publishing, and commerce. Efforts to increase the speed and efficiency of mail delivery and competition for government contracts to carry mail encouraged the growth of roads, railroads, shipping lines, and eventually airlines. Con-

gressional franking, special newspaper rates, the acceptance of books for delivery, and free delivery for cities and eventually rural areas spurred a boom in the publishing business by offering inexpensive rates and wide distribution of newspapers, journals, magazines, catalogs, and paperback books. Mail order businesses benefited from reduced rates for catalogs, rural free delivery, and parcel post service.

Through the use of flat rates, stamps and envelopes, registered mail and money orders, and free delivery for larger cities, the basic form of modern postal service had taken shape by the Civil War. Important services instituted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries included rural free delivery, parcel post, and Postal Savings. Long advocated by farmers, rural free delivery, which began experimentally in 1896 and permanently a few years later, greatly reduced the isolation of rural areas. Between 1897 and 1908, local governments spent millions to improve roads in order to qualify for rural delivery service. This service also resulted in a drastic reduction in the number of post offices in small communities, in which commercial establishments had sometimes been supported by necessary periodic visits of rural citizens to pick up mail. Parcel post, inaugurated in 1913, provided another great convenience to rural areas, which were often unprofitable for private express



*Copperas Cove Stagestop and Post Office, Copperas Cove vicinity, Texas, 1878. This fine example of vernacular stone construction in Texas is the only surviving structure from the original town of Copperas Cove. It served many functions, beginning as a stage relay station and post office. (Texas Historical Commission)*

companies. Postal savings banks were authorized in 1910 in order to encourage thrift, increase the amount of money in circulation, and provide security, especially for those without access to banks. They became particularly popular during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the government inspired greater confidence than private financial institutions.

The buildings constructed for use as post offices have reflected various government and architectural philosophies. From the establishment of the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury in the 1850s until the 1890s, the style of Federal buildings tended to follow the favorite style of the incumbent Supervising Architect. During the tenure of James Knox Taylor (1897-1912) as Supervising Architect of the Treasury, the Federal government promoted the concept that government buildings should be monumental and beautiful, and should represent the ideals of democracy and high standards of architectural sophistication in their communities. Taylor preferred styles derived from classical or early American traditions. Believing that Federal buildings should be built to last, he

also emphasized the use of high quality construction materials. Private architects worked on many of the larger projects, but the Office of the Supervising Architect produced most smaller buildings, including many of the post offices. In either case, the buildings were individually designed; Taylor firmly resisted suggestions that designs be standardized.

After 1913, Federal construction policy changed in response to concerns over the cost of public buildings projects and controversy over whether all the buildings authorized by Congress were truly needed. The 1913 Public Buildings Act, which authorized the construction of a large number of public buildings, also prohibited the construction of new post office buildings in communities whose postal receipts totaled less than \$10,000. In the interest of economy and efficiency, the Department of the Treasury instituted a classification system under which a post office's structural and ornamental qualities were functions of the value of real estate and postal receipts in the city where it was to be located. First class post offices in large cities would still be monumental and elaborate, but for

a small town, the standards specified an "ordinary class of building, such as any businessman would consider a reasonable investment."<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the earlier policy of designing post offices individually, the Supervising Architect's Office used the same design and floor plan whenever possible, and rarely employed private architects during this period, which continued through the 1920s.

The emphasis on economy and efficiency continued during the Depression, when the government rapidly expanded its public works program as a means of stimulating economic recovery and providing work for the unemployed, almost one third of whom were in the building trades. The number of public buildings constructed in the 1930s increased dramatically. Approximately three times the number of post offices were built in this period as had been built in the previous 50 years. The construction of these post offices was funded through a number of different programs and authorizations, but remained the responsibility of the Treasury Department until 1939.

Nearly a quarter of the post offices built during this period were authorized by the Public Works Administration (PWA), established in 1933 to oversee the planning and construction of Federal and non-Federal public works projects. The planning required by the 1926 Public Buildings Act and the 1931 Federal Employment Stabilization Act enabled the PWA to begin its program with a minimum of delay by starting with Federal projects such as post offices. The Bureau of Labor Statistics maintained statistics on employment, wages, cost of materials, and other data on PWA projects. Although the 406 post offices built under this program composed only a small portion of the approximately 34,000 PWA construction projects completed or in progress in virtually every county in the nation by 1939, they were among the most familiar to the general public. Despite the desire to complete projects rapidly, the PWA also stressed the importance of high quality in order to ensure "public works of an enduring character and lasting benefits," according to its 1939 report.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix E.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Public Works Administration, *America Builds: the Record of the PWA* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), 73.

The government once again employed private architects after 1930, but this practice was ended with an order of June 29, 1934, that all remaining Federal buildings be designed by the Office of the Supervising Architect. The Treasury Department determined that it was not economical for private architects to handle small architectural projects. It was felt that the expeditious placement of buildings under contract and the putting of men to work in the shortest time possible facilitated employment in the construction field, and outweighed the benefits of procuring designs from a comparatively small number of architectural firms. A limited number of private architects were associated with the Treasury Department's building program on a consulting basis. In March of 1939, however, in likely response to the improved employment picture, the Treasury Department reversed its policy and decided to select private architects by means of regional competitions. This new

policy was barely announced when the public buildings program was removed from the Treasury Department in July of 1939 and merged into the Federal Works Agency. Although some variations to facades were allowed, standardized interior plans were well established by this time, and outlined in a publication entitled "Instructions to Private Architects Engaged on Public Building work under the Jurisdictions of the Treasury Department."<sup>3</sup> The most commonly used styles were the Colonial Revival style or a simplified classical style blending modern and classical elements, characterized by symmetrical massing and plain surfaces.

Many of the post offices constructed during the 1930s were adorned with murals or other forms of artwork commissioned by the Federal government. Of the four

government programs supporting graphic arts during the Depression, the Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture (later the Section of Fine Arts) was the principal sponsor of art for Federal buildings, primarily post offices. Funds for artwork were based on 1% of the total appropriation for the building's construction. Unlike another major program, the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project, the Section's program was one of patronage rather than relief and stressed quality over mass production. Artists were selected through blind competitions, whose standards encouraged realism as the most appropriate style and scenes of everyday American life as suitable subjects. Placement of the commissioned murals and sculptures in public buildings resulted from the desire of leaders in the Administration to make original, quality art accessible to those who otherwise had little or no opportunity to see it. Local reactions to the newly installed works

<sup>3</sup> There may be no surviving copies of this publication, but it is discussed in the September 1933 issue of *Architectural Forum*, 222-230.



*Federal Office Building, Seattle, Washington, 1932-33. In addition to being the city's first building designed especially for Federal offices, this was one of the first Modernistic-styled buildings designed by the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. The innovative use of cast aluminum spandrel panels beneath the windows was the first extensive use of aluminum on the West Coast. Much of the interior Art Deco ornamentation remains intact. (John Kvapil)*

ranged from enthusiasm and pride to indifference or criticism over the choice or interpretation of subject matter. Sometimes works sparked sharp controversy.

When the public buildings design function was transferred from the Treasury Department to the Federal Works Agency in 1939, its vision was altered as well. In its 1940 annual report, the Federal Works Agency described itself as “primarily an organization for building” concerned with providing facilities for persons engaged in military readiness.<sup>4</sup> By 1943, temporary war-related construction was completed and the Supervising Architect’s staff reduced by nearly one-half. Construction of non-military buildings, especially post offices, was virtually at a standstill. However, the Federal Works Agency planned for a post-war public building program. The agency studied the character of building materials, designs, and construction methods used during the war years, and gauged the adaptability of the new materials and methods to post-war Federal construction.

After the war, Federal architectural activities were well diffused throughout military and civilian agencies. The Federal Works Agency—with its public buildings design function—was subsumed into the new General Services Administration in 1949. With the Public Buildings Act of 1949, the Office of the Supervising Architect increasingly relied on private archi-

tectural firms to carry out public building designs. The Office continued, however, to provide standard designs and guidelines for post office buildings, although the nature of those buildings changed remarkably after World War II. Post offices became prominent examples of the architectural tenet “form follows function.” Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield desired utilitarian post office designs with no extraneous frills, such as exterior entrance steps. New post offices had clean lines and standardized designs for lobby windows, counters, lock boxes, and letter drops.

Another significant difference between pre- and post-war post offices was site design relative to automobile accessibility. After World War II, post offices were located near major roadways or automobile traffic intersections, rather than along railroads or in town centers. The new pattern emerged as post-war development spread out from central cities. Site plan concerns included adequate parking, tail-gate space, rail sidings, and drive-through service.<sup>5</sup>

With private architects or architectural firms designing most post offices after the war, the General Services Administration encouraged standardized designs not only by providing prescriptive drawings and specifications, but also through an ambitious lease-purchase program. This program provided for private investors to finance and construct public buildings

according to Federal government requirements. The government would lease the buildings for a specified number of years and then, according to a prearranged purchase contract, become owner of the building.<sup>6</sup> The architectural treatment of the exterior was left to the decision of the building owner and the architect, but interior spaces had to conform to accommodate specific postal functions. In 1954, all exclusively post office projects were removed from the General Services Administration and transferred to the U.S. Post Office Department. The General Services Administration was left with most of the remaining civilian Federal buildings, including those that combined post offices with other Federal functions.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Federal Works Agency, *First Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1940), 9-10.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Mickel, “Washington Topics,” *Architectural Record* 114 (November 1953), 38.

<sup>6</sup> “Branch Post Office, Denver Colorado,” *Architectural Record* 112 (August 1952), 152; and Ernest Mickel, “A Washington Report,” *Architectural Record* 116 (November 1954), 12-13.

<sup>7</sup> Ernest Mickel, “Washington Topics,” *Architectural Record* 116 (September 1954), 38, 304.

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# III. EVALUATING A POST OFFICE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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To qualify for listing in the National Register, a property must have significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture, and retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Determining whether or not a particular property, such as a post office, possesses these characteristics can be accomplished by following six steps designed to reveal whether or not the post office represents one or more significant themes in American history, and whether or not the post office possesses characteristics that would make it a good representative of those themes. This approach may be used by those conducting a survey to identify significant post offices as well as for evaluating a specific post office.

First, obtain information about the specific post office based on physical inspection of the building and on documentation of its history. Next, identify the appropriate historic themes within which the post office should be evaluated. Each theme should consist of a geographical area, a particular cultural or historical development within the geographical area, and a specific time frame. Themes must be significant in American history, as demonstrated by scholarly research.

Outline the characteristics the post office should possess to be a good representation of each theme. It should be possible to organize these characteristics according to the National Register Criteria: what physical features are necessary to represent a type, period, or method of construction? What associations

suggest significance within a town's pattern of economic development?<sup>8</sup> Also, evaluate the types of integrity that are important for each characteristic, and list the features that the post office should retain to possess that type of integrity.

Remember to determine if any aspect of the post office's history or present condition might place it into a category of properties not generally considered eligible for the National Register, and therefore requiring special justification. Finally, apply the

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix B for the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

list of characteristics, types of integrity, and any special considerations to the post office under evaluation.

## OBTAIN INFORMATION

The first step in evaluating a potential historic property is to identify the type, functions, and history of the property being considered. The basic information to obtain for a post office, which falls into the National Register category "building," includes dates of



*Jennings Post Office, Jennings, Louisiana, 1915. Representing a degree of stylistic sophistication unexpected in a small town in rural Louisiana as early as 1915, the Jennings Post Office is noted for its progressive design in a commercial center otherwise characterized by more modest vernacular buildings. (Jonathan Fricker)*

design and construction, architect(s) and builder(s), construction materials, style, the class of the post office, and period of service. The researcher also should learn whether or not the building has been altered (interior or exterior) and when these alterations occurred; whether it was designed and built specially for use as a post office or became a post office later in its history; whether it was combined within another type of building, such as a courthouse or Federal office building; and the names and periods of tenure of the postmasters. Additional information may be important, including the local introduction of innovations such as rural free delivery and parcel post, the location of previous post offices in the community, the availability of additional services besides mail delivery at the post office, and pertinent information on works of art.

## IDENTIFY HISTORIC THEMES

Once the "biography" of the post office has been compiled, the next step is to analyze it in its appropriate historic context. This context may include important historical events and trends that influenced the community or State where the post office is located, as well as important themes in the development of the nation. It may be helpful to check with the State Historic Preservation Officer and local historical and preservation organizations, as they may already have developed historic contexts within which institutional and civic buildings can be analyzed and can recommend important source materials.<sup>9</sup>

Geographical context is an important consideration in evaluating any type of property for the National Register. Properties listed in the National Register must possess significance when evaluated in relationship to other properties locally, statewide, or nationally. The geographical context provides the perspective for studying appropriate architectural and historical developments. It also defines the areas within

which to identify other resources with similar characteristics if this is necessary. The information required to demonstrate the significance of a post office will vary according to whether it is significant to the community, the State, or the entire nation. It may not be necessary, for example, to describe the development of local architectural style for a post office that is significant as an important prototype for Federal design standards nationwide. This information is essential, however, if the post office has no distinction on the State or national level, but is a significant example of its architectural style in its community. The three levels of significance are not mutually exclusive; a post office may be significant on any or all levels. Information concerning appropriate historical or architectural developments must be provided for each geographical context within which the post office may be significant.

Local significance is often difficult to evaluate because there may be many similar properties in the area or in other communities throughout the State or the country. Whether or not the property under consideration is significant to its community depends on the historical development and architectural character of that community as well as on the attributes of the property. A 1930 Colonial Revival post office might be historically or architecturally significant in one town where the style is rare, while a nearly identical one could be undistinguished in another area where there are numerous better examples. That is why it is essential to learn the historic events and trends that are important to the locality of a post office before trying to determine the qualities that would make it significant. Historic factors important to the community may include national or State developments, but the post office must be more than merely a local example of a property associated with these developments. The way in which the post office is significant to the community, State, or nation in representing these particular historic themes must be clearly stated.

An evaluation of State significance requires a similar knowledge of the appropriate historical and architectural developments within the State in order to evaluate a property on that level. Because post offices that are significant on the State level are often important examples of standardized Federal designs, it may be necessary

to be familiar with the designs used in a particular State, or even to initiate a survey of post offices in the State before evaluating the significance to the State of an individual post office. This type of information may also be necessary in assessing artwork designed for post offices. Data and photographs should be consistent for all buildings throughout the State and will provide a comparative framework for identifying standard and unusual architectural designs and important characteristics of the artwork. The information can also be useful in determining the relationship between Federal policy and State or regional history.

The histories of the postal service in America and of Federal construction policies provide a chronological framework for assessing individual post offices, and place them in the context of national historical patterns. These factors, as well as the broader historical and architectural movements in this country, should be considered in evaluating possible national significance for a post office. A post office that may not be nationally distinctive may be significant to its community or State as an important representative of a nationally significant theme. In these cases, the appropriate local or State context must be established.

There are many ways in which a post office may be significant for its role in the historical development or its relationship to the architectural character of the community, the State, or the nation. Theoretically, a post office could represent significant themes in almost all of the areas of significance used by the National Register.<sup>10</sup> Identified themes must be significant in American history on the local, State, or national level, as demonstrated by scholarly research. The chart on pages 8-9 lists some of the themes that post offices could represent in their role as communications centers. Time frames are not included as they would vary according to the particular post office, locality, and relevant historic factors. In addition, of course, a post office could represent a theme by virtue of associations totally unrelated to its design or function as a post office. These themes should also be considered when judging a post office's historic or architectural significance.

<sup>9</sup> We also recommend referring to *National Register Bulletin 39: Researching a Historic Property*, and pp. 30-32 of *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis For Preservation Planning* for sources of information on local history.

<sup>10</sup> See *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* for lists and definitions of areas of significance used by the National Register.

# HISTORIC CONTEXT

Areas of Significance	Levels of Significance	Related Themes
<b>Architecture</b>	Local and State	The architectural development and character of the area or State.  The symbolic impact or influence of public or governmental architecture.
	National	The work of an important architect.  Same.  The evolution of Federal design policies.
<b>Art</b>	Local, State, and National	The access to and influence of art by and on citizens.  The development of artistic creativity, technique, and philosophy.  The work of an important artist.  The perception of culture and values as portrayed by the artwork.
<b>Agriculture</b>		See "Commerce".
<b>Commerce</b>	Local, State, and National	The development of the business community, or of any specific business, and its influence on social, economic, and political life.  The career of a prominent businessperson.
<b>Communications</b>	Local and State	The influence of the methods and technological advances of communications systems on the area or State.  See other areas of significance.
	National	Same.  The history of the U.S. Postal Service.
<b>Community Planning &amp; Development</b>	Local	Periods of growth and prosperity in the area's population and economy.  The evolution of the physical growth and design of the community.  The establishment and influence of community planning agencies.
	State	The impact of State laws, policies, or events on community planning and development.
	National	The impact of national laws, policies, or events on community planning and development.
<b>Economics</b>	Local	The factors influencing economic stability or crisis on the area.  See "Commerce".



Areas of Significance	Levels of Significance	Related Themes
<b>Education</b>	Local, State, and National	The development and organization of educational systems and facilities.
<b>Exploration/Settlement</b>	Local and State	<p>The events influencing or constituting the initial or an important exploration or surveying of an area or State.</p> <p>The founding and early development of a community or State.</p> <p>Factors influencing settlement and settlement patterns.</p>
	National	<p>Same.</p> <p>The advancement of the frontier.</p> <p>Federal visibility and influence in the frontiers.</p> <p>See "Commerce" and "Economics".</p>
<b>Politics/Government</b>	Local, State, and National	<p>The administration, impact, and perception of local, State, and Federal government services and institutions.</p> <p>The roles and conduct of political parties.</p> <p>The relationship of the Executive and Legislative Branches in the administration of government.</p> <p>The history of party politics.</p> <p>The growth, abuse, and reform of the Federal civil service system.</p> <p>The history of public works programs and policies.</p>
<b>Social History</b>	Local, State, and National	The establishment, development, and role of social institutions.
<b>Transportation</b>	Local, State, and National	The development and role of transportation facilities.

# OUTLINE CHARACTERISTICS

After information on a specific post office has been outlined and the appropriate significant themes identified, it is possible to determine the characteristics the post office should have to be a good representative of each theme. It is not sufficient to show that the post office relates to a particular theme, or even to describe the role the post office played within that theme, although these are important steps in the evaluation. It is also essential to identify the significance of the post office's role within each theme. Characteristics may consist of historic associations, architectural features, or potential to impart information. The characteristics should be organized according to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.<sup>11</sup>

Major features of a building, either exterior or interior, contribute to the identity and character of the building, and therefore, potentially to its significance, whether or not it might be possible to remove and preserve them separately. Historic woodwork; lighting fixtures; ornamental marble, grillwork, or other material; artwork; and other features that form integral parts of a post office should be considered in evaluating significance

and integrity. In some cases, these features may include equipment, spatial arrangement, and other aspects of the post office's working area.

Like all buildings, post offices may be significant solely or primarily for the quality of their interiors. This does not mean that any painting hanging on the wall of a post office could qualify the building for the National Register, but artwork that forms an integral part of the building may possess significance that derives wholly or in part from its placement within the post office, and may make it eligible for listing. In particular, this may apply to murals that were commissioned by the Federal government specifically for the buildings in which they were placed, and that were either painted directly on the wall or painted on a base adhered in a fashion intended to make them a part of the wall. Murals, sculptures, and other artwork commissioned as part of the Federal program to support the arts during the Depression and to adorn Federal buildings may be significant in the history of artistic expression, as the works of important artists, as representative examples of Federal policy, for their social impact, or for the information they convey about American—including community—life and culture. The Federal government kept records on the competitions, artists, subject matter,

media, and installation of such works, and they should be available from the National Archives if they cannot be located in local or regional offices.

Some of the characteristics by which a post office might represent a significant theme are listed on pages 11-13. Not all of these characteristics will apply to every post office. As stated above, the characteristics that a particular post office must possess to be eligible for National Register listing will depend on the history of that post office and the important themes with which it can be associated. Also, because it is impossible to enumerate specific characteristics without knowledge of specific themes, the list outlines general characteristics that might qualify post offices for listing in the National Register. These characteristics should be much more specific when applied to an individual post office. For example, the features that make it a good example of an architectural style, or the aspects of a city's period of growth represented by the post office must be clear. Because each post office and its related themes will be different, examination of a particular post office and its themes may reveal additional or different characteristics than the following ones.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix B, CFR 36 Part 60, *National Register Bulletin 16A*, or *National Register Bulletin 15* for definitions of the criteria.



Russell United States Post Office, Russell, Kansas, 1939-1940. The artwork in the Russell post office dramatically depicts the Kansas landscape. "Wheat Workers," an oil on canvas mural, is exceptionally significant at the local and State levels for its historical association with the U.S. Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts program and for its high degree of physical integrity. (Kansas State Historical Society)

# PHYSICAL AND ASSOCIATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Areas of Significance	National Register Criteria: Possible Characteristics
<p><b>Architecture</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Influenced the architectural tastes of the public or the development of architectural design in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Influenced or reflected the attitude of citizens concerning their government.</p> <p><b>C:</b> Is a good characteristic example of an important local, State, or national architect or builder.</p> <p>Is a good example of an architectural style in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Is a good example of a style adapted to local or State building traditions, materials, or scale.</p> <p>Is a good example of public or monumental architecture in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Is a rare example of an important building or architectural tradition, style, period, or policy in a community, State, or the nation.</p> <p>Contains good examples of design features, facilities, or equipment distinctive to its design and use as a post office.</p> <p>Illustrates the transition from one stylistic influence to another.</p>
<p><b>Art</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Reflects attitudes of the public, government, or other identifiable groups about the beneficial influences of access and exposure to art.</p> <p>Contains as an integral part of the building an example of artistic expression that had a significant impact or influence on the actions or attitudes of citizens in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p><b>C:</b> Contains as an integral part of the building a good example of the work of an important local, State, or national artist or craftsman.</p> <p>Contains as an integral part of the building a work of art important to the development or understanding of an important local, State, or national artist or craftsman.</p> <p>Contains as an integral part of the building a good example of a particular type, period, or style of artistic expression.</p> <p><b>D:</b> Contains as an integral part of the building artwork that reflects in an important or unique way the life and/or attitudes of citizens in the community, State, or nation.</p>
<p><b>Commerce</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Initiated, or is associated in another important way with, a postal service that had a specific identifiable effect on the development of local, State, or nationwide business.</p> <p>Introduced or represents a postal service that has a significant impact on the way citizens or businesses procured or exchanged goods in a community, State, or the nation (e.g., the relationship between parcel post and catalog sales).</p> <p><b>B:</b> Is associated with a postmaster, businessperson, or other person whose experience with the postal service had an important influence on a local, State, or national business.</p>

## Areas of Significance

## National Register Criteria: Possible Characteristics

### Communications

**A:** Represents the introduction or evolution of an important service, technological advance, or other development that influenced communications systems operated in a community, State, or the nation.

Represents events or patterns of events that had an important influence in the policies and philosophies of operating the postal service or other communications systems in a community, State, or the nation.

Represents a significant period or distinctive method of communication in a community, State, or the nation.

**B:** Is associated with a person who had an important influence on the development of the postal service.

Is associated with a person whose experience with the postal service influenced a significant achievement in another area of communications.

**C:** Represents, through its design elements, the goals or achievements of the postal service.

### Community Planning and Development

**A:** Represents an important period of growth, prosperity, consolidation, optimism, depression, or other significant period in the history of a community, State, or the nation.

Is or was perceived as a symbol of community pride and achievement in a particular accomplishment or period of its history.

Represents the early establishment, development, or location of government, civic, and/or business centers of a community.

Represents influences on the development of community or State planning departments.

**B:** Is associated with someone whose experiences with the postal services influenced significant achievements in community development.

### Economics

**A:** Represents goals, policies, practices, services, or other factors influencing or intended to influence significant periods of economic stability, crisis, or fluctuation in the community, State, or nation.

**B:** Is associated with someone whose experience with the postal service influenced significant achievements in the economy of the community, State, or nation.

### Education

**A:** Introduced or represents the development of services that had a significant effect on the development of the educational system of the community, State, or nation.

**B:** Is associated with someone whose experience with the postal service influenced significant achievements in the educational system of the community, State, or nation.

Areas of Significance	National Register Criteria: Possible Characteristics
<p><b>Exploration/Settlement</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Represents factors that influenced the exploration, founding, settlement, or settlement pattern of the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Represents events that contributed to the advance of the frontier.</p> <p>Represented or symbolized stability or governmental control in a new community, or State.</p> <p>Introduced or represents postal services or other factors that influenced major demographic trends of the community, State, or nation.</p>
<p><b>Politics/Government</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Served as an important center of government administration and services in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Represents an early or important period of governmental or postal service in the community, area, State, or nation.</p> <p>Represents important events or periods in the history of political parties, influence, or activity in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Represents or symbolizes the democratic aspects of the Federal government in the community.</p> <p>Represents events or pattern of events in the relationship between the President and Congress.</p> <p>Represents events, patterns of events, or periods in the history of the Federal bureaucracy and Civil Service reform.</p> <p>Represents important policies or periods in the history of public works and public works programs in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p>Represents Federal assistance, stability, control, power, interference, or other influences in the community or State.</p> <p><b>B:</b> Is associated with the career of an important political leader in the community, State, or nation.</p> <p><b>C:</b> Is a good example or prototype of Federal design and construction standards and policies.</p>
<p><b>Social History</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Served as the center for significant social services other than mail pick-ups and delivery in the community.</p> <p>Represents an important social center that can be demonstrated to have had a significant impact on the patterns of life in the community.</p>
<p><b>Transportation</b></p>	<p><b>A:</b> Represents or reflects a specific period of local or State efforts to improve roads, bridges, and other transportation facilities.</p> <p>Represents significant events or policies that influenced the development of transportation facilities and technology, such as roads and highway systems, railroads, shipping, and aircraft.</p> <p><b>B:</b> Is associated with persons whose policies or achievements influenced the development or course of transportation facilities and technology.</p>

# EVALUATE INTEGRITY

In addition to meeting criterion A, B, C, or D, a property must retain its historic integrity. Historic location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association must be considered in determining whether a post office retains enough of its important features to convey its historically significant appearance or associations.<sup>12</sup> Precisely what features an individual post office must have to possess integrity depends on the themes selected and the reasons the post office is significant within those themes. Post offices, like all properties, change over time. The retention of integrity depends upon the historic period of significance, and the nature and degree of alteration since that period. Once the appropriate significant themes and the reasons for the post office's significance have been determined, it is possible to establish whether the post office is significant for its original or altered character. Although it is not necessary that a post office retain all the physical features it had during its period of significance, or that it possess all seven types of integrity, it must retain the essential physical features that enable it to convey its past identity and character and therefore its significance. The features a post office should retain to possess types of integrity important for its significance should be added to the list of characteristics necessary for meeting National Register Criteria.

# DETERMINE THE NEED FOR SPECIAL JUSTIFICATION

Certain types of properties do not ordinarily qualify for listing in the National Register. These include properties that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed buildings, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years. These properties will qualify for the National Register if they are integral parts of historic districts that meet the criteria or if they meet other special requirements.

A building that has been removed from its original location may be eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural merits or if it is the only surviving structure most importantly associated with an historic person or event. A reconstructed building is eligible if it has been "accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived."<sup>13</sup>

A common characteristic among post offices that could preclude acceptance is relatively recent age. In many communities, early post offices were not housed in buildings constructed specifically for postal ser-

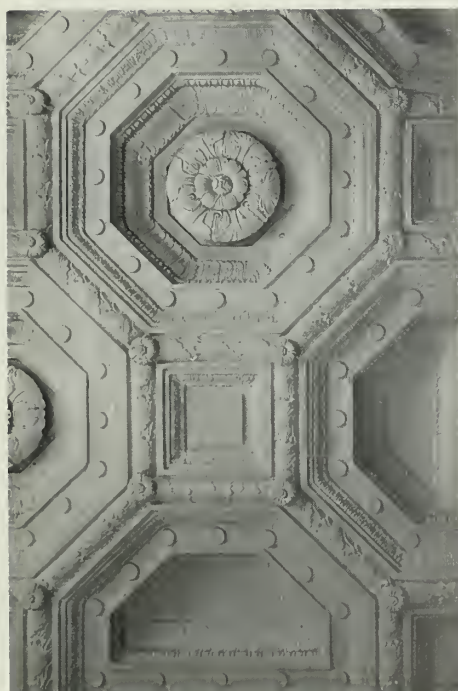
vices, but shared space in residences, stores, or offices. In addition, existing postal facilities have periodically become inadequate in the face of growing populations, increasing services, and advancing technology, and have had to be replaced or consolidated. For these and other reasons, many communities contain post office buildings that are less than 50 years old.

<sup>12</sup> See *National Register Bulletin 15* for definitions of the seven types of integrity and a more detailed discussion of how to apply them.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix B, CFR 36 Part 60, *National Register Bulletin 16A*, or *National Register Bulletin 15* for a full list of properties requiring special consideration.



*Knoxville Post Office, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1932-33. Sometimes the interior of a building may be as significant or more significant than its exterior. The Knoxville Post Office displays elaborate Art Deco detailing in its lobby, which is one of the most significant interior spaces in the city. (Thomason and Associates)*



*United States Post Office and Courthouse, Albany, Georgia, 1910-12. This post office was completed during the term of Nellie Brimberry, the first female postmaster of a major American post office. In 1911, Mrs. Brimberry inaugurated the first air mail flight and struck the first air mail stamp. She also won acclaim in Georgia for securing for the State's pecan growers the privilege of sealing their product in packages that could be dispatched by mail. In addition to its historical associations, this post office contains excellent examples of fine craftsmanship. (James R. Lockhart)*

Because the National Register deals with "historic" properties, the program provides a working definition of the line separating historic from contemporary periods by establishing a policy that eligible properties should be at least 50 years old. This requirement provides a reasonable historic perspective from which to evaluate properties, and helps ensure that judgments of significance have withstood the tests of time and scholarly analysis and are not merely the results of passing interest or enthusiasm.<sup>14</sup> Properties less than 50 years old may be accepted if they are exceptionally significant. Exceptional significance does not necessarily mean national significance. Properties may be exceptionally significant within their communities or States by virtue of their extraordinary impact in certain periods or fields of history, as rare or exceptionally intact examples of particularly fragile or transitory types of resources, or for their relative age or importance in communities that are young or retain few remnants of their past. Decisions about a property's exceptional significance can be made only after comparing it to other properties with similar

associations and qualities within the appropriate geographical context. The reasons why the selected property is considered exceptionally significant must then be explained. This requires knowledge of the area and the type of property being considered to allow the identification of qualities that distinguish a resource as exceptional among a field of similar properties.

A post office less than 50 years old may be exceptionally significant for its role in post-war communities and transportation systems, for the private architect or architectural firm that designed it, for its architectural style, or for innovative use of materials. Because post offices built after World War II were frequently designed by local architects, they may better reflect the local community's values than did previous post office styles. Post offices determined not to be exceptionally significant should be reevaluated when they reach 50 years of age.

<sup>14</sup> See *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years* for a more detailed discussion of evaluating less than 50 year old properties.

## EVALUATE THE PROPERTY

At this point in preparing for evaluation, the following steps have been completed: identification of the post office; research on the history of the post office and of the geographical area in which it may be significant; identification of the significant themes within which to evaluate the post office; organization of the ways in which the post office may represent these themes according to National Register Criteria; identification of the appropriate types of integrity and the physical characteristics necessary to possess them; and a check of the

National Register Criteria for a list of properties not ordinarily considered eligible. It is now possible to evaluate the post office against a list of characteristics to determine if it meets the National Register Criteria. The list of characteristics consists of the ways in which the post office should represent significant themes, the features necessary to retain integrity, and (if applicable) the additional justification for properties requiring special consideration.

If the post office has the characteristics listed under the criteria, retains integrity, and meets any special considerations for properties not generally considered eligible, it is eligible for the National Register. It is not necessary for a post office to have

every characteristic on the list, but it must possess the most important ones for significance and integrity, plus those for additional justification if required. The number and combination of characteristics necessary to assure eligibility will depend upon the strength of associations or architectural merit, the degree of significance of various themes, and possibly on the number of other resources in the same context with similar associations or physical characteristics. A post office that is an excellent example of its style in the State and retains its principal qualities of design and workmanship should be eligible for the National Register regardless of the existence of other buildings in its style. Similarly, if a stylistically



*Post Office, Christine, North Dakota, ca. 1895. This building is a good example of the vernacular "Boomtown" architecture typical of North Dakota's earliest years of white settlement. Originally constructed as a residence and commercial establishment, this became a post office in 1923 after Charles Hanson, a prominent local educator, became postmaster and lived with his family in the rear portion. (State Historical Society of North Dakota)*



undistinguished post office had a postmaster who, through his appointment as postmaster, played a significant role in local politics, or who introduced postal services having a dramatic effect on local business, and if that post office possesses integrity of location, material, feeling, and association, it should be eligible. A post office that was the most important center of county government administration and service during a specific period, and that retains integrity of location, materials, and feeling, should also qualify. In each of these cases, reasons that the architectural features are excellent, the postmaster's role was significant, or the post office was the most important government center must be specified, not merely assumed from a general statement.

In some cases, a single quality or association under one of the criteria and the retention of the most important quality of integrity may be sufficient to demonstrate that the post office is eligible for the National Register. When the quality or qualities of significance, or the significance of themes, are weaker, however, a combination of characteristics may be necessary to justify eligibility. In marginal cases, it is necessary to compare the post office's qualities of significance and integrity to those of other properties within the same themes to decide which property or properties best represent the significant themes. The post office may or may not surface as the best or one of the best examples of a theme. In some cases, a survey conducted to identify these properties for comparison may reveal a related group of post offices, or post offices and other properties, all of which meet National Register Criteria. If the post office is the only identified property in its theme, that will strengthen the case for listing in the National Register, but there may be instances where a post office that is the only surviving representative of an important theme fails to possess a strong enough justification of significance or sufficient integrity to meet National Register Criteria. If a post office is determined not to be individually eligible for the National Register, it may still be eligible as part of an historic district that qualifies for listing.<sup>15</sup>



*United States Post Office, Des Moines, Iowa, ca. 1908-12. The architectural significance of a building is often illustrated through a collection of rich detailing. This doorway and acanthus leaf lantern are part of a post office that is one of the best examples of classical architecture in central Iowa. (John H. Wetherell)*

<sup>15</sup> See *National Register Bulletins 15 and 16A* for more detailed discussions of historic districts.

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# APPENDIX A: NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETINS

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Bulletin Number	Title
4	Contribution of Moved Buildings to Historic Districts
5	Tax Treatments for Moved Buildings
7	Definition of Boundaries for Historic Units of the National Park System
8	Use of Nomination Documentation in the Part 1 Certification Process
12	Definition of National Register Boundaries for Archeological Properties
13	How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices
15	How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation
16A	How to Complete the National Register Registration Form
16B	How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form
17	Certification of State and Local Statutes and Historic Districts
18	How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes
20	Nominating Historic Vessels and Shipwrecks to the National Register of Historic Places
21	Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties
22	Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years
23	How to Improve the Quality of Photos for National Register Nominations
24	Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning
26	Certified Local Governments in the National Historic Preservation Program
28	Using the UTM Grid System to Record Historic Sites
29	Guidelines for Restricting Information About Historic and Prehistoric Resources
30	Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes
32	Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons
34	Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Historic Aids to Navigation
36	Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Historical Archeological Sites and Districts
38	Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties
39	Researching a Historic Property
40	Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields
41	Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places
42	Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering Historic Mining Properties

The above publications may be obtained by writing to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, P.O. Box 37127, Suite 250, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

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# APPENDIX B: THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

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The National Register's standards for evaluating the significance of properties were developed to recognize the accomplishments of all people who have made a contribution to our country's history and heritage. The criteria are designed to guide State and local governments, Federal agencies, and others in evaluating potential entries in the National Register.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that

represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria considerations:** Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- a. a religious property deriving primary significance from architecture or artistic distinction or historical importance; or

- b. a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

- c. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or

- d. a cemetery that derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or

- e. a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or

- f. a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or

- g. a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

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# APPENDIX C: MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION

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To date, sixteen states have conducted surveys of post offices and nominated eligible ones to the National Register in multiple property formats. The historic contexts documented in support of these nominations are excellent sources of information about postal services, policies, and design in those states. Copies of these documents may be obtained from either the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, P.O. Box 37127, Suite 250, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127, or the appropriate State historic preservation offices. The following do not represent all post offices listed in the National Register; hundreds of others are listed individually or as part of historic districts.

Arizona	<i>"Historic U.S. Post Offices in Arizona, 1900-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>
California	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in California, 1900-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>
Colorado	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in Colorado, 1900-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>
Idaho	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in Idaho, 1900-1941, Multiple Property Submission"</i>
Kansas	<i>"Kansas Post Offices with Artwork, 1936-1942, Multiple Property Submission"</i>
Mississippi	<i>"Mississippi Post Offices, 1931-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>
Montana	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in Montana, 1900-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>
North Dakota	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in North Dakota, 1900-1940, Multiple Property Submission"</i>
Nebraska	<i>"Nebraska Post Offices which Contain Section Artwork Multiple Property Submission"</i>
Nevada	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in Nevada Multiple Property Submission"</i>
New Mexico	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in New Mexico Multiple Property Submission"</i>
New York	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in New York State, 1858-1943, Thematic Resources"</i>
Oregon	<i>"Significant U.S. Post Offices in Oregon, 1900-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>
Utah	<i>"U.S. Post Offices in Utah, 1900-1941, Multiple Property Submission"</i>
Washington	<i>"Historic U.S. Post Offices in Washington Multiple Property Submission"</i>
Wyoming	<i>"Historic U.S. Post Offices in Wyoming, 1900-1941, Thematic Resources"</i>

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# APPENDIX D. IMPORTANT DATES

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- 1775—First Postmaster General under Continental Congress
- 1789—First Postmaster General under Constitution
- 1794—Post Office Act
- 1829—Postmaster General became cabinet post
- 1838—Congress declared all railroads post routes
- 1847—Postage stamps
- 1860—Pony Express
- 1863—City delivery service
- 1864—Money orders
- 1864—Railway post office service
- 1896—Rural free delivery service
- 1902—First omnibus public buildings law
- 1910—Policy to build post offices near railroad stations
- 1911—Postal Savings
- 1913—Parcel post
- 1913—Public Buildings Act
- 1913—Public Buildings Commissions established to standardize public building construction
- 1918—Airmail
- 1926—Public Buildings Act (Keys-Elliott Act)
- 1931—Federal Employment Stabilization Act required advance planning by Federal construction agencies
- 1933—National Industrial Recovery Act established Public Works Administration
- 1933—Public Works of Art Project
- 1934—Treasury Department’s Section of Painting and Sculpture (later called Section of Fine Arts)
- 1935—Emergency Relief Appropriation Act established Works Progress Administration (later called Works Projects Administration)
- 1938—Ramspeck-O’Mahoney Act put all postmasters within Civil Service and limited their political activity
- 1939—Federal public buildings program transferred to the Federal Works Agency
- 1948—Parcel post air service
- 1949—Public Buildings Act of 1949 empowered the Commissioner of Public Buildings to employ private architectural firms in public buildings projects
- 1949—Federal public buildings program subsumed into the new General Services Administration (GSA)
- 1950—One-day service in residential areas
- 1954—Postal Service becomes responsible for all exclusively post office projects while GSA retains multi-use projects combining different Federal functions (i.e. courthouse, agency offices, and post office in one building)
- 1955—Certified mail service
- 1963—Zip codes
- 1969—Patronage factor eliminated in appointments of postmasters
- 1969—First postage stamp cancelled on the moon
- 1970—Postal Reorganization Act converted the Post Office Department to the U.S. Postal Service, an independent agency within the Executive Branch (Postmaster General left the President’s cabinet in 1971)
- 1971—National Service Standards

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# APPENDIX E: McADOO'S 1915 CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR FEDERAL BUILDINGS

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*Note:* Taken from the Secretary of the United States Treasury Department's *Annual Report on the Finances, 1915* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915).

## CLASS A.

**Definition:** Buildings that include a post office of the first class with annual receipts of \$800,000 or over; the site forming part of a city development plan or situated on an important thoroughfare of a great city; improvements on adjoining property reaching the higher valuation of metropolitan real estate.

**Character of building:** Marble or granite facing; fireproof throughout; metal frames, sashes, and doors; interior finish to include the finer grades of marble, ornamental bronze work, mahogany, etc. Public spaces to have monumental treatment, mural decorations; special interior lighting fixtures.

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## CLASS B.

**Definition:** Buildings that include a post office of the first class with receipts from \$60,000 to \$800,000; valuation of adjoining property somewhat below the higher valuation of metropolitan real estate.

**Character of building:** Limestone or sandstone facing; fireproof throughout; exterior frames and sash metal; interior frames, sash, and doors wood; interior finish to exclude the more expensive woods and marbles; ornamental metal to be used only where iron is suitable. Restricted ornament in public spaces.

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## CLASS C.

**Definition:** Buildings that include a post office of the second class with receipts of \$15,000 or over, and of the first class to \$60,000 receipts; valuation of surrounding property that of a second-class city.

**Character of building:** Brick facing with stone or terra-cotta trimmings; fireproof floors; non-fireproof roof; frames, sashes, and doors wood; interior finish to exclude the more expensive woods and marbles; the latter used only where sanitary conditions demand; public spaces restricted to very simple forms of ornament.

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## CLASS D.

**Definition:** Buildings that include a post office having annual receipts of less than \$15,000; real estate values identifying only a limited investment for improvements.

**Character of building:** Brick facing, little stone or terra cotta used; only first floor fireproof; stock sash, frames, doors, etc., where advisable; ordinary class of building, such as any businessman would consider a reasonable investment in a small town.







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