historic preservation

The Center continues to collaborate with other PBS programs, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations on smart stewardship initiatives to better integrate federal preservation policy into GSA's day-to-day business decisions. These initiatives include, in cooperation with GSA's Office of Portfolio Management, GSA's award winning *Legacy Vision* for balancing the fiscal responsibility goals embodied in GSA's portfolio strategy and the federal preservation mandate to put 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, by outleasing underused historic federal buildings to private entities, leasing non-federally owned community landmarks for federal use, and when appropriate, by 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 by providing technical advice on the repair and restoration of historic building materials and on rehabilitation design options. 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 accomodating life safety, building code, ADA, energy conservation, and other requirements.

- This requires creating new products and forums to promote successful preservation approaches. It also demands new methods of communicating information across regions and business lines so that GSA project teams and staff nationwide have ready access to needed resources and benefit from GSA's cumulative stewardship experience.

Within the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) real estate inventory are many buildings significant in American history, architecture, and culture. More than half of GSA's 1600 owned buildings are over 50 years old; over 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 landmarks built by others—a railroad station, city library, hotel, sanitarium, and bank—that were acquired for use by federal agencies. GSA's design, construction, acquisition, and disposal activities have the potential to greatly affect these buildings and their surrounding communities.
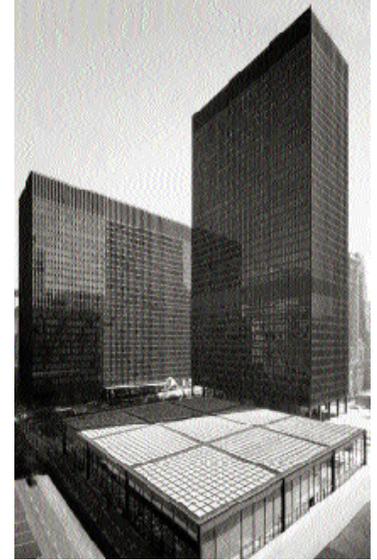
Preserving a legacy.

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 the 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: PBS 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, laying the foundation for the agency's business-like stewardship approach.

To learn more about GSA and the Center for Historic Preservation,

please visit our website at www.gsa.gov/historicpreservation.

Celebrating the historic building inventory and recognizing stewardship achievement is important to promoting GSA's stewardship vision.

- An award winning brochure and poster series launched by the Center in 1999 showcases GSA's monumental historic building legacy.

- GSA's historic building screensaver, available on the Center homepage, displays images of legacy public buildings from the poster series.

- Documentary videos profile major monumental buildings such as the Howard M. Metzenbaum U.S. Courthouse in Cleveland, Ohio and the Byron R. White U.S. Courthouse in Denver, Colorado.

- GSA's Public Buildings Service Heritage Awards program, organized and hosted by the Center, recognizes model preservation projects and stewardship initiatives. Previous award winners and submission guidelines are available on the Center homepage.

- GSA has been recognized by national preservation organizations, including the National Trust and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, through awards such as the Trust's John H. Chafee Trustees Award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Policy and the Trust/ACHP Award for Federal Partnerships in Historic Preservation.

Aging buildings of the Modern era present unique challenges. The Center's ground-breaking study, *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s and 70s* examines GSA's Modern buildings within the context of American architecture of the time to better understand their range, character, and potential significance. Results are published in an attractively bound book with case studies illustrating successfully resolved design and reinvesting issues.

Ahead of the curve.

Major preservation resources developed by the Center or available on the Center homepage include *Held in Public Trust: PBS Strategy for Historic Buildings*, and a six volume Preservation Desk Guide of sample documents and reference information. The most comprehensive collection of its kind ever created by a federal agency, the Guide covers every GSA business activity affecting historic buildings.

Through a GSA agreement with the National Park Service, digitization of completed National Register nominations for GSA properties has been accelerated so that documentation on all individually listed buildings is now available online. A database conversion currently underway will soon provide online access to GSA's comprehensive Building Preservation Plan (BPP) database as well.

Additional resources available on the Center homepage 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.

GSA

U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405
www.gsa.gov