

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items

New Submission  Amended Submission

#### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

U.S. Post Office Department Facilities in Oregon, 1940 to 1971

#### B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

U.S. Post Office Department Facilities in Oregon, 1940 to 1971

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#### D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Samuel B. ..., FEDERAL PRESERVATION OFFICER 14 DECEMBER 2016  
Signature and title of certifying official Date

United States Postal Service

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Postal position (response to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's (ACHP) Report to Congress): The mere use of a building as a Post Office does not make it historic. The ACHP states that the function of providing retail mail services to a community for decades is sufficient to make a building "historic" within the meaning of Section 106, i.e., a building eligible for listing or listed on the NRHP, specifically, under Criterion A. This is an odd theory. Adopting the ACHP's concept would effectively foreclose sales of post offices, since there would be little opportunity to mitigate or minimize the adverse effects of a loss of postal use. The NHPA does not mandate such an outcome. Moreover, reference to the Criteria misplaced, given that Criterion A requires that the property have an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and that the association be direct and significant. It is rare that such an event would take place at a post office and certainly not all post offices are associated with important events.

U.S. Post Office Department Facilities in Oregon, 1940-1971

Oregon

Name of Multiple Property Listing

State

**Table of Contents for Written Narrative**

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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#### Section E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT

##### Introduction

Today's "Post Office", formally known as the United States Postal Service (USPS or Postal Service), was created by the Postal Reorganization Act, effective July 1, 1971. It is an independent establishment of the Executive Branch and responsible for the delivery of mail. Its heritage dates to the Continental Congress with Benjamin Franklin serving as Postmaster General. As a federal entity, the U.S. Postal Service dates to the U.S. Constitution, specifically Article 1, Section 8, which enumerates the powers of Congress, and clause 7 within that empowers Congress to create "Post Offices and Post Roads." Particularly, through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the postal system played a crucial role in national expansion, fostering interstate communication and commerce, encouraging transportation improvements and demonstrating the benevolent authority of the federal government. Beginning in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and particularly after World War II, that landscape changed significantly. The Postal Reorganization Act was intended to facilitate improved management and efficiency. The USPS today has approximately 500,000 employees, making it the third largest civilian employer in the country. On a daily basis, mail is delivered to 155 million delivery points. It has over 31,000 post offices and locations. Operationally, it relies on a "hub and spoke" system whereby mail is picked up, brought to a regional distribution center where it is received, processed and organized for local distribution.<sup>1</sup>

The period from 1940 to 1971 was transformative for the United States Postal Service. In 1940, the Post Office Department was a cabinet-level branch of the U.S. government. Mail service was essentially a monopoly, a fundamentally government-funded function, at the time as much focused on political patronage as cost-of-delivery. Mail delivery itself was concentrated in tight urban centers, complemented by an elaborate, rural free delivery route system. Physical structures, the result of the Tarnsey Act and Depression-era federal spending, were less about the business of mail delivery and more about creating a local tangible manifestation of the federal government.

By 1971, this world was largely turned on its head. The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 abolished the Post Office Department and created the Postal Service as an independent establishment of the Executive Branch. The delivery of mail was expected to be financially self-sufficient while at the same time delivery zones expanded with urban sprawl and suburbanization. The Postal Service was challenged to be innovative, nimble, embracing new technology and business systems simultaneously expanding service areas amidst increasing volume. This new order was reflected in a new generation of postal facilities that placed a premium on design-build.

During the 1940-71 era, there were two basic periods of construction for the Post Office Department: the first one finished projects that were on the books; the second embraced a new order of business.

Just prior to the start of American involvement in World War II, the Post Office Department constructed Public Works Administration (PWA)-funded buildings that were similar in design and intent to those constructed during the Great Depression. These "Legacy Post Offices" were the direct result of the Depression-era federal investments.

<sup>1</sup> United States Postal Service, "By the Numbers," <http://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-facts/size-scope.htm>



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Immediately following World War II, systems innovation rather than construction initially marked the focus of postal activity. Existing buildings were adapted to house new machines and systems. Then beginning in the late 1950s and into the 1960s, the Post Office Department embarked on a new second era of construction. The new Post Offices, referred to as the "Thousand Series," were typically design-build, and most often leased. They were auto-friendly and conveniently located outside of town centers. The buildings were comparatively small, uniformly one-story, of economical construction with a fairly consistent interior. At the same time, the Post Office Department used the design-built/leased framework to build large regional industrial postal processing warehouses. These were built near freeways in order to expedite mail distribution around the country. Finally, in select instances, the Post Office Department joined with the General Services Administration (GSA) in the construction of new federal buildings under the aegis of the 1962 "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture," promulgated by the Kennedy Administration. These structures harkened back to the Legacy Post Offices as a monumental and symbolic representation of the federal government.

During this era, Oregon very much followed this pattern. One property, in Gresham, completed in 1941, is best understood as a Legacy Post Office with roots to the PWA-era. The vast majority of Post Office construction in Oregon fits the "Thousand Series" paradigm: small, one-story, design-built, lease-back structures built in more than 100 Oregon communities. The Post Office Department built two industrial-like Processing and Distribution Centers (P&DC), one in Portland and one in Springfield. And in three Oregon communities – Medford, Baker City, and Enterprise – the department worked with the GSA on a federal building with post office.

**Legacy Post Offices, 1940-42**

Post Office construction in the 1940s was a continuation and the completion of the Depression-era Post Office project, those planned in the 1930s but for whatever reason not constructed until the 1940s.

The circumstances of Legacy projects are well documented in Post Office National Register thematic studies for the 1900-1941 era<sup>2</sup>. These projects fulfilled a twin-purpose. First and foremost, the buildings were to be a physical manifestation of the federal government. Second, these projects were intended to create construction jobs. The buildings featured many of the same characteristics of the post offices built earlier in the century. They tended to have high-design qualities and were constructed of materials which evoked a sense of permanence. They were typically located on prominent parcels close to the town center, often on a full city block. Yet, in contrast to the post offices built before the Depression, designs in the Depression Era were less opulent. Many of the post offices were in the "starved classicism" style, which attempted to achieve the same statement of permanence and patriotism but with stripped ornamentation. The style descended from the Beaux-Arts approach of the earlier Treasury Department's Supervising Architects. Plans and facades remained symmetrical, but the elimination of architectural ornamentation reduced costs and sped construction. Ornamentation that was used stylistically drew from the Art Deco style with hard-edged, angular design.

Approximately 400 post offices were nationally constructed in the PWA-era - three times the number of those constructed prior.<sup>3</sup> Within Oregon, eight post offices were built during the PWA era. This list includes the

<sup>2</sup> Significant U.S. Post Offices in Oregon, 1920 to 1941, National Register of Historic Places (January 19, 1985)  
<sup>3</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 53.



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Corvallis, Oregon City, Marshfield (Coos Bay), Hood River, Salem, and McMinnville. Two post offices were built in the 1940-42 period: Tillamook and Gresham. Upon completion of this phase, nearly every county seat and major community in the state had a relatively modern post office; the oldest was located in Baker City, which dated to 1910. Those communities that lacked a notable postal structure were the sparsely populated and remote counties, mostly in the southeastern portion of the state.

### Innovation in the Post Office Department

Conceptually, the function of the Post Office Department is simple: to create and maintain a timely, efficient and reliable system for delivering mail to every address in America. That system must be elastic to respond to physical shifts in population and to fluctuations in volume by day of week, by month of year and year-to-year.

Mail Delivery in a Period of Population Growth, Urbanization, and Suburbanization: The post-war era is marked by three key population trends. The first is growth. Between 1940 and 1971, the population of the United States grew from 131,669,361 to 203,211,926. This represents a growth of 65 percent. Oregon's population lagged behind the national rate, but only slightly, growing from 1,089,684 to 2,091,533, a rate of 48 percent.<sup>4</sup>

The second trend was migration from rural to urban areas. In 1940, the Census Bureau classified 57 percent of the population as urban. In 1970, that number rose to 74 percent. In 1940, only 47 percent of the population lived in metropolitan areas; by 1970, that percentage was 69 percent. Oregon followed this national trend but was not as dramatic a transformation. In 1940, 48 percent of the population was urban; in 1970, that percentage was 67 percent.<sup>5</sup>

The third trend was suburbanization. The population of the inner city remained fairly static from 1930 to the end of the century. In 1940, of the 47 percent living in a metropolitan area, 32.5 percent lived in the central city, while 15.3 percent lived in the suburbs. Thirty years later, of the 69 percent that lived in a metropolitan area, 31.4 percent still lived in the central city while 37.6 percent lived in the suburbs.<sup>6</sup>

The simplicity of the statistics belies the complexity as related to mail delivery. Population growth and dispersal was not consistent over time or geography. On the street-level, these changes were reflected not only in housing units, but in the growth, concentration, and dispersal of places of business, shopping, institutions, schools, libraries, and hospitals, as well as government. And much as Oregon varied from the nation, so too did each of the thousands of communities in Oregon vary from one another. The reasons for these shifts were multifaceted, relating to wartime dislocation, to changing transportation systems and modes, to a changing economy, and to changing consumer expectations. The changes were also fostered by federal policies toward housing and by federal investment in highways. Notwithstanding, it was still the charge of the Postal Service to effectively and efficiently manage mail services for these changing times.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 158.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 80.



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Adding to the complexity was an increasing volume of per capita mail. In 1935, the nation's 127 million people mailed 22 billion pieces of mail; by 1960, these numbers had grown to 177 million and 62 billion, respectively. As a measure of population, mail volume doubled.<sup>7</sup> The social correspondence of the nineteenth century had given way, gradually then rapidly, to business mail as businesses generated a growing mass of bills, payments, advertisements, and magazines.<sup>8</sup>

Innovation at the Post Office: At the start of the period, mail was sorted and distributed at the most local geographical section. Each post office was its own central station. Mail was collected by carriers and brought to their post office where it was sorted. Mail within that station's geographic boundary was identified and processed back to the local carrier for delivery. If the local post office was an urban substation, city mail was identified, sent to the main post office, where it was then sent out to the appropriate substation for redistribution. Intercity and interstate mail was handled the same manner.

Through the post-ward years, the Postal Department experimented with new concepts and by the 1970s. By the 1970s, mail distribution evolved so that each postal facility was part of an integrated comprehensive system. Mail was collected and shipped to regional distribution centers; there it was collected, sorted and redistributed. In some cases returning to the same station it was received from. In this manner, by 1970, the traditional concept of a "post office" as an independent stand-alone business unit was non-existent.

During this transition period, with limited federal funding, the Department responded first by capturing new technology, both in mail-handling and in transportation. While real estate activities did not entirely halt, little new construction was undertaken in the years immediately following World War II. Congress did not appropriate funds for new Postal facilities from 1938 into the late 1950s.<sup>9</sup> Instead, the Post Office looked to the way it managed the mail. Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield, appointed by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1953, directed the agency toward reform and modernization, attempting to rebrand the agency as a modern, efficient organization embracing new management theories, systems and technologies.

Mail-Handling: One particular focus was mail-handling. Processing was very labor intensive. Into the 1940s, with the exception of a few large flat belt conveyers, mail was processed by hand.<sup>10</sup> As the volume of mail increased, the Department added more personnel. As early as the 1920s, the Post Office Department explored mechanization, but found the wide range of sizes, shapes, and weights challenging. Beginning in 1949, the Post Office established a department dedicated to research and development. The objective was a more efficient postal service, and if possible, a reduction of unit costs.<sup>11</sup> Initially, a small amount of portable bulk-handling equipment, such as fixed conveyors, heavy-duty loading/unloading conveyors, fork lifts, and dock boards began to be provided to large post offices to assist with the movement of mail within the building. Gradually, the Post Office explored task-specific machinery focused on automatic-culling, facing, and canceling. The Department also began intensive time-motion studies to make operations more efficient.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 169.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 170.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 44.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 182.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 171.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 184-185 and 207-208.



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Despite all the efforts, mail-handling remained a highly labor-intensive activity. In the decades prior to 1955, labor costs averaged around 73 percent of capital; from 1955 to 1966, when mechanization was first taking hold, labor costs actually increased to 80 percent.<sup>13</sup>

Paralleling mechanical improvements was the development of the Postal Code. The numerical zone concept had been first implemented in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the early 1930s, followed shortly thereafter by Germany. In the United States, the USPS implemented the "Metro" system. This system consisted of two digit numbers, typically located between the city and state; this new system was intended to help newly hired war-replacement postal clerks in sorting.

Twenty years later, the 2-digit postal zones became the 5-digit ZIP code. The specific impetus for the ZIP code came from a 1962 Presidential Advisory Board recommendation.<sup>14</sup> The ZIP Code created 552 sectional centers, each serving between 40 and 150 surrounding post offices. A numerical code was assigned to each center and then to the postal addresses they served. The first digit designated a broad geographical area of the United States, ranging from zero for the Northeast to nine for the far West. This was followed by two digits that more closely pinpointed population concentrations and those sectional centers accessible to common transportation networks. The final two digits designated small post offices or postal zones in larger zoned cities. The ZIP code system began on a voluntary basis on July 1, 1963. ZIP codes became mandatory for second- and third-class bulk mail in 1967 and for first class mail shortly after.

A third initiative, dating to the 1960s, was the establishment of Mail Users Councils. Postal facilities typically became overloaded with the surge of mail volume at the end of the day, mostly created by business mail. The Mail Users Council program began in 1961 to improve communication between customers and local postal managers with the goal of flattening the amount of mail delivered throughout the day. The councils' initial contribution was a "Mail Early" campaign. By flattening the volumes through the day, postal facilities could manage higher capacities. The name "Mail Users Council" lasted for nearly a decade until it was changed in 1971 to "Postal Customer Council."<sup>15</sup>

*Transportation:* In addition to mail processing, the Post Office also sought efficiencies in mail transport and delivery by integrating new modes and methods of transportation. At the time, mail was generally delivered by postal carriers who walked from the Post Office to each address. Carriers walked as many as 22 miles a day, carrying up to 50 pounds of mail. They were instructed to deliver letters frequently and promptly — generally twice a day to homes, and up to four times a day to businesses. The second residential delivery was discontinued in 1950. Multiple deliveries to businesses were phased out over the next few decades.

The growth of the suburbs, however, made walking infeasible. The route locations were physically distant and the points of delivery spatially dispersed. The Post Office Department experimented with various types of light motor vehicles but also with carts, hand-vehicles, and bicycles. Carriers were also provided with funds to ride public transportation to reach their delivery routes.<sup>16</sup> By the end of the 1950s, the Post Office Department had

<sup>13</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 239.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 105.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 104.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 151.



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largely completed the transition to standard commercial lightweight vehicles, and by 1969, more than half of the Department's residential routes were motorized.<sup>17</sup>

Changing transportation technologies were also apparent in inter-city mail deliveries. Until the 1960s, most of the mail transported between cities traveled by train. The creation of the parcel post system in 1913 did allow the Post Office Department to begin to acquire its own fleet of vehicles, but the intent was to supplement, not replace, the rails. As late as the 1940s, more than 90 percent of inter-city mail was still transported by passenger trains.

The Post Office Department completed a study of the postal transportation system to improve the economy and efficiency of mail delivery. They proposed to transport bulk mail on freight trains, which would be transferred to trucks at terminal facilities. The Post Office Department developed a "rail van," which had dual, retractable wheels for both highway and rail. The Department also coordinated schedules of the railroads and the trucking companies contracted to haul mail, established fast truck routes between widely separated urban area, and entered into agreements with passenger buses to carry mail from city to city. At the same time, the Postal Department increasingly used air carriers for rapid inter-city delivery.

Through the 1950s and into the 1960s, the shift in transportation away from walking to vehicular delivery and from inter-city rail to air and truck continued. In 1967, the Post Office Department canceled the majority of its railroad contracts. At the same time, the Post Office Department estimated that 17 billion pieces of first-class mail would be transported by air via approximately 12,000 scheduled daily flights and supplemental small aircraft, known as air taxis. Surface transportation of bulk mail relied on fast-scheduled freight trains in combination with tractor trailers. Loaded containers were transferred from flat-bed freight train cars directly to tractor trailers.<sup>18</sup>

#### A New Era of Postal Construction

Although Congress had not provided funding for new postal facilities since 1938, the Department was nonetheless planning for what it would build when it did secure funds. The Public Buildings Act of 1949 allowed the Department to submit reports on eligible building projects that could be used in whole or in part as Post Offices.<sup>19</sup> Working with the General Services Administration's Public Building Service, the Post Office Department published a manual that documented specific and standards requirements of a Post Office Department building.<sup>20</sup> The emphasis of these documents focused on the functional aspects of a postal facility. Stylistic guidance was largely nonexistent.

In 1958, the Department concluded a five-year study of postal facilities and processes, and then presented a Postal Modernization Program to Congress. Despite the Department's plea, Congress was slow to act. In

<sup>17</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 120 and 155.

<sup>18</sup> United States Post Office Department. *Annual Report of the Postmaster General*. 1963, 50.

<sup>19</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 119.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 27.



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response, the Department took advantage of the Public Buildings Construction Act of 1959.<sup>21</sup> That Act authorized a lease-purchase program for federal buildings. This program allowed lease terms of up to 30 years, lease terms long enough to secure the attention of local developers.<sup>22</sup> Using this program, the Department announced a \$1.5 billion building program in 1959.<sup>23</sup>

Thousand Series: The primary manifestation of this building program was the Thousand Series. The Thousand Series stood in stark contrast to the Legacy Post Office. It was humble, comparatively small with an emphasis on economy and efficiency. Functionally, the Series was intended to provide retail counter service, to receive incoming mail from patrons and carrier pick-ups, and to serve as the area receiving site for mail from the distribution center for carrier delivery. These buildings were intended to be the backbone of the new framework for mail delivery. It was no longer necessary or appropriate to be a symbolic representation of the federal government; for that reason, design was held to a minimum. For retail postal services, more and smaller buildings were better than more central and larger; these were then complemented by the larger and fewer distribution centers. By building smaller, the post office would respond relative to changing demographic patterns, to suburbanization.

The Thousand Series Post Office were mostly developed privately and leased to the Post Office. To that end, the Postal Department issued guidance documents for developers that outlined technical specifications for buildings.<sup>24</sup> This was then complimented in 1959 with a manual that offered examples of "acceptable" designs that could be used by sponsors in the construction of leased post offices between 1,000 and 12,000 square-foot.<sup>25</sup> The brochures included artist renderings, schematic plans, and suggested building materials. The brochures noted that the designs were adaptable to many variations and site characteristics, and that exterior design and materials could be adjusted to suit local conditions.

The Thousand Series was typically located outside the center core of the area in an auto-friendly location. The typical facility was sited centrally on the parcel. It had limited patron parking in the front, truck maneuvering spaces and employee parking at the rear. Depending on location, this may or may not have been paved. Construction was often concrete masonry units with brick or stone facing on the street elevation, or aluminum-framed panels and glass modular systems. Buildings were rectangular and conceived as a shell with interior build-outs. Typical interior organization divided the space into public and operational areas. The public space itself was divided into two sections by a full height securable aluminum and glass partition. Here was a 24-hour lobby that included postal boxes and a will-call window. The "will-call window" was a Dutch door between the lobby and the work room. Finishes here included linoleum flooring, brick or gypsum board walls, and acoustical dropped tile ceiling with fluorescent lighting. The second portion of the public space consisted of an open laminate counter for retail postal services. The operational space was essentially a large open room with fixtures and furniture that was mostly oriented toward the rear loading dock. The space would also include one or more offices spaces, created by gypsum board walls. It would also include a "swing room" which was the employee break room. Both offices and break rooms were typically accessed directly off the work room; in

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 285.

<sup>22</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 286.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 287.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 288.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 289-290.



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larger facilities with multiple offices, a corridor was more likely. The work room finishes were utilitarian, typically with concrete floors, painted exposed walls and ceiling with hung fluorescent lighting. Office and break rooms included linoleum flooring, painted gypsum board walls and dropped tile ceiling.

Within the state of Oregon, the new post office became ubiquitous with an estimated 100 new facilities built. Chronologically, construction crested in 1961 to 1963, but there were examples prior and later. New postal buildings were built in small remote towns such as Unity in Baker County (incorporated in 1972 with a population of approximately 150 people). Replacement postal buildings were constructed in larger towns such as La Grande. And new regional postal buildings were constructed in neighborhoods and suburbs such as the Forest Grove and Killingsworth branches in Portland, and the West Slope branch between Beaverton and Portland.

In the typical scenario, the Post Office Department acquired the land and solicited bids for the construction of a new facility, although as often, the solicitation only outlined parameters of location and the Department never actually acquired the land. That bid request outlined the specifications (size, layout, and construction), but not design. In Oregon, these buildings were typically small, one-to-five thousand square-feet depending on location, and most often in remote communities. People responding to the solicitations were builders. Rarely were architects involved. If the property was owned by the Post Office Department, it was then sold to the builder/developer with an agreement for the Department to lease the building for a period of 10 to 15 years with several renewal options. Alternatively, if the property were owned by the developer, it was the simpler "build-to-suit" development concept. This approach allowed the Department to leverage its limited funds. It also kept the properties on the local property tax rolls. None of the "Thousand Series" Post Offices in Oregon were built and owned by the Department. An article in the *Oregonian* for the new post office for Troutdale outlined the typical arrangement:

*Construction of a new post office in Troutdale has been authorized by the Post Office Department. . . The department has an option on a site on the southwest corner of Second and Buxton Street . . . owners of the property are Arthur D. Matches, E. P. Dering and Olive G. Parsons, all of Troutdale. A modern postal facility will be constructed on the site which comprises 13,000 square-feet. The new building will contain approximately 2,663 square-feet of interior space and will include a 216-square-foot platform and an estimated 5,260 square-feet of parking and maneuvering areas. The new post office will be constructed under the department's commercial leasing program which utilizes the resources and investment funds of private enterprise to obtain needed postal buildings. Bidding forms and specifications will be available in the near future.*<sup>26</sup>

As of 2016, the United States Postal Service owns six "Thousand Series" Post Offices in Oregon. The agency's acquisition of these six post offices was the happenstance result of an owner interested in disposing of the property where there was no ready buyer. These are listed below in Section F.

<sup>26</sup> The Oregonian, September 25, 1960.



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Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC): As part of its revised mail-processing systems, the Department also constructed "terminal annexes." These were later renamed "Processing & Distribution Centers" (P&DC). The purpose of these facilities was to provide centralized mail-handling.

P&DCs are large utilitarian structures on large parcels. Open floor plans were organized by machinery into work zones, each with its own set of conveyors and equipment. Funding for these facilities dated to the 1958 Postal Policy Act (Public Law 85-426), which raised the price of a first-class stamp.<sup>27</sup> These facilities were intended to respond to both the phenomenal increase in mail volume, which went from 26 billion pieces in 1938 to 60 billion pieces in 1958, and the increasing reliance on truck and air transport for intercity mail. The new facilities needed to be large enough to accommodate the new machines, while the sites needed to be large enough on the outside for easy maneuvering by multiple vehicles.

The prototype P&DC was in Providence, Rhode Island. Dubbed "Project Turnkey," the 1960 project was the first postal facility in the country designed specifically for mechanized processing of mail. In 1961, a second mechanized facility, named "Gateway," was built in Oakland, California.<sup>28</sup> The Turnkey and Gateway facilities exemplified the ideal mail-handling facility.<sup>29</sup> They used large sites close to major highways on the periphery of large towns. They were designed with large truck-maneuvering areas and loading platforms sited to work efficiently with the machinery in a large work room. The work rooms were laid out to handle the mechanical mail-handling systems and efficient movement of mail between the systems. The interiors of the buildings required long clear spans, high ceilings, and floors designed for heavy loading capacities. The building shells were determined by their function, which was in turn determined by the layout of several engineering systems and the site constraints. Included in each P&DC were office spaces for postal management and administration. These spaces were economical with gypsum board walls, wall-to-wall or linoleum floor flooring, and acoustical dropped tile ceilings. The facility also included employee break rooms and secured spaces for maintenance, both of the building and machinery.

In Oregon, two such facilities were constructed during this era, one in Portland and one in Springfield. The Portland facility, opened in 1962, was developed privately for the Post office as a "build to suit." The Springfield P&DC, constructed in 1967, was developed, built and owned by the Post Office Department.

Federal Buildings with Post Offices: The third building type was the federal office building that contained a post office. These buildings were mostly developed by the General Services Administration and typically of high design. They contrasted with postal facilities built for the Postal Department which emphasized efficiency and economy. Rather, the new Federal Office Buildings were intent on making a symbolic architectural statement of a modern federal government, not dissimilar from the goals of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Post Offices.<sup>30</sup> The design wellspring of these facilities came from the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, created under President John F. Kennedy. In its 1962 report, the committee called for designs that reflected the "dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American National Government."

<sup>27</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 192.

<sup>28</sup> URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished, 197.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 206.

<sup>30</sup> It was not unusual for most Post Office facilities to include one or more offices for other federal agencies.

Combined post offices and federal buildings are distinguished from other Post Office facilities by their scale and design.

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The typical federal building with a post office was modern and monumental in design, often the product of a prominent architect. Conceptually, these buildings harked back to the Legacy Post Offices except that the structures were no longer Post Offices with offices, but rather Federal office buildings with post office stations. The typical building was prominently located on a major site near the center of town. The site was often a full city block with parking for visitors and patrons at the front and employee and service parking at the rear. Landscaping was integral to the design. Normally, the building was divided into two components, each with their own entry: The primary entry led to a noteworthy building lobby with access to upper floor offices. This lobby was typically an extension of the building architecture. The upper floors were laid out in a typical double loaded corridor configuration. By contrast, the post office entry was usually to the side and led to the postal retail services. The postal space paralleled the Thousand Series build-out, generally austere, but given the central location, was often larger in size. The public lobby was austere with a larger public counter. To the rear was the large open work room.

In Oregon, the only property of this type owned by USPS is located in Enterprise, which is relatively remote and small. The more typical example can be found in Baker City, though this building is under control of the General Services Administration.

#### The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970

Despite the gains of the period, by the end of the 1960s, it was believed that management by a federal department was a barrier to the flexibility necessary to succeed in the efficient delivery of the mail. Congressional hearings eventually led to the Postal Reorganization Act. Signed into law on August 12, 1970, the Postal Reorganization Act removed the Postmaster General from the Cabinet and created a self-supporting postal corporation, which would be an independent establishment of the Executive Branch. The law was intended to enact five basic provisions: adequate financing authority, removal of the system from politics, assuring continuity of management, collective bargaining between postal management and employees, and the Postal Service's setting rates after an opportunity for hearings before an impartial rate panel. The new Postal Service officially began operations on July 1, 1971.

In practical terms, the ongoing real estate activities of the Post Office Department simply segued to the USPS without a notable shift in strategy. Nonetheless, for purposes of this study, the transformation from Post Office Department to the Postal Service in 1971 becomes a reasonable threshold event.



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**F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES**

**INTRODUCTION**

The USPS is an integrated national network of physical resource (objects, structures, buildings) systematically organized to accomplish the federal government’s responsibility to receive, process, and distribute the mail. Resources are functionally integrated. Successful accomplishment of the organization’s goal relies not on the resources but on the system. In other words, to understand a resource solely for its contribution to the U.S. Postal Service, no resource is independent, no resource is unique, no resource is different within their class of resources, no resources is more important than another.

This study addresses USPS resources built in Oregon between 1940 and 1971. USPS maintains a complete database of its real property assets which identifies properties built in the state within the timeframe. These properties may be grouped into three types: 1) Main or Station Post Offices, 2) Processing & Distribution Centers, and 3) Federal Office Buildings with Post Offices.<sup>31</sup> These are described below. Overwhelmingly, resources built in this era were leased by the USPS; current ownership is happenstance and the result of individual circumstances, not USPS policy.

**APPLICABLE NRHP CRITERIA**

The National Register of Historic Places identifies and recognizes properties of national, state and local significance. To make this determination, National Register Bulletin 15 details “How to the Apply National Register Criteria for Evaluation.” Detailed below, there are four basic Criterion: Event, Person, Design/Construction and Potential Information.

Specific to Post Office buildings, the discussion is informed also by National Register Bulletin 13: “How to Apply National Register Criteria to Post Offices.” Completed in 1984, this guidance addressed a different and more narrow collection of pre-World War II resources. It nonetheless remains germane. In summary, the Bulletin details that a Post Office resource may be significant as a Post Office resource in the area of Communication on a national level in the history of the U.S. Postal Service.

Broadly, USPS-owned facilities may be eligible under Criteria A, B or C. Criterion D, typically associated with archaeology, is not germane as all postal facilities are on fully disturbed sites. Under Criterion A, as detailed in Bulletin 13, a property may be eligible on the national level in the area of Communication for place in U. S. Postal Service history. Under Criterion B, listing is theoretically possible, practical demonstration of significance for association with a person is remote. Under Criterion C, Bulletin 13, written in 1984 and addressing pre-World War II resources, offers that post offices could be significant a building type. This assessment was made at a time when most communities had a single post office as a resource, when that post office was an independent operational entity, and when that post office played a significant symbolic local demonstration of the federal government. By the 1960s, postal buildings were decentralized into suburbs and

<sup>31</sup> This typology parallels URS, *Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971*, 2012, Unpublished.



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neighborhoods in largely uninspired utilitarian structures and were no longer a stand-alone operation or even a distinctive entity in mail processing. Today, with 31,000 current postal structures, it is inappropriate that all would be eligible for listing based on mere association. For these reasons, application of Criterion C must be cautious and designation confined to the best examples based on a broad geographic scope and extensive comparative analysis.

As detailed in both National Register Bulletin 13 and the more current National Register Bulletin 15, resources affiliated with the Post Office may also be eligible for listing should they meet any number of criteria external to the Post Office association. Pursuit of such listings would require adherence to National Register Bulletin 15 "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation." Nothing in this MPDF precludes designation under Criteria A, B or C independent to postal association on a local, state or national level.<sup>32</sup>

#### Criterion A: Event

A property may be eligible for the National Register if it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Criterion A recognizes properties associated with single events as the founding of a town, or with a pattern of events, repeated activities, or historic trends. The event or trend must clearly be important within the associated context. Mere association with the event or trend is not sufficient for listing; the association must be significant as well.

As detailed in Bulletin 13, a post office may be eligible in the area of "Communications" on the national level for contributions to the history of the U.S. Post Office Department. As detailed in Section E, the period 1940 to 1971 was transformative in the U.S. Postal Service. While the basic function remained the same, the changing environment resulted in a fundamental way of doing business. In terms of physical resources, this included the

<sup>32</sup> It is important that Bulletin 13, while useful, is also flawed. Written in 1984, it addressed a collection of resources reflective of pre-World War II mail delivery systems. The perspective is thus archaic when applied to the complexities of the modern mail system. For example, the notion of a Post Office as community gathering place may resonate when applied to a main street or rural community in 1910, but not so much when applied to a community in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Further, by the current era, nearly every aspect of the mail delivery system – its property, people and organization – had morphed into a highly complex enterprise, an integrated national network of physical resource (objects, structures, buildings). Thus, while prior to World War II, a community's post office was responsible for independently fulfilling the delivery of mail within its geographic boundaries, in the modern era, such independence is non-existent. In other words, to understand a resource solely for its contribution to and as part of the U.S. Postal Service, no resource is independent, no resource is unique, no resource is different within their class of resources, no resources is more important than another.

Bulletin 13 is also flawed in not addressing the nuance of personal property in evaluating potential significance of real property. For example, Bulletin 13 states that a Post Office may be considered "historic" for the art work contained therein. When such artwork is specific and an attached, part of the real property, such may be the case. When artwork is not attached but personal property merely located within the building, that association is not necessarily appropriate. A similar discussion may be applied when discussing freestanding machinery notable in advancing the Post Office goals. It is the personal property, not the shell containing that property that is important. Bulletin 13 does not explore these nuances and this is a limitation to its application.



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creation of a new form of postal station, a new regional distribution center, and joint federal office/post office. However, per guidance in Bulletin 15, merely being a local example of this trend is not sufficient for listing, the quality of the association to the trend must be significant. Put another way, the resource would need to be significantly associated with the transformation of the postal service in this three decade period. For example, in the 1890, Congress authorized the creation of rural free delivery, a key component of the modern US postal system; at that time, twelve communities were selected on an experimental basis. A Post Office affiliated with that initiative would qualify under Criterion A. A more recent example can be found in 1959; in that year, the Postal Department experimented with a Burroughs Corporation mail sorting machine in Detroit; the experiment was successful and the machine became the backbone of letter sorting for the next two decades. A resource directly tied to that experience would be notable under Criterion A. A still more recent example would be the P&DC built in Providence, Rhode Island in 1960. It was designed as a specific prototype for mechanized processing of mail, which was successful, was then duplicated. In both of these two later examples, for such significance, integrity would be a defining quality. For example, to be noteworthy here the machinery would need to be present and the interior organization largely intact.

#### **Criterion B: Person**

A property may be eligible for the National Register if it is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. Criterion B applies to properties associated with individuals whose specific contributions to history can be identified and documented. Persons "significant in our past" refers to individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state or national historic context. The criterion is generally restricted to those properties that illustrate (rather than commemorate) a person's important achievements. As with Criterion A, not only must the resource be associated with the individual, the quality of that association must be significant. By way of example, Earle Ovington was sworn into service as a mail courier and was the USPD's first airmail pilot; a facility significantly associated with Mr. Ovington would be potentially eligible under Criterion B.

In regard to Criterion B, Bulletin 13 offers the suggestion of "association with a postmaster, businessman, or other person whose experience with the postal service had an important influence on a local, state or national business."

#### **Criterion C: Design/Construction**

Properties may be eligible for the National Register if they 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 value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. This criterion applies to properties significant for their physical, design or construction, including such elements as architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering. Similar to Criteria A and B, to merely be of a style, by an architect, or representing a building type is not sufficient. Simply because a building represents a design or a style, it is not necessarily eligible for listing on the National Register. The property must represent an achievement, a significant resource worthy of preservation. It must be exceptional not common or vernacular. Although not a USPS resource, an example of Criterion C applied would be Robert C. Weaver Federal Building in Washington, D.C. designed by Marcel Breuer, completed in 1968 and listed on the National Register.



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As detailed in Bulletin 13, a post office could also be eligible under Criterion C as a building type. Because post office facilities are national in scope with consistent facility types from town to town, this evaluation must be national in scope with only resources that may be considered exceptionally typical in being eligible. Specifically, it is not acceptable to designate building types on a local level of significance.

***Criterion D: Likely to yield information important to prehistory or history***

Criterion D is not being applied to the associated property types because there is little potential for these buildings to yield new information important to history. Resources are limited to the built environment and are relatively modern in nature. Substantial information pertaining to the context is readily available in existing literature and collections.

**Aspects of Integrity**

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be considered for listing in the National Register, a property must not only be shown to have significance under the National Register criteria, but must have sufficient integrity to convey that significance.

Historic integrity consists of seven individual aspects that collectively provide a property with its ability to convey historic significance. For properties that are considered significant under Criterion A or B, more emphasis is placed on integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are necessary to the degree that the physical features of the property are intact enough to convey historic association. Conversely, properties considered significant under Criterion C rely most heavily on integrity of design, materials, and workmanship to convey significance. Integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association provide context to the physical property and can provide enhanced understanding of its significance and historic associations.

Fundamentally, integrity is a function of significance. Integrity should be measured against the resource's historic and architectural values within the period of significance presented, and should be strongest in those aspects most specifically germane.

**Criterion Consideration G - Properties that have Achieved Significance within the Last Fifty Years**

The period of significance for this Multiple Property Documentation Form is 1940 to 1971. The end date is less than 50 years. The National Register typically excludes properties less than 50 years unless they are of "exceptional significance." In so doing, the Register guards against listing properties of only passing contemporary interest. The phrase "exceptional significance" may be applied either to an individual resource or a group of resources. "Exceptional significance" does not need to be interpreted as of national or even statewide significance, but may be locally significant. Rather, the question is measured by a property's importance within the appropriate historic context. To that end, "exceptional significance" can only be determined when sufficient historical perspective exists on the associated Criterion. In justifying "exception significance" it is also necessary to compare a specific resource with others as it relates to the same historic event or trend.



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Among the resources owned by USPS in Oregon that fall within this Multiple Property Documentation Form at the time of this documentation, only two are less than fifty years old. While the bulk of USPS construction occurred in the mid-1960s, there are additional postal resources which are less than fifty years of age. This MPDF provides a sufficient context and historic perspective to allow specific resources to be evaluated under Criterion Consideration G within the defined historic framework. It is acknowledged that a resource less than 50 years old may be considered significant outside of this MPDF based on its own merits.

#### ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

##### MAIN OR STATION POST OFFICE

For the period of this context statement, 1940 to 1971, the Main Post Office is a facility in an identified urban unit, providing customer service, mail sorting, and distribution. It is a freestanding building that has been fitted out with a retail service lobby and counter, postal boxes, a work room, staff room, offices and truck loading dock. There are two subtypes: Legacy Post Offices and Thousand Series Post Offices. These are divided by chronology and design.

##### LEGACY POST OFFICES (1940-42)

These Post Offices are a remnant of the Public Works Administration depression-era building programs. These Main Post Offices continued the tradition created by the 1893 Tarnsey Act. While built for the processing and delivery of mail, the structures were as much about being a local physical manifestation of the federal government. They were located prominently in a town's central business district and were distinct, often iconic buildings with an architectural presence, including high quality materials, traditional design and often wall murals. While these buildings functioned to process the mail, each was also intended to be a physical local manifestation of the federal government.

*Applicable MPDF National Register Criteria: Within the specific context of USPS resources, Legacy Post Office may be eligible as described below.<sup>33</sup>*

**Criterion A:** A Legacy Post Office may be eligible under Criterion A only in the area of "Communications" and only on the national level for a direct association with a significant contribution to the history of the U.S. Post Office Department.

**Criterion B:** A Legacy Post Office may be eligible under Criterion B nationally for its association with a person significant in the history and development of the U.S. Postal Service.

**Criterion C:** A Legacy Post Office may be eligible under Criterion C locally for its architecture, specifically as the symbolic impact or influence of public or governmental architecture. As detailed in National Register

<sup>33</sup> This MPDF addresses USPS resources as part of the USPS network. As with any building, individual properties may be eligible for their impacts on the local, state and federal level apart from being postal facilities.



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Bulletin 13, is a good example of design features, facilities, or equipment distinctive to its design and used as a post office.

In order to qualify under Criteria A, B or C, all of the following registration requirements must be met:

- The property must be directly and significantly associated with a specific significant event or person in U. S. Postal Service history as documented by published and scholarly research.
- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be the single most appropriate resource for the associative value.
- The property must have sufficient integrity to convey that association.

Legacy Post Offices are best recognized as symbolic representations of the federal government. Distinctive characteristics include a prominent downtown location with prominent siting and monumental entry. Exterior design and material should be evocative and include patriotic decoration. Interior public spaces should be of superior permanent materials with high design values. Work spaces should be functional and utilitarian, designed around the premise of a centralized local mail processing center. To be eligible for listing, a property should have exceptional integrity with few to no alterations to setting, site, exterior or interior, both public and functional spaces.

#### *Oregon Legacy Post Office Resources*

In Oregon, two Postal-owned properties fit this property type. The first is the Tillamook Post Office. This building was included in the 1985 Thematic study, "Significant U. S. Post Offices in Oregon, 1900 to 1941" and listed in the National Register in conjunction with that Thematic Study. The second property, the Main Post Office in Gresham (Multnomah County), was completed in 1941.

#### **Main Post Office (103 W. Powell Boulevard, Gresham, Multnomah County)**

**Description:** Gresham, Oregon is a suburban Portland community of approximately 105,600 residents in eastern Multnomah County, approximately 15 miles from Portland city center. The post office fronts Powell Boulevard, a major thoroughfare and commercial corridor through Portland and Gresham. The surrounding area has a low density mix of commercial and residential properties of newer and older vintage and multiple surface parking lots.

**Site:** The post office is located on the eastern portion of an irregularly shaped street block. The parcel contains two lots that total 91,543 square-feet. The flat, irregular-shaped, fully-disturbed lot is bound by Powell Boulevard to the south, Miller Street to the east, First Street to the north and has an access road to postal parking lots between the post office and abutting commercial property on the west. The 23,243 square-foot building is located in the southeast corner of the lot, abutting sidewalks on Powell Boulevard and Miller Street. A surface parking lot for patrons is located to the southwest and a postal service parking lot is located to the north and northwest. These parking lots are divided by a brick wall, approximately 8' tall. There are two main



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entries; one accessed from Powell Boulevard to the south and the other from the patron parking lot to the west. There are no significant landscape features.

Exterior: First completed in 1941 as a 5,200 square-foot facility, the building was expanded in 1990 to its current size of 23,243 square-feet. The building is one-story in height with a rectilinear shape. Architecturally, the structure today is of nominal design but may be considered an example of the Neo-Renaissance Revival style. The original post office was designed by architect Theodore Ballew; the addition was designed by Mackenzie/Saito & Associates. The building has a flat roof with parapet, poured concrete slab--on-grade foundation, and is unreinforced masonry block. Facade materials are consistent and include tan brick stretcher-bond veneer with matching mortar, cast stone, metal coping, dark brown aluminum-framed glass-panel windows and entryways.

The post office fronts to the south on Powell Boulevard. The south facade is asymmetrical and divided into two main sections; the original building and the new addition. The original building is located in the southeast corner, clad in stretcher bond veneer with three bays of fixed windows. The windows have been replaced with aluminum frames and a 2/2 fixed configuration from their original double-hung style. Two, decorative arched cast-stone elements have been recessed into the south facade, each flanking a side of the three bays.

The modern addition is located to the west, clad in the stretcher-bond veneer with a cast-stone cornice, and five bays of fixed and casement windows framed in aluminum. The addition also has a main entry inset into an archway. The entry-way, accessed from the sidewalk, is of modular design and recessed. It has two full-glass doors with side and center lights and transoms.

Today, the east and west facades are secondary. The east facade is part of the original post office and was the original primary facade. It is clad in stretcher bond veneer and has 11 openings; this includes three metal service doors and five windows that are now bricked in. Windows are fixed 2/2 with brown aluminum framing. The west facade is part of the new addition and abuts both parking lots. This part of the facade is clad in stretcher bond veneer, has a partial cast stone cornice and a blank wall with no windows. The southwest corner of this facade has the other main entry, accessed by the patron parking lot. The main entry projects and is set in an arch similar to the Powell Boulevard entry and also accessed by a set of steps. The entry has two full-glass panel doors, a center light and two full-glass transoms. The northwest section of this facade is part of the service area. It has a loading dock, with a canopy roof and a pair of metal swinging service doors.

The north facade is considered the rear and abuts part of the service parking lot. It is clad in stretcher bond veneer and also has a canopy. It is used as a loading dock and service area.

Roof: The building has a flat roof. There is mechanical machinery located in the center. A parapet extends the entire roof line, including metal coping.

Interior: The facility contains a total of 23,243 square-feet between the original building and new addition. Upon entering the new lobby through an entry vestibule (Powell Boulevard entry) the service/retail space is to the east and with another entry to the west. The lobby and retail sections are partitioned by aluminum-framed full-glass doors with side and center lights and transom. The lobby and customer service areas have acoustic drop



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tile ceiling, painted gypsum board walls, and stone tile floors. The service area is to the north of the public lobby and customer service desks. This section is a large open space and has utilitarian finishes.

**Integrity:** The integrity of the building is absent. The building is in its original location and the setting is generally similar to when it was built. However, there have been substantial design and material changes to both the exterior and interior. In massing, the 17,000 square-foot addition dwarfs the original 5,200 square-foot building. The main entry was moved from the east to the south. The facades of the historic portion were integrated into the addition, such that the building is more 1990 than 1941. All windows in the original building have either been replaced with modern aluminum-framed fixed-glass panels, with 2/2 configurations, or have been bricked in. On the interior, the spaces have been entirely reconfigured. The building is unrecognizable compared to its 1941 appearance.

**History:** The post office was dedicated on July 27, 1941. At the time, the town had some 2,000 residents; as a "Legacy Post Office," it was designed as "an agency of democratic services and a symbol for the government."<sup>34</sup> The architect was Theodore Ballew of Philadelphia. Construction was completed in 1941 at a cost of \$75,000. In 1950, the building was first enlarged at the west. In 1973, the Postal Service then acquired land adjacent to the west and over the next decade explored various options for expansion. The Portland architecture firm of Mackenzie/ Saito & Associates was hired to develop plans and after a couple of false starts in 1984 and 1987, ground breaking on the addition took place in 1989. The new addition cost \$1.75 million, added 20,900 square-feet, and reconfigured both the property and the building.

### Assessment of Previously Unevaluated Legacy Post Offices in Oregon:

The Gresham Post Office is not eligible for the National Register. It lacks integrity to convey any historic or architectural values.

### **THE THOUSAND SERIES POST OFFICES, 1960s**

These Post Offices are associated with the Post Office Department's new construction in the 1960s. This subtype consists of utilitarian, one-story, flat-topped box-like buildings privately developed for Post Office use on a build-to-suit basis. As described above, these building reflected a change in the manner in which mail was processed. The emphasis was on small facilities that served retail and receiving needs, but only tangentially involved in mail sorting. The building was sited outside the center core of the area in an auto-friendly location. It had limited patron parking in the front, truck space and employee parking at the rear. Depending on location, this may or may not have been paved. Construction was concrete masonry units with brick or stone facing on the street elevation, or aluminum-framed panels and glass modular systems. Buildings were conceived as a shell with interior build-outs. Typical interior organization divided into a public space and an operational space. The public space itself was divided into two sections by an aluminum and glass partition. The first was a 24-hour lobby that included postal boxes and a will-call window. The "will-call window" was a Dutch door between the lobby and the work room. Finishes here included linoleum flooring, brick or gypsum board walls, and acoustical dropped tile ceiling with fluorescent lighting. The second portion of the public space consisted of an open laminate counter for retail postal services. The operational space was

<sup>34</sup> The Oregonian, July, 27, 1941.



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a large open room with fixtures and furniture oriented toward the rear loading dock. The space would also include one or more office spaces, created by gypsum board walls. It would also include a small "swing room" which was the break room for postal employees. Both offices and break rooms were typically accessed directly off the work room; in larger facilities with multiple offices, a corridor was more likely. The work room finishes were utilitarian, typically with concrete floors, painted exposed walls and ceiling with hung fluorescent lighting. Office and break rooms included linoleum flooring, painted gypsum board walls and dropped tile ceiling.

Physically, materially, and stylistically, these buildings were humble with an emphasis on economy.

*Applicable MPDF National Register Criteria: Within the specific context of USPS resources, Thousand Series Post Office may be eligible as described below.<sup>35</sup>*

Criterion A: A Thousand Series facility may be eligible under Criterion A only in the area of "Communications" and only on the national level for a direct association with a significant contribution to the history of the U.S. Post Office Department.

Criterion B: A Thousand Series may be eligible under Criterion B nationally for its association with a person significant in the history and development of the U.S. Postal Service.

In order to qualify under Criteria A or B, all of the following registration requirements must be met:

- The property must be directly and significantly associated with a specific significant event or person in U. S. Postal Service history as documented by published and scholarly research.
- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be the single most appropriate resource for the associative value.
- The property must have sufficient integrity to convey that association.

Criterion C: A single Thousand Series facility may be eligible under Criterion C statewide as a building type. The Postal Service has 31,000 current resources; of these, the Thousand Series comprises the vast bulk. It is not appropriate that all properties would be eligible for listing based common association or design. It may be appropriate for a limited number to be listed as superior examples based on a broad at least statewide geographic scope and extensive comparative analysis.

In order to qualify under Criterion C, all of the following registration requirements must be met:

<sup>35</sup> This MPDF addresses USPS resources as part of the USPS network. As with any building, individual properties may be eligible for their impacts on the local, state and federal level apart for their impacts apart from being postal facilities.



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- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be a singularly exceptional representation of the Thousand Series in the State of Oregon.
- The property must be intact with a high degree of integrity to convey that association.

#### Oregon Resources

In Oregon, while there are many examples may be found throughout the state, only six Thousand Series properties are owned by the USPS. In chronological order, these include:

- Myrtle Creek Main Post Office (124 Broadway Street, Myrtle Creek), 1961
- LaGrande Main Post Office (1202 Washington Avenue, La Grande), 1963
- Albany Main Post Office (525 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, SW, Albany), 1963
- Creston Station Post Office (5010 SE Foster Road, Portland), 1966
- Scappoose Main Post Office (52643 Columbia River Highway, Scappoose), 1966
- Florence Main Post Office (770 Maple Street, Florence), 1970

Each property is described below.

#### Myrtle Creek Main Post Office (124 Broadway Street, Myrtle Creek, Douglas County)

**Description:** Myrtle Creek is a community of 3,500 residents located in south-central Douglas County. The town is approximately halfway between Eugene and Medford and roughly a mile east of U.S. Interstate 5. The post office is located northeast of the town’s business district adjacent to a residential neighborhood.

**Site:** The post office is located on a parcel of 12,150 square-feet. The flat, irregularly-shaped, fully-disturbed site is bound by Broadway Street to the north, Oak Street to the south and a commercial property each to the east and west. The 4,031 square-foot building is located to the north of the lot, at the Broadway Street property line. A patron surface parking lot is located on Broadway Street but also in a lot on the west side of the building. Further south at the west is parking and service areas for postal vehicles. The landscape contains trees, grass, and shrubbery to the south and east of the post office.

**Exterior:** Constructed in 1961, the 4,031 square-foot building is one-story in height with an irregular, asymmetrical, yet rectilinear, shape. The structure is of minimal design. The building was contractor-designed. The building has a flat roof, poured-concrete slab-on-grade foundation and is unreinforced-masonry block. Materials are consistent with full-height modular-assembly aluminum-frame windows, and the facade is fully clad in red-brick stacked-bond veneer with matching mortar.

The building fronts to the north onto Broadway Street. The north facade is angular, asymmetrical with a canopy and two main elements. The dominant feature is the ten full-height aluminum-frame window panels. This window panel wall includes the main entry, which has a pair of full-glass doors with a full transom. The second feature is the parapet, on the northeast corner that is clad in stack-bond veneer. The northwest part of this facade fronts onto the side patron parking lot. It features three full length modular window panels and is also clad in the brick stack-bond veneer.



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The east and west facades are secondary. The east facade is clad in concrete masonry block, has no openings and abuts the lot line. The west facade, which traditionally would be considered the rear due to its service use, is divided into two sections. The northwest section is clad in the brick stack-bond and has one bay of four identical, frosted, and fixed and casement windows located off center to the north. The southwest section is a loading dock for USPS service use, and is clad in masonry concrete block. This section has a canopy, three fixed windows, and two entries; including one set of metal-swinging doors and one metal service door.

The south facade is considered the rear facade. It is clad in concrete masonry block and contains six identical windows, the same as the three on the west facade. The southwest section of this facade contains a decorative pattern due to the layout of the concrete blocks. The south facade abuts a yard and gravel parking lot.

Roof: The Myrtle Creek post office has a flat roof with metal coping along the entire roof line. A low parapet is on both the northeast and southwest corners.

Interior: The interior is accessed through the main entry located on the north. The space is rectilinear and divided into three zones. The first zone is the 24-hour lobby with postal boxes along the south wall. To the east is retail customer service. The two areas are divided by a glass-and-aluminum partition with double doors. The lobby and retail space have Vinyl Composition Flooring (VCT), painted gypsum-board walls and acoustic drop-ceiling tiles. The third zone is south of the public lobby, a large open work space with utilitarian finishes.

Integrity: Overall, the resource retains a high degree of integrity. It is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are intact. With slight modifications to the setting and building over time, the feeling and association are similarly intact.

History: The Myrtle Creek post office was first established in 1854. The current building was constructed as a build-to-suit with construction beginning in 1960 and the building completed in 1961.

#### LaGrande Main Post Office (1202 Washington Avenue, La Grande, Union County)

Description: La Grande is a community of 13,085 residents located in the northeast corner of Oregon in central Union County. The post office is located next to the town's historic business district and parallels US Highway 30 (Adams Avenue), the town's commercial corridor. The neighborhood has dense commercial properties with mixed use of newer and older vintage. Residential neighborhoods are located to the west and south and to the east of Route 30 over train tracks.

Site: The La Grande post office is located on a corner parcel of 34,629 square-feet. The flat, irregular-shaped, fully-disturbed lot is bound by Washington Avenue to the northeast, Depot Street to the northwest, Fifth Street to the southwest, Sixth Street to the southeast and commercial properties to its south. The 12,240 square-foot building is located in the north corner of the lot, abutting the Washington Street and Depot Street sidewalks. A surface parking lot for patrons is located to the southeast and accessed from Sixth Street. A postal vehicle surface parking lot is located to the south and accessed from Fifth Street.



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**Exterior:** The 12,240 square-foot building is one-story in height with a rectilinear shape. The structure is of minimal design. The building was contractor designed. The building has a flat roof with extended eaves, poured-concrete slab-on-grade foundation, and is unreinforced-masonry block. Facade materials are modular, full-height window assemblies that consist of aluminum-framed plated-glass windows with a "natural" enameled panel above and below with red-brick stretcher-bond facade and tan mortar. The roof fascia is corrugated-metal siding and metal coping extends the roof line.

The building fronts to the northeast on Washington Street. The northeast facade is asymmetrical, with overhanging eaves and consists of two elements. The dominant facade feature is the 16 full-height windows with enamel panels above and below. The northeast facade main entry is located within these windows to the west. The entry is a pair of full-glass aluminum-framed doors with a full-glass transom. The north and northeast corners are clad in stretcher-bond veneer, with the northeast corner recessed from the sidewalk.

The northwest and southeast facades are secondary. The northwest facade has a stretcher bond veneer on the north corner. The rest of the facade is painted-concrete masonry block separated into three bays. The bays consist of aluminum-framed fixed and casement windows. Metal coping extends along the roof line.

The southeast facade abuts the patron parking lot and has over hanging eaves. This facade is divided into three sections. The second main entry is located at the buildings northeast corner; recessed from the sidewalk. The entry consists of a single; aluminum-framed full-glass door and transom with a full-glass panel to its right with enamel panels above and below. The middle section consists of stretcher bond facade with three bays. The windows are aluminum-framed fixed and casement styles. The southernmost section is part of the service area. It contains five garage-style doors for access to a loading dock. The doors are divided by painted-concrete masonry block facade. An open entry is located between the middle and southernmost facades.

The southwest facade is considered the rear and abuts the service parking lot. It is clad in painted-concrete masonry block. There are five bays of aluminum-framed, fixed and casement windows. Metal coping and corrugated-metal fascia extends the roof line. An open entry is located close to the southern corner of the building.

**Roof:** The building has a flat roof. There is mechanical machinery to the southwest and southeast of the roof.

**Interior:** The building contains 12,240 square-feet. Upon entering the lobby from the Washington Street entry, the service/retail space is to the left (southeast), there are postal boxes along the southern wall and in hallways along the western wall. The customer service and retail section is entered through the patron parking lot entry on the southeast facade. The lobby and retail sections are partitioned by aluminum-framed full-glass doors with side lights and transom. The service area is to the south of the public lobby and customer service desks. This section is a large open space and has utilitarian finishes.

**Integrity:** Overall the integrity of the building is intact. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are intact. With slight modifications to the setting and building over time, the feeling and association are similarly intact.



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**History:** The present Post Office building in La Grande was constructed in 1963, the product of a lease agreement with a builder-developer. Prior to construction, the current site had a one-story commercial building and an automobile garage. In 1961, the Post Office Department solicited bids for a new \$200,000 structure on property owned by Bill Thomas. The winning bid was provided by Worksaver Body Corporation of Seattle.

**Albany Main Post Office (525 SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Albany, Linn County)**

**Description:** Albany is a city of 50,000 located at the northeast corner of Linn County. It is located at the confluence of the Willamette and Calapooia Rivers, west of I-5, in the north central Willamette Valley.

The building is located on a full block site, west of, and relatively remote from downtown. The site is bounded by First and Second Avenues, and by Washington and Calapooia Streets. The immediate area is comprised primarily of low-rise commercial structures. To the northwest is Bryant Park at the point of river confluence. Surrounding streets are one way with dual traffic and parking lanes.

Site: The site is 60,675 square-feet, rectangular and a standard Albany city block. The building is centered on, and faces, Second Avenue with surface parking on the east for patrons and on the west for employees. The northern third of the block is a service area for postal operations. The landscape contains trees and shrubbery planted intermittently along the lot line and building perimeter. A metal fence separates the service parking lot from patron parking lots and borders the rear parcel perimeter. The site is fully disturbed and there are no character-defining landscape features.

Exterior: Completed in 1963, the 19,680 square-foot building is one-story in height and largely rectangular in form. It is best understood as two adjacent rectangles: the one at the north housing the work spaces, being constructed primarily of Concrete Masonry Units (CMU) and being slightly taller and wider than the one at the south. The one at the south is constructed primarily of a modular unit of enamel panel and glass and housing the patron services portion. Both elements are constructed on poured-concrete slab and feature a flat roof. The post office was contractor designed.

The building faces south onto Second Avenue. This facade consists of repeated modular units. These units are divided horizontally into halves with a base of chocolate-brown-enamel panels surmounted by aluminum-framed plate glass. For select windows, the single plate glass is truncated at the base to allow a small hopper-style window, though these windows have not been installed in any consistent pattern. At the roofline, a flat eave extends beyond the building face to strengthen the building's horizontal lines. The building entry is located toward the east and consists of a paired aluminum-framed full-glass doors surmounted by a glass transom. At west is a blank wall of painted CMU.

The east facade, which overlooks the patron parking lot, consists of three elements: At the south, leading to the building lobby, is a continuation of the modular elements of the south facade. At the north is a blank wall of painted CMU. These two elements are connected by a combination of CMU and inverted modular window. Opposite, on the west, the facade overlooks employee parking and matches the east in size and materials. The primary distinction is that the CMU portion features a band of windows that extends nearly its entirety.

The north facade is the rear facade with loading docks along a CMU wall. Here, the roof projects from the main building by approximately 15 feet.



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**Roof:** The roof is flat with metal coping at the perimeter. A singular large, square piece of mechanical machinery is located in the center of the roof.

**Interior:** The interior consists of three core elements: Patrons enter through the main door at the south and southeast, which leads into an "L" -shaped 24-hour lobby one-bay across running along the south and east. This space includes the postal boxes and lockers. Finishes include VCT flooring, painted gypsum and T-111 panel walls, and acoustical drop-tile ceiling. To the west, along the retail portion, is a service counter. The space is secured with a glass-and-aluminum partition with double doors. Finishes in the service lobby are similar to the rest of the lobby. The majority of the interior, located to the north, is devoted to work space. This space is a large open work area with utilitarian finishes.

**Integrity:** Integrity is largely intact with slight changes. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are generally intact. In terms of feeling and association, with slight modifications to the setting and building, those qualities are similarly intact.

**History:** The Albany post office was established in 1963 on a full block site that previously contained six single-family homes on the south half of the block and an auto freight business on the north. As early as April 1961, Albany's Postmaster had explored securing a new site for the post office, eyeing a full block property at Third and Ellsworth Streets. However, that initiative did not move forward and in October, the Post Office Department solicited bids for a build-to-suit. The bid was awarded by the end of the year and the new building occupied within a year. Upon completion, the old post office (240 Second Street) was transferred to the city to serve as the City Hall.

#### Creston Station (5010 SE Foster Road, Multnomah County)

**Description:** The subject property is a neighborhood post office in SE Portland and one of some 18 similar facilities located throughout the city. The building is located approximately five miles from Portland city center. Foster is a primary arterial that connects southeast Portland and Clackamas County to Powell Boulevard and the Portland city center. The post office building is located in close proximity to the Powell-Foster intersection. Located on the eastern boundary of the Creston-Kenilworth Neighborhood. Creston Station is surrounded by a mix of both residential and commercial buildings of newer and older vintage with commercial structures clustered along Foster and mostly single family homes on the adjacent streets.

**Site:** The building is located on an irregularly-shaped block of 53,461 square-feet. The post office occupies the western 21,500 square-feet and is aligned along 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue at the west and Lafayette Street on the north. To the east is patron parking and includes an additional 8,844 square-feet of surface parking that is associated with the Creston Station, but is not owned by the Postal Service. To the south is the service lot for postal vehicles with access off Rhone Street. The site is fully disturbed and there are no character-defining landscape features.

**Exterior:** The 7,509 square-foot building is one-story in height with a rectangular shape. The building is approximately 150 feet on the north-south axis and 50 feet to the east/west. The primary patron entry to the building is at the northeast corner, which gives it an odd orientation to Foster Road. The building is of minimal



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design. Materials are consistent. Structurally, it is an unreinforced masonry block building, clad in red-brick veneer in stacked bond with "natural" mortar, a poured-concrete slab-on-grade foundation and flat roof with a short parapet. Windows are modern aluminum set in gray stucco pebble panels above and below. Windows are a combination of fixed and casement organized in a complex fashion with vertical and horizontal definition. Typically, where the stuccoed pebble window panels meet the red-brick wall, a single vertical header course protrudes from the building face to give the building a more vertical definition.

As noted, the primary patron entry is at the northeast corner and disassociated with the building facades. This entry extends from the building and features an aluminum framed assemblage with plate-glass sidelights and transoms surrounding a center paired-double door. Above the glass transom is a stucco panel. The opening is enframed in red brick to create the appearance of a recessed opening.

The north facade, which fronts onto Lafayette Street, consists of three large but unequal sized bays and a center window bay flanked by blank brick walls.

The west facade faces onto 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue and features three bays of stuccoed-pebble window panels separated by blank red-brick walls again of unequal sizes.

The east facade has two stuccoed pebble window panels, again flanked by blank red-brick veneer walls of unequal sizes. Along this facade are two added service areas. One area is a small projecting brick-veneer structure, the other an open area with a canopy.

The rear facade, of painted CMU, is service oriented with a recessed loading dock that largely spans the width of the building, complemented by a flat metal canopy that extends outward.

Roof: The building has a flat roof with a short parapet running along the roof edge. Metal coping extends along the entire roof line. Mechanical equipment is located in the southwest corner of the roof and extends midway through the length of the building.

Interior: The interior consists of three core elements: Patrons enter through the main door at the northeast corner, which leads into a 24-hour lobby that includes the postal boxes and runs along most of the first bay along the east. This space has painted gypsum-board walls and ceilings, while the floor is VCT. To the west, along the north wall, is a small service counter. The space is secured with a glass-and-aluminum partition with double doors. Finishes in the service lobby are similar to the rest of the lobby. The majority of the interior is devoted to work space. This space is a large open work area with utilitarian finishes.

Integrity: Integrity is largely intact with slight changes. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are generally intact. In terms of feeling and association, with slight modifications to the setting and building, those qualities are similarly intact. The masonry veneer has several areas of systemic cracking, particularly at the northeast. Otherwise the building is in good condition.

History: The Creston Station was established on December 29, 1965. It was named for the surrounding neighborhood, which was an outgrowth of the Creston Plat filed in 1906 and whose development was closely



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linked to the development of Portland’s street car system. Historically, the intersection of Powell, 50<sup>th</sup> and Foster was a commercial center that in the 1920s, spurred forward with the completion of the Ross Island Bridge in 1926. Plans for the station date to February, 1965 when the Post Office Department solicited bids for a 7,509 square-foot facility on a parcel of roughly 18,000 square-feet. The solicitation noted that the property would be leased for 10 years with four five-year renewal options. In May, it was announced that builder Dan Davis was the winning bidder with a design by architects Johnston & Koch, comprised of Hollis Johnston and Robert Koch. The firm had formed in February, 1957 and continued until Johnston’s death in 1966. The site was vacant land just south of the Foster Road and Powell Street intersection. Construction on the post office began immediately and the property completed the following year. Over the years, there have been slight changes to the building and to the postal operations there.

#### Scappoose Main Post Office (52643 Columbia River Highway, Scappoose, Columbia County)

**Description:** Scappoose is a community of 6,600 people located at the southeast corner of Columbia County, approximately 21 miles northwest of Portland.

The building is located on Columbia River Highway, also known as US Highway 30, the main highway connecting Portland to Astoria along the Columbia River. The town center is located to the south and east, across railroad tracks. The immediate area along the highway is generally low-density commercial. To the west (away from the highway) are single family homes on larger lots.

Site: The building is located on a parcel of 39,517 square-feet. The parcel is part of a fully-disturbed block site that is bound by Columbia River Highway on the east, NW First Street on the west, Laurel Street on the north and Watts Street on the south. The 4,516 square-foot building is located toward the southeast corner of the block. Surface parking is located at the north; postal vehicle access is at the west. The landscape contains shrubbery and trees on the parcel perimeter.

Exterior: The 4,516 square-foot building is one-story in height with an irregular, asymmetrical, yet rectilinear, shape. The building is of minimal design, but may be considered an example of the Modern style. The building was contractor designed. Materials are consistent and modular involving two core elements both at full height. The first is a pre-cast stucco panel. The second is a full-height window assembly that consists of an aluminum-framed plate-glass window with a chocolate-brown-enamel metal panel above and below; these panels are accented by “natural” color aluminum mullions that again are full-height.

The building fronts east toward the highway. This facade is asymmetrical and consists of two elements. The dominant feature is six full-height window panels separated by pilaster-like stucco panels. The window panel at the north incorporates the building’s main entry; a pair of full-glass aluminum doors. To the south is a cluster of three stucco panels, similar in size to those separating the window panels. Metal coping at the parapet then ties the facade here horizontally. A second element is a blank wall set slightly back from the building face; this consists of three stuccoed panels, again tied together horizontally with metal coping at the parapet.

The north and south facades are secondary without entrances, again defined by the modular panels. The north facade faces onto the patron surface parking lot. Similar to the east facade, the north facade features a center section of four glass panels separated by stucco panels, in an asymmetrical fashion. To the east is the north



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wall of the main section of the east facade, is a recessed blank wall of three stuccoed panels. The south facade consists of three "blocks", the eastern one of stuccoed panels with a single- window bay; the center entirely of window bays and the west a blank wall of stuccoed panels.

The west facade is the rear. To the south is a three bay loading dock that projects from the building, features a metal overhang for weather protection and metal roll-up doors. This loading dock is a later addition to the previous loading dock. The loading dock has been altered from an open loading platform with two metal swinging service doors to an enclosed three truck bays wide loading dock that extends further into the service parking lot. The remainder of the west facade is a blank wall of stucco panels with an employee entrance to the north.

**Roof:** The roof is flat with metal coping extending along the entire roof line. The roof is irregular but rectilinearly shaped. Mechanical machinery is located in the middle and to the north.

**Interior:** The interior consists of three core elements: Patrons enter through the main door at the east facade, which leads into a 24-hour lobby that includes the postal boxes and runs along most of the first bay along the east. This space has painted gypsum-board walls and ceiling, while the floor is VCT. At the south end of this lobby is a small service counter. The space is secured with a glass-and-aluminum partition with double doors. Finishes in the service lobby are similar to the rest of the lobby. The majority of the interior is devoted to work space. This space is a large open work area with utilitarian finishes.

**Integrity:** Integrity is largely intact with slight changes. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are generally intact. In terms of feeling and association, with slight modifications to the setting and building, those qualities are similarly intact.

**History:** The present Scappoose Post Office opened in 1966, the product of a lease agreement with a builder-developer. A post office has been located in Scappoose since 1872 and was located two miles southeast of the present post office on the Columbia River at Johnson's Landing. Historically, the town center was located along First Avenue, on the east side of the rail line, along Columbia Avenue. The current post office is located on the Columbia River Highway, several blocks north of Columbia Avenue. Prior to construction, the present site was occupied by five single-family homes. The building was approved for construction in April 1963 and opened in 1966 at an approximate cost of \$200,000.

**Florence Main Post Office (770 Maple Street, Florence, Lane County)**

**Description:** Florence is a community of 8,500 residents located at the south center of the Oregon coast. The post office is located outside the main business district, one block west and two blocks south of the Highway 101 and Route 126 junction in a mixed use neighborhood. The immediate area is largely residential.

**Site:** The building is located on a corner parcel of 31,992 square-feet. The flat, rectilinear-shaped lot is bound by Eighth Street to the north, Maple Street to the west with commercial properties to its south and east. The 5,167 square-foot building is located to the northwest of the lot, abutting the property line at Maple Street and along the Eighth Street property line allowing for a cutout lane for mail drop off. A surface parking lot for patrons is located to the south with a postal vehicle parking lot to the east. The landscape has trees, grass and



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shrubby along the parcel perimeter. The site is fully disturbed, and there are no character-defining landscape features.

**Exterior:** The building is one-story in height with a rectilinear shape. The structure is of minimal design and is considered an example of the Modern style. The building was contractor designed. The building has a low-pitched front-gabled roof with overhanging eaves, poured-concrete slab-on-grade foundation, and is unreinforced-masonry block. Materials are consistent, with the entire building clad in a red brick in stretcher bond facade with "natural" mortar and modular slider and fixed aluminum-framed windows.

The building fronts to the west onto Maple Street. The west facade is asymmetrical, with overhanging eaves, a central exposed-wood roof rafter, and two walls clad in the stretcher-bond brick veneer that are divided by a wall of windows. Underneath the eaves is wood. The wall of windows is fixed and modular in design with white enamel panels on the bottom. The main entry is a pair of glass doors with a full transom, framed in aluminum and entered to from the south.

The north and south facades are secondary. The north facade is clad in stretcher bond divided by brick pilasters. Exposed roof rafters are located above each pilaster. Four sets of windows with three bays each are located to the west and center of the facade. The south facade has the same stretcher bond, exposed roof rafters and brick pilaster configuration as the north facade. The windows are also identical with three sets of three bays divided by the brick facade and pilasters.

The east facade is considered the rear. It is clad in the stretcher bond veneer. Wide overhanging eaves project like a canopy roof over the loading dock. Underneath the eaves are exposed wood and a central wood roof rafter. There is a pair of metal swinging service doors and a single metal door located in the center of the facade.

**Roof:** The building has a low-pitched front-gabled roof with exposed wood roof rafters on all facades. There is mechanical machinery flanking both sides of the ridgeline to the east.

**Interior:** The building is accessed through the main entry off Maple Street. The interior is rectilinear in shape and divided into three zones. The first zone is the public lobby that has three areas for postal boxes along the north and west walls. The southern wall is clad in the same stretcher bond found on the exterior. To the east is where one enters the second zone for retail and customer service. The lobby and retail space have VCT flooring, painted gypsum-board walls, and a combination of exposed wood roof rafters and wood ceiling with painted gypsum board over the postal box areas. The third zone is to the east of the public lobby and customer service desks. This zone is a large open space and has utilitarian finishes.

**Integrity:** Overall the integrity of the building is intact. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are intact. With slight modifications to the setting and building over time, the feeling and association are similarly intact.

**History:** The present Florence post office opened in 1970, the product of a lease agreement with a builder-developer. The post office itself dated to 1879 and historically was located at Front Avenue along the Siuslaw River. In spring of 1969, the Post Office Department solicited bids. The winning bid was provided by Herbert



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Bailey and Kenneth Amburgey. The building was constructed for \$132,700 and the initial lease was for 15 years.

### Assessment of Thousand Series Post Offices in Oregon:

Specific to National Register criteria, none of the Oregon resource meets the registration requirements under Criteria A or B. No event or person significant in the history of the Postal Service is associated with any of the structures.

As a building type, the Scappoose facility appears to be most typical. Location was an important aspect to the Thousand Series. Not only was the site chosen to be vehicle friendly but it was intended to be readily accessible by car and truck. With the exception of Scappoose, the Oregon Thousand Series resources are located away from primary highways. Depending upon a fuller integrity assessment and a more detailed comparative analysis, the Scappoose facility potentially could be considered under Criteria C under building type.

### **PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION CENTERS**

Until the early 1950s, most mail was sorted and distributed in the work room of the main post offices using either pigeonholes or racks of boxes. The process was labor intensive and inefficient. With growing mail volumes, space was also at a premium.

In response, the Department began the introduction of machinery in the 1950s, first with industrial machines adapted for postal use and later with new postal-specific machines. In 1959, the Washington, D.C. post office was remodeled and became the first mechanized post office. A year later, the Providence, Rhode Island post office became the first "automated" post office, while the Detroit, Michigan post office became the largest mechanized post office.

In the early 1960s, the Post Office Department created a nationwide system of sectional centers based on population density and transportation facilities. These centers increasingly were built near highways and airports. Due to the increasing cost of postal-specific machinery, the central processing of mail was completed at these large mechanized facilities. These sectional centers serve as a central hub for 80 to 100 surrounding post offices. All incoming and outgoing mail for the area was routed through these processing and distribution centers (P&DCs), as they are now known.

P&DCs were typically located adjacent to major arterials and freeways, frequently in industrial parks, sited on large parcels with ample truck parking and maneuvering space as well as parking. The buildings are warehouse-like structures, 50,000 to 350,000 square feet, with flat roofs, basements, and masonry cladding of brick veneer, precast concrete, or stone-faced panels. On the interior, P&DCs have smaller public spaces, but predominately dedicated to include work rooms.



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*Applicable MPDF National Register Criteria: Within the specific context of USPS resources, Federal Offices with Post Office may be eligible as described below:<sup>36</sup>*

**Criterion A:** A P&DC facility may be eligible under Criterion A only in the area of "Communications" and only on the national level for a direct association with a significant contribution to the history of the U.S. Post Office Department.

**Criterion B:** A P&DC may be eligible under Criterion B nationally for its association with a person significant in the history and development of the U.S. Postal Service.

In order to qualify under Criteria A or B, all of the following registration requirements must be met:

- The property must be directly and significantly associated with a specific significant event or person in U. S. Postal Service history as documented by published and scholarly research.
- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be the single most appropriate resource for the associative value.
- The property must have sufficient integrity to convey that association.

**Criterion C:** A P&DC may be eligible under Criterion C nationally as a building type.

- In order to qualify under Criterion C, all of the following registration requirements must be met:
- The property must be utilitarian.
- The property must have been developed and built by the Post Office.
- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be the exceptionally representative of the building type.
- The property must be intact with a high degree of integrity to convey that association.

*Oregon Resources*

In Oregon, two Postal-owned properties fit this type. The first is located at 715 NW Hoyt Street in Portland built in 1962. The second is at 3148 Gateway Street in Springfield built in 1967. These are described below:

<sup>36</sup> This MPDF addresses USPS resources as part of the USPS network. As with any building, individual properties may be eligible for their impacts on the local, state and federal level apart for their impacts apart from being postal facilities.



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#### Portland P&DC (715 NW Hoyt Street, Portland, Multnomah)

**Description:** The Portland P&DC occupies a super block in the Pearl District of northwest Portland. The block is bounded by Hoyt Street on the south, Lovejoy Street on the north, Broadway on the east, and 9th Avenue on the west. The area immediately surrounding is urban. The surrounding blocks are generally filled with mid- to high-rise residential buildings constructed to the lot lines with ground floor retail.

Site: The P&DC parcel is 13.37 acres. It contains the 1962 P&DC with a footprint of roughly 158,000 square-feet. To the west is a 1987 three-story employee parking structure. Located at the north center is vehicle maintenance building. The remainder of the parcel is paved asphalt and used for truck access and parking.

1962 Building: The 1962 building is a four-story reinforced-concrete construction on a symmetrical and rectilinear grid, but with irregular massing. At the south is an area for postal customer services on the ground floor and offices on the upper floor. A subsequent office addition was added to the fourth floor. The majority of the building is dedicated to postal distribution with a largely open floor plan using a 27 foot grid.

Exterior: The primary facade is located at the south, facing onto Hoyt Street. It is a three-story box, 45' tall and 245' long. It is divided by projecting white ceramic-tile pilasters into 9 equal bays. Within each bay are five equally-spaced slightly-projecting dark-gray aluminum mullions set on a low gray-brick bulkhead and running the full-height of the bay. Windows are fixed with tinted glazing in silver-aluminum frame; those at the second and third floor are of equal height; the first floor is taller. Separating the windows at each floor and the roof line are square gray ceramic tiles.

The remaining three facades are secondary and each distinct from the other. As designed, the east facade is similar to the primary facade in that has white ceramic tile pilasters with gray mullions dividing each bay. The box is 19 bays across. Fenestration is irregular. Windows are typically fixed paned of tinted glass in aluminum frame. The north facade, which faces onto a paved fenced truck staging area, is defined largely in horizontal terms and illustrates the three-floor postal distribution element. The first floor is 25 feet tall and extends approximately 100 feet beyond the west facade. It consists of a loading dock of 32 door bays. Above is white ceramic tile with 12 pairs of louvers somewhat evenly distributed above. The second floor is set back approximately 100 feet and aligns to the east facade. With white ceramic-tile pilasters and gray-metal mullions, it replicates the fundamental design palette of the south and east. Fenestration here consists of a single low line of tinted windows in the center seven bays. The third floor is set back another three bays (80 feet or more) from the second floor and largely mirrors the south facade. As designed, the west facade is irregularly organized and may be understood best as five pieces, though unified by the consistent use of white ceramic - projecting pilasters and dark-gray aluminum mullions. The southernmost bay is similar to the primary facade in materials and design, and at one time featured a secondary canopied recessed entry. The next two bays reflect the four-story element of the office component, again similar to the primary facade in design. The third piece is the largest: It is 13 bays (approximately 360 feet) long. Each end is two bays in width, pronounced by rising slightly above the roofline and without windows. Between the ends, the bays are similar, but with a band of windows at the second and third floor. The fourth piece is three bays across, reflecting the one-story drop in height. At the ground floor of these four elements is a truck loading dock. The fifth piece is where the truck loading area extends west. This elevation is the side elevation to the loading dock; it is four bays across with a band of windows over a raised brick bulkhead.



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Roof: The roof is flat with mechanical machinery located intermittently. Metal coping extends the entire roof line.

Interior: The interior of the building consists of two interconnected components. The first is a four-story office and the second is a three-story industrial distribution area.

The four-story office component is located at the far south. It measures roughly 245 feet along the east-west axis and is approximately 54 feet deep. The first floor consists of postal services. As designed, patrons enter a recessed doorway in the fourth bay from the east (of nine). To the right (east) was the postal box lobby, roughly 81 feet across and 20 feet deep with a ceiling height of 13 feet. At the rear of this lobby where the United States Customs office and workroom are located is a single "U" -shaped space for the postal boxes and related service desks. At the center across from the primary entry was a pair of elevators with an enclosed fire stair to the east; adjacent was a small concession window 11 feet across. To the west was an aluminum-and-glass partition leading to the service lobby. As designed, this lobby was 115 feet across and 20 feet deep. Along the rear (north) was the service counter. A second recessed entry to this space is at the west. Finishes were terrazzo floor, full-height marble walls, and metal panel ceiling. In 1977, the lobby was reworked with the postal boxes located to the west and the service counter to the east. At that time, the partition in the lobby was removed and the area at the west, north of the service counter, was substantially remodeled.

The second and third floors of the office component are similar with a slightly "U" -shaped double-loaded corridor. The second floor housed financial services at the east and personnel at the west. The third floor housed management and operations. Office partitioning on both floors was pragmatic and varied according to function and stature.

The fourth floor as built was only 162 feet along the east-west axis, running west from the elevators. It was also set back one bay from the south. This space was a cafeteria. In the 1970s, the fourth floor was extended both to the north and east. The area at the east was extended 54 feet east and 216 feet north, adding nearly 11,500 square-feet for general offices. At the west, the office functions were extended north into areas originally dedicated to the warehouse, specifically supplies, custodial and locker rooms.

Finishes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> floors are appropriate to an office setting but without any particular distinction. Walls are painted gypsum board, floors are VCT or wall-to-wall carpeted, and ceilings are standard-grade acoustical tile.

The three-story industrial distribution component is located in the northern 475 feet. The first and second floors are similar with a largely open floor plan divided only by structural columns. Floors are concrete or VCT, ceiling is open to the structural plan and walls are concrete or concrete block. On the first floor, the areas along the west and along the north are loading docks. At the north and south of the west is a pair of industrial elevators with an adjacent fire stair. Along the east wall on both floors are locker rooms. The top floor of the industrial portion aligns with the fourth office floor and contains carpentry shops at the west, and storage and mechanicals at the center.

Parking Garage: In 1987, a utilitarian three-story reinforced-concrete ramp to the parking garage was constructed at the southwest corner of the parcel. The garage is approximately 350 feet along the east-west



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axis and 175 feet north and south. Vehicular access is via the secured surface parking lot at the north. Pedestrian access includes a sky bridge at the second floor.

**Vehicle Maintenance Building:** At far north of the parcel, across from the north loading dock is the one-story vehicle maintenance building, approximately 300 feet; along the east-west axis and approximately 50 feet deep. The building consists of 12 service bays (5 on the west, 7 on the east) with modern garage doors; at the center is a small office.

**Integrity:** Overall the integrity of the building is intact. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are intact. With slight modifications to the setting and building over time, the feeling and association are similarly intact.

**History:** In November, 1958, the federal government acquired a largely excess freight yard owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad for \$1.8 million. The parcel was bounded by Broadway, Park Avenue, Hoyt and Lovejoy. The 7+ block area was due north of the main post office at 511 NW Broadway. As part of the acquisition, the railroad salvaged the rails and ties and the land was cleared. In August, 1959, the Post Office Department put out a request for proposals for a \$7 million mail-processing facility. The request was for a developer to construct the facility and then lease it to the government for 30 years. By June, 1960, the Postmaster General had agreed to a \$10 million project proposed by a consortium of private local investors. The investment team was headed by contractor Andersen-Westfall Company and included Fred G. Meyer of Fred Meyer Store Corporation and David Simpson of Norris, Beggs & Simpson. This type of financial arrangement was common for the Department and has been used over 1,400 instances to date.

Construction began in July. The complex was finished in early 1962 and the P&DC occupied by early spring. In 1974, the Postal Service acquired an additional parcel to the west. The land consisted of four blocks from Hoyt to Lovejoy between Park Avenue and 9th. The sale price was \$1,000,000. That same year, the government terminated the lease agreement and purchased the building for \$10 million. Following acquisition, extensive interior and exterior renovations were made on the building. Work included expanding the fourth floor eastward, revising the retail service lobby and entry, and eventually building a three-story parking garage.

### Springfield P&DC (3148 Gateway Street, Springfield, Lane County)

**Description:** The subject property is the P&DC located in Springfield. Springfield is a community of 59,400 residents in the central Willamette Valley. The Springfield P&DC is situated in a business park surrounded by commercial properties to its north and the Gateway Mall to its south. The major north/south artery of the West Coast, I-5, is located just west of the facility.

**Site:** The Springfield P&DC is located in the center of a fully-disturbed rectilinear-shaped lot. The parcel is 461,185 square-feet and the P&DC structure is 148,064 square-feet. The building is completely surrounded by paved surfaces for patrons and employee parking as well as vehicle maneuvering. Patron parking is to the southeast and vehicle maneuvering is clustered at the north. The property is mostly secured with chain link fence. There are no significant landscape features.



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**Exterior:** Constructed in 1967, the 148,064 square-foot building is one-story in height with a rectilinear shape. The structure is utilitarian in nature and the design reflects this. The building has a flat roof, poured-concrete slab-on-grade foundation. Facade materials are consistent and include tan-, red-, and brown-brick stretcher-bond veneer with "natural" mortar, metal coping, corrugated-metal fascia, and black aluminum-framed fixed-glass panel windows and entryway. Most facades have minimal fenestration, consisting of mostly blank wall planes.

The main patron entry to the Springfield P&DC is located at the southeast corner of the building and abuts the patron parking lot. This entrance is set back behind four projected concrete piers. The top of the projection is square shaped and clad in brown and red-brick stretcher bond veneer with a row of tan stretchers every eight rows. The top of the projection has metal coping and an aluminum-framed glass-panel hip roof. The brick veneer pattern is integrated into the east and south facades. Metal signs stating, "UNITED STATES POST OFFICE" are attached to the east and south facades flanking the entry way just below the roofline. Behind the piers is a series of modular-glass window assembly framed in aluminum with two full-glass doors.

The south facade fronts onto Gateway Loop and is visually divided into three sections; the southeast corner, the middle, and the west section. The southeast corner is distinct in its association with the main entry as described above and is separated from the service parking lot. This area is clad in dark brown stretcher bond veneer. There are ten full-glass continuous fixed window panels framed in aluminum between the entryway and brick wall. The middle section is clad in dark-brown stretcher-bond veneer and contains one full-glass aluminum-framed door. The westernmost section is clad in tan-brick stretcher-bond veneer with two rows of brown stretcher-bond every six rows. There are two bays of fixed windows, one metal service door and a pair of full-glass swinging doors.

The west facade also faces Gateway Loop. It is clad in tan brick in stretcher bond with two rows of brown stretchers every six rows. There is a metal roll-down loading door and metal service door to the north.

The north facade is considered the rear and abuts part of the service parking lot. It has a canopy overhang that covers the open loading dock area. The canopy has a metal-corrugated fascia and metal coping. Outside of the canopy covered area, it is clad in stretcher bond veneer identical to that on the west facade.

The east facade faces Gateway Street and abuts to part of the service and patron parking lots. The facade and parking lots are divided by a metal fence. The north service canopy overhang wraps around to the north side of the east and extends approximately halfway to the south abutting the fence for patron parking. It is clad in a mix of brown and red stretcher bond veneer with a row of tan stretchers every eight rows.

**Roof:** The P&DC has a flat roof. There is mechanical machinery located intermittently. Metal coping extends the entire roof line.

**Interior:** The Springfield P&DC has 148,064 square-feet. At the southeast is a small retail service area. Upon entering the public lobby the customer service/retail space is to the east. A self-service counter is directly to the northwest. There are postal boxes and mail drop off areas to the west. The lobby and customer service areas have acoustic drop ceiling tiles, painted gypsum board walls and stone tile floors. The service area is located to the north and west of the public lobby and customer service desks. This section is a large open space and has



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utilitarian finishes. The majority of the building is devoted to mail-handling, an open work area divided only by the structural grid. It has utilitarian modern industrial finishes.

**Integrity:** Integrity is generally good. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design changes and materials are intact. With slight modifications to the setting and building over time, the feeling and association are similarly intact.

**History:** The Springfield P&DC was established to facilitate district and regional mail-handling and reflects the agency's shift toward centralized mechanized operations. Planning for the building began in the mid-1960s and the complex was occupied on August 1, 1967. The land and building were developed by the Post Office Department and today is owned by the Postal Service.

#### Assessment of Postal-Owned P&DC Facilities in Oregon:

Specific to National Register criteria, neither Oregon resource meets the registration requirements under Criteria A or B. No event or person significant in the history of the Postal Service is associated with either structure.

As a building type, the Portland facility is atypical in that it was designed by an architect, is not strictly utilitarian in nature, contains a large office component, and is not located in an industrial park. The Springfield facility is more typical. Depending upon a fuller integrity assessment and a national comparative analysis, it potentially could be considered under Criteria C under building type.

#### FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDINGS WITH POST OFFICES

Prior to World War II, while it was not uncommon for federal agencies to have office space in Post Offices, these structures were unequivocally Post Offices. In the 1960s, the federal government, through the General Services Administration, began constructing new Federal Office Buildings some of which included a main or station post offices. The design wellspring for these new federal buildings came from the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space and "The Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture." In its 1962 report, the committee called for designs that reflected the "dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American National Government." The buildings were modern and often the product of prominent architects. Conceptually, these buildings harked back to the Legacy Post Offices except that these structures were no longer Post Offices with offices, but rather Federal Office Buildings with post office counters.

Typically, they have a prominent location near the center of town with a large, often full site parcel. The site has notable front and side setbacks with low-rise formal landscaping, and a hardscaped functional rear lot with room for truck maneuvering and loading docks. The interior has a distinct separation of federal office and Post Office functions, often with separate lobbies, typically with the office function being the primary entry. The office lobby typically was an extension of the building's architecture with permanent materials of higher design with federal office space located on upper floors with a small elevator lobby, double loaded corridor and modest finishes. The postal public lobby with service counter is separate and austere in nature. This lobby space has an efficient design typically with linoleum flooring, brick or gypsum walls, and acoustical dropped tile ceilings. Counters are typically pressed wood with laminate finish.



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*Applicable MPDF National Register Criteria: Within the specific context of USPS resources, Federal Offices with Post Office may be eligible as described below.<sup>37</sup>*

Criterion A: A Federal Office with Post Office may be eligible under Criterion A only in the area of "Communications" and only on the national level for a direct association with a significant contribution to the history of the U.S. Post Office Department.

Criterion B: A Federal Office with Post Office may be eligible under Criterion B nationally for its association with a person significant in the history and development of the U.S. Postal Service.

In order to qualify under Criteria A or B, all of the following registration requirements must be met:

- The property must be directly and significantly associated with a specific significant event or person in U. S. Postal Service history as documented by published and scholarly research.
- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be the single most appropriate resource for the associative value.
- The property must have sufficient integrity to convey that association.

Criterion C: A Federal Office with Post Office may be eligible under Criterion C nationally as a building type.

In order to qualify under Criterion C, all of the following registration requirements must be met:

- The property must have been developed and built by the General Services Administration.
- The property must be a major physical landmark within its community, based on site, scale, massing and quality of materials.
- The property must be a major commission for a noted architect.
- The property must be intact with a high appropriate degree of integrity to convey that association.
- Based on comparative analysis, that property must be the exceptionally representative of the building type.

<sup>37</sup> This MPDF addresses USPS resources as part of the USPS network. As with any building, individual properties may be eligible for their impacts on the local, state and federal level apart for their impacts apart from being postal facilities.



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#### Oregon Resources

In Oregon, only one Postal-owned property, located in Enterprise (201 W. North Street), fits this property type.

#### **Federal Building/Post Office (201 W. North Street, Enterprise, Wallowa County)**

**Description:** Enterprise is a community of 2,000 residents in an isolated area in the far northeast part of Oregon, located approximately 64 miles northeast of La Grande. The building is centrally located at the intersection of W North Street and NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, where highway systems Route 82 and Route 3, pass through the downtown. The surrounding area has a dense mix of commercial properties to the east and south and residential properties to the north and west, both of newer and older vintage.

**Site:** The Enterprise Post Office is located in the eastern half of a rectilinear-shaped street block. The flat, fully-disturbed lot is 14,400 square-feet, with the building located on the southern half of the parcel. Surface parking is located to the north. The main entry is accessed from NW North Street. Trees, grass, and shrubbery are located intermittently along the parcel perimeter. There are no significant landscape features.

**Exterior:** Constructed in 1965, the one-story post office is integrated into a two-story federal building at the southeast corner. The structure is of minimal design; "L" -shaped. The building was contractor designed. It has a flat roof, poured-concrete slab-on-grade foundation, and is unreinforced masonry block. Facade materials are red-brick stretcher-bond veneer with "natural" mortar, stucco panels, metal coping, and modular aluminum-framed plate-glass windows; fixed and casement style.

The post office fronts to the south onto North Street. The facade is clad in stretcher bond veneer with the main entry located to the east. The facade is 11 bays wide. The windows are fixed and casement, framed in aluminum. The main entry has a pair of full-glass doors and transom framed in aluminum. There is a metal canopy above the main entry.

To the east of this facade is the federal building's south facade. This facade is recessed, two stories and clad in stucco panels. There is one metal service door on the first floor with one casement window above it on the second floor.

The east and west facades are secondary. The east elevation is clad in stucco panels with fixed, casement and a slider window. There is a recessed entry to the south. The west facade consists of two separate sections. This part of the federal building abuts the service parking lot to the north. It is clad in stucco panels and is five bays deep. There is a service door to the south with a slider window above. The other eight windows are casement and fixed. The other section of the west facade is located on the post office part of the building. It is clad in the brick-stretcher veneer with 5 bays. These windows are fixed, casement and aluminum framed.

The north facade is considered the rear and abuts the service parking lot. It consists of both the Post Office Department service area and the federal building. The north facade of the federal building is clad in stucco panels with a slider window on the second and first floors. The rear of the post office area is clad in stucco panels, with brick veneer on the northeast corner. There are three fixed, casement windows with a pair of



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metal swinging service doors. A loading dock has a canopy roof, supported with wide, freestanding brick columns.

Roof: The building has a flat roof. There is mechanical machinery located in the center of both buildings. Metal coping extends around the roof line.

Interior: The building contains approximately 6,500 square-feet. The post office is entered through the south facade. Upon entering the lobby, there is a wall of postal boxes to the north. To the east is a hallway that runs north/south. To the west is the entryway to the retail and customer service area. The lobby and retail space are partitioned by a painted-concrete masonry-block wall with a pair of full-glass and metal doors and transom. The lobby and retail space have painted gypsum-board ceiling and walls with painted-concrete masonry-block walls and VCT flooring. The second floor of the federal building has similar finishes and is used as offices. The service area is to the north of the public lobby and customer service desks. This section is an open space and has utilitarian finishes.

Integrity: Overall the integrity of the Enterprise Post Office/Federal Building is intact. The building is in its original location and the setting is similar to when it was built. There have been no substantial design and material changes. With slight modifications to the setting and building over time, the feeling and association are similarly intact.

History: The General Service Administration authorized this \$270,000 building in April 1965. Construction was initiated almost immediately and the building completed and occupied the following year. The Post Office Department was first established in Enterprise in 1887 and was in contract service until the current structure. Prior to construction, the present site was largely vacant with a single two-story dwelling and outbuildings. When the Federal Building opened, other occupants included the U.S. Forest Service and Soil Conservation Services. Today, the USPS is the only occupant.

#### Assessment of Federal Office Buildings with Post Offices in Oregon:

Specific to National Register criteria, the property does not meet the registration requirements under Criteria A or B. No event or person significant in the history of the Postal Service is associated with this structure. Similarly, the building does not meet the registration requirements under Criterion C. The building is a comparatively humble and largely utilitarian. It was not designed by an architect and is not a prominent structure in the community and does not reflect many of the typical aspects of the building type. The Enterprise facility is not eligible for the National Register under this multiple property analysis.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

During the years 1940 to 1971, there were two periods of Post Office Department construction: The first was in the early 1940s and represented the end of "Legacy Post Offices" that dated first to the early twentieth century and then reinterpreted and extended during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In Oregon, there was one such Postal-owned property in Gresham. Unfortunately, that property no longer retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic values.



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The second construction period was from the late 1950s to the middle 1960s. This construction period consisted of several more specialized property types. In Oregon, three types were present: Thousand Series Post Offices, Processing & Distribution Centers, and Federal Buildings with Post Offices.

The Thousand Series was a post office or station that was either new to the district, a new substation (such as for a neighborhood or suburb) or the replacement of an existing, older facility. These properties were constructed under the Post Office Department’s commercial lease program whereby the agency agreed to lease a property in return for a local developer constructing it. Generally of small scale, these properties were mostly the product of developer/builders without design by an architect. They are largely uniform in layout with a 24-hour lobby and a small retail services lobby, separated by an aluminum-framed glass partition. At the rear is an open work area that connects to the loading docks. Construction of these buildings in Oregon was extensive. Nearly all are under private ownership; today, the Postal Service owns six of these units. USPS ownership however is happenstance and there are no qualities that particularly distinguish the USPS-owned properties from those privately owned.

P&DCs typically are warehouse-like structures with flat roofs, basements, and masonry cladding of brick veneer, precast concrete, or stone-faced panels. Windows are predominately fixed metal-framed with some type of upper or lower awning or hopper sash. The number of truck bays varies widely ranging from 18 to 54, with ample parking for patrons and employees. On the interior, P&DCs have public service spaces, which included service counters and lobbies and postal box lobbies. Predominate interior spaces include work rooms, mail sorting areas, superintendent’s office, and loading docks. In Oregon, there are two Postal-owned P&DC facilities, one in Portland and one in Springfield.

The final building type is the Federal Building with Post Office. In the 1960s, the federal government, through the General Services Administration, began constructing new Federal Office Buildings some of which included a main or station post office. The buildings were modern and often the product of prominent architects. One superior example is the U. S. Post Office (Loop Station, currently owned by GSA), which is part of the Federal Center in Chicago designed by noted architect Ludwig Meis van der Rohe. In Oregon, there is one example owned by USPS, that in Enterprise. The humble Enterprise resource however is atypical of the building type.

In evaluating USPS resources for listing in the National Register, two documents are particularly useful. The first is National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. The second is Bulletin 13, How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices.

The focus of this MPDF is to evaluate USPS resources within their context of USPS ownership and function. The receipt, processing, and delivery of mail is a national enterprise by definition and consistent from community to community. It is not a community or state wide network, but a national one. As such, and as detailed in Bulletin 13, within the context of the USPS function, must be evaluated nationally.

USPS resources may qualify under Criterion A only in the area of “Communications” and only on the national level for a direct association with a significant contribution to the history of the U.S. Post Office Department. Similarly, they may qualify under Criterion B nationally for its association with a person significant in the history and development of the U.S. Postal Service. None of the resources in Oregon meet these criteria. Research



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has not identified any direct and substantial association by any of the Oregon resources to an event or person of significance in the history of the USPS.

As detailed by Bulletin 13, USPS resources may qualify under Criterion C nationally as a building type. There are four building types or subtypes represented in USPS-owned resources in the state. Among Legacy Post Offices, the building type is already amply represented in the National Register. The only Oregon resource available, the Gresham Post Office, lacks integrity to convey historic or architectural values. Among Thousand Series Post Offices, while many properties illustrate some characteristics of the building type, none may be considered exceptionally typical. The Scappoose Post Office most closely adheres to the typology, particular as it relates to being located in a vehicle accessible setting. The second property type found in Oregon, P&DC, is represented by two properties: one in Portland and one in Springfield. Of the two, the Springfield property is more typical. Finally, the third property type, the Federal Office with Post Office, is represented by a property in Enterprise, Oregon. Unfortunately, whereas the intent of the Federal Office is to make a grand architectural statement of modern government architecture, the Enterprise facility is contractor-designed and relatively humble.



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**G. GEOGRAPHIC DATA**

The boundary for this Multiple Property Submission is the legal boundary of the State of Oregon.



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**H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS**

In 2013, the United States Postal Service signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office whereby the USPS committed to preparing a statewide survey and National Register assessment of postal facilities it owns within the State of Oregon that were constructed between 1940 and 1971. The purpose of the study was to establish a context for evaluating said Postal Service facilities for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

The USPS maintains a full and complete database of its real property assets. That database identified 10 properties owned by the USPS and built within the 1940-71 timeframe. In chronological order, these are:

- Main Post Office (103 W. Powell Boulevard, Gresham), 1941
- Main Post Office (124 Broadway Street, Myrtle Creek), 1961
- Processing and Distribution Center (715 NW Hoyt Street, Portland), 1962
- Main Post Office (1202 Washington Avenue, La Grande), 1963
- Main Post Office (525 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, SW, Albany), 1963
- Federal Office Building with Post Office (201 W. North Street, Enterprise), 1965
- Station Post Office (5010 SE Foster Road, Portland), 1966
- Main Post Office (52643 Columbia River Highway, Scappoose), 1966
- Processing and Distribution Center (3148 Gateway Street, Springfield), 1967
- Main Post Office (770 Maple Street, Florence), 1970

Each of these properties was specifically evaluated within the historic context and against eligibility for listing in the National Register. Each of the 10 properties was the subject of a site visit. For context, site visits were conducted to an additional 50 leased post offices located throughout the state. In general terms, Combined Federal/Post Office structures within the state are exclusively owned by the USPS. Main Post Offices and P&DC facilities are both owned and leased; as a building type, there are no factors that distinguish ownership and leased properties. In general, leased and former U.S. Post Office Department facilities may be eligible to be listed in the National Register, as long as they meet the appropriate criteria.



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### List of Figures:

**Figure 1:** Main Post Office (103 W. Powell Boulevard, Gresham, Multnomah County)

**Figure 2:** Myrtle Creek Main Post Office (124 Broadway Street, Myrtle Creek, Douglas County)

**Figure 3:** LaGrande Main Post Office (1202 Washington Avenue, La Grande, Union County)

**Figure 4:** Albany Main Post Office (525 SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Albany, Linn County)

**Figure 5:** Creston Post Office (5010 SE Foster Road, Multnomah County)

**Figure 6:** Scappoose Main Post Office (52643 Columbia River Highway, Scappoose, Columbia County)

**Figure 7:** Florence Main Post Office (770 Maple Street, Florence, Lane County)

**Figure 8:** Portland P&DC (715 NW Hoyt Street, Portland, Multnomah)

**Figure 9:** Springfield P&DC (3148 Gateway Street, Springfield, Lane County)

**Figure 10:** Federal Building/Post Office (201 W. North Street, Enterprise, Wallowa County)



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**Figure 1:** Main Post Office (103 W. Powell Boulevard, Gresham, Multnomah County)





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**Figure 2:** Myrtle Creek Main Post Office (124 Broadway Street, Myrtle Creek, Douglas County)





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**Figure 3:** LaGrande Main Post Office (1202 Washington Avenue, La Grande, Union County)





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**Figure 4:** Albany Main Post Office (525 SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Albany, Linn County)



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**Figure 5:** Creston Post Office (5010 SE Foster Road, Multnomah County)





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**Figure 6:** Scappoose Main Post Office (52643 Columbia River Highway, Scappoose, Columbia County)



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**Figure 7:** Florence Main Post Office (770 Maple Street, Florence, Lane County)





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**Figure 8:** Portland P&DC (715 NW Hoyt Street, Portland, Multnomah)



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**Figure 9:** Springfield P&DC (3148 Gateway Street, Springfield, Lane County)





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**Figure 10:** Federal Building/Post Office (201 W. North Street, Enterprise, Wallowa County)

