
Executive Order 13287

Preserve America

Report to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

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Submitted by

U.S. Postal Service, Facilities Headquarters
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-1862



**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
EXECUTIVE ORDER 13287, "PRESERVE AMERICA"**

**SECTION 3: REPORTING PROGRESS ON THE IDENTIFICATION, PROTECTION, AND USE
OF FEDERAL HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

SEPTEMBER 2023

Identifying Historic Properties

1. How many, and what percentage of your assets, are historic as reported in: (a) your bureau or agency's proprietary database and/or (b) your bureau's or agency's reports to the Federal Real Property Profile MS (FRPP MS)?

The USPS tracks properties, including historic properties, in its electronic Facilities Management System (eFMS). The USPS Federal Preservation Officer (FPO) is responsible for indicating the appropriate historic status of USPS owned properties in eFMS. eFMS data indicate the USPS owns 8,792 real property assets. The USPS has surveyed and evaluated properties 50 years of age or greater for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility and has determined the following:

- 3,618 properties (43%) are 50 years of age or greater.
- 3,341 properties (39%) are characterized by the USPS as historic.
 - 1,416 properties are NRHP-listed.
 - 1,925 properties are considered possibly historic (generally by virtue of their construction date of 1973 or before).
 - This is an increase of 104 properties, or 3%, since the USPS's 2020 progress report.

2. Have your identification methods changed during this reporting period? Approximately what total percentage or portion of inventory has now been surveyed and evaluated for the National Register, and does this represent an increase from your agency's 2020 progress report, if applicable?

The USPS's identification methods remain unchanged from the last reporting period.

100% of the USPS inventory of owned real property assets 50 years of age or older—43% of total owned real property assets—have been surveyed. 100% inventory of assets 50 years of age or older is consistent with the USPS 2020 progress report. The 43% total of real property assets 50 years of age or older represents a 5% increase over the last reporting period. The USPS uses the age 50 years or older as a starting point for determining whether a property is historic because the Department of the Interior (the Federal entity whose unit is responsible for the NRHP) has stated that “generally, properties eligible for listing in the National Register are at least 50 years old.” Thus, the date a property was acquired, occupied, or on which a building was constructed, is important information for determining whether a property is historic.

The Facilities eFMS system generally contains those three dates. If any of those dates are 50 years or more in the past, then the USPS presumes the property is historic unless determined otherwise by the FPO—for example, a property would not be considered historic if

the date land was acquired is greater than 50 years but the date of construction or the date of occupancy is less than 50 years. A final determination may not be made until a property is going to be the subject of an undertaking under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The FPO reviews properties to determine if they are listed or eligible for listing on the NRHP and records their historic status in eFMS. In addition to Postal Service properties that may be historic, a non-historic Postal Service building that is located near historic properties and/or within a historic district may also be identified as historic in eFMS to alert users that they need to consider Section 106 in actions taken at such a property.

3. Has your agency implemented any policies or programs that promote awareness and identification of historic properties over the last three years?

The USPS's policies that promote awareness and identification of historic properties remain unchanged over the last three years.

The USPS identifies historic properties consistent with methods and procedures described in Question 2.

4. Federal agencies are encouraged to share information regarding the number and percentage of historic property identification completed in the context of Section 106 for specific undertakings and programs versus that completed for unspecified planning needs (Section 110 survey). In a given year, what percentage of your agency's identification of historic properties occurs due to Section 106 planning and compliance versus regular stewardship and unspecified planning needs (Section 110)?

The USPS identifies and evaluates the inventory of potentially historic properties as key components of its preservation and compliance programs consistent with methods and procedures described in Question 2.

5. How has your agency employed partnerships to assist in the identification and evaluation of historic properties over the last three years?

The USPS has continued to identify and evaluate properties as key components of its preservation and compliance programs over the last three years, most commonly in response to proposed undertakings. During Section 106 consultation and/or Section 110 evaluation, the USPS engages with State Historic Preservation Officers, other consulting parties, and chief elected local officials, as appropriate, to determine which features of a property, if any, contribute to NRHP eligibility. Additionally, the USPS works with State Historic Preservation Offices, certified local governments, local organizations and private citizens regarding the identification and evaluation of historic properties in connection with possible nomination of properties to the NRHP. For example, the USPS supported the individual nomination of the Brinkley Main Post Office in Arkansas and the privately held Pasadena Post Office in Texas later rehabilitated through state and federal tax credit programs.

The USPS has also partnered with these entities and individuals to support proposals to nominate facilities to the NRHP as part of a historic district. For example, the USPS supported

the nomination of the following facilities to the NRHP: Riverside Historic District, Indiana; Marks Downtown Historic District, Mississippi; Brigham City Historic District, Utah; West Bend Historic District, Wisconsin; Schaefferstown Historic District, Pennsylvania; Atmore Commercial Historic District, Alabama; Maquoketa Historic District, Iowa; and both U.S. Post Offices in California 1900-1941 Thematic Resources and Historic Resources of Martinez, California.

Protecting Historic Properties

6. Have the policies and programs your agency has in place to protect historic properties changed over the reporting period in ways that benefit historic properties?

The USPS's policies and programs in place to protect historic properties remain unchanged over the last three years.

7. How has your agency used program alternatives such as programmatic agreements, program comments, and other tools to identify, manage, and protect your agency's historic properties over the last three years?

During this reporting period, the USPS entered into one Programmatic Agreement (PA). This PA was entered into among the USPS, New York State Historic Preservation Office and a long-term lessee (collectively, the "Parties"). The Parties determined that the requirement to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act was more effectively and efficiently fulfilled through the use of this PA.

As set forth in the PA, USPS, as landlord, entered into a ninety-nine year lease with a lessee (the "Lessee") with respect to a portion of the National Register of Historic Places-eligible Morgan General Mail Facility (the "Leased Premises") located at 341 Ninth Avenue in New York City. The Leased Premises included the top six floors—over 500,000 square feet—of the historic ten-story Art Deco building. The Lessee proposed to perform the rehabilitation of certain portions of the Leased Premises to accommodate new retail and commercial office space. Tenant-proposed exterior and interior treatments going forward at that property shall be addressed under the PA which provides, in part, that work undertaken in connection with the property within the scope and design of the initial project shall not require further consultation and shall not be subject to the requirements of the PA. The agreement further provides a list of exclusions applicable to certain future work; however, certain other future fit-out and base building work would require further review and consultation with the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

Using Historic Properties

8. How does your agency coordinate historic preservation and sustainability/climate resiliency goals in project planning?

While the USPS does not currently coordinate historic preservation and sustainability/climate resiliency goals in project planning, the Postal Service's Building Design Standards for the construction of new facilities and for repairs, renovations, and alterations to existing facilities include building specifications and recommended guidance documents developed in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for use on Postal Service

historic preservation projects. Thus, any efforts at historic properties which would support sustainability goals, such as retrofits to improve energy efficiency, would adhere to those protective standards and guidelines.

The USPS has not seen any notable reduction in sustainability performance as a result of historic rehabilitations needing to comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards, nor has the USPS faced any notable resistance to reuse of historic properties due to any perceived incompatibility of preservation with sustainability goals.

9. How do your agency's historic federal properties contribute to local communities and their economies, and how have their contributions changed over the reporting period?

The USPS's historic properties' contributions to local communities and their economies remain unchanged from the last reporting period. The Postal Service uses its historic properties in the same manner it uses all its properties—to support the mission of the Postal Service to provide the nation (and communities) with reliable, affordable, universal mail service.

SUCSESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

10. Provide specific examples of major successes, opportunities, and/or challenges your agency has experienced during the past three years.

A major success of the USPS has been The James A. Farley Building, at 421 Eighth Avenue in New York City. This building was originally designed by McKim, Meade and White in 1913 for the United States Post Office Department. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is an important part of the City's architectural history. It was identified in 1993 by the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and others for redevelopment into an expansion of the Pennsylvania Station transportation hub. At 1.4 million square feet, the building was surplus to USPS needs and consequently USPS transferred the building to a state corporation that financed construction and modernization of special projects in New York State, especially large-scale projects that would positively impact distressed areas.

During this reporting period, the USPS completed the rehabilitation of its lease footprint at the property, including certain portions of the building's concourse, first and third floors. The USPS was one of multiple government and private interests that worked concurrently to support the development's overall achievement that ultimately combined public transportation and USPS and commercial functions within a historic preservation framework. As a result of this rehabilitation, the New York Landmarks Society awarded this building the Lucy G. Moses Preservation Award for two consecutive years—in 2021 for the Moynihan Train Hall and in 2022 for the Postal Lobby. In 2023, the National Park Service determined that the completed project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and is a "certified rehabilitation," making it eligible to receive historic rehabilitation tax credits.
