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INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Federal Office Building 3 (FOB-3) Survey Number: PG:75A-22

Project: Section 110 identification & Evaluation Agency: F/GSA

Site visit by MHT Staff: no yes Name _____ Date _____

Eligibility recommended Eligibility **not** recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)
Constructed by the Federal Government at the Suitland Federal Center between 1941 and 1942, FOB-3 is a large three-story flat-roofed masonry office building. The building displays seven parallel wings extending east from and perpendicular to the main linear block. Repetition of the windows on the flat unornamented wall plans accentuates the building's monumental scale. FOB-3 exhibits distinctive characteristics the 20th century utilitarian office-building design incorporating influences from the International Style and stripped classicism. FOB-3 was one of the first constructed facilities resulting from the decentralization effort by the Public Buildings Administration to move federal offices to the suburbs. This movement reflects a government wide policy due to the limited availability of office space in Washington and the rapidly increasing size of the federal government. With the decentralization plan, the Public Building Administration built and managed office space for a wide variety of federal agencies. For these reasons, I feel the building is eligible under Criterion a and c.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Suitland Federal Center Historic

Preservation Compliance Section 110 and 106 Compliance Prince George's Co., MD

Prepared by: R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates

Lauren Bowlin October 1994
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence: yes no not applicable
R. Andrews 10.21.94
Reviewer, NR program Date

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

- Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
- Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
- Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
- Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

- Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
- Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
- Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
- Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
- Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
- Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
- Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
- Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
- Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
- Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
- Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
- Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
- Unknown Period (prehistoric historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

- Subsistence
- Settlement
- Political
- Demographic
- Religion
- Technology
- Environmental Adaption

IV. Historic Period Themes:

- Agriculture
- Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
- Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
- Government/Law
- Military
- Religion
- Social/Educational/Cultural
- Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: building

Historic Environment: suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): government/office building

Known Design Source: Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM**

**Suitland Federal Center
Federal Office Building 3**

**STATE
MARYLAND**

**COUNTY
PRINCE GEORGE'S**

**TOWN OR VICINITY
SUITLAND**

**HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME)
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING 3 (GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION)**

**MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES NO. (MIHP)
PG:75A-22**

**SECONDARY OF COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE
FOB-3**

**COMPLETE ADDRESS
Silver Hill Road, SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER**

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION
1942**

**SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF
STRUCTURE)
First Federal Suburban Office Building, Component of First Suburban Federal Office
Complex**

**STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)
International Style; Stripped classicism**

**MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)
Reinforced concrete clad in running bond beige brick**

**SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON
SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)
Three-story in expanded E-configuration; 781 foot head house from which project seven
wings, 61' X 421'**

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE

The flat exterior walls are punctured by double-hung windows and the main entry way, which features four inset cast stone plaques of stylized eagles.

INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)

none; see floor plans

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES

none

PRESENT CONDITION AND USE

Federal offices for the U.S. Census Bureau

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE

See MIHP file

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Suitland Federal Center Historic Preservation Compliance Section 110 and 106 Compliance, March 30, 1992, R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc.

COMPILER, AFFILIATION

Brooks Barwell, Cultural Resource Specialist, EDAW, Inc.

DATE

5/20/2003

PG: 75A-22



FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

APPROVED

W. E. BELT
 Chief of Office

H. E. HARRIS
 Chief of Office

J. C. GIBSON
 Chief of Office

SECOND FLOOR PLAN
 THIS FLOOR PLAN AND SPECIFICATIONS ARE HEREBY APPROVED
 10/20/57

NOT TO SCALE
 SEE SPECIFICATIONS FOR DETAILS OF FINISHES AND EQUIPMENT

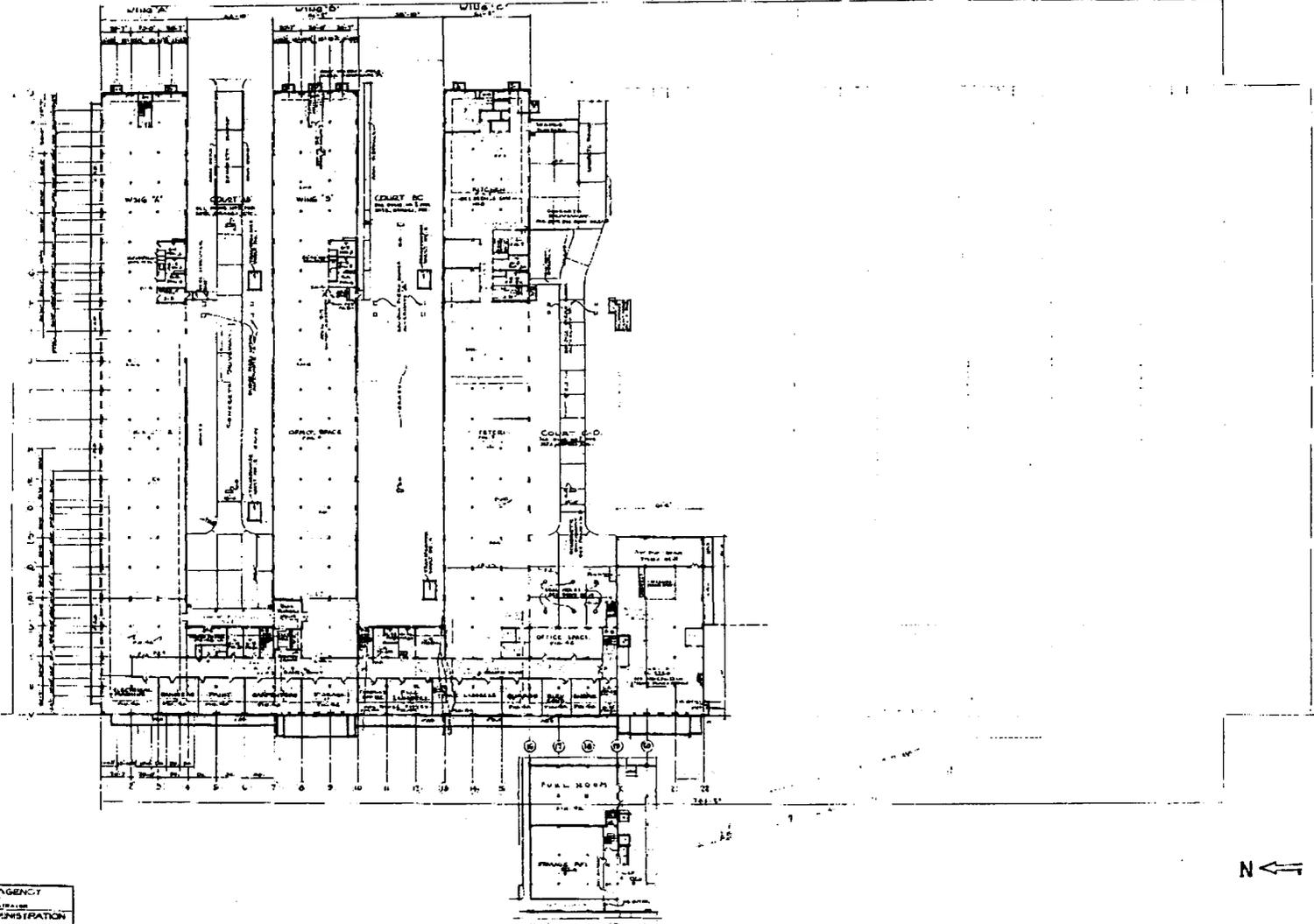


NO. 7

FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
 SUITLAND - MD.

10/20/57

CG 75477



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
 JOHN H. GARDNER
 FEDERAL OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION
PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS
 WASHINGTON, D. C.
 APPROVED
 H. S. WELLS
 CHIEF OF DIVISION



FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
 CITY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.
 DRAWING NO. 5

2-11

RETURN TO AREA 411

24X --

Suitland Federal Center
HABS Photo Key



FOB-3: (MIHP#PG:75A-22)

- 3-1-Front Elevation
- 3-2& 3-2A-Rear Elevation
- 3-3-East Side Elevation
- 3-4-West side Elevation
- 3-5-Document 1 rear court
- 3-6-Major entrance
- 3-7&3-8-Secondary entrances (2)
- 3-9-Lobby
- 3-10-Typical Corridor

FOB-4: (MIHP#PG:75A-24)

- 4-11-Front
- 4-12-Rear
- 4-13-East side
- 4-14-West side
- 4-15-Rear Court
- 4-16-Entrance Detail
- 4-17-Lobby
- 4-18-Underground tunnel
- 4-20-Main Entrance

Suitland
House



XW1001 16P04

MINP # PG: 75A-22

SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.

PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02

MO SKPO

FRONT ELEVATION

FUE 3-1

3-1



MHP # PG 75A-22
SUTLAND FEDERAL CENTER
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.
PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02
MD SHPO
REAR ELEVATION

108-3-2

3-2



100-111-1000

MINP# PG. 75A-22

SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, M.D.

PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02

MD SHRP

REAR ELEVATION ROB: 3-2A

3-2A



MIHP # PG 75A-22

SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.

PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02 MD SHPO

LAST ELEVATION F08-3-3

3-3



XW1001 8860

MIHP#PG 75A-22
SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD
PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02
MOSHAPU

WEST ELEVATION: FOB-3-4

3-4 .



MIHP # PG 75 A-22
SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.
PHOTOGRAPHICAL UNIT FOR SMALLING
1/02
MD SHAD
REAR COURT. FOB 3-5

3-5



MIHP # PG 75A-22
SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.
PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLER

11/02 MOSHPO
MAJOR ENTRANCE FOB 3-6

3-6

KODAK 100T-MX



MIHP # PG. 75 A-22
SUTLAND FEDERAL CENTER
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.
PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SYPLING

11/02 MDSHPD
SECONDARY ENTRANCE

FOB 3-7

3-7



MIHP # PG 75A-22

SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD

PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02

MD SHPD

SECONDARY ENTRANCE

F08 3-8

3-8



MIHP # PG. 75 A-22

SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.

PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMALLING

11/02 MDSHPU

LOBBY FOB 3-9

3-9



[This section contains a large white rectangular area, likely a placeholder for text or a blank page.]

MHP # PG 75A-22
SUITLAND FEDERAL CENTER
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD.
PHOTOGRAPHER: WALTER SMAW

11/02 MDSHPO
TYPICAL CORRIDOR
F03 3-10

F03
3-10

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Federal Office Building No. 3

and/or common FOB-3 (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Silver Hill Road not for publication

city, town Suitland vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Prince George's

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name United States of America

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 615

street & number folio 443

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title n/a

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

See attached continuation sheet.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1941 - 1942 **Builder/Architect** Louise A. Simon (Supervising Architect)

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or
Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

See attached continuation sheets.

Summary

Federal Office Building No. 3 (FOB-3) is a large three-story flat-roofed masonry office building constructed between 1941 and 1942 by the Federal government, and occupied by the Census Bureau since that year. The building retains its character defining features of plan, fenestration, and entrances from its period of construction. The building adopts plan of seven parallel wings extending east from, and perpendicular to, the main linear "headhouse" block. Double-loaded corridors, incorporating bands of windows, provide natural light to all offices. Repetition of the windows on the flat unornamented wall planes accentuates the building's monumental scale. The central west elevation entrance, composed of monumental, three-story bays, is the visual focus of the exterior design. Part of a campus-style Federal office complex located in suburban Suitland, FOB-3 is an example of twentieth-century utilitarian office-building design incorporating influences from the International Style and stripped classicism. The office buildings of the complex are widely spaced and oriented towards the curving, internal roads of the complex. Two buildings of related design and construction are located on sites on either side of FOB-3.

Description

The plan of the three-story office building adopts an expanded E-shape (see attached floor plan). The main elevation of the headhouse extends 781 feet. Seven projecting wings adjoin the rear elevation, each wing extends 421 feet and is 61 feet wide. Enclosed bridges linking the second and third floors span the open-ended courtyards between each wing. FOB-3 is constructed of five-course beige brick load-bearing walls with poured-in-place concrete columns and slabs. The building utilizes structural column bays of approximately 20 feet. A basement extends under the north half of the building. A flat roof with a parapet wall crowns the structure. A mechanical penthouse is set back twenty feet from the perimeter of the headhouse roof.

FOB-3 incorporates a variety of window types. Long rows of steel, sliding sash, eight-over-eight windows supported by limestone sills line the west, south, and north elevations; these units are set directly into the wall without surrounding casings. The three-bay east end elevations of the seven wings also include this window type. The courtyard elevations have a higher percentage of glazed wall surface than the other elevations. Sixteen-light, steel-frame, awning windows with a four-light top-hinged hopper above a two-light bottom-hinged panel account for ninety per cent of the windows on the courtyard elevations. They appear both singly and in groups of three. The remaining ten per cent of the courtyard windows are the same design used on the outward-facing elevations. With the exception of single eight-light windows found on the end corners, all of the courtyard windows include concrete sills. Three types of windows are found on the bridge passageways: steel awning windows, wood-frame sash (on the third floor of the bridges spanning the second and third courtyards), and aluminum awning windows.

Three entrances, located in alternate wings, open into the long west elevation of the headhouse. These entrances create the primary architectural articulation of the building. The main west elevation entrance includes four recessed bays composed of monumental three-story piers that are flush with the main wall plane and framed by curved limestone panels. Stylized eagle sculptures of limestone are mounted over the entrance doors, while square limestone infill panels are found between the second and third story windows. Ribbed limestone accents the recessed doorways. Original doors have been replaced with metal, glazed, double doors. Granite steps provide access to the entrance.

The two identical secondary entrances linking wings 2 and 6 with the main block are one-story in scale. Concrete, cantilevered canopies with rounded edges extend over three four-bay entrances. Limestone panels with deep channels, suggesting stylized rustication, surround the recessed doorways; limestone lintels with five circles top each doorways. Granite steps lead to the wood, five-light double doors providing building access.

The plan of FOB-3 adopts an interior, double-loaded corridor design with offices located along the outside walls of the headhouse and wings. This plan provides natural light to all offices from the expansive window system. Office designs combine private and open plans. Building elevators are located in the lobbies and at the midpoint of wings 2, 3, and 6. Twenty-one interior staircases, constructed of concrete with stone treads, are located at the top, midpoint, and head of each wing.

The three building lobbies incorporate similar interior finishes. Exterior doors and lobbies are divided by a foyer including three glazed wood doors, of identical design to those of the secondary entrances. Beige ceramic tile with brown ceramic tile base boards the walls of the headhouse and central lobby; this tile also clads two piers in the central lobby. The secondary lobbies incorporate similar wall tile in pink. This tile is an original finish. The yellow terrazzo tile floor accented by brass divider strips found in the central lobby, was installed in 1964 and is similar to the original pink terrazzo tile with steel divider strips. This original flooring survives in the secondary lobbies. Acoustic ceiling tiles suspended from a metal grid conceals the original 1942 acoustic ceiling panels.

The corridors include a variety of finishes. Wide open doorways with transoms connect the wings to the headhouse. This door design is also used for interior corridors. In the headhouse, flush and glazed wood doors with wood casings, are found. All door units have transoms to promote air circulation although these transoms survive, they are non operational. Doors found in wings combine both wood and metal units. Remaining wing finishes include composition tile and acoustic tile ceilings. The corridor walls of the wings are finished in gypsum board. This finish is in keeping with the original program for flexible office space.

The majority of the modifications to FOB-3 were initiated to upgrade mechanical systems or to renovate office layout to accommodate advances in office technology. Between 1961 and 1968, the ground floor of wing 3 was extended into the courtyard between wings 2 and 3. A

covered loading dock providing basement access is located in the courtyard between wings 1 and 2. A temporary one-story metal structure has been erected in the courtyard between wings 5 and 6.

FOB-3 was designed as the first building of the campus-style office complex. The structure is oriented towards Swann Road, a curving, interior road linking the buildings of Suitland Federal Center. In contrast with the geometric lots found in Washington, D.C., Federal planners designed Suitland with an irregular plan, including large landscaped space and parking areas. The site plan oriented the buildings toward the interior of the site and away from the existing community.

- Location: Western Shore
 Prince George's County
- Time Period: Modern Period, 1930 - present
 1940s
- Themes: 1. Architecture
 Federal Architecture
2. Community Planning and Development
 Suburbanization
3. Government/Law
 Expansion of the Federal Government

Summary

Federal Office Building No. 3 (FOB-3) exemplifies Federal office design of the early 1940s. The building is associated with the expansion of Federal offices into the suburban Washington, D.C. area. As one of the first structures resulting from a 1939 survey to expand government offices into the suburbs, and the first in suburban Maryland, FOB-3 helped to shape area development. The introduction of large Federal facilities contributed to the area's transformation from a bedroom suburb to large employment center. FOB-3 also is an example of a transitional building integrating design elements of stripped classicism and the International Style. The building illustrates the continuing evolution of the large utilitarian, government office building.

CRITERION A:

Government

The expansion of the U.S. Federal Government is reflected in the development of the nation's capital in Washington, D.C. City population figures and settlement patterns closely mirror the propagation of government agencies and their increasing need for office space. Washington emerged as a major population and employment center during the twentieth century, as proliferating government agencies required a larger work force and associated space.

During the early 1900s, the mounting demand for housing and transportation in the District of Columbia encouraged development away from the city's center. The pace of residential

PG:75A-22

construction was interrupted by the United States' declaration of war against Germany in 1917. Civil servants employed by various war bureaus inundated the District. During World War I, the population of Washington increased 50 per cent. Temporary stucco buildings were erected in all areas of the city to house both government agencies and Federal workers (Froncek 1977:353). With the end of the war, Federal offices dismissed nearly 16,000 wartime employees. However, many people remained in the city, swelling the number of permanent residents nearly 25 per cent between 1917 and 1920 (Green 1967:198).

The Depression and following wartime expansion prompted President Roosevelt to augment the number of Federal programs and properties both in the District and throughout the nation. Population figures climbed higher as the confines of the District grew crowded with Federal agencies and their workers. Many Federal agencies, especially those associated with the military, were forced to inhabit leased space and temporary structures throughout the D.C. area (Brinkley 1988:72).

As government offices became congested, Roosevelt grew concerned over the lack of space. Under the plan of decentralization, civilian agencies that were not essential to the war effort were relocated. More than 21,401 employees were moved out of the city, freeing two million square feet of office space for military bureaucracies (Brinkley 1988:121).

In 1939, Commissioner W. E. Reynolds of the Public Buildings Administration (PBA) initiated a survey of bordering Maryland and Virginia to identify possible sites for Federal expansion close to the District (*Star* March 15, 1941:A-20). The 1941 acquisition of the Suitland property was a direct result of this survey. The PBA intended to erect eight office buildings on the property for agencies with an intense need for space. Clerical workers were expected to fill the buildings, allowing key agency officials to remain in downtown Washington (*Star* March 16, 1941:A-9). The completion of FOB-3 in 1942 marked the realization of the first decentralization program effort in suburban Maryland.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the number of civilian Federal workers soared from 500,000 to more than 2,000,000. Instead of scaling back the bureaucracy following World War II, the Federal Government continued to expand (Craig 1978:438). Under the recommendations of the Hoover Commission on government reorganization, the GSA was formed in 1949 to manage the massive agglomeration of Federal properties, structures, and records. Throughout the ensuing 40 years, the GSA managed the construction of Federal buildings in Prince George's and Montgomery counties for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, and Energy. Today, the GSA continues to manage and maintain buildings in the Suitland Federal Center.

Maryland Suburbanization

Agriculture dominated the economy of Prince George's County throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the twentieth century, the county was the largest tobacco producer in the state. This pattern of agricultural land use first began to change in the northwest section of the county along the streetcar lines, which brought the first large numbers of suburban residents to the county in the 1890s. Suburban communities such as Mt. Ranier, Brentwood, and Cottage City developed along the trolley lines. Older towns on the railroad line, College Park and Hyattsville, also grew.

Suburbanization did not dominate the county until the 1930s. In that decade, county population increased fifty per cent, rising from 60,000 to 90,000 residents. The growth of the Federal work force supplied the people, while the automobile allowed them to reside in areas not served by trains or trolleys. The establishment of Federal installations in the 1940s, such as Suitland Federal Center and Andrews Air Force Base, promoted residential and commercial growth in the central and southern regions of Prince George's County. During the 1960s, more than 10,000 apartment units were constructed in the Suitland vicinity. Population growth continued unabated

until 1970 when it slowed to a more modest rate. As of 1988, Prince George's County was the most populous county in Maryland and claimed a residential population size rivaling that of Baltimore City.

Site-Specific History

Federal Office Building No. 3 (FOB-3) is situated on a portion of Suitland, Maryland condemned and purchased by the Federal Government during the summer of 1941. The acquisition was part of a Federal plan to combat congestion in Federal offices in the District of Columbia by establishing complexes for government agencies in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. In 1939, the Commissioner of Public Buildings, W. E. Reynolds conducted a survey of sites suitable for new Federal office buildings in Maryland and Virginia (*Star*, March 15, 1941:A-20). Two sites were chosen; one in Arlington, Virginia for offices for the Navy and a second in Suitland, Maryland. The selection of Suitland, five miles from the Capitol building, marked a significant shift in the location of Federal offices. In contrast, twenty-six years earlier, some Congressmen complained bitterly about the distance of the site selected for new Federal office building; this site was two blocks west of the White House (*Evening Star*, February 9, 1915:4, as cited in the National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form for the Interior Building).

The PBA was a branch of the Federal Works Agency established by President Roosevelt in 1939 to assume the building program of the Public Buildings Branch of the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department. In 1941, PBA began construction of FOB-3. The structure, designed to house 5,000 clerical workers, was not designed for a specific government agency. Instead the building was designed as general purpose office space. The PBA originally assigned the building to the Office of Price Administration. The space was reallocated to the Census Bureau and the Office of Price Administration occupied a new building in southeast Washington, D.C. This decision caused a delay in building completion as interior modifications were made to accommodate the special machines utilized by the Census Bureau (*Star*, April 8, 1942).

Although selection of the Suitland site was encouraged by Representative Lansdale G. Sasser (D-Md.) as a method of promoting suburban growth in the state, the community was unprepared for the burst of development. Prior to Federal acquisition, the Suitland and Silver Hill areas were gradually shifting from rural to suburban in character. The new Federal complex spurred a flood of new residents that far surpassed the previous influx of suburbanites. The existing police force, sewage disposal, and transportation systems were sufficient for a modestly-settled area, but inadequate for the increase of population (*Star*, March 21, 1941:B1; RG 121 Box 409 License granted to Washington Sewer). With the construction of FOB-3, property prices soared accompanied by plans for housing developments for government workers (*Star*, March 21, 1941:B1 and *Star*, March 16, 1941:A1). New zoning and subdivision regulations were proposed to the state legislature in an attempt to regulate suburban growth (*Star*, March 15, 1941:A20).

FOB-3 was completed in 1942 at a cost of \$6,000,000.00. A newspaper article describing the building dedication noted that the opening of the structure marked the completion of one of the first Federal decentralization programs (*Star*, August 13, 1942:A-6). Approximately 3,000 employees from the Census Bureau were transferred to the facility during its first week of operation (*Star*, August 13, 1942:A-6). Although few facilities planned for the complex were completed by 1942, the 500,000 square-foot, three-story structure did boast a cafeteria with a seating capacity of 1,000. The government also planned to develop recreation facilities on the Federal tract. These included baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and a swimming pool (*Star*, August 13, 1942:A6). A woman's dormitory was constructed in 1942 to house Census Bureau employees (*Suitland Sun* June 1942:2). The government also constructed temporary World War II housing on the grounds of the Suitland tract, as well as provided services such as a nursery for working parents (RG-121 Box 409 License issued to Alley Dwelling Authority by Federal Works Agency). Civilian employees of the Navy Hydrographic Office were relocated to the Suitland complex in 1942; these workers occupied the building currently designated NIC-1.

The influx of government workers created a demand for local housing after the war. The Suitland neighborhood developed into one of the most populous regions in Prince George's County (Community Renewal Program 1974:221). During the 1960s, more than 10,000 apartment units were constructed. By 1974, multi-family units comprised 80 per cent of available housing. Both population growth and housing development have leveled off in recent years. The Suitland community owes much of its development to the expansion of the Federal government in suburban Maryland.

FOB-3 underwent no major alterations following its completion in 1942. Interior modifications made during the 1950s accommodated the first FOSDIC machine, a massive computer utilized by the Census Bureau to transfer information from microfilm to magnetic tape (Washingtoniana Room, Special Collection *Star Photo File*: February 1, 1959). Subsequent interior modifications have been necessitated by advanced office and computer technology.

Today, FOB-3 houses the Census Bureau and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The General Service Administration's government consolidation plan eventually will move the NOAA workers to Silver Spring, opening enough office space at the Suitland Federal Center to enable the Census Bureau to transfer all employees to a single location.

CRITERION C:

Architectural Context

During the 1930s, a recognizable architectural style drawn from the traditions of classicism and nascent modernism emerged. These designs exerted a dominant influence in Federal architecture for the next decade. In the early twentieth century, classicism was the primary source in Federal architecture. The McMillan Commission advocated classical architecture and Beaux-Arts planning for the monumental core of Washington, D.C.; the Federal Triangle office complex was the major achievement stemming from this emphasis on classically-inspired design.

In contrast to classicism, modernism stressed functionalism over symbolism, and simplicity over ornament. The convergence of these two design philosophies has been called variously "stripped classicism" (Huxtable 1986:292 and Stern 1988:44), and "starved classical" (Craig 1978:331). Stripped classicism, which combined classical symbols with functionalism and that was characterized by massive scale, flat detailing, masonry construction, and the use of minimalist classical elements, came to be strongly associated with Federal architecture. A debate over modernism dominated discussions of public architecture until the 1950s, when modernism, uninfluenced by vestigial classicism, began to be the ubiquitous image of Federal architecture (Craig 1978:282). A specific building type, the large government office building, also emerged during the early twentieth century. Office building design received attention in Washington, D.C. as the Federal government commissioned and built large office buildings within and near the monumental core of the city to house expanding Federal agencies. Examination of two of Washington's widely publicized large office buildings, the 1917 and 1936 Interior Buildings, illustrates the office designs influencing FOB-3.

Among the first buildings in the capital that was designated as a modern office building was the old Interior Building (1914 - 1917). It devoted a minimum of space to ceremonial public areas, such as lobbies, instead placing most of its floor area in office space designed to have adequate light and ventilation. The plan included a main corridor with projecting wings forming an E-shape. The design of the new Interior Building (1935 - 1936) drew from its predecessor's plan, also incorporating a central corridor with projecting wings. The Secretary of the Interior criticized the design of the recently completed Federal Triangle buildings for their wasted space, "extravagant" columned facades, and enclosed light courts, which he found inferior to the open-ended courtyards of the old Interior Building (Look 1986:14). Other significant innovations in the 1936 Interior Building were spacious double-loaded corridors that provided windows in each office and corridor access, moveable office partitions, acoustically-treated ceilings, and fireproof design (Look 1986:13 - 14).

A survey published in 1939 of the results of the PWA building program illustrates the increasing concern with functionalism in government-sponsored architecture. While the PWA did not mandate an official architectural style, and although it financed many projects exhibiting traditional and regional stylistic influences, the authors of the survey clearly preferred modern architecture, defined as "the evolving style of the present time, which is based on evolutions from other styles of architecture and on changes that have developed in needs, requirements, and construction" (Short and Stanley-Brown 1939:I). Functionalism was stressed over ornament, decoration, and association with historic architectural styles. Ornamentation was viewed as detracting from the aesthetic value of buildings; the structure of the building as reflected in the exterior design became an architectural aesthetic. The authors of the PWA study identified the accomplishments of Federal building projects as "the elimination of waste space, economy in cost, and proper consideration of light, ventilation, and sanitation; while in design, careful study of line, scale, and proportion, greater simplicity, and an extremely sparing use of ornament, and a skillful and effective handling of materials" (Short and Stanley-Brown 1939:II).

These tenets are sympathetic with those of another strain of modernism, the rising International Style, which appeared in the United States in the 1930s. The use of pure forms, volumes wrapped in thin skins of plastic materials, repetitive elements, and diminished ornamentation or historical references distinguish International Style buildings. As International Style came to dominate American architectural schools, after World War II, stripped classicism became characterized as reactionary. Contemporary architectural critics have viewed it as a "robust and inventive movement within the tradition of modern classicism" (Stern 1988:44).

FOB-3

Against this background of developing styles and building types, the PBA developed the design for Federal Office Building No. 3 in 1941. The Supervising Architect of the PBA, Louis A.

Simon, spent most of his career in government service. He was employed in the Office of Supervising Architect, U.S. Treasury Department, where he served as Chief of the Architecture Division from 1905 to 1933. Simon rose to the highest Federal position in architecture, Supervising Architect, from which he retired in 1941. An article commemorating his career noted that "under Mr. Simon's guiding hand came more the subdued and sentimental architecture of the Italian Renaissance and Colonial;" the Federal Triangle office complex was the major project of his career (*The Federal Architect* January - March 1942:8 - 9). By the end of his career, stripped classicism had replaced traditional classicism as the recognized "official" Federal architectural style.

The architect who succeeded Simon as Supervising Architect, George Howe, designed one of the first International Style buildings in the United States, the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society Office Building (1931). His appointment to the highest government post in architecture marked a shift in Federal architectural preference to modernism without the lingering elements of "evolutions from other styles of architecture" seen in stripped classicism. World War II halted most building activity other than temporary structures, preventing Howe from fully developing a new Federal design program.

FOB-3 exhibits qualities of both the International Style and stripped classicism, while fulfilling the functional requirements of a large office building through a plan based on the E-shape. Like the Interior Buildings, the long projecting wings with open-ended courtyards provide light and ventilation to the offices. Designed on a 20-foot module, the space within the wings could be varied infinitely, allowing for ready modification as needs and technologies changed. The long, low design, flat wall surfaces, and large metal-frame windows are reminiscent of early International Style office buildings in Germany during the 1930s. The central entrance, with its flush piers and recessed entrance bays visually extended the height of the building, and evokes the monumental temple-front-inspired entrances of the typical stripped-classical Federal buildings. The eagles on the spandrels typify the associations with patriotic imagery of the period. These motifs were often used in stripped classical

buildings. The design of FOB-3 is an example of Federal architecture began in the year immediately before World War II.

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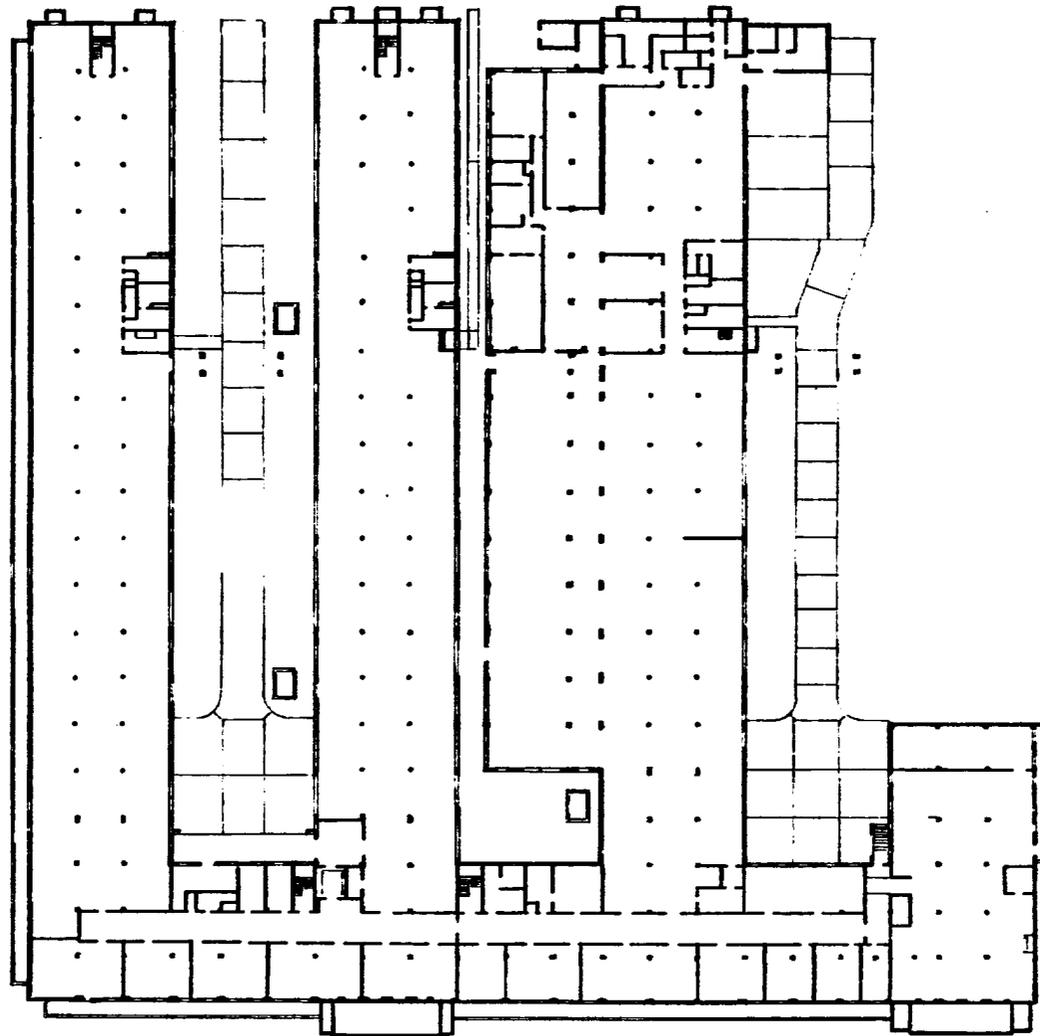
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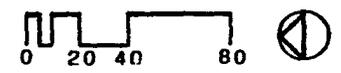
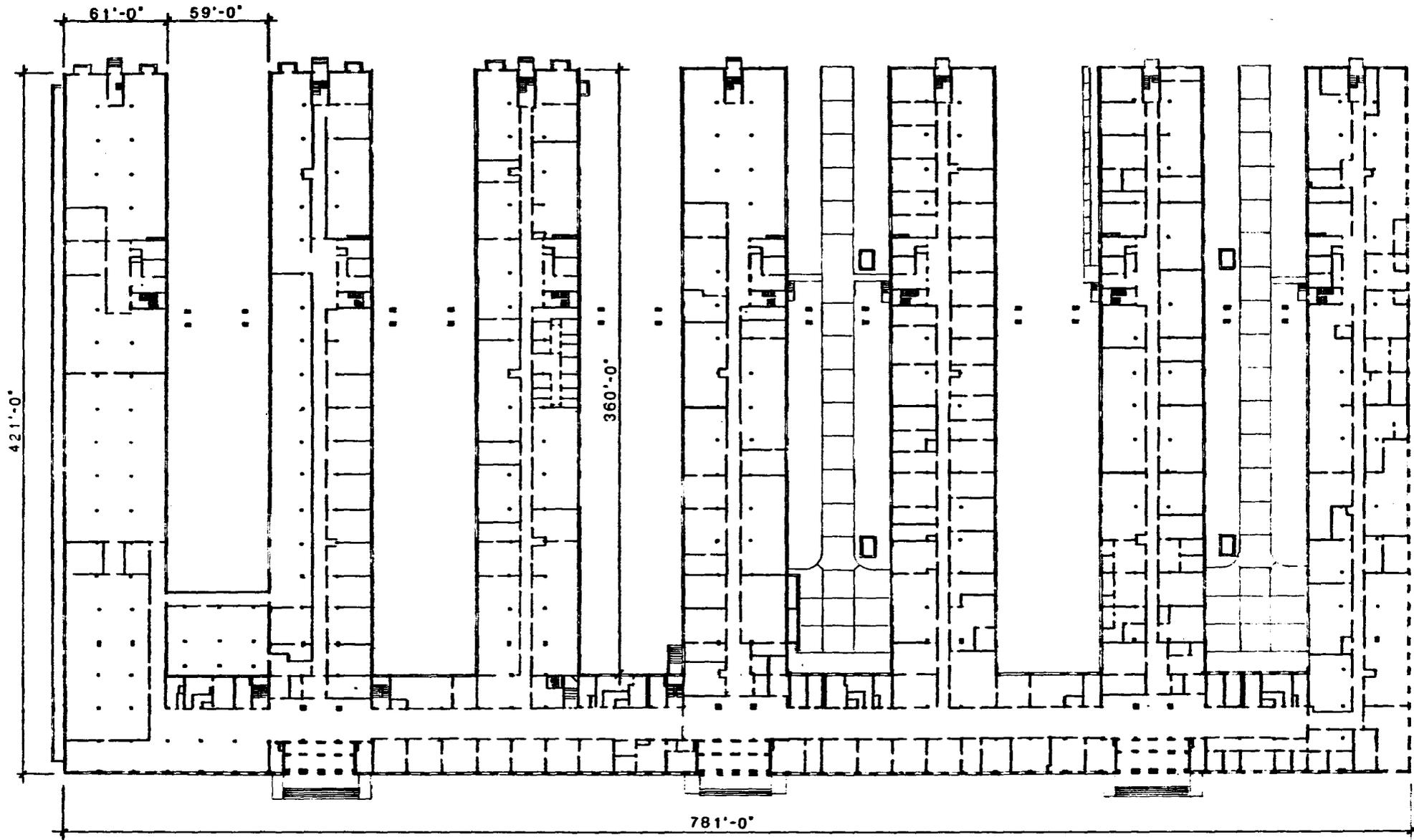
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FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING 3
Suitland Federal Center
Suitland, Maryland

Basement Floor Plan
Drawn in 1941

Ward Hall Associates AIA

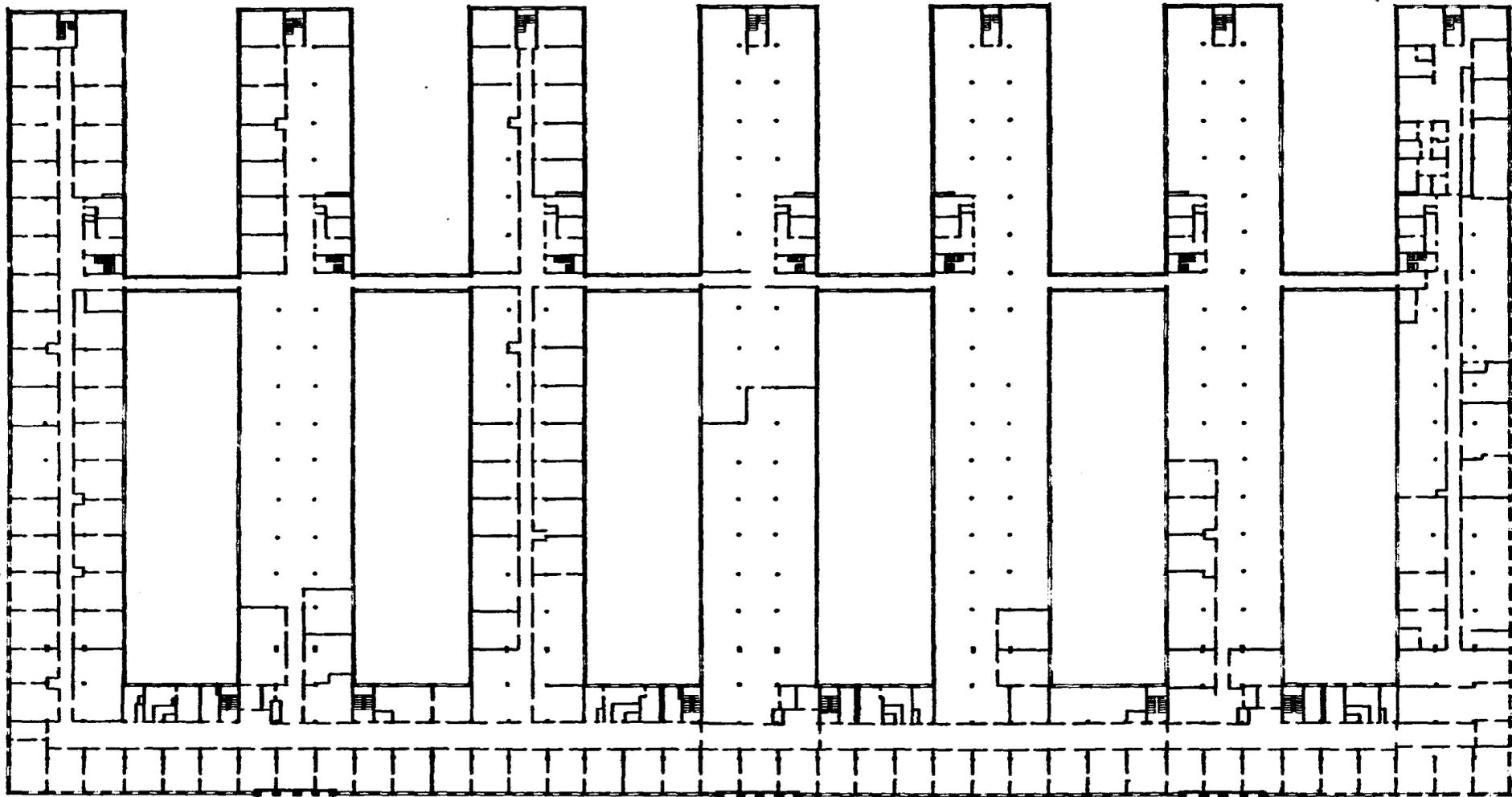


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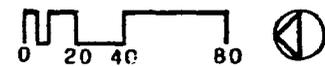
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING 3
 Suitland Federal Center
 Suitland, Maryland

First Floor Plan
 Drawn in 1941

Ward/Hall Associates AIA



PG. 75A-22



FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING 3
Suitland Federal Center
Suitland, Maryland

Second & Third Floor Plan
Drawn in 1941

Ward/Hall Associates AIA

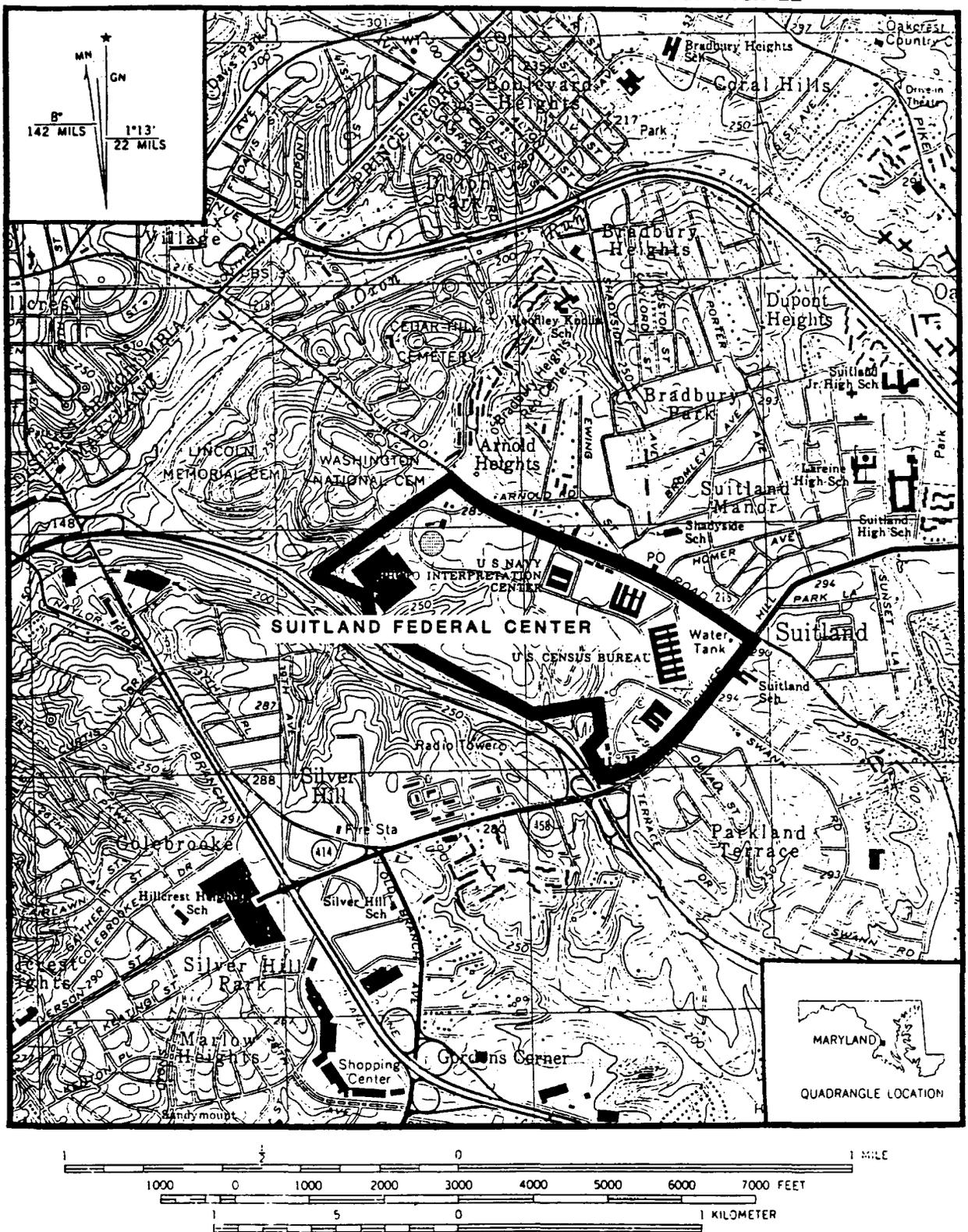


Figure 2. Section of the USGS 7.5' Anacostia, Maryland Quadrangle, showing the location of the project area



PG: 754-22

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PHOTO. - KAREN SCHNEEBBAUM

MAY, 1991

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12011 LEE JACKSON MEM. HIGHWAY

FAIRFAX, VA. 22033

VIEW - SOUTH FACADE



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VIEW - NORTH FACADE



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VIEW — FRONT WEST FACADE



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VIEW - EAST FACADE



19:58-22

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VIEW - MAIN ENTRANCE



PG: 957-22

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VIEW - SIDE ENTRANCE

10 55

1395A-22

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MAY, 1991

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12011 LEE JACKSON MEM. HIGHWAY

FAIRFAX, VA. 22033

VIEW - TYPICAL DOOR



F-275A-22

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PHOTO - MICHAEL ALLEN-HALL

NOVEMBER, 1991

negative w/ WARD/HALL ASSOC
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FAIRFAX, VA. 22033

VIEW: INTERIOR VIEW - TYPICAL CORRIDOR.



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PHOTO. - KAREN SCHNEEBaum

MAY, 1991

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FAIRFAX, VA. 22033

VIEW - INTERIOR OF 1ST FLOOR LOBBY