



historic preservation



Within the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) real estate inventory are many buildings significant in American history, architecture, and culture. One third of GSA's 1500 owned buildings are over 50 years old; more than 400 of these are eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include a legacy of monumental courthouses, custom houses, and federal buildings that are important community landmarks. They also include historic buildings—a railroad station, city library, hotel, sanitarium, bank—constructed by others and acquired for use by federal agencies. GSA design, construction, realty acquisition, and disposal activities have the potential to greatly affect these buildings and the communities surrounding them.

Preserving a legacy

GSA's Center for Historic Buildings provides national leadership for compliance with the spirit and substance of the National Historic Preservation Act and other stewardship directives. To help GSA accomplish these goals as part of its realty services mission, the Center develops strategies and promotes best practice sharing to support the viability, reuse, and integrity of historic buildings GSA owns, leases, or has an opportunity to acquire.

The core philosophy guiding GSA's stewardship approach is captured in *Held in Public Trust: GSA Strategy for Using Historic Buildings*, a cross-region, cross-business line study initiated and released by the Center in 1999. Acclaimed by preservation organizations nationwide and beyond, *Held in Public Trust* examines GSA's stewardship opportunities and challenges with dozens of best practice case studies. A 2004 follow-up report entitled *Extending the Legacy: GSA Historic Building Stewardship*, updates discussion on issues described in the 1999 report, with new chapters showcasing GSA's historic building inventory, investment trends, and newly available resources.



The Center continues to collaborate with other PBS programs, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations on stewardship initiatives to better integrate federal preservation policy into GSA's day-to-day business decisions. These initiatives include GSA's award winning "Legacy Vision," developed in cooperation with GSA's Office of Portfolio Management, for balancing the fiscal responsibility goals embodied in GSA's portfolio strategy and the federal preservation mandate to use historic buildings first, with specific measures for turning around financially troubled historic buildings.

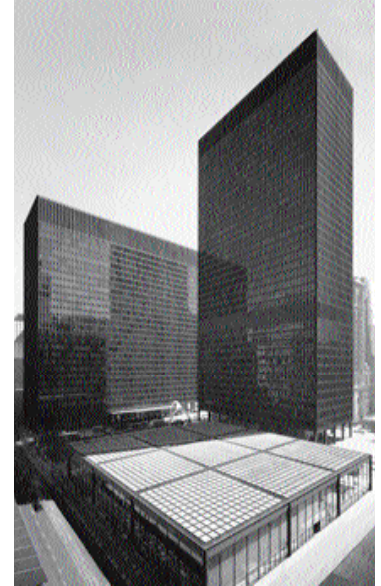
Keeping historic buildings viable

Financial strategies include making the most of available legal authorities and partnership opportunities to keep historic buildings occupied and producing revenue, through continued federal use, outleasing underused federal historic buildings to private entities, leasing non-federally owned community landmarks for federal use, and when appropriate, transferring ownership of historic buildings no longer needed for federal use to others better positioned to provide preservation and public access.

The Center supports the on time and within budget goals of GSA's capital program by assisting in the development of solicitations and selection of architectural firms for historic building projects, and also by providing technical advice on the repair, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic buildings. To keep GSA on the cutting edge in preservation design and technology, the Center conducts research and develops guidance on innovative solutions for meeting preservation goals and tenant needs while accommodating life safety, building code, ADA, energy conservation, and other requirements.

So that associates and project teams benefit from GSA's cumulative stewardship experience, the Center hosts a variety of national forums to identify common challenges and exchange solutions. It collaborates with relevant professional organizations, Regional Historic Preservation Officers, and GSA business lines nationwide to create new products that promote model approaches, reducing project risk and effort. For ready access to needed resources, most products are available online at www.gsa.gov/historicpreservation.

Aging buildings of the Modern era present unique challenges. The Center's groundbreaking study *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 50s, 60s and 70s*, examines GSA's Modern buildings within the context of their time to better understand their range, character, and potential significance. The book includes case studies illustrating successfully resolved design and reinvestment issues and a tool for assessing the National Register eligibility of GSA's Modern-era buildings.



Looking ahead

Major preservation resources developed by the Center or available on the Center website include *Held in Public Trust: GSA Strategy for Historic Buildings*; *Extending the Legacy: GSA Historic Building Stewardship*; and GSA's Preservation Desk Guide of guidance, sample documents, and reference information. The most comprehensive such collection ever created by a federal agency, the guide covers every GSA business activity affecting historic buildings.

Additional resources available on the Center website include GSA's technical procedures database for historic buildings, project manager contract templates for procuring preservation services, and detailed technical guidelines illustrating model solutions to specific preservation challenges such as fire safety code compliance, systems integration, and security retrofitting.

To learn more about GSA and the Center for Historic Preservation, please visit our website at www.gsa.gov/historicpreservation.



U.S. General Services Administration

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