



**GSA HISTORIC BUILDING STEWARDSHIP 2020**

# **GSA Historic Building Stewardship 2020**

## **Introduction**

The General Services Administration (GSA)'s Public Buildings Service (PBS) has a long history of constructing and adapting buildings to provide cost effective workspace that supports federal agencies in meeting their missions. Fulfilling its commitment to saving taxpayers money through effective management of federal real estate, PBS continually refines its strategic approach to achieving an economically sustainable public building portfolio.

Historic building reuse has, from the agency's start, played an important part in GSA's asset management strategy. Welcoming and well-constructed buildings that provide a positive federal presence build employee morale and achieve high customer satisfaction survey scores. While shifting demographics, a reduced federal presence and changing agency requirements present formidable challenges to historic building viability in some locations, GSA's cost study research underscores the value of reinvesting in historic buildings as part of the agency's prudent approach to maintaining a high performing building inventory.

GSA's 2020 Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, Section 3 triennial report, covering agency activities from 2018 through 2020, details asset management initiatives leveraging historic buildings as well as Section 110 and Section 106 accomplishments supporting Section 3 goals. These activities confirm GSA's enduring stewardship commitment and its adaptability to address changing needs and emerging challenges.

## **1 Identifying Historic Properties**

Historic buildings contribute to the variety and quality of workplaces GSA provides its customers. The public buildings legacy that GSA oversees includes custom houses, courthouses, border stations, and federal agency offices across the United States and its territories. GSA's historic building inventory also includes industrial military structures and buildings constructed for non-federal use—a train station, a hotel, a sanitarium, schools, and commercial office buildings, among others. While federal public buildings were historically located in town and city centers, non-public facilities such as military industrial buildings later adapted for use as federal offices were often constructed in suburban locations where large tracts of land could be acquired quickly during wartime.

Historic border inspection buildings are GSA's most remotely located buildings, along with special use facilities constructed for use as laboratories, storage and campus support functions. Given the prominence of most federal public buildings, GSA is keenly aware of their impact on the communities where they are located.

Fully one-third of GSA's 1500 federally-controlled buildings are listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NR). These 504 federally-owned historic buildings include 76 National Historic Landmarks (NHLs), of which 17 are individually listed and 59 contribute to NHL historic districts. In addition to these NHLs, GSA controls 335 individually listed buildings and 93 buildings determined eligible for the National Register.

Under a multi-year designation initiative launched in 2005, GSA has listed 180 buildings in 38 states, doubling the number of designations it had previously achieved since enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Ninety-five percent of GSA's buildings more than 50 years old have been evaluated and several other evaluations are in progress. Eighty-two percent of GSA's eligible properties are now listed, including all eligible buildings constructed by the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, a legacy of monumental public buildings that are focal points of cities and towns throughout the nation.

As expected, evaluation and designation efforts now focus on recent past buildings of the late modern and post-modern periods. Essential to effective asset management and project planning, and to minimize the risk of inadvertent harm to potentially eligible buildings, GSA begins evaluation of all buildings age 40 or older as a prerequisite for capital project funding, which can take years to obtain.

During the 2018-2020 reporting period, GSA nominated 21 historic properties encompassing 22 buildings to the National Register of Historic Places to meet agency stewardship NHPA Section 110 mandates. One fourth of these designations listed modern era buildings constructed during the 1960s and 70s. Twelve nominations individually listed contributing resources in National Register historic districts, substantially updating documentation on these buildings to facilitate asset management and project planning. GSA also cooperated with five municipalities to update historic district nominations by providing information on GSA's historic buildings.

Noteworthy individual nominations include New Deal federal courthouses in Detroit, Michigan (1935); New Bern, North Carolina (1935); Statesville, South Carolina (1938); Las Vegas, Nevada (1933); Albany, New York (1938); and Providence, Rhode Island (1940).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Courthouses in New Bern and Statesville also housed post offices originally; the Las Vegas and Providence courthouses also housed federal offices.

Newly listed modern era federal office buildings in Bozeman, Montana (1966); Indianapolis, Indiana (1976); Kansas City, Missouri (1967) and Reston, Virginia (1974) include the first dedicated headquarters of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Designed as workspace for scientists and technicians developing analytical equipment for field use in the USGS mineral exploration program, the main administration and laboratory buildings are sited within a wooded landscape featuring nature trails and geological specimens. It also stands as one of the first buildings in the Reston Center for Industry and Government, a lynchpin in the early “new town” planned community of Reston, Virginia.

GSA also nominated the Spanish Colonial Pueblo Motor Way Company Garage of Denver, Colorado, determined eligible during the previous Section 3 reporting period. Built in 1926 and acquired by GSA for federal use in 1961, the clay tile-roofed garage was originally built to house Denver-Colorado Springs-Pueblo Motorway buses operated by a subsidiary of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad. As such, the building represents a time of transition in American transportation, as railroads sought to diversify their transportation offerings in the face of rising automobile use.

Notable features of the 1935 Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in Detroit include elaborate courtroom materials and architectural elements salvaged from the building’s 1897 Romanesque predecessor for installation in the new courthouse. The Romanesque courtroom containing more than 30 types of marble and a frieze of more than 100 unique lion’s heads stands in marked contrast to the spare details and finishes typical of the building’s other courtrooms.

GSA is taking advantage of its investment in information technology, GIS, and digital documentation to make information on GSA historic buildings readily available to GSA employees and the public. GSA’s Historic Building Documentation Resource (HBDR), launched in 2019, allows GSA to consolidate National Register nominations, Building Preservation Plans, paint analysis results and other documents where employees can access the body of available documents by building name and other search factors. Through an agreement with the Library of Congress, GSA makes high resolution photos of GSA historic buildings available to the public. GSA National Register nominations are available on the National Park Service website after properties are listed. To assist GSA employees and clients in identifying agency owned and leased historic buildings while exploring locational options, GSA also plans to add historic district designation status in upcoming enhancements to its GIS-based [online inventory tool](#).

## 2 Using Historic Properties

### Optimizing the Owned inventory: Reinvestment, Reuse and Consolidation

GSA capital investment during the 2020 reporting period has focused on fire safety, security, structural needs, exterior repairs and consolidations that reduce the federal footprint and reliance on leasing. Consolidation, backfill and space recapture projects that will reduce federal reliance on leasing include:

Frank E. Moss U.S. Courthouse, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building in Cleveland, Ohio  
Silvio J. Mollo and Jacob K. Javitz Federal Buildings, New York City  
Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Forensic Chemistry Center and John Weld Peck Federal Building, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Joseph F. Weis, Jr. U.S. Courthouse, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Federal Building (101 Ida W. Wells/536 South Clark Street), Chicago, Illinois  
Federal Office Building, Seattle, Washington

Vacated when the U.S. district court relocated to the new courthouse in 2014, the colonnaded Frank E. Moss U.S. Courthouse, fills a block in the heart of Salt Lake City's Exchange Place Historic District and is one of the city's most imposing public buildings. Rehabilitation and seismic upgrading will allow the 1905 courthouse to be backfilled by U.S. bankruptcy court and other federal agencies, reducing the agency's reliance on leasing at an annual savings of \$4.4 million.

Rehabilitation to consolidate regional offices of the Veterans Administration, the Department of Labor and the Department of Education in the 1967 Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building in Cleveland, Ohio will save the Government more than \$1.1 million in annual leasing costs. Structural, mechanical and vacant space recapture at the 1974 Silvio J. Mollo and 1967 Jacob K. Javits Federal Buildings in lower Manhattan will enable relocation of the Department of Justice Civil Division to federally owned space, saving \$3.3 million annually in leasing costs. Space build-out and FDA consolidation at the FDA Forensic Chemistry Center and John Weld Peck Federal Building in Cincinnati, Ohio will meet FDA's laboratory expansion needs while reducing the federal footprint and saving \$177,000 annually in leasing costs.

Repairs and rehabilitation at the Joseph F. Weis, Jr. U.S. Courthouse in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania support the U.S. bankruptcy court's relocation from 43,000 square feet of leased space into 31,000 square feet of vacant space in the Weis Courthouse. Relocating

the bankruptcy court into federal space will save \$1.3 million in leasing costs and \$800,000 in annual rent for the Judiciary while reducing the bankruptcy court's footprint by close to 30 percent, in addition to savings achieved earlier by backfilling space 17,000 square feet of space vacated by the U.S. Postal Service with Social Security Administration offices relocating from leased space.

Similar consolidations at the 1912 Federal Building at 101 W. Ida B. Wells Street (536 S. Clark Street) in Chicago and the 1933 Federal Office Building in Seattle, Washington support GSA tenant agency functional efficiency while improving space utilization to reduce the federal footprint. Space alterations at the Seattle Federal Building will allow the Department of Labor (DOL) to join other agencies relocating from leased space and consolidating in the federally owned building, reducing GSA reliance on leasing while reducing DOL's space need by one third from 75,000 to 50,000 square feet. Interior alterations at the 1912 former Rand McNally printing house and globe factory in Chicago, acquired by the federal government in 1952, will enable the Government Accountability Office to consolidate at the century old federal building.

Critical building system and exterior repairs at some of GSA's most architecturally significant monumental historic properties will maintain the physical viability of these prominent public buildings:

Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1899)  
Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House and Courthouse (1907)  
Edward T. Gignoux U.S. Courthouse, Portland, Maine (1911)  
U.S. Courthouse and Post Office Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (1912)  
U.S. Custom House, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1934)  
McCormack Post Office & Courthouse, Boston, Massachusetts (1933)  
Alton Lennon Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, Wilmington, North Carolina (1933)  
Federal Office Building, Seattle, Washington (1933)  
Harry S. Truman Department of State Building, Washington, D.C. (1941)

Completed in 1912, The U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Oklahoma City was the first monumental structure in the city and the first federal building in the state. Although the post office relocated in 1966, the building continues to function in its historic capacity as a federal courthouse and office building. Rehabilitation funded in 2020 will restore the stately classical facade, install new building systems, improve fire safety, and renew interior spaces to substantially extend the service life of the 108 year old monumental building.

Home of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York, the National

Museum of the American Indian, and the National Archives New York City research facility, the 1907 Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House is the most splendid Beaux Arts building in GSA's inventory and among those most appreciated by the visiting public. Relocation of the National Archives regional facility to this National Historic Landmark in 2012 allowed the Archives to expand its research functions in New York and create a new educational destination in a building already welcoming museum visitors. Components include a welcome center exhibition gallery; a research center for scholars, genealogists and the general public; a learning center to welcome school groups and families, encouraging them to explore National Archives records, and special exhibitions featuring holdings of the Archives in the Custom House rotunda. The two-phased repair project, beginning in 2020, will remediate water infiltration and provide a safe environment for the client tenant agencies and visitors who spend time in the building.

When it was completed in 1911, the U.S. Courthouse in Portland, Maine now known as the Edward T. Gignoux U.S. Courthouse, was the state's first federal courthouse. Its granite facade and distinctive Renaissance Revival architecture, complementing other public buildings surrounding Lincoln Park, brought prestige to Portland's civic center. The building was listed in the National Register in 1974. The 2020 project will repair and replace fire alarm and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, which have exceeded their service lives, to improve the building's indoor air quality, safety, security and energy efficiency.

Referred to as Milwaukee's "Crown Jewel" by former Chief Judge of the Eastern District Joseph P. Stadtmueller, the Richardsonian Romanesque U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building is a defining feature of the city's downtown skyline and one of the most striking courthouses in the federal inventory. Interior space on each of the 1899 building's five floors is arranged around a skylit central atrium ringed by corridors and capped with massive arched-steel roof trusses. Designed to provide ample daylighting for postal processing, the atrium is now a popular location for public events. Repairs to the building's 120 year-old granite facade, initiated in 2018, will address stone spalling, cracking, displacement and anchor bolt corrosion to ensure public safety and restore the iconic building's physical viability for continued federal use.

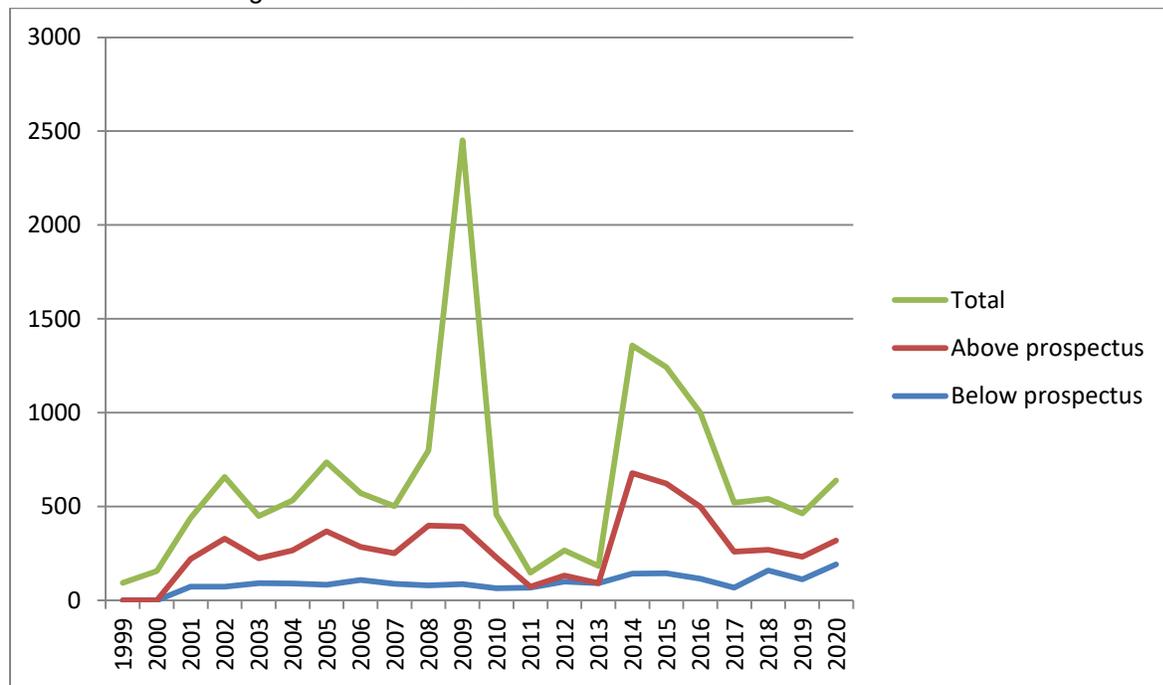
Set apart by its 17-story Art Deco tower, tapered silhouette, ingeniously decorated rotunda and spectacular circular stairs, the 1934 Philadelphia U.S. Custom House vividly illustrates the federal government's role in combating unemployment through large-scale building projects that employed local craftspeople, suppliers, and manufacturers while providing workers with a fair wage during the Great Depression. Building system repairs and replacement will bring an end to recurrent flooding to ensure the future habitability of the well-built and architecturally exceptional public building.

Terra cotta repairs and repointing at the 1933 John W. McCormack U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Boston will ensure pedestrian safety around the 22-story Art Deco tower that helped define the city's early twentieth-century skyline. Renewal of the 87-year-old facade will also preserve the building's rehabilitated interior, completed in 2009. Exterior restoration of the 86-year-old Federal Office Building in downtown Seattle also includes exterior terra cotta facade repairs, along with window restoration, roof replacement, and other work to prevent the intrusion of water into the building.

Elevator repairs at the Harry S. Truman Department of State Building in Washington, D.C. will keep the 1941 building operational, supporting agency consolidation that has increased the building's occupant density.

The Alton Lennon Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Wilmington, North Carolina suffered significant damage during Hurricane Florence in 2018, forcing GSA to relocate occupants to temporary leased space and arrange for the district to hold court in the New Hanover County Courthouse. Repairs to flooded building systems and the 332 foot-long, Classical Revival sandstone facade will return the courts to space designed to meet their needs and reestablish the 100-year-old waterfront icon as an anchoring federal presence in the Wilmington Historic District.

GSA Historic Building Reinvestment 1999-2020<sup>2</sup>



In addition to critical repairs at GSA’s legacy public buildings, building envelope repairs and system upgrades funded during the 2020 reporting period will reduce operating costs and improve safety to extend the service life of the following mid-century federal office buildings:

- William J. Holloway, Jr. U.S. Courthouse, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (1961)
- Major General Emmett J. Bean Federal Center, Indianapolis, Indiana (1953)
- J.J. Pickle Federal Building, Austin, Texas (1965)
- Lyndon Baines Johnson Federal Building (1961)

**Public Private Partnerships: Section 111 Outleasing**

GSA’s use of National Historic Preservation Act Section 111 authority for leasing unneeded space to nonfederal entities continues to make an important difference at historic buildings in smaller markets, especially buildings requiring only modest reinvestment to remain viable. Combined with other funding sources, proceeds from

<sup>2</sup> Appropriated funding not adjusted for inflation. Below prospectus spending on historic buildings estimated proportionally based on the percentage of historic buildings in the owned inventory.

Section 111 leases fill critical gaps and enable GSA to seize opportunities for meeting stewardship goals. Most *outleases*, as GSA refers to them, fill vacant space or provide retail services in buildings predominantly housing federal agencies. Discretely placed rooftop antennas and event space rentals also generate Section 111 revenue. In accordance with the authority, outlease revenue is reinvested exclusively in historic buildings through a rigorous and highly competitive process, in which projects are required to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Concluding an effort initiated during the last reporting period, GSA is pleased to report its execution of the planned lease of the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse at 312 North Spring Street in Los Angeles to the State of California. Use of Section 111 authority will keep the NHL, which had been vacant since the U.S. District Court relocated to a new courthouse in 2016, in public use and viable for future federal use. As the new home of the State Superior Court, GSA's Moderne federal courthouse is meeting the judicial needs of the state while maintaining the building's historic function. All fifteen of the building's courtrooms have been reused for their originally intended purpose. This outlease boosted GSA's outleasing proceeds nationwide by close to 30 percent.

Reinvestment using outlease revenue follows protocols similar to those of GSA's capital program, with priority given to pressing needs of the buildings earning the revenue and work necessary to make or keep a historic building viable. Second funding priority is given to critical repair needs not met by other funding sources and opportunities for accomplishing stewardship goals such as restoration in high visibility public areas.

Among GSA's smallest public buildings are inspection stations constructed during the 1930s along America's north and south borders. Southern border inspection stations commonly feature regional Spanish Colonial materials and detailing. Though modest, these historic buildings often engender considerable community interest, given high pedestrian traffic and engaged citizens in populous border cities.

Outlease-funded secondary egress and security retrofits at southern border stations will enable GSA to retain in federal use its only Pueblo style building, the 1936 Naco, Arizona inspection station, along with the 1930 Spanish Colonial revival inspection station at the Dennis DeConcini Land Port of Entry in Nogales, Arizona. Funding for exterior repair projects at the 1932 Douglas, Arizona inspection station, along with California inspection stations in Calexico and Tecate will enable GSA to retain these distinctive historic buildings in active use.

At the 1934 Joseph F. Weis, Jr. U.S. Courthouse in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, outlease funds enabled GSA to stabilize Guastavino tile vaults in the former post office lobby and replace non-original aluminum lobby doors with bronze doors, restoring the building's gateway to its original dignified appearance. Outlease funds also allowed GSA to restore the first floor concourse and the seventh floor courtroom lobbies in the 1934 Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in Detroit, Michigan. The Weis and Levin projects complemented modernizations focused on building system upgrades and court requirements, allowing GSA to also accomplish priority restoration goals offering a high public benefit.

Outlease revenue also funds conservation of federal artwork in historic properties. In 1977, GSA commissioned artist William Scott to design an exterior sculpture for the civic plaza of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. Scott created a kinetic sculpture consisting of three elliptically shaped vertical pieces, titled *Vigil*. The three independently mounted stainless steel sculptures reflect the changing wind, light and color of the surrounding environment, echoing both the calm and ferocity of nature. Installed in 1978, it survived the bombing of the Murrah Building intact but was removed from the site for its protection and conservation. The sculpture was reinstalled in 1999 when the plaza was reopened to the public. *Vigil* is a contributing object in the National Register nomination designating the site of the bombing. In addition to cleaning the sculpture surfaces, outlease-funded conservation repaired the internal mechanical system within each of the work's three components, restoring the sculpture's kinetic functionality.

## **Acquisition**

GSA collaborates with its customer agencies to reuse historic buildings no longer needed by other landholding agencies, particularly the U.S. Postal Service.

In 2016, Congress appropriated \$12.6 million to acquire and rehabilitate the 1931 Robert T. Stafford U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Rutland, Vermont. GSA had already invested in rehabilitation of the building's historic courtroom and chambers while leasing the courthouse space from the U.S. Postal Service; the Postal Service had invested in restoring the historic postal lobby and murals. By leveraging the value of federal investment already made, the courts will enjoy uninterrupted operation in quality space acquired at a fraction of the cost of new construction. GSA acquisition of the federally constructed building already occupied by the courts, will save GSA leasing costs estimated at \$600,000 annually, along with relocation and swing space cost avoidance. Similarly, acquisition of the 1932 neoclassical U.S. Post Office in Clarksburg, West Virginia will maintain the longstanding home of the federal courts in the heart of Clarksburg's National Register downtown historic district.

## **Sustainable Stewardship: Integrating GSA Portfolio and Preservation Strategies**

Since GSA issued its portfolio strategy for creating a financially sustainable inventory in 2002, the agency's preservation and portfolio management programs have worked together on an evolving approach to balance GSA's fiscal responsibilities and stewardship goals. Giving special attention to buildings of high architectural merit and construction quality dovetails with GSA commitment to workplace solutions that offer the best long-term value and contribute to communities where the government does business.

In recent years, GSA has developed a more sophisticated asset repositioning approach that segments properties into investment classes reflecting market dynamics and qualitative factors as well as asset condition and performance. This approach goes beyond per person space utilization rates to focus on effective use of space. Non-financial factors in the decision to hold or dispose of a property include its historic significance, ability to meet federal sustainability performance goals, energy use and tenant satisfaction scores, as well as risk factors such as seismic zoning, floodplain designation, and environmental liabilities such as hazardous materials.

A stewardship prioritizing overlay developed by GSA's preservation program expands upon a logarithmic grading system developed for GSA by the National Institute of Building Sciences using Building Preservation Plan data to rank historic properties on the basis of their architectural and historic significance. The NIBS application, referred to as HIST, informed GSA's Legacy Vision stewardship strategy, recognized in a 2003 National Trust for Historic Preservation John Chafee Award. GSA's 2020 historic asset management ranking factors include, in addition to National Register designation level and architectural significance, viability factors such as federal occupancy backfill potential and other considerations supporting building retention and reinvestment.

Continuing challenges are above commercial baseline federal facility safety and security requirements, reinvestment cost misperceptions, and Federal Buildings Fund appropriation constraints that preclude otherwise justifiable reinvestment. Recent pressures generated by Executive Order 13717: Establishing a Federal Earthquake Risk Management Standard, tend to tip long-term planning for historic properties in high seismic risk zones toward divestment rather than reinvestment for continued federal use.

GSA customer agencies play an important part in retention and disposal of federal real estate, with space requirements and preferences that do not always align with federal stewardship goals. Courts seeking to accommodate expanding caseloads and agencies consolidating to improve operational efficiency often prefer simply replacing smaller buildings with larger ones. Countering a long tradition of meeting functional expansion needs with physical expansion are improved space utilization opportunities made possible by mobile workspace technology and cost savings to be achieved by optimizing federal workspace. Toward that end, GSA encourages agencies to leverage the value of the existing federal inventory by supplementing, rather than replacing, well-constructed historic buildings with new construction. Savings passed on to customer agencies as reduced rents remain a significant factor in their decisions to support options that reuse historic buildings.

To determine the relative costs of reusing historic buildings and new construction, in 2018, GSA's national preservation program embarked on a historic building reinvestment study comparing the costs of GSA-funded rehabilitation and GSA new construction projects over a thirty year period. The study confirmed that rehabilitation consistently costs less than new construction and that the disparity has increased over time. Forty rehabilitation projects completed between 1990 and 2017 averaged \$180 per gross square foot, compared to 80 new construction projects averaging \$297 per gross square foot, a 65 percent difference. Nineteen rehabilitation projects completed between 2001 and 2019 averaged \$203 per gross square foot, compared to fifteen new construction projects averaging \$553 per gross square foot, 172 percent higher than the cost of rehabilitation.

The study also compared operating costs, finding 2017 utility, janitorial and mechanical costs in three recently rehabilitated buildings to be equal to or lower than those operating costs for GSA new construction in the same location. Overall, GSA historic buildings outperformed non-historic buildings in energy usage by 12.3 percent, confirming that historic buildings can, with appropriate reinvestment for improved performance, offer a sound long-term real estate value and cost-effective solution for meeting federal space needs.

## **Stewardship Planning For Historic Properties Leaving the Federal Inventory**

While GSA cooperates with the Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act (FASTA) Advisory Board on implementation of the 2016 Act, PBS disposal and preservation programs continue collaborating to make use of appropriate GSA disposal authorities for historic properties requiring a more tailored approach for long term stewardship. GSA recommendations for PBS property transfer under FASTA focus on disposals that will generate maximum revenue in accordance with FASTA objectives.

Disposals aligned with GSA stewardship goals include transfer of the historic Border Sector Headquarters complex in New Orleans, Louisiana. No longer able to fully utilize the six building complex, the border patrol relocated to GSA's 1881 National Historic Landmark U.S. Custom House, a retention priority. The move enabled U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to consolidate functions serving the seven state sector in CBP's historic location, reducing their real estate costs and the federal footprint. Preservation covenants enforced by the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation provide long-term preservation of the character-defining attributes of the 1927 Border Sector Headquarters building and associated structures.

GSA's negotiated sale of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Coolidge, Arizona reinforced earlier public sales data showing that preservation covenants do not reduce sales value. Disposal cases such as that of GSA's former Middle River, Maryland depot confirm that marketing properties as historic can generate increased public interest that ultimately results in more competitive public sales. Similar marketing contributed to GSA's profitable sale of the 1973 Hawthorne Federal Building in Los Angeles, which formerly served as the Federal Aviation Administration's West Coast Headquarters. An early icon of thin-skin curtain wall construction designed by Cesar Pelli and Anthony Lumsden of the noted architectural firm DMJM, the 11.5 acre parcel, containing 206,000 square feet of rentable space, sold in 2019 for \$55 million. A preservation easement protects the building's character-defining features.

GSA's Office of Real Property Utilization and Disposal also works with GSA's preservation program and other landholding agencies to promote positive stewardship outcomes under difficult circumstances where advanced building deterioration, poor functional adaptability, or weak market conditions limit long-term preservation options. In early 2020, GSA concluded a lengthy collaboration with the city of Knoxville, Iowa to redevelop the century old former Knoxville Veterans Affairs Hospital Campus. The 151-acre property contains 39 historic buildings, many in deteriorated condition after years of vacancy. GSA's

Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Officer established an order of preservation preference solicitation process to achieve the best stewardship outcome that the market could offer. The process encourages preservation in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards while providing flexibility for the city to remove non-viable buildings, addressing community concern about the impact of the property's condition on Knoxville's ability to attract and maintain revenue-generating businesses and residents to sustain the local economy.

GSA also works to optimize the federal inventory by facilitating transfers between landholding agencies. In July, 2018, GSA transferred custody of the 1933 South Interior Building at 1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W. in Washington, D.C. to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Vacated by the Department of Interior when the agency's Washington-based programs and headquarters offices consolidated in the 1936 Stewart Lee Udall Department of the Interior Building, the Interior South Building sits on 3.2 acres, faces the National Mall, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The transfer will put the vacant building back in productive federal use while allowing the Federal Reserve Board to consolidate several leases at a savings for taxpayers.

### **3 Protecting Historic Properties**

Strategies for reducing GSA's Section 106 workload become ever more important as buildings of the 1970s and 80s become eligible for the National Register, increasing the proportion of GSA properties requiring 106 consultation.

GSA regional preservation programs have a variety of tracking systems in place to monitor the progress of 106 compliance reviews and mitigation to ensure that compliance agreements are implemented and brought to closure. While efforts to explore a comprehensive national tracking system have been paused for competing information technology needs, GSA's leased inventory compliance subset is being addressed in the 2020 release of GREX, GSA's Real Estate Exchange application, improving GSA's ability to ensure that agency lease actions comply with the NHPA. Created to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of GSA lease acquisition, the system notifies GSA preservation staff and others who need to review or otherwise assist with the planning and execution of GSA lease actions. GSA's Mid-Atlantic Regional Historic Preservation Officer served on the application development team.

GSA's nationwide preservation program and Office of Facilities Management pooled expertise to respond collaboratively to unprecedented challenges presented by the 2020

pandemic and vandalism stemming from protests and associated civil unrest. The preservation and fine arts programs worked together on combined guidance, subsequently integrated into GSA's disinfection contract checklist, for protecting historic building materials and artwork from inadvertent damage by disinfection products or methods. The program also established a shared access repository for exchanging general and historic building-specific guidance developed by GSA's regional preservation programs.

In response to ongoing social discourse about the meaning, interpretation and treatment of cultural assets reflecting contested history, GSA's preservation and fine arts programs again collaborated to develop guidance, issued in August 2020, on site-specific art, commemorative objects and architectural features on or in GSA historic properties. Although not a new issue to contend with, the discourse had reached an intensity deserving heightened attention and consideration of established policy, regulation and law governing GSA's stewardship responsibilities for historic cultural assets. The preservation program also established shared tracking to record cases of, and responses to, protest damage at GSA historic buildings.

### **106 Streamlining Compliance**

Noteworthy 106 streamlining accomplishments during this reporting period include a 2020 Memorandum of Understanding between GSA and CBP establishing communication protocols, roles and procedures for interagency collaboration, to improve the consistency and efficiency of 106 compliance activities at border protection facilities, which will result in time and cost savings for both agencies.

GSA regional preservation programs executed two site-specific programmatic agreements establishing template space management approaches to provide GSA tenants needed flexibility while promoting consistency in the long-term implementation of workspace improvements. Floor-by-floor workspace design templates developed for the Department of Housing and Urban Development at the 1968 Robert C. Weaver Federal Building in Washington D.C., will meet agency consolidation needs for improved space utilization and workspace daylighting while preserving boldly curving exposed bush hammered concrete walls that are character-defining attributes of the lobbies and principle corridors. GSA's Pacific Northwest preservation program negotiated a similar programmatic agreement establishing office space design templates for the 1966 James A. McClure Federal Building in Boise, Idaho. Both of these agreements serve as models providing flexibility in mid-century federal office buildings to meet current workspace needs while preserving significant interior features and attributes.

## Mitigation

A noteworthy GSA mitigation accomplishment of the reporting period has been the release of the National Building Museum (NBM) book “*St. Elizabeths in Washington, D.C.: Architecture of an Asylum*”, prepared by the curator of the 2018 exhibit *Architecture of an Asylum: St. Elizabeths 1852-2017* in collaboration with GSA’s National Capital Region preservation program. The rehabilitated 1852 Center Building now serves as the Department of Homeland Security’s consolidated headquarters building.

Discovery of a Native American hand tool during excavation at the Santiago E. Campos U.S. Courthouse in Santa Fe, New Mexico led to the currently ongoing repatriation of the cultural artifact for curatorial care by the Tesuque Pueblo tribe under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Made from an uncommon material used in other ancestral artifacts associated with the tribe, the hand fashioned tool resembles similar items in the tribe’s cultural preservation collection. During work on the courthouse in 2006, GSA discovered a prehistoric pit house and burials supporting other evidence that areas of downtown Santa Fe rest upon remnants of an ancient Native American village.

## 4 Section 110 Documentation, Planning and Advocacy

### Historic Building Documentation Resource

GSA’s most significant preservation planning information management accomplishment since the release of the Historic Building Preservation Plan (BPP) in 1992<sup>3</sup> is the Historic Building Documentation Resource (HBDR), launched in 2020. The electronic document management system simplifies uploading of BPP reports, including high resolution captioned photographs, preservation zoning plans and narrative text. The application provides improved browsing and searching, standardized metadata from GSA’s real estate data management application REXUS, full-text indexing of content, and easy access to BPPs for downloading and printing in a user-friendly platform.

The HBDR also accommodates a variety of historic building documents complementing the BPP, so that project planning teams and others are able to upload or download studies and building documentation to meet customer needs and inform asset and facility management and project planning. Examples include National Register nomination forms, paint analysis and documentation on historic materials, site features, alterations and

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<sup>3</sup> Subsequently renamed the Building Preservation Plan

historic building material treatments.

Building Preservation Plans completed during the 2020 reporting period update BPPs to reflect completed rehabilitation projects, provide first time guidance for newer buildings, or expand upon available guidance for GSA's more remote historic buildings.

New or updated BPPs completed during the 2020 reporting period include:

- Six modern era federal office buildings
- Fourteen border station inspection buildings
- Six monumental historic buildings, to document major rehabilitation or repair and alteration projects

### **Library of Congress Photographs**

Since 2001, GSA has been documenting its historic building inventory in professional high-resolution photographs that provide a permanent archival record and serve the needs of GSA business lines, project teams, tenant agencies, researchers and the public. The online digital documentation supports GSA's due diligence, asset repositioning, and social media initiatives with high quality images. Since its inception, the program has documented approximately 275 GSA historic buildings in more than 3500 images.

Photographs commissioned since 2005 are available copyright free in [the Carol Highsmith collection](#) on the Library of Congress website. While physical access to federal buildings is often limited, these photographs provide an additional means for sharing GSA's historic building legacy and preserving it for future generations.

Posters and brochures using photographs from the GSA-LOC archive are available [online](#) and on display in courthouses and federal buildings throughout the country.

### **Education and Advocacy**

GSA training programs make the most of the agency's investment in mobile workplace technology, in-house expertise and agency partnerships to cost effectively support the need for a competent, collaborative workforce.

### **GSA Training Programs and Initiatives**

Monthly calls and annual Regional Historic Preservation Officer internal management meetings allow preservation professionals in GSA's national and regional preservation

programs to exchange best practices and discuss emerging issues to devise response strategies collaboratively. These exchanges inform GSA's national stewardship strategy, training priorities and problem solving initiatives. Follow on working group efforts during the 2020 reporting period produced a detailed subject matter experts list pooling the knowledge and experience of GSA preservation programs nationwide, a web content guide promoting access by regional project teams to historic building documentation and other GSA preservation resources, and technical training initiatives supporting the needs of PBS employees nationwide.

In addition to bi-monthly activities organized by GSA's Historic Masonry Workgroup and GSA Office of Design and Construction described in GSA's previous Section 3 report<sup>4</sup>, during the 2020 reporting period, GSA's national preservation program sponsored three technical webinars tailored to PBS needs. These well-attended training courses fill critical knowledge gaps while providing continuing education credits required for maintaining professional certifications. Technical training offerings for this reporting period include:

- Historic building rehabilitation training focused on the relationship between building systems and building envelopes
- Historic masonry training
- Non-destructive investigation technology for historic buildings

The historic preservation program also provided preservation training as an invited presenter in GSA Project Manager Boot Camp 2020, to GSA's Office of Facilities Management, GSA's Office of Real Property Utilization and Disposal, the National Park Service-National Council on Preservation Education Intern Program, and the United States Administrative Office of the Courts. The program also partnered with GSA's Office of the Chief Engineer on seismic training fundamentals, highlighting historic buildings.

Regional preservation programs also provide targeted training for GSA project managers, facilities management personnel and others regularly.

An education initiative coming to fruition in 2020 will make on demand, GSA tailored, Section 106 compliance training available at no cost through GSA's Online University. The online course aligns GSA's NHPA compliance training with other agency programs established to reduce the risks of compliance oversights and empower GSA employees

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<sup>4</sup> GSA Office of Design and Construction webinar training programs include *Learning from Our Legacy*, *Lunch and Learn*, and *Project Manager Knowledge Exchange*.

with fluency in regulatory matters affecting PBS activities.

## **Conclusion**

While the long-term effects of the pandemic on the agency's historic building portfolio remain to be seen, recent events confirm the wisdom of GSA's investment in mobile workplace technology and cutting edge workspace design at its 1917 headquarters and other flagship historic buildings, proving the adaptability of historic buildings to meet current workspace needs. Embracing change as the one constant on the horizon, GSA's preservation program will continue collaborating with other PBS business lines, agencies and organizations to leverage the value of the Government's investment in well-constructed public buildings that remain sources of pride for communities across the nation.

GSA research comparing the costs of rehabilitation and new construction, along with comparative operational cost data, confirm the value of reinvesting in historic buildings as part of the agency's strategy for achieving a high performing, financially sustainable inventory.

Mobile workplace demands thrust upon federal agencies in the wake of the pandemic may accelerate the rate at which those agencies adopt GSA's model for improved workspace utilization through investment in space sharing solutions and information technology. Social distancing counter measures aside, likely pressures to further compress the federal footprint will call upon compliance oversight entities, advocacy organizations and communities to support GSA and other landholding agencies in developing reasonable, consistent and objective approaches, such as GSA is devising with its historic asset management approach, to make prudent qualitative distinctions among historic buildings toward sound long-term stewardship and investment choices.



1

The 1971-73 USGS National Center, an integral part of the early “new town” planned community of Reston, Virginia, embodies architect Walter Netsch’s Field Theory design approach employing a geometric system for the planning of buildings. (John Gentry, EHT Tracerics)



2

Rehabilitation and seismic upgrading will substantially extend the service life of 1905 Frank E. Moss U.S. Courthouse in Salt Lake City and enable it to be backfilled by the U.S. bankruptcy court and other federal agencies. (Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.)



3

Repairs to the 120-year-old granite facade of the U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building in Milwaukee will ensure public safety, building envelope weather tightness and maintain the building's physical viability for continued federal use for years to come. (Leslie Schwartz Photography, Chicago)



4

Building system repairs and replacement will bring an end to recurrent flooding to ensure the continued occupancy of the architecturally exceptional 1934 U.S. Custom House in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.)



In 2019, the rehabilitated 1851 St. Elizabeths Campus Center Building reopened as a seminal component the Department of Homeland Security headquarters. Now housing 700 DHS employees, the former administrative heart of the campus once again serves that function for DHS leadership as the most important building in the NHL hospital complex overlooking Washington DC's Anacostia and Potomac rivers. (Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.)



6

Outlease-funded secondary egress and security retrofits at southern border stations will enable GSA to retain in federal use the 1936 Naco, Arizona, inspection station, GSA's only Pueblo Revival style building. (GSA)



7

Outlease funds allowed GSA to restore the first floor concourse and the seventh floor courtroom lobbies in the 1934 Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in Detroit, Michigan, complementing a modernization focused on building system upgrades and court requirements to accomplish priority restoration goals offering a high public benefit. (GSA)



Installed in 1978, the GSA Art-in-Architecture-commissioned *Vigil* survived the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building intact and is a contributing object in the National Register nomination designating the site. Outlease-funded conservation cleaned the stainless steel surfaces and repaired the internal mechanical system within each of the work's three components, restoring the sculpture's kinetic functionality. (McKay Lodge Conservation Laboratory)



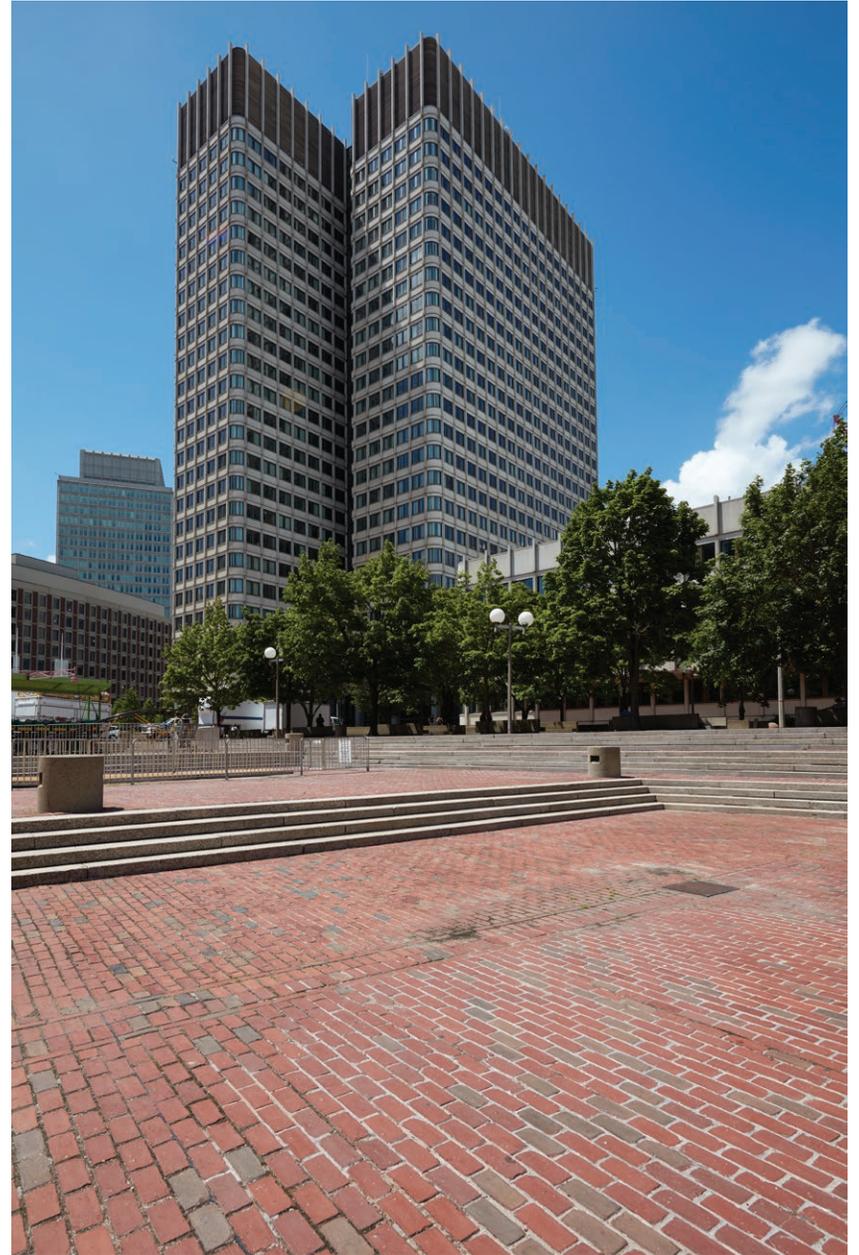
GSA acquisition from the U.S. Postal Service of the 1931 Robert T. Stafford U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Rutland, Vermont, will allow the U.S. district court and related judicial offices to enjoy uninterrupted operation in the National Register-listed building they have occupied for 89 years. (Joe Schumacher)



The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) move from the under-utilized Border Sector Headquarters complex in New Orleans, Louisiana, to GSA's 1881 National Historic Landmark U.S. Custom House enabled CBP to consolidate sector functions while reducing their real estate costs and the federal footprint. (Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.)



Workspace design templates developed for the Department of Housing and Urban Development at the 1968 Robert C. Weaver Federal Building in Washington DC, will meet agency needs for improved space utilization while preserving boldly curved, bush hammered concrete walls that are character-defining attributes of the lobbies and principal corridors. (Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.)





Once slated for demolition as part of New Haven's 1960s urban renewal plan, the 1919 Richard C. Lee U.S. Courthouse in New Haven, Connecticut, is an excellent example of Classical Revival architecture. GSA's newly updated Building Preservation Plan documents ongoing rehabilitation work to inform future project planning. (Carol M. Highsmith Photography, Inc.)



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